

# Cognia Diagnostic Review Report

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Results for: Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy

**November 18-21, 2019**

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# Introduction

The Cognia Diagnostic Review is conducted by a team of highly qualified evaluators who examine the institution's adherence and commitment to the research aligned to Cognia Performance Standards. The Diagnostic Review process is designed to energize and equip the leadership and stakeholders of an institution to achieve higher levels of performance and address areas that may be hindering efforts to reach those desired performance levels. The Diagnostic Review is a rigorous process that includes an in-depth examination of evidence and relevant performance data, interviews with stakeholders, and observations of instruction, learning, and operations.

Standards help delineate what matters. They provide a common language through which an education community can engage in conversations about educational improvement, institution effectiveness, and achievement. They serve as a foundation for planning and implementing improvement strategies and activities and for measuring success. Cognia Performance Standards were developed by a committee composed of educators from the fields of practice, research, and policy. These talented leaders applied professional wisdom, deep knowledge of effective practice, and the best available research to craft a set of robust standards that define institutional quality and guide continuous improvement.

When this institution was evaluated, the Diagnostic Review Team used an identified subset of the Cognia Performance Standards and related criteria to guide its evaluation, looking not only for adherence to standards, but also for how the institution functioned as a whole and embodied the practices and characteristics of quality. Using the evidence they gathered, the Diagnostic Review Team arrived at a set of findings contained in this report.

As a part of the Diagnostic Review, stakeholders were interviewed by members of the Diagnostic Review Team about their perspectives on topics relevant to the institution's learning environment and organizational effectiveness. The feedback gained through the stakeholder interviews was considered with other evidence and data to support the findings of the Diagnostic Review. The following table lists the numbers of interviewed representatives of various stakeholder groups.

| <b>Stakeholder Groups</b>   | <b>Number</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <b>District-Level Administrators</b>  | 1             |
| <b>Building-Level Administrators</b>  | 3             |
| <b>State-Level Administrators</b>   | 2             |
| <b>Professional Support Staff (e.g., Counselor, Media Specialist, Technology Coordinator)</b> | 9             |
| <b>Certified Staff</b>  | 16            |
| <b>Noncertified Staff</b>   | 6             |
| <b>Students</b>   | 36            |
| <b>Parents/Community Partners</b>   | 5             |
| <b>Total</b>  | 78            |

# Cognia Standards Diagnostic Results

The Cognia Standards Diagnostic was used by the Diagnostic Review Team to evaluate the institution’s effectiveness based on the Cognia’s Performance Standards identified as essential for realizing growth and sustainable improvement in underperforming schools. The diagnostic consists of three components built around each of the three Domains: Leadership Capacity, Learning Capacity, and Resource Capacity. Point values are established within the diagnostic, and a percentage of the points earned by the institution for each Essential Standard is calculated. Results are reported within four categories: Impacting, Improving, Initiating, and Insufficient. The results for the three Domains are presented in the tables that follow.

## Leadership Capacity Domain

The capacity of leadership to ensure an institution’s progress toward its stated objectives is an essential element of organizational effectiveness. An institution’s leadership capacity includes the fidelity and commitment to its purpose and direction, the effectiveness of governance and leadership to enable the institution to realize its stated objectives, the ability to engage and involve stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, and the capacity to implement strategies that improve learner and educator performance.

| Leadership Capacity Essential Standards |   | Rating     |
|---|---|------------|
| 1.1                                     | The institution commits to a purpose statement that defines beliefs about teaching and learning, including the expectations for learners.                                 | Improving  |
| 1.3                                     | The institution engages in a continuous improvement process that produces evidence, including measurable results of improving student learning and professional practice. | Improving  |
| 1.6                                     | Leaders implement staff supervision and evaluation processes to improve professional practice and organizational effectiveness.   | Improving  |
| 1.7                                     | Leaders implement operational process and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning.  | Improving  |
| 1.8                                     | Leaders engage stakeholders to support the achievement of the institution’s purpose and direction.  | Initiating |
| 1.9                                     | The institution provides experiences that cultivate and improve leadership effectiveness.   | Improving  |
| 1.10                                    | Leaders collect and analyze a range of feedback data from multiple stakeholder groups to inform decision-making that results in improvement.                              | Initiating |

# Learning Capacity Domain

The impact of teaching and learning on student achievement and success is the primary expectation of every institution. An effective learning culture is characterized by positive and productive teacher/learner relationships, high expectations and standards, a challenging and engaging curriculum, quality instruction and comprehensive support that enable all learners to be successful, and assessment practices (formative and summative) that monitor and measure learner progress and achievement. Moreover, a quality institution evaluates the impact of its learning culture, including all programs and support services, and adjusts accordingly.

| Learning Capacity Essential Standards |   | Rating       |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 2.1                                   | Learners have equitable opportunities to develop skills and achieve the content and learning priorities established by the institution.                                 | Initiating   |
| 2.2                                   | The learning culture promotes creativity, innovation and collaborative problem-solving.   | Insufficient |
| 2.5                                   | Educators implement a curriculum that is based on high expectations and prepares learners for their next levels.  | Improving    |
| 2.7                                   | Instruction is monitored and adjusted to meet individual learners' needs and the institution's learning expectations.   | Initiating   |
| 2.9                                   | The institution implements, evaluates, and monitors processes to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students. | Initiating   |
| 2.10                                  | Learning progress is reliably assessed and consistently and clearly communicated.   | Initiating   |
| 2.11                                  | Educators gather, analyze, and use formative and summative data that lead to demonstrable improvement of student learning.  | Initiating   |
| 2.12                                  | The institution implements a process to continuously assess its programs and organizational conditions to improve student learning.                                     | Insufficient |

# Resource Capacity Domain

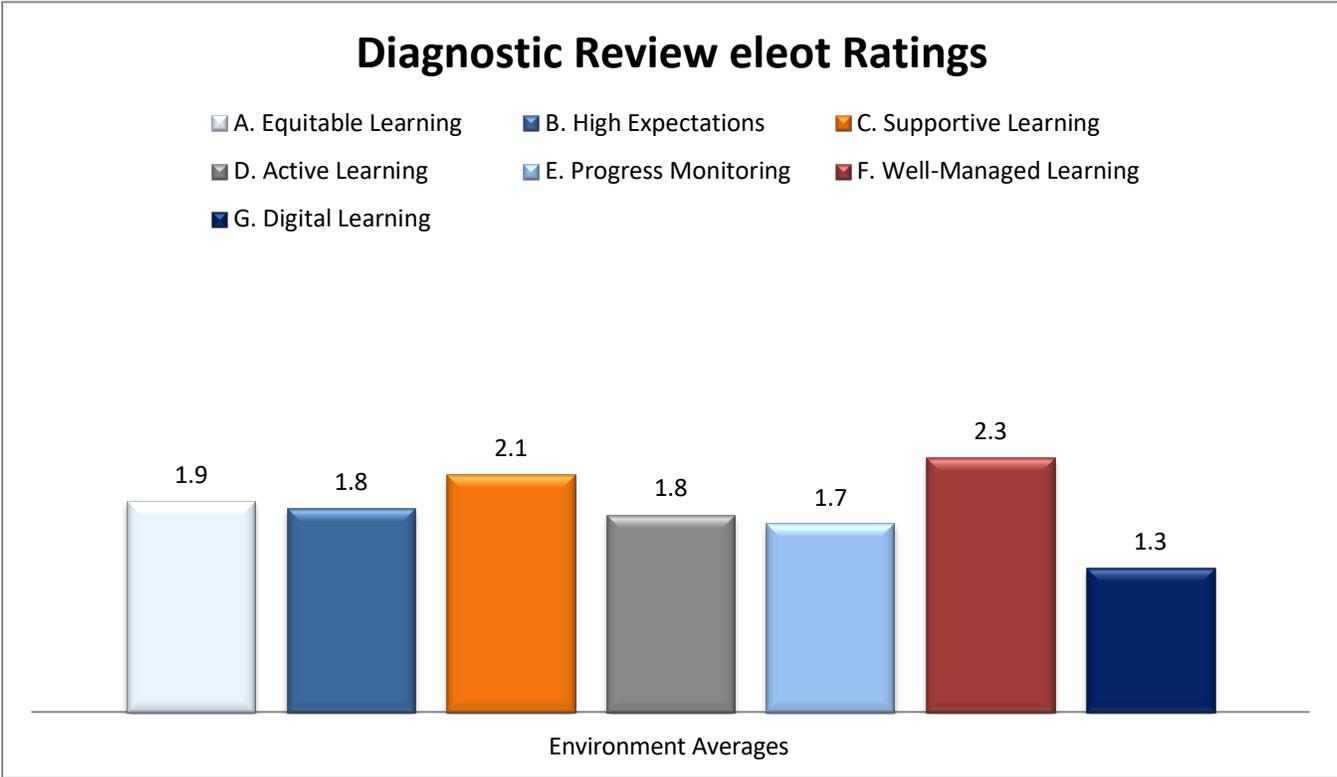
The use and distribution of resources support the stated mission of the institution. Institutions ensure that resources are distributed and utilized equitably so that the needs of all learners are adequately and effectively addressed. The utilization of resources includes support for professional learning for all staff. The institution examines the allocation and use of resources to ensure appropriate levels of funding, sustainability, organizational effectiveness, and increased student learning.

| Resource Capacity Essential Standards |  | Rating     |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------|
| 3.1                                   | The institution plans and delivers professional learning to improve the learning environment, learner achievement, and the institution's effectiveness.  | Improving  |
| 3.2                                   | The institution's professional learning structure and expectations promote collaboration and collegiality to improve learner performance and organizational effectiveness.                           | Improving  |
| 3.4                                   | The institution attracts and retains qualified personnel who support the institution's purpose and direction.  | Initiating |
| 3.7                                   | The institution demonstrates strategic resource management that includes long-range planning and use of resources in support of the institution's purpose and direction.                             | Improving  |
| 3.8                                   | The institution allocates human, material, and fiscal resources in alignment with the institution's identified needs and priorities to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness. | Improving  |

# Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool<sup>®</sup> (eleot<sup>®</sup>) Results

The eProve™ Effective Learning Environments Observation Tool (eleot) is a learner-centric classroom observation tool that comprises 28 items organized in seven environments aligned with the Cognia Standards. The tool provides useful, relevant, structured, and quantifiable data on the extent to which students are engaged in activities and demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions that are conducive to effective learning. Classroom observations are conducted for a minimum of 20 minutes.

Every member of the Diagnostic Review Team was eleot certified and passed a certification exam that established inter-rater reliability. Team members conducted 18 observations during the Diagnostic Review process, including all core content learning environments. The following charts provide aggregate data across multiple observations for each of the seven learning environments.



| A. Equitable Learning Environment         |         |   |              |                  |         |              |
|---|---------|---|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------|
| Indicators                                | Average | Description   | Not Observed | Somewhat Evident | Evident | Very Evident |
| A1  | 1.4     | Learners engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs.   | 72%          | 17%              | 6%      | 6%           |
| A2  | 2.6     | Learners have equal access to classroom discussions, activities, resources, technology, and support.  | 6%           | 39%              | 50%     | 6%           |
| A3  | 2.5     | Learners are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner.   | 11%          | 28%              | 61%     | 0%           |
| A4  | 1.1     | Learners demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities, aptitudes, backgrounds, cultures, and/or other human characteristics, conditions and dispositions. | 89           | 11%              | 0%      | 0%           |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b> |         |   | <b>1.9</b>   |                  |         |              |

| B. High Expectations Learning Environment |         |  |              |                  |         |              |
|---|---------|--|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------|
| Indicators                                | Average | Description  | Not Observed | Somewhat Evident | Evident | Very Evident |
| B1  | 1.9     | Learners strive to meet or are able to articulate the high expectations established by themselves and/or the teacher.  | 28%          | 56%              | 17%     | 0%           |
| B2  | 2.1     | Learners engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable.  | 17%          | 61%              | 22%     | 0%           |
| B3  | 1.4     | Learners demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work.  | 67%          | 28%              | 6%      | 0%           |
| B4  | 1.8     | Learners engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking (e.g., analyzing, applying, evaluating, synthesizing). | 28%          | 67%              | 6%      | 0%           |
| B5  | 2.1     | Learners take responsibility for and are self-directed in their learning.  | 17%          | 61%              | 22%     | 0%           |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b> |         |  | <b>1.8</b>   |                  |         |              |



| C. Supportive Learning Environment        |         |  |              |                  |         |              |
|---|---------|--|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------|
| Indicators                                | Average | Description  | Not Observed | Somewhat Evident | Evident | Very Evident |
| C1  | 2.1     | Learners demonstrate a sense of community that is positive, cohesive, engaged, and purposeful.                         | 17%          | 61%              | 22%     | 0%           |
| C2  | 1.8     | Learners take risks in learning (without fear of negative feedback).   | 44%          | 28%              | 28%     | 0%           |
| C3  | 2.3     | Learners are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks. | 11%          | 50%              | 39%     | 0%           |
| C4  | 2.4     | Learners demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher.                                       | 11%          | 39%              | 50%     | 0%           |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b> |         |  | <b>2.1</b>   |                  |         |              |

| D. Active Learning Environment            |         |  |              |                  |         |              |
|---|---------|--|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------|
| Indicators                                | Average | Description  | Not Observed | Somewhat Evident | Evident | Very Evident |
| D1  | 1.8     | Learners' discussions/dialogues/exchanges with each other and teacher predominate.                           | 39%          | 44%              | 17%     | 0%           |
| D2  | 1.7     | Learners make connections from content to real-life experiences.   | 39%          | 50%              | 11%     | 0%           |
| D3  | 2.2     | Learners are actively engaged in the learning activities.  | 6%           | 67%              | 28%     | 0%           |
| D4  | 1.4     | Learners collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments. | 72%          | 17%              | 11%     | 0%           |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b> |         |  | <b>1.8</b>   |                  |         |              |

| <b>E. Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment</b> |                |   |                     |                         |                |                     |
|---|----------------|---|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Indicators</b>   | <b>Average</b> | <b>Description</b>  | <b>Not Observed</b> | <b>Somewhat Evident</b> | <b>Evident</b> | <b>Very Evident</b> |
| E1  | 1.3            | Learners monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored.                    | 72%                 | 22%                     | 6%             | 0%                  |
| E2  | 2.1            | Learners receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work. | 22%                 | 44%                     | 33%            | 0%                  |
| E3  | 2.1            | Learners demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content.  | 17%                 | 56%                     | 28%            | 0%                  |
| E4  | 1.2            | Learners understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed.  | 83%                 | 11%                     | 6%             | 0%                  |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b>                       |                |   | <b>1.7</b>          |                         |                |                     |

| <b>F. Well-Managed Learning Environment</b> |                |  |                     |                         |                |                     |
|---|----------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <b>Indicators</b>                           | <b>Average</b> | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Not Observed</b> | <b>Somewhat Evident</b> | <b>Evident</b> | <b>Very Evident</b> |
| F1  | 2.5            | Learners speak and interact respectfully with teacher(s) and each other.   | 0%                  | 50%                     | 50%            | 0%                  |
| F2  | 2.6            | Learners demonstrate knowledge of and/or follow classroom rules and behavioral expectations and work well with others. | 0%                  | 50%                     | 44%            | 6%                  |
| F3  | 1.8            | Learners transition smoothly and efficiently from one activity to another.   | 56%                 | 6%                      | 39%            | 0%                  |
| F4  | 2.3            | Learners use class time purposefully with minimal wasted time or disruptions.  | 0%                  | 72%                     | 28%            | 0%                  |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b>   |                |  | <b>2.3</b>          |                         |                |                     |

| G. Digital Learning Environment           |         |   |              |                  |         |              |
|---|---------|---|--------------|------------------|---------|--------------|
| Indicators                                | Average | Description   | Not Observed | Somewhat Evident | Evident | Very Evident |
| G1  | 1.6     | Learners use digital tools/technology to gather, evaluate, and/or use information for learning.                       | 61%          | 28%              | 0%      | 11%          |
| G2  | 1.1     | Learners use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original works for learning. | 94%          | 6%               | 0%      | 0%           |
| G3  | 1.2     | Learners use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning.                           | 83%          | 11%              | 6%      | 0%           |
| <b>Overall rating on a 4 point scale:</b> |         | <b>1.3</b>  |              |                  |         |              |

## eleot Narrative

The Diagnostic Review Team for Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy conducted 18 classroom observations in core content classes, which provided sufficient insight into instructional practices and student learning across the school. Of the seven learning environments, the Well-Managed Learning Environment received the highest overall average rating of 2.3 on a four-point scale. The Digital Learning Environment had the lowest overall average rating of 1.3. The next lowest-rated environment was the Progress Monitoring and Feedback Learning Environment, which received an average rating of 1.7. Additionally, the team was concerned by the low ratings received by three other learning environments. The High Expectations and Active Learning Environments were each rated 1.8 while the Equitable Learning Environment was rated 1.9.

Classroom observation data revealed two items with higher ratings. First, instances of students who “are treated in a fair, clear, and consistent manner” (A3) were evident/very evident in 61 percent of classrooms. Second, it was evident/very evident in 50 percent of classrooms that students “demonstrate a congenial and supportive relationship with their teacher” (C4).

The lowest-rated items emerged in the High Expectations, Progress Monitoring and Feedback, and Digital Learning Environments. Instances of students who “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3) and “engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking” (B4) were evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms. Additionally, students who “monitor their own progress” or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1) were evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms. It also was evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms that students “understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4). It was evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms that students “use digital tools/technology to conduct research, solve problems, and/or create original work for learning” (G2). Finally, it was evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms that students “use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3).

The Diagnostic Review Team identified additional items needing improvement in all seven learning environments. Classroom observation data showed that instances where students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms. Additionally, observation data revealed that students who “engage in activities and learning that are challenging,



but attainable” (B2) were evident/very evident in 22 percent of classrooms. The team also found that in 11 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “make connections from content to real-life experiences” (D2). Observation data further revealed that students who “collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments” (D4) were evident/very evident in 11 percent of classrooms. The team observed few instances where students were involved in differentiated activities, were exposed to high-yield instructional strategies, or participated in active learning.

While Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy had invested significant financial resources in the implementation of a one-to-one digital initiative for students, the devices were observed being used primarily to access programs and take assessments. Students who “use digital tools/technology to communicate and work collaboratively for learning” (G3) were evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms. The low scores for all three items in the Digital Learning Environment provide an opportunity to improve student use of technology as a leverage point for school improvement.

In conclusion, classroom observation data revealed students were rarely exposed to differentiated learning opportunities, high expectations, or rigorous course work. Students had few differentiated tasks and ongoing activities to connect classwork with their own and others’ backgrounds and real-life experiences. Additionally, few opportunities existed for students to understand how their learning connected to the realities of their lives. Classroom observation data revealed a lack of student understanding about how work was assessed. The use of higher-order questioning and quality exemplars were uncommon practices in classrooms. Observation data further revealed students rarely worked collaboratively on projects. By examining classroom observation data for all items within the seven learning environments, leaders and staff at Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy will be able to identify additional leverage points to help the school improve instructional capacity and increase student performance.



# Findings

## Improvement Priorities

Improvement priorities are developed to enhance the capacity of the institution to reach a higher level of performance and reflect the areas identified by the Diagnostic Review Team to have the greatest impact on improving student performance and organizational effectiveness.

### Improvement Priority #1

Engage in consistent and deliberate planning and embed high-yield instructional strategies (active learning, differentiation, higher-order thinking skills, student-centered technology) that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills to address individual learner's needs and interests. School leaders should establish and communicate an observation schedule that focuses on monitoring these high-yield instructional strategies in order to determine and deliver tiered support to teachers. (Standard 2.1)

#### Evidence:

##### Student Performance Data:

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, suggested that instructional strategies implemented over the past two years did not improve student achievement as measured by the Kentucky Performance Rating for Educational Progress (K-PREP). Student performance data revealed that the percentage of students at Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy who scored Proficient/Distinguished was below the state average in reading and mathematics on the 2017-18 and 2018-19 K-PREP assessments. Furthermore, the percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in reading declined by 4.9 percentage points (from 34.0 to 29.1) from 2017-18 to 2018-19. The Growth Index for reading and English Learners were below the state average on the 2018-19 K-PREP administration. Of concern to the Diagnostic Review Team were the African American and Disabilities (IEP) gap groups, which scored below the student groups both in reading and mathematics on the 2018-2019 K-PREP administration.

##### Classroom Observation Data:

The classroom observation data from Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy, as detailed previously in this report, suggested the absence of deliberate and consistent planning to embed high-yield instructional strategies into the teaching and learning process. Instances of students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms. It was evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms that students “demonstrate and/or are able to describe high quality work” (B3). The classroom observation data further revealed that students who “engage in rigorous coursework, discussions, and/or tasks that require the use of higher order thinking” (B4) were evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms. Additionally, it was evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms that students “monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1). Finally, students who “are actively engaged in the learning activities” (D3) were evident/very evident in 28 percent of classrooms.

##### Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data revealed that while teachers were involved in weekly professional learning community (PLC) meetings, planning lessons to adjust instruction was not the focus of the meetings. During



interviews, school leaders at Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy articulated the need for teacher-led systems to accurately collect, analyze, and use data to drive instruction. Additionally, school leaders indicated these systems were in the preliminary stage of implementation at the school. Although the principal started to collect specific pieces of data, such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and pre/post summative assessment scores, that were shared with teachers during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to make decisions about Tier 2 and Tier 3 groups, interview data revealed little evidence to suggest teachers were using data to adjust instruction and teaching strategies. Observation data revealed that students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities and/or activities that meet their needs” were evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms.

While data analysis was just incorporated into the PLC process with an anticipated focus on weekly responsive planning to strategically determine which students needed support prior to instruction, interview data revealed this initiative was in its infancy and the use of professional discourse about use of data to individualize learning and adjust instruction seldom occurred.

Interview data further suggested that teachers received walkthrough observations utilizing eleot and were given feedback; however, there was no documentation or observable evidence that the feedback was used to adjust instruction to transform learning. Observation data revealed that students who “collaborate with their peers to accomplish/complete projects, activities, tasks and/or assignments” (D4) were evident/very evident in 11 percent of classrooms. During interviews, students stated that they sometimes work collaboratively, but whether this is operationalized is entirely dependent on the teacher. Students further indicated that they had opportunities to receive additional instruction and demonstrate learning; however, this practice is not consistently implemented schoolwide and is contingent on the teacher.

#### **Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:**

The stakeholder perception data revealed that 53 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning of students” (E2) and 47 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9). Additionally, 58 percent of the surveyed parents agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my child’s teachers meet his/her learning needs by individualizing instruction” (E4). The survey data further showed that 64 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examinations of professional practice” (E1). Sixty-seven percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “My school provides me with challenging curriculum and learning experiences” (E2), and 68 percent agreed/strongly agreed that “My school prepares me for success in the next school year” (G3). These findings from stakeholders’ surveys pointed to limited use of high-yield instructional strategies, personalization, and challenging student work, as well as limited use of data to adjust instruction in order to meet the needs of students.

#### **Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of documents and artifacts (e.g., school eleot data, stakeholder surveys, MAP assessment data) revealed that copies of lesson plans were not shared with the Diagnostic Review Team. While interview data revealed teachers must make lesson plans available, the team was unable to verify whether the plans were consistently monitored and reviewed to ensure high-yield instructional practices were embedded.



## Improvement Priority #2

Implement and monitor a formal process to ensure student performance data are being consistently analyzed and used to adjust instruction to meet individual learner needs. (Standard 2.7)

### Evidence:

#### Student Performance Data:

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated the absence of a formal process that ensures student performance data are used to adjust instruction in order to meet individual learner needs. The performance data were considered by the Diagnostic Review Team to identify Improvement Priority #2.

#### Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data from Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy, as previously detailed in this report, revealed that students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities” (A1) were evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms. Furthermore, in 22 percent of classrooms, it was evident/very evident that students “engage in activities and learning that are challenging but attainable” (B2). Additionally, students who “are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand content and accomplish tasks” (C3) were evident/very evident in 39 percent of classrooms. Observation data also revealed that in 33 percent of classrooms, students “receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work” (E2). Classroom observations further revealed that few students “monitor their own progress or have mechanisms whereby their learning progress is monitored” (E1), as this was evident/very evident in six percent of classrooms. Finally, it was evident/very evident that students in 28 percent of classrooms “demonstrate and/or verbalize understanding of the lesson/content” (E3) and in six percent of classrooms “understand and/or are able to explain how their work is assessed” (E4).

#### Stakeholder Interview Data:

The stakeholder interview data revealed that while there were multiple sources of documentation for planning efforts to showcase and analyze data, a consistent process was absent to monitor and make adjustments to instruction in order to meet individual student needs. During interviews, school leaders identified many of the barriers the school faced and communicated the instructional needs of Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy. Furthermore, school leaders identified and shared the needs for staff members to engage in standards clarity, consistent feedback, and progress monitoring as the “big rocks” for school improvement. Stakeholder interview data also revealed that while all teachers participated in PLC meetings every Tuesday, this time was not consistently used to discuss lesson plans and/or analyze data to adjust instruction. During interviews, teachers shared that while there are multiple sources of documentation for planning efforts and data analysis, there is absence of a consistent monitoring process of these efforts.

#### Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder perception data showed that 64 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All teachers in our school monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment based on data from student assessments and examination of professional practice” (E1). Additionally, 53 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual



learning needs of students” (E2). Stakeholder perception data further revealed that while 62 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “All teachers in our school use multiple types of assessments to modify instruction and to revise the curriculum” (E7), 47 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9).

**Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of documents and artifacts including Jefferson County Public Schools’ PLC Framework, PLC Action Plan, and the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) revealed the absence of a plan to monitor the fidelity and consistency of implementation of protocols to revise and adjust instruction.

## Improvement Priority #3

Evaluate and monitor processes and programs to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students. Collect and analyze data to monitor, adjust and evaluate the effectiveness of these processes and programs. (Standard 2.9)

### Evidence:

#### Student Performance Data:

The student performance data, as detailed in an addendum to this report, indicated the absence of a process for school staff members to evaluate and monitor the implementation of programs to identify and address the specialized social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students. The performance data were considered by the Diagnostic Review Team to identify Improvement Priority #3.

#### Classroom Observation Data:

Classroom observation data from Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy, as previously detailed in this report, showed that students who “engage in differentiated learning opportunities . . . that meet their needs” (A1) were evident/very evident in 12 percent of classrooms. Observation data further revealed that students who “demonstrate and/or have opportunities to develop empathy/respect/appreciation for differences in abilities” (A4) were evident/very evident in zero percent of classrooms. Additionally, students who “are supported by the teacher, their peers, and/or other resources to understand and accomplish tasks” (C3) were evident/very evident in 39 percent of classrooms. Finally, observation data showed that it was evident/very evident in 33 percent of classrooms that students “receive/respond to feedback (from teachers/peers/other resources) to improve understanding and/or revise work” (E2).

#### Stakeholder Interview Data:

Stakeholder interview data revealed the absence of a schoolwide, systematic structure for behavior that addresses all social, emotional, and developmental needs of students. The data suggested that while specific support structures were available to help with these student needs, such as the Exceptional Child Education (ECE) Support Team, the Behavior Infrastructure Support group, and academic and mental health counselors, a formal process to collect and analyze data to adjust and evaluate these programs was not evident. Interview data further revealed that administrators and teachers were engaged in conversations about academics and behavior during various scheduled meetings. Multiple stakeholders shared during interviews that a great number of students at Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy had experienced some form of trauma. When stakeholders were asked to describe the commitment to the shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning, some teachers said that “at times, it was challenging to teach at Frost” and that they were all just trying to manage the different behaviors. Another stakeholder responded to the same question and stated, “Most are in alignment, but it is getting frustrating trying to survive a lack of follow-through on consequences.” Additionally, many teachers expressed a concern with the principal splitting her time between two schools this year and felt things at Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy were not as “tight” as they used to be.

#### Stakeholder Perception/Experience Data:

The stakeholder perception data revealed that while 83 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “In our school, related learning support services are provided for all students based on their needs” (E12), 62 percent of parents surveyed agreed/strongly agreed that “My child has access to support services



based on his/her identified needs” (E14). Furthermore, perception data also showed that while 86 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “Our school provides high quality student support services (e.g. counseling, referrals, education and career planning)” (F8), 58 percent of students agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “In my school, I have access to counseling, career planning, and other programs to help me in school” (F7). Stakeholder perception data also showed that although 71 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that “In our school, all staff members use student data to address the unique learning needs of all students” (E14), 58 percent of parents surveyed agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “All my child’s teachers meet his/her learning needs by individualizing instruction” (E4). Furthermore, 47 percent of student surveyed agreed/strongly agreed that “All of my teachers change their teaching to meet my learning needs” (E9).

### **Documents and Artifacts:**

A review of documents and artifacts including CSIP, a CHAMPS training presentation, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) meeting agendas, and a contract with Solution Tree Professional Services indicates the existence of programs and processes to identify and address specialized needs of students. However, stakeholder perception and interview data revealed the absence of a formal process to collect and analyze data to monitor, adjust, and evaluate the effectiveness of these processes and programs. The absence of agreement among stakeholder groups supports the Improvement Priority that recommends the evaluation and consistent monitoring of programs to identify the specialized, social, emotional, developmental, and academic needs of students.

# Insights from the Review

The Diagnostic Review Team engaged in professional discussions and deliberations about the processes, programs, and practices within the institution to arrive at the findings of the team. These findings are organized around themes guided by the evidence, examples of programs, and practices and provide direction for the institution's continuous improvement efforts. The insights from the Review narrative should provide contextualized information from the team deliberations and provide information about the team's analysis of the practices, processes, and programs of the institution within the Levels of Impact of **Engagement, Implementation, Results, Sustainability, and Embeddedness**.

**Engagement** is the level of involvement and frequency with which stakeholders are engaged in the desired practices, processes, or programs within the institution. **Implementation** is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are monitored and adjusted for quality and fidelity of implementation. **Results** represent the collection, analysis, and use of data and evidence to demonstrate attaining the desired result(s). **Sustainability** is results achieved consistently to demonstrate growth and improvement over time (minimum of three years). **Embeddedness** is the degree to which the desired practices, processes, or programs are deeply ingrained in the culture and operation of the institution.

## Strengths:

The leadership team and teachers of Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy genuinely cared for their students. The Diagnostic Review Team observed a well-maintained facility. The building and grounds provided a positive, safe, and clean environment for students to engage in learning. The leadership team and staff worked collaboratively to refine the school's mission and vision in conjunction with stakeholders to reflect the priorities. This was evident in communication and throughout the building with signs, posters, and other messaging.

The principal led the school with a governance and leadership style that communicated a sense of urgency. She engendered the trust of many stakeholders who believed in her abilities to lead the school's turnaround process. The principal has articulated a need for data-driven systems in the areas of curriculum, instructional design and delivery, and teacher effectiveness to maximize student achievement. Protected time during the school day was provided weekly for PLC meetings. During PLC time, teachers were expected to work collaboratively and held discussions regarding lesson planning, Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS), student work, and data analysis. Additionally, many grade-level teams met informally with team leaders, instructional coaches, and department chairs to review assessment data and provide support to new teachers.

The principal sought out support for both human and fiscal resources for the school. During the Diagnostic Review, the team was made aware of a technology grant presentation the leadership team made to Verizon. The grant, if awarded, would provide iPads to students at the school. Additionally, the principal was able to adjust her budget to allocate funding for three additional positions (English language arts coach, a mathematics coach, and a retired principal). These individuals provided support and guidance to their departments and newly hired teachers respectively.

## Continuous Improvement Process:

The leadership team articulated the need for teacher-led systems to accurately collect, analyze, and use data to drive instruction. These systems were in the preliminary stages of implementation. Data analysis with faculty had just been incorporated into the PLC process with an anticipated focus on weekly responsive planning to strategically determine which students needed support prior to instruction.



Stakeholder interview data revealed that teachers were receiving walkthrough observations and feedback; however, there was no documentation or evidence that the feedback was being used to adjust instruction to transform learning. The lack of strategic action plans relative to the walkthrough observation data and individual teacher implementation of high-yield, high-engagement instructional strategies were not affecting student academic growth. Classroom observation data provided evidence that teachers did not develop strategic individualization based on student performance data. Additionally, observation data and a review of documents and artifacts showed that despite students having access to technology, the use was limited to accessing programs and taking tests. It was evident from interviews and observations that teachers needed to continue to build capacity in implementing rigorous lessons where students can create and innovate in order to demonstrate learning.

Curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices are critical areas to address. Classroom observations revealed a lack of consistency in implementing research-based, rigorous instruction. Furthermore, students engaging in high-quality work and teachers providing meaningful feedback were seldom observed. The Diagnostic Review Team agreed that the school should find ways to actively engage teachers in ongoing, structured collaboration related to curriculum alignment, assessment development, data use, differentiated instruction, and student learning tasks.

To continue growth toward proficiency and to provide opportunities to leverage school improvement, staff members need coaching and mentoring to maximize the implementation of high-yield instructional practices. Classroom teachers need additional support to effectively differentiate instruction, use exemplars to promote student understanding of high-quality work and create a culture and climate conducive to learning. The school leadership team and staff should embrace and consistently implement systematic processes to ensure the efficacy of implementing initiatives, monitoring instruction, evaluating programs, coaching, mentoring, supporting all staff members and becoming adept at providing and participating in opportunities to share and build on the strengths of the staff.

## Next Steps

The results of the Diagnostic Review provide the next step for guiding the improvement journey of the institution with their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Diagnostic Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on current improvement efforts and adapting and adjusting their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Upon receiving the Diagnostic Review Report, the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the improvement priorities identified by the Diagnostic Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution's continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report.

# Team Roster

Diagnostic Review Teams comprise professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Diagnostic Review Team members complete Cognia training and eleot® certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the Cognia tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Diagnostic Review Team:

| Team Member Name                   | Brief Biography  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <p><b>Milagros Fornell</b></p>     | <p>Milagros Fornell is an educator who has had a powerful impact on her community, students, parents, and peers since her first day as a mathematics teacher in 1978. Throughout her 36-year career with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, she has served as school-site administrator, regional curriculum director, regional superintendent, Associate Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Staff. During her six years as Chief Academic Officer, the district eliminated all F-rated high schools, student performance increased on both state and national measures, participation in and performance on AP exams increased, graduation rates improved, and the district was awarded the Broad prize.</p>   |
| <p><b>Kim Cornett</b></p>          | <p>Kim Cornett joined the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) in 2013 and currently serves as an Education Recovery Leader. She has served on several diagnostic and internal review teams as a co-lead and as a member through her work with the KDE. The experience of being a team member and a co-lead has enriched her knowledge and has allowed her to help organize and orchestrate the entire process from beginning to end. She has 25 years of experience in education and began her career teaching mathematics at the high school level.</p>  |
| <p><b>James Carrier</b></p>        | <p>James Carrier is a 23-year veteran educator in Lincoln County, Kentucky. Since 2018 James has served as principal of Stanford Elementary. From 2013-2018, James was principal of Highland Elementary. He has experience as an Academic Program Consultant, Library Media Specialist, and classroom teacher. Most of his 16 years of classroom teaching were spent in second grade. He also spent time teaching in fifth and sixth grades at the beginning of his career. Mr. Carrier was a semi-finalist for the Kentucky Elementary Teacher of the Year in 2009 and a KY finalist for the 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching. He is currently an active member of the Kentucky Association for School Administrators and serves on their nominating committee.</p>  |
| <p><b>Dr. Phyllis Gilworth</b></p> | <p>Dr. Phyllis Gilworth has teaching experience at all levels, Pre-K-16 in rural, suburban, and urban settings. Dr. Gilworth's counseling experience includes elementary school students and at-risk students in the alternative school setting and adults in the community setting. Dr. Gilworth's administrative experience includes assistant principal in charge of all discipline and curricular issues at a high-risk, urban middle school, assistant principal in charge of guidance, director of instructional programs and assessment, and assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction at an affluent suburban district in Northwest Indiana. Dr. Gilworth has extensive experience facilitating school improvement and particularly enjoys issues relative to curriculum, teaching, and learning. She has participated on numerous Cognia accreditation teams, serving in multiple roles, both nationally and internationally. Dr. Gilworth is a certified lead evaluator as well as a report editor for Cognia.</p> |
| <p><b>Teresa Miller-Ruiz</b></p>   | <p>Teresa Miller-Ruiz currently serves as an Education Recovery Specialist with the Division of Consolidated Plans and Audits for the Kentucky Department of Education. She has over 22 years' experience in education. The primary focus in her current role is to improve student achievement by building leadership capacity, improving instructional practices within the classroom, and creating sustainable systems to ensure future student success.</p>  |

# Addenda

## Student Performance Data

### Middle School Performance Results

| Content Area   | Grade | %P/D School (17-18) | %P/D State (17-18) | %P/D School (18-19) | %P/D State (18-19) |
|----------------|-------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Reading        | 6     | 34.0                | 59.7               | 29.1                | 59.0               |
|                | 7     |                     | 57.4               |                     | 57.4               |
|                | 8     |                     | 62.9               |                     | 62.6               |
| Math           | 6     | 23.7                | 47.5               | 24.0                | 46.7               |
|                | 7     |                     | 47.4               |                     | 47.1               |
|                | 8     |                     | 46.1               |                     | 45.3               |
| Science        | 7     |                     | 25.9               |                     | 26.0               |
| Social Studies | 8     |                     | 60.2               |                     | 58.8               |
| Writing        | 8     |                     | 44.3               |                     | 31.9               |

#### Plus

- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in mathematics increased from 23.7 percent in 2017-18 to 24.0 percent in 2018-2019.

#### Delta

- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in reading and mathematics were below the state average in 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- The percentage of students who scored Proficient/Distinguished in reading decreased from 34.0 percent in 2017-28 to 29.1 percent in 2018-1029

### Growth Index Middle

| Content Area     | School (17-18) | State (17-18) | School (18-19) | State (18-19) |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Reading          | 19.6           | 16.1          | 44.9           | 56.1          |
| Math             | 9.5            | 8.0           | 54.8           | 48.8          |
| English Learner  | 8.2            | 5.4           | 40.3           | 56.3          |
| Growth Indicator | 14.6           | 12.1          | 49.9           | 52.5          |

Note: The formula for calculating growth changed between 18-19 and 19-20. Comparisons should only be made between school and state ratings.

### Plus

- The Growth Index in mathematics in 2018-19 is above the state's Growth Index (54.8 vs 48.8).
- The Growth Index in mathematics has been above the state's Growth Index for the past two school years.

### Delta

- Growth Index for reading and English Learner, as well as the overall Growth Index for the school are below the state's Growth Index for each respectively.

## 2018-19 Percent Proficient/Distinguished

| Group                           | Reading | Math | Science | Social Studies | Writing |
|---------------------------------|---------|------|---------|----------------|---------|
| African American                | 19.5    | 14.2 |         |                |         |
| Alternative Assessment          |         |      |         |                |         |
| American Indian                 |         |      |         |                |         |
| Asian                           |         |      |         |                |         |
| Consolidated Student Group      | 23.5    | 17.3 |         |                |         |
| Disabilities (IEP)              | 9.7     | 6.9  |         |                |         |
| Disabilities Regular Assessment | 6.0     |      |         |                |         |
| Disabilities With Acc.          |         |      |         |                |         |
| Economically Disadvantaged      | 27.9    | 22.3 |         |                |         |
| English Learners                |         |      |         |                |         |
| English Learners Monitored      | 27.3    | 27.3 |         |                |         |
| Female                          | 32.3    | 26.4 |         |                |         |
| Foster                          |         |      |         |                |         |
| Gifted and Talented             |         |      |         |                |         |
| Hispanic                        | 44.8    | 41.4 |         |                |         |
| Homeless                        | 24.0    | 20.0 |         |                |         |
| Male                            | 26.1    | 28.1 |         |                |         |
| Migrant                         |         |      |         |                |         |
| Military                        |         |      |         |                |         |
| No Disabilities                 | 33.2    | 27.6 |         |                |         |

| Group                                 | Reading | Math | Science | Social Studies | Writing |
|---------------------------------------|---------|------|---------|----------------|---------|
| <b>Non-Economically Disadvantaged</b> | 37.0    | 35.2 |         |                |         |
| <b>Non-English Learners</b>           | 29.4    |      |         |                |         |
| <b>Non-Migrant</b>                    | 29.1    | 24.0 |         |                |         |
| <b>Not Consolidated Student Group</b> | 38.8    | 35.5 |         |                |         |
| <b>Not English Learners Monitored</b> | 29.2    | 23.9 |         |                |         |
| <b>Not Gifted and Talented</b>        |         | 24.0 |         |                |         |
| <b>Not Homeless</b>                   | 29.5    | 24.3 |         |                |         |
| <b>Pacific Islander</b>               |         |      |         |                |         |
| <b>Total Students Tested</b>          | 29.1    | 24.0 |         |                |         |
| <b>Two or More</b>                    | 40.7    | 18.5 |         |                |         |
| <b>White</b>                          | 32.0    | 29.3 |         |                |         |

#### Plus

- English Learners monitored gap group scored above all students in math (3.3).
- Hispanic gap group scoring above all students in both reading (15.7) and math (17.4).

#### Delta

- African American gap group scoring below all students group in reading (9.6) and math (9.8).
- Disabilities (IEP) gap group scoring below all students in reading (19.4) and math (17.1).
- Economically disadvantaged gap group scoring below all students in reading (1.2) and math (1.7).

# Schedule

## November 18, 2019

| Time                     | Event                         | Where                 | Who                            |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 4:00 p.m.-<br>4:30 p.m.  | Team Meeting and Introduction | Hotel Conference Room | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 4:30 p.m. -<br>5:15 p.m. | Principal Overview            | Hotel Conference Room | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 5:30 p.m. -<br>8:00 p.m. | Team Work Session #1          | Hotel Conference Room | Diagnostic Review Team Members |

## November 19, 2019

| Time                     | Event   | Where                 | Who                            |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 7:00 a.m.                | Team arrives at school                                    | School office         | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 7:40 a.m. -<br>4:15 p.m. | Principal Interview / Classroom Observations / Interviews | School                | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 4:15 p.m. -<br>5:15 p.m. | Team returns to hotel                                     |                       |                                |
| 5:45 p.m.-<br>8:30 p.m.  | Team Work Session #2                                      | Hotel Conference Room | Diagnostic Review Team Members |

## November 20, 2019

| Time                     | Event   | Where                 | Who                            |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 7:15 a.m.                | Team arrives at school                                | School                | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 7:40 a.m. -<br>4:00 p.m. | Interviews / Artifact Review / Classroom Observations | School                | Diagnostic Review Team Members |
| 4:00 p.m. -<br>5:00 p.m. | Team returns to hotel                                 |                       |                                |
| 5:30 p.m. -<br>8:30 p.m. | Team Work Session #3                                  | Hotel Conference Room | Diagnostic Review Team Members |

## November 21, 2019

| Time                     | Event                   | Where  | Who                            |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|
| 7:15 a.m.-<br>10:00 a.m. | Final Team Work Session | School | Diagnostic Review Team Members |

**School Diagnostic Review Summary Report**  
**Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy**

Jefferson County Public Schools

November 18-21, 2019

The members of the Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy Diagnostic Review Team are grateful to the district and school leadership, staff, students, families, and community for the cooperation and hospitality extended during the assessment process.

Following its review of extensive evidence and in consideration of the factors outlined in 703 KAR 5:280, Section 4, the Diagnostic Review Team submitted the following assessment regarding the **principal's capacity** to function or develop as a turnaround specialist, including if the principal should be reassigned, to the Commissioner of Education:

The principal does have the capacity to function or to develop as a turnaround specialist and, accordingly, should continue as principal of Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy.

The Commissioner of Education has reviewed the Diagnostic Review and recommends, pursuant to KRS 160.346(6), the Superintendent adopt the assessment of principal capacity submitted by the Diagnostic Review Team.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education

I have received the Diagnostic Review for Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal, Robert Frost Sixth-Grade Academy

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent, Jefferson County Public Schools