Current Reality and GAPSS

Miranda Jacobs

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Dr. Yi Jin

**Vision**

Ware County Learning Center (WCLC) does not have a formally written vision for the use of technology, but the vision of WCLC is a clean, positive, safe learning environment that produces high academic achievement while leading students to become lifelong thinkers and learners. Using this vision as a foundation, the principal, Mr. McClain, has informally established aspirations and intents as to how teachers and students will use technology in the learning process. Teachers use computers, laptops, Chromebooks, and Smart Boards daily for the use of instruction and other related school needs. WCLC students use Chromebooks daily to complete their classwork. With technology being used daily, it is vital that teachers and students are knowledgeable of the expectations when using technology.

First, teachers and students are expected to use technology appropriately as this helps establish and maintain a positive and safe learning environment for everyone. Students are not allowed to visit unauthorized websites that their teachers have not permitted them to visit. Mr. McClain, WCLC’s principal, asked Ware County Schools Technology Specialists and Network Administrator to block certain proxy’s and servers that do not permit students to visit certain sites. Next, teachers are encouraged to not only use technology for students’ classwork but also to enhance learning. Teachers are expected to use technology to monitor students learning to check for understanding and use the data to identify knowledge gaps to modify instruction. Technology in the classroom is also to be used to deepen student learning by creating assignments that require students to use higher order thinking and problem-solving skills as this leads students in the path of becoming lifelong thinkers and learners. For math, students use IXL as a drill and practice activity providing them with a fair chance to become fluent in skills they are learning or deficit in so they have the opportunity to demonstrate high academic achievement.

**Needs Assessment**

The professional learning needs identified in WCLC by reviewing current data of student’s referrals, and analyzing what are minor and major discipline issues. With this data, and the school demographics, the principal, Mr. McClain decides on what he would like to cover over classroom management during PLCs as it relates to student’s behavior. Teachers are also asked to submit bi-weekly reports of students’ progress, and this data is also used to determine what modifications if any, need to be done to enhance student learning and engagement.

**Professional Learning**

Currently, WCLC provides book studies as professional learning. Professional learning is collaboratively done at WCLC. All teachers and paraprofessionals attend the professional learning meetings. However, the professional learning coordinator and the principal provides everyone with an opportunity to present during professional learning. It is important that everyone has an opportunity to present and share their creativeness and ideas. Collaborating with one another provides an opportunity to examine students’ behavior and work, and discuss strategies that can be used to improve student learning and behavior. The reason for book studies is that WCLC is an alternative school and although not all students are enrolled for behavioral reasons, most are and the principal use book studies as a means of learning different perspectives and approaches that are effective when dealing with At-Promise Students.

Within the last year, the system Technology Specialists provided on-site training to teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators on how to use a program called Impero. Impero is a program that is uploaded to the teacher’s computer, which allows them to monitor student computer use activity. During this training, WCLC staff learned how to block sites that they do not want students to access. Teachers also learned how to configure their settings in Impero and only allow students to access specific sites. Which means, if a teacher wanted students to work on IXL for the duration of their class time, they could configure the settings to only allow access to IXL, students will not be able to visit another site. However, if a teacher only blocks certain websites, students are still able to visit sites that are not included in the blocked proxies and servers by the Technology Specialists.

 Besides the on-site training for Impero, there has not been any formal technology-related professional learning offered at WCLC. There have been new staff members, and they are individually taught how to use the technology resources that students use to complete their classwork. Additionally, teachers and paraprofessionals were taught by the lead teacher during PLC how to use the online database that is used to upload artifacts of proof that each completed community service and professional learning. However, it is the goal of the professional learning coordinator that the principal would allow for more technology-related professional learning to assist teachers with integrating more methods to use technology in their classrooms to enhance the teaching and learning process.

During professional learning, teachers discuss the strategies they have been using in their classroom practices and discuss suggested strategies that can be used. Then, there are follow-up discussions on student behavior and academic progress, using student data to measure the effectiveness of the strategies used in their classroom practice. Content-wise, teachers evaluate students’ progress and discuss with their peers, principal, and self-reflect as to how the strategies are working and find new methods for enhancement to master the new strategies for their classroom practices. The principal also does check-ins while classes are in session and confer with teachers individually during evaluation conferences and also set up meetings when necessary.

**Alignment to School Improvement Goals**

WCLC is an alternative school that is considered a program within the Ware County School district. Since WCLC is a program, there is not a school improvement plan set in place. However, the principal has set goals to improve the school and discusses those goals with the faculty and staff. A few goals for school improvement are to enhance students learning, improve behavior, reduce referrals, and keep students in class as much as possible. Nonetheless, this is challenging when working with At-Promise Students; this is why the need for book studies was crucial. WCLC completed their last book study using a book titled,

**Funding and Incentives**

After speaking with the principal, Mr. McClain, WCLC professional learning is funded locally by Ware County Board of Education. The school is given a yearly budget that includes professional learning funding. WCLC use the budget for professional learning to purchase materials for the book studies. Teachers are sent to training and workshops by the principal and registration fees are paid using PLC funding. Furthermore, Ware County School system may require that teachers for certain reasons attend workshops and training, but fees and reimbursements are covered by the central office. For instance, WCLC testing coordinator has to attend workshops and training for new updates on testing regulations. The testing coordinator fees, if any, will be covered by the central office. Last school term, the principal and professional learning coordinator were required to attend a workshop over differentiation, and those fees were covered by the central office.

Professional learning is required for all Ware County School’s teachers and paraprofessionals. There are not any incentives for participating in professional learning; it is mandatory that each staff member have ten Professional Learning Units (PLUs) before the end of the school year. However, the professional learning coordinator has a proposal to submit to the principal regarding incentives for participation in PLC’s. One incentive is to provide teachers with an opportunity to wear jeans on the day of their choice. Next, another reward is to park in the front for a day, because parking for staff is located in the back. Other rewards include presenting staff with coupons and gift certificates from local businesses, inexpensive prizes, and breakfast or lunch provided by WCLC.

**Diversity**

During professional learning, some discussions assist teachers in working with students who come from diverse backgrounds. However, there is a special education teacher that works between WCLC and Ware County High School (WCHS). The special education teacher work at WCLC for the first part of the day and WCHS for the remainder of the workday. Since WCLC does not provide professional learning opportunities for working with students with special needs, the SPED teacher receives professional learning from WCHS SPED department.

**Collaboration**

This year before pre-planning began, Ware County Schools held their first professional learning conference for all teachers within the system called Ware Instructional Conference. All teachers were required to take three classes during the conference. The classes that I chose were all related to technology. I learned about a new website called Quizziz that is used for formative assessments that are engaging to students and records their data. I also attended a class that taught teachers how to create a free website for their class using Weebly. Lastly, I attended a class over Digital Citizenship that is used to teach students how to use technology appropriately.

 The instructional conference is related to WCLC school improvement because I learned how to use and integrate technology effectively to promote student learning. Next, I learned how to communicate digitally with students and parents by creating a teacher website. Lastly, I learned how to promote a positive and safe learning environment while using technology by being introduced to Digital Citizenship. I also learned how to become certified in Digital Citizenship as a school or classroom teacher level to teach students how to use technology appropriately.

**Evaluation**

The impact of professional learning on teacher practice and student learning is evaluated by student data and teacher evaluations. As improvements are shown in teacher’s practices that have been address in professional learning that is evidence that what have been discussed during PLC’s have translated into their professional practices.

**GSAPS Review**

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| **Professional Learning Standard 1:** Aligns professional learning with needs identified through analysis of a variety of data |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Professional learning needs are identified and differentiated through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff, and families). Ongoing support is provided through differentiated professional learning. | Professional learning needs are identified through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff, and families). | Professional learning needs are identified using limited sources of data. | Professional learning needs are identified using little or no data. |
| EVIDENCE: WCLC is an alternative school program that uses a software program for student’s curriculum. After speaking with my principal, Mr. McClain, he stated that he is having a hard time deciding what to cover for professional learning because every teacher at WCLC teaches a different subject, and this is why he is limited to what type of PLCs are covered. WCLC use limited sources of data when determining PLCs needs among staff. WCLC can only use student fidelity data for behavior, attendance data, and classroom data when determining PLCs. Since WCLC is an alternative school program, data on student behavior is mostly used for PLCs for the purpose of learning how to better deal with At-Promise Students. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018) |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would recommend surveying WCLC teachers to find out what specific needs and topics they would like to see covered in PLCs to assist them in their classroom and professional practices.  |

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| **Professional Learning Standard 2:** Establishes a culture of collaboration among administrators and staff to enhance individual and collective performance |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Administrators and staff, as a foundational practice, consistently collaborate to support leadership and personal accountability and to enhance individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).Teachers conduct action research and assume ownership of professional learning processes. | Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback). | Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback). | Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback). |
| EVIDENCE: WCLC administrator and staff meet bi-weekly for PLCs to discuss and provide feedback on performance. During the PLCs discussions and feedback is taking place, that covers strategies to implement for improving in areas that teachers or students are not performing well. The principal provides feedback and direct communication with staff during meetings and evaluations. The principal usually has one-on-one discussions with the staff if it was an area an individual needed to show improvement. However, most times during PLCs, we began by discussing what concerns we have and what strategies we have been using and reflect on its effectiveness while receiving feedback collectively from the group. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018)  |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would recommend teachers peer observing others during their planning periods and provide feedback after school. These will be observations over strategies and practices discussed during PLCs. Also, perform an informal observation to give feedback to teachers addressing strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions before teachers’ annual observations. I think peer observations will be a great tool for teachers to use to improve their practice.  |

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| **Professional Learning Standard 3:** Defines expectations for implementing professional learning |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Administrators, teacher leaders, or both consistently define expectations for the implementation of professional learning, including details regarding the stages of implementation and how monitoring will occur as implementation progresses. | Administrators, teacher leaders, or both regularly define expectations for the implementation of professional learning. | Administrators, teacher leaders, or both occasionally define expectations for the implementation of professional learning. | Administrators, teacher leaders, or both rarely, if ever, define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.  |
| EVIDENCE: The expectations for implementing professional learning has been defined. The staff has to have at least ten contact hours (PLUs) for PLCs before the end of the school year. To monitor PLCs and staff attendance, there is a Google Form that is used for electronic sign-in. All staff members are required to sign-in using Google Forms via their school Google email account. There have to be agendas, meeting minutes, and supporting documents for each PLC as evidence that the implementation of professional learning occurred. The supporting documents include Google Slide presentations, handouts, or other materials that we used during the PLC. At the end of the year, all staff members must submit a reflection of what they learned during the PLCs for the year. The professional learning coordinator has to complete and overall reflection at the end of the school year and submit that along with the PLC-end of year report. However, all staff members must upload artifacts as evidence that they participated in PLCs and met PLC goals for the school year. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018)  |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would recommend the principal and WCLC professional learning coordinator to create a document explaining in writing the PLC expectations for the school year describing how PLCs will be monitored. Once the document has been created and approved by the principal, the document should be discussed in entirety, and all staff members sign stating they have read and understood the PLCs expectations and implementation process.  |

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| **Professional Learning Standard 4:** Uses multiple professional learning designs to support the various learning needs of the staff |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Staff members actively participate in job-embedded professional learning that engages collaborative teams in a variety of appropriate learning designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks). Professional learning includes extensive follow-up with descriptive feedback and coaching. | Staff members actively participate in professional learning, most of which is job-embedded, which includes multiple designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem-solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks) to support their various learning needs. Professional learning includes follow-up with feedback and coaching. | Some staff members are engaged in professional learning that makes use of more than one learning design to address their identified needs. | Staff members receive single, stand-alone professional learning events that are informational and mostly large-group presentation designs. |
| EVIDENCE: WCLC staff members participate in professional learning, which includes collaborative book study, problem-solving sessions for student behavior, and student academic progress. Professional learning includes feedback from principal and peers. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018)  |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would recommend receiving feedback from staff as to what designs of professional learning they would like to participate in to support the various needs of staff actively. I would also recommend designing technology integration PLCs for teachers.  |

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| **Professional Learning Standard 5:** Allocates resources and establishes systems to support and sustain effective professional learning |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Extensive resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are allocated to support and sustain effective professional learning. Opportunities to practice skills, receive follow-up, feedback, and coaching are provided to support the effectiveness of professional learning. | Adequate resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are in place to support and sustain professional learning. | Some resources and systems are allocated to support and sustain professional learning. | Few, if any, resources and systems are provided to support and sustain professional learning. |
| EVIDENCE: WCLC PLCs are held after school because teachers do not have common planning. However, when teachers attend PLCs at another location, there are substitute teachers assigned to cover their classes. There are no model classrooms in place to support and sustain professional learning, although I think that there is something all teachers can learn from one another. Additional resources such as materials and handouts are provided during some PLCs to support the professional learning. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018) |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would recommend providing teachers with an opportunity to practice skills learned during PLCs and to receive follow-up feedback from the lead-teacher and other colleagues within the school to support the effectiveness of professional learning. |

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| **Professional Learning Standard 6:** Monitors and evaluates the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and increases in student learning occurs extensively. Evaluation results are used to identify and implement processes to extend student learning. | Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning occurs routinely. | Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs sporadically. | Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs rarely, if ever. |
| EVIDENCE: The principal monitors and evaluates staff practices and student learning frequently. Staff and students are conferenced with by the principal. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018) |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would suggest that staff and students be included in identifying and implementing practices and strategies that they think will help extend learning. Also, ask for staff and student feedback as to what practices they think that extending learning and what is not working.  |

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| **KSU ITEC Professional Learning Standard:** Professional learning reinforces educators’ understanding and use of strategies for promoting equity and high expectations for all students, application of research-based teaching strategies and assessment processes, and involvement of families and other stakeholders in promoting student learning. |
| **Level 4****[ ]  Exemplary** | **Level 3****[ ]  Operational** | **Level 2****[ ]  Emerging** | **Level 1****[ ]  Not Evident** |
| Classroom practices (e.g., considering interests, backgrounds, strengths, and preferences to provide meaningful, relevant lessons and assess student progress, differentiating instruction, and nurturing student capacity for self-management) of all teachers reflect an emotionally and physically safe environment where respect and appreciation for a diverse population is evident. There are high achievement expectations for all students and teachers. The principal and other leaders provide professional learning for teachers lacking understanding of the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.  | Classroom practices of most teachers reflect skill in communicating high expectations for each student and adjusting classroom activities to meet student needs. Respect for students’ cultures and life experiences is evident through the emotionally and physically safe learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds and experiences are taught the school code of conduct (customs) to help them be successful in the school context. | Classroom practices of some teachers reflect evidence of teachers’ training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.  | Classroom practices reflect little or no evidence of teachers’ training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.  |
| EVIDENCE: The purpose of WCLC completing book studies during PLCs is to understand the types of students the staff is working with. Therefore, the staff is conscious of considering student’s backgrounds, interests, strengths, and preferences to provide nurturing student capacity for self-management while providing an emotionally and physically safe learning environment by respecting and understanding student’s differences. (M. Jacobs, WCLC Professional Learning Coordinator, 2018) |
| RECOMMENDATIONS: I would suggest providing effective professional learning over differentiation for instruction and assessments. Although the majority of the student’s work is done using the software program designed for WCLC students, teachers can still incorporate lessons and assessments in the classroom making them relevant and interesting to students.  |