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Evaluation of Mayor Sponsored Charter School:

Believe Schools, Inc.

Site Evaluation: November 16, 2021

Prepared For: Office of Education Innovation-
Office of the Mayor, City of Indianapolis
and

Kimberly Neal

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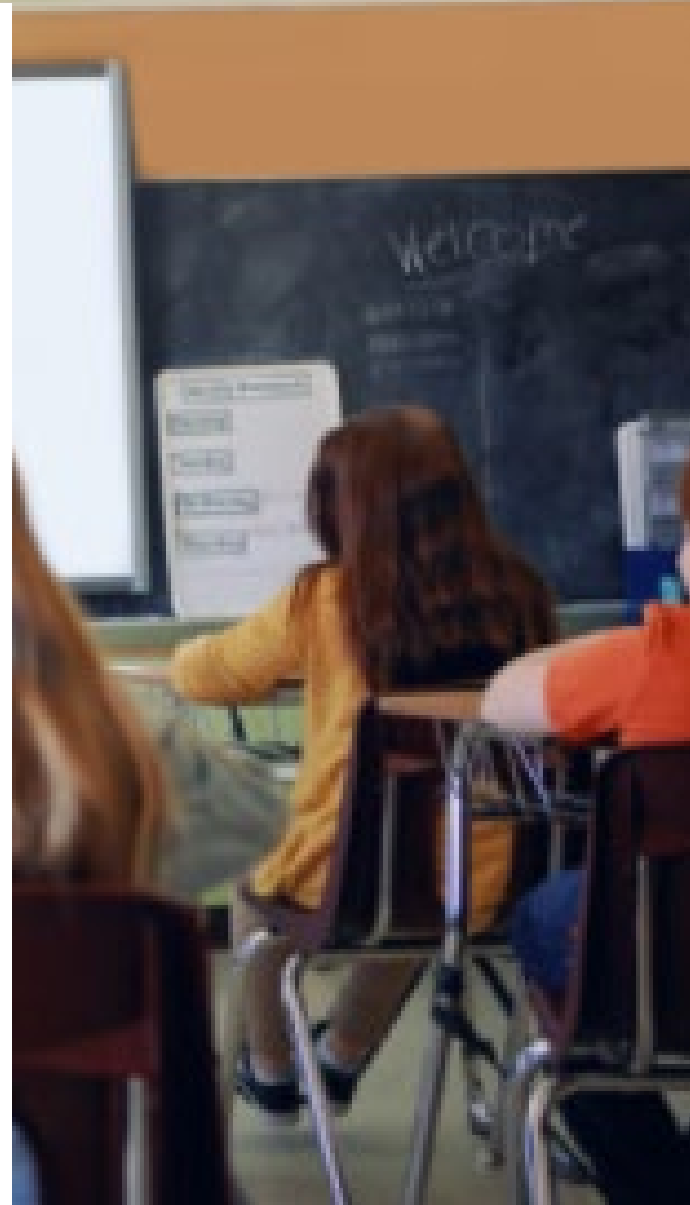


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OEI Ratings Summary

Indicator Ratings Summary	
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.

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?	Exceeds Standard
4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options? *Only applies to schools serving grades 9-12	Meets Standard
4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	Exceeds 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?	Exceeds Standard
4.7. Is the school climate responsive to the needs of students, staff, and families?	Meets Standard
4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and families clear and helpful?	Exceeds Standard
4.9. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is implementing best practice?	Approaching Standard
4.10. Is the school implementing best practice related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	Does Not Meet Standard

School Background*

BELIEVE Schools was launched in 2019, with its first campus BELIEVE Circle City opening in the Fall of 2020. BELIEVE Circle City High School is currently a single-site early college and career high school focused on agency, autonomy, and acceleration. The school is centrally located in the heart of Indianapolis and serves approximately 130 students. Our students represent under-estimated communities across the city, and our goal is to close the achievement gap for scholars we serve.

*Disclaimer: *This information is not yet available on the IDOE website and is self-reported data submitted by the school.*

Mission Statement

BELIEVE Circle City High School is a public college and career preparatory high school dedicated to the achievement of students in the Indianapolis area. Our mission is to develop students into leaders through a community that fosters their agency, autonomy, and acceleration— providing a foundation for future independence and success.

Academic Program

Acceleration- All BCC students will follow the Indiana Core 40 to earn a diploma with Academic or Technical Honors. In addition, all 9th & 10th graders will be enrolled in an AP or dual-credit course. Through our Early College partnerships, BCC students will be dually enrolled in college or career classes starting in 11th grade. Students will have a more rigorous curriculum and course load to ensure they are prepared for the college or career pathway of their choosing.

Student Demographics *

Enrollment by Grade Level*	
9th	78
10th	40
11th	7
Total Number of Students	125

%	Student Demographics*
92	Free/Reduced Lunch
45	Multilingual Learners
8	Student with Disabilities

Historical Academic Performance*

State Assessment (IREAD/ILEARN/ISTEP+)	School Performance	State Average
Grade 10 (Biology) Science Proficiency (ILEARN)	10.9%	31.8%

*This data is not yet available on the IDOE website and is self-reported data.

Evaluation Process

As a part of the OEI accountability requirements, Believe Schools, Inc. commissioned Yellow Hat Consulting (YHC) to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the Believe Circle City High School's (BCC) current organizational and academic progress. The focus of this evaluation was **OEI Performance Framework Core Question 4 (CQ4): *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?***

The school evaluation process was divided into four phases. YHC collected both quantitative and qualitative data to determine how the school met each indicator. The four phases were:

1. Pre-Evaluation Meeting
2. Document Upload and Review
3. On-Site Visit- Full Day
4. Follow-Up Meeting with Leadership

Before the site visit, Lead Consultant, Kimberly Ransom, and Lead Evaluator, Evelyn Gearries met with the school's Founder, Mrs. Kimberly Neal to conduct a pre-evaluation meeting. They discussed logistics and the documents needed for the site evaluation. After the meeting, YHC created a digital document and portal for BCC to upload documents and links for each indicator in the CQ4 Rubric. YHC reviewed various documents uploaded by BCC. The evaluation team gathered information from BCC's website, social media page, mission statement, scholar and family handbook, staff handbook, calendar, MOUs, and survey data. Other artifacts are listed in the report under a specific indicator.

List of Focus Groups:

- Focus Group #1-Assessment & Instruction
- Focus Group #2- ESL, Exceptional Learners, and SEL, MTSS
- Focus Group #3 Teachers
- Focus Group #4 Operations
- Focus Group #5 Parents
- Focus Group #6 Students

On the day of the site visit, YHC evaluators completed classrooms observations, conducted focus group interviews with teachers, administrators, parents, and students, and reviewed files. Each classroom observation ranged from fifteen to twenty minutes. Focus group sessions lasted between thirty minutes to one and a half hours. YHC met with BCC leadership at the end of the day and debriefed the site evaluation. During the debrief, YHC asked follow-up questions and notified BCC that some of the SPED files had goals that needed to be reviewed and revised. Before the virtual follow-up meeting, YHC asked BCC to complete the report's School Demographics and Historical Academic Performance sections. Typically, these items are found on the INDOE website, but the information on the site is not current. YHC held a virtual meeting with Mrs. Neal to discuss the draft report and answer any questions.

Indicator Performance Ratings

YHC looked at the indicators in CQ4 to determine the performance rating. Performance ratings are highlighted to identify the overall rating for each indicator.

Curriculum and Materials

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"> ▪ Scope and Sequence Integrated Math ▪ Math Lab Lesson Plans ▪ Biology Curricula ▪ Humanities Standards and Curricula ▪ Lesson Plans with Exit Tickets ▪ Vision for Literacy ▪ Humanities Team Meeting Notes ▪ Focus Groups: Believe Leaders, Teachers, Parents, and Students 	
Summary of Findings	
<p>YHC Evaluation team reviewed several artifacts provided by Believe Circle City. YHC also conducted focus groups and interviews with school leaders and teachers. The evaluation team concluded that Believe Circle City MEETS the standard for curriculum and supporting materials.</p> <p>4.1 a) The curriculum used across all academic areas is rigorous, evidenced-based and aligned with state standards.</p>	

Subject	Curriculum	Online/Resource
Math	Carnegie	
Savvas Realize	Science	
9 th Grade Composition	Unbound Ed/Engage NY/ Writing Revolution	
9 th grade World History	Rosalee Metro	
AP History	Fabric of a Nation	
Active	Chemistry /Physics	
Composition		No Red Ink
Biology and Composition		Edgenuity
SEL	Reconstruction	
Multi-cultural	Kelvin	

BCC curriculums are currently aligned to the SAT, which aligns with the Common Core Standards. The only subject that aligns with Indiana standards is Biology. Teachers pull material from various resources to create a curriculum that meets the needs of its scholars (academically and culturally) and supports their mission. YHC could only confirm that Carnegie math is evidence-based and rigorous, according to EdReports. Most of Believe Circle City’s curriculums were not available for review in EdReports. Teachers explained that much of the curriculum is guided by essential questions. Some teachers include Capstone projects to increase rigor. Teachers routinely conduct grade audits through Schoolrunner and use the data to ensure that questions are not too easy.

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.

During the instruction and assessment focus group, school leaders shared that the staff is constantly reviewing and updating the curriculum on an ongoing basis. After students are assessed, grades are stored in Schoolrunner and can be viewed to identify gaps. Teachers shared that they aggressively monitor student performance and also know students well. This helps them identify gaps early. The school leader explained that the staff is in the process of developing a dashboard that will allow them to view student data across and within subgroups.

Believe Circle City compares its assessment data with other schools in the Noble Network, a high-performing charter school network in Chicago. School leaders review student results on the Knowledge Assessment offered at Ivy Tech, and they have looked at SAT data to identify student performance within subgroups.

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

Believe leaders shared that teachers create pacing guides and resources that align with interim assessments. Based on their goals, teachers developed some critical standards that crosswalk from Indiana standards to SAT standards to ensure standards are covered. Teachers submit lesson plans every week and make adjustments Tuesday through Friday based on what happens in the classroom on Monday. YH evaluators confirmed that instruction aligned with the pacing guide's objectives and lesson plans.

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.

Believe Circle City teachers review the SAT domains and selective IN Standards to identify core learning objectives for each grade.

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

Teachers shared that they have access to materials to deliver the curriculum effectively. However, they are hoping to re-build the freshman composition course and don't necessarily know the materials they will need. Teachers explained that if they ask for something, it is provided. Contracted instructional coaches also make recommendations for materials and then provide them.

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

The leadership has structures in place to ensure teachers are teaching using curriculum documents and materials with fidelity and for the recommended use and time. School leaders review lesson plans carefully before instruction. Support for lesson plans is provided after school on Mondays. Instructional coaches let teachers know if they need to attend. Teachers told YHC that Instructional Partners observe and provide results to teachers within the week. School leaders also conduct frequent formal and informal observations. Between formal observations, and regular checks of lesson plans, unit plans, and standards, and meticulous planning, meetings with Ms. Reimer, there is confirmation that teachers are utilizing materials with fidelity. All evaluation feedback is captured in Whetstone

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation (if applicable)

Rubric Rating

a. The curriculum used across all academic areas is rigorous, evidenced-based and aligned with state standards.	Emerging
b. Systematic reviews of curricula are conducted by administrators and school staff to identify gaps based on student performance across and within subgroups.	Implementing
c. The school regularly reviews instructional curriculum maps to ensure presentation of content is aligned with learning objectives.	Sustaining
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.	Implementing

e. Instructional staff have access to provided materials to deliver the curriculum effectively.	Sustaining
f. Instructional staff understand and uniformly use curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction.	Sustaining
Strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BCC has systems in place to monitor pacing and instruction. ▪ Teachers are provided support for lesson planning. ▪ Teachers have the resources they need to deliver instruction effectively. 	
Opportunities for Improvement	
Believe Circle City’s curriculums currently align with Common Core and the objectives assessed on the SAT. A crosswalk bridging Common Core standards to Indiana standards may be helpful.	
Recommended Next Steps	
<p>Believe is using the Carnegie Math Pathway for math instruction. The Integrated Math courses include Algebra I and II, and Geometry. Math instruction is observed/monitored by an outside agency, Instructional Partners. SAT assessments will give necessary feedback on the efficacy of this math program as it is implemented. It will require continuous monitoring by the school leadership team.</p> <p>Most in their first or second year of teaching, new teachers are usually not ready to develop curricula, so math instruction is of concern. As the school anticipates offering Calculus and AP Calculus, recruiting and hiring math teachers who can enhance students’ skills and growth are critical areas of consideration for the Believe leadership team.</p>	
Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward	

Pedagogy

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

- Lesson Plan Review
- Teacher Observation Schedule
- Teacher Observations
- Classroom Observations
- Administration, Student and Teacher Focus Groups

Summary of Findings

Yellow Hat Consulting (YHC) conducted teacher and administrator focus groups and observed classroom instruction at Believe Circle City High School. Classroom observations took place for 20 minutes. After reviewing artifacts and data collection from focus groups, YHC concluded that Believe City Schools “Exceeds Standard” for 4.2.

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

BCC has systems in place to ensure the curriculum is implemented with fidelity. Everyone is involved in this process. Leaders work alongside teachers and can be observed leading instruction or co-teaching in classrooms. During focus groups, both administration and teachers expressed how ongoing checkpoints, speaking to the learning objective throughout the lesson, and Exit tickets, confirm that lessons align to the essential questions embedded in the curriculum. YHC also observed the administration co-teaching a literature lesson.

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

Believe has an internalization process that explicitly targets core learning objectives. The pacing guide highlights the topic, standards, essential questions, pacing, objectives, and key vocabulary. YHC conducted a lesson plan review and determined that the lesson plans at BCC align with their internalization process. During YHC’s observation, teachers followed the pacing guide and their lesson plan. It was also noted in the focus groups that the administration works with teachers to review and discuss lesson plans. BCC’s administrative team offers extra hours after school for any teacher who wants or needs additional support with planning. Teachers are given feedback in person, electronically, and even through Zoom.

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

YHC looked at the instructional strategies in the lesson plans submitted at Believe City Schools. The lesson plans reviewed had the following components:

- Teacher Name/Course/Grade Level/Date
- Standard(s)

- Objective(s)
- Key Point
- Assessment(s) & Scoring Guide
- Agenda
- Lesson Component & Time Estimate
- Teacher Actions & Student Actions
- Exemplar Responses & Anticipated Errors or Misconceptions

Teachers noted that the lesson's structure is built around the guiding question discussed immensely during coaching conversations. The administration expressed that they (teachers and coaches) work backward from the Exit Ticket to plan lessons that meet the objective. Student-led discussions, teacher facilitation instruction, and co-teaching are evident in the classrooms. YHC observed classrooms with student-led conversations centered around essential questions and peer evaluations during the classroom visits. For example, in an American Literature class, the students cited examples from a text and video. Student responses were posted for their classmates to view and analyze whether or not the response was emphasized in the text or video.

Students have access to the materials they need. Handouts, PPTs, and many texts are provided in English and Spanish, and teachers show both languages when presenting. The school purchased translators for students and teachers, but students prefer to use Google translator on their cell phones. Students with special needs can use fidgets to stave off anxiety, flexible seating, use notebooks or course packets, and be taught how to improve note-taking skills.

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

At BCC, the lessons are written using a backward design that focuses on the guiding question and Exit Ticket. In one interview, the teacher expressed that their classroom library selections were determined based on student interests, book clubs based on gender, recommendations, small group interventions, curriculum, donations, and summer school needs. In the teacher focus groups, teachers stated that they “aggressively monitor” their students to ensure they are on task and understand the content. One teacher stated, “I surveyed my students at the beginning of the year to see how they like to respond to questions.” As a result, this teacher started using Google as means for students to write their responses to questions.

Teachers also described how they use formative assessments to guide their practices during the Acceleration block. Acceleration block is where differentiation, scaffolding, reteaching, and reading one-on-one occur.

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

YHC observed a classroom where instructional strategies promoted authentic learning, and all students were engaged during classroom observations. The administration noted that students take ownership of their learning. Students know how to take notes because they use rubrics of success exemplars for how work should look. The students used the guess and check method to solve linear equations during a math lesson. The students solved problems from their textbook and used Desmos, an online graphic calculator tool used with solving equations in algebra and trigonometry. Students told YHC that many of their classes are student lead and they can participate in discussions, give their opinions, and not feel judged. They also said that they could access their learning on their timetable.

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

During classroom observations, there was evidence of instructional materials and resources that affirmed the culture of the students at BCC. Libraries had books that represented various subject matter, perspectives, and cultures. Several examples were given in the Student’s focus group for how BCC affirms various cultures. Students mentioned that they learned about religions, and they enjoyed a lecture on personal genealogy. Relationships were initially established when the staff had Zoom calls with their families.

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

The administration provides explicit feedback on instructional practices on an ongoing basis. Administration frequently meets with teachers to review their lesson plans and discuss the lesson. During the meetings, they discuss the essential questions and what key points should be addressed in the lesson. Teachers expressed that they are provided a lot of support with lesson planning, and administration is always available to provide more supports if needed or requested.

Leadership does frequent walkthroughs. Teachers choose their date for their observations and meet before observation with the administration to discuss their lesson and meet with administration post-evaluation to discuss their lesson. Teachers welcome feedback from multiple team members because it is part of the culture. The teachers noted that the feedback could be immediately accessed in Whetstone with specific growth points and next steps.

Rubric Rating	
a. The curriculum is implemented in all classrooms with fidelity.	Sustaining
b. A clearly documented lesson internalization process is used to explicitly target core learning objectives across all academic areas.	Sustaining
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
d. Instruction is differentiated based on ongoing formative assessment of student learning needs, identified student interests, and preferred learning styles.	Sustaining
e. Instructional strategies used are designed to promote authentic learning to impact levels of student engagement.	Sustaining

f. Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the culture of students.	Sustaining
g. Instructional practices are intentionally designed to validate and affirm the cultures of students.	Sustaining
Strengths	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students are provided opportunities to engage in learning with their peers. ▪ Administration and coaches provide support with lesson planning. ▪ Systems are in place to support accelerated learning. 	
Opportunities for Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers asked for more text that reflect all cultures at Believe City Schools, not just African American and Caucasian. ▪ Students were told which tool to use during math and there was little discussion about tools and strategies that could have been used to solve the problem. 	
Recommended Next Steps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to upgrade classroom libraries by providing books that represent diverse perspectives, cultures, and lifestyles. ▪ Increase the use of the Math Process Standards and question stems to promote mathematical thinking and discourse. 	
Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward	

High School Guidance and Support

4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options? *Only applies to schools serving grades 9-12	
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

- School Handbook and Website
- List of School Curricula, Course of Study (including IN Career Pathways, AP, and Dual Credit options)
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with College And Community Partners.
- In Diploma Options And Graduation Requirements
- Disaggregated Reports on Course Enrollments
- Counseling Department Policies, Procedures, and Additional Resources
- Academic, Behavioral, and Emotional Supports
- Survey Data
- Focus Group Data: Leadership, Teaching Staff, Students, Parents

Summary of Findings

YHC Evaluation team conducted focus group and one-on-one interviews, reviewed artifacts, and conducted classroom observations to determine the following:

4.3 a) Believe provides access to rigorous coursework and career planning experiences (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities aligned to their interests.

BCC provides students with coursework that will meet the Indiana state graduation requirements to earn the four diploma types:

- General
- Core 40
- Core 40 with Technical Honors
- Academic Honors Diploma

In addition, courses include college and career preparation required for students to complete Graduation Pathways that are also required by the state. These courses and activities are selected by students based on their career interests

Students who have taken advantage of dual enrollment through Ivy Tech have begun to earn college credits that will transfer to Ivy Tech if they decide to attend there. There is a pathway for them to transfer to other Indiana colleges and universities after completing Ivy Tech course requirements. College credits are taught at Ivy Tech, or students may complete them through virtual instruction. The courses are offered in several disciplines and begin to prepare students for college rigor. In the spring of 2021, eight students earned college credits in English Composition. This year 31 students have elected to enroll in the following classes:

- American Government
- English Composition
- Economics Fundamentals
- Public Speaking
- Spanish I and II
- Student Success
- Introduction to Literature
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Rhetoric

- Argument

English Language Learners (ELL) and students with special needs are also encouraged to enroll in these courses.

BCC is in the process of gaining the necessary approval through the College Board to offer Advanced Placement (AP) United States History. The process begins with a course audit of the curriculum and materials needed for an AP course to be eligible for College Board approval. This audit confirms that the school administration and the teacher(s) are aware of the course scope and sequence; and that all confidential practice AP, final AP exams, and any other resources are accessible only to authorized AP teachers. Course audits for any anticipated classes for the next school year need to be submitted by BCC no later than February 2022. Upon that approval, Believe will be able to offer AP courses for high school and college credits.

4.3 b) A system is in place to ensure school staff provide students with supports they need to effectively prepare for postsecondary opportunities.

Teachers utilize several instructional strategies and differentiate instruction to meet student needs. Teachers meet with students twice daily in advisory periods called Village and Acceleration Block. Teachers are assigned students to work with from freshman through their senior year in an advisory capacity to discuss current and postsecondary planning, monitor student progress, and assess student needs. Teachers provide feedback to students and parents about academic and any other concerns inhibiting student progress.

BCC staff identifies “scholars of concern” who receive additional support in reading groups and the Developmental Reading lab. English Language Learners (ELL) and students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and accommodations are supported by ELL and SPED teachers; and Instructional Aides who “push-in” and “pull-out” services in the classrooms. Most lessons, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations are given in English and Spanish. The staff also utilize GOOGLE Classroom’s suite of lessons to provide a broader scope of options to enhance learning. An SAT fleet of assessments helps teachers focus instruction and remediate when needed. Teachers also provide tutoring during their office hours. BCC also has summer school options for students who would like to work ahead; or those who need to retake a course that they did not pass during the school year.

The school enlists other agency support to provide supplemental services to screen students for dyslexia, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and therapeutic counseling as student needs are identified.

4.3 c) The school provides opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities connected to student interests, (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase postsecondary options.

Many students were observed staying after school in the safe environment created by the BCC staff. Students can participate in basketball; volleyball; an 8-week dance program through the Ibada Dance Company, Student Council; a music program provided by Indy Urban Arts; Business Club; Cosmetology Club, and options to complete community service. Next semester, one of the teachers would like to offer Financial Literacy as an option to help students begin to understand how to budget and how to develop their wealth potential. In the student focus group, students talked about how they enjoy getting to know other students in these informal settings.

As the staff grows, current teachers feel that they will have additional extracurricular activities to offer students. A plan is to explore more field trips and travel options for students.

4.3 d) The school offers a range of pathways that allow all students to meet or exceed Indiana Core 40 graduation requirements.

BCC course offerings satisfy the state requirements for Core 40 diplomas and have the potential to meet other diploma types. The master schedule allows students time for course work and remediation during the school day. It also allows students to have dual enrollment in courses offered through their partnership with Ivy Tech. Students can explore career paths, new trends in developing careers, and earn certifications in some vocational areas.

As the school adds grade levels and increases staff, students will have additional options to take Advanced Placement classes. The plan to develop and implement this program should have a strong focus on their SPED and ELL subgroups. The access for these students to qualify for placement and their subsequent support in rigorous classes will be essential to meeting the expectations of parents and students who have enrolled based on the prospect of students' ability to graduate with college credit.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation (if applicable)

Rubric Rating

<p>a. The school provides access to rigorous coursework and career planning experiences (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities aligned to their interests.</p>	<p>Implementing</p>
<p>b. A system is in place to ensure school staff provide students with the supports they need to be effectively prepared for post-secondary opportunities.</p>	<p>Implementing</p>
<p>c. The school provides opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities, connected to student interests, (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options.</p>	<p>Sustaining</p>
<p>d. The school offers a range of pathways that allow all students to meet or exceed Indiana Core 40 graduation requirements.</p>	<p>Implementing</p>

Strengths

- Students, staff, and parents have formed positive relationships through opportunities embedded in the school day.
- Students meet with teachers and leaders in their classrooms and daily interactions in their Village, advisory period.

- The Village time also welcomes parents/guardians to the school during four scheduled times during the school year and more if needed.
- Purpose Pathway Days afford parents time with teachers to assess student data, goals, growth, and postsecondary planning.
- Students can also take advantage of the daily Acceleration Blocks to receive remediation, guided notes; suggestions on developing time management skills; and one-on-one time with teachers. These are opportunities for teachers and students to get to know each other on a more personal level, and to discuss any concerns that might be inhibiting student progress. Social/emotional growth and soft skills are also emphasized during these periods.

Opportunities for Improvement

Believe Circle City High School leadership will need to recruit and hire additional, qualified staff to meet the needs of students who are taking higher level math classes for high school credit; to prepare students for the Ivy Tech Knowledge Assessment; and to prepare all students for the Indiana Gateway Exam. This additional staff is essential for Believe to qualify for College Board approval for all of the Advanced Placement courses they would like to offer.

As enrollment increases with the addition of grades 11 and 12 in the coming years, support staff will also need to increase to assist teachers and students in classrooms and comply with students' accommodations. Currently, Believe has staff and planned times to address the needs of students who need academic and behavioral supports. However, as more rigorous high school courses occur in grades 11 and 12; and Advanced Placement courses are approved by the College Board, Believe staff will need strategic plans for teachers and support staff to assist SPED and ELL students who would like to take challenging courses in their areas of strength. Currently, teachers receive professional development on instructional strategies for SPED students; and technology resources and translators are provided for ELL students.

As Believe leadership monitors data on student progress and growth, they will be able to find the areas of support that need improvement or additional staff. Ultimately, students' success will be contingent upon how instruction is differentiated and how well the Master Schedule can find time for remediation efforts provided during the school day. Teachers will need common planning times to discuss student needs and develop plans to address any concerns about their academic progress. Students who have not passed the Knowledge Assessment to qualify to take college courses through Ivy Tech during 9th and 10th grades will need a modified plan to complete an Associate's Degree before high school graduation. Advanced Placement students will also need additional time with teachers to complete rigorous coursework to earn college credit and prepare for final AP exams.

Recommended Next Steps

BCC staff should finalize a strategic plan for developing and implementing approved Advanced Placement courses as soon as possible. A key facet of their school goal is to prepare students for post-secondary preparation and course rigor. This plan must be a priority to meet upcoming approval deadlines and teacher preparation.

There are some built-in academic supports for English Language Learners and students with special needs, but a process must be developed to assist these students so that AP courses are also accessible to them. With a small staff of new teachers, it will be necessary for the teachers to feel confident in

their ability to meet AP curriculum requirements related to rigor and pacing as they teach a college-level course. They will also need a tracking system to assess the progress of subgroups (SPED and ELL), and best practices to offer assistance. Additional time to work with their students to meet the rigor of the courses has to be built into an already busy school day.

Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

- One of the teachers in the focus groups mentioned that a program to allow students to experience overseas travel is being considered as COVID restrictions are lifted. It was suggested that the teachers contact EF Educational Tours to discuss travel options for students. EF Tours will plan safe tours to several countries and recommend cost-saving methods for the best overall experiences for the group. The bonus is as teachers recruit students to attend, teachers can travel at a discounted rate.
- Additional opportunities for students to explore Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) activities would also bring vital experiences to the IN Pathways requirements and support their knowledge of new careers in these areas.

Assessments

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

- Testing Schedule/Calendar
- Formative Assessments
- Summative Assessments
- Sample Assessments
- SAT Standards
- Humanities Assessment
- Student Letter Regarding Assessment Results
- Teacher Reflection on Assessment Results

Summary of Findings

4.4 a) Assessments utilized are well aligned to learning standards.

School leaders explained that Believe identifies standards that align to SAT. The only assessment Believe gives that aligns with Indiana standards is the Biology End of Course Assessment. BCC is norming the results of some of their assessments with the Noble Network, a network of high-performing charter schools based out of Chicago, and with KIPP schools. They are currently waiting on the results of the PSAT. Approximately forty percent (40%) of students have completed the Knowledge Assessment offered through Ivy Tech. To enroll, students working towards dual credits must achieve seventy or better in reading and math. Believe uses Edmentum, an online assessment for Lexile testing. Believe's formative and summative assessments align to their identified curriculums which align to the learning standards.

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

A review of assessments at Believe indicated that assessments vary in response and include multiple-choice, short answer, read and respond, etc. Assessments are administered in various ways: oral/discussion, written, project-based, and computer-based. Sample assessments and results were provided by Believe staff.

According to participants of the ESL, SPED, and SEL leadership focus group, the SPED teacher at Believe modifies assessments as required in student IEPs. The online curriculums, Edmentum and Edgenuity, have differentiation built in. These online curriculums use students' reading levels to prompt teachers to provide guided notes, additional assistance, or pull students into small groups.

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

YHC allowed staff members responsible for assessment and instruction to explain how they use student data. They currently use exit tickets and quizzes as formative assessments. This helps teachers know how to adjust from day to day. They give unit tests, interim assessments, and standardized assessments to gather growth and proficiency data on students. School leaders also rely on the Pre-SAT and SAT to provide data on proficiency. The Pre-SAT is used to predict how students will perform on the SAT.

During Purpose Pathway meetings, teachers and school leaders review progress and set the course for the next quarter. They compare student progress to similar schools, previous year student data with current year progress, and Lexile scores to see how students have improved.

There is no overarching data management system that provides student-level data focused on growth and proficiency. Leadership is in the process of creating a dashboard that will give them a glance at all assessments and student performance based on demographics.

This information can be accessed online and pulled into reports.

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

Believe Circle City’s school calendar shows that assessments are administered with sufficient frequency. The calendar provides formal standardized tests, interim assessments, and final exams dates. Teachers provide assessment results in a timely manner. Teachers shared during the teacher focus group that data from interim tests is reviewed quarterly. Pre-SAT and SAT results are reviewed annually. Daily exit tickets and quizzes are reviewed daily. Student data is discussed by the staff weekly. Interim assessment results are available the Friday after the test is given. Teachers generally have a week to review and prepare for student meetings. Schoolrunner is the grade reporting system. Classroom assessment results are provided as soon as they are graded.

PSAT and SAT results are provided as soon as they are received. Teachers told YHC that after the last SAT, the data showed that students struggled with summarization. They spent two weeks post-assessment to support this skill, providing instruction tied to that objective and asking students to summarize paragraphs.

Purpose Pathway meetings provide the opportunity to share assessment results and student progress with parents quarterly.

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.

According to Believe Circle City teachers, during the teacher focus group, teachers use the data from quarterly interim assessments, PSAT, SAT, and Knowledge Assessment data to analyze student progress across and within subgroups. The Believe Circle City staff also compare their results with similar high schools like KIPP and Noble Network. School leaders and teachers meet every two or three weeks to analyze data formally. They engage in informal discussions on data frequently.

Teachers frequently review exit ticket results and performance on quizzes to help them plan how to start the next class. During the student focus group, students shared that teachers talk to them about preparing for a test and then how to improve, how to remediate, etc. They indicated that sometimes teachers would give a retest. Students also noted that they are encouraged to study and are allowed to review their academic information and set goals based on their progress.

Teachers at Believe Circle City review daily exit tickets and aggressively monitor content knowledge and skill level, i.e., cite a source/develop an argument to determine proficiency levels, etc. Teachers shared during the focus group that if sixty percent (60%) of students fail, they make time to re-teach. If fewer students fail, those students are pulled into small groups for support. During the student focus group, students shared that teachers will reteach information if needed.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation (if applicable)

Rubric Rating

a. Assessments utilized are well aligned to learning standards.

Sustaining

b. Assessments utilized are varied in order to support a wide range of student learning styles and abilities.	Sustaining
c. Assessments utilized provide student level data focused on growth and proficiency.	Implementing
d. Assessments are administrated with sufficient frequency and results are provided in a timely manner.	Sustaining
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.	Sustaining
Strengths	
Believe Circle City staff engage in frequent reviews of data, both formally and informally.	
Opportunities for Improvement	
There should be a data tracking platform that provides insight on student performance.	
Recommended Next Steps	
Create a data management system that provides insight on student growth and proficiency in one place (dashboard).	
Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward	

Human Resource Systems

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.
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Data/Artifacts Reviewed

Document Review

- Staff Handbook
- Hiring Policies/Manual
- Onboarding Artifacts
- Evaluation Artifacts
- Staff Handbook
- Staff Roster

Focus Groups- Teachers and Leadership

Summary of Findings

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.

Believe High School has increased staff due to the addition of Grade 10 this year. All new staff was recruited and hired through the Teach for America Program. All but two of the six are first to second-year teachers. More staff will be needed as Believe adds Grades 11 and 12 in subsequent years; and as their program includes Advanced Placement courses. The leadership team is conscious of their ongoing need to recruit and interview candidates who have had some experiences with curriculum development; assessment and have experience teaching higher-level courses to meet the needs of their students’ postsecondary preparation. Culturally relevant curriculum is also being developed through the assistance of their Chief Academic Officer and a consultant who comes to the school from Chicago.

The team would like to develop a partnership with local teacher placement programs at Marian and Butler Universities. They have relied on word-of-mouth recruitment through staff contacts in Indiana and surrounding states, hiring fairs; Teach for America and similar programs; posts on social media and LinkedIn, and agencies like Indeed. Postings for open positions for next year will be up by late November 2021. Believe has looked within and has encouraged a bus driver and maintenance worker to work in other capacities to support the needs of their students. The front desk receptionist is a parent of two Believe students. She is bilingual and fully engaged in the life of the school.

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

The hiring process is effective and has proven to work well to orient new staff to the building. After a phone interview with the Principal, a formal interview is scheduled with the entire leadership team. Each candidate submits a writing sample and must present a sample lesson to the team. Three to five previous supervisory references are contacted and are asked to speak to the candidate’s work ethic. The Chief Academic Officer then drafts a letter to the candidate if they are to be hired. The Human Resources representative from Milestone HR Services will then give an overview of the payroll processes and complete necessary paperwork; discuss benefits, health care, and retirement planning information when teachers are hired.

All staff receives three weeks of summer planning and professional development as they are acclimated to the school. Teachers receive an orientation to technology and the systems they will need to use. They also receive an introduction to the school's mission to begin their teaching experience at Believe.

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

Jawn Manning, Leadership Team/Teacher/Dean of Students, decides scheduling. She builds the master schedule based on scholar numbers in content areas. She will then consider schedules based on staff requests, common preps, etc.; and then she and the leadership teamwork as a team to have “critical eyes” to assist in balancing class sizes. There is a plan to hire Special Education and English Language Learner teachers to assist Ms. Manning and to take more of these duties off her plate. An ELL staff person is currently working on completing her licensure to become a school counselor, so she will be able to support working with the master schedule and can address more of the students' academic needs.

Believe currently uses ALMA as their Student Management System, which is relatively easy to understand. They would like to upgrade to PowerSchool or some other technology software system that would be more effective in managing information and maintaining student records, but these systems are more expensive.

ELL and SPED staff push in or pull students out for additional support. The gentleman who began as a bus driver was observed to be very effective with male students. He works with students on assigned lessons, behavior support, and “Scholars of concern.” He has been instrumental in enhancing the school culture, and assisting with facility needs.

The staff at BCC have diverse skillsets and wear many hats. Systems seem to be working at this point; however; as BCC student enrollment increases, staff will not be able to keep up with the demands of their current roles. There will need to be more people in place so that staff can adequately address instruction. BCC is aware of its hiring needs and has created partnerships to find more people to add to the staff.

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.

Milestone HR Services works with the Chief Academic Officer to keep track of licenses and ensure timely renewal dates. YHC used [Indiana Educator License Lookup](#) and identified instructional staff members with a valid license in their assigned area. YHC concluded that 7/12 (58%) of BCC Instructional Staff have valid permits and licenses.

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.

In addition to summer and weekly options, the leadership team does cultural walkthroughs to determine professional development training for staff to train on culturally relevant and differentiated instruction. Believe also works with an educational consultant to observe and provide feedback on curriculum development and instructional strategies.

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 Development days occur throughout the year with one per quarter built into the academic calendar; “huddles” for staff occur once a week, including cultural facing and data analysis. Huddles occurred five times per week at the beginning of the year.

As a “Slow-grow” high school, Believe is required to make improvement goals. Last year’s goals were focused on data analysis, surviving the pandemic, growing the school culture, and instructional coaching. This year, the focus is on developing and implementing a curriculum with fidelity, data tracking, team communication; the school model; SAT growth; and students meeting 80% or their Core 40 diploma requirements by the end of 10th grade. Staff participates in professional learning, and teachers told YHC that professional learning is tailored based on the needs identified at the school.

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

In October, staff had a professional development session to outline the evaluation plan and timeline. At that time, they were notified of the timeframe for unannounced observations. Teachers use the rubric to determine the artifacts they want to submit. One Informal/unannounced observation is held in the fall during the first quarter. A formal/announced observation is conducted for each staff person in the spring. Pre and Post observation feedback is given to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate and pacing follows the content area's scope and sequence. Feedback is noted in the Whetstone. Staff can meet with coaches during the professional development time each Friday while students are in elective options or after school. Last year, 75% of the teaching staff were identified as effective; 25% needed improvement. (There were only four teachers last year, so only one out of four teachers was evaluated as “needs improvement.”)

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation (if applicable)

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.	Implementing
b. Hiring processes are well organized and used to support the success of new staff members.	Sustaining
c. Staffing levels adequately allow staff to maximize instructional time and capacity.	Implementing
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
e. Professional learning opportunities are offered regularly in order to support the staff in delivering culturally relevant and	Implementing

differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.	
f. Professional learning opportunities are determined through analyses of student outcome data and clearly linked to strategic objectives and school improvement goals.	Implementing
g. The teacher evaluation process is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.	Sustaining

Strengths

The professional learning opportunities required for all staff help set the atmosphere for continuous improvement. Teachers in the focus group referenced the leadership team, instructional coaches, technology, and online resources as supportive to their growth. They appreciate the informal/walkthrough observations; curriculum planning and pacing; and the open communication they have with the leadership and with their peers as they have been integrated into the life of the school.

Opportunities for Improvement

A primary concern that our team observed is that there is no licensed counselor at Believe, nor is there a true coordinator for the AP and Dual Credit Programs that they would like to expand. The Dean of Students also works to coordinate the guidance needs of students is managing several responsibilities within the school (building the master schedule; scheduling students in classes; balancing class totals; requesting records and updating transcripts of transfer students; teaching, etc.).

As components and courses of the AP Program are implemented; and as the number of students increase in the program, she will ultimately be overwhelmed in maintaining College Board requirements (course audits and approval; teacher training; student recruitment; scheduling tutorial sessions; holding student and parent informational and progress meetings; securing confidential AP materials, resources, and tests; scheduling and administration of AP final exams; etc.). Because AP tests are given and proctored following strict timelines required by the College Board, the entire school will be impacted. There is a staff member who is in the process of completing work toward licensure as a secondary school counselor. Still, additional staff should also be receiving training to be able to teach AP courses and to support building the AP program. Hiring qualified math teachers must also be a priority to meet the needs of students and the requirements of the AP Program.

Recommended Next Steps

Believe is running up against stringent deadlines to develop and implement Advanced Placement courses that have been identified to begin during the next school year. The leadership told YHC that they are aware of all the expectations and are confident that they have done the necessary actions to be approved.

YHC recommends BCC forecast a viable timeline for adequate teacher recruitment and training for AP courses. The College Board suggests that teachers have at least three years of teaching experience in

their content areas to teach AP courses at a college level. While it is not mandatory, it is still a best practice that should be considered for the program's efficacy. BCC told YHC that they are confident they will meet the rigours expectations of College Board and will continue to provide the staff with the support needed to successfully teach ALL courses offered at BCC.

Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

School's Mission

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

- Teacher Focus Groups
- Teacher Interviews
- Administration Focus Groups
- Classroom Observations
- Website
- Facebook Page
- Scholar & Family Handbook

Summary of Findings

Believe Schools' Mission can be located on their school's website's homepage. It reads, "BELIEVE Circle City High School is a public college and career preparatory high school dedicated to the achievement of students in the Indianapolis area. Our mission is to develop students into leaders through a community that fosters their agency, autonomy, and acceleration – providing a foundation for future independence and success.

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

BCC uses feedback from conversations with stakeholders and Stakeholder survey data to confirm the commitment to the school's mission. In the focus groups, the parents expressed to YHC that the school always includes them when making school-wide decisions. They are always informed regarding their child's academics.

Commitment is demonstrated by stakeholders' actions. BCCCS stakeholders demonstrate commitment. Board attendance is usually 90-100%. Board members contribute financially, volunteered to be on committees, adopted families... buys lunch, purchased bookbags for founders, some are considering placing students into school. Two board members moved out of state but still stayed connected to the school.

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

Believe Circle City Schools has established partnerships with families and the community. The website lists several partnerships and affiliations. The Facebook page posts pictures of activities involving scholars and invitations for the community to come and support various events. In the focus group, one parent stated, "It's not only a relationship teacher-to-scholar, more a relationship as a family member. They are very focused on the student's personal lives, and what is happening outside, it is like a family."

Rubric Rating

<p>a. Procedures are in place for assessing all stakeholder's perceptions, knowledge, and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.</p>	<p>Sustaining</p>
<p>b. Procedures are in place for establishing meaningful partnerships with all families and community stakeholders to support the school's mission.</p>	<p>Sustaining</p>

Strengths

- Stakeholders demonstrate understanding of mission through their actions.
- Partnerships have been established with various organizations in the community.

Opportunities for Improvement

Recommended Next Steps

Continue building community partnerships and relationships between stakeholders. Consider having an annual fundraiser dinner and acknowledge Parent of the Year, Student of the Year, Community Partner of the Year.

Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

Climate & Culture

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

Document Review

- Believe Circle City Scholar Expectations and Privileges to Unlock
- Student Handbook
- MTSS/RTI Plan (including a list of available interventions)
- Disaggregated discipline data (One (1) student up for expulsion for assault)
- Classroom Management Plans
- Classroom Observations
- Family Engagement Plan

Survey Data: Parent, Student, Teacher
Focus Group: Staff, Students, Family

Summary of Findings

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

Believe Circle City High School has a representative team that includes individuals responsible for implementing MTSS. According to the ELL, SPED and SEL leadership focus group participants, the team includes one SPED teacher, counselors contracted through SPEDX for occupational therapy, speech therapy, and physical therapy. Believe has employed a bi-lingual ELL teacher and a Title I teacher. The MTSS Team implements/oversees intervention and regularly meets with the building leader and the scholar’s village leader (homeroom teacher). According to the MTSS/RTI Plan, Tier 1 interventions are divided into academic and behavioral interventions. They include daily differentiation for effective instruction, collaborative, multi-modal core instruction addressing student learning preferences, and other interventions provided in the pre-referral intervention manual.

BCC has a systematic process for screening students. All incoming freshman and any students enrolling over the summer are tested. The MTSS team meets on Tuesdays to review scholars. All students of concern are tracked in Schoolrunner. It helps teachers and school leaders identify who might need support in advance. If a student is not on grade level, they must attend summer school. If no progress is made, students have interventions for six weeks. At the end of the six weeks, the team reconvenes to determine the level of success and next steps.

According to the school leader, BCC's behavioral intervention plan focuses on love and logic rather than discipline. Within the plan, students earn points that provide them with privileges. According to the operations team, the goal is that by the time students are juniors, they are consistently exhibiting behaviors supporting their academic success. Students told YHC that teachers and leaders consistently enforce behavior expectations during the student focus group. Consequences applied by the staff match the actions of the behavior 'really well.' Students also indicated that teachers use discipline as teachable moments meant to get students back on track.

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

To ensure they are culturally responsive, Believe Circle City school leaders complete cultural feedback forms and get better faster forms on each teacher. There is explicit guidance in the MTSS plan for each tier. The MTSS/RTI plan states that "the team will meet weekly to discuss Tier 2 and Tier 3 scholars. Team members include Mrs. Neal-Brannum, Mrs. Jackson-Anderson, Ms. Manning (SPED/ESL), and Mr. Thomas (Culture). Mrs. Jackson-Anderson will track the intervention implementation for each scholar/teacher by following up personally with each teacher and recording the data onto our MTSS tracker." Teachers create a Watch List that includes scholars of concern who struggle with either academics or behavior throughout the year. This list is distributed to staff and debriefed for clarity. Progress for Watch List scholars and any referred scholars are discussed weekly by grade-level teams during their grade-level team meetings.

Interventions are derived from "RTI Tier 2 Intervention Strategies for Secondary Schools. "Tier 2 supports include completing a character Academy assignment from the SEL curriculum, which focuses on growth. Students complete these assignments on Fridays so that they don't miss academic time. This approach also supports students participating in dual enrollment. Scholars of Concern work with Ms. Tillman every day to get grades up during the acceleration block.

According to BCC's MTSS/RTI Plan, Tier 3 interventions increase to parent, and administrator developed academic and behavior plans, in addition to more intensive academic interventions and interventions intended to modify behaviors of concern.

While these systems are in place and are monitored frequently, YHC noted that some students with ILPs and IEPs may not get all the supports they need if their ELL and IEP files are not current or missing information (See 4.9 and 4.10).

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.

Procedures are in place to develop strong, positive relationships between adults and students. The Believe staff is expected to form positive relationships with students. Students are organized into villages with a village leader who follows them for all four years. The village leader also checks in with

students twice daily just to see how they are doing. The love and logic approach provides a strategy for establishing, maintaining, and restoring relationships with students and families.

Teachers shared during the teacher focus group that they hold parent meetings after initial enrollment to intentionally learn about students and their families and to build relationships. Purpose Pathway meetings are held quarterly with students and families to review student progress and set goals for the next quarter. The parents in the parent focus group shared that they feel like the school is a family. They feel included in what’s happening at the school and participate as much as their work schedules allow. During the student focus group, students shared that teachers ‘listen to us and talk to us like we are adults.’ They also stated that they feel like they can talk to all the staff and school leaders about concerns and that they act on them.

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.

Believe Circle City’s most recent Staff Culture and Climate Survey indicated that ninety-two percent (92%) of staff found the culture and climate favorable (OCT 2021).

Student perspectives captured in a survey indicated that fifty-three percent (53%) of students find the social/emotional environment favorable and sixty-three percent (63%) find the school's culture/climate/equity/inclusion favorable.

A POSSIP survey from 8/22/2021 indicated that 94% of parents are happy with the high school.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation (if applicable)

Rubric Rating

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

Strengths
Believe Circle City has established strong relationships with parents and engages them frequently in their children's progress.
Opportunities for Improvement
Recommended Next Steps
See 4.9, 4.10 Recommendations
Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

Communication

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"> ▪ Artifact Review: Communication Documents, Newsletters, Welcome Letters, Purpose Pathway Agenda ▪ Survey Data ▪ Website 	

- Facebook Page
- Focus Group Interviews- Teachers, Leadership, Parents, Students

Summary of Findings

YHC examined various artifacts, conducted focus group interviews, and navigated Believe Circle City High School's webpage and Facebook page to determine how Believe Schools communicates with families and students.

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

YHC asked participants in the Operations focus group to describe how Believe Schools communicates to families. Information is shared with families via newsletters, social media, and the website. The staff has ongoing communication with students during Village. Village occurs daily, and the expectation is for everyone to be invested in student success. During this time, teachers share student data, and students have notecards to record and track progress. Village is also a time for students and teachers to build relationships through discussion and collaboration. Participants in the Parents' focus group confirmed that the school communicates via mail, texts, and email. Parents told YHC that they communicate with the teachers via text and the Remind App.

YHC was able to get the gist of the activities at Believe Circle City Schools by navigating its website and Facebook page. YHC viewed Believe Schools' website and noted that stakeholders could stay abreast of what is happening by subscribing to the newsletter. *The Recent News* newsfeed was dated September 20, 2021. The *Upcoming Events* column had previous events listed first. A banner in the middle of the page announced the Winter Open House. Believe School's Facebook page had multiple posts that included upcoming events and a November 5th post for October's Scholars of the Month. Posts were made almost daily in October.

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

The Scholar/Family Handbook informs families how to contact the school, when is the best time to contact the office and teachers. The handbook also lists several policies and procedures, including the process for filing a grievance. During the focus group, parents told YHC that they could call the school or come to the school to address concerns. The system in place seems to be working, but as BCC increases enrollment, the process for reporting addressing concerns will need to be more explicit for both students and families. This will also ensure that all concerns are addressed and forwarded to the correct person.

4.8 c) Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their students' academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.

Students told YHC that their teachers send screenshots of good grades and good comments to them and their families. They can access this information in the Student Information System to get real-time information. Parents told YHC that they receive information in English and Spanish. During the Operations focus group, Leadership told YHC that they use Google Translate to translate documents for families.

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.

BCC has touchpoints in place designed to strategically build family-school partnerships and assess the needs of all families. For example, Purpose Pathways meetings allow staff and families time to exchange information to support the scholar's success. Information collected includes a professional plan, academic history, scholar demographics, and family history.

In addition to regular check-ins with families and students, BCC conducts POSSIP surveys to identify if they are meeting the needs of their families. YHC looked at Stakeholders Survey Data submitted by BCC.

Some comments in the survey were:

"I like the idea that they have more one-on-one activities and help with the students they offer more help when they need help. And I love the communication that the teachers have when they reach out and give you their personal numbers if you need anything to let them know and they're willing to go above and beyond to make sure that students are doing well.- Parent of 9th grader

"My daughter and I really love the school administrators. They have no problem with reaching out to me if there is a problem with my daughter."- Parent of a 10th grader

During the Student's focus group, participants told YHC that their teachers have good communication, and they can accept feedback from teachers because of their relationships. The teachers and staff know them.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation/Artifacts Reviewed on (if applicable)

Rubric Rating

a. An active and ongoing system of communication between the school and family members in place.	Sustaining
b. Procedures for responding to concerns of families are clearly defined and implemented by all school staff and validated by families.	Sustaining
c. Families are regularly informed in their native or home language of their students' academic and behavioral strengths and areas of need.	Sustaining
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.	Sustaining

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose Pathway meetings with families promote building positive relationships and give the staff insight into supporting scholars. ▪ Stakeholders have ongoing, open communication.
Opportunities for Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website <i>Recent News</i> display isn't current. ▪ The processes for communicating concerns work for a small school but BCC will need a more manageable system of checks and balances as student enrollment increases.
Recommended Next Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have most recent newsletters automatically updated under <i>Recent News</i> on the website. ▪ Update the <i>Upcoming Events</i> column on the website to list the most recent upcoming events first. Currently, past events show, and users have to scroll down to access ▪ The website has a place for scholars to enroll in the school, but there isn't a family/scholar handbook. Consider uploading the scholar handbook on the site, so prospects know what to expect. ▪ Identify a designated person or committee to address concerns. Notify stakeholders of the process for addressing concerns and update the family/scholar handbook.
Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

Exceptional Learners

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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidential Student File reviews ▪ Parent Correspondence ▪ Conference Notifications ▪ Survey Data ▪ Focus Group Data 	

- IIEP Dashboard
- YH File Review Checklist
- SPED File Review Checklist
- YH Interview Sheet

Summary of Findings

YHC conducted a file review of Believe Circle City’s IEP files. Currently, there are eleven students enrolled who have IEPs. YHC reviewed ten of these files, as the eleventh student had just enrolled but had not yet had a move-in conference. Files were kept in a locked cabinet in the Dean of Student’s Office, who currently serves as TOR (Teacher of Record). Files were well organized and contained all required components. BCCS utilizes the IIEP system.

BCCS is working with Marian University Special Education department and is currently looking to hire a special education teacher. It should be noted that a previous Special Education teacher may have been responsible for some of the errors in these student IEPs; however, in nearly all cases, the names of the Conference Participants were not included in the final IEP, so this was unclear.

4.9 a) Services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student:

Seven files were compliant with matching the needs of the students. One IEP for a student with an ED (Emotional Disability) and OHI (Other Health Impairment) noted “behavioral support.” Still, there was no noted FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessment) or BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan), nor a goal to address the stated behavioral concerns. Two students’ IEPs noted “transportation” as a provision, but the description said, “Will ride same as peers,” making this redundant. Of note, one student requires an FM Hearing system, and these IEP goals and services were well planned to address these student-specific needs. Due to POLP (Present Level of Performance) not being updated and two missing move-in IEPs, some IEP supports may not match the current needs of the students in this LEA (Local Educational Agency). Focus groups indicate that supports are in place for all students to help meet their exceptional needs.

4.9 b) IEP plans include student-specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.

Each reviewed IEP contained student-specific goals and a plan for assessment of progress. These are required components of the IIEP system. One IEP indicated that an audiology goal would be monitored “1 assessment per year”. This is specifically indicated for “transition services only” and should not be utilized for this goal.

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

BCCS utilizes the IIEP system, which requires utilizing a drop box to choose state and national standards. However, two students’ IEPs utilized at least one “Foundational Standard,” which is more appropriate for students with significant disabilities or early learners. (D. ELA2.4: Demonstrate comprehension) and (C. M1.3: Recognition of number relations). One student’s IEP had well-developed and rigorous goals and updated grade-level standards, but they did not match the student’s PLOP as all goals were copied directly from the previous IEP. One IEP for a ninth-grade student included a rigorous grade-level reading comprehension goal, but the standard chosen was eighth grade.

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

This is an area of concern. Of the ten IEPs reviewed, only one was compliant with this indicator. Three IEPs had very nicely developed PLOP (Present Level of Performance). However, these levels were not used to develop new goals, and goals were repeated from the previous IEP. One IEP utilized a cut and paste of academic progress from the previous IEP and repeated the same goals. This IEP also indicated in the progress monitoring section Goal was not met Goal will be adjusted” but was not updated.

Additionally, transition assessment dates were not updated to match the IEP. Two files did not contain Move-In conferences to accept and update the IEP received from the sending school. Some files repeated two or more of the same goals from previous IEPs; two were identical to the previous conference.

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

Indiana IEP requires SDI to be included in goal development. All the reviewed IEPs contained appropriate specially designed instruction that aligned with each students’ needs.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation/Artifacts Reviewed on (if applicable)	
Rubric Rating	
a. Services outlined in Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student.	Implementing
b. IEP includes student specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.	Implementing
c. IEP goals are rigorous and based on state and national learning standards.	Implementing
d. IEP goals are reviewed and revised annually as determined by present levels of student level of performance.	Planning
e. IEP explicitly identifies requirements for specifically designed instruction to align with student needs.	Sustaining

Strengths

- BCCS has hired an independent consultant (SpEd ACTS) to support their Special Education initiative. It was evident that IEP revisions were done before this Site Visit (recent updates to IEPs without a meeting). This support helped with better-developed goals and overall compliance.
- BCCS is working with Marian University to add another support person to their staff.
- Focus group responses indicate that teachers are intentional about addressing what students need. Teachers know the needs of the students, and support staff provides push-in support and additional layers of support.
- BCCS conducts Purpose Pathway meetings with all families within the first two weeks of school to get supplemental information from parents on Special Education or other academic concerns.

Opportunities for Improvement

- IEP dates should align with Transition Assessments and goals. One IEP indicated that transition assessment “will be done at future ACR.” Indicator 13 is monitored closely by the IDOE for compliance. This checklist may be beneficial:
<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/specialed/2020-21-transition-iep-indicator13-checklist.pdf>
- Goals must be reviewed and revised for each new IEP and driven by the PLOP (Present Level of Performance). Staff would benefit from professional development to ensure that goals are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time Frame bound).
- At least 90% of reviewed IEPs had carry-over goals from year to year, PLOP that had not been updated to drive the development of goals, and state standards that did not align to grade-level goals.

Recommended Next Steps

- With the recent staff turnover and a potential new staff hire, it is recommended that staff explore the Indiana IEP Resource Center’s offerings:
<https://www.indianaieprc.org/index.php>
 - Goal Development,
 - Behavior Intervention Plans,
 - Progress Monitoring,
 - Indiana IEP Walkthrough
 - Other Supports
- Attend Focus on Inclusion Conference and/or other PD opportunities to explore best practices <https://www.indianaieprc.org/images/Focus2022/FOI2022InfoFlyer.pdf>

Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

The Indiana IEP Resource Center offers free virtual office hours weekly for specific technical assistance: <https://www.indianaieprc.org/index.php/technical-assistance>

The Indiana Department of Education Special Education website has resources that may help enhance available resources and supports: <https://www.in.gov/doi/students/special-education/>

English Language Learners (Multilingual Learners)

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	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EL files ▪ Confidential Student Files ▪ Survey Data ▪ Focus Group Data (Leadership, Teachers, Students) ▪ Teacher Communication ▪ Parent Communication ▪ 1:1 ESL Teacher interview 	
Summary of Findings	
<p>YHC conducted a random file review of BCCS ELL Files. Seven of the forty-plus EL files were complete. Seven files had completed ILPs. Three out of seven (3/7) plans had goals (based on WIDA testing) and a plan for assessment. Only students returning to BCCS received the required Annual Parent Notification Letter. Three files contained student specific goals and a plan for assessment. None of the files contained the original HLS (Home Language Survey). According to the EL Guidebook, the HLS should only be completed once during a child’s Indiana academic career, upon their first enrollment in Indiana schools, and “receiving school should make at least three documented attempts to obtain the original HLS from the previous school or schools.” Leadership told YHC that WIDA notifications are sent before testing. Full reports are sent home, and families can come in to discuss. Newly enrolled students are screened within ten days. YHC noted that WIDA score reports were included in six (6) EL files. None of the files contained a copy of the Annual Parent Notification Letter, and only three contained ILPs. Parent Focus Group responses indicated that parents received communication in multiple languages.</p> <p>During the ESL, Exceptional Learners, and SEL, MTSS Leadership Focus Group, administrators explained that the school is currently revising how they want the ELL program to look. The ELL</p>	

teacher is TESOL trained, and BCC has provided training to their ENL teacher to support the growing number of Els. Newcomer students receive 50 minutes/day, 4x per week of ENL services. Higher performing students receive push-in support). They are developing a file system and working to ensure compliance. A wide range of students are coming from other schools, and numbers have “quadrupled.” The school is working on moving everything to IILP. According to the EL teacher, folders were created for all students who tested out of WIDA to keep up with monitoring.

BCC Leadership told YHC that specific professional development around best practices for ELs has occurred, and they are building curriculum and materials that are accessible to everyone. During instruction, students receive handouts are in English and Spanish. PowerPoints are dual language (teachers are showing both during class). BCC has purchased copies of books in Spanish and translators for students and teachers. BCC told YHC that students are resistant to use them and make their own accommodations to learn English (use their phones.) Higher performing students receive push-in support).

YHC reviewed lesson plans, and there were no indications of differentiation for ELs.

Corresponding Indiana Code or Law Violation/Artifacts Reviewed on (if applicable)	
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.	Emerging
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.	Emerging
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.	Emerging
d. ILP plans include student specific goal and plan for ongoing assessment of student progress.	Planning
e. ILP plans explicitly identify needs for targeted instruction to align with student needs.	Planning
Strengths	

- The ELL teacher is TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) certified and bilingual. The administration has provided “training around interpreting results of tests”
- School administration is dedicated to finding a teacher who can address the majority of the ELs in their native language (Spanish, Fulani). Multiple interviews have happened, but an intentional hire has not been made.
- There are two bilingual staff members, and all teachers utilize translation apps to help support ELs.

Opportunities for Improvement

There are multiple requirements for EL files, as determined by the IDOE EL Guidebook. Many of these requirements are not explicitly addressed in BCC’ files. Care should be taken to review these guidelines to ensure compliance with state and federal requirements.

Recommended Next Steps

Utilize the IDOE EL Guidebook for all EL requirements and sample forms:
<https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/elme/idoe-el-guidebook.pdf>

Although not a requirement, the IILP system may streamline the ILP process. All files (including HLS) may be uploaded into the system. It is also updated with the most current expectations for ILPs (including a goal section) discussed in the Guidebook but not on the IDOE exemplar of the ILP, annual WIDA scores, and helps generate the Annual Parent Letter.

Potential Partnerships/Organizations Moving Forward

Central Indiana Educational Service Center (CIESC) <https://ciesc.org/> has hosted SIOP training locally.

Wabash Valley Education Center Title III Consortium provides PD and other resources for ELs:
<https://www.esc5.k12.in.us/about-wvec/about-us>

Closing and Recommendations

Believe Circle City High School’s leadership team and staff demonstrates a dedicated commitment to their student's academic success. Their focus on developing a positive and nurturing school climate, an inclusive culture, and supportive staff are evident from the time you are greeted in the front office. Most of the systems currently in place are working. Students have staff members assigned to their progress monitoring and overall academic success. However, as the school continues to grow, some students may not receive the appropriate services and other supports they need because the process for tracking data and student files (SPED, ELL) have not been fully put into place or streamlined. YHC recommends BCC reevaluate its processes for managing and updating ELL and SPED files. YHC also recommends that BCC aggressively prepare for its projected AP offerings by providing professional learning to staff who will be teaching AP courses.