Minutes of Regular Meeting
The Board of Trustees
Duncanville ISD

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Duncanville ISD was held Monday, September 21, 2026, at 6:30 PM in the Duncanville ISD Education Plaza, 710 S. Cedar Ridge Drive, Duncanville, TX 75137.

1. CALL TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM

President Janet Veracruz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was called under the Texas Government Code 551.045.

Let the record show a quorum of Board of Trustees is present, that the meeting has been duly called and that the notice of this meeting has been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

The following trustees were in attendance: Jacqueline Culton, Carla Fahey, Phil McNeely, Renee McNeely, DeRon Pelton, Hector Sanchez, and Janet Veracruz.

2. OPENING CEREMONIES

2.A. INVOCATION
Presenter: President Janet Veracruz

2.B. PLEDGE TO US FLAG AND TEXAS FLAG
Presenter: Board Members

3. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

There were no communications from citizens.

4. WORKSHOP - STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

Presenter: Dr. T. Lamar Goree

Dr. Goree presented Strategic Plan Updates. Thank you very much, Madam President and other trustees assemble tonight and happy National Night Out. Hopefully we will be smart with our time so that some of you can still take advantage of some of the National Night Out activities.

I'm really excited about the opportunity tonight to come and begin the conversation around our academics of our district. I just want to first pause, just to thank the board to let you know that many of the accolades that we talk about tonight, but even more importantly, those things that we talk about as we move forward tomorrow, are only possible because of the incredible support of this board.

And I've had opportunity to work with several different boards, and this one is top-notch when it comes to truly supporting those things that are in the academic interests of our students.

So, in that respect, if you'll remember, last year we started this regular cadence, where we come to the board monthly with something as it relates to how we're performing academically and those things that we're doing in our district. And tonight is the beginning of that cycle for this year as we present an update to the board around our district strategic plan, and more specifically an update as it relates to board goal priority number one, which is student academic success, and really let you know where we stand as we look at that goal.

Now before we begin tonight, trustees, what we've prepared for you tonight is, at your stations you have a packet and it's entitled Board Workshop Strategic Plan Update. It looks like this. And what I will tell you is that this packet summarizes everything that you will see in the presentation tonight.

It follows the same order as the slides. So, as the slides are presented, you will see the corresponding notes that go with that. Each of the sections has a space for notes, as well as a separate space for your questions. What I'll tell you too back on page 11, because we love acronyms in schools and we try not to do it, but in the event that we do that, we do have an index on page 11 that does give you what some of those terms mean.

So, we're going to ask you tonight, just because, and we really studied how this works best. At the end of each section, we're going to give you an opportunity to ask your questions, that way because it is quite a bit of information, you don't have to wait till the end to ask your questions.

I just want you to remind you that it's important that we present this information so that we can make sure that we remain focused on those board goals that you have set. These are key action steps, and these truly are the gateways to the things that we do to create success.

As you know, because we have taken our board training, by law, we are required to set those performance objectives as it relates to third grade reading, third grade math, as well as our Domain 2 performance, is something that we do also in our district. Again, these are the areas that we really do believe speak to the greatest opportunity for academic success of our students.

I think that's all the notes that I have to cover before we jump into our presentation. Do we have any questions for me before we begin? Okay, thank you.

Of course, I want to start off tonight. I got the fun part. I get to celebrate. Most of tonight will be focused on those things that we're doing as we move forward, but I think I'd be remiss if we didn't just take time to celebrate all those things that we did accomplish. We certainly had a great year academically last year, and we want to just celebrate some of those things that we did, and we did very well.

I want to take this opportunity, of course, just to start off by looking at what our district's accountability looks like at a glance. We did maintain our C rating, but I think the things that we're most proud of is that we saw a year where we went from seven F schools to one F schools. At the same time, last year we saw seven of our schools increase by a letter grade, three went down by a letter grade, and four remained the same. So, we're certainly on a positive trajectory when it looks at increasing the scores of our schools, and ultimately our goal is to increase the score of our district.

A couple of things in schools that I'll celebrate, and we just can't celebrate these schools enough because of their incredible performances last year. Now I want to start with our schools that went up one letter grade, and we'll start off with Brandenburg.

Now Brandenburg's interesting because what it shows here is that Brandenburg went from an F to a D. But if you will remember, Brandenburg was offline last year. What happened though is, because when we consolidated Alexander and Merrifield, because there were more Merrifield students that went to Alexander and after a state evaluation, the score of Merrifield was actually assigned to Brandenburg. So that's why it shows F to D, but I do think it's only fair to celebrate Alexander and Ms. Phillips. Ms. Phillips, you there? Stand up, Ms. Phillips. Celebrate them for going from an F to a C. And very transparently, that was the school that we were most concerned about last year because of where it was in the cycle. So truly appreciate Ms. Phillips and her entire team for everything they did there.

Super excited for Hastings going from a C to a B. Ms. Robinson, stand please so we can recognize you. And then, our schools that jumped up two letter grades. Well, again, Ms. Phillips, we have you here too, going from an F to a C, we have Ms. Phillips at Alexander. Ms. Dennis at Bilhartz, stand up Ms. Dennis, going from an F to a C. Very good. And Fairmeadows making a big jump. Mr. Quintero, stand please, going from D to a B.

And certainly, our only campus that went up three letter grades, Ms. Crosby at Daniel, l going from an F all the way to a B. Thank you. Also at the same time, we've talked about our schools that received distinctions, and a distinction,

remember that based on your economics, every school is grouped with 40 schools across the state that are similar in economic makeup. And what these awards show is these are the schools that performed in the top 25% of their comparative groups. And this is something to really be proud of.

We'll be looking at Alexander with the top 25% of comparative academic growth, going to Fairmeadows, top 25% comparative academic growth, as well as academic achievement in math. Daniel Elementary, top 25% comparative academic growth and top 25% in comparative closing the achievement gap.

We'll then go to Hastings with five distinctions. We had top 25% comparative academic growth, academic achievement in reading, academic achievement in math, and post-secondary readiness, as well as top 25% comparative closing the achievement gaps. This is something to really clap about.

And of course, Duncanville High School with an impressive 14 of 16 distinctions. As we talk about and look at the distinctions, because of design, some of these we won't ever get. But nevertheless, we're so proud of the achievement of Duncanville Collegiate Academy with those 14 distinctions. Again, what I tell you as we celebrate this historic lag data, we're excited as we move forward and really excited to know that this list will be even longer as we go into next year because of the progress that we've made this year and how we're actually building on those systems of success, and making sure that we're providing our schools and our campuses with everything that they need.

Without further ado, I would like to invite Ms. Lucretia Newton to the podium. And Ms. Newton, who is our director of assessment and accountability, will come with the first part of our presentation. Thank you.

Ms. Lucretia Newton added to the presentation. Good evening, Madam President, members of the board and Dr. Goree. Thank you for allowing me the time to visit with you this evening, specifically about the board goals as it relates to our strategic plan. As a reminder, you have met and created the goals for our district moving forward, and so we're going to focus tonight strictly on priority one of the strategic plan, student academic success.

And so, the performance objectives listed for student academic success include increasing the percentage of third grade students meeting grade level on STAAR reading, from 34% to 43% by 2028, increasing the percentage of third grade students meeting grade level on the STAR math from 27 to 35% by 2028, and also improving the district accountability rating for Domain 2, which is school progress from 72 to 80% by 2028.

First, I want to say, thank you for selecting third grade as our area to focus on. While other grades as students move up, it is important that they're doing well, preparing for college career military readiness, but we know that foundation starts in third grade and even below that, but we don't have a STAAR score for kinder, first, or second, but we want to know how our students are doing, how well-prepared they are to move up through the upper grades of elementary into middle and high school.

Again, our first performance objective is to increase the STAAR reading for Meets and above from 34 to 43%. As a reminder, we are evaluated on the STAAR test. We get four different performance levels, or our students do. The first performance level is Did Not Meet. That's those that Did Not Meet the standard that the state sets.

The second level is Approaches Grade Level. Approaches Grade Level, the state considers as a passing score. However, they define it as it is approaching grade level. They're not quite there yet, but with a little extra help, a little intervention, they can get there.

And then Meets Grade Level is that. They are on grade level, they're ready to move on to the next level, and Masters are those students that are performing above grade level standards. And so, the goal here is to increase those students that are at Meets and Masters from 34 to 43%.

As you can see here in 2025, our third-grade students, meeting grade level and above on STAR reading, was 34%. For 2026, we see that we're at 34%. So, we know we have some areas here. This is an area of opportunity to increase those scores to get us where we want to be by 2028.

However, we also know that STAAR is not the only indicator of how our students are doing. So, we want to look at our i-Ready data. I-Ready is a reading and math assessment that shows how students are performing, how they're growing over time, where they are, and what areas they need support in. We give an assessment three times a year, beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of year to determine our intervention plans. And it also helps us predict STAAR performance, where our students are going to fall at the end of the year.

Looking at our beginning of the year i-Ready data, this was given about first three weeks of the school year this year. 47% is what would be equivalent to our Did Not Meet. 24% is Approaches only. 21% is our Meets only, and 8% Masters only. When we combine our Meets and Masters, we're at about 29%, which is exactly where we would expect to be this early in the school year, at the beginning of the year. These are students, third grade students coming in being evaluated on third grade level standards. So, they haven't had the full third grade instruction. This is about where we would expect them to be.

Our next performance objective is to increase the percentage of third grade students on STAAR math from 27% to 35%. As you can see, we did a pretty good job here. We got a little bit closer to that 28 goal. In 2025, we had 27% of our students Meeting Grade Level, and in 2026 we had 33% Meeting Grade Level on math.

Again, for our third-grade math, i-Ready that was given at the beginning of this school year, we started out with 9% at the Meets only, and 1% at the Master's, which is 10% Meets and above. But again, these are incoming third grade students that are being evaluated on third grade math standards that they have not been taught yet. So again, this is pretty accurate as far as what we would expect this time of year. We expect to see growth at our middle of the year test and then again for our end of the year test.

Another set of data we think is important to note here. While we're focusing on third grade for the strategic plan, we do have a partner, Sustain Ed, and they put together a cohort grouping of data for us, and they published this in one of their documents, and this is one of the reasons we've had visits from TEA. They want to come, they want to see what we're doing, because they're showing this growth here.

So, when we talk about cohort growth, we're talking about the same students. So, in this slide, the light blue are students who were in third grade in the '24-'25 school year, and then the dark blue is the same students when they moved to fourth grade in the '25-'26 school year. So, it's the same student from one year to the next. And as you can see, excuse me, from the Approaches, the students increased two percentage points from 51 to 53.

For Meets, they improved eight percentage points from 26 to 34. And Masters, they jumped up 10 percentage points from seven to 17%. Again, these are the same exact students from one year to the next. They also made the same comparison with our fourth to fifth grade students. So again, the light blue is the fourth-grade students from the '24-'25 school year. The dark blue is the same students as fifth graders from the '25-'26 school year. And as you can see, our Approaches went up 17 percentage points, Meets went up eight percentage points, and then Masters maintained at 10.

Our third performance objective for priority one is to improve the district accountability rating for Domain 2 from 72 to 80% by 2028. A quick review from our last board meeting about Domains and accountability. Domain 1 is Student Achievement. Domain 2 is divided into two parts, part A and part B. Part A is Academic Growth, which is a student, how well they progress from one year to the next if they meet their growth targets. And part B is Relative Performance.

This is indicative of how we perform compared to other campuses and other districts that have similar economically disadvantaged percentages that we do. And then of course, Domain 3 is Closing the Gaps. They take our overall score by picking the better score of part A or part B in Domain 2 and then comparing that to Domain 1. The best of those three is 70% of our grade, and then Domain 3 is 30% of our grade.

Here's our exact data for the district. Domain 1, we received a 69, Domain 2A a 68, 2B a 73, and Domain 3 a 71. 2B was the highest of 2A or 2B, so it became the number that we carried at 70%. It was the higher of 2A and 2B, and then it was the higher of Domain 1 and Domain 2, and that is where our 72 grade comes from.

I pointed that out because I think it's important to note that, this past year, Relative Performance is where our score came from. So, if we look at 2025, Domain 2 rating was 72%, and in 2026, our Domain 2 rating was a 73%. Both of those came from Domain 2B, the relative performance. However, I think it's important to note that our 2A score increased from 61 to 68%. It's increasing much more rapidly than the 2B score. And if we keep moving at that percentage rate, our 2A will overtake our 2B, and that will be what our district score will be based on.

In our strategic plan, you all have set some key actions for how we are going to achieve the goals that I've just described here for you. Some of those key actions include reevaluating and abandoning academic initiatives that aren't working. Why keep doing it if it doesn't work? The whole phrase, if you keep doing what you've always done, you're going to keep getting what you've always got. So, we're going to reevaluate some programs. We're going to improve instructional quality by having a set of non-negotiable research-based strategies that are evident across the district in all classrooms and all grade levels.

We're going to develop scripted lessons for our math and reading teachers in pre-K through eight, especially for those new teachers, brand new teachers, not certified teachers, to give them a map of where to go and how to present their lessons. And then, we're going to create and deploy instructional plans and processes that create consistency. Again, from campus to campus, grade level to grade level, subject to subject with a curriculum management plan, professional learning plan, and instructional expectations that will be aligned across the district.

My colleague, Dr. Michelle Neely, the executive director of teaching and learning, will unpack each of these key actions for you. She will start with key action one and then other colleagues will take the other three. But do we have any questions about data before I pass over to Dr. Neely?

Dr. Goree added. Right. And while you're gathering your questions, and thank you very much, Ms. Newton. One thing I'll point out too is that Ms. Newton talked about i-Ready, and as you go through the presentation tonight, you'll see that there are several benchmarks that we take throughout the year and that we immediately adjust those things that need to be adjust, to make sure that we're getting the outcomes that we want. And again, I do think how we've refined that process over the last year and what we're implementing this year will speak greatly to the success that we will see academically this year. But any questions for Ms. Newton?

President Veracruz asked. Are we still seeing remnants of the COVID learning disruption at all, or are we seeing something else other than that?

Ms. Newton replied. Yes, ma'am. Our babies that were born during COVID are now first-graders. Their behaviors are different. Their attention span is different. Then as we progress up, my personal... I have a niece who's a ninth grader who was a third grader during COVID. She didn't learn her times tables, and she still doesn't know them. So, there's gaps across the spectrum from those kinder, first-graders and all the way up through high school. We're going to see the remnants of COVID for a long time.

Trustee P. McNeely asked. When do we give the test?

Ms. Newton replied. We give the i-Ready test three times a year. We gave at the beginning of the year, late August, early September. We'll give again in the middle of the year, right before Christmas break, and then at the end of the year we'll give early May, right after STAR testing is complete. STAAR is the month of April.

Trustee Culton asked. What do you do with students that Masters the curriculum at the beginning of the year?

Ms. Newton replied. Our teachers work with our gifted and talented team, with our advanced academics team, and they look at ways that they can enhance the curriculum enrich, because one of the important things to do with on STAAR test Masters, the students have to maintain Masters, and sometimes it's harder to maintain when you made a 98% than it is to grow a student who didn't get Masters. So, they look at different enrichments and extending the curriculum projects, STEM-based activities that they can do to make sure that they're maintaining the scores that they start with and not declining.

Dr. Goree added. And one thing I'll add to that, and first off with Coach McNeely, one thing I'll add too, with the i-Ready testing, that's what our TIA, our teacher's incentive allotment, is based on too. So, we're very much structured with when we do that.

But one thing I'll add to it, and your question's a great question around mastery students, and it can get challenging at the elementary level. We must be very intentional. However, when we hit our secondary schools, we have the different levels of classes and if we have a kid that could be in a regular class, they hit a Mastery in the beginning of the year, we're changing that schedule and putting them in a more rigorous class.

Trustee Culton commented. Yeah, that was kind of my question.

Dr. Goree replied. Yeah, but we acknowledge that elementary, you must be intentional, because it is a little more challenging.

Trustee Culton asked. I have another question related to the key actions. What is our schedule for implementation? There were a number of key actions that you had referenced.

Ms. Newton replied. Yes. I believe each of my colleagues will be discussing that when they break down their part. They'll talk about what that timeline looks like.

Dr. Goree added. And what we'll do, Trustee Culton, if you still have that question at the end, we'll be more specific about that, but I do think that's a part of the presentation tonight too.

Trustee Culton asked. Would you go over the cohort performance growth again?

Ms. Newton replied. So, the first slide is our third graders from '24-'25. That's two years ago. That's when we had seven F campuses. To '25-'26, those students moved up to fourth grade this past year. That's our most recent data. And this is the STAAR data. This one is for math. Again, from '24-'25, third graders are in the light blue.

And so, it's the same students. They were third-graders one year and then they moved to fourth grade the next year. And it shows that, because sometimes people will say, "Well, the scores improved, but it's different kids. They have different experiences, different backgrounds." This particular set of data is the exact same students that moved from third grade into fourth grade. And so, they increased approaches by two points, but then their Meets and Masters by eight and 10 points, which shows our students not only are performing that one day on STAAR, but they're maintaining the information that they learned the year before and adding to it the next year.

And then, the second slide is the same for the fourth graders that grew into fifth grade students from '24-'25 to '25-'26. And again, there, while there was no growth at the Masters level, like I said, that one is harder to maintain sometimes when you're scoring at that upper level, but we did show significant growth in Meets and very significant growth in Approaches with the same set of students. So, this is showing, especially with this Approaches, that a lot of gaps were filled, because they were at 44% that first year. Same set of students scored 61% the next year. That shows that gaps are being closed.

Dr. Goree added. I was having a conversation with a middle school principal, and we were talking about this very group of students. And math is why TEA was here to visit us, and why we were visited around our math, but they talked about how, to your point, Ms. Newton, how the sixth graders that they have, and that would be the same group of students are coming in just stronger mathematically. So, our goal is to continue to see that happen as those students matriculate through. But I love it, it's a comparison to the same kids.

Trustee Culton asked. So, is it all the kids that went from third to fourth grade?

Ms. Newton replied. Yes.

Trustee Culton commented. Okay. Not a sample.

Ms. Newton replied. Not a sample, no. It was all Duncanville ISD third graders moving to fourth grade, and fourth to fifth.

President Veracruz asked. So here it says that the plan says Monitoring on the third bullet, Develop and Adopt and Monitor Scripted Lesson Plans. My question is, when we say we are monitoring these strategies, are there specific metrics that we'll be using, and how often will we be seeing those metrics used to determine whether this is being properly utilized?

Ms. Newton replied. Dr. Wyatt will address this in her presentation. It's coming. Thank you. I will turn it over to Dr. Neely. Thank you.

Dr. Goree commented. Dr. Neely serves as our executive director of teaching and learning.

Dr. Michelle Neely added to the presentation. Good evening. I'm really excited for the opportunity to share with you this afternoon or this evening, because I think I'm perfectly positioned as a new member of our team to talk about Key Action Number 1, which is to reevaluate and abandon academic initiatives, programs and resources that are not yielding student performance gains or aligned district wide. We have a very rigorous cycle for the evaluation process, and it includes all our stakeholders and several steps. First and foremost, the evaluation process includes collecting data, reviewing the outcomes such as alignment and trends, gaining perspective from stakeholders, developing viable recommendations to either continue, revise, expand, or discontinue programming. And the plan is developed ultimately to foster improvement across our system. So tonight I'm going to share with you two programs that are currently under review. The first one you heard about was during our last board meeting, which is our K-2 Literacy Program. And the second one is Dual Language 2.0.

This year we're using the evaluation framework with K-2, which I'll start there, which is in its second process or second iteration because the findings from last year indicated that there's a strong relationship between the classroom implementation, coaching support, and student achievement and outcomes. So, we wanted to continue that because the findings also showed us that first grade is a very critical transition year. And that grade has the largest concentration of TEKS. And because of the review, we understand that we must give more support to our teachers. We must tier our professional development, which means to provide professional development according to the needs of our teachers. And we want to make sure that we continue to give our principals more information about the tiering process. So that's why we are continuing that evaluation process.

The second initiative is for our Dual Language 2.0 program, which serves 1,226 of our champions here in Duncanville. This program is actually being launched after two years of planning and preparation and research. And so, with all implementations, new implementations, sometimes there are challenges that you don't anticipate. It's under review so that we can work through any challenges and make sure that the long-term implementation goes well for our students because when our students are in a dual language program in about fifth grade, we're going to start to see the outcomes in their student achievement based on how well we do with our dual language program.

Those two programs specifically are our formal evaluation process. We're looking at what we can revise, what we can do differently, what we can do better. And while these two programs are under formal review, we also have several things because I'm new that we're reviewing that I'd like to share with you today. The first one is we talked about curriculum and you're going to hear more about that later, but we have implemented a continuous improvement model for our curriculum feedback. Now, we have certain constraints around our curriculum. Our curriculum is HQIM, which means highly qualified instructional materials that have been approved by our commissioner. We must use them with fidelity because they are connected to our LASO grant. So, it's super important that while we are required to use them with fidelity, we also get feedback when the curriculum doesn't fit the needs of our students and our teachers and our schools.

Working collaboratively with school leadership, we have provided a way to give feedback around the curriculum, and our principals will be able to, as well as teachers, give us feedback on how we might improve the curriculum. So that's an informal process that we are looking over this year. I also would like to share with you our professional development coherence informal review that we're doing right now. As we evaluate systems, we must also evaluate the things that support the implementation of the system. So, with this new curriculum, we must also evaluate professional development. So, we're focusing this year with our evaluation process on the quality. The actual professional development itself has been outlined by school leadership, but we are ensuring in our department that when teachers come to professional development, they see an increasing quality of the instruction that they're getting. Specifically, it's important for teachers when they come to be able to think about why they're doing certain moves within the classroom.

So that's something that we're working on to help teachers understand why they're doing certain things and helping them to understand how to explicitly model the curriculum that we have with HQIM because there's some gaps in the curriculum and we understand that. So, we're meeting needs in that way.

Another way that we're meeting the needs of our teachers that's under evaluation is that everybody learns differently, especially adults. Adults need several touches sometimes with information that they're receiving. It can be overwhelming for teachers when they go to professional development. So, what our department is doing now is evaluating the big rocks that we have as it relates to instruction and developing professional developments that our teachers can utilize offline. We call them asynchronous professional development. We've developed workbooks and procedures for teachers to engage with those professional developments.

And one of the most wonderful things that happened recently is Dr. Nix was in a classroom, and he was observing a teacher that was executing a QSSSA. And so, he asked the teacher, "How did you know to execute this so well?" And he said, "Well, I took the asynchronous training and it was really helpful." Again, this professional development allows them to learn at their pace and that's really important and it allows us to really ensure that our teachers have what they need.

The next area is back to professional development. One of the most important things we can do is amplify the excellence that we do have across the district in our classrooms. And we can do that through our Ring the Bell Award. So, during professional development, starting this semester, we are asking the curriculum department to identify teachers who are doing great work and we're giving them time to share during our professional development the strategies, the work that they're doing so that other teachers can hear best practices from their colleagues. This has been a wonderful way for us to amplify excellence across our district and celebrate the good work of our teachers. We'll continue to do this and refine this practice with the assistance of our principals and our school leadership because we want to highlight and amplify more teachers. And that is one way that we can continue to evaluate instruction in the classroom.

And then another formal evaluation system that we're looking at right now is just collaboration walk redesign. So right now, we go on collaboration walks to campuses and the purpose of that is for us to understand trends, to understand the needs of our campuses, of our students, of our teachers, and to understand changes that we need to make with curriculum. We are revamping this process so that it is less heavy for the campus and more intuitive and more thorough for curriculum and instruction so that we can provide the best support possible in partnership with school leadership for our campuses.

As we evaluate this practice, we are working to improve alignment across the district as it relates to curriculum. Now I have talked a little bit about our actions that we're taking and the initiatives that we're evaluating, but I did want to also include information about some of the ways that we are evaluating and some of the entities that we're working with. We get to work closely with Commit to help us walk through the process of making sure that we're evaluating our systems and our actions with Fidelity. We have several opportunities to walk through the process and look at our practices with Commit over the course of the year and it will codify the changes that we need to make. And finally, every week curriculum instruction leaders are meeting to evaluate data, to look at information so that we can identify exactly how we can improve our system.

So, the key action, while we have two formalized areas where we're working, we're always looking to make improvements. Thank you so much. Are there any questions that I can answer?

Trustee P. McNeely asked. [inaudible 00:38:50], what does that mean?

Dr. Neely replied. So, in terms of working with our partners with Fidelity, what that means to us is making sure the implementation plan, if we're implementing dual language at our schools, that the curriculum is being followed, that if there's changes that need to be made, we are making the changes in the appropriate formalized manner. It means that we have a cycle of feedback so that we are not straying away from the actual plan that's in place.

Trustee P. McNeely commented. That means doing what you're supposed to do.

Dr. Neely replied. Yes sir. Yes sir.

Trustee P. McNeely commented. I mean, that's TEA. It's so nice to work with TEA. They're such a helpful bunch.

Trustee R. McNeely asked. Can you kind of walk me through, I hope this is okay, what a calibration walk, what it looks like and who's involved.

Dr. Neely replied. Yes, ma'am. I would love to. So, with calibration, it's comprised of a cadre of people. It could be school leadership is included, individuals from curriculum and instruction, the principal. And what we are doing is we go into a classroom for a set amount of time and Sustain Ed. I want to mention them as well. And we look at just the instruction and we have a rubric, an agnostic rubric that we utilize to kind of just check and see if the instruction is being delivered correctly, if the teacher's monitoring, is the teacher holding the cognitive load or are the students holding the cognitive load? So, we're looking at that. We go out into the hallway after we make observation, after we take that time to observe, and then we have that discussion and we see if we're all on the same page about what we saw.

And then we decide what actions we need to take next to improve the instruction. And we give recommendations to school leadership and the principal. And then we take recommendations on what we can do better, but the whole system is for us to look at trends across the system.

Trustee R. McNeely asked. When you do those, the teachers, do you just at random walk into the classrooms? Do the teachers know you're coming there that day? How does that work?

Dr. Neely replied. That's a great question. The principal knows we're coming and usually outlines that plan for us. So, they may or may not share with the teachers that we're coming. I think that's a principal preference or a school leadership preference. But I think it's so common that people don't have to know. They just do what they're supposed to do. We really have great teachers.

Trustee R. McNeely asked. Once you go out in the hall and you're meeting with what went on in the classroom, do you all give that to the principal to communicate with the teacher at a later time?

Dr. Neely replied. So everybody goes through a cycle of maybe three or four classes and then we come back to a space where we discuss trends that we saw, we discuss our ratings, we decide that the principal can identify some things that they want to do with their team and we work with them to identify things that we can do to support the work that they need to do along with school leadership.

Dr. Goree added. And one thing I want to lift up in this is that they're using the same instrument when they go into the classroom. And I remember two years ago when I came, there was this big conversation about these calibration walks, and I do believe we've gotten so much better with this. We've adjusted the number of people and even our principals and our staff are accustomed to us coming in, especially as we built a relationship with Sustained Ed. And one thing I also want to reiterate is that it is the principal that is delivering and supporting those teachers based on those walks. And it also helps us to look for trends across schools because then we know how we need to, again, modify our professional development so that we do it with fidelity.

Trustee P. McNeely asked. How many are there in a quadrant? Is it a battalion, a squad? Are we going as an invasion or what? What's a quadrant?

Dr. Neely replied. Well, just depends on what the need is, sir. There's usually about four or five of us that, no more than five would go into a classroom.

Dr. Goree added. There was a time, coach, where we had some pretty big groups and that was one of the things that we worked on.

Truste P. McNeel commented. I know. Yeah. Yes. I heard about them.

Trustee Culton asked. I have a question regarding academic initiatives that we are evaluating. You mentioned dual language and the, I think literacy. Are those the only two that we are evaluating this year?

Dr. Neely replied. Yes, ma'am. Those are the only two that are currently under evaluation, but as a new member of the team, I've been charged by Dr. Nix to look at our system as a whole. And so, to make those adjustments and monitor those systems, I also had to adjust and improve in some other areas. So, I wanted to share both with you.

Trustee Culton asked. We have developed, adopted, and monitored scripted lesson plans for math and reading, pre-K 8 for all low performing campuses and novice teachers. So, looking at the data, our middle schools are struggling I guess the most, right? What are we doing to address them?

Dr. Neely replied. The middle schools? Yes ma'am. That's a great question. I know that I'm going to touch the surface of this right now because one of my colleagues is going to share more, but we are supporting in PLCs. We are supporting through the calibration walks. We work closely with Sustain Ed and just determine how we might support middle schools. We offer professional development, look at data. And so those are some of the ways, but we are not the only source of support. They have school leadership as another form of support and then our extension is also Sustain Ed. So, they're getting a lot of support this year.

Trustee Sanchez asked. During these visits to the classroom, do you stay from beginning to end or are you just in there for a few minutes?

Dr. Neely replied. No, sir. It's just a short amount of time. Anywhere from eight to 10 minutes is a pretty good amount of time to see what's going on in the classroom.

Trustee Fahey asked. In regard to the calibration walks, for the weekly monitoring, do you return to the same class you monitored the week before just to see if it's better or whatever, or do you go to entirely different classrooms and teachers each week or a combination of both?

Dr. Neely replied. It could be a combination of both, but really that is determined by the principal and school leadership. We're there primarily looking at trends at the school and then taking a step back; we're looking at trends across the district to make improvement around curriculum and professional learning. So really, it just really depends on our collaboration with school leadership and the principal.

President Veracruz asked. I have a question regarding on slide 29, there is a Dr. Jose Medina program. Is that the same one that we had a couple of years ago at Fairmeadows campus?

Dr. Neely replied. Yes, ma'am. I believe so.

President Veracruz commented and asked. And I think that was rated very well with excellence. So, I remember having a group of teachers that excelled with that and they got recognized. Is that the same program?

Dr. Neely replied. I don't know all the details, but Dr. Medina has visited several times, and he is the foremost expert on the dual language program.

President Veracruz commented. That's the one, yes.

Dr. Neely replied. And we are excited that he's coming. He's coming November 4th through the 6th.

Trustee R. McNeely asked. I have a question about the language. Tell me a little bit about how that's run. We have 1,226 students in it. Does each classroom do the dual language? Because I know you're teaching students in their native tongue and English. I want to know a little because I don't know a lot about it. I'd like to know how we run the Dual Language Program.

Dr. Neely replied. Yes, ma'am. I'll be glad to share a bit with you. I also want to add that in our next board meeting, we'll hear more about that too. It's on the agenda. Right now, we're in our first year with pre-K one, the rollout. So, they have content knowledge, I mean content instruction in Spanish. They have an English language block where they're learning English for just isolated amount of time. And they have bridging, which is a wonderful strategy to kind of make the connection between Spanish and English throughout the class period. I think as much as the content is in Spanish, the most important part is the strategies that we're implementing to ensure that our students can make the connection so that they become biliterate and bilingual. So, we want them to be writing, reading, speaking in Spanish as well.

Trustee R. McNeely asked. So right now, it's in K-1 and it'll probably go to second grade and go up like-

Dr. Neely replied. Yes, ma'am. It will go up every year until fifth grade.

Dr. Goree added. I do think it's a natural spot too to really brag about our principals and our HR team. We're excited. For the first time in a long time, we are fully staffed at our elementary schools with our bilingual teachers. So really excited to have those certified teachers in front of our bilingual learners.

Trustee Culton asked. I have a question that's not really related to students, but I just wonder if the district offers some type of classes for parents to learn English.

Dr. Neely replied. I don't know if we do. I'm going to turn around and... Not currently, but Trustee Culton, what we do offer is we do offer training and professional learning so that our parents can learn how to support their students. We just did a math academy last week in Spanish and in English. So, while we don't have those classes, we are looking for ways to support our parents.

Trustee Culton asked. So, you had a math camp for parents?

Dr. Neely replied. It was just a day math academy where they could come and learn about strategies. It was English and in Spanish. It was wonderful.

Trustee Culton commented. Oh, that's wonderful. That's great. Thank you.

Dr. Goree added. Ms. Hernandez will come now. And one thing I'll specify is that Dr. Neely is over teaching and learning, which is really everything dealing with curriculum and instruction. Ms. Hernandez and Dr. Wyatt are on the school leadership side, and they deal with direct leadership of principals. Ms. Hernandez.

Ms. Hernandez added to the presentation. Good afternoon. Good evening. It's my absolute pleasure to speak about Key Action Two. Key Action Two is improving instructional quality by requiring and training on a focus set of non-negotiable research-based strategies that yield the highest academic gains. D'ville created non-negotiable research practices. These are our four categories that I'm going to speak to tonight. We have structured conversation strategies which go across all subjects, and those are our QSSSA that Dr. Neely spoke about. Our talk, read, talk, write. Our engagement strategies will go across all subjects; it's our interactive notebooks and our whiteboards. And then we have our match strategies and our reading strategies. I'm going to go deeper into each one of these, but they really fall in these four categories. When you talked about measurement earlier about what we are measuring, how are we measuring it? These are the boxes and I guess you can say that we're measuring, so we don't want to be everywhere. We want to be strategic. What are we looking for in those walks specifically, and then how are we measuring those pieces within the instruction?

And one of our challenges in our district is consistency that we've been doing well on the last year. It's what helped us get that data across the schools. So, what I want to also note is that we're not just doing it on one campus. It's not just school improvement campuses. It's across all 17 campuses. So, you'll see these four components in every campus that you walk across our district because we want to shoot for consistency no matter where our children go, that they're getting the same level of tier one instruction.

Our first one that we'll talk about tonight is our structured conversation. Structured conversation is an expectation across all content areas. These two strategies help us work with our students with thinking, speaking and processing, not

just simply listening to the teachers, but really for our teachers to take a second and allow kids to have that cognitive load. Dr. Neely talked earlier about who's doing the lifting. Is it the teacher or the kid? So, when you walk in the classroom and you see the teacher talking and talking and for 45 minutes, they're still talking, that probably means the teacher's doing the work. We're trying to get to where the students are being able to articulate what they're learning at the level they need to learn. So, we're asking our teachers to stop twice at least in their lesson. Stop, turn and talk, do an engagement activity that creates the opportunity for students to talk about what they're learning to their colleagues.

We want them to stop. We want them to jot notes. Then we want them to talk about it. We want them to have some debate and healthy discussion. And then we want that teacher walking around the classroom hearing, doing aggressive notes. Has this kid got it? Does this kid get it? And then that's how we're kind of monitoring that. So, we want kids to slow it down. We want teachers to do not less of the talking but let kids do a little bit more so we can see what they understand and what they're struggling with. And then that way we can go in and say, okay, so they did a turn and talk on a math problem, and we saw eight of the 20 kids didn't get it. We might stop and do a reteach at that moment. So that gives us the ability to check in the moment the work we're asking teachers to do.

Does that make sense? We don't want them to go a whole 45 minutes and then not know what the kids know. So, when you're asking for some of those monitoring datas, both deputy chiefs along with teaching and learning, we're building in those checking for understandings in the moment. The biggest gains we had last year were in the moment coaching, was in the classroom after the walk. We might have a walk on board, and we might see something that needs immediate attention. What we're going to do as deputy chiefs is whisper to the principal, "Hey principal, you might want to ask them to do a talk, or read write, and talk." So, we're going to whisper that and then they're going to go and then they have that relationship and they're going to lead the instruction, not the deputy chief. Our job is to coach principals, principal's job is to coach teachers, and that's just how we do it in Duncanville.

So, I just kind of wanted to stamp. Those are the two main ones that we do around structured conversations and that's how we monitor them, right? We have an aggressive monitoring sheet where teachers have, let's say they have their 24 kids. I'm doing my turn and talking. I built it twice into the lesson and then I'm tracking that data. So, then I can have a conversation with the principal later, "Tell me about that data. How's it working? When did you spiral?" The kids didn't get it and we saw the teacher go back and we saw the teacher reteach in the moment, not three lessons down the road, not two hours later when we had the conversation. Right there and then. And that's where we got the biggest gains last year. That's how the schools were able to come from an F to a B or a C because principals were coaching in the moment with their teacher. But more importantly, they were building relationships.

We left, we had a walk last week with the superintendents who came down and the principals were asking, "Ms. Hernandez, where's our note cards? Where's our brag cards? We want to know what we did well and what we could work on." And so, I was texting them, I was texting the principals, "Hey, these are some note cards. Please make sure you give it back to your teachers." They're craving that feedback. I think we made a pivoted change this year where last year it was uncomfortable because we had to do some hard work, but this year they're asking for that feedback and we're giving it in a way that builds relationships. We're giving it in a way that's making true impact in the classrooms.

Our next one is engagement strategies. Looks a little bit different, right? So, we're asking for two things of principals. We're asking for interactive notebooks across campuses. They're K through eight. Now high school varies a little bit because there's a lot of digital learning and sometimes, they have digital notebooks and they do a couple of different things differently. You know how high school kids are. But K through eight, every child has an interactive notebook three through eight. And then the littles, K through two, have two types of notebooks. They do a diction notebook and then they do a content notebook because littles must do all those dip thongs, all the language building.

So, we're asking teachers to think through that first layer of instruction. So those first 15 minutes when they get up and they're doing that direct teach, what are kids writing? What do they have to do to understand? What happens when we release them to go independently? What are we asking them to do? And do they have a good model? Did they write their notes? I promise you, if I collect everybody's notes in here and ask them what they learned, I'm going to decide whether they took the notes or not. We are hoping as your executive leaders, we're also jotting down your questions and we're thinking about those questions so that at the end you get the answers you need. So, I did some notetaking while y'all are asking questions. That's what we're asking kids to do, to teachers to model the lifelong lesson of notetaking because they're going to get that every day in their life, every piece, facet of jobs. They're going to have to take information, dissect that information and then deliver or act upon the information.

That's one of the big keys and it's been tremendous work. Our second piece is whiteboards. So, making sure that we are checking for understanding a real quick way. If you have ever been in a classroom with 30 kids, you need a quick, fast way to check for understanding. So really quick, write your answer down. Ready, set, hold it up. Do they get it or they don't? That's going to tell us, do I need to stop and reteach? Because if everyone holds up the board and if I just told you, "Hey, what are the two strategies that I just showed you right now?" If all y'all could not give me interactive notebooks and whiteboards, Ms. Hernandez better go back and do a reteach in the moment. So that's that engagement strategy.

Our next is math and reading. So, math we're doing read, draw, write and APS check. This is just a way to check our work by doing independent practice. So, we've taught good instruction, hopefully. We released our kids to go 15, 20 minutes. It may vary, right? Middle school has 70 minutes and we're asking them to go produce something. But then we want them to think through the answer choices before they go pick on star answer B, can they defend that answer? But more importantly, can they think critically? Can they respond critically? Can they take a piece of information and justify the answer? So that's what we're doing in a math class. Those are two strategies. And teaching and learning does a better job than we do because we do the coach in a moment. They track what percentage when they walk into our classroom and they let me and Dr. Wyatt know, "Hey, 80% of your teachers, we saw this, 20% didn't." And then that's feedback for us, right? So, then we'll go back and do some coaching.

The next strategy is our reading strategies, P.A.C.E. is something we introduced last year. School leadership worked with teaching and learning, and we sat in a room and said, "What do kids really need to know? What do they need to do before they read something, while they're reading something and after they're reading something?" Real simple. We gave them an easy strategy that they can take home to their parents that they can use in class, and it uses across, it doesn't matter if you're teaching reading, math, science or social studies. What are you doing before you touch the text? What do you do while you're engaging in the text? What do you do after you read it? Real simple.

And then with our LIFT grant, we must do RBIS, which are research based instructional strategies. And basically, all the strategies we're talking about are embedded. It's a long, long research base, but basically it says kids need to think, kids need to write, kids need to respond, kids need to engage. And that's what we're doing. So those are our non-negotiables.

You asked about professional development. You asked about how do we track things? We do that well in the school leadership office along with our teaching and learning, along with our partner, our Sustain Ed partner, great partner. They track data for us. We have 67 professional developments for elementary and 73 for middle school. What I will note is that last year we had a few middle school trainings and what we did better based on the learning, we added quite a few more middle school strategies.

The middle schools are there every night with the elementary, their Thursday's every two weeks. Science is on Wednesday every two weeks. And we're unpacking strategies. We're very strategic, working with teaching and learning and making sure these are the areas we see. We got the data. This is what we need to go fix. This is what we need to unpack. Let's unpack inequalities. Our data came back; it wasn't on target. So, we worked with Dr. Neely and her team and we're going to reteach that. We're going to reteach it to adults so they can reteach it to kids. We're tracking our data and then we also have principals take surveys because everybody needs a voice. So, if we need to move differently, our principals are giving school leadership feedback.

We're also getting teachers' impact. The biggest question we ask our teachers, did you take away something today? Did we give you something that you can use in the classroom and then when are you going to use it? And so that feedback's important because it helps us inform our practice, decide if we need to go deeper if they feel like they have it. "Hey, I didn't get it." Or "I got this, but I really need this too. Can you add this?" And then we look at that and we update our training. So, there's a lot of points when we're looking through data and getting feedback.

And then I just kind of put out our PDs calendar. This is our leaders instructional capacity. We are continuing to work in this area. Last year you saw a lot of work with school improvement, but not just school improvement, across the district. When I came here last year and presented to you our plan, we did it for all campuses. We're continuing that work because we are one team, one family. Everybody's at the table. This is the PD. We're working not just on instructional strategies, but we're talking about how do you do hallway talk? How do you look at data? Where are your fall conferences? So basically, just everything that we did last year with school improvement, we've expanded it with all principals.

And then next we also, this is our instructional planning that we're doing. You see the principals there doing interactive notebooks themselves because if we're asking kids to do it, we want to first what? Model with our adults. We want to make sure our adults have the concepts nailed down so when they're sitting in front of teachers, we can do that well. And so, we have those PDs. They're throughout twice a month and various days.

Finally, I'll leave you with this thought. The work is not about adding more. This work is about getting good at the right things. It is about getting good at the right things. We don't have 20 things we're doing in D'ville. We have four major buckets of strategies. We're coaching those every day. We're establishing a clear system, a clear standard. Doesn't matter if you're at Daniel Elementary, Hastings Elementary, Fairmeadows, you're going to see the same instructional standards across. We're going to train on our instructional strategies. We're going to coach our teachers, our principals, and our instructional coaches along the way because we value our people and we're going to make sure that there's consistency in every classroom. It'd be my pleasure to answer any questions for you.

Trustee Fahey commented. It's just a shame you can't get more excited about it.

Ms. Hernandez replied. I get to wake up and do what I love every day, guys. I really do.

President Veracruz commented and asked. I have a thought. When I was in the field, when I was teaching, I remember the five E's. Does anybody remember the five E's out there? See a lot of the heads shaking. And so now on slide 40, you're saying you're doing a QSSA. It sounds like that type of assessment. And when I was in the field and teaching, I taught my fourth graders how to do Cornell notetaking. Does anybody remember that? And so, this sounds fire to me and my heart is going, yes. Because as I taught at the school that I was teaching at that time, I was trying to tell the teachers we need to do this. And it sounds so much like hands-on. And principals, can you see that happening? It sounds so much like hands-on because one, you get them writing, because you said something earlier, I don't know who it was, they learn differently. Every student learns differently. That is so true because once upon a time we didn't know if students learned differently. Everybody was taught to learn the one way back in my time in being in the education school system. But now we're having to learn and adapt to how every student learns differently. And they may take away from this type of strategy, the strategic planning of all this assessment, something they can take away. Same thing for the teachers. And so, I applaud this very much. Thank you, principals, for doing this.

Ms. Hernandez replied. Thank you. And to your point, we love Cornell notes. It is part of our interactive notebooks. And then we do the engage, the five E's, so in our science classrooms. So that has not changed. We do that. And that has not changed.

President Veracruz commented. I did something right. Thank you.

Ms. Hernandez replied. Foundation is foundation. We're getting back to it. Oh, I apologize. I got so excited about my work. Let me introduce my esteemed colleague, Dr. Wyatt, my better half. Come on up, Dr. Wyatt.

Dr. April Wyatt added to the presentation. Greetings, everyone. Just know I had the opportunity to spend two evenings with her this past weekend with that level of excitement. And believe me, it is contagious.

I will now present key action three and show how we connect district lesson plans to teacher preparation to ensure we support teachers in delivering the instruction students need for increased student achievement results. Key action three is to develop, adopt, and monitor scripted lesson plans for math and reading, pre-K through eighth grade for all low-performing campuses and novice teachers to ensure rigor, relevance and alignment. This action establishes a common instructional foundation. It also gives us a clear responsibility to support teachers in using that foundation effectively. The following slides will show you how that work moves from the lesson plan into the classroom.

Why does this action matter? This action responds to two important needs in our district. 25% of our teachers are in the first three years of their careers and we have five low-performing campuses with a D or F rating. Teachers who are developing their practice need clear guidance on what to teach and how to prepare. Students on campuses with the greatest academic needs need consistency across to access rigorous grade-level instruction. This key action addresses both needs by providing a strong instructional starting point and the support to put into practice. Now I must say, I must

go off script for just a second. It's not just our zero to three years' experience or novice teachers. Everyone is doing this. Everyone is ensuring that they are doing something very essential called internalization. And I'll speak to that in just a second.

The impact of this key action is consistent lessons, stronger instruction and better student outcomes. District lesson plans establish a common foundation for instruction. They identify the grade-level content students need to learn and provide a clear sequence for teaching it. Now for our novice teachers, that structure supports sound instructional decisions. For campus leaders it establishes a shared expectation that they can support and monitor. Reaching those outcomes requires us to examine how teachers prepare, how they deliver the lesson, and what students demonstrate during the lesson. The district lesson plans help ensure the following. Students learn the right content at the right level. Teachers have quality materials to use; new teachers receive additional structure and support. And number four, instruction is consistent across classroom and to echo across campuses.

Now I'd like to present the Duncanville ISD-approved instructional materials for the core curriculum for 2026-2027. To echo what Dr. Neely said, we do use high-quality instructional materials, and you will see that term HQIM as it covers the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, which uses research-based instructional strategies and includes supports for students and teachers. The Texas Education Agency supports the state review process, and the State Board of Education has the final approval authority. At that time, local school districts make adoption decisions based on their needs. These resources provide the foundation teachers study as they prepare to teach. As you can see at the elementary level, Bluebonnet Learning provides the foundation for kindergarten through fifth grade reading and mathematics. Lowman serves as our core social studies resource and Savvas provides our science materials. At the middle school level, our approved materials include HMH, Intro to Literature for Reading and Language Arts, and Savvas's Envision Math for Mathematics. The district also identifies core resources for social studies and science. Across grade levels, these materials provide a shared foundation for lesson preparation and delivery.

In Duncanville ISD, it is essential that teachers take ownership of the lessons they deliver to our students. The ownership begins with understanding the lessons before we teach it. We call this process internalization. Now, let's think about this. Think about a basketball team preparing for a game. The coach provides the playbook, our core curriculum, but players must study each play, understand their role, and know how to respond when the defense changes. Teachers need the same understanding before delivering a lesson. Our approved materials provide the playbook. Internalization is when teachers study the lesson, work through the task and anticipate where students may struggle.

As you can see, I've included an example here that shows that level of preparation. The teacher has completed the mathematics and added notes to guide questions and student support. So, for example, they're working through it and... "Gosh, I'm a little confused. Wow, that student might be confused too. Let me write that down. Let me..." So, they are working through and also producing exemplars so they will know when students get confused and want to provide opportunities for strategies to do QSSSA.

President Veracruz asked. Excuse me, is that teacher's notes right there?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Yes, ma'am.

Trustee P. McNeely asked. You're doing it with fidelity, right?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Yes, sir.

Dr. Goree commented. Keep it simple, coach.

Dr. Wyatt continued. In addition to them doing it with fidelity, the teacher has worked through mathematics and added notes about questions, vocabulary and areas where students may need support. I also want to add; teachers aren't just coming to meetings to do this. They come with the work done so they will have the opportunity to sit down with their colleagues. "Were you confused on that one? I know I surely was. Hey, let's talk about this." And I'm going to speak to those meetings here in just a second.

The annotations make the teacher's thinking visible. A prepared teacher understands the purpose of the task, what a strong student response should include, and how to respond when students show confusion. This preparation helps make the teacher make informed decisions during instruction. Before teaching, teachers do the following. They complete the lesson task and identify what strong student work should look like. They plan the pacing for each part of the lesson. They identify the most important learning students must understand. They also anticipate student responses, including common mistakes and areas where students may struggle. They also plan when and how to check for understanding throughout the lesson.

Now, I must speak about your educational experience. Remember when they would say don't talk any longer than how old a student is? If you talk for 10 minutes and you have first graders, you've talked too much. They have not had an opportunity to do some form of QSSSA. That's very important how we intentionally do number five, we plan on when we check for understanding. Number six, select strategies that actively engage students in learning, our core four. And number seven, identify supports and adjustments to ensure all students can access the lesson.

Teachers receive support through professional learning communities where they prepare alongside colleagues and strengthen their understanding of upcoming instruction. This collaboration includes content teachers, campus administrators, instructional coaches, special education teachers, and our instructional partners Sustain Ed. Dedicated time each week allows teams to study grade-level expectations, examine the lesson task and plan support for students who need it. The purpose is to strengthen each teacher's ability to deliver the lesson successfully. The next slide will show you how the preparation moves from understanding the full unit to studying a specific lesson and practicing its delivery.

So, unit module internalization is like, "Okay, you all, we are about to study a unit for the next 13 days. Let's get an idea of what it's about, why it's important, what are the skills that we need to ensure students need to master?" Once teachers get an understanding, it then moves to the lesson internalization. "All right, now let's plan out what we are doing each day." And one of my favorite forms of PLC to observe is lesson rehearsal PLC. That's where the teachers get to pretend like their kids. "Miss, I don't understand." "Oh, boy. Okay. Let me get ready for that one." Teachers use the lesson rehearsal protocol to practice high-leverage instructional moves, receive feedback from their colleagues and refine delivery on a meaningful part of a lesson before classroom implementation.

As we look at monitoring, we look at the scorecard that's indicated in the strategic plan, the percentage of our teachers adhering to the scripted curriculum based on, again, the quarterly calibration walks. Our action implementation consists of monitoring to see how the teachers use the lesson plans and what the students are learning. Teachers upload their lesson internalization into a Google folder shown here. This allows campus leaders to review their preparation before instruction and follow up on areas where teachers need support. Campus leadership conducts at least five walkthroughs a week. The walkthrough form that you see here in the middle, it helps leaders record what they see and hear in the classroom. This is a full circle moment to what Ms. Hernandez spoke to because for example, one of the areas for instructional delivery is frequent practice and engagement. And what does it speak to? QSSSA, talk, read, talk, write, whiteboards, interactive notebooks.

Leaders then use a guide. So, there's a structured language. Any one of you all can go and give feedback. You can just look at the guide for next action steps to choose a specific teaching practice to strengthen. This helps them give clear feedback, so the teachers know what to do next. As you can see, during this coaching cycle, leaders observe, identify an action step, provide feedback and help the teachers practice. They then return to check whether the teacher applied the feedback and what support is still needed. Now I must tell you, it's not just the coaching cycle closed. We close the coaching cycle. It's now time to see. Let's see the next move for the play and let's start another one. It is continuous feedback for our educators. School leadership supports principals in using these tools and classroom evidence to guide their question. Lastly, I'd like to add furthermore, the scorecard, excuse me, measures from the strategic plan what we will track, the percentage of teachers following the scripted curriculum.

We spoke about calibration walks, but I also have that indicated here. As a result, this occurs through quarterly calibration walks for all 17 of our campuses. During this walk, district and campus leaders observe together and use shared expectations to review instruction and they use the same form that the principals use throughout the week to provide feedback. This process connects what teachers prepare, what leaders observe, and the support teachers receive through the commitments. So, you know how we talked about going in the hallway, we give feedback? One of my favorite parts of the calibration walk is that we all come back together at the very end and there is immediate feedback

from the teaching and learning department. I've seen great reflection from the principal that say, "I noticed they're not waiting for someone to tell them. They automatically start making commitments and so do the teaching and learning team." Through the teaching and learning department, commitments are tracked and we have the opportunity that when we go back to the campus, we review the commitments and make sure that they're met. That is an amazing accountability structure.

Well, this concludes our overview of key action three. Before I bring up Dr. Nix, our chief academic officer who will share key action number four, what questions do you have?

Trustee R. McNeely commented and asked. All of this is overwhelming. I can't imagine all of this, but I'm sitting here trying to think, okay, you've gone through, you've got your whiteboards, you're checking for understanding, you're doing all this and you realize, I'm assuming that everybody does the same lesson plan and you've practiced it in PLC and you're doing all that. But in your classroom, you've done everything as a teacher like you think and you realize your kids aren't getting it. They aren't getting it. How do you handle that? I mean, because then the next day, you're supposed to... How are you reaching those kids that... What do you do for those that aren't getting that day's lesson? How do you go back and reteach and stuff?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Thank you so much for asking. So, what happens is that they bring that data to the next PLC, and then that's when the instructional coach and the administrator, we bring our exit tickets. How did students do on that particular exit ticket? So, the thing is they might teach something for three days and then they'll say, "For the next PLC, we need you to bring the exit ticket." And as you say, "I did everything. What did I do?" And then that's when we start looking at individual students and we do what we call student work analysis. We determine, "Did the student miss a step or did they just not understand the actual instruction or the curriculum?" That's when the principal or the instructional leader or the leader who's leading the PLC starts talking about the different strategies and the reteach. And that is where the value of the PLC comes from because you're not alone on an island, "I taught it like this." And then that's when your colleagues say, "Have you tried this?" Maybe you should do this." And what is also a beautiful structure on all of our campuses is that any administrator will be able to go in at any time to see when there is a focused reteach time and say, "Okay, I'm going to give you feedback, teacher, on if what you tried, is it working or is it not working?" And I must tell you; we keep that cycle repeatedly until we find something that does.

Trustee R. McNeely commented. Because I'm thinking of those approaches' kids, I guess those kids that are just there, that have moved in and they don't have the skills and stuff. I want them to move up and so do y'all.

Dr. Wyatt replied. Thank you for saying that. And I saw a beautiful observation at a middle school today. Come to my table. I'm like, "Middle school, we're doing small group instruction." Because once the independent practice started, the teacher was in the power zone and she was looking. She said, "Okay, all right baby, you come on, come on over here with me. You come on over here with me and explain that at that time." So, when I tell y'all it is a great experience to see how committed our teachers are to ensuring that they're getting it because like I said, with striving to be or better, knowing every student's data that is driving them to say, "We want you to win student achievement." Thank you.

Trustee Fahey asked. When do our teachers meet and collaborate and rehearse? Do they do it once a week or every morning? Is there a specified time in their schedules? I don't know how they do it all. When do they do this?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Well, they have an opportunity to meet once a week. So, for example, I was at a campus today and well, twice a week at our middle school campuses and then sometimes twice a week at elementary campuses. There are sometimes where they meet once a week, but I will tell you a different layer that they add. You have some teams who huddle every morning. "Hey, how'd that lesson go yesterday?" "I'm going to tell you it didn't go too well for me." "Hey, what are we going to try?" So, it's just a natural way, but that formal time that we have is at least once a week.

Trustee Fahey asked. A formal time?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Yes, ma'am.

Dr. Goree added. And that's our PLC time, which is our professional learning community. And if you go into those PLCs, I know we've referenced several tonight, it is extremely structured. There is an agenda. There is an opportunity just based on what the topic is for those teachers to go through those rehearsals and to go through all those things that they must do to ensure that their students are successful.

One thing I want to agree with Dr. Wyatt too is that the fun thing about a PLC is that you're not doing this in isolation. And one thing, what I'm really excited about as we see PLCs this year, is that we are growing from having the same curriculum. We're growing in our PLC because we've done this before. So, we're really seeing some stronger PLCs.

One thing to I'll add, and someone asked, I think it was Trustee Culton asked about middle schools. One thing that we did not have in our middle schools last year was a formal PLC time. It is going to be a game changer at the middle school and with the things that we're doing. And we do that twice a week. Our teachers are meeting with their middle school PLCs.

Trustee Culton commented and asked. Thank you for all that you all are doing. I mean, it's awesome work and very tiring, but you have a vision and you make it happen and you educate students. So, my question relates to when you teach a lesson and very few of the students grasp the information, so the next day, what do you do?

Dr. Wyatt replied. Thank you for asking. I just keep going back to those old school practices, a bell ringer. All right, you all, before we move on, we're going to all come together with the whole group. And the thing is that it's all about the evidence because they're analyzing the student work and they saw where they made the mistake. I've been on several campuses where they address it the next day and say, "Before we continue on," and the kids know the word misconception, "I want to address a misconception." And okay. And you see where you all, they, "Oh." But it's an immediate because we can't keep building on the learning if the student doesn't have the foundation that occurred the day before.

Trustee Culton: I understand the PLC and I'm very happy to hear that at the middle school level they meet twice a week. So, I don't have an education background, but I was wondering, are there mentors and team leaders and-

Dr. Wyatt replied. Yes, there are. I will tell you one thing though that is very impressive to me in 2026, when I was a teacher, I was a team leader, and I had to carry my team. The beautiful thing about what's happening in 2026 and what's happening in Duncanville ISD is that administrators are present. The instructional coaches are present. And we also have team leaders that do support the teachers outside of the PLC setting so they can go and serve as a mentor, do onsite coaching. And that was very important, a restructure that we had very important for our middle schools.

Trustee Pelton commented. I don't have a question, but I've never been at a point to where I've reconsidered my career. You guys make it so exciting. So, I think I need to get certified in education.

I want to say the job is well done. I don't know how Dr. Nix is going to be able to... I don't know how he... He's bringing in the tale now, but job well done for everybody.

Dr. Wyatt added. I will now introduce Dr. Nix. He will now share key action four and explain how our district instructional plans and processes support consistency across campuses.

Dr. Nix continued the presentation. President Veracruz, members of the board, and Dr. Goree, you guys have talked tonight about the work. You've talked about how hard it is. It's a lot. And I just want to take this moment. I may get in trouble for this. I will receive it because I would like to publicly acknowledge my team. And by my team, I mean the people that have presented today, they work day in and day out tirelessly. The deputy chiefs were at that building on Saturday till midnight, midnight, preparing for the principal meeting that we have tomorrow.

Dr. Neely and her team, C&I, work so tirelessly and just to stamp. When you hear things like teaching and learning, teaching and learning's job, Dr. Neely and her team, is to set the roadmap. It's to say, "This is where we're going and here's the map that we're going to follow." School leadership's job is to work with the principals to make sure they're following the roadmap.

But all that is for naught if the principals don't have the mindset, the skillset and the determination to make it happen. October is National Principals Month. And I'm going to tell you, when we talked about moving schools one letter grade, two letter grades, and coach three letter grades, I'm going to stamp this. It's literally unheard of for a campus to move from an F to a B. I don't mean to leave anyone out, but I just want you guys to acknowledge these principals are trying. These principals have the heart, they have the mind, they're working tirelessly to make sure not one of them, not one principal that's sitting here, not one. I tell you, not one principal is not coming to work giving everything they have. They've got the right mindset; they've got the right attitudes.

I'm just telling you, it is just such a pleasure to stand here working with this team. I'm going to tell you all your questions, hopefully we're answering them, but I'm going to tell you we're going to show up every day. We're going to give our best for these kids and that's what those principals are doing and their teams every single day.

Thank you for allowing me just to stamp that because it's heavy. It's heavy and they're doing a great job and we're seeing the results. I'd like to talk about the final key action as we talked about the board goals, as we talked about what we're doing. I want to talk about the fact that the final strategy is that we are developing and making sure that every school in our district, basically it boils down to their following best practice, that we develop what students are supposed to learn, that we have the resources for them to learn it, that we explain and have a process to train teachers and that it's quality. And that we give clear guidance for what that looks like and that we're using the right materials. So how do we reach our goals? By making sure that we are providing the teachers with what they need, the campuses what they need and that it is quality.

You've heard this several times and you heard it mainly from, I think it was both Ms. Hernandez and Dr. Wyatt. Guys, there are a million things that we need to do, but we cannot do a million things and we're not going to try to do a million things. We're going to focus on doing a few things well. So, everything that you've heard us talk about tonight falls into the lane of one of these three things. These are our instructional focuses as a C&I team.

Observation and feedback. How many times tonight have you heard talk about checking the work, giving feedback? Because that's a big rock of ours. Internalization and customization. Those are just big fancy words for I think Dr. Wyatt said it best. If you've got a game plan, great. But during the game, you're going to have to make some adjustments. That's the easiest way to put it. You're going to have to make some adjustments and you're going to need to know what adjustments you need to make. That's what we call customization and internalization.

All that writing that you saw in that lesson plan, because curriculums are not a silver bullet. Curriculums don't fix anything, right? Curriculums are a way for us and what to use, but we've got to get in there and determine, all right, when I get here, what's the misconception for the student going to be? What adjustment am I going to make here? And that's a process of teaching people how to do it. It's not easy, but that's what internalization is through the PLC process.

And then of course, data driven instructions. Tell you what, you guys have heard this probably till you're tired of hearing it, but we don't need to make feeling decisions. We don't need to make, I think decisions. The data must drive our decisions. When we get the data, we need to know exactly what to do with it when we get it.

So going back to, I believe Ms. Neely's question, a kid's not learning. First, how do we know they didn't learn? What data are we checking to make sure they didn't learn? Right then and there, not a week, six weeks down the road, not how do we know they didn't learn? And now as Dr. Wyatt said, what are we doing with that data immediately to address it? Whether it's in our win time, which is our intervention time, or whether it's the next day through a bell ringer or that's in a small group.

What you're looking at here is the instructional plans and processes. I want to take just a moment to highlight Dr. Goree, because when Dr. Goree got here, one of the first things he did is he said, "Listen, I need to make sure I'm involved in monitoring what's going on with these campuses and these principals and this data." So, he charged us to make sure that we have something called impact focus meetings. These impact focus meetings are designed. Last year they were designed for principals to come present to the superintendent and his team regarding what they're doing, what they're focusing on, giving high leverage areas on just updates with the data. What are your goals? What evidence do you have that you're making progress with these goals?

But in addition to that, we had some overlapping presentations because principals needed to report to me and present to me. They need to report to the deputies. They need to present to... It was just a lot. So, this year we streamlined that process so that everything is aligned. They still present, but when they're presenting to Dr. Goree, it's real high level. It

gives him an understanding of what the trends are in the district. It gives him an understanding of where support needs to be deployed. It gives him an understanding of exactly where we are in the processes. Are we using our curriculum with fidelity? Are we using our curriculum the way it's intended to be used?

And then he can deploy support the way he needs to support. But when we have our data huddles with the principals, for example, I can speak with myself, I supervise Mr. Colbert and Dr. Staatz. Of course, the deputies have theirs. And so, those one-on-one meetings. That's those meetings where we're going extremely deep into detail as to everything that impacts teaching and learning. Those are very long meetings. They're not short. They're very extensive meetings. The deputy has them as well because we need to know student by student, subgroup by subgroup, campus by campus, teacher by teacher, where the data is so that we know how to make those shifts.

So, this is an overview of what those impact focus meetings and data huddles look like. This is simply the schedule for those impact focus meetings. Once again, sitting in a room for two days with Dr. Goree and with the team, listening to high levels of what the presentations are, where the data is. That gives us an opportunity as a team to give them feedback on what we're seeing, give them feedback on how they're performing, and then for them to tell us what they need. What support do you need? Where are you lacking? What do you need from us? What commitments can we support with you? And then of course, we make those commitments and we track those commitments to make sure that we follow through to make sure they have what they need.

This is an example of a data huddle meeting for school leadership. And when we meet with the campuses, we're going deep. Everything that impacts teaching and learning, we're monitoring, whether it's attendance. Why is attendance on? Because kids can't learn if they're not in school. We want to know how you are tracking. We want to know what's working, what's not working. And if it's not working, what adjustments do we need to make?

Because we have goals for attendance and it's not enough just to teach kids. We've got to get them there. And that means that we've got to be strategic on how we work with parents, how we communicate with parents, how we work with children, how we understand what's stopping them from coming to school. Yeah, it's a lot that they're being asked to do, but they're doing it. And they're doing it with a smile and they're being creative around it. And so, we're talking about grades and looking at grades. Here's why that's important.

I know some of you have been in education and what we had was failure meetings, right? So, if you have a lot of kids that failed come meet with the principal. Well, if you don't want to meet with the principal, well you just stop failing kids, right? But that doesn't mean they're learning. So, what we do is we look at grades, that means the grades that the kids are earning in class in relation to how students are performing on those district assessments, on those benchmarks, and we're correlating to see, are they learning? Not are we just giving them grades, nor are they passing, what evidence do we have that they're learning? And those conversations we unpack with those principals and with those teachers to make sure we have a good grasp as to where kids are. And that's what you see those district common assessments that we frequently give. We are even looking at how we're observing teachers, how we're rating teachers.

One of the big challenges that we've had is we cannot continue as a district, and man, this is uncomfortable, to rate teachers extremely high when students are performing so low. We must correlate that. And so, our principals are doing a phenomenal job of embracing that, understanding what that looks like. That's part of our meetings where we're unpacking for those principals. We get deep into the data.

For our student work samples, we want to see what's working, how are we collaborating, how are kids collaborating, how are teachers collaborating, how are campuses collaborating, how are we analyzing the data? What does that look like in our PLCs? We're identifying planning and identifying. At the end of the day, we need to know what the kids are learning. We need to see evidence of it. We need to see exemplars of it. We need to unpack it. And so that's what you heard a little while ago about these student work samples.

Well, what is a student work sample? We pull what students are doing, and we look at it and we evaluate it and we have conversations with the principals about, "Look, this is what your student is writing. These are the notes that your students are taking. Here are the gaps. Why are we not capturing this? Why do we not know that this is not happening?" We've got to capture learning in time. So that's just an example of what that looks like there.

You've heard this several times. I'm going to stamp it again. We expect so much and we must expect what we inspect. And so, you've heard about the calibration walks. That's a way for us to inspect what we expect at the campus level. The deputy chiefs, Ms. Hernandez and Dr. Wyatt, 75% of their time is on campuses. They are always on campus. They are

coaching, they are supporting, they are mentoring, they are holding accountable. That's where they are. They're on campus. That's what they're doing if they're not in a meeting. And then of course you've heard about Sustain Ed, that's our third-party support. They also coach and support and provide feedback and work hand in hand with C&I and with the office of school leadership so that principals aren't hearing seven different messages, it's all aligned.

I want to share with you here; we talked about our professional development. This is an example of this summer. I know it's small. I know it's hard to see, but it's not... I mean, you can read it if you want, but the general gist here is this summer. I want you just to see the intentionality. We planned for professional development. We plan for how we're going to train teachers. We plan on how we're going to train principals. We plan what we're going to train them on.

It's funny because I was doing this in isolation, then I got with the deputies and they were giving... And it's fun, everything aligned as we were talking about how we're going to train principals, what we're going to train them on. And it was just so similar because we used the data from last year to determine, all right, this year we need to train on this sooner. We need to get ahead of this sooner. We need to plan for this. So as the deputies and as C&I are planning for support, this is just the intentionality of what it looks like to plan, to train, and then to vet that quality of professional development to make sure that we're giving the campuses what they need.

And then lastly, what you see here is an instructional model. This is just an example, but remember, this particular key action is this. And not necessarily this specific schedule, but the key action is if we want principals and teachers to be successful, we need to give them a roadmap. We need to give them something they can follow. So, for us, it's simple, right? We have schedules that need to be followed. We have lesson plans that need to be followed, customization, internalization of course, but we have lesson structures.

And so basically what you're looking at is we do not want to go into a classroom and see teachers teaching the whole time. There needs to be an I do, meaning there's direct teach. There needs to be a we do, meaning we're doing together collectively. And then there needs to be independent practice, which we call the you do.

And when we're in it, we need to see the cycle. You've heard them talk about the cycle, the instructional cycle, the teaching cycle. You talked about the 5E model, President Veracruz. This is just an example of we need to see instructional strategies like QSSSA, talk, read, talk, write. Here's when we should see them. This is what it should look like. If we're in a classroom for 10, 15 minutes, we shouldn't just see direct teach. We should see students learning and demonstrating their learning. And so, this is just an example of what that structure looks like.

Board, thank you so much for your time today. It's been a lot. It's a lot to digest, but I would like to leave you with this. My goal, my charge from Dr. Goree is, and I said this to you before, is not to have a one-off. And what I mean by that is most coaches are not interested in winning a game. They're interested in building a winning program.

And so, what we want to do is build a winning program instructionally in Duncanville. And that's a system, and that means everything that we're doing, that's why you hear the words aligned and calibrated and all this stuff, and it's not easy to do that. But a strong system creates consistency, means it's duplicatable. It aligns our work and ensures every classroom has the right plans, the right practices, and the right resources to help every student succeed. So, board, I just want to thank you. I want to thank the team, the principals, for all the work they're doing. And just would like to know if you have any questions that I can answer.

Dr. Goree added. And if I could say right before Dr. Nix's questions, I hope that what you took from tonight's presentation is that we are building a whole school system. It's no secret, our survival, our growth this year came in domain two, which was around growth.

But one thing that we know for sure, if we're going to see a sustainable system that's going to be successful for years to come, we must remain focused on domain one. And that's getting our students to those meets and master's levels. And everything you heard tonight focused on the whole classroom experience; it focused on the whole child. And it focused not just on creating those quick growth models, but creating a system where students are successful year after year after year. And that's what we're building. And I am just incredibly proud of the entire team for the efforts that we made last year, but even more excited this year. We didn't start this work in September. We started this work in June, and we have a full year where we will see everything come together with great results for children. Thank you.

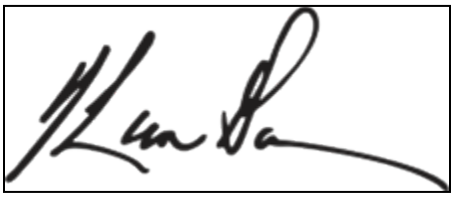
Trustee R. McNeely commented. I just want to say to the principals, thank you. I know that when I went to the convocation this year, we talked about being a family. And I can't imagine how hard your job must be every day. It

sounds like we have a lot of young teachers that are learning and there's a lot on your shoulders to work with them. But I would really like to see, and I'm saying this to the principals too, I know that people get fed up and tired and frustrated and, "Well, I'm going to go somewhere else or I'm getting out of this." Teachers are doing it all the time and stuff.

I hope that we can see some consistency in our staff because it sounds like from last year that the instructional team got together. And you are all at a different place this year than perhaps you were last year, and that's because of the consistency in what we did. I just hope we don't lose as many people and stuff. I know it's got to be so frustrating. And I hope the new teachers have support. I hope that they are because I can't imagine walking in brand new out of college. And maybe they're learning this in college, but no, I didn't learn it in college. No. I mean, even back in the day, I didn't. So, I just want to say thank you to all y'all because this is a lot.

5. **ADJOURNMENT AT 8:20 PM**

Trustee Culton made a motion to adjourn: Trustee P. McNeely seconded the motion.



Dr. T. Lamar Goree
Superintendent of Schools