


**Clarity Education: CQ4 Report Prepared for the Office of Education Innovation  
 Irvington Community Elementary School - Fourth Year Evaluation  
 November 2023  
 Evaluation Team Members: Dr. Catherine Pangan, Dr. Kelli Esteves and Dr. Brooke Kandel**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mission</b></p> <p>Provide a small, safe learning community where respectful behaviors are modeled and expected.        Offer a college-prep, career-readiness curriculum that focuses on developing a strong work ethic and creative thinking.        Prepare all students for post-secondary success.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>“The Irvington Way”</b></p> <p>Be Respectful        Be Responsible        Be Safe        Be Involved        Be Focused</p>
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<p><b>Site Visit Overview</b></p> <p>This report includes a performance evaluation of Irvington Community Schools completed by members of the Clarity Education Evaluation Team in November 2023. The evaluation reflects the Office of Education Innovation Core 4 Question: “Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?”</p> <p>The school evaluation team engaged in both quantitative and qualitative evidence gathering. A preliminary meeting was conducted with building leadership to discuss the overall context and logistics of the evaluation. ICES completed a comprehensive self-assessment responding to areas of improvement and strengths for each indicator within Q4. The ICES team also uploaded a significant amount of data and materials to support each indicator. In addition to the uploaded data, the evaluation team reviewed the school website, social media pages, and past OEI reports to provide further insight into historical context and growth.</p> <p>As part of the evaluation process, the team visited ICES for a full day, observing each classroom twice with a different evaluator (morning and afternoon) to see a variety of content areas taught. Special emphasis was given to intervention time. The team met in person with the Special Education team, ESL team, administrators, and school leadership. At the end of the visit, the evaluation team met with the leadership team to present informal findings and observations. Focus groups took place following the site visit and included students, parents, teachers, and Board of Governors members.</p> <p>The team’s visit was extremely positive. ICES presents a warm, community-centered, and motivated environment. The community is embracing new leadership and curricular changes with optimism. They are defined by a strong sense of belonging and community where each student is known and appreciated in their unique way. They acknowledged the collective frustration that students’ test</p>
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scores are not at Indiana’s average, yet they are showing increments of growth. The school leaders and teachers are hopeful that the new curricula (Savvas in Math and Wonders in ELA) will contribute to increased test scores as teachers acclimate to the curricula.

The Special Education Team along with the School Counseling Team provide intentional PD for staff and intentional support for classroom teachers and parents/caregivers facing student challenges. Both leaders are also new in their positions and both are making great strides in education and building understanding with staff regarding behavioral and academic needs.

In the summary meeting, the Leadership Team was in agreement with the identified strengths and opportunities for growth offered by the evaluation team. Our focus for recommendations includes concrete ideas, resources, and creative solutions for ICES to explore.

## Table of Contents

<b>School Background.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>OEI Ratings Summary.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?7</b>	
<b>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission?.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4.6. Is the school’s mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>4.10. Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?.....</b>	<b>30</b>

[IDOE School Performance Report](#)  
[Self-Assessment](#)  
[2022 Charter Renewal Report](#)

## **School Background**

### **Mission Statement**

Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES) shares a mission statement with the Irvington Community Middle School and the Irvington Community High School:

Provide a small, safe learning community where respectful behaviors are modeled and expected. Offer a college-prep, career-readiness curriculum that focuses on developing a strong work ethic and creative thinking. Prepare all students for post-secondary success.

ICES complements the mission statement with daily reminders of the Irvington Way:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe
- Be Involved
- Be Focused

### **Academic Program**

*Describe the core components of the academic model and the vision for the school.*

Sources: ICS website and <https://inview.doe.in.gov/corporations/1093300000>

ICES seeks to provide differentiated instruction and innovative programming in delivering educational services while making a positive lifelong impact on students' intellectual, emotional, and civic development. All students receive instruction in Art, Music, and Physical Education. STEM coursework is experienced by students at every grade level, including instruction in coding and computer science, with robotics clubs. The school's learning approach is standards-based and student-centered. Restorative Practices and Social and Emotional Learning programs, with an underlying Positive Behavior Supports approach, complement behavior management efforts that focus on coaching and building strong relationships with students. Finally, service learning programming is a staple of student character development at ICS.

The ICES educational approach relies on strong student-family-educator relationships as an integral part of teaching and learning. ICES uses a community/neighborhood/school model in which the school and its leaders are invested in the community and multiple partnerships have been formed with local nonprofit organizations.

### **Student Demographics**

Grade	Enrollment as of 11/13/2023	Ethnicity					Socioeconomic Status		Special Populations	
		White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Multiracial	Free/Reduced	Paid	SpEd	ESL
PreK	13	5	6			2	8	5		
KG	74	39	17	3	1	14	54	20	1	1

1	65	32	16	9	1	7	50	15	3	7
2	64	34	13	6	1	10	52	12	7	4
3	59	35	14	6		4	44	15	8	6
4	64	38	13	8	1	4	48	16	9	5
5	61	42	10	4		5	39	22	9	3

**Historical Performance**  
**Academic Performance Data**

Source: <a href="https://www.in.gov/department-of-education/data-center-and-reports/">https://www.in.gov/department-of-education/data-center-and-reports/</a>	2023 Percent Proficient	2022 Percent Proficient
ILEARN English Language Arts		
3rd grade	37.9%	38.8%
4th grade	38.1%	39%
5th grade	39.7%	30.1%
ILEARN Math		
3rd grade	45.5%	50.7%
4th grade	47.6%	39%
5th grade	19%	11%
IREAD-3		
3rd grade	83.1%	82.1%

**Attendance Data**  
2023-24 (YTD): 92.3%  
2022-23: 91%  
2021-22: 91.7%

**Discipline Data**

2023-2024 (YTD)		
Total # of students enrolled	444	
# students experiencing at least one day of OSS	29	7%
total # days of OSS served	91	
# unique instances of OSS	43	
# students expelled	0	
2022-2023		
Total # of students enrolled	418	
# students experiencing at least one day of OSS	35	8%
total # days of OSS served	116	
# unique instances of OSS	58	
# students expelled	0*	
<i>*5 students withdrew under threat of expulsion</i>		

## OEI Ratings Summary

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

Indicator Ratings Summary	
<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
<b>Approaching Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
<b>Exceeds Standard</b>	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?	Finding
4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	Meets Standard
4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	Approaching Standard
4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	Meets Standard
4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	Meets Standard
4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	Meets Standard
4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?	Exceeds Standard
4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?	Meets Standard
4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?	Meets Standard

4.10. Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency? Brooke	Meets Standard
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**4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?**

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

**Data/Artifacts Reviewed**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 2023-2026 Strategic Plan</li> <li>● Vertical Articulation Documentation</li> <li>● Core Learning Outcomes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Curriculum Maps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kindergarten</li> <li>● 1st grade</li> <li>● 2nd grade</li> <li>● 3rd grade</li> <li>● 4th grade</li> <li>● 5th grade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Classroom Observations</li> <li>● Lesson Plans</li> <li>● Teacher Focus Groups</li> <li>● Parent Focus Groups</li> <li>● Leadership Interviews</li> <li>● ICES Self-Assessment</li> </ul>
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**Summary of Findings**

**Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES) meets the standard with a total score of 20/24 (83%).**

**4.1 a) The curriculum used across all areas is rigorous, evidence-based and aligned with state standards.**

The evaluation team found evidence to support curriculum resources that are relevant to the student population and aligned with Indiana standards. Additionally, teachers are given some autonomy to create and modify curriculum that aligns with the school's mission and addresses the individual needs of each student. The ELA curriculum is evidence-based and aligned with the Science of Reading, but it is new and teachers are still working on adopting it with fidelity.

**4.1 b) Systematic reviews of curricula are conducted by administrators and school staff to identify gaps based on student performance across and within subgroups.**

ICES leadership has intentionally shifted to published curricular materials that align with state standards based on assessment data. It is recommended that individual and assessment subgroup data be used to modify curricula to meet learner needs by fully leveraging the multitiered system of support that is already in place.

**4.1 c) The school regularly reviews instructional curriculum maps to ensure presentation of content is aligned with learning objectives.**

Moving forward, the school has prioritized the creation of curriculum maps that reflect the new state standards. Opportunities for teachers to observe each other in professional development cycles are currently in place, allowing for shared meaning-making and alignment checks to support the implementation of a high-quality curriculum.

**4.1 d) The school has a well-defined horizontal and vertical alignment within and across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on core learning objectives.**

Teachers evaluate core learning outcomes in monthly meetings to ensure alignment across grade levels and address areas of improvement, supporting students' readiness from one grade to the next. A review of documents demonstrates adequate horizontal alignment across grade levels.

**4.1 e) Instructional staff have access to provided materials to deliver the curriculum effectively.**

Teacher focus groups confirmed that the staff have high-quality materials and resources to effectively deliver the curriculum and are actively engaged in utilizing these resources.

**4.1 f) Instructional staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction.**

Classroom observations provided evidence of adequate instructional pacing and implementation of professional development concepts. Given the assessment data and the importance of addressing gaps in reading achievement, it is recommended that focus be given to fully implementing the Wonders curriculum.

**Rubric Rating**

a) The curriculum used across all academic areas is rigorous, evidenced-based and aligned with state standards.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>
b) Systematic reviews of curricula are conducted by administrators and school staff to identify gaps based on student performance across and within subgroups.	<b>Emerging (2 points)</b>
c) The school regularly reviews instructional curriculum maps to ensure presentation of content is aligned with learning objectives.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
d) The school has a well-defined horizontal and vertical alignment within and across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on core learning objectives.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
e) Instructional staff have access to provided materials to deliver the curriculum effectively.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
f) Instructional staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>

**Strengths**

- In the strategic plan, ICES outlines the goal to have teachers deliver rigorous and high-quality instruction that aligns with grade level expectations. By the 2023-2024 school year, the goal is for 70% of students to demonstrate mastery on grade level assessments. This target will increase to 80% by the 2024-2025 school year. The aim is to maintain consistent performance across different student subgroups. To achieve the goal,

the school implements various strategies such as school-wide writers workshops. They also ensure consistent implementation of the school-wide curriculum in Reading and Math, providing additional professional development on how to effectively use these programs.

- This intentional focus is a strength. A review of documents showed alignment of educational standards and a scope and sequence for each grade. Curricular maps, data tracking systems, and implementation of evidence-based curricula will support reaching the goal.
- Based on observations, teachers are integrating technology into the curriculum without over-relying on it. Technology is used in many classrooms to complement the curriculum.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Ensure curricular modifications are based on assessment data and that interventions are targeted and individualized for specific needs of learners.
- Equip teachers with supplementary curricular materials that cater to different learners and their abilities.
- Regular analysis is needed to look at student performance data across different subgroups to identify trends, patterns, and areas of improvement with special attention to academics.

### Recommended Next Steps

- Support the implementation of the curriculum, with prioritized focus on the Wonders curriculum due to the importance of the Science of Reading initiatives at the state-level.
- Support the implementation of individualized interventions based on data by increasing focus on decisions made during MTSS team meetings. Consider adding more general education teachers to the team to help make decisions about classroom-based interventions.
- Continue to hold data meetings to look at data across subgroups and identify academic interventions, including differentiated instruction, that will support reaching the goal to narrow the achievement gap.

## 4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school’s mission?

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

## Data/Artifacts Reviewed

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mission statement</li> <li>● Focus groups – parent/caregivers, students, Board of Governors, staff</li> <li>● Lesson Plans</li> <li>● Student Work</li> <li>● Assessment Results - NWEA</li> <li>● Teacher evaluation indicator scores</li> <li>● Educator improvement plans</li> <li>● Employee Evaluation Plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observations in all classrooms – (with documentation)</li> <li>● Professional Development Choices</li> <li>● Counseling Presentation PowerPoint</li> <li>● ICES Academic Expectations for 2023-2024</li> <li>● Educator Observation Reports</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lesson Planning Expectations Powerpoint</li> <li>● Data Trackers for Each Grade Level (*Note, IB was missing for ELA and Math)</li> <li>● ICES Policies and Procedures</li> <li>● School Calendar</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

## Summary of Findings

**ICES is approaching standard 4.2 with a total of 19/28 (68%).**

**4.2 a) The curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with fidelity.**

This year, Irvington Community Elementary School is engaged with new curricula (Wonders and Savvas) and are supplementing with other resources. The school community is fine-tuning the balance of a standardized curriculum with teacher autonomy. It is apparent that after ICES gets experience with the new curriculum, the school community will quickly move from “Approaching” to “Implementing.”

**4.2 b) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly target core learning objectives across all academic areas.**

ICES incorporates a clear and organized lesson internalization process in addition to PD addressing lesson planning expectations with detailed examples and specific rationale. Lesson plans submitted by teachers included learning objectives and differentiation. The systems in place are strong. However, during some of our classroom observations, it was observed that a few educators had unclear core learning objectives that did not reflect their submitted plans. This could be attributed to the “newness” of the curriculum transition or the timing of our visit. Supports for a successful curricular transition were present and more time to work with the curricula will help in this area.

**4.2 c) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly identify a wide range of instructional strategies that target core learning objectives across all academic areas.**

In classroom observations, the majority of the lessons were teacher-centered or teacher-directed. However, the evaluation team did notice robust and purposeful conversation among peers, a joyfulness in engaging with teachers, and the majority of environments conducive to discussion, participation, and student voice in most classrooms. For future improvement, more attention could be given to a wider-variety of instructional strategies to further engage students. Recommendations are below (specific to differentiation strategies as well).

**4.2 d) Instruction is differentiated based on ongoing formative assessment of student learning needs, identified student interests, and preferred learning styles.**

During the intervention blocks, differentiation was noted in each classroom based on mode of engagement and at times, learning need. In many classrooms, there were 5 different modes of instruction. In one example, a teacher provided stations with computers, books (several levels), a writing center, review cards, small group instruction, and one-on-one help. Assistants were invaluable during this time and provided high-quality instruction within the groups.

Data trackers are used in all grade levels. The team observed that while differentiation was occurring during intervention time, the benefits of high quality differentiation were not yet leveraged. Younger children seemed to have a lot of “instructional dead time” logging into computers or waiting for them to load, and at times, just pushing buttons until a different answer popped up. ICES has the system, time, and structures of differentiation in place, and adding different methods and high quality strategies will be the “easy” part. Recommendations are below for more strategies.

**4.2 e) Instructional strategies used are designed to promote authentic learning to impact levels of student engagement.**

From the team’s focus group data, test scores, and observations, we found ICES is positioned and has the drive to achieve a higher level of authentic learning that includes more hands-on experiences and a deeper connection to real-world experiences. Teachers, administrators, and students commented on how much they enjoyed collaborating with the community for different academic and social projects. Future community connections are provided in the recommendations section.

**4.2 f) Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the cultures of students.**

A strong and growing SEL program is in place as well as a school support dog, Jack. Parents/caregivers, staff, administrators, and students commented on the sense of belonging and community that exists in the school. All staff have had Implicit Bias training. Recommendations are below to weave and grow culturally responsive practice into the curriculum in a natural way that fits with the needs of the school. Further recommendations include aspects of incorporating student identity into the classroom environment.

**4.2 g) Staff receive explicit feedback on instructional practices on an ongoing basis.**

Staff consistently mentioned their appreciation of administrative support and feedback in focus groups and unsolicited comments to the evaluation team. The guidelines for the employee evaluation plan were evident. Data is collected from TAP observations, the Irvington Way goals, and individual goals. Observations occur both unannounced and announced. In teacher observation forms, the observer and educator both provide an assessment of the observation. “Glow and Grow” feedback are provided as well as feedback on targeted NIET indicators.

**Rubric Rating**

a) The curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with fidelity.	Approaching - 2 points
b) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly target core learning objectives across all academic areas.	Implementing - 3 points
c) A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly identify a wide range of instructional strategies that target core learning objectives across all academic areas.	Implementing- 3 points
d) Instruction is differentiated based on ongoing formative assessment of student learning needs, identified student interests, and preferred learning styles.	Approaching – 2 points

e) Instructional strategies used are designed to promote authentic learning to impact levels of student engagement.	Approaching– 2 points
f) Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the culture of students.	Implementing - 3 points
g) Staff receive explicit feedback on instructional practices on an ongoing basis	Sustaining - 4 points

### Strengths

- The curricula (Wonders and Savvas) are new and strong mechanisms (PD, expectations, and data tracking) are in place to help with a smooth transition. Many were enthusiastic about the curriculum adoption and the hands-on nature and potential of Savvas.
- Many administrators and staff are aware of the lack of quality/accuracy reflected in Teachers Pay Teachers and are eager to transition to other supplemental resources. The community wants to keep its autonomy in content creation while learning more about the standard curricula.
- A wealth of support exists within grade-level teams and administration to support educators with resources and ideas.
- In several Indiana school environments, “canned curriculum” has squelched creativity and teacher autonomy and there is a clear support of balance within the new curriculum and teacher ownership at ICES. In educational research, teacher curricular freedom contributes to teacher retention and job satisfaction.
- The school community is proud of the work they are doing with and for the students. They see the unlimited potential of the students and are working diligently to bring out the best in each individual and the collective community. School leaders are aware of teachers who are excelling as well as those who need extra support.
- Accountability measures for lesson planning and pedagogy from administrators are evident. ICES is aware of challenges and administration/staff are transparent and supportive about trying new practices to improve NWEA scores (which have improved).

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Continue professional development surrounding new curricula and implementation efforts to encourage strong curricular alignment and teacher creativity.
- As many administrators discussed, they are making an effort with teachers to move away from “Teachers Pay Teachers” to more intellectually relevant and supportive materials (recommendations to help with this transition are below).
- Many teachers are incorporating differentiation strategies with stations and we observed that much of the content was reflected in the “beginning level” of Bloom’s taxonomy stages of remembering and understanding. ICES is ready and poised to challenge students in the “application, analyze, and create” stages of differentiation as well.
- There is enormous potential (and administrator/staff interest) to exceed expectations in the area of “Instructional practices intentionally designed to validate and affirm the culture of students.” The school is engaged in successful practices and the team consistently noticed a strong community of care – and ICES can take the momentum to dig deeply into identity-affirming instructional practices. The team provided several resources below.
- There is a large drive across the school community to incorporate more hands-on learning opportunities and more natural integration of connecting to “real world” experiences. Specific recommendations are below.

### Recommended Next Steps

**In focus groups, an emphasis on the need for productive resources was mentioned. The evaluation team would like to emphasize that these resources are recommendations and not mandatory for implementation.**

- 1) **To gradually replace the use of “Teachers Pay Teachers,” consider integrating supplemental materials from respected community organizations that encourage teacher review. These are also outstanding community partners for future collaborations. The resources below also incorporate hands-on learning. The education directors at each of these institutions would be more than enthusiastic to help teachers find what they need.**
  - [The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis Educator Resources \(Free Lessons and Units of Study linked here\)](#) – Becky Wolfe is the Director of School Services and Education Resources and can help you find the resources you need. They also have a strong unit of study for 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> graders regarding Civil Rights and education access through the eyes of Ruby Bridges and now Malala.
  - [The Benjamin Harrison House Presidential Site](#) provides a wealth of information and curricular resources for K-5 Social Studies and Civic Education. The VP of Education, Roger Hardig, would be more than happy to visit classrooms or offer PD (for free) to share resources. They also have a Canvas module for teachers with access to lessons and 3-D artifacts for schools to use.
  - [The Indianapolis Zoo Educator Resources](#) provides free access to activities regarding Citizen Science and Wildlife Watches that would add a real-world relevance to science and language arts activities. Each summer they offer educator PD through the [Center for Global Species Survival](#) which has a plethora of practical hands-on activities for elementary learners focused on a specific animal (excellent for animal adaptations, life sciences connections – all reflected in the new Indiana Standards). The scientists at CGSS feel passionately about the education of learners and will visit classrooms for free to share their latest research. If ICES wants to explore further, reach out to Education Director Tolly Foster.

- The Department of Natural Resources’s [Project Wet](#) and [Project Wild](#) Trainings and Curriculum Guides provide robust activities that integrate science, social studies, language arts, and math in active ways. These trainings are free and come with a wide variety of free materials (especially Project Learning Tree). They also address grades PK-12 and guides are also offered in Spanish. (They also have Flying Wild, Aquatic Wild, and Climate & Wildlife). If interested, reach out to Kathy Mandren for more information.
- [Indiana State Museum Educator Videos](#) This educator guide has a wealth of videos around social studies, STEM, and current events. They also provide free curriculum guides for PreK-12. Nicole Rife is the education liaison for the museum.

**2) To expand the pedagogical knowledge base surrounding differentiation and culturally responsive practice, ICES might consider these resources to enhance your professional library and PD.**

- [Differentiation and the Brain](#) (D. Sousa and C. Tomlinson) may be a text your staff would enjoy as a choice for PD to help take them to “the next level” of aspects of differentiation and the importance of rich activities within differentiation. It has a strong educational neuroscience component which would also connect to SEL initiatives.
- [This article by C. Tomlinson](#) (Tomlinson is an excellent all-around resource on differentiation) provides an overview of what differentiation can look like in process, product, and content and offers more strategies.
- In [Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain](#), author Zaretta Hammond discusses the practice of becoming a “warm demander,” “a teacher who communicates personal warmth toward students while at the same time demands they work toward high standards” specifically with students of color. This practice is a practical way that can make a positive impact within the test score achievement gap. Hammond includes several activities related to the book on her website. [Zaretta Hammond’s Website with educator resources is linked here.](#)
- Art work was abundant and beautifully displayed in the hallways, but inside the classroom, little documentation was found to represent the students’ identities or authentic work. Simple student-created self-portraits or printed-out photos can contribute to growing culturally responsive pedagogy. This [brief article](#) describes the benefits of incorporating self-portraits within a school community. Although the article is for PreK, many schools do it each year, K-8. Further, Dr. Erica Buchanan Rivera is a local author whose research is centered on creating identity affirming classroom environments (and wrote “[Identity Affirming Classrooms](#)”), she could be an outstanding resource for PD or a book study.

**4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?**

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

#### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

- 2023-2026 Strategic Plan
- Data trackers
- K-5 digital data walls
- ILEARN Item Specifications (3rd-5th grade)
- NWEA Proficiency Rates
- NWEA Testing Schedule

#### Summary of Findings

**Irvington Community Elementary School meets the standard with a score of 17/20 (85%).**

#### **4.4 a) Assessments are well-aligned to learning standards.**

Information gathered from classroom observations, lesson plans, teacher focus groups, and leadership interviews indicates that assessments are aligned with standards. Learning goals are established and supported with planned learning activities.

#### **4.4 b) Assessments utilized are varied in order to support a wide range of student learning styles and abilities.**

There is evidence of academic goals in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that align with grade-level standards, ensuring that students with disabilities receive a curriculum and instruction that is appropriate for their grade level. An area for improvement includes increased data-informed differentiation for students with and without disabilities, especially as it relates to accommodations and individualized interventions.

#### **4.4 c) Assessments utilized provide student-level data focused on growth and proficiency.**

The school employs a standards-based reporting system, and evidence was provided for student proficiency trackers by standard. NWEA data is used as a baseline and to monitor growth on a digital data wall, along with other key indicators such as sight words, math facts, etc. Templates were reviewed; however, *how* the data from the data walls used to inform decision-making was not evident through documentation. According to focus groups and interviews, faculty and leadership collaborate in multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) meetings to analyze student learning across all academic areas, as well as attendance and discipline, for an ongoing assessment of overall student performance.

#### **4.4 d) Assessments are administered with sufficient frequency and results are provided in a timely manner.**

To inform instruction, teachers meet with school leaders every three weeks to review data using the data tracker system. They identify the key skills students need to master in the next three weeks. Using the assessment framework, teachers plan how they will assess the skill, determine success criteria, and align with standards. When teachers return, they bring assessment data and analyze it to identify student performance levels and common areas of strength and errors. Using this analysis, teachers create a plan for reteaching and reassessing

until at least 80% of students demonstrate mastery. Teacher focus groups, interviews, and a review of records indicate that assessments are conducted regularly, and results are shared.

**4.4 e) A system is in place to ensure that assessment data is analyzed across and within subgroups and used to guide decision-making related to instruction and curriculum.**

The ICS strategic plan outlines a goal to offer individualized support for all students to succeed academically (Goal 3), including students of different abilities, cultural backgrounds, and socio-economic statuses. Their goal is to narrow the achievement gap between subgroups by ensuring no more than a 15 percentage point difference in passing standardized assessments by Spring 2024, and decreasing it further to 10 percentage points by Spring 2025 as measured by ILEARN. Strategies outlined relate to behavior interventions, executive functioning skills, and guidance lessons. An area for improvement is the full development of a system to ensure that data from multiple assessments is regularly analyzed across and within subgroups, and used to inform instructional and curricular decisions for targeted interventions.

**Rubric Rating**

a) Assessments utilized are well aligned to learning standards.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
b) Assessments utilized are varied in order to support a wide range of student learning styles and abilities.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>
c) Assessments utilized provide student level data focused on growth and proficiency.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>
d) Assessments are administrated with sufficient frequency and results are provided in a timely manner.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
e) A system is in place to ensure that assessment data is analyzed across and within subgroups and used to guide decision-making related to instruction and curriculum.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>

**Strengths**

- ICES has developed a system for documenting and analyzing data that includes formative and summative assessments.
- In addition to assessment systems, information gathered from focus groups and interviews showed that educators knew students well and were responsive to their needs.

**Opportunities for Improvement**

- Ensure that teachers are implementing interventions and accommodations based on data and documenting the effectiveness. Look at data over time and track effectiveness of interventions at the individual level and classwide level as a part of the MTSS process.

### Recommended Next Steps

- The existing MTSS structure could also be used as a communication and feedback team that allows teachers to discuss assessment results and have discussions that lead to the implementation of instructional strategies and interventions in the classroom setting.
- Increased participation from general education teachers on the MTSS team may support the implementation of data-based instructional interventions in the classroom setting. It is recommended that ICES add, at minimum, a two-year rotational position for a general education teacher to routinely participate in the problem-solving process alongside special educators and interventionists.
- Develop individualized growth plans based on assessment data for students identified as needing extra support by the MTSS team. Plans should outline specific areas for improvement and customized strategies for growth based on data.
- The free resource [Assessment Practices Within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports](#) from the CEEDAR Center and the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education, primarily pages 31-36, may be helpful.

#### 4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

#### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff Onboarding and Orientation Manual</li> <li>● School Counseling Roles and Responsibilities</li> <li>● ICS Talent Acquisition Procedure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ICES Teacher Policies and Procedures</li> <li>● ICES 2020-2021 Employee Handbook</li> <li>● ICS Hiring Policy</li> <li>● Employee Evaluation Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employee Spreadsheet</li> <li>● Admin Crisis Plan</li> <li>● 2023-2024 Organizational Chart</li> <li>● Panorama Action Steps - Spring 2023</li> <li>● Evaluation Schedules</li> </ul>
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#### Summary of Findings

**ICES meets standard 4.5 with a total of 23/28 (82%).**

**4.5 a) A standard recruitment/ hiring policy and procedure process is in place and is designed to ensure human resources are leveraged to reflect the needs of the school population.**

Standard recruitment and hiring procedures are in place as reflected both at the Leadership Team level and Faculty/Staff Levels. Evidence of the recruitment plan is also evidenced in the Talent Acquisition Procedure.

**4.5 b) Hiring processes are well organized and used to support the success of new staff members.**

Hiring processes are well organized. It was acknowledged that with the teacher shortage and mid-year turnover, onboarding can be challenging.

**4.5 c) Staffing levels adequately allow staff to maximize instructional time and capacity.**

ICES is fully staffed. However as reflected across the state, staffing is a challenge when teachers are out sick. Instructional assistants, teachers, and administrators are pulled frequently to cover. This is not an issue that ICES faces alone.

**4.5 d) Faculty and staff are appropriately certified/sufficiently trained in areas to which they are assigned and possess the instructional proficiencies needed for the school population served.**

According to the ICES Spreadsheet provided, 89% of the faculty (Teachers including special areas, Special Education, and Guidance Counselors) are licensed (24/27 people). Timelines and expectations have been given to staff without licensure.

**4.5 e) Professional learning opportunities are offered regularly in order to support the staff in delivering culturally relevant and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.**

There is evidence of professional development that is targeted at culturally relevant instructional practices, however, the evaluation team believes the school community is poised to grow in this area (see recommendations and resources in 4.2). The team is unsure if SREB is mission-aligned with ICES specifically related to culturally relevant practice and LGBTQIA students.

**4.5 f) Professional learning opportunities are determined through analyses of student outcome data and clearly linked to strategic objectives and school improvement goals.**

Professional learning opportunities are provided consistently throughout the year and based on teacher interest and teacher evaluation feedback. Model Teaching online resources are used. SREB coaches are also meeting with teachers. 72% of staff felt favorably about school support in their professional growth.

While mentorship is provided by SREB across content areas, ICES might consider focusing on one content area and one pedagogical area for the year that addresses a targeted area of growth (for example: ELA and differentiation). This may also address the low percentage of staff feeling like PD is of value. Recommendations are below.

**4.5 g) The teacher evaluation process is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.**

Evidence of a clear teacher evaluation process was provided with both informal and formal evaluations using the TAP rubric. However, in the Panorama staff survey, 41% of staff felt favorably about receiving specific feedback on their work.

**Rubric Rating**

a) A standard recruitment/ hiring policy and procedure process is in place and is designed to ensure human resources are leveraged to reflect the needs of the school population.	Sustaining -4
b) Hiring processes are well organized and used to support the success of new staff members.	Sustaining - 4
c) Staffing levels adequately allow staff to maximize instructional time and capacity.	Sustaining - 4
d) Faculty and staff are appropriately certified/sufficiently trained in areas to which they are assigned and possess the instructional proficiencies needed for the school population served.	Implementing - 3
e) Professional learning opportunities are offered regularly in order to support the staff in delivering culturally relevant and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.	Approaching - 2
f) Professional learning opportunities are determined through analyses of student outcome data and clearly linked to strategic objectives and school improvement goals.	Approaching - 2
g) The teacher evaluation process is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.	Sustaining - 4

### Strengths

- ICES is currently fully staffed and while the teacher shortage is impacting the school with substitutes, there is optimism and a “can do” spirit among the administrators and staff regarding coverage when teachers are out.
- The majority of Instructional Assistants were fully engaged with students in small group and pull-out settings. The Instructional Assistants consistently stated how supported they felt and how satisfied they were in their positions.
- Two mentor teachers meet every other week with new teachers (1st and 2nd years) for support.
- Hiring practices are clear and standardized throughout ICS.
- More PD opportunities have been created around Culturally Responsive Practices compared to the past, and the team saw this as an area that was mission-aligned that was important to sustain throughout the whole year (and in the future).
- Teacher evaluation processes are clear.
- ICES takes advantage of multiple platforms for PD and development (in person, hybrid, and fully online).

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Opportunities for focused PD exist within the new curricula (going deeper into a content area).

### Recommended Next Steps

- Consider taking advantage of the new curriculum adoption and focus on one content area and one pedagogical area as a lens or themes for the year for professional development (For example, ELA and Differentiation). This will allow opportunities for continued growth in test scores, and support teachers in building familiarity with new curriculum while honing pedagogical skills. The team recommends that Culturally Responsive Instruction is an ongoing part of teacher development and integrates in many ways into aspects of differentiation. (See resources under 4.2)
- SREB may not be mission-aligned. ICES may want to seek out resources and mentorship opportunities from Keep Indiana Learning <https://keepindianalearning.org/> and their Digital Content Library <https://keepindianalearning.org/digital-content-library/> - most of their workshops and content are free. Keep Indiana Learning has a “Reading Summit” coming up in June 2024 that may be helpful to your staff. <https://keepindianalearning.org/events/reading-summit-2024/>
- School leadership mentioned a partnership with Marian University and a potential teacher residency collaboration. Undergraduates could also participate as substitutes after 30 hours of coursework. This could help build a teacher pipeline into ICES.

#### **4.6. Is the school’s mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?**

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

#### **Data/Artifacts Reviewed**

- Mission statement
- Irvington Way poster
- Strategic Plan
- Focus groups – parent/caregivers, students, staff, Board of Governors
- Board of Governors sample agendas
- Employee Handbook with appendices
- Parent Survey Spring 2023
- Student Survey Spring 2023
- Observations with documentation in classrooms and hallways

#### **Summary of Findings**

**ICES meets the standard with 7/8 (87%).**

Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES) shares a mission statement with the Irvington Community Middle School and the Irvington Community High School:

Provide a small, safe learning community where respectful behaviors are modeled and expected. Offer a college-prep, career-readiness curriculum that focuses on developing a strong work ethic and creative thinking. Prepare all students for post-secondary success.

The evaluation team met with various stakeholders and reviewed artifacts to determine the extent to which and how ICES ensures understanding of the school mission.

**4.6 a) Procedures are in place for assessing all stakeholder’s perceptions, knowledge, and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission.**

The school’s mission statement is posted on the school website. The “Irvington Way” is a set of behaviors aligned with the mission statement and is posted throughout the physical school building, recited during the daily announcements, and familiar to students, staff, and other stakeholders as documented during focus groups with the evaluation team. ICES uses an annual parent survey and an annual student survey to gather systematic data on stakeholder perceptions of the mission statements and its implementation. While the specific mission statement is not mentioned in the 2023 survey, items tap key constructs from the school mission statement.

Student survey results from the Spring of 2023 suggest that students perceive the school is a safe environment and that adults at the school care about the students. 77% of students responded favorably to a question about supportive relationships at school, and 86% of students noted there is an adult at school who the students could count on no matter what. Results from the parents survey demonstrate similarly positive perceptions of the school community and educational experience. 73% of parents responded positively related to student sense of belonging at school, and 76% of parents responded positively to how well the school is preparing students to be responsible citizens. In terms of academic preparedness and the curriculum as noted in the mission statement, 90% of parent respondents documented a positive response to the rigor of coursework offered to students. Similarly, 80% of respondents reported a positive response regarding the quality of instructional materials used by students.

**4.6 b) Procedures are in place for establishing meaningful partnerships with all families and community stakeholders to support the school’s mission.**

Data from parents, teacher, and school leader focus groups documented the many partnerships the school has with community organizations including: Skills Specialist from Community Health who makes daily visits, a therapist from Community Health, Support for transportation and clothing closet, YMCA before and after care, and the I-CAN dog.

Stakeholder focus groups provided documentation regarding intraschool partnership and community building such as class newsletters, and Title 1 nights for families. The school also sends weekly communication, the Peek of the Week, to the school community.

**Rubric Rating**

a) Procedures are in place for assessing all stakeholder’s perceptions, knowledge, and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission.	Sustaining (4 points)
b) Procedures are in place for establishing meaningful partnerships with all families and community stakeholders to support the school’s mission.	Implementing (3 points)

## Strengths

- ICES stakeholders (students, parents, educators) view the school community as safe and small, which is an important component of the mission statement. Stakeholders consistently report feeling cared for and a part of the ICES “family.”
- Students know and can name individual ICES educators who have their best interests in mind.
- ICES has created routines and systems for stakeholders to internalize key components of the mission statement including daily reminders of the Irvington Way, character traits as a part of daily announcements, staff goals set around the tenets of the Irvington Way, a monthly career cluster focus.

## Opportunities for Improvement

- There is an opportunity for clear and consistent connections between the mission statement and the strategic plan. For example, there is evidence of college and career readiness in the strategic plan; but no evidence of other parts of the mission statement. The mission statement should inform and/or drive the strategic plan.
- Parents indicated a desire for more opportunities for engagement with advance and systematic communication (see 4.8 recommendations) to enhance engagement. It was noted that the Parent Engagement Group could be more fully leveraged to support the school.

## Recommended Next Steps

- Consider revisiting and/or refreshing the mission statement to ensure shared understanding across stakeholder groups and, perhaps, to make it more concise. An initiative for school stakeholders to engage with, discuss, revise and/or re-commit to the mission statements could be a great opportunity to unify, re-energize, and communicate with the school community. A vision statement could be added if desired.
- Include the mission statement in regular communication to stakeholders, including on meeting agendas and other documentation; employee handbook; new staff onboarding
- Possible resources:
  - *Finding Your School’s Mission and Vision* (article)  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/forming-schools-vision-mission-statements/>
  - *Six Actions to Keep Moving Your School’s Vision Forward* (article)  
<https://www.newleaders.org/blog/blog-six-actions-to-keep-moving-your-schools-vision-forward>

### 4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.

Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

Data/Artifacts Reviewed		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discipline report</li> <li>● Extra-Curricular Offerings</li> <li>● Progress Reports</li> <li>● Attendance Notifications</li> <li>● Updated Attendance Policies</li> <li>● Enrollment/Demographic Data</li> <li>● Panorama Staff Survey Responses 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus Groups (Students, Families, Teachers, Administrators, Board of Visitors)</li> <li>● MTSS Tracking</li> <li>● Pyramid of Supports for students</li> <li>● Panorama Student SEL Survey Data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MTSS Flow Chart</li> <li>● Report Card Standards (K-5)</li> <li>● Behavior Management Handbook</li> <li>● Implicit Bias Overview</li> <li>● Restorative Justice Presentation</li> <li>● Panorama Parent Survey Results 2023</li> </ul>
Summary of Findings		

**ICES exceeds the standard with a 15/16 (94%)**

**4.7 a) A multi-tiered framework designed to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students is implemented with fidelity.**

ICES has an extensive support system for students that addresses academic, behavioral, and SEL needs. From the data, interviews, and focus groups, it is clear that staff and administrators take this work seriously and creatively. The staff and administration seek a variety of ways to support students and the idea of “doing whatever it takes” was mentioned across groups. Restorative justice practices are at the heart of behavioral decisions. A tiered support system begins with foundational instructional strategies and contains three additional levels of practice for intervention. A relatively new and robust SEL program and support is also in place with consistent building PD. Documentation is evident.

**4.7 b) Culturally responsive and evidenced-based interventions are explicitly identified and implemented throughout the school to support the needs of students.**

Restorative justice practices are used as intervention support. A strong sense of knowing each student was apparent through classroom visits, and most visible through informal hallway conversations with students during arrival. The students’ excitement to see their teachers in the morning and supportive conversations were documented consistently throughout the day. The team believes ICES can take its culturally responsive practice “to the next level.” Recommendations are below.

**4.7 c) Explicit procedures for facilitating the development of strong, positive relationships between adults and students are clearly communicated to and implemented by all staff.**

A behavior management plan and handbook include practices and guidance regarding implicit bias, trauma-informed practice, ACES, Proactive Discipline, PBI&S, Character Education, and explanations of functions of behavior, Restorative Practices, and parent communication. Professional Development is routinely provided in these areas and staff stated how supported they feel by colleagues and administrators when problem solving challenging situations. The students in the focus group also stated they feel safe and supported.

**4.7 d) Procedures are in place for assessing staff, student, and family perspectives to ensure a sense of connectedness and engagement with the school.**

Several informal measures for assessing perspectives are in place including Google Voice for texting, carpool conversations, phone calls, and in-person meetings. Formal assessment includes the Panorama Student Survey and conversations during parent/teacher conferences. Further levels of engagement outside of assessment are suggested in 4.8.

**Rubric Rating**

a) A multi-tiered framework designed to support the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students is implemented with fidelity.	Sustaining - 4 points
b) Culturally responsive and evidenced-based interventions are explicitly identified and implemented throughout the school to support the needs of students.	Sustaining - 4 points
c) Explicit procedures for facilitating the development of strong, positive relationships between adults and students are clearly communicated to and implemented by all staff.	Sustaining - 4 points
d) Procedures are in place for assessing staff, student, and family perspectives to ensure a sense of connectedness and engagement with the school.	Implementing - 3 points

**Strengths**

- Recent SEL and school counseling work is robust and intentional.
- Professional development opportunities surrounding student support are frequent and consistent.
- For a small school, after-school offerings are diverse. Families commented on the quality and caliber of after school programs.
- Families commented that ICES is “Warm and inviting with a small school feel, they know all of us.”
- Caregivers also acknowledged that staff acknowledge and appreciate students “how they are” no matter what issues the students are experiencing. The families stated that often the staff “catches it before we do” and acknowledged how challenging it must be to be so knowledgeable of each student with so many students.
- Teachers are open to feedback and communication. In one example, a teacher had a suggestion box and within a week made changes based on feedback.
- Administration is available to families. Many commented on the appreciation they feel for brief conversations in the pick-up line or in other casual spaces.
- 100% of staff responded favorably when asked: “When challenges arise in your personal how understanding are your school leaders?” in the Panorama School Survey. 92% also commented favorably when asked about administrative support of challenging students.
- ICES Panorama Staff Survey that

### Opportunities for Improvement

- As mentioned by the Special Education/Counseling team, developing a deeper understanding of how to use MTSS from a classroom teacher perspective - see recommendation below.
- Develop further informal tools for parent/caregiver feedback - see recommendation below.

### Recommended Next Steps

- MTSS Shared Understanding: Consider addressing in grade-level planning meetings or more full group PD (the evaluation team acknowledges that this has been provided by the special education team and that with time, staff will develop an understanding).
- Create “Snapshot Surveys” for parents/caregivers and staff - these are quick surveys, usually 2 questions at most to provide information on a targeted topic (aspects like preference for after-school activities or feedback on suggestions on drop off/pick up, or even perceived strengths and challenges of classroom management). Because the snapshots are so short, they usually have a high rate of return once families get used to them. They can provide a wealth of information to enhance data-driven decision-making from a caregiver perspective. They can be extremely valuable for staff input as well.

#### 4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

#### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ICES New Student Orientation Information</li> <li>● Headstart MOU</li> <li>● Peek @ the Week Example</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Instagram/Facebook post example</li> <li>● 2023-2024 Parent Involvement Policy</li> <li>● ICES Staff Survey Responses 2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Title One Parent Compact</li> <li>● Title One Parent Information 2023-2024</li> <li>● Panorama Survey Results 2023</li> <li>● CEO Corner Newsletters</li> </ul>
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#### Summary of Findings

**ICES meets the standard with a 14/16 (88%) total score.**

**4.8 a) An active and ongoing system of communication between the school and family members in place.**

Although communication between the school and families is in place with a newsletter and a variety of methods for teacher/caregiver communication, families commented on the desire for communication to be more systematized and similar across platforms (social media and emails).

**4.8 b) Procedures for responding to concerns of families are clearly defined and implemented by all school staff and validated by families.**

Handbooks articulate procedures and processes are provided for staff. Families commented on the ease in which they can contact teachers and administrators when challenges arise. New student orientation addresses procedures for family concerns.

**4.8 c) Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their student’s academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.**

Staff and administrators do provide communication in native/home languages of students. Translators are used if a language is outside of Spanish. Haitian Creole and Chinese languages are becoming more prevalent within the school.

**4.8 d) The school’s communication methods are designed to promote family-school partnerships in ways that meet the needs of a diverse set of families.**

ICES staff and administration consistently seek out creative ways to promote family-school partnerships. Data reflects a strong development of community across stakeholder groups but families seek more consistent approaches to standard communications. A few systematized “tweaks” in this area will remedy this area quickly.

**Rubric Rating**

a) An active and ongoing system of communication between the school and family members in place.	Implementing -3 points
b) Procedures for responding to concerns of families are clearly defined and implemented by all school staff and validated by families.	Sustaining- 4 points
c) Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their students’ academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.	Sustaining - 4 points
d) The school’s communication methods are designed to promote family- school partnerships in ways that meet the needs of a diverse set of families.	Implementing - 3 points

**Strengths**

- Significant appreciation from families in regards to the effort and care staff provides for students
- Families commented that teachers make them “feel welcome.”
- Specific staff and administrators were mentioned who communicate frequently and quickly.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- More consistent, timed communication across social media platforms and emails to parents/caregivers at a specific time for predictability for families. See recommendation below.
- Use report cards as an opportunity for more intentional communication - see recommendation below.

### Recommended Next Steps

- A set time frame for “Peek of the Week” and other frequent communication (like Sunday night) would be helpful for families’ planning schedules. In addition to emailing, linking this in a consistent way to social media can be easily done for free on Meta Business. Facebook and Instagram posts can be timed and planned with minimal effort and reach more of the school community.  
<https://www.facebook.com/business/tools/meta-business-suite>
- If desired, a rotating administrator could record a phone message for Sunday evenings (many schools do this to set a positive tone for the week). It can become a friendly, predictable tool.
- Continue development of the Parent Engagement Group and consider having planning meetings on Zoom if ICES doesn’t already. Families stated they were eager and excited for more communication.
- Report cards: From the report cards examples provided, some teachers could provide more narrative to provide a richer snapshot of the student for families. There was a wide variety from one sentence in some narratives to a full paragraph.

#### 4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

### Data/Artifacts Reviewed

- IEP/Case Conference Committee Reports
- Progress Monitoring Goal Reports
- Sample parent correspondence
- Case Conference Notices
- 504 Plans
- Focus Group Data
- Teacher Interviews
- Leadership Interviews

## Summary of Findings

**ICES successfully meets the established standard with a score of 17 out of 20 (85%).**

The audit process revealed sufficient evidence confirming the compliance of special education services for currently enrolled students with special needs at ICES. However, some Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) did not include all the required participants in the IEP meetings.

**4.9 a) Services outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student.**

Based on the file review, it is evident that the IEPs are adequately individualized to students' needs. They include well-developed present level of performance statements and incorporate assessment data, services, and goals aligned with each present level of performance. The school utilizes the electronic Indiana IEP, where each goal section encompasses the present level of performance, aligned standards, specially designed instruction, goal statement, and assessment plans. These sections were completed and progress reports for goals were aligned with the goals.

**4.9 b) IEP plans include student specific goals, and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.**

The Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) specify services that encompass specific goals for students and outline a strategy for continuous progress assessment. The goals set in the IEPs are appropriately challenging and aligned with state standards. Goals were customized for each student.

**4.9 c) IEP goals are rigorous and based on state and national learning standards.**

The IEP goals were aligned to students' current level of performance and standards. Although IEPs outlined curricular and instructional needs, they could be more specifically designed to align with student needs, especially in terms of listed accommodations.

**4.9 d) IEP goals are reviewed and revised annually as determined by present levels of student level of performance.**

It was noted that if goals were not met from year to year that goals were revised. Adjustment to services was not noted or evident in the files reviewed.

**4.9 e) IEP plans explicitly identify requirements for specifically designed curriculum and instruction to align with student needs.**

Following the file review, it was evident that the IEPs identified a specifically designed curriculum that aligned with the students' needs. However, it was noted that many accommodations were consistently the same

across multiple students. While IEP plans were individualized to address specific curricular and instructional needs, they could benefit from greater specificity in aligning with individual needs in terms of listed accommodations.

### Rubric Rating

a) Services outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student.	<b>Implementing (3 points)</b>
b) IEP plans include student specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
c) IEP goals are rigorous and based on state and national learning standards.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
d) IEP goals are reviewed and revised annually as determined by present levels of student level of performance.	<b>Sustaining (4 points)</b>
e) IEP plans explicitly identify requirements for specifically designed curriculum and instruction to align with student needs.	<b>Emerging (2 points)</b>

### Strengths

- Documentation was up-to-date. Measurable (“SMART”) goals were written and well-aligned with the present level of performance.
- Inclusive practices were evident with the IEP with careful attention paid to LRE decisions.

### Opportunities for Improvement

- Accommodations, assistive technology, and related services were documented, but many of the accommodations were consistent from one IEP to the next. Accommodations didn’t always appear to fit the specific needs of the academic area (e.g. a hundreds chart for an ELA goal), which indicates lack of individualization.
- Communication and collaboration with parents can always be improved. Use of virtual options for IEP meetings is an accessible option but due to the lack of humanization it recommended that it be an alternative only when in-person meetings are not feasible or when parents request it.

### Recommended Next Steps

- Training on IEP development for school administrators and special education staff, especially as it relates to accommodations, assistive technology, related services, and legal requirements. Resources include free training from <https://www.iepta.org/>.

**4.10. Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?**

Does not meet standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at 65% or less of the total overall points possible.
Approaching standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 79% and 66% for the total overall points possible.
Meets standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored between 80% and 89% of the total points possible.
Exceeds standard	Ratings across all sub-indicators were scored at or above 90% of the total overall points possible.

**Data/Artifacts Reviewed**

Reviews of student Individual Learning Plans (ILP), Survey Data, Progress Monitoring Spreadsheet, Parent Correspondence, Survey Data, ICS Language Minority Tracking Sheet, Sample classroom teacher lesson plans, classroom observations

**Summary of Findings**

**ICES meets this standard with 16/20 (80%).**

According to the ICS Language Minority Tracking Sheet, ICES serves 16 students identified as English Language Learners in grades K-5. Demographic data provided by the school notes 25 ELL students. The discrepancy could be due to changes in enrollment numbers between document creation. Regardless, the school has a relatively small ELL population. With limited resources, the ELL coordinator and collaborators provide services for ELL students that comply with Indiana law.

**4.10 a) Staff have a clear understanding of legal obligations, current legislation, research, and effective practices relating to the provision of services for ELL students.\***

Data from focus groups, interviews, and provided documentation suggested the ESL coordinator and ESL instructional assistants understand the legal obligations, current legislation, research, and effective practices related to services for ELL students. General education classroom observations and provided lesson plans did not show evidence related to classroom teachers' understanding of the same concepts.

**4.10 b) Staff have a knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skillsets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs ELL students.**

Data from focus groups, interviews, and documentation suggested the ESL coordinator and ESL instructional assistants have knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skillsets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs of ELL students. General education classroom observations and provided lesson plans did not show evidence of classroom teachers' knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skillsets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs of ELL students.

**4.10 c) Procedures are in place to ensure relationships with ELL students, parents, and external providers are well-managed and in compliance with Indiana law and regulations.**

The ESL coordinator, in collaboration with school leadership and instructional assistants, oversees sound procedures related to compliance with ELL students, parents, and external providers. All documents provided suggest ICES is in full compliance with the law and regulations in this regard.

**4.10 d) ILP plans include student specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.**

The sample of ICES student ILP plans reviewed included student specific goals and plans for ongoing assessment of student progress. The ICS Language Minority Tracking Sheet provided evidence of the process used for documenting student progress relative to ILP goals and plans.

**4.10 e) ILP plans explicitly identify needs for targeted instruction to align with student needs.**

The sample of ICES student ILP plans reviewed include specific and appropriate targeted instruction aligned with student needs. One of the sample ILP plans included two different student names in the ILP section focused on observation of independent English performance level. The evaluation team is attributing this to a clerical error.

**Rubric Rating**

a) Staff have a clear understanding of legal obligations, current legislation, research, and effective practices relating to the provision of services for ELL students.	Approaching (2 points)
b) Staff have a knowledge of the process of language acquisition and the skillsets needed to differentiate instructional strategies to meet the needs ELL students.	Approaching (2 points)
c) Procedures are in place to ensure relationships with ELL students, parents, and external providers are well-managed and in compliance with Indiana law and regulations.	Sustaining (4 points)
d) ILP plans include student specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.	Sustaining (4 points)
e) ILP plans explicitly identify needs for targeted instruction to align with student needs.	Sustaining (4 points)

## Strengths

- The ELL coordinator is knowledgeable and leads services related to ELLs with care and in compliance with legal requirements.
- The two instructional assistants serving ELLs at ICES offer dedication, strong instruction, and sense of belonging for ELL students.
- Communication with parents and other stakeholders is clear and, when needed, in the home language of students and families.

## Opportunities for Improvement

- Services to ICES ELL students would be enhanced with more intentional differentiation and language-supportive instruction in general education classrooms. With the understandable absence of a dedicated elementary ESL teacher due to limited resources, it is imperative that classroom teachers have knowledge of the language acquisition process and language supportive instructional practices, including differentiation based on overall language proficiency, proficiency in individual language domains, and academic language knowledge in different content areas.
- Co-planning with ESL instructional assistants and classroom teachers or the ESL coordinator and classroom teachers might enhance the instruction offered to ELLs within the general education classroom. The evaluation team acknowledges this is a challenge considering current staff capacity, scheduling, and limited resources.

## Recommended Next Steps

- Continued professional development focused on sheltered instruction and linguistically responsive instruction.
- Increased emphasis on lesson planning with ELLs in mind, including intentionality regarding instructional accommodations in the general education classroom.
- Here are several resources that may be helpful to get started:
  - <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/ell/cresource/q1/p04/> (Sheltered Instruction)
  - [https://keepindianalearning.org/digital-content-library/?\\_sf\\_s=English%20learners](https://keepindianalearning.org/digital-content-library/?_sf_s=English%20learners) (Variety of content)
  - Any texts or videos featuring Andrea Honigsfeld and/or Maria Dove focused on co-teaching and co-planning

Thank you for the opportunity for the team to take part in ICES's Q4 evaluation and providing such a welcoming atmosphere. If you have questions or concerns regarding the report, please feel free to reach out to:

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