

Cambridge Education, LLC. – Planning and Pre-implementation

We have a core competency in facilitating effective site-level planning and pre-implementation through our Focused Planning to Improve Student Learning process. Our **Theory of Action** is that if a school can define a narrow set of strategic objectives to accelerate student learning, execute well-defined initiatives with a persistent focus on implementation, and systematically monitor the impact of those initiatives to inform midcourse corrections, then outcomes for students will improve dramatically.

Cambridge Education’s Guiding Principles for School Planning

- **Deep and Intentional:** Focus on a few overarching objectives. Target identified needs and the instructional core.
- **Coherent:** Develop a **coherent and focused** set of strategies and initiatives specific to supporting the school’s own unique path to success.
- **Collective Responsibility:** Enable and support **cross-functional collaboration** and take **collective responsibility**.
- **Dynamic:** Use evidence at interim checkpoints to assess progress. Adjust in a **dynamic process** in light of new learning, experience and interim results.
- **Monitor the plan:** Identify and support implementation and monitoring of progress.

We have applied the above principles to support the design and implementation of effective SIG programs in over 40 schools across the US ranging from inner-city Chicago, Los Angeles, Newark and New York to smaller towns and cities in Michigan and Wisconsin and remote rural locations in Illinois and Virginia. We offer a comprehensive package including: conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment, including facilitating parent and community forums; supporting schools and districts to write successful SIG applications; and serving as Lead Partner in both Transformation and Turnaround Models and facilitating the effective site level planning at all stages, including pre-planning.

The exact nature of our services is customized to meet the requirements of the individual school, but the process includes:

- Consideration and revision (if necessary) of vision and mission statements and development of the theory of action
- Use of multiple data sources
- The creation of themed school priorities (no more than 5 and optimum of 3)
- Unpacking of priorities to ensure deep understanding
- The creation of “BIG messages” that capture wide stakeholder views and perceptions
- The alignment of BIG messages with priority statements
- Methodology for measuring progress, including the creation of group and individual action plans with interim success criteria and endpoint key performance indicators (KPI)
- Accountability processes for regularly, rigorously and consistently tracking progress

We believe that by engaging staff and the broader community in the school improvement planning process, schools have the opportunity to develop collective ownership of their overall improvement strategy and a broad spectrum of distributed leadership, key components of sustaining improvement over time.

States, districts and schools have all provided positive feedback on the quality and effectiveness of the planning process we have implemented as Lead Partner.

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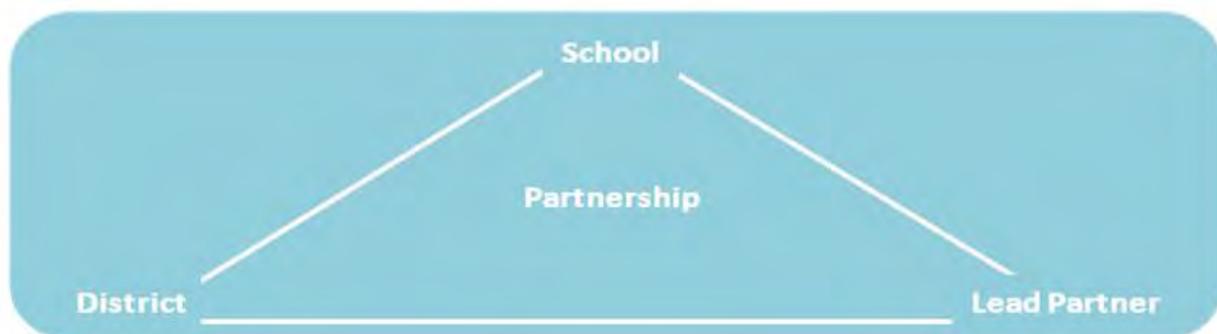
Cambridge Education, LLC. – Governance

Our experience, expertise and research drawn from around the world indicate the critical importance of effective governance in order to ensure that education reform is successful. In particular it is essential that everyone realizes the importance of placing an unrelenting focus on the quality of learning and teaching.

This entails transforming student-teacher relationships, promoting equity, providing opportunities for all students to be actively engaged in their own learning, and developing a culture of success. Teachers need to be the main agents of change, and students the main focus for change.

A key component of implementing successful transformation is that LEAs must review and revise their governance structures. As Lead Partner, we support LEAs with this process, and provide high quality training for school board members to enable them to fully understand their key roles and responsibilities.

One of the key components that it is essential that districts and schools recognize from the outset is that if they are to achieve the maximum benefit from engaging a Lead Partner, highly effective school transformation must involve a genuine partnership between the three parties. In locations where this has happened, for example in Virginia, for all of the SIG schools where we were Lead Partner, at the end of the SIG funding the schools had come off the state priority list and four schools had achieved full accreditation for the first time.



Our technical assistance, support and training include a number of key areas including:

- **Challenges** - financial systems and governance structures
- **Roles and Responsibilities** - the need to focus on strategic planning to implement and manage the intervention and accountability as opposed to day-to-day management
- **Alternative Approaches** - lessons on effective governance arrangements from other sectors and other nations.
- **The Way Forward** - what should the structure look like? Who should helm the wheel? And how can we bring these thoughts into action?

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Cambridge Education, LLC. – Operational Flexibility

Schools receiving SIG funds can select from different SIG Intervention Models: Closure; Restart; Turnaround; Transformation; Whole School Reform; and Early Childhood. We have supported districts and schools to implement all of these models. However, we primarily support the effective implementation of the Transformation, Turnaround and Whole School Reform models.

In facilitating Transformation, Turnaround and Whole School Reform models we have supported schools and districts to maximize operational flexibilities including, for example:

- Developing a comprehensive instructional reform model that places an unrelenting focus on evidence of student learning and support for teacher effectiveness
- Working with school leaders to create and implement plans for recruitment, placement and development of staff to ensure staff members have the professional skills and personal attributes to meet the needs of all students
- Supporting the design and implementation of innovative schedules and collaborative structures that increase time for both students and staff
- Providing high quality leadership support and training for school leaders, including consultation regarding management of SIG funds
- Providing high quality job-embedded professional development and coaching for teachers and support staff

The following are typical comments that we have received from schools and districts on the impact of our work in this area:

“School leaders have established plans, using the new Operational flexibility to recruit and retain high quality staff.”

“Leadership at school has established and communicated a clear vision for change and success. The school community embraces it and is willing to work hard to ensure achievement. All stakeholders confidently share that leadership at the school has changed radically this year and that the school is now beginning to work with a strong sense of team spirit and purpose, motivating all to try harder, take risks, and challenge each other.”

“After a year with the Common Priorities Approach, teachers truly had a good understanding and solid foundation of their work with CCSS....Common Priorities has been the strongest piece in our integrated approach because it too focused on building capacity and taught us to use our common planning time effectively”

“With the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, clearer and higher expectations of staff, and more leadership development opportunities for teachers, the school is attracting higher quality staff and ensuring their efforts are validated. Many staff also share how key and strategic hires are supporting more robust and capable instruction and leadership.”

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Cambridge Education, LLC. – Teacher/Principal Evaluation with Student Growth Component

Cambridge Education has extensive experience and expertise in supporting states, districts and schools to design and implement highly effective teacher and principal evaluation systems, which include student growth components. In addition to our SIG work, we were partners in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s **Measures of Effective Teaching Project**. We have applied the findings of this project to our work with SIG schools and other districts across the U.S., most notably Hillsborough County where we have trained over 900 district and school administrators and peer evaluators with a focus on ensuring inter-rater reliability (IRR), which has led to IRR of over 97% between evaluators. In addition to our work in the U.S., between 2000 and 2005 we also led, on behalf of the UK Government, the implementation of Teacher and Principal Evaluation in all 26,000 schools in England and Wales.

In supporting SIG and Priority schools, our services are closely aligned to a range of teaching and learning frameworks, and support teacher and principal effectiveness, leading to increased student performance.

<p>1. Preparation and Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy ■ Demonstrating knowledge of students ■ Setting instructional outcomes ■ Demonstrating knowledge of resources ■ Designing coherent instruction ■ Designing student assessments 	<p>Common Priorities Approach</p> <p>Building the capacity of teacher teams to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analyze multiple sources of data ■ Unpack and prioritize learning standards ■ Design units based on UBD approaches ■ Design formative assessments ■ Set instructional outcomes and design lessons utilizing effective instructional strategies 	<p>The Common Priorities Approach builds the capacity of teacher teams to improve curriculum, assessment, and lessons</p>
<p>2. Classroom Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creating an environment of respect and rapport ■ Establishing a culture for learning ■ Managing classroom procedures ■ Managing student behavior ■ Organizing physical space 	<p>The Motivated Classroom</p> <p>Building the capacity of teachers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage their students (showing that they care) ■ Build structure (establishing expectations) ■ Stimulate their students (empowering them to learn) ■ Give support (giving effective feedback) 	<p>The Motivated Classroom gives teachers a wide range of practical strategies to establish a classroom environment that promotes student engagement and self-motivation</p>
<p>3. Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicating with students ■ Using questioning and discussion techniques ■ Engaging students in learning ■ Using assessment in instruction ■ Demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness 	<p>Assessment for Learning</p> <p>Building the capacity of teachers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share learning outcomes in ways that build students’ ownership of learning ■ Ask better questions that cause students to think and give them support to answer them ■ Provide feedback in ways that help students improve their performance ■ Promote assessment by students for peers and self 	<p>Assessment for Learning helps teachers promote student ownership of learning while assessing and responding to their learning</p>
<p>4. Professional Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reflecting on teaching ■ Maintaining accurate records ■ Communicating with families ■ Participating in the professional community ■ Growing and developing professionally 	<p>Targeted Job-embedded Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Building reflective practice individually and in teams ■ Building systems for maintaining records ■ Supporting systems of communication ■ Building and supporting professional learning systems and learning communities 	<p>Targeted Job-embedded Support helps develop a culture of professionalism that supports effective teaching and learning</p>

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Incentives and Strategies

The recruitment, hiring and development of school leaders and teachers is a key part of our role as a Lead Partner, which we have undertaken in five of our most recent transformation projects, including in Illinois, New York City and across Virginia. Our support includes establishing job descriptions, drafting the advertisement, planning and supporting the interview process. One of our key roles as Lead Partner is supporting and developing school leaders and teachers and supporting the implementation of effective retention policies so that improvements can be sustained once the period of funding and support is over.

Recruitment activities- we support districts and schools to maximize the size of their recruitment pool by participating in a range of activities including:

- **Career Fairs** - host and register for career fairs with CPS, colleges and universities, and The Teacher Recruitment Consortium, Teach for America Selection Day
- **College and Universities** - communicate with outstanding national and local Colleges of Education and career management centers
- **Websites** - post open positions on websites such as the school's website, CPS, ISBE, IASA Education Job Bank, Career Builder, and Non-Profit Opportunities (NPO.net)
- **Networking** - contact colleagues and school leaders for referrals; establish relationships with career management centers
- **Alternative Teacher Programs** - contact National Teacher Education Center (NTEC) and Urban Teacher Education Program (UTEP) for referrals
- **Public Relations** - communicate with media sources to publicize school events and recognize student and faculty accomplishments to attract teachers and leaders that are able to facilitate and sustain transformation.

Hiring – we support districts and schools to review and revise their hiring policies and practices to ensure that they follow best practice including: Resume Review; Phone Screening; Panel Interview; Demonstration lesson (Teachers) ; Presentation to Board Members (Principal) Student data and/or portfolio artifacts; Reference Check

Retention Incentives we support schools and districts to design and implement a range of individual and team incentives including for example:

- **Teacher attendance** - 98% or above annually -\$500 Wish list of instructional materials
- **Class attendance** - 95% or above – Monthly preferential parking
- **Class Student achievement** - 90% or more student growth pre to post-tests– options include - \$500 Wish list of materials, PD paid conference
- **Subject content Student achievement** - 90% or more students passing on benchmark assessment options as per individual teacher
- **Class culture** - 6 behavior referrals or less generated by teacher -\$ 500 Wish list of materials
- **Administrators** Overall student achievement - 90% or more student growth on NWEA Reading and Math Professional Development opportunities (1 paid conference registration per year)

An example of the success of activities in this area is that, in all four of the first round SIG schools where we were involved as Lead Partner from the outset in the recruitment of a new principal and hiring and retention of teachers, they are continuing to improve two years after the end of our involvement as Lead Partner on a wide range of measures including, for example: student and teacher attendance, student graduation rates, college readiness indicators and, above all, student academic achievement in ELA and math.

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Rewards Associated with (Improving Student) Achievement or Graduation Rate

In all the schools where we serve as Lead Partner, a key area of work is strengthening the climate and culture in the school. In particular this includes reviewing, designing and actively promoting whole school behavior intervention and support policies and procedures. Many of the schools have formally adopted Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (**PBIS**) as their systemic approach to proactive, school-wide behavior based on a Response to Intervention (**RtI**) model. However, we often find that the efficacy and rigor of the implementation of the program is inconsistent. For example, in some schools PBIS is applied consistently in public areas but there is a high degree of variation between classrooms. In other schools the opposite applies. Our team also facilitates student and parent focus groups to ensure that they actively encourage and promote the engagement of students and parents in the development of incentive plans.

Sample Student Incentive plan

<u>Who</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Reward</u>
Individual Student	Attendance-98% or above	Per Semester-January & June	Silver Dollar Ticket for Free Hat Day
Students	Grade Level attendance 95% or above	Per month	Class Pizza Party
Individual Student	Student achievement-90% or more student growth on universal screening on reading or math	January and May (at 2 nd and 3 rd screening)	Choice of one: 1.)Freeze pop Friday 2.)Flash drive
Individual Student	3 referrals or less per month	Monthly (last school day of the month)	Choice of one: 1.)Flash drive 2.)1 free game pass with popcorn 3.) Surprise Grab Bag
Class	Overall student achievement-90% or more student growth on reading and math per universal screening	January and May (at 2 nd and 3 rd screening)	Choice of one: 1.)Class popcorn & a movie party 2.)Field trip

Schools typically report that, as a result of our technical assistance, training and support to administrators and faculty, there is much greater consistency and application of the agreed policies and procedures across the school.

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Extended Time

As a Lead Partner, we have successfully facilitated discussions with school and district administrators and local teacher union representatives to implement an extended school day for all students. In a number of schools, the additional time has been strategically used for targeted instruction, intervention, remediation, credit recovery, enrichment activities, and more Advanced Placement and dual-enrollment classes. Another key element of the revised schedules is incorporating collaborative planning time and job-embedded professional development into the school day. In districts such as Newark, NJ, the extended learning time (ELT) also included extending the school year through the introduction of Saturday school. As part of the NYC Renewal School initiative, we are supporting the implementation of **Expanded Learning Time**, including an additional renewal hour which is delivered by school staff, above and beyond Extended Learning Time.

As Lead Partner, our starting point is to support schools in reviewing their existing schedule to ensure that it maximizes learning time in core academic and other subjects, provides enrichment activities, teacher collaboration, planning and professional development time. Typically our extended learning time support covers four main areas:

1. **Increased learning time** – revising the master schedule to increase learning time in (a) core subject areas and (b) non-core subjects through computer-based instruction with adaptive capabilities, intervention and enrichment periods, and block scheduling
2. **Collaborative planning and professional development** – to enable all staff to collaborate on and design instruction and formative assessments, analyze student work and current data, support curriculum development and implementation aligned to CCSS, and engage in professional development time within and across grades and subjects
3. **Extended learning time** – amending the annual calendar to increase the school year by adding days and/or extending the school day
4. **Enrichment program** – programs that provide students with a wide range of stimulating activities and events to supplement the taught curriculum. Supporting schools to find the right community partners to ensure that the enrichment programs are fully aligned with the school ethos and curriculum.

A typical example of the success of our work in this area is a school in New York City where the after-school program launched at the start of this school year is a 5-day-a-week program, with 4 modules that run for 6 school weeks. In less than a year the school has established a robust program that has enabled the school to re-introduce an Arts program and increase its focus on College and Career readiness. The programs also includes: Flag football, Homework help, Saturday Regents prep, Math through Card Play, Cooking, Hip Hop dance, Art club, film club, chess basketball and much more.

Attendance in the ELT program has reached 93%, meaning that every student has participated at least once in an extended learning time activity. Consistently, ELT attendance is above 75%, which exceeds the 50% target, and in many instances it is close to 100% which speaks to students' desire to attend clubs and activities offered.

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Comprehensive Instructional Reform

One of the key issues that we find in almost every SIG school, which is increasingly supported by research, is that there is a lack of alignment between the states/districts written curriculum, the school's planned curriculum, the assessed curriculum and the curriculum enacted in the classroom. Therefore, as Lead Partner we provide coaching and support to the school administration, instructional coaches and teachers to enable effective implementation of a comprehensive instructional model. Our approach is customized to meet the specific needs of the individual schools but typically it includes:

- Developing a priorities-driven curriculum to ensure that the enacted curriculum is aligned with CCSS and State Standards, including implementing ELA and math instructional shifts with fidelity
- Embedding formative assessment and data-driven instruction, incorporating student feedback and peer assessment practices with feedback to students
- Promoting professional learning to ensure best practices are shared among teachers
- Providing training and professional development for school administrators and peers to undertake effective classroom observation
- Developing student support, intervention, and enrichment systems like MTSS/RtI, to ensure that all students have access to rigorous and relevant curriculum

Our coaches work with teachers, school administrators and district leaders to enhance their understanding of the CCSS and the corresponding instructional shifts in ELA and math, within the context of curriculum mapping, lesson planning, effective pedagogical strategies, evidence of quality learning from classroom observations, and analysis of student work samples and current data. We begin this process by unpacking the implications for student learning of each instructional shift and reinforcing the fact that the skills embedded in each shift are applicable and important across subjects from K-Grade 12. Once educators are clear on what the common core requires of students that is different than current expectations, our coaches facilitate a process where participants collaboratively determine the implications for teachers, principals and district educators aligned with the agreed-upon expectations for students.

When working with teams of teachers and instructional leaders, we engage in meaningful activities that lead to clear articulation of what students need to know and be able to do and the most effective pedagogical strategies or moves that will ensure students achieve these goals along a continuum of K-Grade 12. For example, using evidence from sources to defend or support an argument should begin in kindergarten and builds in sophistication up to high school. It also carries relevance through all subjects including Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, World Languages and the Arts. This work with teacher teams involves unpacking the CCSS and content standards (when applicable) to identify skill and concepts to be learned, developing learning objectives that come straight from the unpacked standards, and designing learning experiences, tasks, and formative assessments that promote independence.

A typical example of the impact of our work is a high school in New York City where, in just six months, the results in the January Regents examinations showed the following increases compared to the previous year:

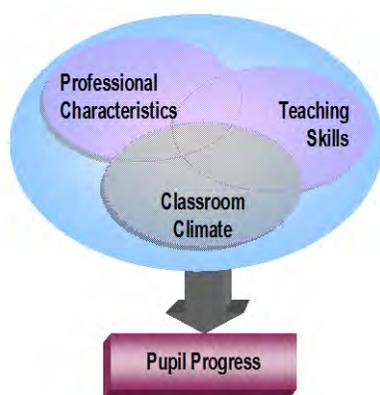
ELA +23%; Algebra + 31%; Geometry +33%; US History +31%; Living Environment +36%

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Job-embedded Professional Development

Cambridge Education supports schools to produce an annual Professional Development Plan, which will be designed to provide all administrators and staff with access to high quality job-embedded professional development (PD). We continually help schools and districts to totally rethink their professional development programs, while at the same time assisting school and district leaders in their efforts to provide job-embedded professional learning in the daily routines of school and district practices. Research shows that job-embedded PD that takes place within the school and is integrated into the day-to-day work of the school is the most effective means of increasing internal capacity and developing sustainable skills among staff. Job embedded PD is therefore the cornerstone of our program.



Our professional development services are varied and wide. However, our prime focus is on training and development that will have the maximum impact on student progress and academic achievement, including professional characteristics of teachers, teaching skills and programs that support and develop an effective classroom climate. Our programs are designed to be activity-based and, when possible, we adopt an 80:20 principle for training where at least 80% of the training is embedded in classroom practice. Our goal is to ensure that the PD programs are having a positive impact on the quality of learning and teaching in the school.

The exact components and balance of the job-embedded PD program are customized on a year to year basis to meet the emerging needs of the individual school. However, the following are typical of the range of programs we provide to SIG schools:

- Executive Coaching for the Principal(s) and Instructional Leadership Team
- Effective Classroom Observations with feedback that leads to actionable change
- Common Priorities to support professional learning communities
- Instructional Coaching (including support for implementing the CCSS)
- Assessment for Learning
- Data and Inquiry Teams

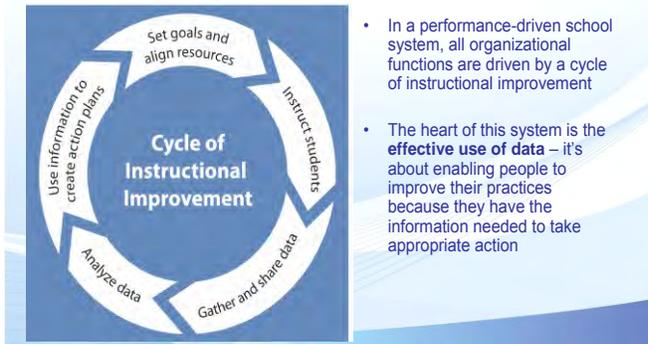
Additionally, on-site leads conduct an extensive program of instructional coaching, facilitating or supporting teacher extended learning time, establishing collaborative structures and protocols for grade level or department teams, and delivering professional development, and attending district professional development sessions to support and monitor implementation. The following findings, after one year as Lead Partner at an Illinois elementary school, are typical of the impact of our approach. *“Teachers have incorporated strategies and knowledge gained from professional development sessions. When designing lessons, teachers are more intentional about the types of questions asked to assess and advance students’ learning. Across most classrooms, there is clear evidence of better questioning strategies and its impact on student learning, including students asking better questions themselves”.*

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Use of Data to Drive Instruction

Building Performance-Driven School Systems



Transforming schools requires the Lead Partner to support districts and schools in setting ambitious targets based on reviewing and analyzing their data, including student and school-level analysis of past performance, and estimated future performance, and by challenging expectations where targets indicate low aspirations for rates of progress or outcomes to be achieved.

Our coaches model supports and train leaders and teachers in the importance of collecting and tracking a wide range of verifiable evidence, not just student achievement data.

SIG programs utilize a wide-range of research-based strategies and interventions to enhance the quality of instruction. In particular, schools tend to follow a tiered approach for intervention and enrichment: **Tier 1: Universal, Tier 2: Targeted, Tier 3: Individualized and Intensive.**

Assessment: In order to track the impact of these initiatives, student performance data is monitored weekly by the school support team and at least monthly by the instructional leadership team with support from the lead partner to monitor progress, determine course corrections, and adjust support services as needed. Teachers meet in professional learning communities to analyze student data and look at student work to make necessary instructional modifications. Data sources include:

1. **Lesson Observations**- weekly and monthly disaggregated by grade, subject and teacher
2. **Students' work** - daily and bi-weekly as part of PLC meetings
3. **Formative assessments** - daily, weekly and monthly; disaggregated by grade, class, subject, and student to differentiate instruction
4. **Interim/Benchmark Assessments** - at end of each quarter, disaggregated by grade, class, subject, and student to develop intervention plans
5. **Summative Assessments** - disaggregated by student, sex, grade, class and subject to develop school-wide strategies and professional development plans

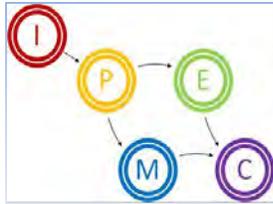
In addition to analyzing the data, the instructional leadership team should monitor, evaluate and review the impact of each intervention to suggest revisions to policies and procedures. This team will also establish a color-coded early warning system that focuses on identifying students for academic intervention and social-emotional supports or wraparound services. The following findings, after one year as Lead Partner at an Illinois elementary school, are typical of the impact of our approach: *“Instructional leadership has been a primary area of focus for this year’s work. Teachers, students and community members report a distinctive positive change and a stronger focus on learning and teaching. Teachers report that they get constant and consistent support and feedback; they confidently share that they trust the instructional leaders and that there has been a significant improvement in student learning in their classrooms.”*

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Program Monitoring

Disciplined program management is a hallmark of the Cambridge Education approach. We adopt a 5 stage process which follows industry best practice.



Initiation - we help establish the purpose and scope to facilitate project authorization; organizational buy-in; and provide clarity of purpose and benefits.

Planning - we develop project management plans that establish the resource, costs and time-scales for completion, allowing organizations to determine how they achieve the right outcomes.

Execution - we work alongside clients to ensure the job gets done.

Monitoring & Controlling – we establish a continuous process that tracks performance, anticipates problems and takes corrective actions to ensure delivery of valued outcomes.

Closing – we assist in completion of this final phase of the project to confirm benefits realization, and that lessons are learned and embedded within the organization.

At first, we play the role of program manager, facilitating monthly meetings in which progress on program benchmarks is collaboratively assessed. We gradually release responsibility for program management as we build the capacity of staff members to play this critical coordinating role. Drawing on the findings of the initial needs assessment, we engage all stakeholders in the development of a motivating school vision and theory of action and a tight strategic plan focused on a few core improvement strategies. Guided by vision, theory of action, and a progression of achievable benchmarks, this plan is used, referenced, implemented and *lived* throughout the implementation process.

Program management meetings are an opportunity to identify bottlenecks and obstacles and coordinate solutions across teams and departments, and they play an important accountability function as well. A key focus of program management is using data-driven inquiry to monitor early evidence of change and short-term outcomes and adjust action plans to ensure the greatest impact on student learning.

Principals typically report that using the customized templates and acting upon the training, coaching and advice that our staff and consultants provide enables the school leadership team to develop improvement plans that are:

- **Focused:** Effective plans target a few priorities that will lead to sustained improvement of learning
- **Coherent:** Cross-functional teams communicate and implement a tight set of inter-related initiatives
- **Driven by outcomes:** Strategic plans clearly demarcate early evidence of change, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes; plans are adjusted flexibly and dynamically in light of evidence to ensure accelerated progress
- **Supported by progress monitoring tools:** We develop progress-monitoring tools and processes to improve coordination among multiple stakeholders and maintain accountability throughout the system

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Family and Community Engagement

Cambridge Education has extensive experience and expertise in supporting districts and schools to develop and actively promote community and education partner relations. We encourage all schools to adopt the philosophy of “**a school in its community, the community in the school**”. Establishing a genuine partnership and culture of mutual respect between all stakeholders is central to the transformation of low-performing schools.

We guide and support schools to implement proven strategies to promote the active involvement of students, parents/guardians and the local community. One key feature of this aspect of work is the implementation of a communication plan that regularly and effectively provides ongoing information and updates to parents, student, staff, and the community as well as engages stakeholders so they are involved and invested in the activities to transform SIG and Priority Schools into high performing schools in which student achievement is substantially raised. Other effective Family and Community Engagement strategies we promote include:

Meaningful Partnerships Approach (MPA)

Contemporary research shows that productive, positive, and meaningful relationships with parents and the community are the tipping point in moving the schools forward. This is why we believe that building into a school responsiveness and capacity to adapt to a given community, its beliefs, and the context will be a determining factor for their success. Therefore the MPA will:

- Identify a group of key stakeholders that will be the leaders of the MPA process
- Support the parent liaison and the creation of the parent action plan
- Create overall monitoring and assessment tools
- Provide guidance to support a productive collaboration between parents and the school
- Support parents with age and context-appropriate parenting tools and skills

Community Quality Review (CQR) this is a process that creates a sustainable feedback mechanism for the school that becomes a very powerful tool for transformation. What makes the CQR unique is that it’s a communication and assessment tool (parents to school) that creates a common language and understanding of what different domains of the schools should be like. A group of parents are involved in the creation of a rubric that facilitates meaningful conversations with parents.

Volunteering opportunities for parents within the school, a process that brings school staff and students together to develop opportunities for parents to be involved. CE facilitates conversations and structures the creation of these opportunities so that students and staff can create ways in which parents can work with them in ways that he/she has an opportunity to develop himself/herself as a parent, can positively impact student development and ultimately all stakeholders can internalize a true collaboration between students, school, and parents.

The following comments, from an Illinois elementary school, are typical of the positive feedback made by principals, staff and parents at the end of one year of our involvement as Lead Partner.

“The school’s leadership has placed a high priority on building a collaborative and trusting relationship with its community. Families openly share how much has changed this year and feel like they are welcome as true partners to support the school’s vision. This has motivated both parents as well as staff members to reach out and has enabled multiple instances of effective collaboration that has had a positive impact for students, including prompt interventions, referrals to support mechanisms for parents, and in-school collaboration. There are several parent volunteers actively working in classrooms.”

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Sustainability

We believe that building sustainability begins from the first engagement with the school and underpins all of the work. The key to achieving sustainability is building the school's capacity through the development and maintenance of efficient and effective Professional Learning Communities (PLC), a continuous process for professional development, and monitoring implementation and assessing impact. We build in sustainability from the outset as a key component of all our work. For example, all PD programs will be designed to be activity-based and wherever possible we adopt an 80:20 principle for training where 80% of the training is embedded in classroom practice. Cambridge Education also utilizes a train-the-trainers model by training school/district staff to facilitate our professional development programs.

Sustainability Plan

An integral part of our approach is to model best practices, create effective teams, build leadership capacity at all levels, including teacher leaders, to ensure sustainability. In effect we adopt an “I do, We do, You do” approach.

The following is an outline of the typical steps we believe are needed to build sustainability into the transformation process:

- Step 1: Understanding the interventions to be used in transforming the school
- Step 2: Continuously practicing these interventions to achieve mastery
- Step 3: Leading others in developing the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary
- Step 4: Objectively reviewing the work carried out and its impact
- Step 5: Adjusting and amending to improve the impact

These capacity building steps are aimed at ensuring that the school grows a totally sustainable system for reviewing the effectiveness of its work delivered by a more skilled cadre of people, who pass on their mastery to a continuous succession of new participants.

Our technical assistance, training and support enables school's to **embed sustainability** by:

1. Helping the school to identify specific champions to lead on key areas of sustainability (e.g. focused planning, data-driven instruction, parent and community engagement)
2. Training these champions and communicating their role to others
3. Involving champions in all core transformation work
4. Encouraging ever-increasing levels of leadership with guided support
5. Promoting frequent internal evaluation to ensure that strengths and weaknesses are known and responded to in a timely and productive way
6. Partnering with the school leaders to plan for the strategic development of the transformation process for the long-term
7. Acting as objective evaluators of the work as autonomy grows to ensure clarity and objectivity.

The following is typical of the feedback we receive from clients: *“Cambridge Education...has provided excellent PD with modeling on inter-rater reliability and effective feedback to improve teaching and learning for district leaders, principals, and assistant principals throughout the year. The ongoing professional learning has made a significant impact in Brevard Public Schools, and we've built sustainable capacity at every level.”*

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Cambridge Education, LLC – Lead Partner

Cambridge Education is uniquely qualified to be a Lead Partner (LP). We are a highly regarded global company with a reputation for providing high quality technical assistance and consultancy. We partnered with Mass Insight during their in-depth analysis of turnaround sites across the country and helped undertake site-visits and write the resultant reports. In addition to serving as LP to six Illinois schools and named LP for one potential FY16 SIG schools. We have also served as LP to 25 schools across a range of states including, Michigan, Wisconsin, California, New York and Virginia. Over three decades the success of our Comprehensive School Improvement Program for Transforming low-performing schools in the U.S., the UK and over 50 other countries around the world has reflected our commitment to applying proven research to develop and implement customized strategic interventions. These interventions enable all schools, especially low-performing schools, to improve on their previous best through the provision of high quality education that prepares all students for lifelong success at college, career, and citizenship.

Our vision is to create a lasting improvement in the quality of education experienced by the young people and adults we support, either directly or indirectly through our relationship with clients.

Our aim is to provide high quality technical assistance, professional advice, and support.

Our objective is to contribute to and be part of the development of every organization with which we work.

Our approach is to develop partnerships based upon mutual trust.

Our work is characterized by the belief that we can only be successful if our clients develop the knowledge, capacity, and mechanisms to help themselves.

We have gained a unique reputation for providing advice, support and training to build capacity at school, district, and state levels. All our programs include training and job-embedded professional development for teachers, school and district administrators and others to gain experience and expertise by working alongside members of our experienced consultants. As an organization with over 30 years of experience we have established an impressive client base and a track record of successful innovation. As part of our Quality Management system members of our Project Leadership Team and Project Advisory Board undertake on-site visits to conduct customer evaluations with all of our clients.

The following example, from a County High School in rural Virginia, is typical of the impact of Cambridge Education’s LP engagement. Before our engagement the High School had not attained accreditation due to low graduation rates. At the end of 2013, our final year of our 3-year engagement, the school achieved full accreditation for the second consecutive year.

Core Subjects	Benchmark	2010	2011	2012	2013	Met Accreditation
English: reading	70	87	88	76	88	YES
English :Writing	70	83	90	90	83	YES
Mathematics	70	76	88	67	75	3YR
History and Social Science	70	86	69	79	81	YES
Science	70	74	86	84	83	YES
Graduation Index	85	-	81	88	90	YES

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