



NETWORK MIDYEAR AUDIT REPORT

School:	Grades Served:	Cohort:	Date of Site Visit:
Lincoln-Bassett Community School	PK-6	Network Cohort III	1/8/15
District:	Principal:		
New Haven Public Schools	Janet Brown-Clayton		

Part I: Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice		✓		
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture			✓	
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies		✓		
1.4. Professional development			✓	
1.5. Leadership effectiveness			✓	
1.6. Instructional leadership			✓	
Summary of Strengths:		Summary of Growth Areas:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Professional Culture: Teachers and leaders expressed a shared sense of purpose for their work at the school, and a willingness to request, receive, and provide support to best meet students' academic and socio-emotional needs. Teachers' commitment to the school is further evidenced by the 97% teacher attendance rate and their agreement to remain at the school for three years. School leaders foster this culture of professional growth and community through an open-door policy and frequent and targeted opportunities for teacher collaboration and community-building. Talent Management: The principal strategically leverages staff talent to improve school operations, instruction, and community engagement. The leadership team and teachers reported that systems and structures are in place and well-communicated to ensure everyone knows building-wide expectations and who to contact for support in specific areas. Teachers shared they feel comfortable and encouraged to try new strategies to improve their instruction, and the evaluation system is relevant. The leadership team consists of the school principal, assistant principal, director of operations, 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instruction: Although instructional coaches and common planning time are new strategies this year designed to improve teacher effectiveness, instructional practice requires steady and focused improvement. The principal explained and acknowledged that, with over 75% new teachers this year, establishing norms and a positive school culture were priorities for the first half of the school year. She shared that professional development for the second half of the year will address instructional rigor, data usage, and differentiation. During classroom observations, instructional quality varied across classrooms and grade levels, with few instances of academically rigorous or student-centered learning present. Ownership of Collaborative Planning: Given the large number of new teachers to the school and profession, the leadership team strategically allocated coaches to help facilitate morning professional collaboration. Teachers suggested this structure helps to advance instruction and dialogue among teachers; however, it requires a significant preparation on the part of coaches. It will be important for teachers to exercise increasing levels of ownership and direction in 		

<p>director of school climate, math coach, literacy coach, and data/technology coach. These leaders provide ample and targeted support for staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Structure: The school’s leadership team successfully balances individual responsibilities and collective decision-making. The school also welcomes community members and teachers into the project planning process, while simultaneously using the existing turnaround plan to guide school actions. Teachers reported there is efficient and consistent follow-through from administration, and common language and expectations support the implementation of school initiatives. The district supervisor attends weekly turnaround meetings at the school and is supportive of school initiatives, aligning central office resources to meet school needs. 	<p>leading their collaborative planning time, allowing coaches and leaders to focus on teacher coaching and feedback cycles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment: Lincoln-Bassett engaged in a significant re-staffing as part of the transformation process. New Haven Public Schools provided minimal support in the recruitment effort, and the district’s online application system contained outdated applicants. Lincoln-Bassett faced two unexpected Grade 3 vacancies in the fall. One vacancy was filled; the second remains vacant, and a paraprofessional is providing temporary coverage.
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Part II: Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor		✓		
2.2. Student engagement			✓	
2.3. Differentiation		✓		
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Common Core State Standards		✓		
2.5. Supports for special populations		✓		
2.6. Assessment system and data culture		✓		
Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Engagement: The majority of students were on task during classroom observations, and routines for work stations and independent reading were clearly in place in multiple classes and across grade levels. Interviewed students reported that in contrast to last year, this year they are learning more and enjoying school. Students conveyed their teachers care about their academic performance. Systems Development: Even with a predominantly new teaching staff, the school has developed systems to collect multiple sources of data to track student progress and guide intervention decision-making. Although 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Rigor: While Common Core-aligned learning objectives were posted in student-friendly language in most classrooms, academically rigorous work was not consistently observed. Tasks requiring higher-order thinking were evident in 25% of classrooms observed, and instruction was primarily teacher-led throughout the building. During interviews, the principal and leadership team identified academic rigor as a growth area and stated that a voluntary professional learning community has been established to supplement planned professional development support for teachers. Instructional Design: Although lessons were 			

<p>the use of data remains a growth area, teachers cited regularly using multiple progress monitoring systems, district-provided assessments, and Tier II reading and math interventions with their students. The reading coach shared plans to support teachers in using additional formative assessment strategies and data to design units using the backwards-design process.</p>	<p>generally well-paced, learning activities were not consistently student-centered. Classroom observations revealed little academic discourse among students and few differentiated activities. Despite recent investments in technology, the use of technology during classroom observations was limited. While the leadership team described plans to support pedagogy and increase differentiation, interviewed teachers expressed foundational concerns with classroom management, particularly with limited paraprofessional support in Grades 3-6. Given the presence of paraprofessionals in Grades K-2, it seems the upper grades may be operating from a deficit mindset as opposed to understanding the unique purpose of and need for teaching assistants in the primary grades.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment System: Lincoln-Bassett administers a variety of assessments; however, it is unclear whether the school has a consistent and norm-referenced measure used periodically throughout the year. The variety of assessments may preclude teachers from meaningfully charting student progress and applying timely interventions. • Supports for High-Needs Students: Lincoln-Bassett employs the Comer SSST model to identify and address the needs of struggling students. While staff spoke positively about the system, teachers expressed concerns supporting the increasing number of students being identified with learning disabilities without additional teachers or paraprofessionals.
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Part III: Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. School environment			✓	
3.2. Student attendance	✓			
3.3. Student behavior			✓	
3.4. Interpersonal interactions			✓	
3.5. Family engagement			✓	
3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy			✓	
Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:			

- **School Culture:** Students, teachers, parents, and community partners consistently reported dramatic changes in the school's climate between last year and this year. The principal has formed a strong leadership team and hired faculty and staff who are working together for student success. Several new processes and systems support the new culture (e.g., the SOAR behavior management system, daily teacher planning meetings, frequent observations of teachers followed by immediate feedback, and regular opportunities for parents to come to the school). Teachers reported they "built the new culture together." There is a shared belief that "the kids are our kids." Teachers also noted that students and staff are using a common language, which was observed throughout the audit site visit. Students have embraced the new expectations and reported they regularly remind each other of what is expected.
 - **Student Behavior System:** Based on observations of 12 classrooms, hallway transitions, and the lunchroom, student behavior appeared orderly and under control. Students seemed to understand expectations for behavior and the SOAR system of rewards and consequences. Teachers did not identify student behavior as a major obstacle to teaching and learning, and staff reported they receive consistent and appropriate support for significant behavioral problems. During the first half of the school year, Lincoln-Bassett reported 27 suspensions and no expulsions. During the 2013-14 school year, Lincoln-Bassett reported 74 total incidents resulting in suspensions or expulsions.
 - **School Environment:** During morning arrivals, students were warmly welcomed as they entered the school. Students reported they feel safe at school and have at least one adult with whom they can discuss problems. Through the school's partnership with ConnCAT, Lincoln-Bassett engaged in beautification efforts this past summer, adding splashes of color and murals throughout the school, which creates a warm and inspiring atmosphere. Hallways are also enriched by creative bulletin boards
- **Student Attendance:** Improving student attendance is a priority for the new administration. The school has a data wall showcasing attendance trends near the main entrance, and teachers display daily classroom attendance rates on white boards outside of their classrooms. The school publicly acknowledges classes with high rates of attendance. The school has implemented protocols to contact families of absent students.

Despite these efforts, student attendance remains relatively low compared to other Network and New Haven schools. The student attendance rate for the first half of the 2014-15 school year was 90%, and the chronic absenteeism rate was 41%. The 2013-14 attendance rate was 91% with 32% chronic truancy.
 - **College Culture:** As a next step in further defining the school culture, school leaders should consider making more explicit connections between SOARing at Lincoln-Bassett and success in middle school, high school, and beyond. Existing programs that provide relationships with adults (e.g., Gentleman's Club, church-sponsored mentoring) can be used to help students see how success in school leads to success in college, career, and life.

<p>showcasing student work; however, displays could be strengthened by additional school data and academic connections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Engagement: The school has substantially increased the level of family involvement in the school this year evidenced by dramatic increases in parent attendance at school-sponsored events. The principal reported that only 10 parents attended a June 2014 meeting while over 300 attended a December 2014 event. Leaders expressed the goal to provide families with additional ways to support their children’s learning. Parents noted the school provides a newsletter, and teachers regularly contact parents. Health Services: The school offers on-site health and dental services for students through the school-based health center. 	
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Part IV: Operations				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
4.1. Adequate instructional time			✓	
4.2. Use of instructional time		✓		
4.3. Use of staff time			✓	
4.4. Routines and transitions			✓	
4.5. Financial management			✓	
Summary of Strengths:	Summary of Growth Areas:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Time: Lincoln-Bassett employs an extended day schedule for teachers, enabling faculty members to collaboratively meet four mornings per week. Teachers use the meeting time with the school coaches collaborate, learn, and problem-solve with their grade-level and vertical teams. Teachers reported the time has been invaluable in building consistency across classrooms. Extended Day Programs: Through partnerships with ConnCAT, Camp Antrum, and the Boys & Girls Club, Lincoln-Bassett offers a rich array of before- and after-school programs directly at the school site. These programs extend the school day by up to four hours for some students, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Instructional Time: Lesson pacing with inconsistent across observations. Some classroom observations revealed ample student downtime and inefficient transitions between tasks. Additionally, before- and after-school programs introduce additional time during the school day. According to school stakeholders, this time could be used more purposefully to advance student engagement and achievement. Academic Alignment of Extended Day Programming: This year, Lincoln-Bassett launched before- and after-school programming extending the school day for the majority of the student population. Partners leading these programs aspire to expand enrollment further 			

<p>incorporating academic supports and enrichment opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines and Transitions: Observations during morning arrival, classroom transitions, the lunch period, and dismissal time demonstrated that clear processes and expectations are in place and consistently followed. Students seem to understand and recognize the importance of school routines. Adults were visible throughout the building and were consistently positive with students. • Resource Allocation: Through an operations position, the school has taken proactive steps to manage school resources and operations. The Network grant provides substantial resources to support the turnaround effort. The district has allowed the principal to allocate personnel and resources in support of school-specific needs and priorities. The state also provided bond funding for facilities improvements and additional technology. 	<p>next year. Partners and staff acknowledge that programs are not yet impacting academics to the fullest extent possible. Stakeholders noted that homework support is inconsistent. Focus group participants suggested that additional communication between teachers and partners could promote alignment between program activities with classroom learning objectives. Partners recently began working to align their behavior management strategies with the school's SOAR program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology: As noted, the use of technology during observed classroom lessons was limited. As the school increases student and teacher access to technology, it will be important for the school to establish trainings and systems to promote technology integration.
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Part V: Recommendations	Priority Level:	Resource Requirement:	Timeline:
1. Talent: Define actionable instructional priorities and establish a PD calendar to reinforce these priorities.	Medium	Medium	Medium-term (by summer 2015)
2. Talent: Gradually shift ownership for common planning time to teacher leaders, building ownership and allowing coaches to focus on individual teacher coaching for assigned teacher caseloads.	Low	Low	Long-term (by fall 2015)
3. Talent: Evaluate the use of teaching assistants; consider using teaching assistants in the upper grades during intervention time.	Medium	Medium	Long-term (by fall 2015)
4. Academics: Conduct an assessment inventory; discontinue/add normed benchmark assessments ensuring teachers have access to real-time data to differentiate instruction and interventions.	Medium	Medium	Long-term (by fall 2015)
5. Academics: Review and codify a system for providing targeted students interventions (e.g., data to inform placements, length of intervention cycle, intervention programs/strategies by tier, staff to deliver interventions, intervention time for all grades).	Medium	Medium	Long-term (by fall 2015)



6. Climate: Establish a staff/community taskforce to address student attendance; create clear protocols for when students miss school and/or approach chronic absentee status. Assign chronically absent students to adult mentors.	High	Low	Short-term (by spring 2015)
7. Climate: Capitalizing on the school's tremendous success reengaging parents, continue to provide events that empower parents to support school academic and behavioral expectations at home.	Low	Low	Long-term (by fall 2015)
8. Operations: Work with before/after-school partners to incorporate school principles (e.g., SOAR expectations) and academic standards in extended day program design/delivery.	High	Medium	Medium-term (by summer 2015)
9. Operations: Establish a long-term technology integration plan, including strategies to train teachers and incorporate technology in daily lessons (e.g., sample lesson plans, model lessons).	Medium	Medium	Long-term (by fall 2015)

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