ACHS Innovation Plan

Draft Big Ideas For Stakeholder Feedback

Our Agenda

1. What is Innovation Status?
2. Why Should We Apply for Innovation?
3. ACHS Needs and Our Main Areas for Innovation
4. ACHS Proposed Innovations
5. Flexibilities Requested to Support Our Innovation
6. Next Steps

What is Innovation Status?

- In 2008, the state adopted the *Innovation Schools Act* to provide schools with additional flexibility for the purpose of meeting student needs and raising achievement.
- The law provides a path for schools to re-design and create a plan that will best serve the students at the school.
- By formally applying for Innovation Status a school may obtain waivers from state and local policies and collective bargaining agreements that stand in the way from their ability to best meet student needs

Why Should We Apply for Innovation?

*Innovation Status **elevates our school's voice** and **ensures we retain control** and **decision-making authority of our school**. In the alternative – reconstitution – none of the above is true.*

- Over the past several years, ACHS has been designated a ***Priority Improvement School*** by the Colorado Department of Education

- Despite some efforts to improve, we are in the ***final year of the accountability clock*** and have not demonstrated sufficient progress to exit. We have urgency to act now, before relinquishing control.

- Previous efforts were hindered by policy and practice barriers at the local and state level. With Innovation Status ***we can request to waive these policies to clear the path and allow us to make school-based decisions*** that best serve our school.

Our Design Process

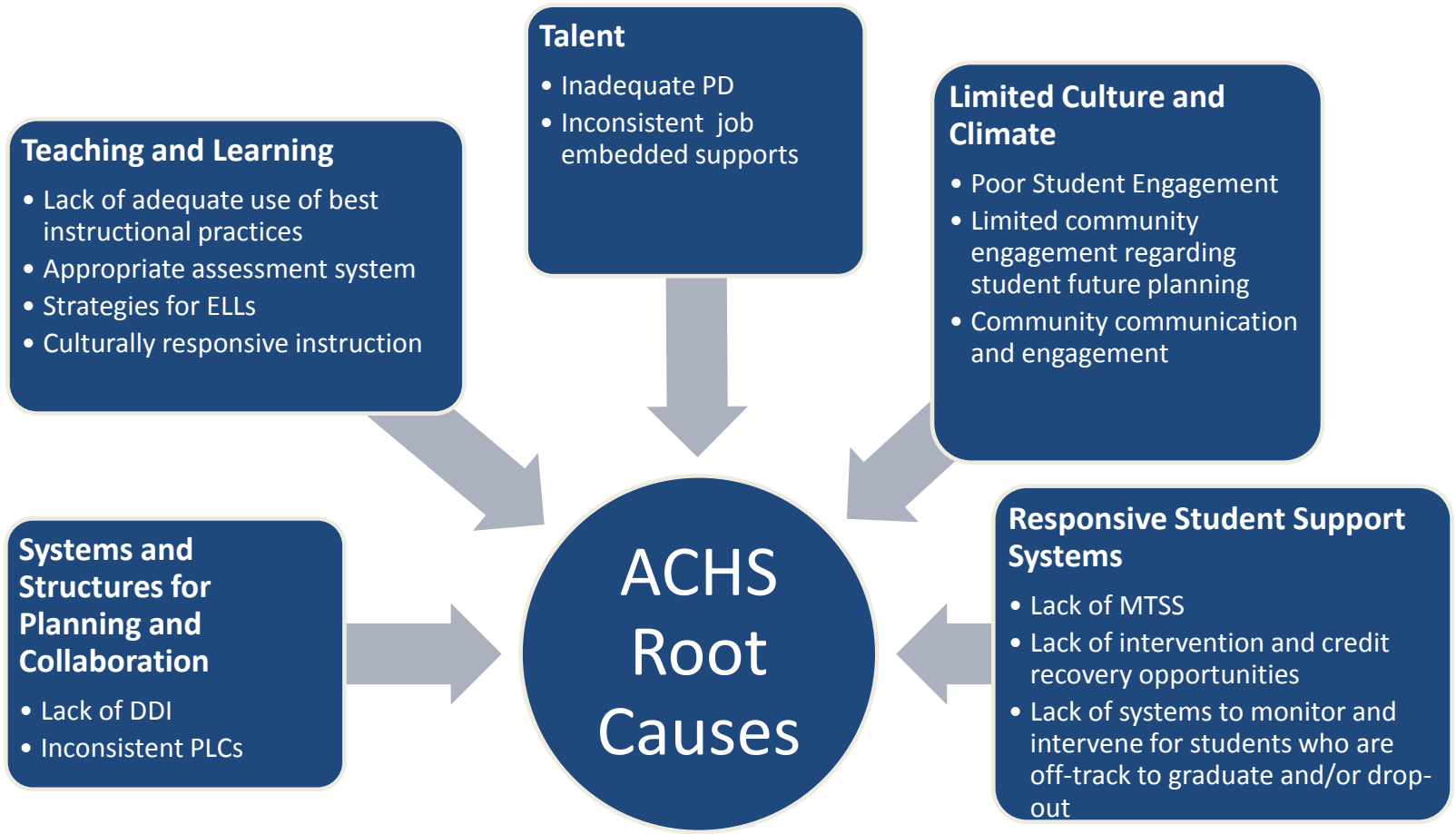
To put forth a design that best addresses our needs, the school design team engaged in a rigorous process and engaged students, staff, families, and community members throughout for input.

Understand	Understand the state of the school and define the challenge(s) that need to be addressed.
Brainstorm	Brainstorm as many possible solutions to the identified challenge(s). Refine list of ideas.
Prototype	Flesh out selected ideas, analyze and determine implementation needs and constraints.
Test and Revise	Test the prototypes/models with community members and revise as needed.

Our Priority Performance Challenges

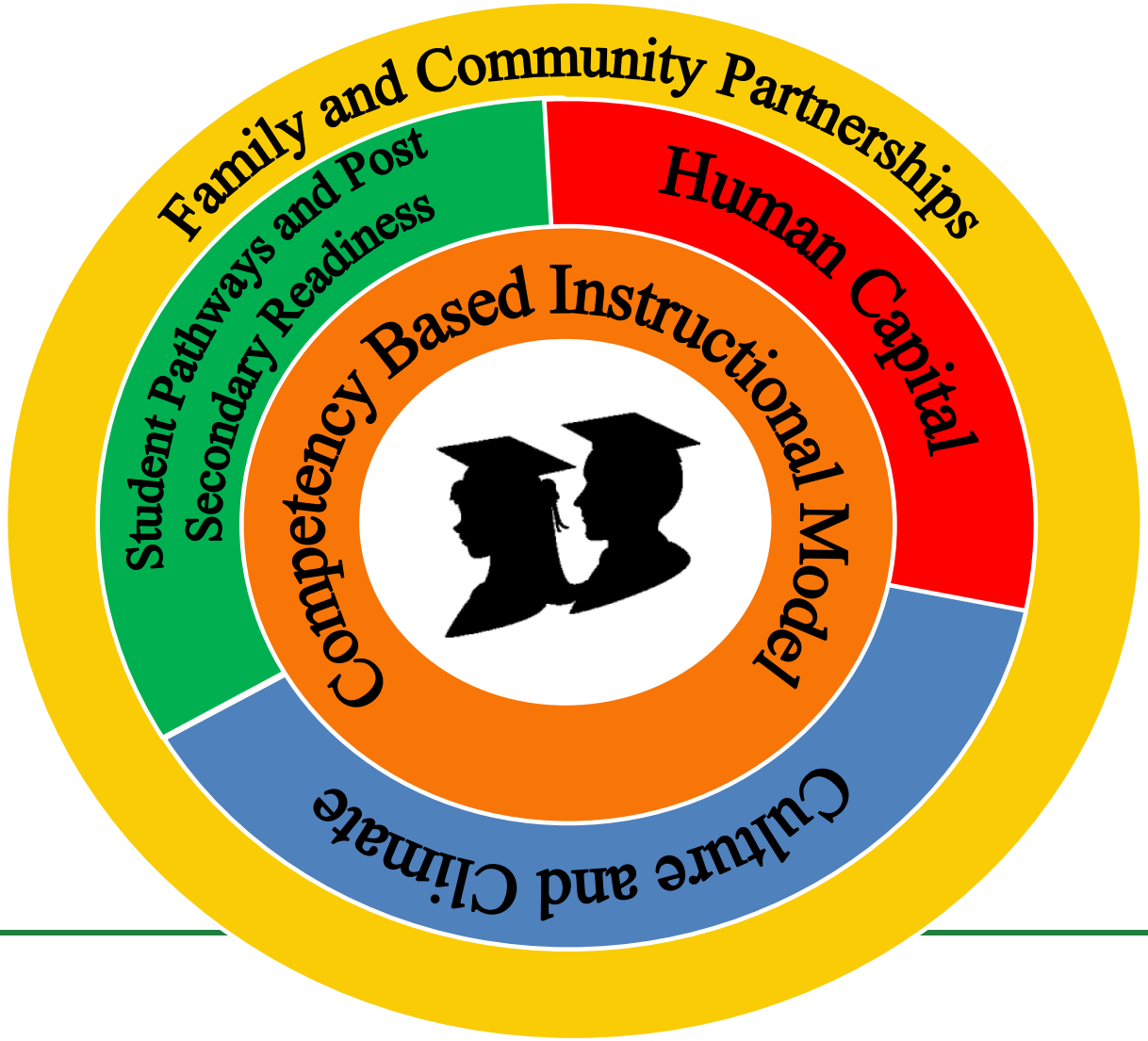
Academic Achievement	Academic Growth
• 9th and 10th grade achievement scores, for all disaggregated groups persistently below state expectations in ***reading, math, and writing*** • Percentage of students **reaching proficiency** is consistently below state and district averages, resulting in a total SPF rating of "Does Not Meet."	• MGP for all disaggregated groups in **Reading, Writing and Math** is not making adequate growth over a three year period. • The total MGP in the areas of **reading, math, and writing** are below state average. • The MGP of students in minority, **FRL, ELL, IEP** subgroups declined over the past year in the area of **reading and writing.**
Growth Gaps	**Post Secondary and Workforce Readiness**
• All subgroups have not demonstrated median **adequate growth** for the past three years. • Overall **math growth data** for all subgroups is below the state average. In particular, ELL students rank in the 46th percentile and behind other subgroups. • **Overall growth data for IEP and ELL** has decreased in Math over a three year period.	• At-**risk students** are not successful in the comprehensive setting • School's **attendance rate** has remained constant and flat • The school has not met state expectation in the **graduation rate, and dropout rate.** The graduation rate is 38% points below state expectations. • The school is below state expectations in **ACT Composite**

Our Root Causes



Our Design Framework

To address our significant areas of need and root causes, our school design team engaged in re-design in the following areas:



Our design also integrates a focus on **international leadership for students** across all areas.

Instructional Model

Competency Based Learning Model

AURORA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

What is Competency-Based Learning at ACHS?

Aurora Central High School will ***implement a competency-based learning system,*** which ensures that students demonstrate understanding of learning outcomes. This means ***all students will demonstrate repeated proficiency of a particular process, content or skill (based on Colorado Academic Standards) as measured by different types of assessments***. Students will have the opportunity to learn content and skills in subject area classes and through p***ersonalized work that they complete at their own pace, allowing for acceleration and/or intervention, depending on each individual student's need.***

One of the primary differences between ACHS and a traditional school is our competency-based approach. It may be helpful to think of the traditional system as *time-based* and a competency-based system as *performance-based*. Unlike a traditional system in which students earn credits and advance based on completion of time in a course, or seat time, in a competency-based system students keep working on specific skills and knowledge until they can demonstrate their understanding and ability to apply them. Then students move to the next learning outcome.

How is this different from the traditional model?

1. ***Student learning and advancement is not constrained by time.*** Students advance when they have demonstrated proficiency on the identified competency. If the semester ends and they haven't mastered the competency yet, they do not get an "F", they continue working on the competency with differentiated supports until they demonstrate proficiency.

2. ***Teachers have increased flexibility to meet students where they're at and personalize learning as needed.*** Teachers, informed by data will have ability to determine the extent to which instruction occurs in whole group, small group, or independently. Teachers will use ongoing formative assessment to meet individual student needs more readily and promote acceleration and recuperation.

Our Model Ensures all Students Have Measurable, Explicit Learning Competencies and Outcomes

Using Colorado Academic Standards and global competencies we will develop proficiency scales and student progress goals that define transparent performance outcomes.

ACHS is proposing a proficiency scale rating system ranging from 0-4 including .5 increments which ensures all students can deepen rigor through level four by developing, applying, and creating knowledge and skills.

Why:

This allows teachers to engage students at level four which allows for more rigorous and engaging learning opportunities and experiences.

What could personalization look like in the core classroom?

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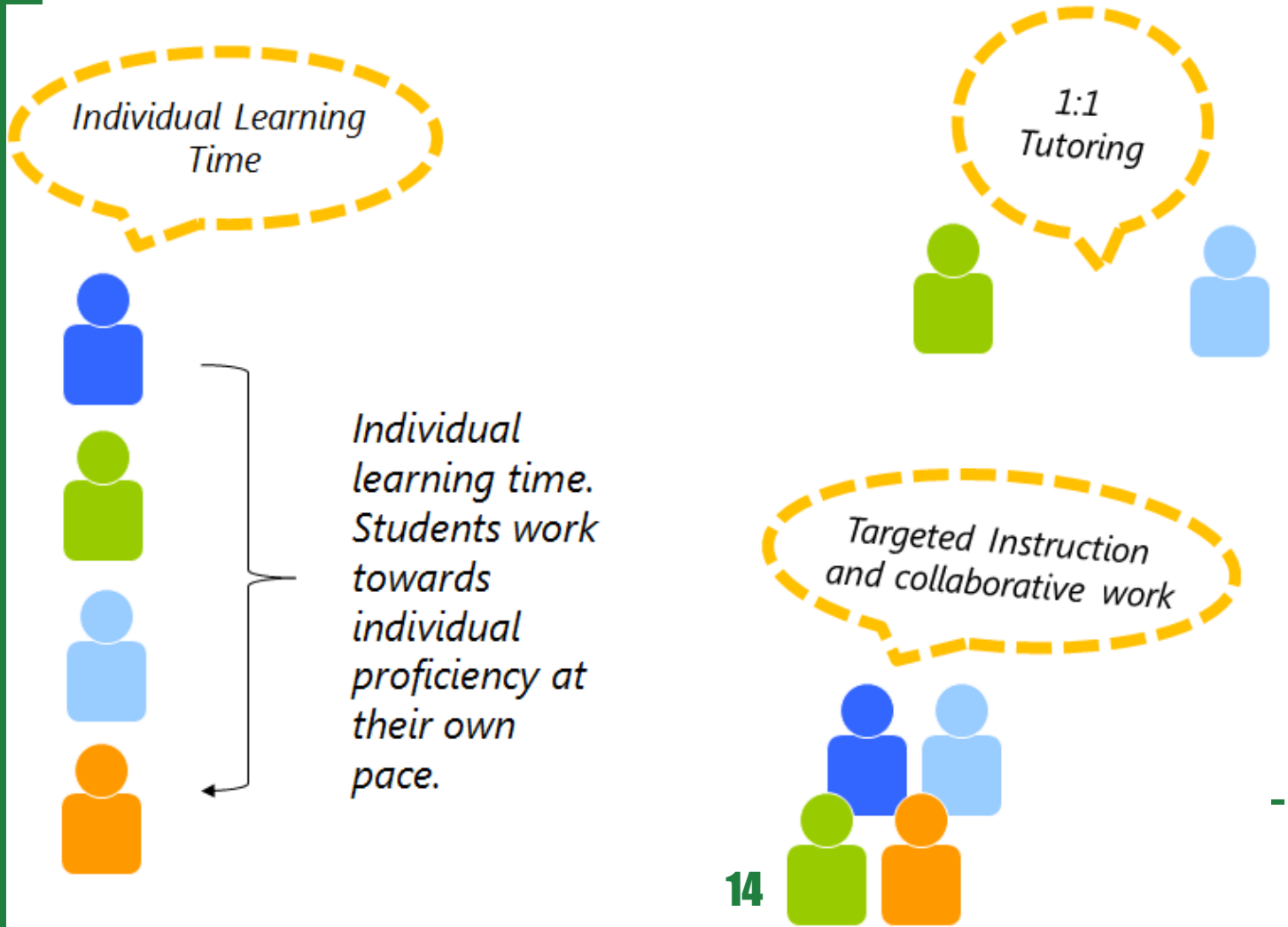
After full implementation following a supported "phase-in" process



To support this model:

- Students will receive explicit instruction to self-direct and self-manage learning.
- This will be addressed directly in advisory and integrated throughout the full day.
- Teachers will receive training/PD in best practices to manage and instruct with personalization

What does it look like in the classroom?

Individual Learning Time *In core subject area courses, students will have opportunities to engage in Individual Learning Time.*	
Student Learning	- Students work individually, either online or in writing, on coursework and projects - Peers assist each other - both with tasks and with topics - Students are both self-managed - set & complete daily goals, find their own resources - Students actively present questions and/or support requests to both peers & teachers - Students actively solicit feedback from peers and teachers on their work & progress - Students are self-paced - move asynchronously through coursework, depending on their needs & progress
Teacher/ Volunteer Actions	- Teachers are actively monitoring student engagement & learning (via both physical presence and observation, & circulating among all students - Teacher sets up and manages system for communication, that allows students to transparently request support/instruction - Facilitates strategic peer & instructional pairings to promote support & collaboration - Foster and support student reflection & self-assessment (around process, engagement, autonomy)
What resources support learning? How is learning assessed?	- Classroom environment and layout of space must allow for independent work areas throughout the room. - Access to technology is needed to support individual learning.

What does it look like in the classroom?

1:1 Tutoring *One to one instruction to accelerate or reteach students*	
Student Learning	- Students are receiving 1:1 support from: teachers, community partners, or students who have already shown mastery on this competency. - Eliciting 1:1 support from classroom community to demonstrate mastery. - Offering 1:1 support to classroom community to help fellow students achieve mastery. - Accessing resources needed to support acceleration or relearning.
Teacher/ Volunteer Actions	- Directing which students need 1:1 tutoring each day. - Directing which students should offer their 1:1 support to their classroom community. - Tutor has plan in place for the students selected for 1:1 support. - Checks for understanding during the 1:1 time. - Tutor transitions student to individualized learning time by giving the student specific and measurable next steps.
What resources support learning? How is learning assessed?	- Additional adults in the room during 1:1 time. - Variety of texts and opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery. - Monitoring tools for informal assessments. - Technology access to support individualized student learning.

What does it look like in the classroom?

Targeted Instruction - Small Group *Small group based on need for initial instruction, scaffolding, reteaching, or acceleration.*	
Student Learning	- Students are receiving small group instruction focused on a discrete skill within a competency from teachers and/or peers. - Small group learning will set the stage for the independent work time. - Space and time for gaps to be filled within instruction - Time where teachers are setting students up for success.
Teacher/ Volunteer Actions	- Teacher provides instruction through best instructional practices to the small group - Teacher sets up and manages routines for small group instruction - Teacher checks for understanding through formative assessment, questioning, as well as through discourse.
What resources support learning? How is learning assessed?	- Classroom setup must allow for small group space - Technology access to support individualized student learning.

Meaningful, Positive Ongoing Assessment- How will we know if students demonstrate proficiency?

What:

- Standards and scale aligned assessments (formative and summative) and performance tasks will be created within PLCs using scoring rubrics to assess student proficiency at levels 3 and 4. Teacher will have common understanding of what proficiency looks like through the use of student benchmarked work samples.
- Teachers will also utilize NWEA MAPS (or other standardized assessment) to measure student growth and gather data to level students and provide appropriate supports.

Why: Valid assessments allow teachers and students to collect a body of evidence that shows students' proficiency levels on the specific learning outcomes which allow students to advance to next learning outcome when they have reached proficiency.

How will students advance upon mastery?

1. Students move forward based on demonstrated mastery of specific competencies within each content area:
   - Competencies are determined by teachers based on Colorado Academic Standards and Global Competencies (ISSN).
   - Proficiency scales (4 - 0) are created for each competency or group of competencies
2. To earn a credit unit, students must demonstrate proficiency (3.00-4.00) in a minimum of 70% of course outcomes and demonstrate understanding at at least 2.0 in all remaining course outcomes.
3. MAPS or other standardized testing may also be used as an alternative, additional methods to assess (and issue credit for) competency.

Sample Student Schedule - DRAFT

Period	Time	Daily Schedule * Except for one Friday per month, which will be student release time for staff PD
1	8:00-9:00	**CORE: Math** -One-one-one -Small group instruction -Individualized learning time
2	9:05-10:05	**Elective**
3	10:10-11:10	**CORE: Humanities** -One-one-one -Small group instruction -Individualized learning time
	11:15-12:00	**Lunch** -45 min
4	12:05-12:50	**Advisory** -45 min
5	12:55-1:55	**CORE: Science** -One-one-one -Small group instruction -Individualized learning time
6	2:00-3:00	**Enrichment (Rotating Content Area):** -Re-teaching of competencies or -Acceleration for students who have already demonstrated proficiency
7	3:05-4:05	**Elective**
	4:05-5:00	Expanded Learning Opportunities (provided by outside community organizations)

*Starting slightly later supports our students who have younger siblings because the elementary levels start at 8am or later. This will help increase 1st period attendance. It also allows us to provide a potential zero hour class for students needing more support or acceleration

What is Enrichment Period? How is it scheduled?

- Enrichment is a class where students receive interventions (acceleration or remediation) in the core content areas.
- Students will have an enrichment period <u>everyday</u> that will rotate throughout the content areas. Monday, Wednesday, Friday will be a set schedule of the three core content area classes (Humanities, Math, Science) while Tuesday, Thursday will be student/teacher/house directed enrichment.

What will our teachers need to master in this model?

- Instruction and assessment in a competency-based system.
  - Deep understanding of standards and grade-level progressions.
  - Create, use, and assess proficiency scales to inform instruction and determine competency.
  - Using proficiency scales in to inform grading practices consistently across the building.
  - Plan for components of personalized learning including blended learning approaches (i.e. individualized learning time, 1:1 tutoring, and targeted instruction and collaborative work)
- Effective co-planning for intervention and acceleration within a collaborative house model.
- Effective co-planning/co-teaching for the humanities course.
- Integration of global competencies/themes into all content areas.
- Embed ELL best practices in all classes.
- Plan for and implement culturally responsive practices.

How/when do we train teachers and build their capacity to be successful?

- All staff back to school kickoff learning prior to 1st day (Time TBD annually prior to the start of the school year)

- The school will have approximately monthly full day PD days in place of Late Start Wednesdays.
  - These days will overlap with the elementary EPR days in order to better support our students with younger siblings who are responsible for their care when school is not is session.

- Providing consistent time and opportunity <u>within the school day</u> for teacher collaboration and planning.

Differentiated and job-embedded teacher supports

- Personalized teacher supports: offered through choice PD time, coaching, and frequent, informal observation feedback cycles.
  - **Planning**: standard prioritization, proficiency scales, standards based/competency based instruction, gradual release, student facing learning targets
  - **Classroom management**
  - **Culturally responsive student engagement strategies**

- Teacher needs based off of observation, feedback, evaluation data, teacher self-identified need, and coaching support.

- Administrative supports related to implementation of a competency based system.

Staff Collaboration

- Staff will have 2 daily PLC periods:
  - **Content-based PLCs:** Focused on Data Driven Instruction (DDI) Cycles to plan effectively in a competency based model

  - "**House" based PLCs:** In the next section under the Culture and Climate design area, you will learn more about the house model, where teams of teachers and students form a "family". House PLCs will focus on multi-tiered system of supports models for students in each house.

Aurora Central High School—PLC Data Cycle

1 – Identify the **Colorado Academic Standards** and **Global Competencies** within this unit of study.

2 – Create a **proficiency scale** for your unit of study.

3 – Create a **common formative assessment (CFA)** with your PLC.

4 – Teachers assess learning and **analyze** student work with other members of PLC noticing strengths and obstacles.

5 – Based on analysis of student work, teachers **select research based/ culturally responsive instructional strategies** to make personalized learning plans for each student

6 – Teachers, students, and class continue to implement PLPs and **track progress** towards proficiency.

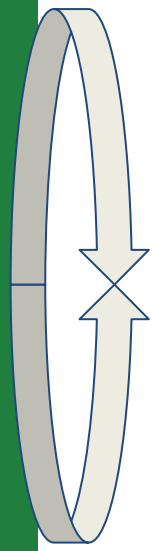
Teachers and students set goals and track progress towards proficiency.

Teachers use ongoing formative assessment data to inform the students' Personalized Learning Plan (PLP)

Content Area PLCs - Processes of the Cycle

Content PLC time is defined on a daily/weekly basis to align with the data cycle.

Example:



Monday - Use data analysis (from previous week) to track progress and update learning plans

Tuesday - Determine priority competencies for the next week and create proficiency scales

Wednesday - Create common formative assessment

Thursday - Plan learning activities for the next week

Friday - Collect and analyze data

House-Based PLCs - MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support)

House-Based PLC time is defined on a daily/weekly basis to align with the data-cycle.

House-Based PLCs will be used to proactively identify and respond to students in need of differentiated support above and beyond the differentiation occurring in the classroom. (Many supports will be implemented through enrichment)

Through **House-Based PLCs:**

- Student rotation / placement in enrichment courses will be determined
- Additional student supports related to non-academic factors such as behavior, attendance, health, etc. will be designed
- Differentiated plans for students accelerating through competencies will be designed

What does a day in the life of a teacher look like?

Period	Time	Humanities Teachers ENG/Social Studies	Humanities/ELD Teachers: ENG/Social Studies	Science	Math	Electives
1	8:00-9:00	Humanities (a)	Humanities/ELD (a)	Science (a)	Plan *(Common PLC Plan)*	Elective (a)
2	9:05-10:05	Humanities (b)	Humanities/ELD (a)	Science (b)	Math (a)	Elective (b)
3	10:10-11:10	Plan *(Common House Plan)*	Plan *(Common House Plan)*	Plan *(Common House Plan)*	Plan *(Common House Plan)*	Elective (c)
4A	11:15-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Advisory
4B	12:05-12:50	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Lunch
5	12:55-1:55	Enrichment *(Common House Enrichment Schedule)*	Enrichment *(Common House Enrichment Schedule)*	Enrichment *(Common House Enrichment Schedule)*	Enrichment *(Common House Enrichment Schedule)*	Plan
6	2:00-3:00	Plan *(Common PLC Plan)*	Humanities (b)	Science(c)	Math (b)	Plan *(Common PLC Plan)*
7	3:05-4:05	Humanities (c)	Plan *(Common PLC Plan)*	Plan *(Common PLC Plan)*	Math (c)	Elective (d)

Grading and Transcripts-Sample

Grades are issued based on demonstration of identified competencies for each course

1. To earn credit, a student must demonstrate proficiency (3.00-4.00) in a minimum of 70% of course outcomes and demonstrate understanding at least a level 2.0 in all remaining course outcomes

2. Proficiency Scales may be converted into letter grades for GPA calculation and College Application:
    - 3.00-4.00 = A
    - 2.50-2.99 = B
    - 2.00-2.49 = C
    - 1.00-1.99 = D
    - Below 1.00 = F

Grading and Transcripts

- In this competency based system, grades are based *solely* on students' current levels of performance with specific identified competencies

- Attendance, behavior, and other non-achievement measures are not part of core content grading in a competency based system (Seat time, homework completion, etc. do not factor into grade calculation)

- Attendance, behavior, and other "soft-skills" along with demonstrations of global competencies may be reflected in Advisory grades.

Credit Acquisition and Graduation Requirements

Student Classification - SAMPLE

Advancement / Promotion based on acquisition of credits rather than age or number of years a student has been enrolled in school.

Example:

- Freshmen = White Belts
- Sophomores = Yellow Belts
- Juniors = Green Belts
- Seniors = Black Belts

(This could be indicated by colored wrist bands which could be presented during celebrations in advisory.)

Implementation Timeline

- **Year 1 (2016-17):**
  - ***All grade levels:*** cultural shift: staff focus on specializing and becoming "experts" in the standards and proficiency levels within their assigned work. Build staff capacity by providing training on classroom design to help teachers look at their own beliefs about learning, examine tenets of personalizing learning, build student agency by creating classroom codes of collaboration, introduce new operating procedures, enhance formative assessment, develop and take advantage of transparency of learning targets, and plan for a competency-based instructional model that emphasizes higher order skills.
  - ***9th grade:*** full implementation in core content areas
- **Year 2 (2017-18):** 9th and 10th full implementation, continue deepening staff capacity to change instruction school-wide
- **Year 3 (2018-19):** 9th, 10th, and 11th full implementation, continue deepening staff capacity to change instruction school-wide
- **Year 4 (2019-20):** Full school implementation

Student Pathways And Post- Secondary Readiness

Advisory

Advisory

We propose adding an advisory period into each school day

- Advisory classes 45 minutes long
- Maximum of 18 students per advisory
- Furnished curriculum designed to build a sense of community and individual growth

Goals for Advisory

1. Develop interpersonal relationships among staff and students
2. Provide academic support to students
3. Provide social and emotional support and direct instruction of global leadership competencies and develop student's ability to self-direct learning and self-management
4. Enrich the curriculum: goal setting, 21st century skills, current affairs
5. Provide college/post-secondary preparation and experience
6. Build school culture and student voice
7. Increase engagement and attendance
8. Connect with families and community

What could advisory look like?

- Small group - eighteen students max
- Group assigned stays together throughout 4 years
- One 45 minute class period (preferably before 3rd hour)
- Teacher is a generalist - assist with all areas
- All students and teachers, consider including admin and other adults (mentors), counselors in support role
- Shared curriculum differentiated for each grade level
- Safe place to discuss personal issues

Why is Advisory important

- Students will have an identified adult to go to when they have academic and behavior concerns
- Advisory focuses and building communities, peer relationships
- Provides students a forum for discussing issues that they face in their day-to day life. (feelings, emotions, family issues, world events)
- Reinforces academic skills and/or curriculum: time management, organization, discussion etiquette, listening, and journal writing
- Offers specialized curriculum: conflict resolution, personal and social support
- Advisory can help with PWR Goals: ICAP, College Applications, Career Information, Internships
- Advisory allows more adults to keep track of a smaller number of students

Topics

Topics outside academic scope

Examples

World news/Current Events
Core values
credits/ grades
Sex ed:
STDs/pregnancy/consent/sexting
Self reflection
Interest topics - Friday presentations plus long term project
Life topics

Conflict resolution
Personal finance
Welcoming new students (staff)
Personal vision statement
Resume writing
Working towards eligibility for internships/partnerships
Test skills
College and Career Readiness
Suicide (SOS)
Challenge day

Staff Ongoing support for Advisors

Curriculum provided by:

- Counseling (personal/Social)
- Community (guest speakers, community services
- Administration
- Special interest Groups
- Post Secondary Workforce Readiness (PWR)(ICAP)
- Career
- Military
- Health Services

Support advisors through “advisory for advisors” as a part of PD (perhaps in rotation with other topics)

Important to support and honor the advisory period - ex: not schedule pep rallies during advisory

Implementation Timeline

Form advisory committee as soon as possible to begin developing curriculum. Bring committee in during summer to complete. Use professional development time before school begins to familiarize teachers with content.

Start 2016-17 with advisory for all students (including a change to the daily schedule)

Freshmen in 17-18 start to work toward internships that begin in their junior year

Involving Parents in advisory

The purpose of advisory is to impact all students of all backgrounds. But the gap between educators and parents have become an annoying trend. We propose to include Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to help create a bridge of relation with educators and parents. CBOs would engage parents in schools in low income urban communities.

The three core elements of community-based relational approach..

1. Emphasis on relationship building among parents and educators
2. A focus on the leadership development of parents
3. An effort to bridge the gap in culture and power between parents and educators.

Student pathways

Student Pathways

We propose to create individual pathways for student's academic pursuits through their four years at Aurora Central High School

- Individual paths that help guide course selection and inform postsecondary choices
- Monitored through advisories
- Potentially leading to junior/senior year internships
- Connect with community and postsecondary partners

Purpose/goals

Pathways differentiate learning for students based on their interests

Pathways allow students to develop skills and experiences related to their chosen path

Planned pathways ensure our students graduate with a plan for their future post ACHS

Possible pathway options

Health Science Academy
Community internships and apprenticeships
AVID
GEAR UP
Pickens
ROTC
STEM
International leadership/studies
Culinary/hospitality

Arts performing/visual
Math and science
General studies
Outdoor experiences
Business
Technology
Education
Public service
Leadership

Pathways

- Can supplement the student schedule as electives.
- Can create a framework for the development or modification of new courses.
- Can give students goals to work towards.
- Can provide certifications and/or real life experiences.

Pathway progression

Students begin freshman year without a specific pathway. Through advisory they are exposed to the options and the requirements for each path. Advisors help track student progress toward their goal/path. Before course selection, freshmen choose their pathway so that they can align future coursework and experiences.

Culture and Climate – The ACHS House Model

Smaller Communities

Students benefit from strong relationships and consistent structures. One way to achieve this is through the development of a Village/ House model.

Research demonstrates that this is a common practice in many areas of the world such as Nepal, Japan and, Mexico.

Village/ House Model

- A group of students grouped by similar scheduling of core classes and an advisory period
  - students rotate through these classes as a unit and stay together year after year

- Village/House Staff includes:
  - Core Teachers, Special Education Teacher, Dean, Counselor and Assistant Principal

- Student grouping can be by “grade level spans” or other grouping methods that do not “track” students

- 100 - 120 student maximum per group

- Implementation: begin with one “grade” in year one, scaling to additional levels each year

Goals for the Village/House Model

- Build stronger relationships with students and staff
- Increase attendance
- Decrease negative behaviors
- Increase the feeling of connectedness for students and staff
- personalize student learning to better meet needs by building deeper relationships
- Caring, Consistent student-adult relationships that communicate high expectations for student learning and behavior
- Consistent rituals, routines and instructional expectations across classrooms – set by each house, and could be created with and by students
- Allows deeper development of consistent rituals, routines and instructions and expectations across cohorts

Student Experience

- Students are grouped with a variety of peers from all performance different levels
  - Initially students will be grouped based on data
- Research speaks to the importance and opportunity for student input and voice, smaller communities allow for that autonomy
  - Students and core teachers will set the rules and expectations for their village
- Inter- Village competitions (grades, spirit week, attendance)
- Reinforcement of positive behaviors
- Get to know classmates at a deeper level due to intentional relationship building and opportunities for collaboration
- Uniform experience across classrooms (teaching, words, expectations, etc.)
- Advisory to address non- academic needs

Teacher Experience

- Increased opportunity for teachers to collaborate
  - cross- curricular planning for teachers within the village
  - Planning time in the content area
- Opportunity to build stronger and more meaningful relationships
- Counselors, Deans, Teachers come together to support whole child
- Advisory Teacher will make weekly calls teachers have more planning time
- Advisory teacher will make home visits to their group of students

Family and Community Partnerships

Home Visit Model

Parent and Community Partnerships

What is the purpose of a Home Visit Program?

- The purpose of a Home Visit program is to build relationships with the families of the students attending Aurora Central; home visits will also strengthen our community

- The purpose of a Home Visit program is to “end the cycle of blame between families and school staff by building trust, respect, and competence”

- The purpose of a Home Visit program is NOT to point out the troublemakers and at-risk students by visiting them frequently, but rather to visit each student who attends the school individually and build relationships with their families

What Does a Successful Home Visit Program Look Like?

- The current parent conference process can be modified to integrate home visits and hold visits in place of formal conferences, based on student need. Since the school would be restructuring existing time, it would not be necessary to adjust current staff compensation to cover home visits
- Both teachers and parents make their expectations clear, share their hopes and dreams for the child, and work together to meet them.
- Teachers could show up in pairs (Two teachers meeting the parents and the student)
- Parents and student should be open to try Home Visit from teachers
- Meet with said student 2 times per year, once in Fall and once in Spring
- http://www.nea.org/home/34090.htm
- http://neatoday.org/2014/10/28/all-in-the-family-how-teacher-home-visits-can-lead-to-school-transformation/

The Benefits of a Home Visit Program

- Parents stay in their “comfort zone”
  - Meeting in the classroom might be uncomfortable for some parents and talking over the phone can be “distancing and impersonal”
- Closer partnerships & positive communication
  - Home visits give both teachers and parents the opportunity to talk about the child they care about
- Students realize that they have a network of support
  - “Children take comfort in knowing that their teacher understands their home situation and in knowing that what they do in the classroom may have consequences at home”
- The teacher learns more about their students
  - The biggest benefit of a home visit program is that it gives the teacher “a better understanding of the child’s environment and how it impacts their learning in the classroom”.

A Year's View of the Home Visit Program

- Summer: Begin training for first visit
- Fall: First Round of Home Visits
  - Focus on Listening and Relationships
- Debrief the First visit
  - Which student(s) stood out the most? Who needs more support vs. who doesn't? What have we learned about the family we visited? How can we do a better job next time? Etc.
- December/January: Begin training for second visit
- Spring: Second round of Home Visits
  - Focus on Academics and Capacity Building
- Debrief the Second visit
  - Who has improved since the first visit? Who has not? How can we help this student and his/her family before the school year ends? What can we do better for next year? Etc.
- End of School Year: Complete evaluation and begin preparing for new school year

Will a Home Visit Program Benefit Our Students?

Research from the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project (PTHVP) show that:

- "In Sacramento, a three-year study found that teacher home-visits corresponded to a 6.5 percentage point gain in reading tests and 9.8 in math, plus improved graduation rates."
- "In Maplewood Richmond Heights, Missouri, discipline referrals declined by 45 percent and parent involvement improved by 20 percent."
- Districts that have reached out through home visits have almost always found success in promoting academic achievement and social development of students (Delisio, 2010; Freeman & Freeman, 2001; Steele-Carlin, 2010; "There's No Place Like Home…visits," 2009). www.joci.ecu.edu/index.php/JoCI/article/download/128/145

ACHS Student Refugee Welcome Center

Parent and Community Partnerships

Purpose for an ACHS Refugee Student Welcome Center

- To inform students about the structure, components, and benefits of ACHS.
- To provide resources to help parents navigate their new setting.

Importance of recognizing the backgrounds of the refugee students allows ACHS to:

- Expose students to all aspects of the American educational program so that they are familiar with how education works in their new country.

- To eliminate the assumption that refugees have basic knowledge about what school is like in America

Model Objectives

Students will:

- Share information about their personal goals for education in America.
- Become familiar with the elements of a school day
- Become aware of the multiple benefits of an American education.

Key points:

- Academic Coaches and Translators will be available throughout the ACHS and the school year.
- Students need opportunities to talk about their personal experiences and goals.

Additional Ideas for Onboarding New Refugee Students

- Introduce the adults responsible for helping refugee students.
- Tour the school facilities.
- Invite local refugee students who live in the school community to talk about their adjustment to American schools.
- Visit local community organizations that provide free or inexpensive winter clothing.

Strategies to Decrease Chronic Absenteeism

Prepared by the Family & Community Group

ACHS attendance policy aims to increase the student daily attendance to 93% from 81%.

Over the past two years of TIG, there has been a significant decline in the percentage of chronically absent students. With an effective plan in action, ACHS will address the identified aforementioned needs for the safety, security, and success of our students.

ACHS will Develop Our Own Attendance Polity to Support and Encourage Student Presence. The New Policy will be in alignment with our mission, vision, and new design framework.

1. A pass must be issued by the attendance office when a student arrives to school after their first period of the day has started. The attendance office will determine if the tardy is excused or unexcused and record the transaction in IC as such.

2. Three tardies will not be counted as an absence and school detention will not be assigned. The school will collaborate with the student and families to problem solve challenges that might be in the way of student attendance at school.

3. Early dismissal can only take place if a note is approved by the attendance office before 8:30 AM.

4. An early dismissal notification list will be sent out to teachers by 9:00 AM to track those students that are cutting or to determine if they are officially absent.

Sample

Continued

5. Once the teacher determines that a student is missing (absent) from their class, the problem can be problem solved immediately to alleviate an ongoing process.

6. Students must have a tardy slip to enter class; either from a teacher, the office, the dean, etc. that detained them.

7. To minimize security issues, students will be discouraged hanging out in the cafeteria during class time.

Sample

Continued

8. Students must not leave the building unless their name is on the early dismissal list or their parent is escorting them from the building by first signing them out. (During the school hours the school is responsible for the whereabouts and safety of all students.)

9. Students who had good attendance throughout the school year will be rewarded with a certificate at an awards ceremony or banquet which will take place during the last week of school to insure that our students will have continue success.

Sample

Impact on Students and Adults

Student Experience: ACHS attendance policy will increase the instructional time for our chronic absentee and tardy students which will result as an increase in student achievement.

Teacher Experience: ACHS attendance policy will eliminate the chaotic atmosphere that is presently viewed by the new teachers. A higher teacher retention rate will result by showing the new teachers that ACHS does care about the students and staff with the no tolerance attendance policy that has been put in place.

Parent Experience: ACHS attendance policy will demonstrate to parents that ACHS is concerned about their child's safety and well being. Collaboratively the graduation rate of ACHS can be raised.

Communication and Engagement with the Community

What makes the ACHS enrollment area different? Why are parents reluctant to come?

- Most parents don’t have the time or transportation to involve themselves with their child’s education; or sometimes they are just simply busy. However, other times, the parents do not feel comfortable in a school setting.
  - “Parents who have dropped out of school do not feel comfortable in school settings.”
  - “Parents who don't speak fluent English often feel inadequate in school contexts.”
- Solutions: Diversity/Culture Fair to familiarize ourselves with the families in our community, Family/Group supports for people who don’t have native English speaking skills (some don’t realize that this is even an option).
- Communication is KEY!

Parent/Community Partnerships

- At ACHS, Parent/Community partnerships are defined as fostering vibrant relationships with parents and community partners for the success of students.

- Our Parent/Community partnerships goals aim to establish a positive school culture, increase student attendance as well as the issue of chronic absenteeism, improve our accountability in students & parents through communication, and to continue the number of students participating in sports, clubs, and other activities.

- The reason for our Parent/Community partnerships is to ensure the future viability of Aurora Central High School. Statistics show that when parents and communities are involved, it translates to higher student achievement.

How to Increase Parent Participation

- Simply ASK the parents. Have a sign-up table at registration with events and activities that are already on the calendar that parents can volunteer for.
- Hold a “raffle” at back to school night and conferences that parents can be eligible to win if they attend.
  - Entrance to the drawing is contingent on the classes that they attend/teachers they talk to during the evening.
  - Prizes can include iPad, Chromebook, Xbox, etc.
- Establish a Parent Advisory Committee that meets monthly/bi-weekly.
- Create a welcoming school environment.
  - Have teachers make personal contact with the families via email, phone, etc.
  - Hold an open house for parents to meet the students’ teachers, offer home visits, etc.
  - Have translators on-deck to help assist families with a native background.

ACHS Will Expand Opportunities for Parents to Volunteer at the School

- Parents should volunteer on their own time but could have encouraged opportunities to volunteer.

- Implement watch D.O.G.S. (dads of great students) program.
  - http://www.fathers.com/watchdogs/
  - http://fathers.com/wp39/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/2015-16-Startup-Kit-Information.pdf

- Parent volunteering goes beyond simply attending conferences, it involves making a meaningful impact throughout the school day and year that impacts all students.

- Tutoring, attending classes, chaperoning field trips, helping with sporting events and clubs and activities.

How do you Involve Parents in a Meaningful Way?

- A welcome/attentive approach at all offices in the school
  - In some offices, frustrated parents and visitors do not receive a positive and welcoming message.
- Educate the building staff about the Aurora Central HS community.
  - The history, struggles, challenges, changes, positives and successes.
  - Hold presentation/training before students come back to school in August.
- Create a parent involvement program that not only supports student learning goals but also addresses other topics of interest to the parents.
  - Family math nights, constructive discipline, prenatal care, menopause, budgeting, etc.
- School resource or drop-in center could be created in Community Room A.
  - Open up the Wellness Center to serve families or at least siblings of our students.
  - Will need to consult with Wellness Center to see if a possibility
- Utilize and embrace the amazing cultures of our families.
  - Respect what our parents and families can bring to the education process.
  - Focus on strengths rather that deficiencies.

What does a Successful Communication Dept Look Like?

- Successful relationships are built on communication.

- Have the Web Design Class take ownership of “official school twitter” and other social media outlets.

  - Create google form to submit updates, announcements, photos to social media.
  - Share as many student and faculty success stories as possible on the website

- Do a better job of promoting to low-cost technology and internet that are available to families with free or reduced lunch.
  - https://everyoneon.org/get-connected/offers#

How to Involve Students & Parents in the Hiring Process of Staff

- Familiarize staff and parents with the screening process and provide clear parameters regarding what is and is not the job of the screening committee.
    - The value of this process is that it allows the principal and the screening group to discuss the mission of the school, desirable attributes of staff members for specific roles, qualities and skills that need to be added to strengthen the faculty, and which school traditions are most important to maintain.
    - Northfield HS has a Collaborative School Committee, which “serves as a consulting body for Northfield High School’s principal on various aspects of school management.”

How to implement "required" parent/student counseling check-ins prior to the first day of each school year

- Home visits could accomplish this.
- 20 minute face-to-face or phone conversations with parents/guardians.
- Require parents to watch an introductory video about the school prior to the school year.
  - Involve broadcast journalism class with this project.

What would holistic & increased personal and social supports look like?

- Partner with mindfulness programs in the community.
- Create a space for students to voice their concerns.
- Staff follow through to ensure that all students are supported on a personal level.
- All students are seen and acknowledged: 5-10 rule: 5 feet: “how are you?” 10 feet: smile or “hello.”
- New after school groups to help increase personal relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Bold effort on the part of counselors to make contact with families and students.

Culture Fair

Culture Fair

- The Cultural Fair is an annual school event where parents, students, teachers and community members come together to celebrate the diversity of the many cultures represented at ACHS.
- Fair Chairpersons
  - Athletic Director, Principal, Counselor, Ambassador Club Sponsor, Family Liaison, Welcome Center Liaison, etc.
- Countries are represented by booths at the fair
- The booths will showcase memorabilia, artifacts, traditional games, clothing, language, music and food.
- Invite community partners and businesses to present and have booths.

Benefits of Culture Fair

- To combat stereotypes and improve understanding and cooperation among people from different cultures.
- To raise awareness worldwide about the importance of intercultural dialogue, diversity and inclusion.
- To build a community of individuals committed to support diversity with real-life gestures.
- Global awareness and international collaboration during the formative years results in more well-rounded individuals
- Promotes project-based learning

Activities

- Hold a contest which features original works of art and essays by ACHS students
  - Prizes for contest
- Essays and art posted in an area
- Entertainment on stage during lunch periods
  - Dances, songs, music, and tales from their culture.
- Foods from different cultures to try
- Speakers from different organizations

Passport Trivia

- Passport Trivia: **“Passports” will be made available throughout the Fair**.
- Booth Visitors will have the opportunity to answer trivia questions at each booth and in return will receive a “stamp” or handwritten symbol/word on their passport.
- Passports may be redeemed for a prize at the Community Club Booth.

What it will Look Like in 3 Years?

- Fully implemented
- Participation from many community businesses and organizations
- Grants and sponsorships
- Full ACHS participation

Human Capital

ACHS Human Capital Strategy : In order to ensure every student has the most effective teacher, we will implement a robust, competitive, and culturally responsive human capital system, which includes:

1. A ***recruitment system*** that attracts and generates a pool of highly effective, diverse candidates
2. A ***multi-step selection process*** that assesses candidates based on a set of skills and traits required to be successful at our school
3. An ***onboarding plan*** to orient and equip all new hires with the information and skills needed to be successful at our school
4. A ***transparent and equitable evaluation process*** that assesses staff strengths and areas for growth and provides meaningful and timely feedback fostering individual reflection and growth.
5. A ***comprehensive data-driven, differentiated, and job-embedded professional development*** system to develop teachers' professional skills and support individual goal achievements

Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment Goals:

At ACHS our recruitment plan aims to ensure that we maintain a pool of highly qualified and effective applicants throughout the year.

This plan will include an aggressive marketing plan to attract the best qualified staff. An in-staff Recruitment/Marketing specialist will oversee this process.

This plan will also include partnerships with local Colleges and Universities.

Recruitment Flexibility:

At ACHS our recruitment plan is to develop a system that has the flexibility to recruit highly effective and highly qualified staff that supports the needs of our community.

This system is separate from the APS district HR process but is supported by the district.

Impact on Students and Adults:

Students will have teachers that bring a set of skills that relate back to our theme of “International Leadership.”

At ACHS our students will benefit from a highly skilled staff and build better relationships with all school staff which will increase student attendance and improve student achievement.

Teachers will not only hold themselves to a higher standard, they will also hold their students to higher standards.

Rationale:

At ACHS we need high quality staff that understands the needs of our students and community.

Our students need consistency from all staff working with them and deserve staff that will be capable of helping them meet their goals.

ACHS is becoming a school of International Leadership so our staff should reflect that theme.

Multi-Step Selection Process:

At ACHS staff will be selected through a rigorous multi-step process.

Staff will be held to a higher standard and expected to maintain that standard in order to continue **year-to-year employment**.

This is will be based on our new formative teacher-evaluation process.

This process will ensure that teachers are truly committed to the innovation process, our students, families and the community.

Conditions and Flexibilities:

1. HR support to work with ACHS recruitment specialist.
2. Request a waiver from the district to hire non-licensed staff.
3. Request a waiver from the district for differentiated hiring timelines.
4. Request the EA position to be brought back to Central.
5. Create an internship program for our seniors to fill classified support positions.

Timeline:

Year 1: Recruit ACHS recruitment specialist to coordinate ongoing recruitment process

Year 2: Formal Partnerships with University and Colleges, Boettcher Foundation, Teach Across America, Grow Your Own Program

Year 3: Fully implemented

Retention and Compensation

Retention & Compensation:

ACHS will have a ***differentiated retention and compensation model*** that incentivizes teachers for hard to staff areas, and additional leadership pathways. This model will include Compensation, Career Pathway Advancement Opportunities, Collective Voice in Educational Decisions and Adequate Teacher Support Systems. ACHS needs the flexibility in staffing to allow for quick and actionable decisions to ensure students engage with the most effective instructional staff at all times. This will be achieved through **annual staff contracts**.

Retention and Compensation Objectives:

- Compensation- Create a salary structure that will attract and retain highly- effective educators and reward them for specific roles, responsibilities and achievements.

- Career Pathway Advancement Opportunities - Give staff a variety of opportunities to advance and participate in leadership roles.

Impact on Students and Staff:

Short-term and long- term Impact on Students: Offering bonuses at ACHS will attract high talent staff to our school and compete with surrounding districts, allowing us to be more selective in hiring in order to ensure students have access to the most highly effective teachers. The ability to provide extra incentives will ensure we do not have vacancies and are able to meet the needs of our students in all hard-to-staff content areas. A more robust career progression/ladder structure will provide students with access to teachers who have developed expertise in various areas. Last, this system will incentivize excellent teachers to stay at our school, students will benefit from increased staff consistency and the ability to build longer-term relationships with adults resulting in increased student achievement.

Short-term and long-term Impact on teachers: At ACHS this system of career progression and compensation will provide adults in our school with increased job satisfaction, decreased chronic teacher absenteeism, increased interest in pursuing a long-term career at this school, leadership skills and the opportunity to specialize in areas of interest, and additional compensation.

Differentiated Retention & Compensation Structure:

Sample

Annual Staff Contracts that may include:

- Salary Portability (Honoring teaching experience at hiring)
- Hard-to-Staff School - TBD ($2000) annual bonus
- Hard-to-Staff Subject Area - TBD ($2000) annual bonus
- Student Achievement Growth Goals Met (as measured by state assessment) - TBD ($2000) (paid after results are released)
- Career Leadership Pathway - TBD ($2000) per pathway progression

-Base (Effective Instruction; professional development)

-Teacher Leader (Effective Instruction; School-Based Roles (CTE, PLC, Dept Chair)

- Master Teacher (Effective Instruction/Demonstration classroom; Instructional Leadership Team; PD facilitator;) planner/facilitator

- Instructional Teacher Leader (Coach working with admin to support Instruction)

Rationale:

In recent years we have had a large turnover of teachers and we must address this issue to establish consistency for our students. While salary is not always the main reason individuals enter the teaching profession, research indicates it has an impact on who enters the profession (Milanowski 2003) and who stays. Our school's three year retention and vacancy data demonstrates we have a significant challenge attracting teachers to even consider applying at our school. Similarly, annual data indicates significant teacher turnover- which includes the loss of high performers. **This model addresses major concerns that cause teachers to leave, based on extensive data and research**

Why offer differentiated career opportunities? Teacher retention is enhanced by creating paths for teacher promotion (i.e., career ladders) that increase responsibility and leadership, and reward outstanding teaching practice. Career ladders have the potential to increase the job satisfaction of teachers by adding professional challenges and rewards, increasing their likelihood of staying at the school (Ingersoll 2004). Career ladders also have the built-in potential to increase retention among less-experienced teachers by presenting a challenging and rewarding future career prospect attainable without leaving the school.

Timeline:

Year 1: Immediate Compensation for staff who meet expectations.

Year 2: Structured System of Incentives

Year 3: Fully Implemented Differentiated System

The HOW:

1. At ACHS we will need to add a system for incentivized compensation in addition to the district pay scale in order to retain highly effective staff.
2. This system will include structured pay incentives designed around high needs bonuses, career progression, leadership, involvement, student relations and student achievement.
3. Request waiver from master agreement for additional incentivized compensation.
4. Request waiver from master agreement for annual staff contracts.

Evaluation

Proposed Evaluation Process:

At ACHS we will be enhancing our current system for evaluating our teachers. These enhancements will include:

-Eliminate Required Formal Observations
-Require 8 Formative (informal) Observations a year (with the option of 2 of them being peer observations)
-2 Evaluation Rating Meetings per year (Mid and End of the Year)
-Differentiated edvaluation focus based on experience (Year 1: QS 1 and 2, Year 2: QS 1,2 and 3, Year 3: QS 1,2,3,4 and 5)
-SLO –Teacher/Admin Developed
-Student Evaluations (mid-year/end-of-year)
-Self-Evaluation

-In addition to our teacher evaluations, we will be developing a more in depth system for evaluating “non-licensed” staff by year two.

Impact on Students and Adults:

Students: At ACHS students will benefit from this evaluation process by having highly qualified staff who are continually improving their professional practices.

Adults: At ACHS this enhanced evaluation process will give staff a more meaningful evaluation with opportunity for frequent feedback and more opportunities to reflect and adjust their practice.

Rationale:

At ACHS we want our students to have the opportunity to engage with highly-qualified staff. Research has proven that highly-qualified staff are the result of an accurate and efficient evaluation model. Our current model limits our opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue and consumes our time

Implementation Timeline:

Year 1:

- Waive formal observation requirement from pre-existing model and transition to 8 formative observations (informals) throughout the year.
- Create and train a pool of “peer evaluators” to implement second semester or the following year.
- Differentiated evaluation focus for teachers based on experience.
- Generate and pilot student teacher-evaluation process.

Year 2:

- Reflect and adjust implemented evaluation process.
- Fully implement student evaluation.
- Create new process for evaluating classified staff based on their specific roles. Create new process for evaluating administrative staff based on their specific roles.

Year 3:

- Reflect on and adjust Year 1 and 2 implementation as necessary.

Conditions and Flexibilities:

1. Create the criteria and select “peer evaluators.”
2. Request waiver for “formal observation” requirement.
3. Create Template for “Formative Observation” data-collection and feedback.
4. Determine Teacher Evaluation Quality Standards of focus for differentiated evaluations based on teacher experience.
5. Create student template for teacher-evaluations.
6. Create evaluation for specific roles of classified staff.

Flexibilities and Waivers

Conditions and Flexibilities

Waivers from state and local policies to:

- Allow school to determine own hiring process, timeline
- Allow school to refuse mandatory placements
- Allow school to hire non-licensed staff for supplementary (non-core) areas
- Allow school to offer annual contracts
- Allow school to develop own evaluation process, modify existing process to fit school's needs
- Allow school to set own compensation structure
- Allow school to depart from APS Calendar and develop own calendar
- Allow school to select own textbooks and curriculum
- Allow school to set own grading and assessment system
- Allow school to set own GPA policy
- Allow school to create own student retention, promotion, acceleration policy
- Allow school to create own Grad Requirements

Next Steps

Key Dates	Activities
Feb 3-11	Gather staff and community feedback to presentation
Feb 11	Complete draft Innovation Application that incorporates staff and community feedback ; gather additional feedback
Week of Feb 22	Collection of support evidence; conduct votes to demonstrate consent
Feb 26	Final plans due to local board
March 1	School board presentation
March 15	Board votes on Innovation Plans prior to sending to state board of education