



Executive Summary

UW Laboratory School

Albany County School District #1

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Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

The UW Laboratory School is a public school of choice in Albany County School District One currently serving 235 kindergarten through 9th grade students. Enrollment is through a lottery of applications on file. Currently, there are 20 full-time, certified staff members employed, along with 10 shared or part-time certified teachers, and 12 full or part-time classified staff members. The school is located in the College of Education building on the University of Wyoming campus. Established in 1887 as a University Preparatory School, the Lab School (Prep) has transformed over time, while maintaining its unique relationship with the University's College of Education. As an integral component of the UW Teacher Education Program, the school serves as a laboratory for innovative and research-based education. The school models a student-centered learning approach while providing a learning site for university students. Hundreds of UW undergraduate and graduate students complete observations, practicum experiences, and internships in the school each year. The school is a charter member of the National League of Democratic Schools which was established in 2004, and emphasizes the growth of students as individuals who are successful members of our democratic society. In 2014, the school was invited to become a member of the Ashoka Changemaker Schools Network.

Over the last three years, the school has maintained high levels of achievement across broad educational goals. During this time, there has been increased focus on data collection, analysis, and action planning that has included monitoring student progress using multiple measures and providing corrective or enrichment instruction as needed. Another change in the past three years is improvements and renovations to the physical environment. The purchase of technology tools such as ipads, document cameras, interactive smart boards, and projectors, as well as some needed computer upgrades/replacements has also occurred.

Continuous learning for all is an important part of the school's mission and staff participate in a variety of teacher leadership and professional learning opportunities. Staff are involved in university research projects; enroll in graduate classes and programs; teach and provide guest lectures for undergraduate and graduate university courses; serve on a variety of school and district committees; participate and take leadership roles in state and national organizations and work groups; and present at state and national conferences. In addition, a significant number of teachers have accomplished National Board Certification and additional teachers are pursuing this advanced certification. The school is a 2012 recipient of the Ellbogen Meritorious Schools Award. Many teachers have also received state and national awards and recognition.

The unique role and setting of the Lab School provides many benefits and a few challenges. The District leases the school's space in the College of Education which was built in 1949. The age of the facility and the shared role of the District and University require different methods for maintaining and improving the school environment for optimal learning and safety. Parking is another challenge and the school has worked with the University to make it easier for parents to drop off/pick up their children as well as to be involved in school activities and events. As reported in previous years' Executive Summaries, meeting the wide ranging needs of all learners while addressing the whole child and simultaneously preparing students to be productive citizens in the twenty-first century, continues to be a challenge. The school is committed to not only improving the performance of students who are not yet proficient in basic skills, but also to challenging and providing enrichment opportunities for the many students who are already performing at a proficient or advanced level. Despite our nation's narrow view of accountability focusing primarily on Literacy, Math, and Science, every effort is made to maintain rich opportunities for Social Studies, physical education and wellness, visual and performing arts, foreign language, and contemporary skills including emotional

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intelligence, higher order thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Additionally, the school remains committed to engaging students in complex, authentic learning through integrated curriculum opportunities, investigations, simulations, research projects and presentations, field trips, and field work as well as meaningful service learning and community service projects.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

UW Lab School Vision: To serve as a model for effective, learner-centered kindergarten through 9th grade education as part of a public school district and teacher education institute promoting the development of competent and democratic citizens.

UW Lab School Mission: To create a positive learning community that will recognize, foster, and assess continuous improvement toward high levels of academic, social, and emotional achievement for ALL students, pre-service teachers, faculty, and staff.

Achievement is determined by a variety of indicators including: national/state and professional standards; individual/group academic performance, individual/group accomplishments, and individual/group growth. The school strives to achieve the mission by implementing research-based best practices in education. Developmentally appropriate, differentiated instruction is promoted through multi-age and flexible grouping. Curriculum integration and collaboration with specialists is emphasized to support learning in all areas. Students are involved in opportunities for independent research and self-directed learning using project presentations as a mode of developing and sharing knowledge. In addition, opportunities are created for engaged learning with attention to student choice within a framework of standards. Critical thinking, problem solving, and self-evaluation are incorporated into curriculum. Field studies, camps, and outdoor education are integrated to provide authentic, engaging learning. There is also a focus on developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for successful participation in democratic processes.

The school provides rich programming in Music, Art, P.E., Foreign Language, Science, and Social Studies, while maintaining high levels of student achievement in Math, Science, and Literacy. Adjustments to instructional programs and schedules are frequently made to better meet the needs of a variety of learners. Multiple sources of data are used to determine when students need additional time and support to understand concepts or when students are learning quickly and would benefit from more opportunities for extension and application. Time is built into the school schedule to provide opportunities for these interventions and enrichments.

There is a school-wide commitment to engaging students in complex, authentic learning through integrated curriculum opportunities, investigations, simulations, research projects and presentations, field trip,; and field work. There are ongoing efforts to align the curriculum to the Common Core State Standards with a focus on the instructional practices emphasized in the Common Core State Standards. Students are involved in integrated, standards-based learning experiences. The 4th/5th grade Sweet Shop and 6th/7th grade Pie Party for Peace are examples of fully integrated learning experiences linked to meaningful community service. This type of experience promotes authentic reading, writing, speaking, listening, research, and math skills to plan, organize, and facilitate the fund-raising of thousands of dollars for student selected charities. Service learning experiences also help students to expand their view of community. Along with multiple day trips for all students, a few of the opportunities for extended field trips and field work have included: a five-night Biology trip to Yellowstone for 9th graders; a four-night Science trip to Keystone Science School for 7th graders; a two-night Science trip to Centennial for 4th and 5th graders; and a two-night Social Studies trip around Wyoming for 4th and 5th graders.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

The UW Lab School has maintained high levels of achievement over the last three years on broad educational goals. This information is summarized in annual UW Lab School Accountability Reports which can be found on the Albany County School District One website (www.acsd1.org) under the UW Lab School link.

In the next three years, the school is striving for additional improvement in the area of literacy, emphasizing informational reading, writing, and discussion as primary modes of learning both content and skills. After four years of increasing achievement in reading, the spring 2013-14 Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) test results show no change in the percent of kindergarten through ninth grade students scoring at or above the national mean (at 81% for both 2012-13 and 2013-14). In addition, the school is working to increase achievement in Math. Following three years of strong performance, Math MAP results show an overall decrease of three percent. Improving achievement in Science, especially for girls, had been identified as an area for improvement during the 2012-13 school year. The 2013-14 results from the state test in the area of Science show a significant increase in the percentage of students performing at the proficient or advanced level with 4th grade students improving from 59% to 92% and 8th grade students improving from 57% to 86%. The school continues to build shared knowledge of best practice in assessment, grading, and reporting. Standards-based grading process has been extended to the Middle School and integration of Common Core State Standards into the grading/reporting system is taking place across all grade levels. The school remains committed to meeting the varied needs of all learners. There will be a continuing focus on supporting students who are not yet proficient as well as further challenging students who are already performing at a Proficient or Advanced level by providing opportunities to enrich and extend their learning.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

The UW Lab School has a comprehensive accountability report that can be found on the District website (www.acsd1.org) under the UW Lab School link. This report strives to broaden the way we approach accountability as well as the way it is communicated. It provides a wide variety of information including: student and staff accomplishments; highlights related to our participation in the National League of Democratic Schools as well as in the area of Coordinated School Health; achievement results from a variety of measures including PAWS, MAP, and ACT EXPLORE; and progress towards school goals.