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Painesville City Local Schools Case Study

Background and Rationale

WordFarmers Associates undertook case studies of Ohio districts nominated for having made long-term commitments to using the Ohio Improvement Process and the support materials provided by state and regional organizations (e.g., State Support Teams, the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council). The purpose of developing the case studies was to provide a deep description of the district to serve as material for developing teaching cases to be used in professional development materials offered by the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC). That is, the case studies were to be conducted by the standards of genuine research, respecting what districts are *actually doing* with the tools. This orientation permits the studies to surface the messy and nonlinear process of school improvement in Ohio. The process should permit OLAC to offer professional development founded on authentic practice.

WordFarmers visited the Painesville City Local Schools to collect data the week of September 11, 2017. The overarching question for the Painesville case study was:

> What is the Painesville City Local School District doing to improve education for all learners?

Subsidiary questions, used to frame interview questions, but also to guide observations and conversations among the researchers were as follows:

- What are the district's improvement goals and why were they selected?
- What is the district's improvement strategy and how did leaders in the district arrive at that strategy?
- What structures enabled the district to make improvements?
- Who has been involved in the leadership of the improvement initiative and how have they been involved?
- What were the challenges that the district faced as it implemented its improvement strategy?
- What is the role of OIP teams (DLT, BLTs, and TBTs) in the improvement process?
- What is the role of data in the improvement process?
- How have instructional practices change as a result of the improvement process?
- How has student grouping changed as a result of the improvement process?
- What effects has the improvement process had on curriculum (e.g., depth versus breadth, use of standards, or teachers' role in curriculum development)?

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- What is the role of professional development in the improvement process? What professional development has been most helpful and why?
- What role has the local community played in the improvement process?

Context

The Painesville City Local Schools is essentially a large-town system enrolling about 3,000 students, all of whom are identified as "economically disadvantaged." Half the students are Hispanic, and their families have arrived steadily over the course of the past quarter century.

This section describes the context, first of the city of Painesville and, second, of the school district. The principal sources for the description of the school district are the extensive datasets assembled annually by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). For the city, the major source of information come from the U.S. Bureau of the Census—both the 2010 decennial census and the more recent data provided by the Census's American Community Survey.

The City

Painesville is the county seat of Lake County and occupies a portion of the southern shore of Lake Erie. The city's total population has increased at each decennial census since 1820, with two exceptions (i.e., 1980 and 1990). Most recently, total population increased 19.8% between 1990 and 2010 (from 15,699 to 19,563). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has classified the locale as "suburban, large" (NCES, 2017). On the ground, though, the city strikes a visitor as a substantial small town, with a particularly attractive historic center. Nonetheless, the seat of government for Lake County is perhaps the most economically disadvantaged municipality in the county, as the following discussion shows.

The city's population in 2016 was estimated at 19,753 (72% White, 14% Black, and 14% other races, mostly Multiracial); the population aged 5-17 was estimated at 3,359 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2017).

More significant than the Black-White composition of the district and the city is the steady growth of the Hispanic population across recent decades. Painesville's Hispanic population increased by a factor of 11 between 1990 and 2010, from 389 to 4,298 (Garcia Cano, 2011). Of these new arrivals, 3,614 were Mexican (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010), with most arriving from León (Garcia Cano, 2011). The estimated 2016

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proportion of the Painesville population who are Hispanic is 24%, up 2% since 2010 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2017).[1]

Arriving immigrant families have reportedly been drawn by the prospect of employment in the region's nurseries, a local enterprise with a reported $90 million in annual sales (Garcia Cano, 2011). Hispanic participation in this type of work, however, may be overstated: just 1.4 % of Painesville's 2016 labor force was employed in agriculture, forestry, or fishing (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2017).[2] The modal occupational category for that year was manufacturing (23.5%), followed by education (17.4%); arts, entertainment, and recreation (10.9%); and retail (9.9%). Estimated 2016 median household income, at $41,652, is below the national household median of $53,808. Of the estimated 4,678 Painesville families in 2016, 24.2% have incomes below a very meager $25,000 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2017).

An unknown proportion of Hispanic immigrants are undocumented; 9% of residents were reportedly not citizens (Garcia Cano, 2011).[3] Some misguided local resentment of this circumstance is likely, according to Garcia Cano (2011), but has not been reported as common.[4]

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[1] By Census rules, *Hispanic* is not a "race" (referring to skin pigmentation) but an "ethnicity" (referring to cultural heritage and language use): Hispanics are counted separately by the Census from "race," which means that Hispanics may be of any race (e.g., Black, White, Asian, American Indian, or Multiracial). This problematic treatment of these categories is peculiar to an American reality in which Hispanics remain the largest immigrant group to the U.S and Blacks remain the most evident targets of economic, social, and political mistreatment.

[2] The Census figures would underestimate employment in the nurseries to the extent they fail to include undocumented residents (Davis, Reyes, & Hasty, 2017).

[3] Bacon (2017), writing in *USA Today*, reported the deportation of a Painesville mother of four, Beatriz ("Betty") Morelos Casillas, employed in a local factory. She was a 17-year resident of Painesville and all of her children were born in the city. Under new rules, she had subjected to "expedited removal," despite being a productive, tax-paying resident of long standing, married to a husband with a valid work visa (Davis et al., 2017). Painesville has reportedly been "rattled" (Davis et al., 2017, p. 1). Morelos Casilla's case has received substantial national attention. According to Davis and colleagues, Morelos Casilla is not the only Painesville resident deported under the new rules.

[4] Although recent developments targeting immigrants are disturbing, Painesville has been at the symbolic forefront of the national controversy over social justice before. The town served as the location for an internationally well-regarded film, *One Potato, Two*

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Finally, Painesville's appeal to Hispanic immigrants is hardly unique in the Cleveland area. During the heyday of steel production, both Mexicans and Puerto Ricans came to work in the mills. In 2016 the Hispanic population of Lorain, in the western suburbs of Cleveland, was 21% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2017). Clearly, Hispanic immigrants contribute productively to their communities and have done so for a long time in the Cleveland area.

The School District

According to the ODE, in 2016-2017 the Painesville City Local Schools enrolled 2,958 students (ODE, 2018) in a high school (grades 9-12), middle school (grades 6-8), three elementary schools (grades K-5), and a preschool (PK). The Painesville City Schools' geographic boundaries cover a 7.75-mile area (Painesville City Local Schools, 2017), not—it seems—entirely contiguous with the city's boundaries, which enclose 7.9 square miles (City of Painesville, 2017).

The school district is a main employer in the city (Painesville City Local Schools, 2017). Painesville, though, is also the location of Lake Erie College, founded in 1856, which currently enrolls about 1,200 undergraduates (Lake Erie College, 2017). The presence of the two institutions explains the previously noted share of employment for the education sector in the city.

Painesville is a geographically small district surrounded by a much larger district, Riverside Local Schools, composed of three surrounding townships (in Lake County: Painesville, Concord, and Leroy, plus small extensions into two townships of Geauga County). Seven of the eight Riverside schools are situated, in fact, within just three miles of the center of the city (Google, 2017). The Riverside high school is barely one mile from the center of Painesville. All eight Riverside schools, in fact, are identified with a Painesville address. The Riverside district's demography, however, differs sharply from that of the Painesville City Local Schools: the population is negligibly diverse (over 90% White). Riverside is predictably far more affluent: Riverside district patrons' 2009 median household income was $65,218—nearly twice that in the Painesville district ($33,689) in the same year (ProximityOne, 2017). The other nearby local school districts (Mentor, Perry, and Fairport Harbor) are demographically similar to Riverside. Residents of Painesville City and its schools are thus notably more diverse and more impoverished by comparison to all nearby districts.

Potato (1964), about the relationship of a White woman and Black man. The film received notable honors at the Cannes Film Festival that year (Weiler, 1964). The subject was controversial within the racist culture of its day.

This section next reports on (1) students at the district level (five years of data); (2) schools (enrollment and subgroup proportions); (3) district-level process indicators (attendance and discipline); and (4) outcome indicators (district-level scores on state accountability tests and graduation rates). For detailed data displays, consult Tables 1-6 in Appendix A. Again, all data in this section and in the Tables come from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE, 2018).

Students

Enrollment in the Painesville City Local Schools has become predominately Hispanic, having changed steadily over the past three decades. At the same time, total enrollment has held steady across the past five years. The 2017-18 enrollment is 3,044 (Painesville City Local Schools, 2017).

From 2012 to 2016, the proportion of Black non-Hispanic students increased by about 1% of total enrollment (to about 17%), whereas the proportion of White non-Hispanic students decreased by about 4.5% of total enrollment (to about 23%). The proportion of Hispanic students increased by about 5.5% of total enrollment (to about 50%). The proportion of Multiracial students fell by about 2% of the total (to about 9%).

Further detail appears next about student groups classified by whether or not they have been identified as (1) having a disability, (2) facing economic disadvantage, or (3) exhibiting limited English proficiency (all data from ODE, 2018). See Table 2 in Appendix A for the full data display,

- Most strikingly, nearly all (98.1%) of the district's students in 2016-17 confront economic disadvantage. The proportion has steadily risen from about 90% in 2012-2013.
- Most students (just over half) face economic disadvantage, but do not have an identified disability or exhibit limited English proficiency. Across the five years, this proportion has increased about 3.5% of total enrollment, but variability is evident—with a range of about 6% of total enrollment across the time frame.
- About a quarter of students (with some variation across the time frame) face economic disadvantage and exhibit limited English proficiency but are without an identified disability.
- About one eighth of students face economic disadvantage and exhibit an identified disability, but do not exhibit limited English proficiency. The proportion of students in this group has risen about 1.5% of total enrollment across the time frame.
- About 4% of students exhibit all three conditions, and just 1% exhibit none of them. In 2012-13, nearly 9% of students exhibited none of the conditions, but the proportion has remained in the 1%-2% range since 2013-14.
- Altogether, about 30% of students exhibit limited English proficiency. With Hispanic students constituting about 50% of total enrollment, one may infer that about 40% of Hispanic students do exhibit English proficiency; quite likely many of these students would be bilingual.

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Professional staff

The district is led administratively by a superintendent and assistant superintendent. Each of the six schools has a principal. The teaching staff is 88% White, 8.4% Black, and just 2% Hispanic (ODE, 2018). The disparity between the race/ethnicity of staff and students is notable, and a common issue in many American school systems.

Schools

About one quarter of the district's students (756) attended the high school in 2016 (all data in this section from ODE, 2018). Each of the three elementary schools (Chestnut, Elm Street, and Maple) enrolled about 470 students, and the preschool (Red Raider) enrolled about 120.

The distribution of the subgroups varied somewhat among schools.[5] The proportion of Black students varied from about 14% (Elm Street) to about 21% (Maple); that of White students varied from about 14% (Elm Street) to 27% (Harvey High), and that of Hispanic students from 65% (Elm Street) to about 45% (Maple and Harvey High).

The proportion of students with limited English proficiency (LEP) varied more. Given the participation of young immigrant families in the city, the proportions were highest at the elementary schools: Elm Street (50%), Chestnut (37%), and Maple (36%). The 2016 rate was predictably lower at the middle school (29%) and high school (17%).

In all five schools, the proportion of students confronting economic disadvantage in 2016 was virtually 100%. A visitor to Painesville likely would not see "abject poverty," however. Rather, the visitor would observe a diverse and economically healthy small town—perhaps lower-middle class to middle class in terms of economic status.[6]

The proportion of students with disabilities was notably lower at Elm Street Elementary (10%) as compared to all the other schools. In the other elementary schools, the proportions were at or above the state 2016 average of 15%: Chestnut at 15% and Maple at 17%. At the middle school, 17% of students were identified as having disabilities. The high school rate was almost twice that of Elm Street, at 19%.

The most notable deviance from the district averages is evident at the (small) preschool. It enrolls a larger proportion of White students (42%) and a smaller proportion of Hispanic students (33%). It has a smaller proportion of students confronting economic disadvantage (still a very high 78%), and a very high proportion of students with disabilities (47%). Because it operates with a different mission and structure from the

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[5] The preschool is an outlier and receives separate treatment in this subsection.

[6] This impression is oddly discordant with Census and ODE data.

other district schools, the preschool's demographics and data will not be included in further discussion of the Painesville City Local Schools' improvement process.

Process indicators

Selected process indicators feature attendance rate and disciplinary actions per 100 students by subgroup (all data in this section from ODE, 2018). Each is summarized next (see Table 4 in Appendix A for details). Attendance rates are typically high and vary, statewide, within a narrow range for traditional public-school districts.

The district attendance rate was above 93% for all five years, 2012-13 through 2016-17. For 2012-13 and 2013-14, it was greater than 95% (the ODE does not specify rates above 95%). The state rate in 2016-17 was 93.9%: Painesville has an average attendance rate.[7] Attendance of LEP students and Hispanic students, though, was in fact marginally higher than the overall district average in 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-2017 (data not reported in Table 4).

The frequency of disciplinary actions by subgroup (Black, Hispanic, White, disadvantaged, disabled, LEP) shows notable differences (see Table 4). Across the five years from 2012-13 through 2016-17, the overall rate has declined. This trend holds for all subgroups except White students, for whom the rate increased marginally (from 19.9 per 100 to 23.1). The district's 2016 overall rate is higher than the statewide average for all students in all districts (see Table 4). However, nearly all Painesville students confront economic disadvantage: Perhaps a more relevant comparison is to the statewide average for students confronting economic disadvantage (36.4 disciplinary actions per 100 statewide, as compared to Painesville's 26.9).

Among Black, White, and Hispanic students, Hispanic students are reported to have by far the lowest disciplinary involvement: 15.4 per 100 as compared to 56.5 for Black students and 23.1 for White students. The White rate is higher than for the state as a whole, while the rate for Black and Hispanic students is lower.

For students confronting economic disadvantage, having disabilities, and exhibiting limited English proficiency, the latter group has the lowest rate of disciplinary actions (17 per 100) and those with disabilities the highest (51.2 per 100). The rate for disadvantaged students, as previously noted, is the same as that for the entire district.

Outcome indicators

Selected outcome indicators (all data in this section from ODE, 2018) feature test scores (proportion of students judged proficient on statewide accountability measures) and

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7 Comparison to the overall average rate for Ohio, however, ignores the fact that virtually all Painesville students confront economic disadvantage.

graduation rates (see Tables 5 and 6 in Appendix A for details). Ohio's accountability tests, as in other states, change periodically—and for a variety of reasons.[8] For whatever reason, Painesville's overall accountability test scores—an average of all available scores for the district as a whole (bottom row of Table 5)—declined over the five-year period 2012-13 through 2016-17. By grade level the 2016-17 scores range from an average of 21% proficient for high-school math average (end-of-year course tests) to 49.7% (the average of Grade 3 reading and math). The district received an "F" on achievement from the ODE.

Graduation rates are another typical schooling outcome. The rates can be calculated in various ways. An accepted standard is the cohort graduation rate, which is based on the proportion of entering ninth grade students who graduate four years later. For the five years from 2011-2012 through 2015-16 (the latest for which data are provided by the ODE), the rates have risen by about 10% of ninth grade enrollment.[9]

What proportions apply to the Hispanics, Blacks, and Whites—particularly as to ninth grade cohorts? The ODE does not report relevant statistics (subgroup grade-level enrollment), but a relevant inference is possible. Table 6 (see Appendix A) reports the authors' calculation of the proportions of graduates in these groups, and also the proportion of the groups enrolled overall in Harvey High School four years earlier.[10] The trends show that the graduating proportions do not differ much from the proportions four years earlier. Each group shows some variability, but none is substantially handicapped. In three of the five school years, the proportion of Hispanic students among all graduates exceeds the proportion of Hispanics enrolled in the high school (overall) four years earlier.

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[8] The upshot is that test-score trends cannot be inferred in detail. For 2015-16, tests developed by the American Institutes for Research replaced the "PARCC" tests developed by Pearson PLC (headquartered in Britain). Patterns in Table 4 likely reflect this change and others (e.g., the replacement of the Ohio Graduation Tests by subject-specific end-of-year tests).

[9] These are the rates: 2015-16: 71.8%; 2014-15: 71.1%; 2013-14: 73.0%; 2012-13: 63.2%; 2011-12: 60.5% The rate of student mobility would influence the meaningfulness of these rates somewhat. Approximately 15% of students each year have been enrolled in the district for less than a year.

[10] The comparison is approximate, since these proportions do not represent the 9th Grade per se. Nonetheless, the approximation is reasonable because differences in proportions by grade within the same year are probably not great.

Context Recapitulation

The Painesville City Local School district confronts challenges that are somewhat unique for an Ohio district. The district is surrounded by much more affluent and less diverse districts, with barely one mile separating Harvey High School from the high school in the neighboring Riverside district. Almost the entire Painesville student body confronts economic disadvantage, but it is a diverse enrollment. The student body is about half Hispanic, with the remaining enrollment somewhat evenly divided between Blacks and Whites. Hispanic students appear to do as well as other students, despite the fact that 60% seem to be identified as exhibiting limited English proficiency. Hispanic students graduate proportional to their high-school enrollment, and the reported disciplinary rate for Hispanic students is the lowest for all subgroups. Poor achievement (measured as percentage proficient on ever-changing state accountability tests) remains a pressing problem.

Methods

This section describes the methods used for developing the case study of improvement efforts in the Painesville City Local Schools. It examines the research design and its theoretical framework, especially its use of *appreciative inquiry* and *portraiture*. It describes the steps used to organize and schedule data collection as well as the modes of data collection and their associated instrumentation, the types of data collected, and the procedures used for analyzing the data.

Methodology and Study Design

The research team used a hybrid methodology as the basis for designing and executing the study. Appreciative inquiry, originally developed in the field of organizational management, pushes researchers to interrogate study participants to learn primarily about the positive features of their stories, rather than the negative or critical features. It does not ignore the challenges, but instead builds rapport and focuses on "storytelling" (Michael, 2005, p. 224). The move away from a more critical mode of inquiry works to build trust between interviewer and participant and fosters dialogue, in turn helping to solve one problem inherent with short-term research—the difficulty of building trust when it's possible to conduct only one interview per participant. Such trust-building is especially important in organizational research where interviewees may be reticent to disclose some information or opinions for fear that their words might find their way back to their colleagues or supervisors (e.g., Webb, 2002).

The research team also relied on the portraiture method. Portraiture (e.g., Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983; Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) aims to capture a complete story in an effort to understand the myriad contexts, influences, variables, actors, and so on that play a role in the processes or events under investigation. Whereas portraiture

sometimes seeks to incorporate the researcher's personality or perspectives into the narrative, this study relied on more impartial and dispassionate modes of interviewing.

Both methodologies (i.e., appreciative inquiry and portraiture) dovetail with the aims of this case study. The typical use of appreciative inquiry for improving organizational structures aligns with the research team's interest in illuminating improvement efforts in the Painesville City Local School District—thereby illustrating educational systems' change at the local level. In addition, the goal of capturing as complete an account as possible using portraiture furthers the research by presenting the intricacies and complexities of improvement work in schools and districts.

Access and Logistics

The lead researcher, in collaboration with the district's assistant superintendent, created a research plan that minimized disruption in the district, while maximizing the scope and efficiency of data collection. The assistant superintendent generated a master schedule of interviews and observations for the team of three researchers. He selected study participants using several criteria: first, that they played a leadership role in the district; second, that they held different positions within the district; and third, that their schedules aligned with the proposed research plan.

The lead researcher also discussed the scope of the interview questions with the assistant superintendent. But, prior to the interviews, she did not share the specific questions with the assistant superintendent or other district personnel.

Instrumentation

Prior to arriving in the district, the lead researcher developed a set of questions for guiding interviews with stakeholders who had participated (or were continuing to participate) in the district's improvement efforts. The interview guide contained separate but similar questions for each type of interviewee (i.e., board members, central office administrators, principals, other BLT members, and TBT members). The interview questions asked participants for their impressions of the district's efforts at improvement, focusing on: who was involved and in what capacity, the district's improvement goals and strategies, the role of various structures (e.g., the OIP teams) in the process, and the role of data and professional development. The interview questions also asked about the general outcomes of the process, as well as specifically targeted changes to instruction, grouping practices, and the curriculum. The questions also pushed interviewees to think about the challenges that the district faced during the improvement process. See Appendix B for the complete list of interview questions.

Data Collection

A three-person research team worked in district for three days, conducting interviews and observations. During the data collection phase, the team met daily to discuss preliminary insights and to refine their interview questions and other data-collection strategies.

Interviews

The research team conducted 24 interviews during their time in the district. Interviewees included a school board member; central office and building administrators; and members of TBTs, BLTs, and the DLT (including some classroom teachers and intervention specialists). With the exception of the school board member, participants were members of at least one OIP team.

The interview questions were semi-structured in their format: Interviewers relied on a predetermined set of questions to initiate conversation but permitted participants to deviate from the questions in their responses in order to share their complete stories. In other words, the researchers sought to be as unobtrusive as possible in the interviews, mostly allowing participants to guide the discussion. This open-ended approach allowed each participant's sense of key events and improvement dynamics to emerge.

Interviews were scheduled to last one hour, and many lasted that long. A few of the interviews were significantly shortened due to unforeseen complications during the prearranged time. All interviews were conducted on district premises—either in the central office or in the schools (e.g., in classrooms or offices)—and the audio was recorded digitally. Following the data collection, typists produced verbatim transcripts from the recordings. The transcripts were then used as a major source of data for analysis.

Observations

The research team also observed classroom teaching at various grade levels and subject areas throughout the district as well as observing several leadership team meetings. For the observations in classrooms, the researchers explicitly asked central office administrators and building principals to identify effective teachers. This strategy was intended to help the research team gain insight into what district leaders thought of as high-quality instruction, and it also aligned well with the research stance of appreciative inquiry. Researchers observed instruction and wrote field notes; observations were not recorded with video or audio equipment.

In addition to classroom observations, the research team also sat in on a district principals meeting, several TBT meetings, and an elementary school meeting at which a new OTES rubric was discussed. These observations complimented the interviews and helped provide a clearer portrait of improvement work in the Painesville City Local

district. The researchers captured descriptions of these meetings in field notes, which were then used as a source of data for analysis.

Data Analysis

The research team employed an iterative approach to data analysis. Using the verbatim transcripts, two researchers independently applied a set of 13 *a priori* codes to the 24 interview transcripts. Upon completion, the research team reconciled the two sets of coded interviews to build consensus regarding the codes. Using their coded interviews, the two researchers employed a two-step process to aggregate the most salient examples for each code. This involved compiling the strongest examples of each code from every interview and then using these aggregated data to select the five most salient data points for each code across all interviews.

The process of coding and examining quotes to determine salience enabled the research team to evaluate connections between the codes and identify potential emergent themes. Using the collection of all coded quotes and the scope descriptions revealed in the most salient five quotes, the team discussed possible themes to explain findings about improvement efforts in the Painesville City Local Schools. An interpretation making use of five themes worked to knit together multiple codes to characterize the improvement work.

Members of the research team then used a systematic process to verify the salience of the themes. This process involved rereading and recoding the transcripts to determine the extent to which each of the themes was present in the data set. The researchers also counted the number of occurrences of each theme. (Counts by theme are presented in the findings section of this report.)

The research team next began work to construct a narrative description of the five themes. During this process, one researcher reviewed all of the field notes to find observation data that either substantiated or contradicted the thematic interpretation supported by the coded transcripts.

Finally, the lead researcher shared the findings section of the report with the assistant superintendent, asking for informant feedback about the relevance of the thematic interpretation and the accuracy of particular details about the district's improvement process. He noted three errors, which the lead researcher subsequently corrected.

Findings

Analysis of interview and observation data produced five themes that characterize Painesville's instructional improvement experience in recent years, reported in order of frequency counts of theme-relevant passages in the transcript record:

1. districtwide curriculum strategies scaffold improvement (270 coded passages);
2. key structures organize improvement efforts (197 passages);

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3. a leadership coalition emerged to guide and sustain improvement (114 passages);
4. the leadership coalition propagated a districtwide shared vision (101 passages); and
5. a notable part of the vision is responsiveness to the district's families (90 passages).

The one-sentence descriptions of these themes illuminate improvement work in the district—as it functioned in September 2017—from the perspective of interviewees. This section discusses each theme in detail.

Districtwide Scaffolding Practices

Beginning five years ago, the Painesville City Schools developed and deployed a districtwide instructional framework. Interviewees mentioned the following practices as key parts of the framework: (1) Leveled Literacy Instruction (LLI), (2) guided reading instruction, (3) the Daily Five, (4) a "co-serve" teaching model; (5) a daily intervention and enrichment period, (6) standards-based grading, (7) classroom management based on Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), and (8) English Learner supports for many of the district's Hispanic students (the largest ethnic group in the district). After describing the eight practices representative of the framework, discussion of this theme will end with observations about the framework as a whole. The intention, and perhaps the effect of the framework, is to scaffold students' learning by supplying targeted supports.

Leveled Literacy Intervention

LLI[11] use began two years ago; one central office administrator described it as "one of our most intensive intervention programs for reading." District educators explained that LLI operates in a coordinated fashion with other practices the district is using, and the students who need this level of support receive it during the daily intervention and enrichment period each day (see the discussion below). Professional development (PD) in LLI is reportedly ongoing.

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11 Leveled Literacy Intervention is, according to its developers, "… a powerful, short-term intervention, that provides daily, intensive, small-group instruction, which supplements classroom literacy teaching. LLI turns struggling readers into successful readers with engaging leveled books and fast-paced, systematically designed lessons" (http://www.fountasandpinnell.com/lli/).

Guided reading instruction

Painesville struggled with guided reading[12] until a new curriculum director helped scaffold related teacher understandings and capacities, in part via formal PD. As the assistant superintendent recalled: "When we put our big push on to get our literacy framework… we had to make sure that everybody had the same understanding of how to conduct guided reading." District assessment data (e.g., standards-based grading) reportedly informs guided reading instruction. One principal noted,

> The work that we're doing at the BLT [Building Leadership Team] is to monitor students' benchmark scores and then to the teacher-based team level looking and then how that ultimately impacts the guided reading instruction they're doing in the classroom. (Building Administrator)

Daily Five

Daily Five[13] is a method for cultivating literary independence at the elementary level; Painesville teachers use it at higher grade levels as well. The following quote from one of the building administrators describes the practice:

> Four different things were happening in that classroom. And then the teacher shifted groups and she had another group of six students come back to her table, and those students knew what to do. So, she was almost embedding her Daily 5 routines in small group rotations, but really structuring it to what the students needed at that time. (Building Administrator

During the week that WordFarmers researchers visited the district, Daily Five was observed in three elementary classrooms—one in each of the district's three elementary schools. Teachers use the program for regular language arts instruction and also during the "intervention and enrichment" period at the end of the day. This use is reportedly

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12 Guided reading uses: (1) small group instruction to facilitate differentiation and leveled instruction and (2) cognitive processing tools and graphic organizers to help students chunk, comprehend, and interpret what they are reading (https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/4-tips-guided-reading-success/)

13 From the project website (https://www.thedailycafe.com/daily-5): Students select from five authentic reading and writing choices, working independently toward personalized goals, while the teacher meets individual needs through whole-group and small-group instruction, as well as one-on-one conferring. These choices include: Read to Self, Work on Writing, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, and Word Work.

guided by the literacy framework to monitor progress and support differentiation (e.g., with various protocols):

> [Daily Five] provides teachers a framework for differentiation. And teachers don't have a structure for differentiation. It doesn't happen. [But with Daily Five] once we've leveled our students, the teachers can group their students, and then pull them for guided reading groups. (Building Administrator

Co-serve teaching

With this practice one class might have three teachers teaching the same thing, with students grouped and instruction differentiated for each group. For instance, a typical Painesville configuration might include a special education teacher, an EL teacher, and a general education teacher. According to interviewees, co-serve teaching should be practiced collaboratively, without an identifiable leader. In other words, all the co-serve teachers should be visible as instructional leaders, as the description below illustrates:

> The intervention specialist was going through the lesson and speak[ing] with groups, then the other one takes over, and you wouldn't have known [which] was the content area teacher and [which] the intervention specialist. (Building Administrator)

Co-serve was witnessed four times during classroom observations. Especially effective use occurred in one 9th grade ELA class, where the teachers seemed to have thoughtfully planned out a complex set of stations for small-group instruction directed toward the comprehension and interpretation of two related texts. The co-teachers in this classroom also appeared to use a coordinated approach for addressing students' needs for behavioral support

Daily intervention and enrichment period

Painesville initially established an "intervention and enrichment" (IE) period for elementary level students at the end of each day. The purpose of this practice was to ensure that opportunities for support and enrichment would not interfere with core classroom instruction. In addition, the practice limited the extent to which educators would need to single-out specific students (i.e., those with special needs) in front of their peers. More recently, the districts' teacher-based teams have reportedly undertaken changes to realign the practice with the districtwide instructional framework. A building administrator explained, "So, we've really tried to have the students be a part of the regular instruction in their grade level, but then pull them during IE time the way it's truly intended."

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Standards-based grading

Painesville created a grading system tied to the Ohio Learning Standards. Grades are now pegged to a locally devised set of district standards based on the state standards. A cohort of stakeholders—mostly teachers, with guidance from building and central office administrators— created the system by aligning their formative and summative assessment practices with the relevant Ohio standards. According to a district administrator, "This… is a really important piece of our improvement efforts right now." During a meeting with the teachers at one of the schools, a WordFarmers' researcher heard the administrator who led the meeting talk briefly about standards-based grading. The intention of his comments seemed to be to remind teachers about the importance of standards-based grading to the overall improvement effort and also to scaffold teachers' learning about the district's new teacher-evaluation rubrics.

PBIS responsive classroom management practices

Use of PBIS[14] varied from school to school, though the program appeared to provide a common vocabulary and outlook for classroom management. In addition, as the comment below suggests, teachers saw it as a way to foster student engagement.

> Students have got to trust us, that we're here to protect them, and then once we do that, then we can teach... PBIS makes sure our kids understand that they are recognized, understand that there's positives outside of the negatives. (High School Teacher)

Of all types of strategies observed across the schools during classroom observations, PBIS strategies were seen most often—12 times. The specific PBIS strategies were often different across grade levels and schools, but three practices were used consistently regardless of the specifics: (1) positive reinforcement; (2) quiet redirection; and (3) explicit structures for encouraging desired behavior.

EL academic supports for the district's Hispanic population

More than half the district's students are Hispanic (see context section for relevant details). Hence, the district reportedly uses an array of supports for these students:

- propagating ESL teaching methods and related outlooks districtwide;

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14 From the project website (https://www.pbis.org/school/swpbis-for-beginners/pbis-faqs): PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS IS NOT a packaged curriculum, scripted intervention, or manualized strategy.

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- implementing an English Language Development (ELD) program districtwide; and
- supporting *older students* who have not yet reached English proficiency.

An example of support for older students was the EL lab/study hall, an elective class at the high school. The lab/study hall enlisted the help of two bilingual paraprofessionals, who gave support to English Learners as they were studying and completing other schoolwork.

The Painesville framework as a system

According to interviewees, the Painesville framework provides a system of scaffolds for students. Its key practices work together to coordinate efforts on behalf of students by clarifying expectations for what the adults (e.g., teachers, paraprofessionals, related service personnel) need to do. As one teacher put it,

> Between a schoolwide language of positive behavior, schoolwide language of language arts block, and schoolwide language of formative assessment… we can see there's an overall sense of community now: like the kids know what's expected… we are all speaking the same language. (Elementary Teacher)

The framework, moreover, appeared to be administered somewhat like the state's "multi-tiered system of supports:" with Tier 1 supports incorporated as part of routine practice in general education classrooms, and the other two "tiers" increasingly more intense—and undertaken with assistance from other educators. The district reportedly tries to ensure that as many students as possible can be served through Tier 1 supports, reserving more intensive intervention until data suggest that a student cannot achieve mastery otherwise. As one district leader noted, "We've really tried to focus people's attention on that, because it's not about the intervention, it's not about the special programs, but quality Tier 1 instruction" (Central Office Administrator).

According to a building administrator, Tier 1 instruction ought to be responsive to the developmental levels of students:

> [For instance,] research shows that students should be given breaks in between instructional time. A child who's five years old shouldn't be asked to attend to a task for more than eight minutes before they're rotating, or moving, or changing. So whole group instruction is limited in our instructional framework based on the level of the students. (Building Administrator)

As one major strategy for improving and expanding the impact of Tier 1 instruction, the system monitors instructional practice through daily "walkthroughs." According to two school leaders:

> Our district leadership has streamlined our walkthrough… So, feedback [I give to teachers]… is related to the instructional framework. I… monitor the progress of

the initiatives, like Daily 5, how our guided reading is going, how our benchmark assessments are going, Eureka math… I'm able to see those things and give staff feedback specifically [related to the] instructional framework. (Building Administrator)

Another significant improvement strategy involves the use of literacy coaches: We put literacy coaches from an outside agency in our classrooms, with our teachers, with our kids… It's consistent, and ongoing. Every month we have somebody working in your classroom either to model a literacy strategy, to give you feedback, to help you in planning, to help you set up your classroom. (Central Office Administrator)

Based on the nature of the strategies the district was using, the research team inferred that Painesville educators have worked to correct the common practice of treating "special education" and "general education" as separate domains of practice. An administrator and former teacher spoke to district improvements in this area, commenting, "I feel like we did a lot of tracking: you were with the low kids, you were with the high kids. That's just not a practice we engage in anymore. We've said, 'That's not acceptable'" (Central Office Administrator).

The conceptual change is substantial: the entire district now develops a common language, set of practices, and cycle of self-evaluation governing the education of all students. Arguably, the emergence of the Painesville instructional framework on this basis has deepened improvement efforts in the district. As one district leader noted, "Every type of improvement that we've made, the literacy program, the writing program, the Write Tools, and the commitment to everybody working on the writing… everything is hand-in-hand" (Central Office Administrator).

Structures to Support Improvement

Interview data point to five structures that scaffold school improvement: (1) leadership teams (TBTs, BLTs, and the DLT); (2) communication structures; (3) accountability and assessment systems; (4) resourcing structures; and (5) external support structures.

OIP leadership teams

Many interviewees characterized the leadership teams (TBTs, BLTs, and the DLT) of the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) as the core of Painesville's improvement efforts. In Painesville, students have "Late Start Tuesdays," a schedule adjustment that gives the leadership teams time to meet weekly. A key administrator observed, "It starts with time for TBTs—real, dedicated time for TBTs. You have to dedicate the time." Another interviewee claimed, "If it's not in the OIP, the district does not focus on it" (Central Office Administrator). Interviewees often asserted that Painesville was persistent in operating its leadership teams ("with fidelity" according to several interviewees). The

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following paragraphs summarize findings for each type of team (i.e., TBTs, BLTs, and the DLT).

TBTs

Interviewees described a change in the focus of TBTs from "analyzing data" toward "analyzing instruction." These interviewees seemed in previous years to have regarded *data* only as performance information about students. The data they now analyze about instruction, from this former vantage, seems to be something else. For instance, more recent data discussions focus on data generated through the daily observation of instruction (i.e., walkthroughs).[15] Researchers observed TBTs at the elementary-school and high-school levels, encountering this new focus: One team was involved in discussions of formative assessment strategies, the other was working on an instructional strategy that had been selected by the Building Leadership Team (BLT).

In the view of many interviewees, the shift in TBTs' focus also represented a relatively new, but nevertheless shared, belief that the best way to improve education for students is to improve instruction. In part the shift may reflect the influence of a statewide leadership program—Ohio Leadership for Inclusion, Implementation, & Instructional Improvement (OLi[4]) with which most of the district's leaders have been involved.

BLTs

Interview data suggested that BLTs are used to support the work of TBTs and teachers generally. One interviewee explained that the BLT helped distribute useful ideas from individual TBTs to other TBTs so that helpful strategies might spread across the building. At least one principal structured her BLT to monitor the TBTs and made sure there was a representative from each TBT on the BLT. The principal made this change to support the TBTs: "It will be a continuous form of support, and awareness of where we need to go next, because of that communication structure." An elementary teacher noted that the BLT had worked with individual teachers to show them how to keep running records— aiding the data collection and monitoring process and supporting the team's work to use collaborative forms of inquiry.

DLT

Interviewees reported district outcomes as occupying the attention of the DLT. These outcomes included graduation rate and academic performance; interviewees also mentioned student behavior. For instance, one interviewee reported that the DLT looked at every individual student who did not graduate to analyze possible causes of

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15 OLi4 is two-year, long-term, job-embedded PD to help principals practice inclusive instructional leadership (see the program website: https://www.oli-4.org).

noncompletion. The walkthroughs previously mentioned were reportedly initiated by the DLT as one source of data about implementation of the district's instructional framework. The role of the DLT in designing the instructional framework is unclear from the interviews. Nevertheless, even if all DLT members were not fully aware of the nuances of the district's instructional framework, they nevertheless seemed to possess a clear understanding of the differing roles of the leadership teams. As one noted, "Everyone knows what's expected. The BLT is fully aware that they are expected to provide support to the TBTs and to monitor the progress of the TBTs towards… reaching the goals handed down by the DLT" (Building Administrator).

Communication systems

Interviewees clearly viewed improvement of educational outcomes as the overarching district goal, and discussions about improvement were a focal point for the leadership teams. Interviewees, moreover, saw the teams as a mechanism for facilitating communication and trust across the district. These structures allowed for the reciprocal flow of information, which enabled administrators to roll out new initiatives (or refine ongoing initiatives) and teachers to articulate concerns. One building administrator characterized the communication process as follows:

> We've got the boots on the ground in our TBTs. They're having these conversations about instruction. They bring, "Hey, these are the issues we're still facing, this is what we need," to the BLT. And then if we can't solve it there then we go, "Okay, hey guys at the district level, what can we do to support the BLT, and in turn, to support the TBTs?" (High School Administrator)

Apparently, as interview data suggest, team structures—and the communication mechanisms they enable—have evolved over the course of the last five years. For example, at the high school, teacher-based teams had once been organized departmentally, but they are now multidisciplinary. According to high-school administrators, the change was put in place to try to break down silos. Their hope was that, over time, it would alter members' understanding of the TBTs' work—and indeed, communication patterns within and across the teams.

The habit of collaboration in leadership teams, as the researchers heard, puts demands on participants that cultivate responsibility and trust. According to one middle school teacher, "[It cultivates] the openness to be able to say, 'Hey, I don't agree with that, and this is why,' and to have a voice." According to another teacher,

> Outcomes that are positive would include trust. I think we have a lot of trust between all three levels of the building… And that comes from the "us" driving the machine. That we, rather than the… superintendent, are saying, "This is what we're doing." (High School Teacher)

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Leadership teams in Painesville thus played two important communication functions: connecting parts of the school-system domain and inviting stakeholders who might otherwise have been left out of the decision-making process. Additionally, participants in BLTs typically included participants from the central office or the State Support Team that provides guidance to the district:

> Typically, there's someone from either the state [that is, SST] or central office that comes [to the BLT meetings], and if they're not observing, they're just listening… and always direct[ing] us back to whatever the bigger goal is. (Elementary Teacher)

Assessment and accountability systems

To ensure implementation of planned actions and to monitor progress, district leaders rely on various types of data. The district's assessment and accountability systems support these functions. As one administrator remarked,

> That's the biggest reason why [we've] made the change now. Because we've always had goals, we always had strategies and action steps. Nobody ever followed through. Nobody ever held people accountable. (Central Office Administrator)

The district adopted two structures to foster accountability and assessment: (1) the district's data repository and (2) AIMSweb.[16] Using the former, leadership team members upload and share key documents. For example, TBTs "share out" a report of each meeting. In this way, administrators can monitor attendance and judge whether or not teams are working effectively. Many interviewees shared their belief that these accountability structures directly support district improvement efforts.

> We can [now] sit down at the table, we can pull up our computers, and we can look at what every single team did. We can send feedback to individual teams. We can send general feedback to the whole district or to a whole building based on the work that happened in that meeting. (Central Office Administrator)

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16 The district also used Infinite Campus to generate standards and report cards. This system enables teachers to input assessment data which can then be pulled by administrators.

Painesville also adopted AIMSweb[17] for collecting and sharing student assessment data, and the following excerpt is suggestive of how this structure is used:

> We've been intentional about making that something that we look at a couple times a quarter, or at least once a quarter, to see how kids are growing and if they're not, what are we going to do? (Elementary Teacher)

Resourcing structures

According to interviewees, the district uses resources carefully to support its improvement efforts. One administrator commented, "We are very, very focused on what we buy. We don't buy any more frivolous things, like teachers just want something and people would just buy it for them. Now we are very structured in what we do" (Central Office Administrator).

The district also has tapped temporary funding sources to make some purchases (e.g., for Pearson Publishing's AIMSweb). The AIMSweb purchase was funded, according to interview data, by "residual Race to the Top" funds. Another such purchase, which related to improvement efforts in reading and language arts, was made via a Straight-A grant to the district from the ODE. As is the case with the district's decisions about resource allocations, decisions about seeking external funds are reportedly intentional.

External support structures

An array of organizational stakeholders—especially regional and state organizations—surround Ohio school districts. These support structures, like the previously mentioned OLi[4], have played influential roles in the improvement efforts. One administrator characterized the influence of OLi[4] in the following way:

> OLi4 solidified the fact that we need to shift our mindset from data, data, data, to okay, what is it telling us? Were we successful in these strategies? We need to focus more on what our teachers are doing, because we can adjust that more and then look at the results. (Building Administrator)

The regional State Support Team (SST4, serving Geauga and Lake counties, and headquartered in Painesville) played a similar role in the district:

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17 From the Pearson site for this product (https://www.aimsweb.com/about): AIMSweb is the leading assessment and RTI solution in school today—a complete web-based solution for universal screening, progress monitoring, and data management for Grades K-12. AIMSweb provides guidance to administrators and teachers based on accurate, continuous, and direct student assessment.

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> We have had success in these efforts and you get to a point where you say, "Yeah, you know what? I've kind of got this figured out." And it takes that external person to come in and say, "You know what? You could do this a lot better," or, "Why're you doing that?". And to be honest, that perspective cannot be generated from within the organization. It has to come from out there. And [our SST representative] is just the right fit. (Central Office Administrator)

The research team also heard from one district administrator that an ODE expert helped the district design its standards-based grading system, providing "high quality assessment design." And, even during WordFarmers' visit to the district, one of the researchers observed a presentation to principals about the depth-of-knowledge training that an external consultant was scheduled to provide later in the year.

Leadership Coalition

A new leadership cohort arrived in Painesville at about the same time and appears to have coalesced since then. Some were recruited internally and some from outside the district. Interview data describe three leadership nexuses: (1) central office leadership, (2) building leadership, and (3) other leadership actors.

Central office leadership

Many interviewees said central office leadership was key to the improvement process in Painesville. Teachers who were interviewed claimed that the central office leaders "really took [teachers' ideas] to heart" and believed they had "somebody at the top who supported them." A district administrator characterized the assistant superintendent and curriculum director like this:

> Those two together [are] like a force to be reckoned with. They get it, they know what we need to do, and they are really here to change… Without those two, we'd still be doing nothing. (Central Office Administrator)

Interviewees' opinions suggested, in particular, that the assistant superintendent has played a central role in improvement efforts. Though an outside hire, he knew the district well: Previously he had been SST4's liaison with Painesville, sitting on the DLT and building professional relationships with district educators. According to a building leader, the assistant superintendent's experience with the SST gave him "a lot of strength with understanding the five-step process and a lot of strength with trying to hone our TBTs."

One board member noted that "with that change in leadership, there was a new focus." In part, this new focus involved a shift from goals that were "lofty and not achievable" to those that were more focused and reasonable. Part of the assistant superintendent's early responsibility was to connect the improvement plan to building-level practice:

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The work that was clearly defined in our Ohio Improvement Plan didn't match any of the things that were happening at the BLTs. Like there was this huge disconnect. There wasn't clarity in the message and there wasn't focus on what we really should be doing. (Central Office Administrator)

As another administrator commented,

[The assistant superintendent] structured what it's going to look like, like how it's supposed to work and move on from there. It's not just, "Oh, we did it. We wrote this plan and there it sits." That's not what it's about. It's about all the action stuff that actually gets us to that big goal. (Central Office Administrator)

The assistant superintendent also played a critical role in hiring new professional employees in the district, according to interview data. One of his key hires, according to interviewees, was the curriculum director (formerly a Painesville teacher with whom the assistant superintendent had worked previously). The curriculum director explained:

We had worked really closely together. My administrator at that time sent me to represent the school at the building leadership and district leadership team level. So, he and I knew the direction things needed to go, and we saw the disconnect.

Her promotion seemed to be a strategic decision. It established two leaders who were ready to act with shared vision and informed understanding of the district.

The assistant superintendent described the "heavy lifting" done by the curriculum department on behalf of instructional improvement in Painesville:

We are right now finalizing really solid, aligned curricular maps, producing quality assessments. We've undertaken standards-based grading and reporting, which is a really important piece of our improvement efforts. The curriculum director is really important in that stuff. That department does a lot of the heavy lifting and a lot of the leadership behind those pieces.

Many other interviewees also noted the importance of curriculum work, especially citing the push for standards-based grading: but also, the use of the LLI program, the guided reading initiatives, benchmark assessments, and the centralized curriculum website. The website, in particular, according to one central office administrator, helped to "[keep] everything very consistent" across the three elementary schools, particularly in face of high rates of intra-district student mobility.

Additional members of the central office leadership team included the director of state and federal programs and the ELL director. One board member commented about the importance of these leaders: "Those directors play a big role in this, too. I mean,

reaching out to each of those demographics to make sure that we're covering all students."

Building leadership

Principals also played key roles, according to many interviewees, teachers and administrators alike: "The principals make [the improvement process] happen. So, they're absolutely key there because they have to provide the support and the accountability for the things to be carried out" (Central Office Administrator).

In particular, according to teachers, building leaders were able to provide focus and to foster two-way communication. As one teacher noted,

> I honestly believe that the kind of leadership you have and the focus of the leadership trickles down through the staff. Our principal was able to help us see the evidence that shifts were happening. (Elementary Teacher)

The principal referenced in the above quotation reportedly led substantial literacy efforts in the school based on identified needs in reading, including initiating the intervention and enrichment period described in a previous section.

The high-school principal, hired to improve school climate and student behavior, was also an important member of the leadership coalition. Employed a year before the employment of the assistant superintendent, the two were working in close collaboration when WordFarmers researchers visited. According to an interviewee from the high school, "We had to clean up the climate a little bit. There was a low morale among teachers. Kids were acting out and there were disruptions" (Building Administrator).

Describing his own actions, the high-school principal noted,

> I just continued to tell my staff that we have disrespect from the classes because you've tolerated it. Or, if they're not academically rigorous, it's because you tolerated it. And I'm like, "Folks, I'm not going to tolerate it." So, we're going to work together and make this happen. (High School Principal)

Another administrator at the high school characterized the progress that has been made thus far: "Now we've cleaned that up a fair amount and we're ready to take the next steps with improving the rigor in the classrooms and instruction from our teachers" (Building Administrator).

Several other interviewees also noted the functionality of some of the newly instituted behavior-management practices (e.g., highly visible hall passes and a "student management room"—where students go if they are late, for example, so they do not interrupt instruction).

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Other actors

Leadership reportedly extends beyond administrators and the administrative coalition. According to one interviewee,

> We have some key teacher leaders at the building. They're in difficult positions sometimes whenever we're asking for change, but they kind of translate messages. There's one or two of those folks in every building, and they may or may not be the ones who participate in DLT and all those things, but they participate in the work and they understand it. (Central Office Administrator)

One teacher reflected on what the teacher-leader role entails:

> I have a reputation for being professional, speaking truth to power in some ways. The teachers around me knew that I had their interests at heart. And I believed in what we were doing and the changes that we could make. But I had to convince people. I really had to cheerlead to get our team on board. (High School Teacher)

Unified Visioning and Communication (Coherence and Consistency)

As noted above, a coalition of administrators emerged in Painesville to lead improvement efforts. What made their work successful, however, was a shared philosophical vision and approach. Two communication goals (and associated strategies) seem notable, based on interview data: (1) sustaining a unified vision and direction districtwide and (2) sustaining self-reflection and trust as a districtwide value.

Sustaining unified vision and direction

"Unified vision" was described by interviewees as a process of consensus-building (or buy-in) and also as shared understandings about goals and priorities. According to one central-office administrator, "We have goals that we need to achieve. And we check our goals. Did we achieve them? No? Why not? What's the next barrier we can peel back?" A high school teacher reflected on the benefits of a unified set of goals and strategies: "A lot of those little things wouldn't happen without that consistency of leadership at the top."

Notably, and at all levels, interviewees asserted that even though vision was a critical part of the improvement process, vision itself—without direction and endurance—was *not* "unified" or unifying. Central-level and building-level administrators, as well as teachers, spoke strongly about the importance of "sticking with it": having follow-through, and giving plans and strategies time to work. Teachers reported feeling more secure in implementing new instructional practices and curriculum because of the leadership's understanding that plans needed support and time to work.

As revealed throughout the findings, a unified district vision was reinforced by several efforts, including (1) implementation of common instructional and behavioral support

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frameworks, (2) districtwide training efforts, (3) districtwide standards-based learning expectations for students, and (4) the deployment of common accountability structures.

Sustaining self-reflection and trust as a districtwide value

Interviewees described improvement efforts as collaborative. Many initiatives originated at central office, but principals and teachers also remained actively engaged in improvement processes. One teacher described the openness with which teachers work toward improvement: "As a district we're all in this together, and that team concept is important. People don't get on the defensive with walkthroughs and that kind of stuff."

From the perspective of all interviewees, the involvement of teachers was critical, even when initiatives originated with administrators. As one teacher put it, "There's more of a partnership with the teachers." Another disclosed, "If I don't agree with something, I want to sit down and say, 'This is why.' And I want to be heard. In this district, you're able to do that, and you're able to grow" (Middle School Teacher).

A central-office administrator commented: "This work [drafting improvement efforts] guides every single thing that we do, and we don't make these decisions without teachers in the room.". Teachers communicated clarity about their role in improving instruction:

> This week, we're working on vocab, and we're all using the same strategy. And with that strategy, we're going to analyze and say, "Hey, what percentage of your students did well? Which ones did not? And what are we going to all do to help our struggling students with that?" (Middle School Teacher)

In addition to the internal accountability that came with collaboration, leadership built in a degree of flexibility—asking for implementation with fidelity up to a point, but also allowing for a degree of autonomy:

> [The assistant superintendent] made everyone accountable. Teachers [in the past] would just walk in on "late start day" and just do whatever they wanted and not meet their team, even. And we're like, "Why is that okay?" (Central Office Administrator)

Interviewees also appeared to understand, or anticipate, the struggles they might confront as they worked to achieve this flexible kind of coherence. They noted the importance of trust, openness, and self-reflection, as reflected in this comment from a high-school teacher: "We have a lot of trust between all three levels of the building. There's that camaraderie, that teamwork is built into that system." It seemed that, as trust developed, leaders proposed ideas and allowed for input and trials, rather than mandating and enforcing changes.

Finally, teachers and administrators reported that, in teamwork, the focus was on staying active. The process of improvement remained the core of teams' work, with a consistent focus on "next steps." According to participants, there was no such thing as "being done," but instead their work was guided by constant revision, redirection, and refinement:

> During professional development teachers will say, "Oh my gosh, should I be putting this in my grade book? Why aren't we doing this? And where's my common assessment form for this?" And I always say to take a minute and reflect: "Five years ago you didn't care what the teacher next door to you was putting in her grade book. We never even talked about it. Now you have a common assessment for every single standard we've determined on a schedule." I said, "This is a good thing." It's going to take us years to get there. But the fact that we're having this conversation is exactly what I wanted. (Central Office Administrator)

Communication practices described by interviewees seem to have supported the development of a culture in which teachers, in particular, found themselves supported and respected as well as held accountable. It seemed likely that such a development was facilitated by a strong but flexible district leadership, by the information bridges across leadership teams, and by multilevel input for improvement initiatives. The "what's next" attitude described by several interviewees seems emblematic of district improvement efforts.

Engagement with Local Circumstances

The context section of this report documents the ethnic makeup of the district's families and community culture. Unlike other places with sizable shifts in their ethnic makeup, Painesville City appears to have welcomed Mexican immigrants, though the study has limited data to support this claim. Certainly, though, neighboring districts have not experienced anything like the Painesville phenomenon. And reports from other places in the United States show evidence that towns and their school districts are not always welcoming (e.g., Flores, 2014).

Most Painesville interviewees, however, spoke positively about the district's efforts to engage its Hispanic patrons. This engagement, according to interview data, reflects four strands: (1) appreciating the district's students, (2) overcoming middle-class ignorance, (3) improving family engagement, and (4) sponsoring initiatives that fit students' and families' circumstances.

Appreciating Painesville's students

Two related circumstances were mentioned by most interviewees: the comparatively large proportion of economically disadvantaged students and the large number of

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students with limited English proficiency. Household mobility (transience) and student attendance also were mentioned frequently by interviewees. Other issues, such as mental health, were mentioned less often.

Perhaps what makes Painesville most striking (especially in comparison to neighboring districts) is its large Hispanic enrollment. Interviewees' descriptions of this circumstance varied, but none seemed negative. According to one administrator,

> So, it's [the Hispanic and ELL population] a part of the fabric of our district… You don't work in Painesville City and not work with English language learners, you know? Somebody that's using English as their second or third language. (Central Office Administrator)

Another administrator remarked, "We get kids who haven't gone to school since 6th Grade in Mexico, and they show up at our doors. Okay, how do we educate these kids now? How do we give them what they need?" (Building Administrator). Some administrators, in fact, offered very positive views about the students the district serves:

> It doesn't mean that they are denied access just because they're coming from home environments that offer different experiences and different challenges. It doesn't mean that they're any less intelligent. It doesn't mean that they're any less capable. (Central Office Administrator)

Teachers also spoke about their Hispanic students—and, in fact, all Painesville students—using mostly positive characterizations. A comment from a high school teacher, for example, suggested that that many Painesville students have needs (the term "baggage" was used by the speaker), but the comment did not target these students as deficient:

> Our kids are rough around the edges… not bad kids, but they come to the table with tons of baggage. They come to the table all over the place, in terms of background knowledge… that starts in kindergarten, and it never goes away. (High School Teacher)

Another comment showed deep admiration for the resilience of some of the students:

> I've got kids in my class that will work 40 hours a week and go to school. There's a core of 15 to 20 kids that work from 3 to 10 and come back to school and do it all again. I mean: I couldn't do that. (High School Teacher)

Overcoming middle-class ignorance

Interviewees expressed concerns about transience—understood as an issue of housing instability for families—and its impact on students in the district. They saw transience as

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a consequence of the poverty in which a portion of the Hispanic population lives, especially new arrivals and families with younger children. Interestingly, the administrators who expressed concern seemed to speak with care, avoiding any hint of a patronizing attitude. Furthermore, they were particularly supportive of strategies for helping teachers view children and families from an "assets" rather than a "deficits" perspective. As one administrator commented,

> We—as middle-class, comfortable, professional people—just don't get it. And that really impacts how we interact with kids, how we interact with families, the expectations that we have, whether they be too high or too low… And we said, "Okay, let's do something systematic around poverty. Let's start a conversation. Let's sustain a conversation to allow us to make all these other connections." (Central Office Administrator)

Other interviewees also mentioned the disadvantages of an outlook based on "middle-class" professionalism: "You know, we get new teachers in all the time, and they don't really understand what our kids are going through: 'Oh, they need to do my homework!' Well, there's a lot of other stuff going on too" (Building Administrator).

They contrasted this outlook with the more sympathetic perspective that the district cultivates:

> And why didn't Billy do his homework? Well, Billy was doing his homework by the car light because the electricity got turned off two days ago. Or, you know, little Sally doesn't come to school because mom doesn't have any gas. Getting it out in front of teachers opens their eyes [to] the struggles that students are going through. (Building Administrator)

These excerpts suggest that at least some educators in the district came to understand that families often struggled hard to secure basic needs (e.g., food and shelter). Some educators also understood that older children might choose, or be required, to become contributors to their families' economic well-being. Although educators viewed high school graduation as an important goal for the districts' students, some realized that, from the vantage of families, it might not be seen as a basic need:

> The district was saying, "What can we do to get our kids to school?" But we had to look at, "*Why* are they not coming to school?" And, I learned that a lot of our Hispanic students actually quit school around eighth or ninth grade because they choose to work. There was reasoning behind that: it was dealing with money. (Middle School Teacher)

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Improving family engagement

In view of the circumstances and educators' growing appreciation of students and families, fuller engagement with families seemed a logical—yet difficult—step to interviewees:

> A lot of our Hispanic families feel nervous coming into our schools because they don't speak English. We have translators, we have the headphones that you speak into and they can hear the whole thing in Spanish. But it still seems like they don't know if they'll be able to communicate with somebody. (Central Office Administrator)

Another interviewee suggested that some parents may have had difficult experiences with the district in the past, and the district is responsible for doing better in the future:

> We had an elementary curriculum night. But many of our parents don't even know what the word "curriculum" means! And so, as a BLT, we thought, "We're not maximizing an opportunity here to connect with parents." So, we changed our "meet the teacher night" and called it "back to school night" this year. We had the best turnout we've ever had. The gym was packed! (Building Administrator)

Changes such as these may require educators to revise their expectations of parental involvement, according to another interviewee. Expecting parents to come to school for every PTA event and every conference is too high a standard, on this view. The interviewee reported that the school had adjusted expectations accordingly.

Sponsoring initiatives that fit

By "transience," interviewees meant movement within the district, for the most part. It seemed to present the greatest challenge, in interview data, at the elementary level. District leaders viewed a common elementary curriculum as helpful in such circumstances:

> If we don't align those elementary buildings down to the grade level, down to the unit or the grading period, those kids are never getting a chance to have a solid curriculum. When [after they move] they're either repeating what they saw at [one school] two weeks ago or two months ago, and then going to [another school] and… doing it again. (District Administrator)

With a sizable EL enrollment, however, such a step was understood as a partial solution:

> One of our fifth-grade classes has three newcomers. No English. So, it's kindergarten- level word study: They have to learn the language. But we (also) have to teach fifth grade content. (Elementary Teacher)

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Homework completion had been a preoccupation for some teachers, as previous transcript excerpts suggest. Withdrawal of recess was one punishment for incomplete homework. An elementary teacher claimed the practice was unfair. According to this interviewee, recess fostered a "positive educational experience" and removing it made school a worse place for vulnerable students—someplace they did not want to be. In this view, such punishment became an incentive to drop out. Other interviewees noted that parents with limited proficiency in English might not be capable of helping with homework assignments. Homework was, it seems, a vexing issue.

Interviewees connected homework issues to grading, as well. Grades had depended in part on completing homework assignments, but Hispanic EL students from struggling families would not have equal opportunity to complete homework. From what educators had learned of the district's families, students were being punished by unfair grading practices. Standards-based grading addressed the vexing homework issue:

> The changes in the grading policy are so important because our students don't have the resources to do hours of homework. And what does homework really show you about what a student knows? I think there's a direct connection between the grading policy and the population we service, and the poverty level that many of our students are at. (Building Administrator)

Notably, relevant to this context, standards-based grading has limited the extent to which homework can be counted in the calculation of grades. According to the assistant superintendent, homework along with other formative assignments can constitute up to 15% of the grade.

Other instructional strategies identified in interviews as addressing local circumstances included (1) efforts to provide more relevant instruction; (2) use of an intervention and enrichment (IE) period in which students might complete homework during the school day; and (3) districtwide training in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to address language objectives in all subject areas.

Additional supports were also developed in response to community-specific conditions, including a Family Resource Center:

> We have English classes, we have parenting classes, and we have clothing for the students, because we're uniformly dressed.[18] We have food programs, like

18 The district has maintained an "academic dress code" since 2007. According to information published on the district website, the purpose of the policy is to encourage appropriate comportment at school. Several study participants presented the policy as

Backpack Buddies, where the kids are sent home on the weekends with a backpack full of food. There's a food market day in the community: We set it up at the Y, and people come and there's food for them. And all this run through the Family Resource Center. (Central Office Administrator)

Interviewees mentioned other supportive programs, as well. High-school level supports included a recently hired attendance liaison, guidance counselors, and connections to mental health services. Other services included a free summer lunch program and a free book exchange program in the summer.

Discussion

The case study illuminated organizational dynamics in Painesville that led to and sustained the district's improvement efforts. To a considerable extent, these dynamics reflect the use of recommended improvement practices such as (1) establishing focus and ensuring coherence (e.g., Forman, Stosich, & Bocala, 2017), (2) showing persistence and patience (e.g., Elmore & City, 2007), (3) relying on inquiry processes (e.g., Talbert, Mileva, Chen, Cor, & McLaughlin, 2010), (4) engaging educators in collaborative decision-making (e.g., Datnow, Park, & Kennedy-Lewis, 2013), (5) focusing on instruction as the cornerstone of improvement work (e.g., Andrews-Larson, Wilson, & Larbi-Cherif, 2017), (6) providing job-embedded professional development that is directly responsive to educators' needs (e.g., Althauser, 2015), and (7) mobilizing the wider community on behalf of improvement goals and strategies (e.g., Chadwick, 2004).

In addition to these well-documented practices, educators in Painesville also worked hard to establish and maintain an ethos of inclusiveness. They demonstrated the commitment to being inclusive by setting up structures to protect all students' access to core instruction (e.g., scheduling an IE period each day for all students) and also by expanding teachers' capacity to use practices for differentiating instruction (e.g., the "Daily Five"). Their commitment to being inclusive also entailed responsiveness to family circumstances. For example, they altered homework expectations and practices to accommodate students' problematic housing arrangements, their after-school work schedules, and their English language proficiency. The ethos of inclusiveness also extended to professional staff—all of whom were expected to contribute to improvement efforts through their participation on OIP teams and engagement with professional development initiatives.

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an equity measure—as a way to keep students from using access to higher-priced clothing as a marker of status.

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In spite of the improvements in educational practice that Painesville has made, the district continues to receive relatively low grades on Ohio's accountability metrics. Arguably, Painesville's improvement process is headed in a positive direction but will need more time. Under the circumstances, leaders in the district may be looking for ways to sustain momentum for work that requires perseverance while leading slowly and sporadically to improvements in performance. Meanwhile, everyone in the system might need to remind themselves that improvements in the inclusiveness and responsiveness of the districts' educational program has value beyond what the state might measure.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1 Painesville City Local Schools Total Enrollment: Black, White, Hispanic: 2012-2016

Group	School Year				
	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Total Enrollment	2,958	3,026	3,073	3,024	3,046
Percent Black, non-Hispanic	17.3%	16.4%	15.3%	15.5%	16.4%
Percent White, non-Hispanic	23.3%	24.1%	26.2%	27.2%	27.7%
Percent Hispanic	50.4%	49.9%	48.4%	46.9%	44.8%
Percent Multiracial	8.7%	9.1%	9.7%	10.0%	10.6%

Note. Percentages do not sum to 100 because of missing groups (Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islanders) and rounding.

Table 2 Painesville City Local Schools Enrollment: Proportions with Coincident Disability, Economic Disadvantage, and Limited English Proficiency

Group			School Year				
disability	low-SES	LEP	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
No	Yes	No	55.8%	57.8%	58.3%	58.3%	52.2%
No	Yes	Yes	25.9%	24.2%	24.8%	25.5%	22.2%
Yes	Yes	No	12.1%	11.7%	11.5%	10.7%	9.5%
Yes	Yes	Yes	4.4%	4.4%	3.7%	3.8%	3.4%
No	No	No	1.2%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	8.7%
Yes	No	No	0.4%	<0.3%	NA	<0.3%	1.6%
Yes	No	Yes	<0.3%	<0.3%	NA	NA	0.4%

Note 1. Data about teachers from the ODE for 2016 (ODE, 2018) indicate that the district's teaching staff is about 88% White, 8.5% Black, 2% Hispanic, and 1% multiracial.

Note 2. Proportions calculated by the authors. Percentages do not sum to 100% because of data unreported for some cells, and because of rounding. NA= not available. Precise number are not reported in cells with fewer than 10 students (i.e., .03% of the Painesville total enrollment).

Table 3 Painesville City Local Schools 2016-17: Total Enrollment and Subgroup Proportions by School

Schools	Total	Black	White	Subgroups Hispanic	LEP	DISADV	DISAB
Chestnut Elementary	478	16.7%	23.2%	52.1%	37.4%	99.4%	15.0%
Elm Street Elementary	470	13.5%	13.7%	64.8%	50.2%	99.7%	9.9%
Harvey High	756	19.9%	26.6%	44.6%	16.8%	97.6%	18.5%
Heritage Middle	654	15.5%	22.0%	53.0%	28.7%	99.6%	16.5%
Maple Elementary	461	20.9%	22.2%	46.4%	35.8%	99.2%	16.8%
Red Raider Preschool	118	15.6%	42.0%	32.5%	<9.0%	77.6%	47.0%

Note 1. Black and White are exclusive of Hispanic; Hispanics may be any "race."
Note 2. LEP=limited English proficient, DISADV=economically disadvantaged, DISAB=disability. These three subgroups are not mutually exclusive.

Table 4 Painesville City Local Schools: Attendance & Disciplinary Actions/100 Students, by Subgroup

Indicator	2016-17	2015-16	School Year 2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	OH 2016
Attendance	93.3%	93.6%	94.1%	>95%	>95%	93.9%
D/100T	26.9	28.2	23.8	33.1	32.0	22.0
D/100H	15.4	17.3	17.4	33.4	24.6	20.3
D/100B	56.5	60.3	51.5	62.7	71.7	64.4
D/100W	23.1	28.4	18.6	19.1	19.9	12.1
D/100DV	26.9	28.3	24.2	33.6	33.0	36.4
D/100DB	51.2	67.1	52.4	58.6	51.5	41.0
D/100LEP	17.0	18.3	14.6	29.7	23.5	20.0

Note 1. D/100T=total disciplinary actions per 100 students for the district, D/100H=for all Hispanic students, D/100B=for all Black students, D/100W=for all white students, D/100DV=for all students confronting economic disadvantage, D/100DB=for all students with disabilities, and D/100LEP=for all students with limited English proficiency.
Note 2. State-level data may be misleading due to the confounding of charter schools and public districts.

Table 5 Painesville City Local Schools: Percentage Proficient by Level

Level	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
3rd	49.7%	41.6%	56.3%	63.1%	68.8%
4th	46.0%	47.8%	44.5%	40.9%	47.8%
5th	44.4%	44.3%	42.6%	57.7%	51.0%
6th	38.8%	28.8%	41.3%	34.2%	36.4%
7th	30.1%	35.7%	41.9%	63.9%	55.4%
8th	31.9%	34.2%	37.2%	59.8%	54.9%
10th				69.8%	71.3%	74.5%
11th		81.2%	87.7%	85.7%	83.0%
HSGov&Hist	41.1%	43.9%	27.7%		
HSEng1&2	42.3%	32.6%	27.3%		
HSAlg1&Geo	21.0%	20.1%	73.0%		
All Avail	38.7%	45.4%	55.5%	67.4%	66.9%

Note 1. Percent proficient for each level is the average of all available scores at that level.

Note 2. HSGov&Hist=average of the government and history end-of-year tests; HSEng1&2=average of the English 1 and English 2 end-of-year tests; HSAlg1&Geo=average of the Algebra 1 and Geometry end-of-year tests; All Avail=the average in the given year of all available district-level test scores (percent proficient).

Note 3. The "HS" tests (end-of-year tests) replaced from 2014-15 forward the sections of the Ohio Graduation Test previously given in grades 10 and 11.

Table 6 Painesville City Local Schools: Proportions of Hispanic, Black, and White Graduates

Groups	School Years									
	15-16	2011	14-15	2010	13-14	2009	12-13	2008	11-12	2007
NGrads	169		141		140		139		126	
PrGrads H	40.2%	37.6%	36.9%	39.3%	32.9%	33.5%	36.7%	30.5%	31.0%	24.3%
PrGrads B	17.8%	17.4%	15.6%	19.3%	20.7%	22.3%	20.9%	24.8%	19.0%	26.7%
PrGrads W	26.0%	32.3%	36.2%	30.4%	31.4%	31.4%	30.9%	34.1%	34.9%	40.7%

Note 1. The three bottom rows (PrGradsH, B, and W) indicate the percentage of the number of graduates (N_Grads) in the respective subgroups (e.g., 41% of the 166 graduates in 2016 were Hispanic students).

Note 2. Table 6 *also* includes the proportion of the subgroup of the total high school enrollment four years earlier (italicized column head) for each of the years 2012-13 through 2016-17. For instance, in 2016 41% of the graduates were Hispanic, whereas four years earlier 38.9% of the high school enrollment was Hispanic.

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

Superintendent/Central Office Administrators/Board President

- Could you describe your current position/current role? How long have you been at your current role? How long have you been in the district?
- Would you describe the district's efforts over the past several years to improve education for all students?
    - When did the district decide to make significant improvements and why?
    - What actions did district leaders take?
    - Who was involved? What role did each key participant play?
- What has your role been in relation to district improvement efforts? OR – for specific roles: What has the role of the board been? What has the role of the curriculum specialists been?
- Does the district have a set of improvement goals?
    - What are the most important goals?
    - How were the goals developed? With whom are they shared?
    - How often does the district revisit the goals?
- What strategy or set of strategies has the district used in the improvement process?
- Have parents or community members played a role in influencing district improvement efforts? If so, how?
- What internal structures or structural changes enabled the district to make improvements?
    - What has been the role of Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) teams (i.e., DTL, BLTs, and TBTs) in the improvement process?
    - Can you describe your role on the DLT/BLT? Or how do you interact with the DLT/BLT/TBTs?
- Did professional development opportunities help the district make improvements? If so, what PD was helpful and why do you think it was helpful?
- Did data collection and analysis help the district make improvements? If so, what types of data were helpful? How did the district use these data?
- What improvements have you seen as a result of the district improvement process?
- What parts of the improvement process have worked well? What parts worked less well?
- What were the outcomes of the district improvement process?
    - Did instructional practices change? If so, in what ways?
    - Did grouping practices change? If so, in what ways?
    - Did the curriculum change? If so, in what ways?

- o Have there been measurable outcomes such as improvements in test scores or graduation rates?
- What challenges did the district face as it worked to improve?
  - o Have improvement processes been implemented equally throughout the district?
  - o How has the leadership team worked to reach all district personnel in implementing changes? Has this been successful? Why or why not?
  - o What do district educators perceive as the external challenges the school district has faced in improving education for all learners?

Principals/Other BLT Members

- Could you describe your current position/current role? How long have you been at your current role? How long have you been in the district?
- Would you describe your school's efforts over the past several years to improve education for all students?
  - o How do your school's efforts fit in with district efforts?
- Does the district have a set of improvement goals? If so, how are those shared with you? How often do you discuss district goals with central office administrators?
- Do you have a set of school improvement goals?
  - o How were the school improvement goals established?
  - o How do your school improvement goals fit with the district's improvement goals? How do they diverge?
- What particular strategy or set of strategies has your school used for making improvements?
- Have parents or community members played a role in influencing school or district improvement efforts? If so, how?
- What internal structures or structural changes enabled the school to make improvements?
  - o What has been the role of Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) teams (i.e., DTL, BLTs, and TBTs) in the improvement process?
  - o Can you describe your role on the BLT? What about the DLT? OR - how do you interact with the DLT/BLT/TBTs?
  - o Can you talk about how TBTs function in your building?
- Did professional development opportunities help the school make improvements? If so, what PD was helpful and why do you think it was helpful?
- Did data collection and analysis help the school make improvements? If so, what types of data were helpful? How did the school use these data?
- What improvements have you seen as a result of the district improvement process?
  - o What aspects of the improvement process have worked well?

- What were some outcomes of the district improvement process?
    - Did instructional practices change? If so, in what ways?
    - Did grouping practices change? If so, in what ways?
    - Did the curriculum change? If so, in what ways?
    - Have there been measurable outcomes such as improvements in test scores or graduation rates?
- What challenges has your building faced as it worked to improve education for all students?
    - How has your building worked to include all teachers and staff in improvement efforts? Has this been successful?
    - What are some of the external challenges the school district has faced in improving education for all learners? (e.g high poverty, high transience among population, low parental involvement, funding difficulties)

TBT Members

- Could you describe your current position/current role? How long have you been at your current role? How long have you been in the district?
- Could you describe how your TBT works?
- What topics does your TBT consider?
- How does your TBT review data?
- How does your TBT talk about and plan for instruction?
- How does your TBT monitor the use of the instructional strategies you decide to use?
- How does your TBT fit into other school and district structures (e.g., the BLT, the DLT, other planning groups)?
- Are you aware of the district's specific improvement goals? If so, how did you become aware of the district's goals?
- Would you describe what you know about the district's overall efforts over the past several years to improve education for all students?
- How do parents and community members contribute to the plans your TBT and/or BLT make?
- Do you think your teaching has improved as a result of your participation as a member of a TBT? Why or why not and in what ways?
- What overall improvements have you seen as a result of the district improvement process? What aspects of the improvement process have worked well?
- In terms of specific outcomes, can you speak to any of the following:
    - Have instructional practices changed? If so, in what ways?
    - Have grouping practices changed? If so, in what ways?
    - Has the curriculum changed? If so, in what ways?
- What have some of the challenges been in this process?