Highly Effective Schools Accreditation Plan

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School Improvement Plan

Mt. Vernon Middle School

2024-2025

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation

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Mt. Vernon Middle School Profile

Mt. Vernon Middle School is located in Fortville, Indiana, and is part of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation (MVCSC). Mt. Vernon Middle School currently serves 1120 students. The building's population consists of 360 sixth graders, 391 seventh graders, and 369 8th graders. Our largest population of students is white (80.2%), 13.8% of students qualify for special education services, 0.8% qualify for services for English Learners, 14.2% are identified as gifted, and 23.9% of students are identified as economically disadvantaged (Indiana Department of Education).

Mt. Vernon Middle School is one of five schools in the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation participating in Professional Learning Communities. MVCSC and MVMS rebooted their PLC process at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. Over the past three years, MVCSC and MVMS have developed PLC teams that are focused on the three big ideas of a PLC. During collaborative team meetings, staff look at student data from formative and summative assessments and address the four essential questions of a PLC. School administrators visit PLC teams to observe PLC activities and engagement and to provide feedback. It is the belief of MVCSC and MVMS that all students can learn at high levels. This belief guides our PLC practices and is the driving force for our school's growth and improvement.

Maintenance Plan

The mission of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon Middle School is to Engage, Educate and Empower today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities. Our vision states, "Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is where parents choose to send their children, students are successful, highly qualified personnel desire to work, and the community is proud to support. We are committed to serving a diverse population in a safe, secure, and challenging learning environment where students are engaged in a rigorous, relevant, and technologically-enhanced curriculum. Student success is nurtured through diverse instructional methods enabled by partnerships fostered between students, parents, school, and community. A strategic and fiscally responsible approach ensures a sustainable, highly effective learning experience inside and outside the classroom. We respect the uniqueness of each student as we engage, educate, and empower them to seize their futures as responsible members of society." All members of the school community have worked to create an

environment where the core values and beliefs that are included within our mission and vision are brought to fruition.

In order to provide our students with a rigorous, relevant, and technology-enhanced curriculum, our staff has worked to set learning goals through developing "essential learnings" which provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all our students. The staff has also developed common formative and summative assessments for these essential learnings so that progress toward mastery of those learning targets can be measured and monitored so we can ensure that all students are progressing toward high levels of learning.

Analysis of student results data drives our work to both intervene when students have not yet mastered the targeted essential learnings and to enrich learning when they have mastered it. This data analysis also helps to guide our own professional development as we can use it to help pinpoint and identify what forms of professional development would be the most impactful for our students' learning.

In order to provide the time and opportunity for a collaborative culture and a collective responsibility for our students, MVCSC and Mt. Vernon Middle School operates on an "Early Release" schedule each Wednesday throughout the school year, with the exception of the first and last Wednesday of the school year. Each MVCSC school dismisses students 45 minutes early. After dismissal, teachers meet with their Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams and engage in the activities of a PLC. Each PLC's work is guided by what we term an "Instructional Planning Sheet" which provides a framework for the teams to address each of the four essential questions of the PLC process. This includes collaborative teams selecting essential learning to focus upon and evaluating the curriculum to ensure that it will fully address that given learning target, utilizing common formative assessments to measure the students' learning, reviewing and analyzing achievement data of students from assessments, determining next steps for teaching and learning based on the data, and/or identifying the most effective and powerful instructional practices. By working in this collaborative manner, PLC teams are able to work together to ensure that ALL our students are able to progress toward mastery and high levels of achievement.

Teachers at each grade level and content area have identified essential learning targets for content areas. They have also connected those essential learning targets to prioritized state standards. Collaborative team members work to track progress on developed common formative assessments and common summative assessments. These PLC teams use one-stop data sheets as a planning tool and an assessment data/progress monitoring tool. The PLC teams use the data to determine which students have mastered the essential learning targets,

need additional instruction and interventions, or need enrichment activities. Teachers also use the assessment data to determine if adjustments need to be made to their instructional strategies and practices. When students are identified as needing additional support, the PLC team establishes research-based interventions to implement at the Tier II level. This could include working with a math or reading specialist to provide differentiated instruction outside of the core math and reading instruction. Students receiving interventions are reassessed and their progress is monitored to determine if interventions have been effective in helping students master learning targets. Mt. Vernon Middle School will maintain performance in this area by continuing to designate 45 minutes weekly for PLC team meeting time. Additionally, school administrators will continue to monitor the work of the teams and provide instructional support to teachers to ensure that all students achieve at high levels.

HRS Level 1: A Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture

To ensure that we maintain a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture at MVCSC and Mt. Vernon Middle School, we have created leadership teams. Leadership team members are made up of one teacher from each grade level, one special education teacher/special area teacher, and the building-level administration. Leadership teams meet monthly, and as needed, to support and communicate various district and school-based initiatives. After each of these meetings, the team members meet with their grade level team to ensure all have a voice in the decision-making process. The leadership team is asked to provide feedback to the building administration to ensure supportive and collaborative decisions are made. Oftentimes, consensus is used to make decisions. When decisions are made, the problem/need is identified, and guiding principles are used when the team makes a declaration. The leadership team also meets to review data, including surveys, behavior data, and school improvement goals.

The leadership team has been instrumental to the climate and culture at MVCSC and Mt. Vernon Middle School. This team has created a framework and opportunity to ensure all voices are heard and valued. The leadership team at Mt. Vernon Middle School has also taken the lead during PLC time each Wednesday. Team leaders facilitate the discussion, ensuring the team is following the norms they created as well as the agenda that guides their PLC time.

In addition to the leadership team, collaborative teams regularly meet to discuss common issues regarding curriculum, assessment, instruction, and the achievement of all students. Teams meet in Professional Learning Communities weekly on Wednesdays for 45 minutes. During this time each team is engaged in the activities of a PLC. They review common formative assessments, discuss instructional practices that worked, and work to ensure that all

students are learning at high levels. Pre, post, and post-post assessment data is recorded for all essential learnings (ELs) that are cycled by the collaborative team. If teams are not cycling an EL, the post-assessment data is still recorded to track progress toward mastery of ELs.

District-wide collaborative teams met over the summer to review proficiency scales and success criteria and to update CFAs to align with the recently adjusted state standards. During this meeting, teams reviewed and scaled their essential learnings and built common formative assessments. The district-wide collaborative teams will meet at least two additional times throughout the school year to continue this work.

As mentioned above, our PLC teams use Instructional Planning Sheets (also referred to as data sheets), a progress monitoring tracking tool, to evaluate assessment data. The PLC teams use the data to determine which students have mastered the essential learning targets, need additional instruction and interventions, or need enrichment activities. Teachers also use the assessment data to determine if adjustments need to be made to their instructional strategies and practices. These data sheets are shared with key stakeholders in each building. For example, the special education team, specialists, and administration have access to all Instructional Planning Sheets, allowing those staff members to monitor progress, provide feedback, and analyze progress.

HRS Level 2: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom

We will continue to build our collective understanding of The New Art and Science of Teaching (NASoT) framework. The goal is to create an instructional model using these research-based strategies. In July 2021, the newly hired specialists in the district spent a full day learning about this framework. We also trained all administrators and some teacher-leaders on the NASoT framework in the fall of 2021.

MVCSC currently employs the RISE Rubric for teacher evaluation and utilizes Standards for Success as the vehicle to curate observations and evaluations. As part of our evaluation process, teachers receive short "walkthrough" observations from their evaluators throughout the year. MVCSC implements a walkthrough model that is directly related to the ten design areas in The New Art and Science of Teaching. Additionally, a crosswalk between the NASoT and the RISE Rubric has been identified. This rubric, where only practices that are observed are noted, serves as an instructional snapshot of what we hope to see in the classroom. This model will continue to be used to gather data on instructional practices and to target professional development for faculty. A district-level committee is currently reviewing our teacher evaluation rubric to potentially further align NASoT and our teacher evaluation.

MVCSC Classroom Walkthrough Model

Ten Design Areas	
✔ YES	INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE
1. Clear Learning Goals	
	- Learning objectives are clearly stated and visible to students.
	- Students demonstrate understanding of the learning goals for the lesson.
2. Engagement Strategies	
	- Students actively participate in the lesson.
	- Engagement strategies promote student involvement.
3. Checking for Understanding	
	- The teacher checks for understanding at various points throughout the lesson.
	- Students respond to the teacher's use of assessment related to class progress toward learning goals.
4. Feedback and Support	
	- The teacher provides timely and specific feedback to students.
	- Students receive support or guidance when encountering difficulties.
5. Teacher-Student Interactions	
	- Teacher-student interactions demonstrate mutual respect and support.
6. Differentiated Instruction	
	- Instructional strategies are tailored to meet individual student needs.
	- The teacher provides additional support or challenges based on students' abilities.
7. Instructional Materials	
	- Instructional materials are aligned with the learning objective and student needs.
	- The teacher effectively utilizes technology or instructional resources to enhance instruction.
8. Student Collaboration	
	- Students are engaged in collaborative learning activities.
	- Students work together effectively to achieve learning goals.
9. Classroom Management	
	- Disruptive behavior that impedes learning is addressed.
	- Clear expectations and routines are established.
10. Technology Usage	
	- Technology is being used to enhance student learning
	- Technology use is balanced for active engagement

To orchestrate growth in teaching practices at the classroom level, the walkthrough tool (Instructional Snapshot) will also be utilized as a framework for instructional rounds. The Instructional Snapshot approach to instructional rounds is different from the problem-based approach touted by Elizabeth City, but school leadership teams have chosen to focus on one

area of the NASoT Snapshot that is related to their individual school improvement plan during a given school year. In addition, as noted above, teachers have been provided professional development, via webinars with Marzano, to support the NASoT launch. Ongoing professional development needs will be identified as the PLC cycle shines a light on opportunities where growth is needed. For example, previous data support a need for increased support in core math and language arts instruction at the middle school level. For the past couple of years, Mt. Vernon Middle School has focused on providing reteaching to students through our Success period and through our GOAL classes, taught by our specialists, and through our resource classes, taught by our special education teachers.

MVCSC has spent a few years launching Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) at the elementary and middle school levels. This training supports the relationships and culture in the school, tying directly to the context category and relationships design question in the NASoT framework.

Rounding Process

School leadership teams will identify at least two times during the school year when all teachers will conduct instructional rounds. Small teams of teachers will visit a set number of classrooms or view pre-recorded lessons with the goal to observe behaviors related to the NASoT Snapshot. Post observation(s), the small teams will discuss what they saw during their approximately 10-minute visit. As the leader of the team (administration or specialists) facilitates the debriefing conversation, team members (teachers) will undoubtedly seek to understand how an observed colleague designed strategies to align with one or more of the elements from NASoT. As a resource, each faculty member will be provided with their own copy of The Handbook for the New Art and Science of Teaching.

Data Reviews and Growth

We have implemented the NASoT instructional strategies as a means of instructional improvement. Cumulative data from rounds and walkthroughs by administrators have been curated for faculty to track and to help see where their collective instructional strengths lie. Opportunities to dive deeper into the 43 elements within the ten design questions as well as the associated instructional strategies will be ongoing during regular staff meetings and building newsletters throughout the year. Our building administrators will use the data gathered through walkthroughs and instructional rounds to provide brief, targeted PD sessions as a part of regular faculty meetings to address areas of growth. For example, English and math teachers are

participating in a series of professional development sessions to align our curriculum to better prepare students for Indiana transitions to using the SAT as the state exam. Finally, our schools will continue to seek to provide staff members with various professional development sessions related to creating more effective assessments which will in turn produce more high-quality data in order to drive instructional decisions.

HRS Level 3: A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon Middle School has developed a system for creating our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. We have a committee of teachers representing grade levels, teaching teams, and schools who volunteer to be a part of our Curriculum Collaborators committee. This committee's work started by identifying essential standards deemed by teachers to be critical for students to learn from each content area and grade level. These essential standards we termed "essential learnings" or ELs and these ELs have resulted in the design of our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. The curriculum collaborator committee categorized ELs by nine-week quarter views and has curated our curriculum on our curriculum website that all staff can access. The ELs for each subject are broken down into quarter views to ensure teachers can teach the intended curriculum in the allotted time during the school year. Curriculum Collaborator committee members continue to meet periodically to unpack standards and adjust ELs as necessary. The middle school curriculum collaborators have continued to meet to create proficiency scales or success criteria for each of our ELs and to begin developing common formative assessments for each EL.

Our individual school PLC teams collect student data on each of their grade level and content area ELs to determine if all students are learning. PLC teams use this data to create SMART goals to inform instruction and develop interventions for students who need remediation to meet proficiency. PLC teams reflect and celebrate student success and achievement of SMART goals. They acknowledge and note instructional practices that worked and what they want to do similarly or differently in the future. Our district has been exploring the possibility of creating a district wide data dashboard to display and monitor school and grade level progress toward meeting our vision that all students will learn at high levels. As teams choose ELs to cycle, they will use post assessment data to target reteaching throughout the year. Teachers will provide reteaching on the ELs they cycle and reassess students for proficiency.

Mt. Vernon Middle School has a tiered system for instruction to ensure all students learn at high levels. All four levels of instruction are built into the daily master schedule and have designated times throughout the school day. Below is a sample schedule:

Sample Schedule for Students receiving Tier I, II, and III		
Period 1	Success Period	Tier I Flexible Grouping
Period 2	English/Language Arts	Tier I
Period 3	Science	Tier I
Period 4	Math	Tier I
Period 5	Social Studies	Tier I
Period 6	United Arts Elective Course	
Period 7	GOAL Math and/or ELA (tier II) or Resource Support (tier III)	Tier II Tier III

   Tier I instruction is the uninterrupted high-quality classroom instruction that all students receive. This core instruction is standards-based, and differentiated, and offers a variety of assessments that are used to monitor student progress toward mastery as well as guide instruction. Tier II instruction is supplemental instruction that is provided to students whose data shows a need for more intense instruction. Students in Tier II are given additional time to practice the strategies and skills with content specialists. Instruction in Flexible Groups is the differentiated instruction that students receive based on their individual learning needs or paths. Some students receive enrichment or an extension of learning while others receive remediation. Tier II instruction is a separate time for each team of teachers to provide individualized remediation for identified students. There are times when students need more intensive Tier III instruction. Tier III is a wrap-around approach to provide identified students with the most intensive instructional support. Tier III instruction is in addition to the Tier I and Tier II supports in place and can occur at a greater frequency and/or a longer duration than Tier II.

   All buildings have hired two additional faculty members to serve as specialists. One was to focus on reading and one on math. These specialists work with grade-level teams and their students to provide targeted Tier II instruction based on students' needs of learning the established ELs. Students who do not respond to Tier I through Tier II instruction will be referred for Tier III support and/or intensified special education services which will provide an array of individualized instruction for identified students. Tier III support will be given outside of

Tier I and Tier II time. This support will be provided by trained specialists and students will be progress monitored to track the effectiveness of the intervention.

Mt. Vernon Middle School will review data during quarterly meetings to identify at-risk students, review data, and make determinations for placements in Tier II and Tier III. During these data analysis discussions, teams may adjust the intervention, continue the intervention, or dismiss the intervention if the student has shown mastery. In those meetings, all progress monitoring will be reviewed.

Growth Plan

The mission of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is to "Engage, Educate, and Empower today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities." This mission is the foundation on which Mt. Vernon Middle School has built its core belief that all students can learn at high levels. While the staff members of Mt. Vernon Middle School have many successes to celebrate, they also recognize opportunities for growth and improvement. It is important to MVCSC and Mt. Vernon Middle School to continually grow and improve, as we believe that all students can learn at high levels. Two areas of growth for Mt. Vernon Middle School are 2.6 *Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching* and 3.4 *The school establishes clear and measurable goals that are focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement at the school level*.

First Area of Growth

2.6 Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching.

GOAL: 100% of certified teachers at MVMS will participate in instructional rounds at least twice during the school year.
In both instructional rounds, teachers will reflect on classroom instruction using the following questions (*Leading a High Reliability School, p101*)

1. What do I see and hear that reaffirms something I do?
2. What do I see and hear that I would like to know more about?
3. What do I see and hear that I would like to try in my own practice immediately?

Data collected from walkthroughs and from feedback after instructional rounds will be used to guide professional development. Over the past two years, teachers have had multiple opportunities to view videos of their colleagues instructing students during instructional rounds.

Teachers have found this process to be beneficial. During the 2024-2025 school year, teachers will have opportunities to visit the classrooms of their colleagues and discuss instructional strategies. Teachers will discuss instructional practices, reflect on their own practices, and set goals for implementing strategies within their own classrooms. Teachers will use the NASoT instructional framework to enhance instruction further to benefit all students.

Second Area of Growth

3.4 The school establishes clear and measurable goals that are focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement at the school level.

GOAL: 100% of PLC teams will ensure that at least 80% of students master each Essential Learning, as measured by the PLC team's Common Assessment. (If initial mastery is 80%, then 85% should be reached after intervention and reassessment cycle.)

Mt. Vernon Middle School will target areas of growth based on data collected from NWEA, ILEARN, and PLCs. Teachers will utilize a tiered system to support student growth and achievement. All students will receive quality tier 1 instruction during classroom instruction and during the Success period. During Success, students will work on individual learning goals through IXL and may receive small group instruction and reteaching in math and language arts. Students needing additional support will receive tier 2 support during GOAL classes that target specific skill deficits in math and language arts. Finally, students needing tier 3 support will receive specialized instruction and support from special education teachers during collaborative classes and resource classes.

Conclusion

By working on the identified indicators 2.6 and 3.4 throughout this next school year, the Mt. Vernon Middle School staff will be able to promote and ensure high levels of learning for all students. Mt. Vernon is committed to providing the best possible instruction for the benefit of all students.

NWEA Data (Spring 2024)

NWEA: 6th grade ELA
- lo: 15%
- lo avg: 16%
- avg: 22%
- hi avg: 30%
- hi: 17%

NWEA: 6th grade Math
- lo: 6%
- lo avg: 14%
- avg: 21%
- hi avg: 20%
- hi: 39%

NWEA: 7th grade ELA
- lo: 12%
- lo avg: 24%
- avg: 28%
- hi avg: 23%
- hi: 13%

NWEA: 7th grade Math
- lo: 11%
- lo avg: 18%
- avg: 24%
- hi avg: 22%
- hi: 25%

NWEA: 8th grade ELA
- lo: 13%
- lo avg: 17%
- avg: 35%
- hi avg: 25%
- hi: 10%

NWEA: 8th grade Math
- lo: 6%
- lo avg: 11%
- avg: 22%
- hi avg: 21%
- hi: 40%
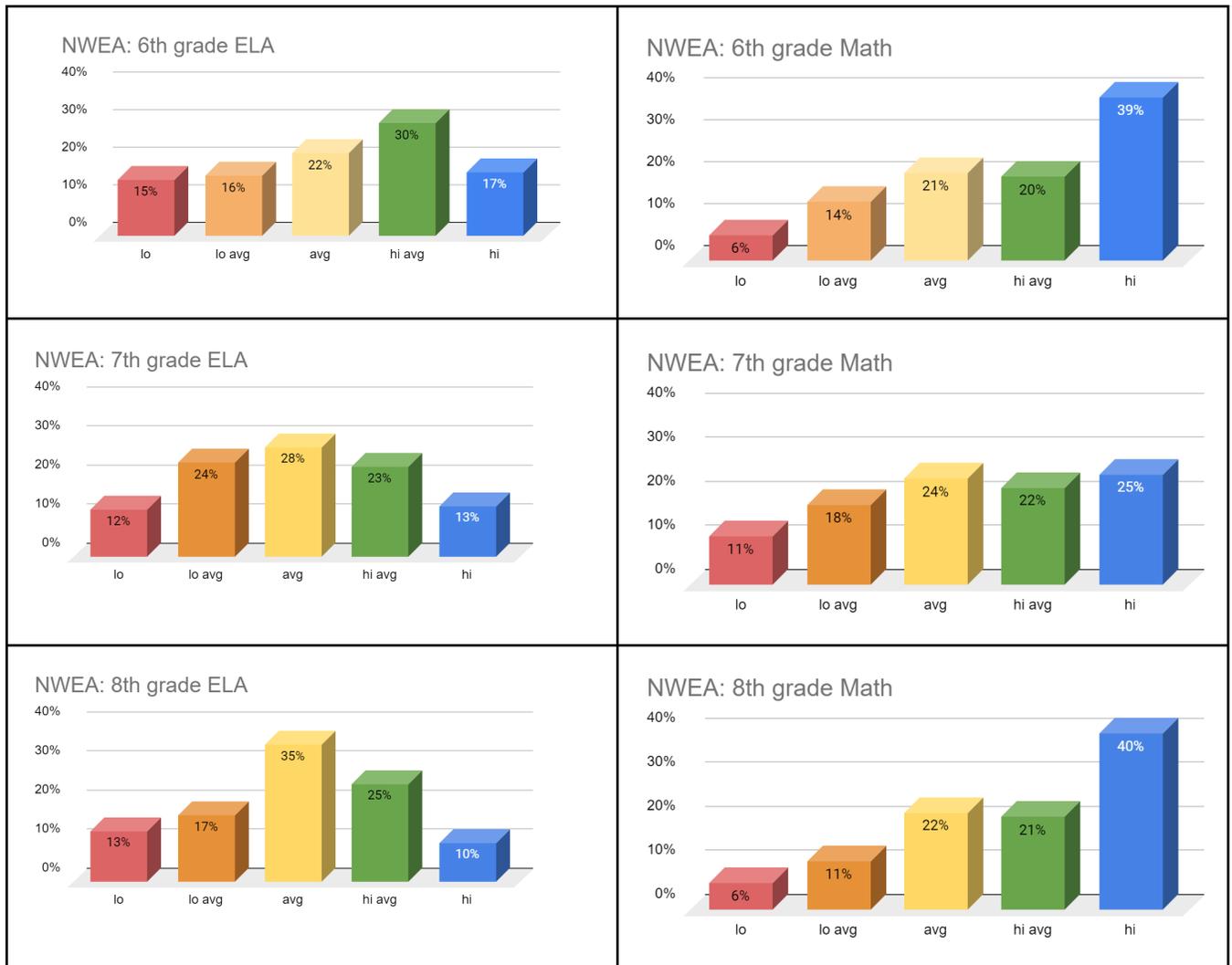
Percentage of students who met NWEA growth projection

Subject	Student Grade	No	Yes
Language Arts	6	48.88%	51.12%
	7	50.85%	49.15%
	8	51.78%	48.22%
Language Arts Total		50.61%	49.39%
Mathematics	6	12.19%	87.81%
	7	40.80%	59.20%
	8	16.47%	83.53%
Mathematics Total		23.43%	76.57%

ILEARN Data (Spring 2024)

ILEARN: 6th grade ELA

below	approaching	at	above
27%	26%	29%	18%

ILEARN: 6th grade Math

below	approaching	at	above
23%	25%	30%	23%

ILEARN: 7th grade ELA

below	approaching	at	above
26%	32%	27%	14%

ILEARN: 7th grade Math

below	approaching	at	above
35%	34%	17%	13%

ILEARN: 8th grade ELA

below	approaching	at	above
26%	27%	31%	17%

ILEARN: 8th grade Math

below	approaching	at	above
31%	29%	21%	19%
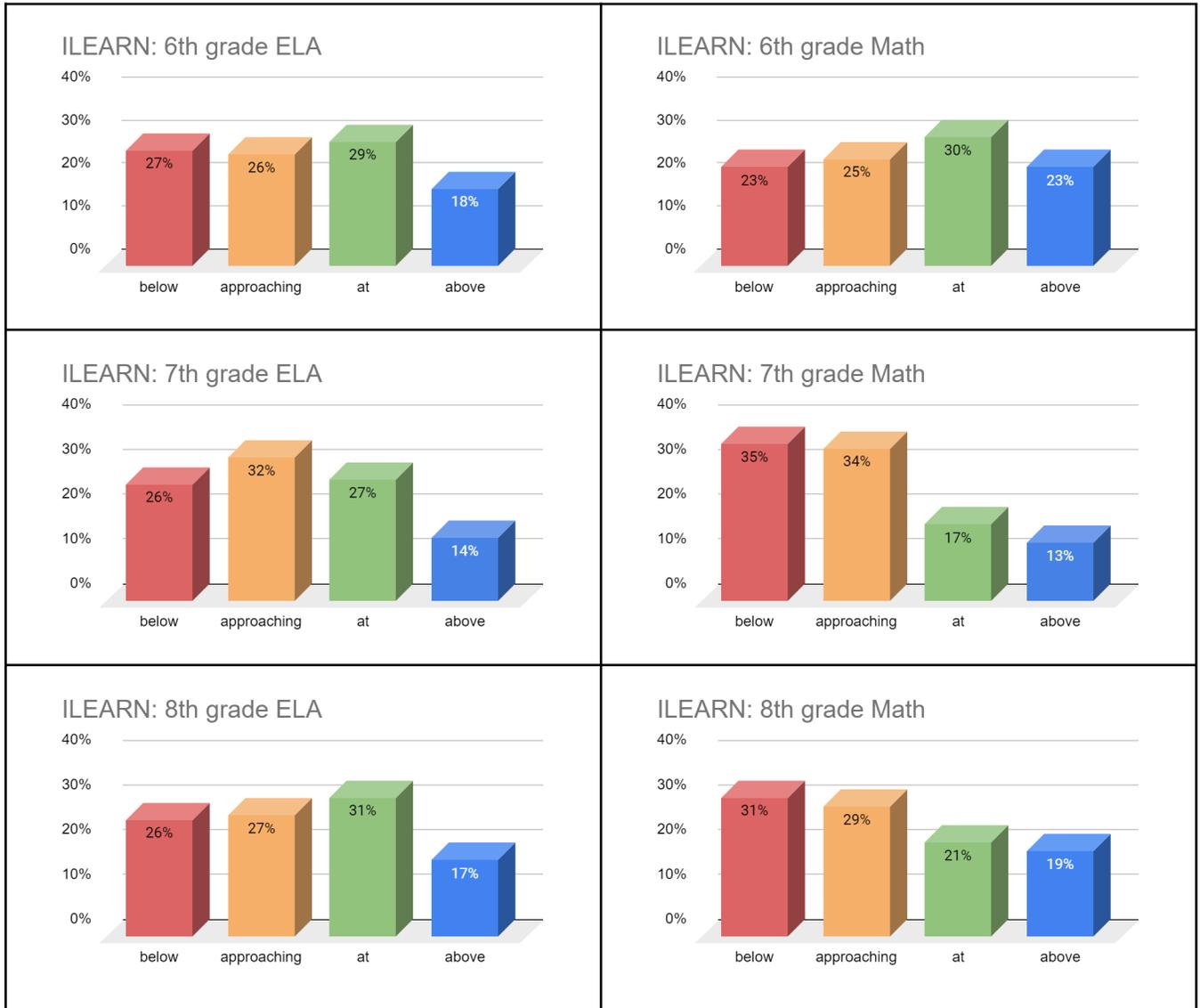
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