DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW REPORT

PLATTE CANYON HIGH SCHOOL
PLATTE CANYON 1 SCHOOL DISTRICT
BAILEY, COLORADO
FEBRUARY 12-14, 2018

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Report Contents: **Page(s)**

This report will be shared with, and may be edited by, the Colorado Department of Education.
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About the Diagnostic Reviews for the Colorado Department of Education

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) supports the implementation of diagnostic review visits in identified schools across the state. The purpose of the reviews is to measure a school's operations against a set of research-based standards and indicators in order to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and considerations for future planning. The diagnostic review is based on the Colorado School Standards and Indicators for Continuous Improvement which serves as the framework to understand the effectiveness of school practices. The review will help CDE and Colorado schools and districts understand where implementation is successful or lagging, as well as how future plans can be improved.

Overview information about the school and the diagnostic review process

GENERAL INFORMATION:

School:	Platte Canyon High School	District:	Platte Canyon 1
Principal:	Mr. Mike Schmidt	Superintendent:	Dr. Brenda Krage
Phone:	303-838-4642	Phone:	303-838-7666

Major improvement strategies identified in the current Performance Plan UIP:

- Provide intervention classes within the school schedule.
- Identify students who struggle in English using NWEA data and teacher referrals.
- Implement school-wide focus on reviewing non-fiction literature.
- Provide release time for teachers to analyze data and align curricula.

Sources of evidence for this report include:
Classroom visits: 16

Interviews with:

(18) Teachers	(2) District Administrators	(1) Administrative Assistant	(6) Parents
(1) Interventionist	(2) School Administrators	(2) Classified Staff	(15) Students
(2) Specialists	(1) BOCES Director	(3) Paraprofessionals	

60 documents, including:

10 Things PCHS Offers	Athletics Participation	PCHS Vision	School Demographic data
2014 School Growth Info.	Handbook (Rev.)	PCSD Parent Guide	School Growth data
2016 Corrected PSAT scores	CDE Accountability updates	Percentile Rank Report for	School Health Information
2016 PARCC District Growth	Course descriptions	District	School improvement Plan
Report and Analysis	Data - Spring 2017	Performance Frameworks Fact	School Post secondary data
2016 School Growth Info.	Disciplinary Data	Sheet	School Press Releases
2016-17 District UIP	District Accountability	Principal-provided notes	School Safety Plan
2017 1-Yr School SPF	Handbook	Principal survey	School website
2017 3-Yr School SPF	District press releases	Principal survey free response	School year calendar
2017 District 1-Yr SPF	District website	Sample SAC minutes	Secondary School Report
2017 District 3-Yr SPF	Emergency & Crisis Guide	Sample Teacher Professional	Staff Handbook
2017 PARCC	Grade distribution	Growth Plan	Staff List
2017 School Growth Information	Growth Fact Sheet for Parents	SAC membership requirements	Standardized Test Results
2017 Science CMAS	Husky Update	SAT,PSAT summary	Spring 2017
2017-18 Assessment	Lesson plan template	School Accountability data	Student Handbook
2018 Electives	Master Schedule	School Achievement data	Stu. Safety Survey Fall 2017
		School Calendar	Teacher Survey Summary

STANDARD 1: STANDARDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING
The school implements a curriculum that is aligned to Colorado Academic Standards and ensures rigorous, effective instructional planning.

FINDINGS:

- Teachers are aware their lessons should reflect the learning identified in the Colorado Academic Standards. The Staff Handbook reminds teachers to select essential standards for their grade and content area courses.

- Changes in accountability, primarily through state testing and school ratings, as well as changing demographics and competition with another school for student enrollment, are leading to greater staff awareness that some current methods, materials, planning, instructional strategies, and differentiation require rethinking and adaptation.

- The school is in its initial stage of working systemically with standards. Teachers recently participated in a vertical articulation session with teachers from the other schools in the district to begin identifying key topics taught at each grade level in order to identify gaps and overlaps. Preliminary conversations were also held addressing teachers' expectations for student performance on standards, i.e., introductory or mastery level.

- A school-wide analysis of state standards has not yet reached the level of deep analysis of: graduate competencies; the knowledge, concepts, and skills required to master the standards; the student performance expectations for each grade level; and implications for curriculum, instruction, and assessment. There has been some initial work in this area, but not yet the ongoing, systematic and collaborative analysis needed to adequately (a) identify 'non-negotiables' for student learning, (b) create rubrics in student-friendly language where needed, (c) collect and utilize examples and exemplars to illustrate rubric descriptors, and (d) build teachers' inter-rater reliability when evaluating student work.

- Instructional plans have not been monitored in ways that enable teachers to be held accountable for developing standards-based lessons.

- It does not appear that all students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum based on standards regardless of content area, level, course, or teacher. A wide range of those interviewed, including teachers and students, expressed concern that students who are not in an 'upper track' of classes are less likely to receive the benefits of a guaranteed, viable curriculum. That said, there are opportunities for students to make up work, in some cases re-take tests, and participate in intervention classes.

- The staff handbook indicates that teachers should use a backwards design process to ensure that instructional planning "begins with the end in mind," starting with the big ideas, learning targets, and planned criteria to assess mastery.

- Teachers have not historically incorporated common elements in their planning, such as learning objectives, academic vocabulary, essential questions, differentiated student work, and formative and summative assessments. However, teachers recently began the process of redeveloping instructional units to more closely align with state standards, with an awareness of PSAT/SAT assessment demands as well. The new unit template is based in part on the state model and in part on *Understanding By Design* (Wiggins and McTighe). The use of the new unit planning template is expected to bring a greater level of awareness and consistency to instructional design by highlighting standards to be taught, essential questions, and intended assessment.

- The current template for daily lesson plans asks for minimal information, although teachers are free to add information they think would provide clarification.

- Twenty-first century skills (i.e., collaboration, critical thinking, invention, information literacy, and self-direction) are not yet routinely incorporated into instructional planning for all courses and all students, according to observations and interviews.

- Because many teachers in this small school are "singles" (the only one teaching a course), collective instructional planning and horizontal articulation are difficult.

- A portion of a student's school day (Period 1) may include a study hall elective. Study hall is intended to provide both support to students (i.e. teacher assistance and time for students to work) as well as provide the supervising teachers with some additional planning time.

- The school offers a variety of pass/fail electives. A student survey as well as teachers' expertise guide the selection of electives. These electives are intended to provide students with low-stress, high interest topics and opportunities for exploration. In some elective and core courses, instruction includes highlighting the relevance and application of acquired knowledge and skills to real-world situations.

- Many teachers are making a transition from a more teacher-controlled, teacher-centered classroom to a more nuanced student-centered classroom.

STANDARD 2: BEST FIRST INSTRUCTION
Instructional staff members provide aligned, integrated, and research-based instruction that engages students cognitively and ensures that students learn to mastery.

FINDINGS:

- There is not a consistent, research-informed, and comprehensive shared vision among the staff regarding what constitutes best first instruction.

- Although teachers include standards in their instruction, there is not yet school-wide, robust implementation of a range of standards-based instructional practices. However, there is evidence of an increasing focus on and changes in these areas. More specifically:
  a) Teachers have not yet completed the process of identifying essential standards and student performance requirements based on in-depth analysis of the Colorado Academic Standards, the use of exemplars, and the enhancement of inter-rater reliability.
     (What should students know, be able to do, and how well?)
  b) Teachers are not yet studying and prioritizing high-yield instructional strategies.
     (How do we teach effectively to ensure all students are learning at the highest possible levels?)
  c) Assessment practices are expanding as teachers generate more formative assessment data and become more comfortable using data analysis to guide instructional decision making.
     (How do we know students are learning?)
  d) The school is working to increase the range and effectiveness of support for struggling students; the school also offers Honors and AP courses for advanced students in some areas. Concerns were expressed at the number of students who continue to fail classes or fail to reach an acceptable level of mastery.
     (What do we do when students are not learning or are reaching mastery before expectation?)

- Teachers' most frequently expressed concerns regarding resources include: less planning time than in years past; the need for additional personnel, possibly including a full time post-secondary adviser, a full time ACE director, and special education paraprofessionals; and in certain cases (e.g., math, the ACE program), updated materials. There is widespread awareness that acquiring additional personnel and materials is not do-able without funding, and that some funding depends on student enrollment which has been dropping. Note: A math adoption is currently underway.

- According to staff members, bell-to-bell instruction and weekly use of non-fiction text in all content areas are the only two school-wide required instructional practices. Teachers report they are making conscientious efforts to do both, although it is unclear how formally and consistently the practices are monitored. The school has not yet identified, practiced, required, or monitored high impact instructional strategies such as reciprocal teaching, metacognitive strategies, and concept mapping.

- The staff handbook identifies the 'gradual release of responsibility' model (I do-We do-You do) as a general approach to lessons. A few teachers referenced this approached when asked about instructional strategies.

- Feedback to teachers is frequent, based on administrative classroom visits, and often delivered via teachers' Google accounts. Teachers generally report that the timeliness of the feedback, the content of the feedback, and the delivery method are effective. Feedback is typically a reaction to what was observed, with questions regarding the teacher's thinking behind instructional choices and the impact on student learning. These feedback questions are intended to promote teachers' reflection on their work. Relying on teachers' professional judgment to make instructional decisions is a value in this school.

- Teachers did not report any recent study or implementation of research-based high impact instructional strategies other than last year's book study of Teach Like a Champion. The principal sends reminders about techniques mentioned in the book via email this year.

- Some students said they are occasionally asked to self-evaluate their work. A few students also reported that they are sometimes asked to set their own informal learning goals.

- Data indicating relatively poor student performance when dealing with non-fiction text led to the decision to have all teachers provide students with weekly opportunities to read and respond to non-fiction text. Teachers report that they are continuing this initiative and are refining the use of content-specific materials. For example, several content area teams have begun including charts and tables as part of their nonfiction text selection not only because they are pertinent to their discipline, but also because they have noticed that many students have not yet mastered reading, interpreting, and creating them.

- While some initial suggestions were given as to how best to accomplish the non-fiction initiative (reading and responding to non-fiction text) and several teachers have shared their techniques with colleagues, there is no indication that there has been strong and ongoing professional development or performance expectations established for this work. During interviews there was little mention of relevant instructional implications such as levels of text difficulty, levels of comprehension, close reading strategies, developing writing prompts that elicit text-dependent responses, or content-specific reading strategies.

- Teachers mentioned the use of Google as a venue for providing feedback to students on their work. In some cases this has led to student revision of their work. Some teachers described how they try to coach students in such a way that the students begin to self-reflect on their work and modify it accordingly. Others expressed concern and frustration that many students simply ignore their feedback and make few attempts to improve their work. Teachers did not happen to identify the type(s) of feedback they use most commonly and for what purposes, i.e., motivational (*"Good job!"*), evaluative ("*You got an A- on your report,"*), or descriptive (*"The main idea of your paper is very clear. Look through your draft again to see if there are any words you could make more powerful so your word choice is as effective as your content."*)

- Changes from the previous block schedule to a new master schedule structure has caused some confusion and concern as teachers make adaptations to the new schedule. Some teachers believe that in addition to losing some planning time (a commonly expressed concern), the schedule changes have negatively impacted their programs. The review team did not hear a common understanding of the rationale for the schedule changes, although alignment with the middle school schedule was frequently cited.

- Classroom teachers, special educators, and paraprofessionals are sources of individual support for students within the classroom. A number of teachers mentioned test adaptations to meet the specific learning needs of identified students. There is a general impression among most of the staff that "more" (work, rigor, responsibility) is currently being expected of special education students than has been in the past.

- Teachers in several departments identified common areas of student misconceptions of content or lack of underlying skills, and are taking steps to address these gaps. The use of mini-lessons and relevant PSAT/SAT sample questions are common approaches to this task.

- Among staff members there is a wide range of perception regarding the behavioral and cognitive engagement of students. Some interviewed teachers believe there is a group of students in the school who are very self-directed and engaged in their learning, while many other students are disengaged. Other teachers see a higher level of student interest in learning, correcting mistakes, and raising their grades. In some observed lessons, student participation was active, purposeful, and thoughtful; however, classroom visits by the diagnostic team reveal a preponderance of relatively low level of cognitive and behavioral engagement among many students - mostly those in non-Honor and non-AP classes. This was also noted in the occasional large class. Lack of student engagement was an issue that some students themselves also raised.

- Students have access to and utilize technology in many of their classes.

- With a few exceptions, the observed instructional approaches in most classrooms were whole class instruction and individual work, often on computers. The team did not happen to see, for example, frequent use of small group work, reciprocal teaching, peer evaluation, jigsawing information, or other strategies that tend to increase student engagement and accelerate student learning.

STANDARD 3: ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING
The school uses multiple measures and assessment strategies to continuously inform instruction to meet student needs, measure student progress toward and mastery of grade-level expectations, and improve instruction.

<u>**FINDINGS**</u>:

- According to the Staff Handbook, grades are calculated during the first and second halves of the semester, with the class grade equaling 80% of the grade and the midterm exam (1st half of the semester) or final exam (second half of the semester)equaling 20% of the total. The final course grade is an average of the midterm grade and second half grade. Progress reports are posted four times a year in September, November, February, and April.

- Teachers report giving more quizzes, checks for understanding, e.g., exit slips, and classroom-level tests, to serve as formative assessment and the bases for progress reports. The team did not encounter evidence that classroom assessments are periodically reviewed to ensure assessment characteristics such as alignment to grade-level expectations or target-method match (i.e., the right type of question or task for a particular type of knowledge/skill). It was suggested that once curriculum units have been revised, assessment review and revision may become more prevalent.

- Teacher teams seldom analyze student work as an important, ongoing source of data to evaluate both student learning and the effectiveness of instruction.

- Teachers are promptly provided a summary of formal data by the principal and are asked to review the data and use them to inform instructional decision-making. Teachers have been able to use data to some extent for this purpose; teachers did not describe a common data dialogue/decision-making process to help move conversation from the examination of raw data to classroom decisions, nor was the book study on <u>Data-Driven Instruction</u> frequently referenced.

- School leadership and instructional staff use the results of state tests and the recently adopted NWEA/MAPS tests as primary sources of summative and benchmark data. There is still some uncertainty about how best to use MAPS / NWEA information for instructional decision-making.

- The school is adjusting to focusing on the PSAT/SAT testing suite rather than the formerly-used ACT. Practice SAT test questions/problems were often cited and observed as warm-up, review, and re-teach items in classes.

- Most students said they are familiar with rubrics and use them in many of their classes. Rubric samples the team was able to see were generally teacher- or professional-level rubrics. Students did not report that they had been asked to help design rubrics or modify existing rubrics into student-friendly language.

- Most of the students questioned viewed tests primarily as hurdles with results being either rewards or negative consequences of some kind. This attitude was modified somewhat by those students who had had opportunities to re-take a test. Even so, there is not a high level of perception of assessment as a source of learning.

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STANDARD 4: TIERED SUPPORT
The school implements a comprehensive system of tiered academic and behavioral support to enable students to master grade-level expectations.

FINDINGS:

- Although the school has put in place several processes to address a range of student needs, there is not yet a robust, comprehensive multi-tiered system of support for all students. The school has a 3-tiered RtI system for struggling students; there is minimal attention provided to supporting gifted students as it is assumed that they are generally motivated, competent students who can get most of what they need in Honors and Advanced Placement courses.

- The school's RtI approach is intended to be a response to root causes identified in school improvement plan: *"Students lack time/space in their schedules during which they could receive targeted intervention relative to English instruction"* and *"Lack of aligned, timely information regarding mastery of standards causes intervention to be delayed/absent for students who are struggling in English."*

- The school's RtI program consists of three levels:
  Level 1 - (all students). When classroom teachers notice a student falling behind in his/her work, a teacher mentor may be assigned to that student. The goal is to provide personal support and encouragement to help the student get back on track. The primary Identification source is teacher referral. There are mixed results in the effectiveness of this approach as well as some concern expressed about the the consistency and validity of the data collected.
  Level 2 – If a student's issues continue, the RtI team* collects information from teachers, including the mentor teacher, and considers what additional support may be necessary. The team reviews all information monthly. Students are selected for Level 2 help based on teacher observation and on classwork. There are evidently no 'red flags' or assessment cut points that automatically initiate action.
  *The RtI team currently consists of the principal, school counselor, special educators, and several classroom teachers.
  Level 3 – Students may be tested for special education.

- The school does not yet have either a codified and written RtI processes or a 'fidelity of implementation' tool for the purposes of ensuring and communicating consistency, timeliness, thoroughness, and accountability for results.

- The school has not yet created and implemented a vision of best first instruction, including differentiation, which would help support and enhance the learning of all students at Level 1. Likewise, no research was cited to support actions related to the school's response to intervention.

- The staff includes teachers who support mild / moderate as well as severe needs students. Special educators provide co-teaching in some regular education classes. Paraprofessionals also support students during classes, and often assist students who do not have IEPs as well. Several special needs students indicated that they occasionally have to remind teachers about accommodations they need.

- Special educators and regular educators may collaborate on an as-needed basis to touch base and coordinate some aspect of instruction for students, but this is done inconsistently and 'on the fly' as there are no scheduled times for teacher teams to meet for this purpose.

- The need for more or different options and perhaps a new mindset for struggling non-college bound students was mentioned numerous times by teachers and staff. For example, concerns were expressed about the need to adequately staff and revamp the ACE program. ACE is perceived by many teachers and students as a "dumping ground' or a way to "get 'em through the system." Several ideas were suggested with the intention of making ACE a more vibrant, inclusive, and positive part of the school. The need to provide more courses for the tech- and vocationally-oriented students was also mentioned.

- Most teachers report that a relatively small percentage of parents seem to be actively engaged in their child's learning, whether the student is in the RtI process or not. Cited evidence includes parent responses to progress reports, attendance at parent-teacher conferences, and student reports. The school is struggling with the challenge of how to engage more parents with the school and with their child's education. Parents "working down the hill" and coming home late were cited as key challenges in this area.

STANDARD 5: LEADERSHIP
School leadership ensures the school functions as a learning organization focused on shared responsibility for student success and a rigorous cycle of teaching and learning.

FINDINGS:

- Teachers and staff report that school leadership effectively communicates a shared vision of high expectations for the academic and behavioral performance of students. However, when this topic was probed, teacher responses focused primarily on behavioral expectations. Teacher comments regarding academic expectations were directed mainly to student achievement and/or growth on standardized assessments.

- Teachers became familiar with instructional strategies outlined in the book Teach like a Champion. Some of these strategies are highlighted within weekly staff emails, but implementation is voluntary with little follow-up other than occasional principal feedback from classroom visits.

- School administration is visible and accessible within classrooms. The school administrator conducts both informal walkthroughs and formal classroom observations with positive and constructive feedback provided via Google accounts and RANDA. Classroom visits occur somewhat less frequently this school year as compared to the previous year due to school administration staffing changes.

- School leadership has not facilitated ongoing school-wide dialogues about teaching and learning. The adoption and implementation of instructional strategies vary based on teachers' discretion.

- School administrators promote teacher leadership / distributed leadership through membership in and involvement with the Leadership Team, the School Accountability Committee, and club and activity sponsorship. Due to the size of the school, each teacher is expected to assume at least one (often more) leadership role or supervisory responsibility.

- Due to staff and budget reductions, teachers and staff express concerns related to the amount of time available to accomplish their multiple tasks and responsibilities. Opportunities exist for school leadership to minimize factors that distract from a focus on school improvement goals, particularly in relation to minimizing teacher/staff concerns about the master schedule changes and additional duties and responsibilities.

- Opportunities for teacher collaboration exists within departments, staff meetings, and Response to Intervention meetings. The depth of collaboration varies and is not monitored for impact.

- Teachers report there are no clearly defined protocols for decision-making and problem solving, although there are "procedural questions to ponder" in the staff handbook, dealing primarily with classroom behavior-related concerns. However, there are opportunities for teachers to provide input into most school level decisions through the Leadership Team and/or whole staff meetings. These processes have become a de facto staff norm and expectation within the school.

- Starting this school year (2017-18), membership on the school's Leadership Team is on a rotating basis by department, with the only qualification being in the district for at least two years and the responsibility for membership appointment being the principal's.

- School administrators have established a safe and organized environment for students by establishing clear school-wide behavioral expectations. While the school is implementing the Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) program, there is minimal observable evidence that it is an active school program other than Husky tickets and the acronym, PACK.

- School leadership does not use a change model, protocol, or process to lead and facilitate change and to ensure the fidelity of implementation of school initiatives. As a result, school initiatives such as non-fiction reading and writing, Response to Intervention, and academic interventions are unevenly and sometimes rudimentarily implemented.

- Over many years, school leadership and staff created an independent, autonomous, and self-directed school. With the many changes in educational accountability, there is an initial and growing awareness of the need to provide leadership that produces a more interdependent, comprehensive, and systemically aligned school within the district.

- School leadership acknowledges that staff turnover and teacher leaves of absence impact student achievement and growth. School leadership is providing thoughtful levels of support using available resources for long term substitute teachers and for teachers new to the profession through frequent classroom visits, observations and mentoring.

- School leadership strives to initiate meaningful parent and community engagement. Parent-teacher conferences are currently not well attended. The school is implementing orientation nights for incoming freshman and their families to support student transitions into the high school. Two commonly reported challenges to parental involvement are the district geography and parents' schedules. Staff members express frustration and concern about the difficulty of addressing those challenges successfully.

- Both the Student and the Staff Handbooks are detailed, clear, and thorough. In addition, a letter has been published identifying "10 things that PCHS offers to students that other locations can't offer," one tactic in an effort to stabilize or increase student enrollment.

STANDARD 6: CULTURE AND CLIMATE
The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence for students and staff.

FINDINGS

- The school celebrates the achievement and growth of students via an Awards Assembly and Top Dog nominations. Students receive recognition by the principal, dean, and counselor for the most improved, honors, high honors and highest honor awards. Parents and siblings in attendance recognize and celebrate the achievements of these students. Following the Awards Assembly held during the diagnostic review, several students receiving a 'most improved' award shared their sense of pride with the review team.

- According to teachers and staff, high achieving students are generally highly motivated and they positively impact the school's ratings for student achievement and growth. Low performing students often seem to be viewed as being apathetic, disengaged, and possessing negative attitudes. Although staff members report that there are several routes struggling students may take to be successful, e.g., re-taking tests, repeating courses, study hall, ACE program, intervention class, or getting individual teacher help, many teachers do not believe these options successfully address the underlying causes or the ultimate success of many low performing students.

- Teachers report the principal trusts them as professionals, which creates an environment of teacher autonomy and sense of self-efficacy. This leadership style may also impede, in some cases, the accelerated enhancement of teachers' practices, potentially negatively impacting the staff's "collective efficacy" - an extremely high impact [δ =1.57] school factor. (See Hattie, 2017)

- Interviewed parents express great appreciation for school administration and teaching staff. Parents appreciate teachers being available before and after school, their outreach efforts, and the various extra curricular activities offered to students. Parents also mentioned their appreciation of positive handwritten notes sent by staff and administration.

- Although the staff clearly cares about students, they did not communicate a sense of urgency regarding accomplishing the school's goals and accelerating student outcomes.

- Behavioral expectations for students are clearly outlined in the staff and student handbooks. A School Safety Plan as well as a School Emergency Crisis Guide have been developed. Interviews indicate that not all classified staff were briefed on safety and emergency response protocols due to their being "off the clock" during staff meetings. No alternative follow up has been provided to them. According to teachers and staff, the only safety drills practiced so far this year have been fire drills.

- Student Safety Survey results indicate that students feel reasonably safe at school and that they are clear about how to report threats, bullying, and other unsafe activities within the school. Nevertheless, some students shared with team members their concern that not all reports are dealt with consistently.

- Mutual respect in the school exists between teachers and administration. The mutual respect between teachers and paraprofessionals was reported during interviews as an area of improvement.

- Both students and staff desire to rekindle a strong school spirit within the school.

- The physical condition of the school is well maintained and promotes an orderly environment. An environmental scan of the hallways creates an impression of sparseness which does not communicate the school's identity and what the school values, honors, and celebrates. The exception is the East Building which displays many sports-related trophies, pictures, and plaques celebrating athletic accomplishments over the years.

- Students have the opportunity to provide leadership in the school, e.g. in Student Council and Key Club. Students mentioned with pride their contributions to students and community through food drives, drive safe programs, and Pennies for Patients.

STANDARD 7: EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS
School leadership actively develops a high quality professional staff through professional development learning, supervision, evaluation, and commitment to continuous improvement.

<u>**FINDINGS**</u>:

- The staff handbook clearly communicates expectations for professional practice, including effective teaching practices, classroom management, academic records, duties and supervision, emergencies, other academic procedures, and other procedural information.

- School leadership implements teacher and staff supervision and evaluation consistent with the State Model Evaluation System. Teachers view the system as collaborative in nature with most finding the evaluation system oriented toward professional growth.

- School administrators provide feedback to staff via Google accounts after walkthroughs and through formal observations conferences via RANDA. Teachers express the value of dialogues with school administration which corroborate teachers' rubric ratings.

- Teachers and staff conduct a self-evaluation, corroborate their ratings with school administration, and establish professional goals. Professional development that supports professional goals is typically identified independently by teachers. There is no clear accountability for the attainment of professional goals.

- Some professional development is supported through BOCES. School administration supports teachers' participation in professional development through the allocation of financial resources for release time and conference attendance.

- There seems to be a weak connection between the professional growth of teachers and student achievement. This may be in part due to the fact there is no school-wide professional development plan based on identification of the collective needs of teachers/staff, current research on high impact strategies, or the Unified Improvement Plan.

- The school provides new educators with a school-level orientation program. Teachers new to the profession also participate in an induction program offered by the school district.

STANDARD 8: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
The school implements a mission-driven cycle of continuous improvement that optimizes learning and ensures organizational effectiveness.

<u>FINDINGS</u>:

- The Staff Handbook articulates the mission and vision of the school; however, although teachers and staff are aware they exist, but could not articulate them. Teachers and staff could not describe how the mission and vision guide decision-making nor how they relate to the school's Unified Improvement Plan.

- Teachers are not clear on how the Unified Improvement Plan has been developed. Many assume that school administration wrote it.

- Leadership has not yet identified change models to enhance implementation of school improvement goals. Likewise, decision-making processes and protocols are more assumed than explicit.

- The school calendar does not include scheduled UIP progress monitoring meetings for staff, nor does the current UIP include specific progress benchmarks in the action plan.

- The vast majority of the teachers and staff have limited awareness of the school's goals or scope of improvement as identified in the Unified Improvement Plan. Although, for example, teachers did discuss assigning more non-fiction reading and writing in the content areas, they did not talk about that activity within the context of school improvement goals.

- The Unified Improvement Plan meets minimal quality UIP criteria established by the State. The current UIP does not contain the level of clarity, detail, and specificity needed to guide, focus, and monitor school improvement, as well as processes to effectively involve the School Accountability Committee and other stakeholders in the development and monitoring of the plan.

GUIDING QUESTIONS for DIALOGUE & REFLECTION

Standard 1. STANDARDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING
a) Do we have common expectations for student mastery grounded in the Colorado Academic Standards?
b) How might teacher and administrative leadership establish a common framework for instructional planning and instruction? How will this work be developed, initiated, sustained, and monitored in the future?
c) Despite the size of our staff, how can we create opportunities and expectations for instructional planning to be collaborative and a way to share the expertise, experience, and talents of the staff?
d) What should be our next steps in working with standards and revising our units and lessons? What resources would be helpful to this work?
e) Do we hold and communicate rigorous academic expectations for all students? How do we know? Would our students agree?
f) How will the school effectively communicate standards and grade level expectations to parents and community members in a manner they can embrace, understand, and contribute to fulfilling?

Standard 2. BEST FIRST INSTRUCTION
a) How do we teach in such a way that most of the students master most of the grade level material most of the time?
b) Do we have a shared and research-informed understanding of what constitutes best first instruction? Do we see that as a priority for our school?
c) What should all teachers 'know and be able to do'? How will we build on existing strengths while expanding expertise to successfully meet ongoing challenges?
d) Do we see ourselves as life-long learners committed to continuous improvement? What is our evidence?
e) What actions will the school take to ensure that highly effective instructional strategies are incorporated into both professional learning and instructional practice in classrooms?
f) How will the school ensure that all classrooms are effectively managed to ensure instructional time and classroom environments are conducive to student learning?

Standard 3. ASSESSMENT OF AND FOR LEARNING
a) Do we consistently utilize data driven dialogue techniques to help us interpret data efficiently and effectively and lead us from raw data to instruction-related decisions?
b) Are we sharing ideas for and results from our increasing use of formative assessment?
c) What are the most current research-based practices associated with formative assessment beyond what we currently know or practice? How might we incorporate their use within the school?
d) How can we make formative assessment an effective tool for students as a way to help them take more control of their own learning?
e) How well is student use of rubrics impacting their ability to shape and refine their work?
f) Do we have ample models of student and professional work to illustrate the qualities the rubrics describe?

Standard 4. TIERED SUPPORT
a) What else could we be doing to ensure that all our learners are successful, not just the 'easy to teach' students?
b) How can classroom teachers and special educators work together more closely to provide support to students who need it?
c) How will the school ensure Response to Intervention improves student growth and achievement?
d) Is there school-wide clarity on 'best practices' for a multi-tiered response to student needs? How might such clarity enhance the fidelity and effectiveness of our efforts?
e) How will we monitor the effectiveness of our RtI system and modify it as needed?
f) What are the distinctions between a Response to Intervention (RtI) model and a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)? What are the implications for how students' behavioral and academic needs are met?
g) How can the school ensure that interventions are a collaborative process in which all teachers share responsibility for the success of all students?
h) How might we respond to concerns raised about the need to reconceptualize the ACE program?
i) Do we have under-performing gifted students whose needs are not met by Honors and AP classes? What resources can we take advantage of that would enhance our support of gifted students

Standard 5. LEADERSHIP
   a) How can administration and staff determine which school practices should be commonly implemented and which ones should be at the discretion of individual staff members?
   b) How can we deepen collaboration? Are we willing to have the important but sometimes difficult conversations we need in order to resolve issues? Do we have processes that will help us have those conversations in productive ways?
   c) How will breaches in professionalism, if they occur, be effectively handled and addressed by staff and/or administration?
   d) How can the staff evaluation processes be implemented so they are meaningful and impact professional growth and development?

Standard 6. CULTURE AND CLIMATE
   a) How can all staff be responsible for creating a safe, high task/high relationship school culture?
   b) What actions will the school take to ensure that PBIS is embedded and active within the culture of the school?
   c) In what ways can the school enhance how student, staff, and school successes are recognized and celebrated?
   d) How can the staff overcome barriers to creating a strong school spirit, increasing parent involvement, and creating an intentional school culture of success for all students?
   e) How will change and conflict be effectively addressed, managed, and resolved as the school moves forward?
   f) How can staff use an understanding of the differences between dialogue and discussion to better understand the views of others and to help staff make decisions?
   g) How can the staff intentionally use the physical environment of the school to communicate the school's identity and values?

Standard 7. EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS
   a) How will the school and school district enhance the instructional knowledge and skills of classified staff? of substitute teachers?
   b) What efforts will be made to ensure that all teachers use highly effective instructional strategies to support the learning of all students?
   c) How will staff monitor and adjust the effectiveness of efforts to implement a new math curriculum to address standards and grade level expectations?
   d) What should effective teacher collaboration to impact student learning look like/sound like? What does the research say about this?
   e) What elements are critical to designing and implementing an effective mentor and induction program?
   f) How can the school ensure that professional development opportunities are aligned with the school's improvement strategies and that adequate time and resources are devoted to them?

Standard 8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
   a) Is who we were as a school the same as who we need to be now and in the future? Are we still a school focused primarily on college bound students? Should we be? Why do we think so?
   b) What external (e.g., state) and internal factors are pushing / encouraging us to change? How will we tackle the barriers and challenges we face while not letting constraints discourage our efforts?
   c) What change models and processes will help us adapt to changes as positively and efficiently as possible? How can we use these processes to guide our improvement work?
   d) In order to make time and energy available for the work we need to do, is there something that could be strategically abandoned or temporarily postponed?
   e) Although the school currently has a Performance Plan rating, how will we ensure that the school improvement process and the UIP document drive and guide our efforts, and not just lead to perfunctory activities?
   f) How can the school's organizational processes and improvement efforts not be person dependent, but rather system dependent?
   g) How might we successfully build on our strengths and ensure that our school and district are 'first, best choices' for all the students who could enroll here?

Appendix A: Diagnostic Review Team Members

The Diagnostic School Review of Platte Canyon High School was conducted
February 12-14, 2018
by educators from Colorado Education Consulting Services, LLC.

Sharon ("Tina") Kerschen, **Team Lead**

Tina Kerschen has served the students and educators of Colorado in a wide range of roles for 40+ years as a teacher (including Advanced Placement instructor, core and elective classes teacher, drama director, forensic coach, department chair, NHS Sponsor); Clinical Professor at the University of Colorado, Boulder; staff developer; District PreK-12 Language Arts Coordinator; Induction Director; Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; and Executive Director of Learning Services.

For the past fourteen years she has led school and district review teams and has provided training and ongoing professional development for both new and veteran review team members and team leaders. In addition, she is an in-demand consultant, providing customized facilitation, training, and support for schools and districts statewide, focusing on instruction, assessment, leadership, school culture, and systemic change.

She lives with her husband, Dave, in Westminster, Colorado.

Kevin E. Hahn, PhD, Team Member

Kevin Hahn has served students, families, teachers and administrators in the State of Colorado for over thirty years. Currently he has his own consulting business focused on leadership development, school/district improvement and systemic reform.

Prior to this time, he served as the Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools in the Poudre School District, Director of Student Achievement in the Aurora Public Schools and Principal in the Cherry Creek and St. Vrain Valley School Districts. He taught at the elementary and secondary levels and led schools to receive the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award, John Irwin Schools of Excellence Award, and Governor's Distinguished Improvement Awards. He holds a PhD from the University of Colorado in Education Innovation and Leadership, a M.A. in Elementary Education and Middle School certification from the University of Northern Colorado, and a B.S. in Sociology from Kutztown State College.

He lives with his wife, Penny, in Fort Collins, CO and enjoys spending time with her and their two young adult daughters.