

Current Reality of Professional Learning and GSAPS for Brumby Elementary School

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Vision

Brumby Elementary School set out to become a STEM school about five years ago. Since that journey began they have acquired their Cobb County STEM certification and an Advanced ED STEM certification. Technology being a huge component of STEM has been at the forefront of Brumby's school improvement and strategic technology plan. The vision is "preparing digital-age learners for success in a global, ever-changing society (Georgia Department of Education, 2018)." Brumby's administration has determined the goal for this vision to be (1) leverage technology to transform traditional classrooms into digital age classrooms; (2) create and support effective and ethical digital age learning environments; (3) empower digital-age learners, teachers, and administrators use technology tools to enhance rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences (Lake, 2018). According to Dr. Amanda Richie, the principal at Brumby Elementary School, the ultimate goal is to have one-to-one technology. But until that happens they will work to provide technology in every classroom throughout the school, currently they are at 90% (A. Richie, personal communication, September 12, 2018).

Needs Assessment

Brumby's professional learning needs are determined by a couple of factors. Since it is important to provide professional learning that is relevant to the teachers and their needs a survey is given to the staff asking them the types of professional learning they prefer (Lake, 2018). Some of the professional learning needs are data driven. Data from the End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments has driven professional development in the areas of math and reading. Students at Brumby scored extremely low in math and reading and according to the EOG assessments, there is a need for remediation and acceleration in reading and math instruction. The students appear to

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lack a basic understanding of number sense and phonemic awareness (Georgia Department of Education, 2018) and this data is driving professional learning at Brumby Elementary School.

Professional Learning

Every year the staff at Brumby have the opportunity and are obligated to participate in a number of professional learning teams and/or trainings. This year the new professional training teams are called HYPE (Helping Young People Succeed) teams. There are seven HYPE teams, one for each content area, math, reading-social studies, writing, science-STEM, an assessment digital learning and intervention-enrichment teams have been created. Teacher will have the opportunity to serve on a team of their choosing as long as there is a grade level representative on each team. Brumby will also participate in Microsoft Innovation Education (MIE) program. This program is aligned with the schools technology vision and goals.

There have been a number of professional learning opportunities over the years and most of them are collaborative, but if an individual wanted an individualized professional learning opportunity the administration would approve. Book studies have been done, STEM integration lesson planning, STEM Innovations Academy, workshops, and peer observations are just a few of the professional developments that have been offered. Two years ago peer observations were used to assist with STEM integration in the classroom. Follow up with professional development seems to be a weakness, not just at Brumby but with professional development as a whole. However, Brumby attempts to use the academic coach, technology coach, peers and the technology training/integration specialist as professional development follow up support.

Alignment with School Improvement Plan Goals

Brumby has aligned its professional learning to the school improvement goals with five major programs. The MIE trainings are a result of the technology goals in giving teachers and

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students engaging learning experiences with the use of technology tools to enhance rigor and relevance (Lake, 2018). Due to Brumby's School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals for increasing students from non-proficient to proficient by three percent on the EOG (Georgia Department of Education, 2018) four other programs have been implemented. Orton-Gillingham phonemic awareness strategies and math strategies and the use of manipulatives for k-5 (Georgia Department of Education, 2018). These action steps are being taken to address the number sense foundation and phonemic awareness overarching need. Global Strategy Stage Assessment (GloSS) and Individual Knowledge Assessment of Numeracy (IKAN) training will also be provided (Lake, 2018) and both are aligned with the SIP goals. Finally, the HYPE teams have been created to address low performance school wide using a vertical team strategy to try to address the issues and reach a three percent increase in proficient student in math and reading on the EOG's.

Funding and Incentives

Due to Brumby's Title I status, a large proportion of their funding for professional development comes from Title I funds. According to Principal Dr. Amanda Richie, Brumby receives 50 dollars per homeroom class teacher for federal staff development (approximately \$12,000 a year) (A. Richie, personal communication, September 12, 2018). The Orton-Gillingham training was funded by the East Cobb Rotary Club. Brumby has also received grants and donations from companies, organizations, and foundations to support the STEM program.

The incentive for Brumby teachers is based on the Georgia Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TEKS). A commitment to professional growth through professional learning and growth is demonstrated by high levels of professional knowledge by the TKES rating scale (A. Richie, personal communication, September 12, 2018).

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Diversity

Brumby's population is diverse in student population with 72% of the student population receiving free or reduced lunch. The ethnic breakdown is: White/Caucasian 7%, Multi-Racial 5%, Hispanic 24%, Black 59%, English Language Learners (ELL) 11% and students with disabilities (SWD) make up 11% of the population (Cobb County School District, 2018). The staff is not as diverse as the student makeup and diversity training seems as though it would be a good fit for the school culture.

Collaboration

Teachers at Brumby Elementary school will participate in vertical professional learning (HYPE) teams geared toward different subject and critical need areas across grade levels. The learning goals of each HYPE team will align with the school improvement goals of increasing mathematics, reading, and writing performance. These teams will focus on content area strategies, creating assessments which can effectively pinpoint student needs, and digital learning aligned with school improvement plan goals (S. Lake, personal communication, September 12, 2018).

As mentioned earlier, classroom teachers have 80 minutes of instructional planning time each day, providing time for additional professional learning opportunities. Brumby teachers will participate in the MIE Education Cohort during planning time and will work on cohort assignments and collaboration during after-school professional learning meetings.

Criterion and Evaluation

The impact of professional learning on teacher practice and student learning is mostly evaluated by the EOG's. Brumby has a high transient rate which makes it difficult to track the

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effectiveness of professional learning. New initiatives are also introduced each year and the old ones eliminated or no longer factored into the effectiveness rating. Teachers are evaluated through the TKES evaluation system and implementation of professional learning is evaluated in this manner.

References

Cobb County School District. (2018). *Academic Portal*. Retrieved from <https://aportal.cobbk12.org/Secure/Main/MainLanding.aspx>

g. (n.d.).

Georgia Department of Education. (2018). *Brumby Title School Improvement Plan*. Retrieved from <http://www.cobbk12.org/brumby/TitleI/Brumby%20Title%20School%20Improvement%20plan%20FY18-19%20Revised%207%2019%2018.pdf>

Lake, S. (2018). *Brumby Elementary: Strategic technology plan*.

Richie, D. A. (2018, September 12). Principal. (M. B. Lilly Hanna, Interviewer)

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Georgia School Performance Standards

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The means by which teachers, administrators, and other staff acquire, enhance, and refine the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students

Professional Learning Standard 1: Aligns professional learning with needs identified through analysis of a variety of data			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Professional learning needs are identified and differentiated through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff, and families). Ongoing support is provided through differentiated professional learning.	Professional learning needs are identified through a collaborative analysis process using a variety of data (e.g., student achievement data, examination of student work, process data, teacher and leader effectiveness data, action research data, perception data from students, staff, and families).	Professional learning needs are identified using limited sources of data.	Professional learning needs are identified using little or no data.
EVIDENCE: Student data is used by Brumby administration to create the school improvement plan and identify then needs of the students and staff. This year the staff will use the Individual Knowledge Assessment of Numeracy (IKAN) training, Orton-Gillingham and the Global Strategy Stage Assessment (GloSS) to improve the math and reading scores.			
RECOMMENDATIONS: Use the data from current programs to determine the effectiveness of those programs. Use the program for at least two years to track the effectiveness of the program over time in students who have benefited from the program in consecutive years.			

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Georgia School Performance Standards

Professional Learning Standard 2: Establishes a culture of collaboration among administrators and staff to enhance individual and collective performance			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Administrators and staff, as a foundational practice, consistently collaborate to support leadership and personal accountability and to enhance individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback). Teachers conduct action research and assume ownership of professional learning processes.	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).	Administrators and staff routinely collaborate to improve individual and collective performance (e.g., construct knowledge, acquire skills, refine practice, provide feedback).
EVIDENCE: Teacher are given time to collaborate with other staff members during planning (80 minutes) and after school on Tuesdays for staff meetings and professional development time. Teachers use the planning time to collaborate on lesson plans instead of enhancing skills, refining practice or constructing knowledge. Tuesday meetings are often canceled.			
RECOMMENDATIONS: Have teacher create a plan of action to construct knowledge, acquire skills and refine practice throughout the year. This plan can be updated, changed and manipulated by the teacher but the teacher is actively working on these skills throughout the year.			

Georgia School Performance Standards

Professional Learning Standard 3: Defines expectations for implementing professional learning			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Administrators, teacher leaders, or both consistently define expectations for the implementation of professional learning, including details regarding the stages of implementation and how monitoring will occur as implementation progresses.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both regularly define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both occasionally define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.	Administrators, teacher leaders, or both rarely, if ever, define expectations for the implementation of professional learning.
<p>EVIDENCE: Brumby’s administration set clear expectations for implementing professional learning. This year teachers and administrators are expected to participate in HYPE teams and MIE certification. The teachers are expected to use the knowledge and skills gained to create instruction to meet the needs of a digital-age learner and make lessons meaningful and relevant.</p>			
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS: HYPE teams need accountability measures.</p>			

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Georgia School Performance Standards

Professional Learning Standard 4: Uses multiple professional learning designs to support the various learning needs of the staff			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Staff members actively participate in job-embedded professional learning that engages collaborative teams in a variety of appropriate learning designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem-solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks). Professional learning includes extensive follow-up with descriptive feedback and coaching.	Staff members actively participate in professional learning, most of which is job-embedded, which includes multiple designs (e.g., collaborative lesson study, analysis of student work, problem-solving sessions, curriculum development, coursework, action research, classroom observations, online networks) to support their various learning needs. Professional learning includes follow-up with feedback and coaching.	Some staff members are engaged in professional learning that makes use of more than one learning design to address their identified needs.	Staff members receive single, stand-alone professional learning events that are informational and mostly large-group presentation designs.
EVIDENCE: Several staff members at Brumby are completing course work to enhance their professional learning needs. There tends to be little follow-up or feedback when it comes to professional learning. Staff members are working more collaboratively this year in many grade levels and with vertical team members.			
RECOMMENDATIONS: HYPE teams should set sustainable goals and determine how there are going to meet those goals. Administration should be updated on goals and steps to achieving goals. When HYPE team minutes are turned into administration feedback should be given and questions for the next meeting should be addressed by HYPE teams.			

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Professional Learning Standard 5: Allocates resources and establishes systems to support and sustain effective professional learning			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Extensive resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are allocated to support and sustain effective professional learning. Opportunities to practice skills, receive follow-up, feedback, and coaching are provided to support the effectiveness of professional learning.	Adequate resources (e.g., substitute teachers, materials, handouts, tools, stipends, facilitators, technology) and systems (e.g., conducive schedules, adequate collaborative time, model classrooms) are in place to support and sustain professional learning.	Some resources and systems are allocated to support and sustain professional learning.	Few, if any, resources and systems are provided to support and sustain professional learning.
EVIDENCE: Brumby has adequate resources to support and sustain professional learning. Teachers have been given opportunities in the summer to create lessons while receiving a stipend. Classroom teachers have also been given conducive schedules with 80 minutes a day to plan and sustain professional learning.			
RECOMMENDATIONS: Create measurable goals for the professional learning HYPE teams so they have accountability and something they are working towards. Make teachers aware of the learning crisis at Brumby and decide how they are contributing to the increase of student proficiency.			

Georgia School Performance Standards

Professional Learning Standard 6: Monitors and evaluates the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exemplary	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Operational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Not Evident
Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and increases in student learning occurs extensively. Evaluation results are used to identify and implement processes to extend student learning.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices and student learning occurs routinely.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs sporadically.	Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practices occurs rarely, if ever.
EVIDENCE: Monitoring and evaluating the impact of professional learning on staff practice seems to occur sporadically or annually to develop the years SIP.			
RECOMMENDATIONS: Create goals, outcomes and expectations for how professional learning is supposed to impact staff practices and student learning.			

Georgia School Performance Standards

KSU ITEC Professional Learning Standard: Professional learning reinforces educators' understanding and use of strategies for promoting equity and high expectations for all students, application of research-based teaching strategies and assessment processes, and involvement of families and other stakeholders in promoting student learning.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Operational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emerging	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Evident
<p>Classroom practices (e.g., considering interests, backgrounds, strengths, and preferences to provide meaningful, relevant lessons and assess student progress, differentiating instruction, and nurturing student capacity for self-management) of all teachers reflect an emotionally and physically safe environment where respect and appreciation for a diverse population is evident. There are high achievement expectations for all students and teachers. The principal and other leaders provide professional learning for teachers lacking understanding of the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.</p>	<p>Classroom practices of most teachers reflect skill in communicating high expectations for each student and adjusting classroom activities to meet student needs. Respect for students' cultures and life experiences is evident through the emotionally and physically safe learning environment where students of diverse backgrounds and experiences are taught the school code of conduct (customs) to help them be successful in the school context.</p>	<p>Classroom practices of some teachers reflect evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.</p>	<p>Classroom practices reflect little or no evidence of teachers' training in understanding the impact that attitudes regarding race, disabilities, background, culture, high expectations, and social class of both students and teachers have on the teaching and learning process.</p>

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Brumby staff has received training in the past to serve students with diverse backgrounds, but that was years ago. The current Brumby staff has a difficult time being culturally sensitive since they have no knowledge to base their sensitivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Provide regular training and workshops to embrace the diversity of the student population at Brumby. Create a parent group with diverse representation to inform staff members of cultural needs.