**Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Quality Review**

**School Self-Evaluation Form**

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| **Name of principal:** | Chad Thomas |
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| **Name of school:** | Long Creek Elementary |
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**Please complete with as much detail as you can, use the completion as a professional development exercise if appropriate and send it to your lead reviewer (electronically) two weeks before the review**.

**Completing this form will help you prepare for some of the discussions which will take place both before and during the review. It will also help the review team get to know you and your school and to understand how well the school community knows itself.**

**Guidance on completing the form:**

* Please be evaluative, rather than descriptive, and make your focus outcomes for students.
* Include references to where the evidence of your self-evaluation can be found, e.g. "excellent boys’ results in state math tests as shown in annual report to the state”, “parents’ questionnaires from 2006”.
* Be concise; (for example, use bullet points or note form).
* Aim to confine your response to no more than eight pages.
* Please place an X against the grade (1-4), which most accurately reflects your judgment of overall quality in response to the questions.
* **You are advised to complete section B last. This section is summative and draws on your evaluations elsewhere in the self-evaluation report.**
* Please omit sections where you feel that you are not in a position to respond.

**How should evaluations be made?**

* **You are strongly encouraged to refer to the Quality Criteria, sub-criteria and rubrics and as you complete the evaluations. These are included within the Notes of Guidance for the School Quality Review and should be kept close at hand as you complete the evaluations**.

**What approach should we take?**

Schools have adopted different approaches.

In some schools the principal and the leadership team have completed the form as a part of one of their regular meetings.

Other schools have devoted part of a faculty meeting as a way of involving all members of staff; this is highly recommended as a means of engaging the whole staff, helping them to prepare for the review and gathering evidence which reflects the work of the whole school.

Whichever approach you adopt, we recommend that you do not make this an onerous task but that you take the opportunity to stop, reflect and record your immediate perceptions.

**School Profile**

**School name and number:** Long Creek Elementary School; #444

**School address:** 9213-A Beatties Ford Rd. Huntersville, NC 28078

**School telephone number:** 980-343-6095

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | # | % |
| **Grades:** | PreK - 5 | 100% |
| **Number of students enrolled K-5:** | 513 | 100% |
| **\*Number of students enrolled Pre-K:** | 140 | 100% |
| **Number of K-5 general education students:** | 426 | 84% |
| **Number of K-5 EC students:** | 53 | 10% |
| **Number of K-5 LEP students:** | 22 | 4% |
| **Number of Gifted students** | 12 | 2% |
| **Principal suspensions:** | 2 | <1% |
| **Superintendent suspensions:** | 0 | 0% |
| **Percentage of students (K-5) eligible for Free or** | 267 | 52% |
| **Reduced-Price Lunch:** |  |  |
| **K-5 Ethnic make-up of the students (by percentage):** | AA-53%; W-33%; H-6.0%; MR-3.0%; | |
|  | AS-4%; AI-1.0%; | |

**A.** **What is distinctive about your school?**

Our school has advanced technology, student uniform policy (creates consistency) and large classrooms to provide adequate space for collaboration among both students and teachers. Additionally, Long Creek boasts a cohesive, veteran staff with high morale. Characteristics that promote a positive culture at Long Creek include collaborative team planning, clear communication and expectations between administration and staff, and staff focused on the best interests of all students. Parents express a high level of trust in the principal and feel that their children’s academic and social needs are met.

**B** **How effective is your school overall?**

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| School Self-Evaluation: | High quality (4) | X | Undeveloped (1) |

**How do you know?**

Long Creek met high growth standards in 2010-2011 and is deemed a School of Distinction according to North Carolina ABC standards and based upon 3rd-5th grade EOG scores in reading, math and science. High staff morale is evident based on the 2010-2011 Teacher Survey results. Teacher dedication is demonstrated through faculty seeking opportunities such as National Board Certification, UNCC-MSP Project Participant, graduate degrees and grants.

**What are its notable strengths?**

Staff retention, visionary leadership, positive school culture/climate, active PLCs, and an advanced technological environment are notable attributes.

**What are its main areas for improvement?**

We can improve the following areas:

1. Teacher expectations for all student performance
2. Enhance the use of data to drive instruction
3. Improve higher level thinking and questioning strategies to increase reading comprehension
4. Ensure the alignment of all instructional activities with measurable learning outcomes
5. **How effective is your school in ensuring high quality achievement for students in all grades, especially in the core subjects?**

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| School Self-Evaluation: | High quality (4) | X | Undeveloped (1) |

**How do you know?**

Student Performance increasing:

1. Math from 77.8% (2007-08) to 85.3% (2008-09) to 81.4% (2009-2010) to 87.1% (2010-2011)
2. Reading from 65.9% (2007-08) to 75.2% (2008-09) to 75% (2009-2010) to 75.1% (2010-2011)
3. Science from 46.3% (2007-08) to 54.4% (2008-09) to 61% (2009-2010) to 78% (2010-2011)
4. EOG total from 71.8% (2007-08) to 76.8% (2009-09) to 75.9% (2009-2010) to 80.7% (2010-2011)

Based on the 2010-2011 end of year DIBELS assessment, 85% of the K-2 students met their reading benchmark standards.

Met AYP for two straight years 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

**In which subjects and grades do students do best, and why?**

Our students perform well in math across every grade level. The continued implementation of the K-5 Math Investigations curriculum enhances math discussion and overall problem solving skills. MSG (Math Small Group), which was implemented school-wide, advanced our students critical thinking and problem solving skills. In the area of reading for grade 3-5, the use of the William and Mary curriculum and novel studies allowed our students to gain a deeper understanding of literature and literary elements.

**In which subjects and grades is improvement needed, and what action is being taken?**

In order to improve fifth grade science, the school established a science lab, which allows staff to conduct more effective and meaningful experiments. Implementation of vertical planning among the science teachers will enhance instruction of the science curriculum across all grade levels. We have also implemented vertical planning in the areas of Literacy, Math, and Talent Development to improve the overall effectiveness those curriculum areas.

We have implemented departmentalization and ability grouping to help focus our instruction on student needs in each group based upon formative data. Our departmentalized literacy teachers have also adjusted their instruction to include more non-fiction text, vocabulary building strategies, and cross-curricular integration. Through small group instruction, a reading teacher works with struggling students in grades 2-4 using guided reading strategies.

In order to improve K-5 vocabulary development, we are putting into place school-wide vocabulary practices. Support staff and special area teachers will be asking students vocabulary terms based on the NCSCOS.

K-2 reading instruction is enhanced through our Intensive Reading Program, which also incorporates guided reading strategies. This program allows targeted small group instruction of the Big Five areas of reading.

**Is there evidence of disparities in student achievement by subgroups? If so, what action is being taken?**

There is evidence of disparities in student achievement with our economically disadvantaged students, Exceptional Children, and African American male populations. Using small group instruction designed with best practices (such as targeted fluency instruction, guided reading, and direct instruction) will decrease this achievement gap. Response to Instruction (RtI), conferences and Personalized Education Plans will improve the home-school connection. Accelerated Reader Renaissance Program, Family Game Night, Parent University courses and Accelerated Reader/Math Day provide opportunities for parents to learn strategies to help students at home.

**How is the school addressing the specialized needs of EC and LEP students?**

To address the needs of our EC and LEP students the following models are used: inclusion, co-teaching, pull-out, one-on-one and collaborative planning among the regular education teachers and EC teachers.

**How does the school use student performance data to take and adjust actions to improve student achievement?**

Teachers use local assessments, common assessments, EOG scores, and authentic student work to determine students’ needs. The data from Thinkgate and Managing for Performance Teacher Portal is analyzed routinely during vertical and team planning meetings. Grade level data notebooks are used to initiate data discussions. Lesson plans are created and adjusted to meet the needs of the students based on the team analysis from the data. After implementation of the action plan, students are reassessed and updated data is used to drive instruction for teacher directed instruction, math small group time and literacy workshop.

**How does your school allocate available resources to improve student learning and achievement?**

In order to improve student learning and achievement, a variety of resources have been allocated to the entire school community. Resources include a science lab, research lab, the advancement of Accelerated Reader and STAR testing through Renaissance Place, SMARTBoard technology (SMARTBoards and SMARTSlates), document cameras, FLIP video cameras, LCD projectors in every room, and the use of online resources such as Discovery Education, Study Island, Enchanted Learning, Reading A to Z, and Science A to Z. Classroom SMARTBoards were allocated to designated teachers once those teachers committed to participate in training and taking a leadership role at the school level.

1. **How effective is your school in providing a relevant and appropriate curriculum for all students, grades and sub-groups?**

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**How do you know?**

As a result of the relevant and appropriate curriculum provided by Long Creek staff, students made High Growth in three out of the last four years. We also achieved North Carolina School of Distinction for the 2010-2011 school year. In order to target specific student needs, staff members collaborate to implement programs such as small group instruction, Intensive Reading Model, and specialized curriculum. The mentioned strategies support the needs of students struggling to grasp concepts as well as those who have mastered concepts. Long Creek has increased the services provided to academically gifted students and catalyst students by creating an accelerated learning environment for third through fifth grades. Staff retention, closing the achievement gap, and effective utilization of certified special area teachers for individualized instruction, demonstrate effective provision of relevant and appropriate curriculum for all students, grades and sub-groups.

**How is alignment with the NCSCOS ensured?**

Classroom teachers, facilitators and support staff meet weekly to plan lessons based on the NCSCOS and Common Core. The lesson plan format utilized by teachers includes the NCSCOS and Common Core. Achievement Data is disaggregated and aligned to the NCSCOS and/or Common Core. The instructional staff analyzes data during periodic half day planning sessions to identify students’ mastery of skills, as well as create lessons to re-teach partially mastered skills.

**How does the school ensure a broad range of learning experiences?**

Long Creek staff incorporates daily use of upgraded technology and SMARTboards to reach a variety of learning styles and enhance student engagement. Teachers use Discovery Education to incorporate technology and support students in making real life connections with daily instruction. Students at Long Creek experience hands on learning through Math Investigations in kindergarten through fifth grades. Special area teachers link their instruction to that of the regular education teacher. School-wide programming is planned to complement classroom instruction. This includes math/science/book fairs and assemblies. The guidance services have been expanded to include school-wide career and multicultural exploration through a Careers of Wheels Day and a Multicultural Fair.

1. **How effective is the quality of teaching and instruction in ensuring high quality learning, progress and achievement?**

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**How do you know?**

Teacher evaluations and classroom walkthroughs document high level of student engagement during instructional presentation, time on task during instructional activities and structured lesson plans. EOG results document four consecutive years of achieving growth.

**Which are the strongest features of teaching and learning and why?**

The strengths of teaching and learning noted at Long Creek include high expectations, dedication to the success of each student, active teaching and learning and student accountability. The noted strengths have supported us in closing the achievement gap, meeting AYP goals 2 of the last 3 years, and increasing the number of students making their growth goals.

**What aspects of teaching and learning most need improvement and what action is being taken?**

Teaching and learning experiences:

* Need to be directly correlated with ongoing data collection and reflected in teaching practices. These needs are identified through weekly “DataWise discussions”. The result is a collaborative effort of teachers in all content areas to enhance instruction of the identified skill.
* Need to include more critical thinking and scaffolding to develop higher cognitive abilities. The needs are addressed through Professional Development on higher level questioning techniques and explaining the process of mathematical thinking.
* Need of enhancement through opportunities to collaborate with teachers at various grade levels. Implementation of vertical planning addresses this need.

**How do teachers assess students’ achievement of learning objectives and adjust instruction with assessment information?**

Teachers analyze local assessments, Investigations Benchmark Checklists, as well as ongoing formal and informal assessments to make decisions for curriculum compacting, pre-teaching, review, differentiated small groups and workshop/math small group activities. The instructional staff and administrators spend time discussing and analyzing data during weekly grade level planning and half day planning to build a foundation for creating and selecting appropriate instructional resources.

**4.** **How effective is the school in ensuring high quality leadership and management?**

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| School Self-Evaluation: | High quality (4) | X | Undeveloped (1) |

**How do you know?**

The results from the staff surveys reflect extremely positive feedback regarding the leadership and management at Long Creek Elementary. Long Creek Elementary encourages open collaboration among staff members during the weekly team planning, vertical planning, Leadership Cabinet meetings, School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings and through a variety of other shared decision making opportunities for staff. This collaboration process insists on respectful dialogue and promotes faculty investment in Long Creek’s student performance. Long Creek has also instituted a behavior motivation program called “Mighty Mustangs” ensuring students behavior is managed to promote quality lesson delivery with minimal distractions.

**Which are the strongest aspects and why?**

The leadership at Long Creek exemplifies consistent and fair practices with both students and faculty. The leadership also respects and encourages colleagues to share thoughts, opinions, and ideas. As our population continues to change, we have maintained our academic proficiency and student academic growth.

**What most needs improvement and what action is being taken?**

The staff at Long Creek donates personal time and energy to ensure quality lesson delivery every day. The staff recognizes efforts of the administration to maintain high morale. It is recommended that the administrators continue investigating new and creative ways to appreciate and compensate staff for success at Long Creek.

**5.** **How effective is the school in creating a high quality learning environment?**

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**How do you know?**

Students’ respect for the physical building and equipment is evident. Student discipline reports are carefully monitored and behavior problems are addressed promptly in a fair and equitable manner. The data supports that families choose to remain at Long Creek due to its excellent reputation despite living near other well performing CMS schools. The families of lower performing schools consistently choose Long Creek through the NCLB option to further their child’s education. Teachers attend many professional development opportunities throughout the year and summer to stay current with educational trends. Fund raising activities at Long Creek will support increasing the number of Smartboards and other technology resources available for instruction.

**Which are the strongest aspects and why?**

Teachers continually attend professional development courses to remain experts in their field. Many teachers will voluntarily return and implement what they have learned through these courses. Long Creek has been involved in piloting new curriculum which allows for professional growth. Staff, student and parent surveys indicate that all stakeholders believe Long Creek provides a safe and effective learning environment. Finally, Long Creek’s newer facility offers new technology for teachers to utilize during lesson delivery.

**What most needs improvement and what action is being taken?**

Technology changes so quickly and time to investigate these changes is limited. To address this need, Long Creek offers technology professional development.

1. **How effective is the school in establishing a high quality partnership with parents, other schools and the community?**

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| School Self-Evaluation: | High quality (4) | X | Undeveloped (1) |

**How do you know?**

The abundance of donations (goods and services) received from community partners such as Bloom, Chick-fil-A, Assurance United Methodist Church, and community volunteers reflect a high quality partnership. Schools within and out of CMS visit Long Creek to observe effective practices.

**Which are the strongest features of communication between home/school about the school’s work and about each student’s achievement? Why?**

Planners, Parent Assistant, the Long Creek Facebook page, Renaissance Place Home Connect, weekly Student Services Team meetings, Long Creek’s web page and total school commitment to positive weekly contact/communication to parents strengthens Long Creek’s home/school communication. These features enhance parental access to their child’s academic performance. Therefore, student achievement excels.

**What most needs improvement and what action is being taken?**

Long Creek could use more male volunteers. This year SLT is developing a program (M.E.A.S.) to increase the visual presence of males within the school. In addition, the volunteer committee has launched an orientation program to connect current volunteers to their desired area of service as a means to retain volunteers. The committee is actively planning ways to demonstrate appreciation for volunteers.

**What aspects of the school’s work to involve parents/guardians and the community in the life of the school work best? Why?**

* The evening music performances coordinated by the music teacher, Beth Gommel, increased the attendance at PTO meetings.
* Family Game Night is a highly attended event allowing parents to interact with students and teachers, while learning math and reading strategies to apply at home.
* Curriculum Night sparks involvement from parents, PTO and community partners such as Chick-fil-A.

**What needs improvement and what action is being taken?**

Long Creek needs to increase family and community involvement. Creating innovative motivations for parental attendance in Parent University courses, implementation of Renaissance Place Home Connect, current Long Creek and teacher web pages and publicity through Lake Norman Citizen will help vary the modalities of communication to ensure successful home and community partnerships.

1. **What other information, if any, do you feel it would be important for the reviewers to know prior to the review? (For example: principal recently appointed previous month)**
   * Our percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students has grow from 19% in 2007 to over 50% in 2011.
   * We departmentalize and ability group in third, fourth and fifth grade.
   * We cluster our gifted (TD)/accelerated students into leveled core content classes in third through fifth grade.
   * We currently have K-5 students in our new facility and Pre-k housed in a renovated building on the old campus.
   * Our staff theme for this year is “Imagination and Innovation” to focus us on the enhancement of 21st century learning skills and attributes. .
   * We created a Leadership Cabinet (grade level and department team leaders) that meets monthly to discuss concerns and provide solutions to improve Long Creek. No administrators attend to help keep the dialogue candid and open.
   * Our staff voted to rotate staff SLT representatives to enable a larger group to experience leadership and decision making opportunities.