

***CARLISLE COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT***



EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS



Carlisle CSD is One of About 200 Schools and Districts in the US and Canada to Receive This Honor

Carlisle Community School District is recognized by Solution Tree for its sustained success in raising student achievement. The district's successful implementation of the Professional Learning Communities at Work™ process was a major contributing factor in the improved achievement of its students.

PLCs are schools and districts in which educators recognize the key to improved learning for students is on-going, job-embedded learning for the adults who serve those students. The three big ideas of a PLC call upon educators to:

1. Focus on learning.
2. Build a collaborative culture.
3. Create a results orientation.

Districts are recognized based on strict criteria, including demonstration of a commitment to PLC concepts, implementation of these concepts for at least three years, and clear evidence of improved student learning over that period. Once measurable results can be seen, the school must explain its practices, structures, and culture and submit its application for consideration by the PLC Review Committee.

According to Richard DuFour, Rebecca DuFour, Robert Eaker, and Mike Mattos, champions of PLC at Work™, educators in the schools and districts selected for this recognition have shown “a sustained commitment to helping all of their students achieve at high levels. They have been willing to alter the structure and culture of the organization to reflect their commitment. We applaud them and congratulate them for achieving this very significant milestone on the never-ending PLC journey.”

Recognized model PLC districts are listed on www.allthingplc.info, where they share implementation strategies, structures, and performance with other educators interested in improving their schools. Tools for team collaboration, articles and research about PLCs, blog posts, and other related resources are also available on the site.

The site was developed and is maintained by Solution Tree, a leading provider of educational strategies and tools that improve staff and student performance. For more than 20 years, Solution Tree resources have helped K–12 teachers and administrators create schools where all children succeed.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of Students: 2,230

Percent Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch: 33.6%

Percent of Limited English Proficient: 0.6%

Percent of Special Education: 10.2%

SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT

Carlisle Elementary School (PK-3)

Hartford Upper Elementary School (4-5)

Carlisle Middle School (6-8)

Carlisle High School (9-12)

ETHNICITY

White: 86.5%

Black: 1.8%

Hispanic: 5.8%

Asian: 3%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.1%

American Indian or Alaska Native: 0%

Multiracial: 2.8%

Other: 0%

PLC Practices

Carlisle School District has historically been a solid, progressive district. Carlisle's challenge was moving to the next level, ensuring that all students are learning at high levels every day, thus becoming a great district. The primary shift for the district to move to that next level was establishing a culture of continuous improvement. The journey started in the summer of 2013 when district leadership and school administrators identified current district practices and structures related to the PLC four critical questions. The team added a fifth critical question, "How will we teach it?"

Early out Wednesdays for professional development created a structure and time for teams to experience firsthand the power of learning by doing. Collaborative team time is a non-negotiable at Carlisle, teams value the opportunity to learn together and are committed to using that time collaborating around the five critical questions.

The focus for the 2013-14 school year was building staff capacity and coherence on the core principles of a professional learning community and establishing 'systemness' around the district's five critical questions. During the first year, the district conducted a PLC Practices survey to establish a baseline and guide professional learning. Recognizing that the fundamental work of collaborative teams is learning, teachers and administrators worked together, establishing a value and belief system in the power "learning by doing."

A team priority in year one was unwrapping the Iowa Core Curriculum to develop a guaranteed viable curriculum for all grade levels and courses. Carlisle teams created Essential Learning Targets (ELTs) that have since evolved as teams deepened their understanding of rigor and the needs of students. A key factor in the development of impactful teams is clarity of expectations leading to improved teaching and learning. Carlisle created norms and protocols bringing 'systemness' to the work and language of collaborative teams. The district's Hierarchy of Collaboration (HOC) developed by stakeholders moved teams beyond basic professional actions to a higher level of dialogue and actions focused on teaching and learning. Collaborative teams, from district leadership to building level teams follow the HOC and data analysis protocols. Team dialogue is focused on not just "what worked" but "what works best" when analyzing student performance data. The level of collaboration in teams has progressed each year resulting in increased collective efficacy.

Because the five critical questions are interdependent, the district provided professional learning, structures, and expectations for a balanced assessment system to address critical question #3, "How do we know if they learned it?" Teams developed unit plans and aligned assessments (formative/summative) to inform practices and provide supports for all students.

Continuing to develop PK-12 PLC 'systemness' the focus expanded to critical questions "How will we respond when they don't" and "How will we extend and enrich the learning for students?". Collaborative teams analyzed student-learning data, instructional practices, and monitored team culture. The district provided support by developing protocols to assist teams in the process. Protocols ensured a structure and dialogue focused on teaching and learning throughout the system. Student performance continues to increase, team culture and collective efficacy has also increased. The team mindset of "know thy impact" and "200% accountability" is the lynchpin of team culture.

Building upon the district's foundation of continuous improvement and commitment to PK-12 'systemness', or "*getting all of our arrows going in the same direction*" resulted in a culture of reflection and responsiveness at all levels. All staff understand how individual actions and systems affect teaching and learning. This understanding enabled collaborative teams to become the driving force of Carlisle's PLC and RTI Systems in each building.

RTI systems are responsive and are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our students. The culture of “my kids” has transformed into a culture of “our kids”.

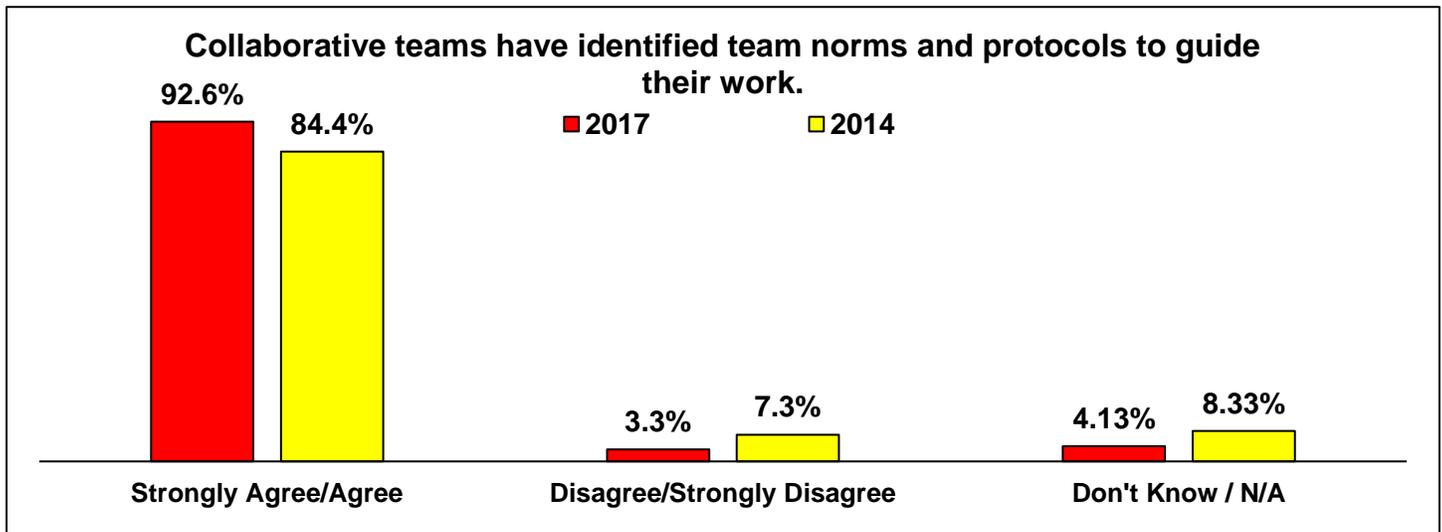
Carlisle’s culture of learning by doing and collaboration is evidenced by the commitment both teachers and the district have made to professional learning. The district has dedicated professional development funds to support and build the capacity of our teachers and collaborative teams. 90% of Carlisle’s instructional staff has attended at least one PLC Institute resulting in a collective understanding of this work. All school and district leadership have attended PLC Institutes.

As the district continues our journey of being a professional learning community, the mindsets of continuous improvement and ‘systemness’ are at the heart of district culture. We celebrate our successes and then we raise the bar a little higher. Collaborative teams are the foundation of our district. Learning for all students and adults in our system are at high levels.

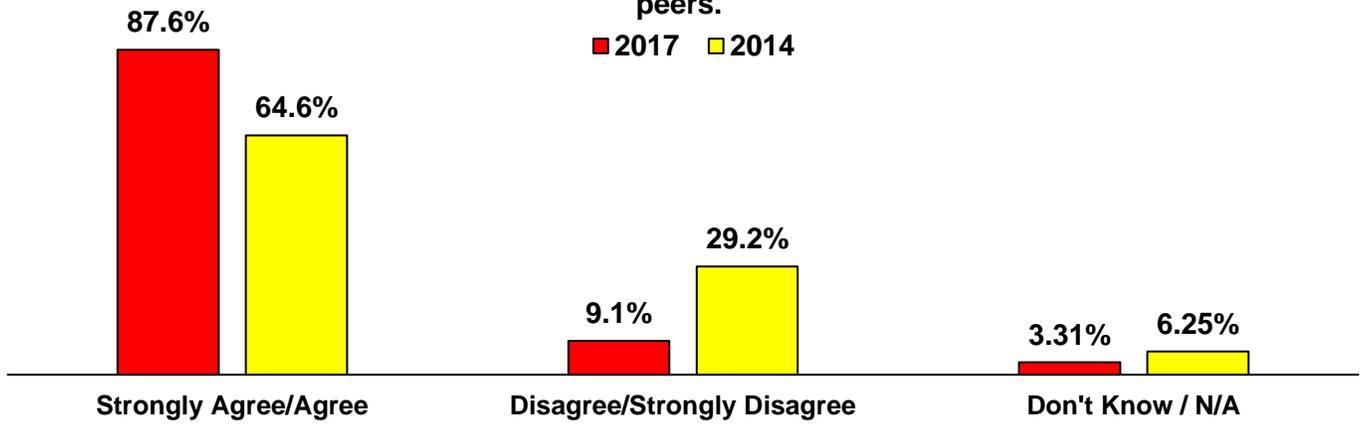
PLC Practices

Explain how you built high-performing, collaborative teams to focus efforts on improved student learning.

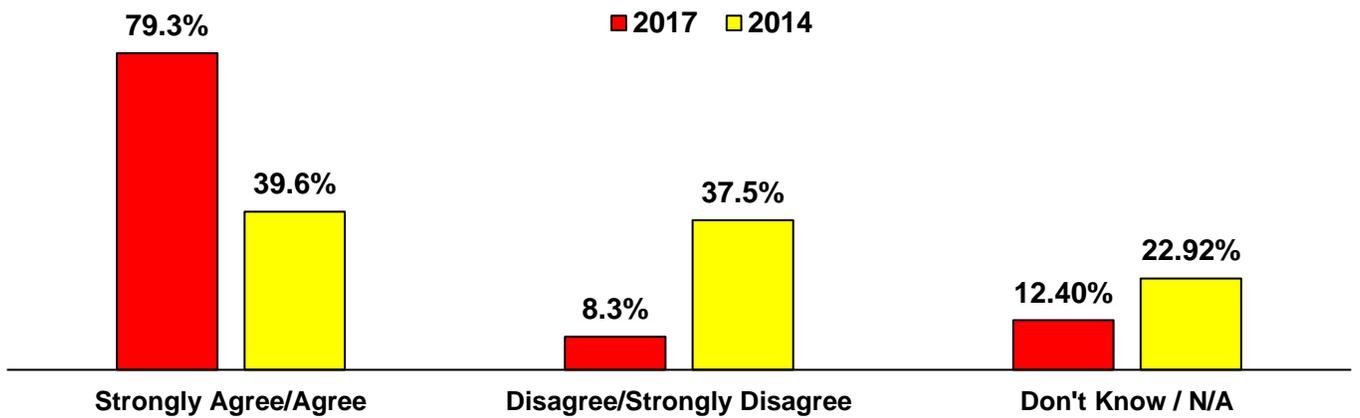
One of the first priorities for the district was to establish strong collaborative teams as the foundation of our professional learning community. The focus of teams were on the five critical questions. Leadership focused on professional learning and support for teams in their work around the five critical questions. The district’s focus year one was developing our teams. The first step was determining “current reality” and areas for professional learning. District developed protocols focused team dialogue on teaching and learning. The growth of our teams can be seen in our district’s PLC Practices survey. The district administered the survey to get a baseline current reality and 4 years later to again re-evaluate and reflect on growth areas.



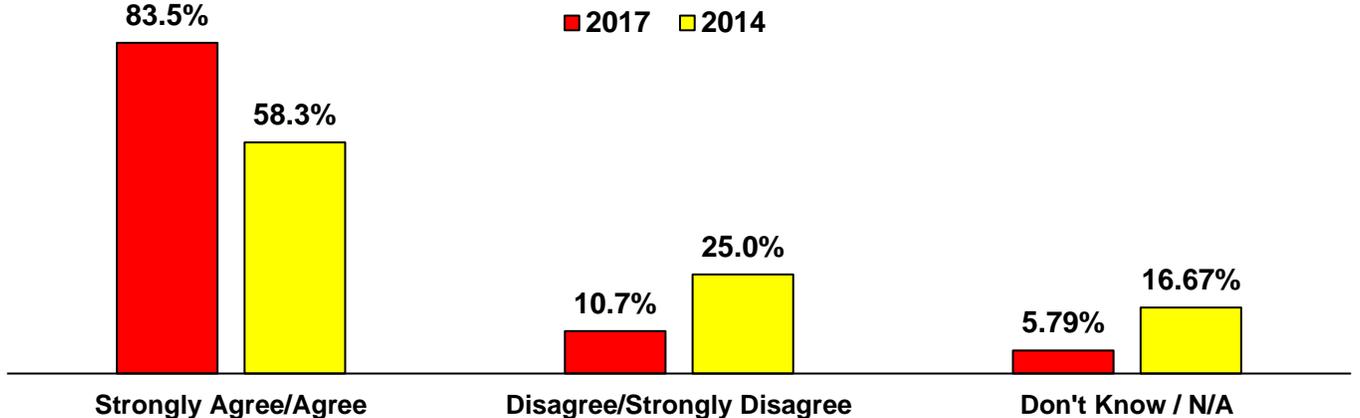
Teams engage in an ongoing search for best instructional practices through collaborative research and dialogue, analyzing student work and learning from peers.



Teams have agreed on the criteria used in judging the quality of student work related to the learning of each content area.

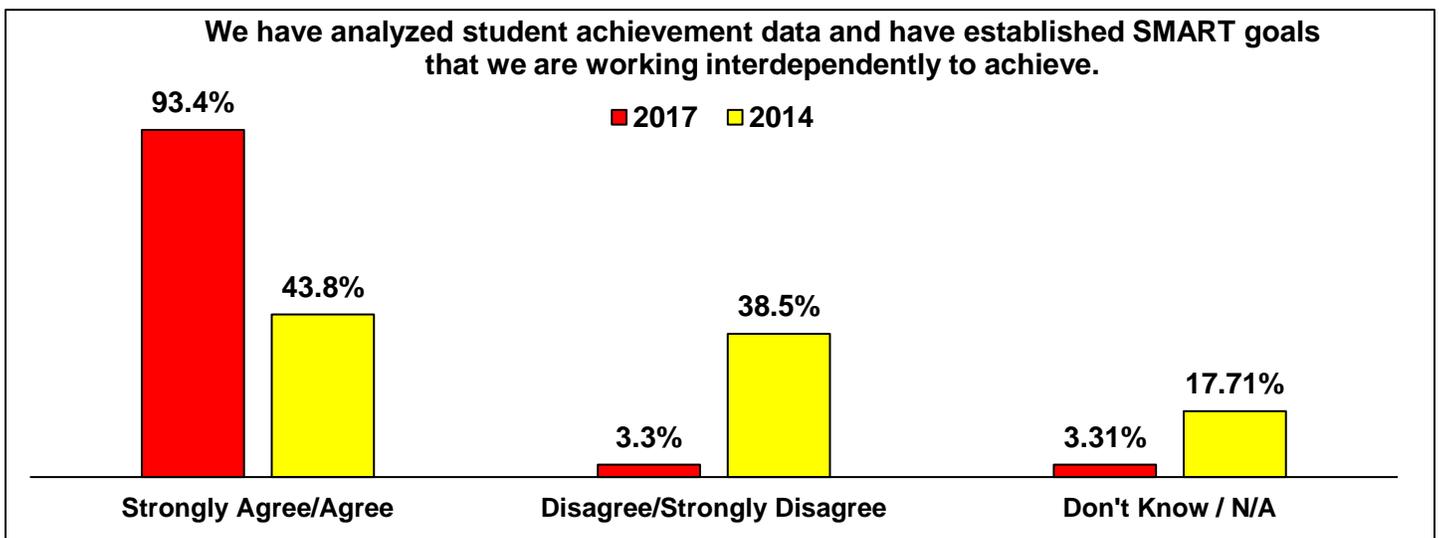
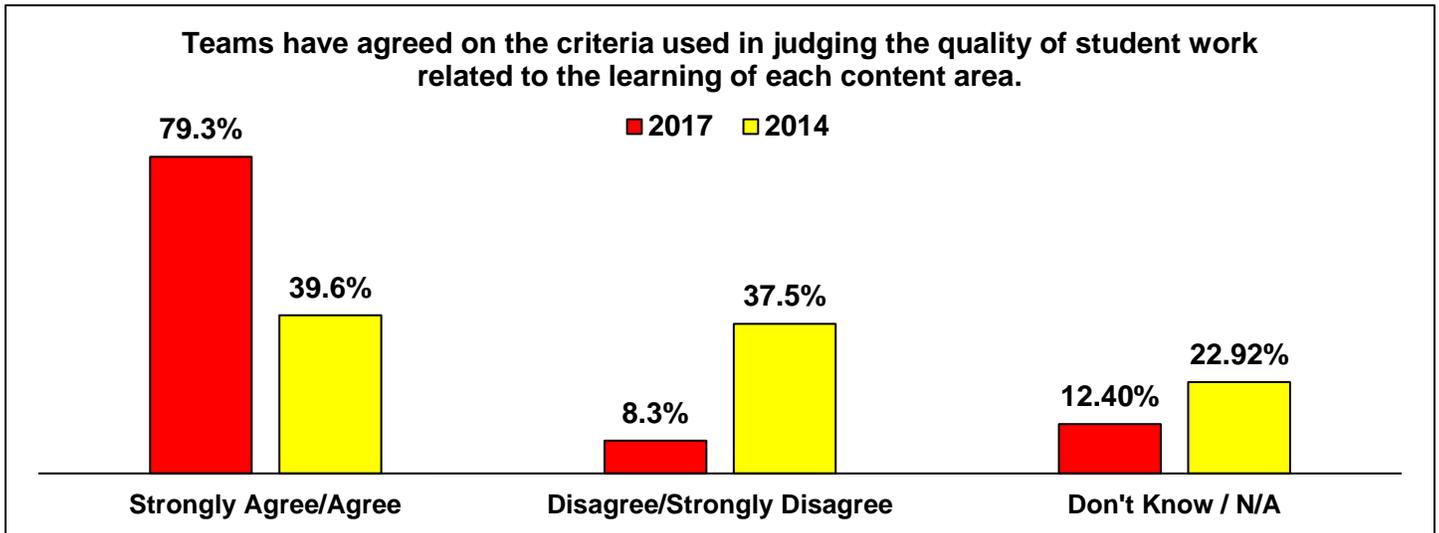


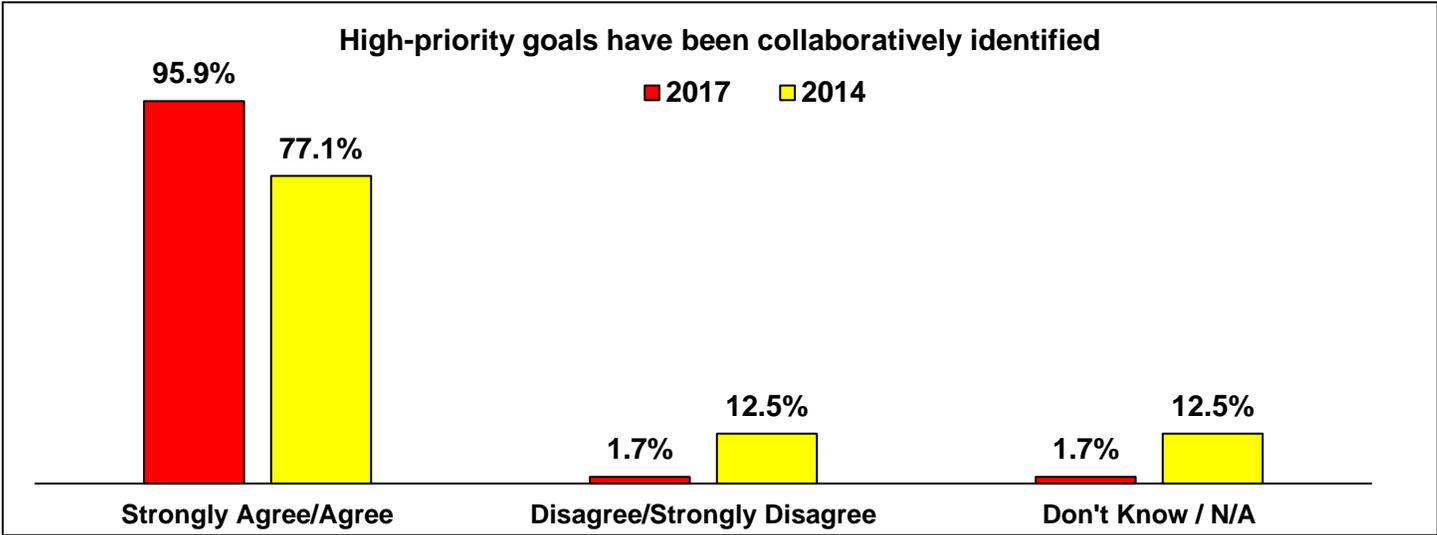
Student learning data as well as student work are analyzed to identify professional development needs.



Describe the strategies used to monitor student learning on a timely basis.

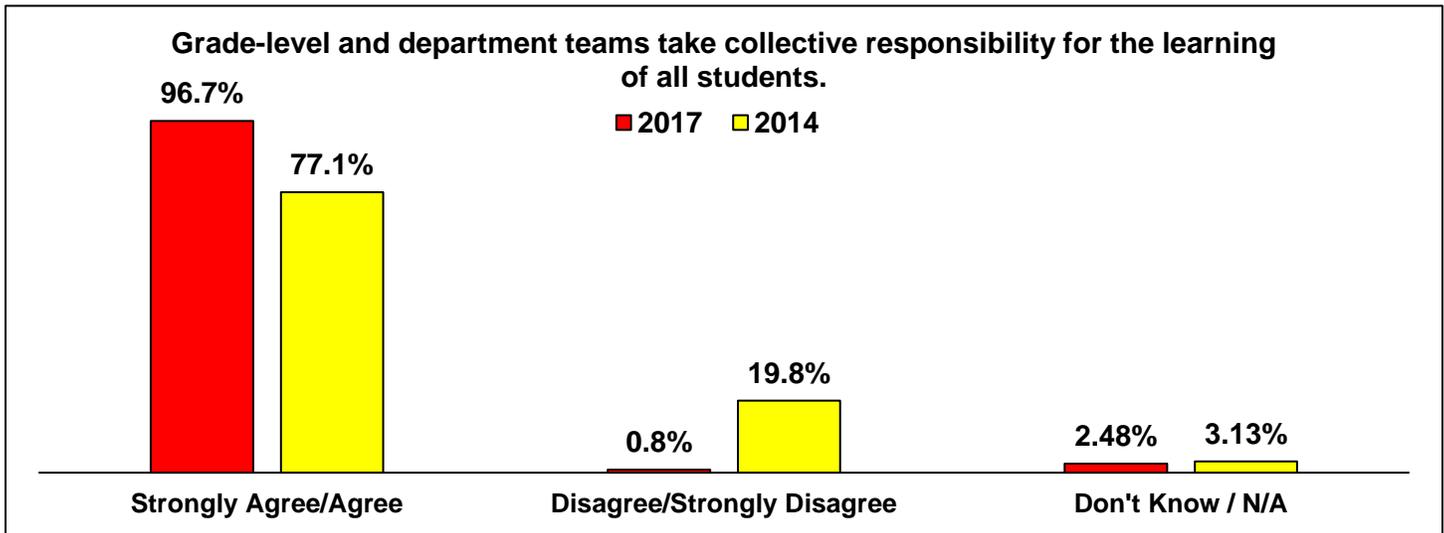
The focus of our collaborative teams developing a guaranteed and viable curriculum was the first step of developing balanced assessment system. Once collaborative teams unwrapped the Iowa Core Curriculum and other national curriculum standards, we started the learning around formative assessment. Team developed formative and summative assessments have become the cornerstone of the collaborative team dialogue and for each buildings RTI system. Assessment development has now moved to the next level of vertical alignment, designated vertical collaboration days in K-5 and 6-12 have led to improved essential learning targets and assessment alignment to core rigor. Data from formative assessments drive the development of SMART goals at all levels in the district.

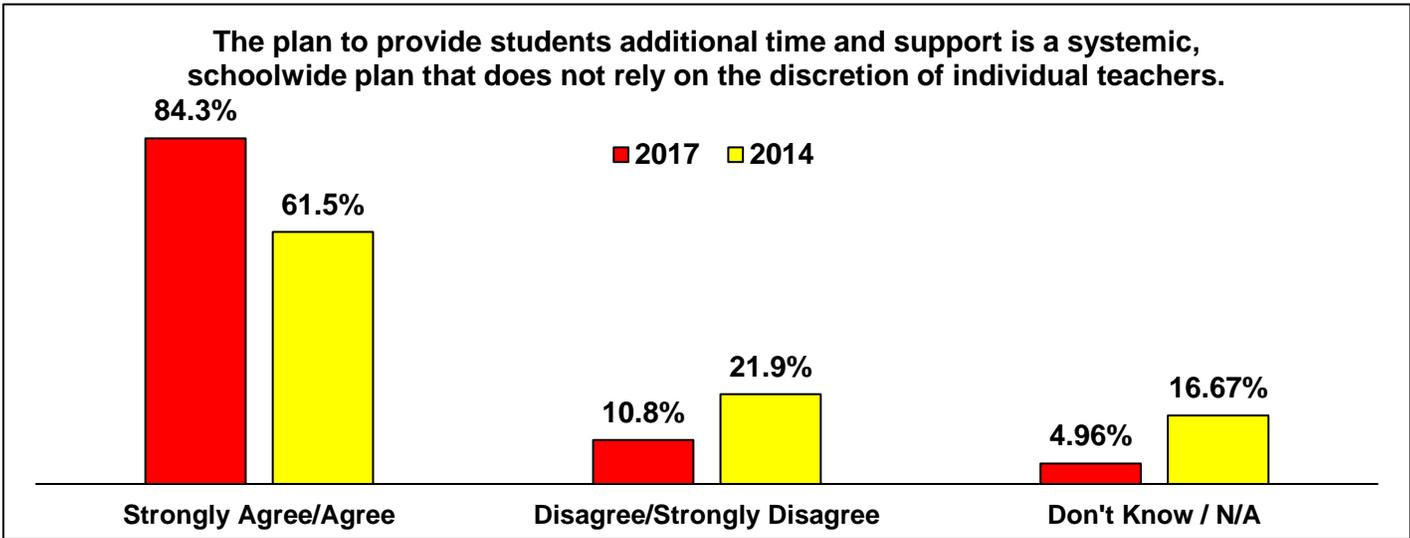
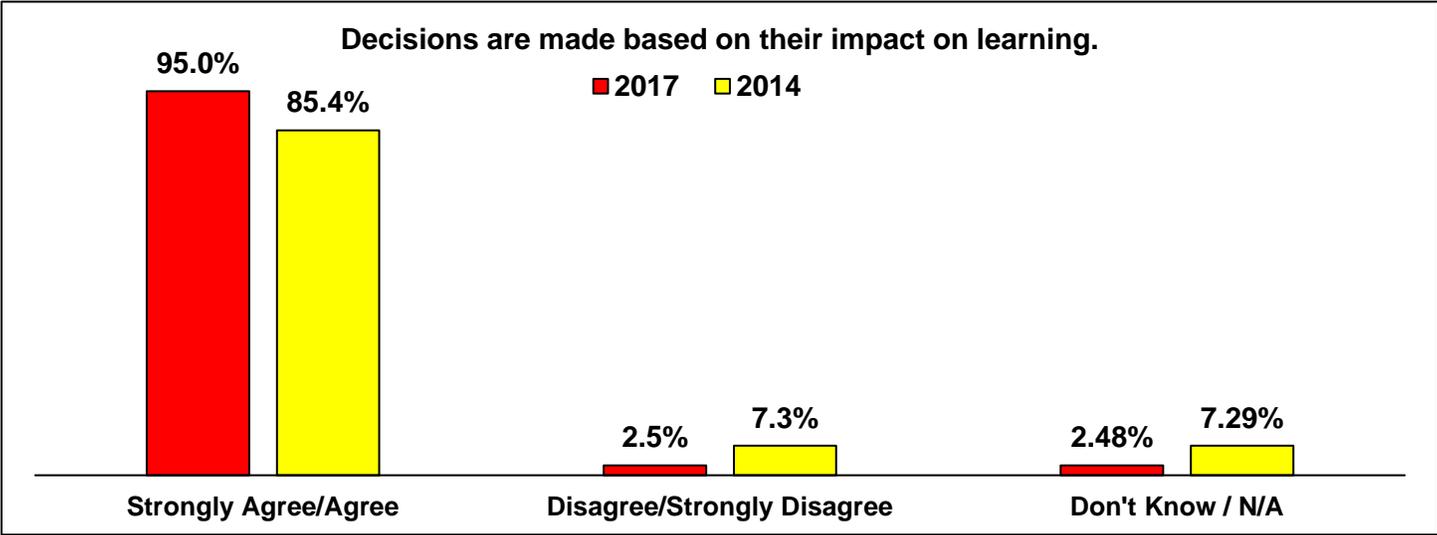




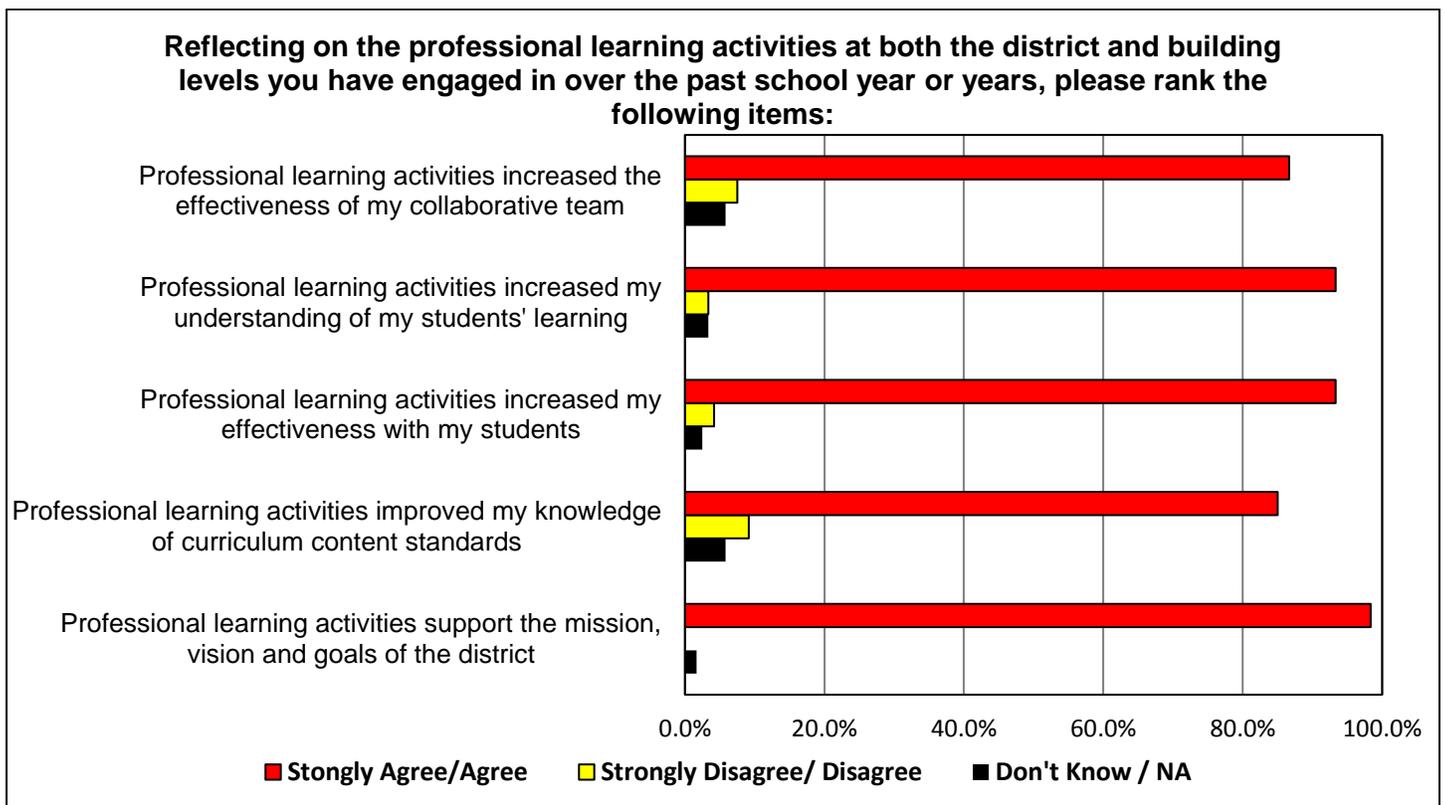
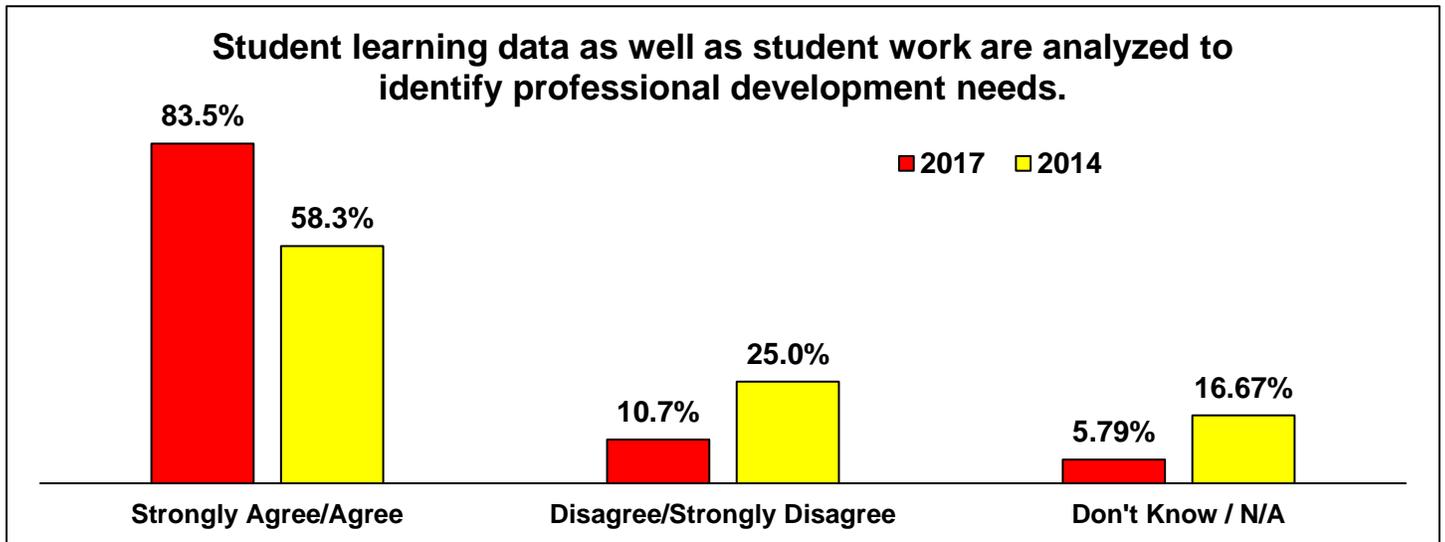
Share how you created systems of intervention to provide students with additional time and support for learning.

The focus of our collaborative teams on critical questions 4 and 5 has led to increased dialogue on instructional practices and a RTI systemness in buildings and district level. All collaborative teams use the district data team protocol in analyzing and discussing student formative assessments results. The data team protocol has developed a district culture of 200% accountability. Teams now have transparency, consistency and systemness in monitoring and responsiveness to student learning data. School RTI systems are responsive to student learning and have created school cultures that has moved from “my kids” to “our kids” in providing intervention and supports. All RTI systems in the buildings are embedded during the school day and have options to provide support to students at both end of the intervention spectrum to address both question 4 and 5. Instructional staff that facilitate intervention are guided by student needs, either will or skill and are constantly monitoring progress via formative assessments and collaborating with core and classroom teachers. District leadership conducts school improvement summits every six-weeks to monitor school’s progress on improvement goals. Improvement goals flow from the district level goals, to building goals, to collaborative team goals. The district’s PLC Practice survey shows the growth of our teams and district.



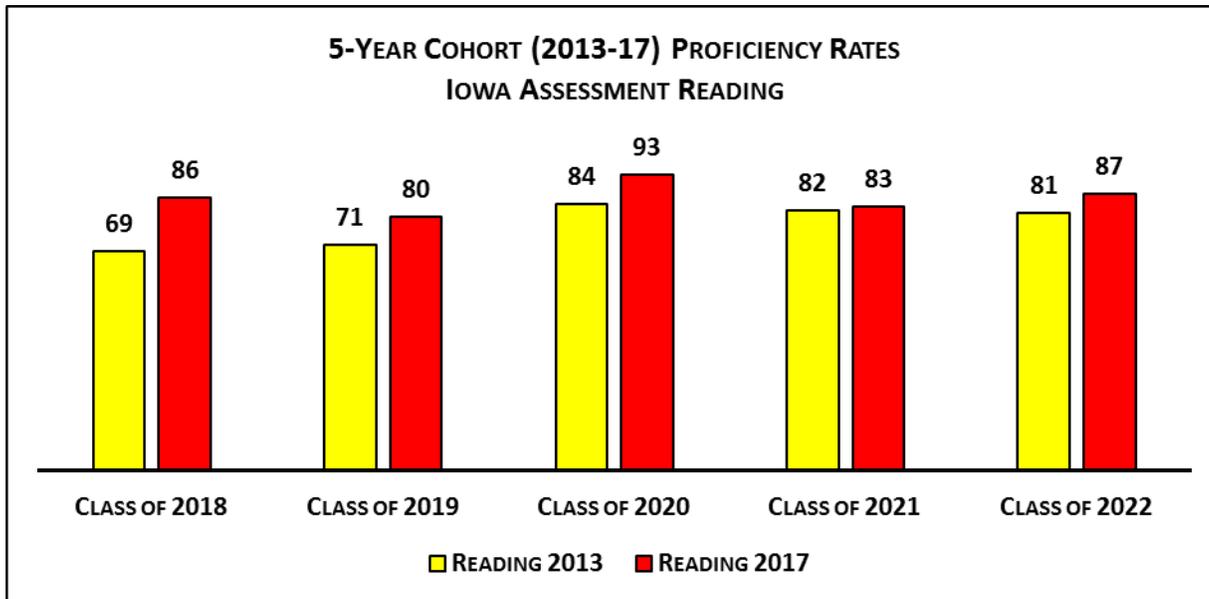


One of the key factors in the growth of our professional learning community is professional learning. Our professional learning is grounded and aligned to our five critical questions. Carlisle staff are dedicated educational professionals who work hard every day. We had the challenge of moving from a “good” school district to a “great” school district. Professional learning was at the heart of our work, the learning stayed focus on the our core as a district that all students learn can learn at high levels. Our professional learning was guided by student and adult learning data. Our professional learning is based on always keeping to our PLC Core values and mindset but always adapting to our needs that moves our students and adults to the next level.

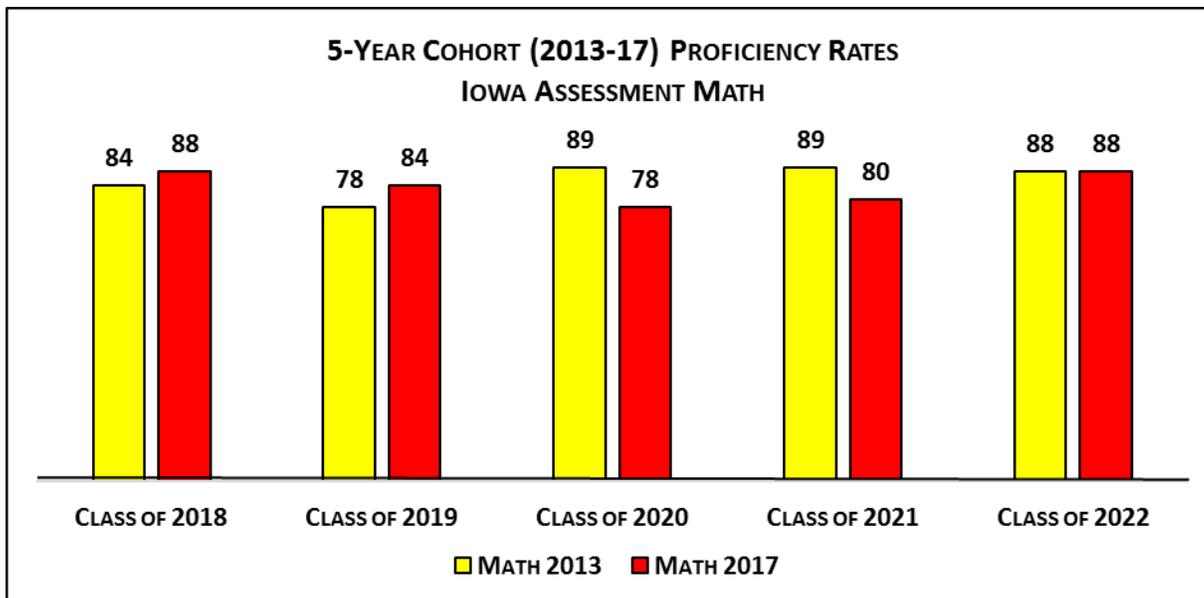


Achievement Data

Iowa Assessments are administered annually in all Iowa school districts. Proficiency rates in reading have increased over the last five years by 8.4 points as reflected in the charts below. The increase is attributed to the collaborative teams' focus on guiding questions 1, 2, and 3 and collective responsiveness to students needs (questions 4 and 5).



Student achievement data for math created a sense of urgency for math teams, building level and district level leadership. Early in the PLC process, teachers worked together to identify the Essential Learning Targets and supporting standards along with formative and summative assessments. Throughout this process, teams identified a need for additional support in instruction and resources (guiding question 2). In 2015 the district invested in professional development and a curriculum resource to bring coherence in math from preschool through Advanced Placement Calculus. Collaborative teams have been instrumental in bringing the entire math department (PK-12) into focus, ensuring all students are provided with the relevant and rigorous math experience they need to be successful beyond high school.



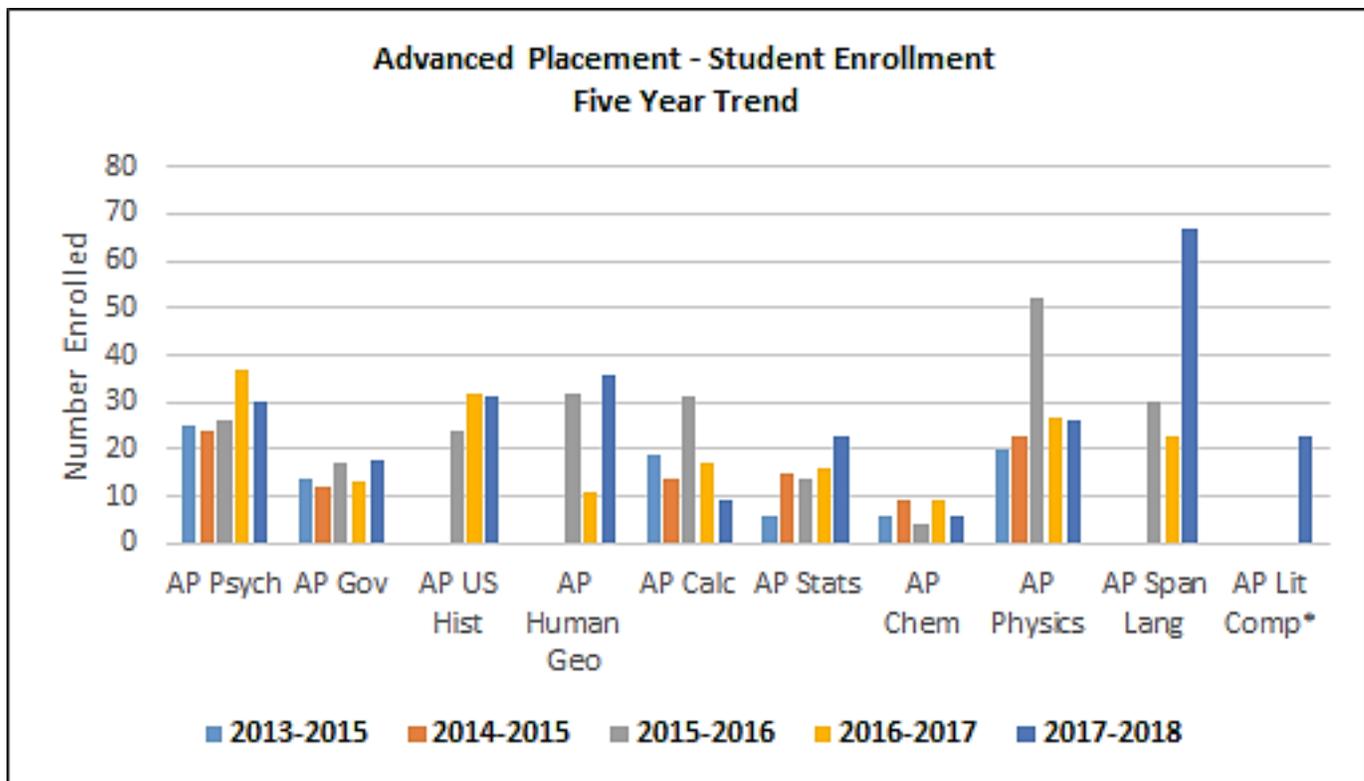
The ACT assesses high school students' educational development and their ability to successfully complete college-level work. Carlisle is committed to ensuring all students are prepared for success at the post-secondary level and since the spring of 2016 has provided all 11th grade students the opportunity to take the ACT at no cost to the student.

Grad Year	Total Tested	% of Graduates*	English			Mathematics			Reading			Science			Composite		
			District	State	Nat'l	District	State	Nat'l	District	State	Nat'l	District	State	Nat'l	District	State	Nat'l
2013	70	53.4%	20.9	21.5	20.2	20.3	21.6	20.9	21.0	22.5	21.1	21.1	22.2	20.7	21.0	22.1	20.9
2014	85	62.5%	23.2	21.5	20.3	21.8	21.4	20.9	23.6	22.5	21.3	22.9	22.2	20.8	23.0	22.0	21.0
2015	99	56.8%	22.2	21.6	20.4	22.1	21.5	20.8	23.5	22.7	21.4	22.8	22.3	20.9	22.8	22.2	21.0
2016	85	49.4%	21.6	21.4	20.1	21.7	21.4	20.6	23.2	22.7	21.3	22.7	22.3	20.8	22.4	22.1	20.8
2017	129	88.3%	19.0	21.2	20.3	19.7	21.3	20.7	21.4	22.6	21.4	20.7	22.1	21.0	20.4	21.9	21.0

*Iowa % of Graduates 67%

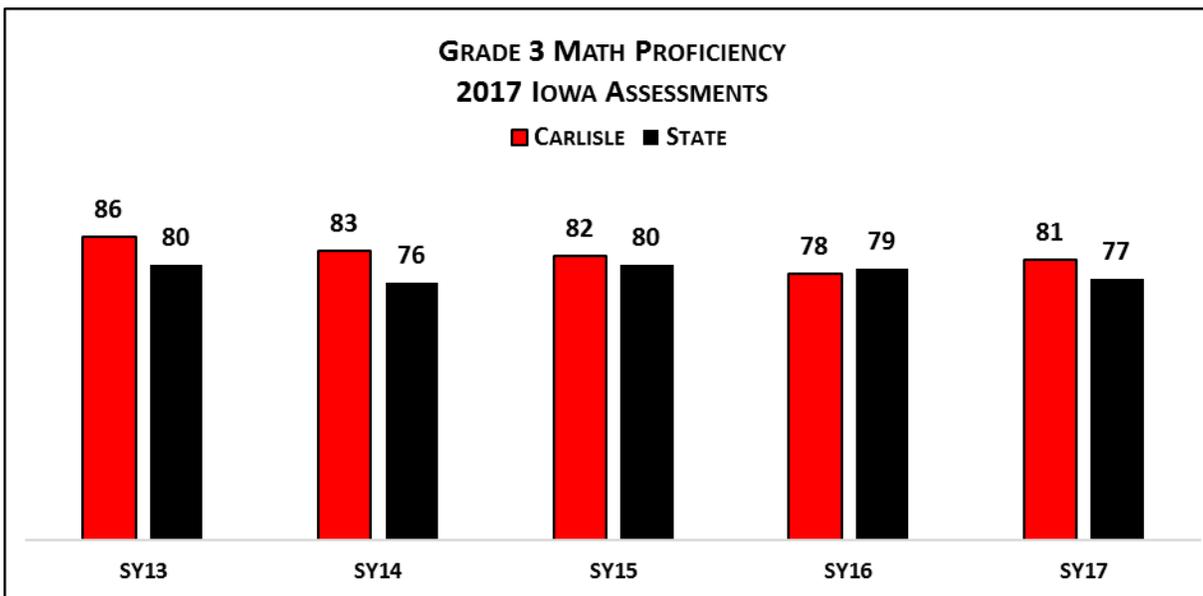
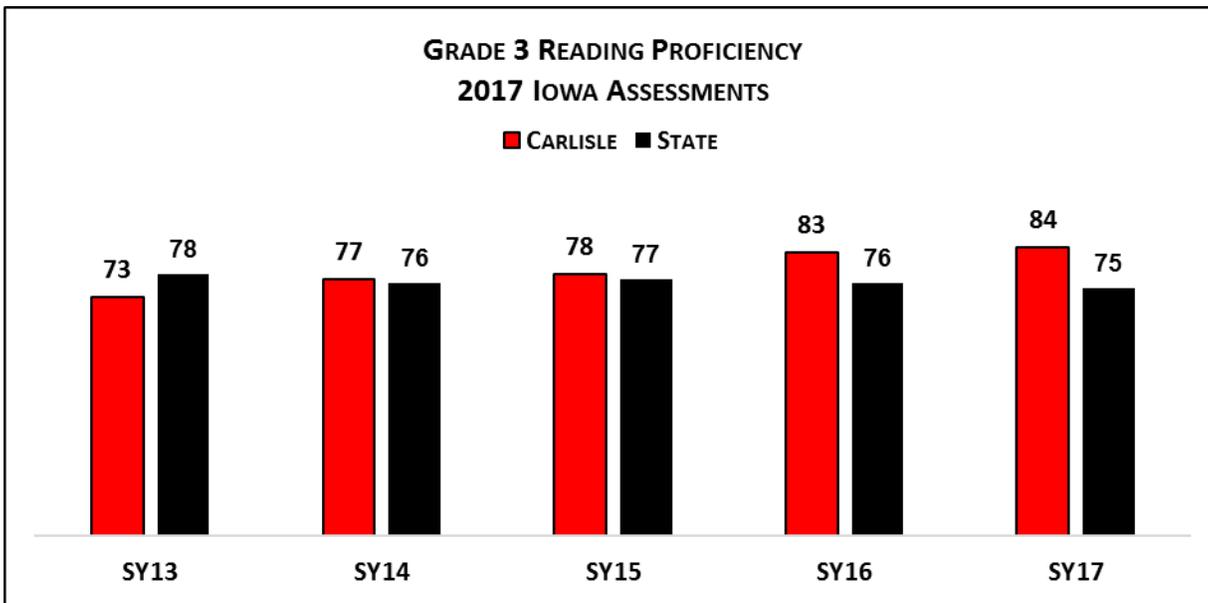
*National % of Graduates 60%

Advanced Placement courses are considered to be some of the most rigorous courses and exams available to high school students. Carlisle has increased AP course offerings over the last five years enabling students access to AP courses in all four core areas and Modern Language. The participation rate for Advanced Placement courses has increased by 199% at Carlisle High School over the last five years. Carlisle ranks 25th in the State of Iowa on the AP Index (AP Index = N of AP Exams/N of Graduates).



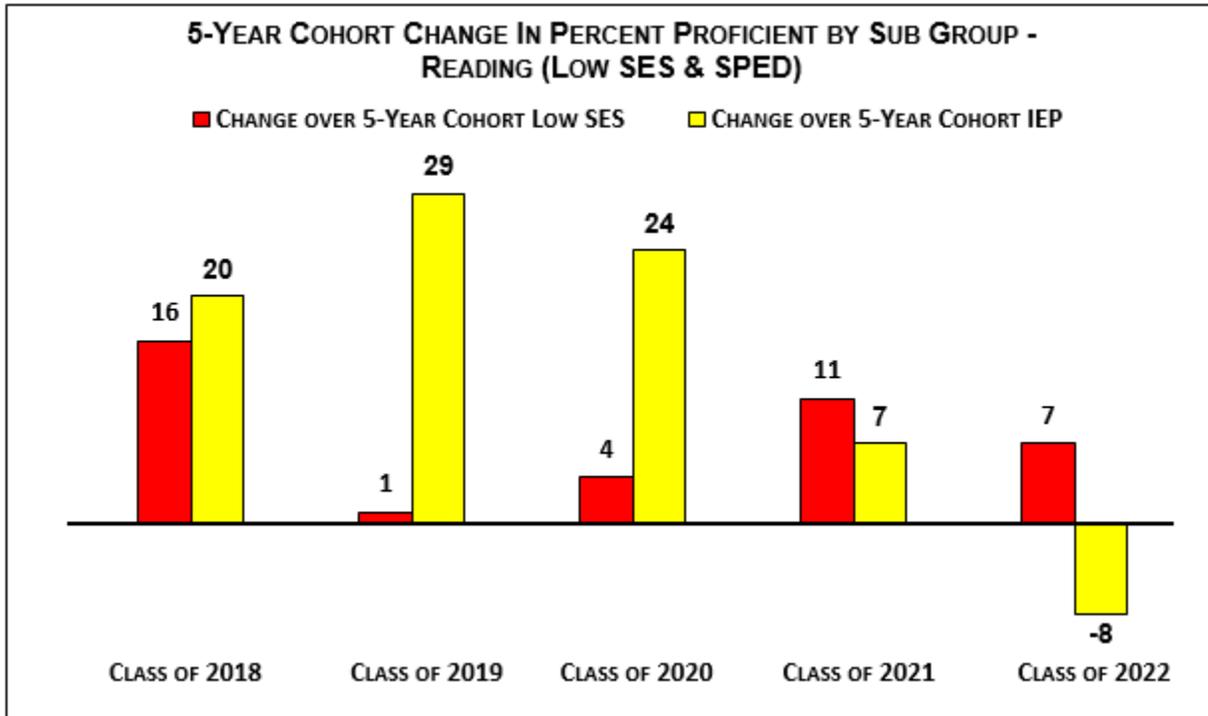
In addition to monitoring cohort data, Carlisle evaluates grade level data over time to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum, instruction and support structures. Carlisle is in the second year of a math curriculum resource adoption. Collaborative teams have done extensive professional learning in math instructional practices and aligning ELTs with the rigor of the common core math standards. Collaborative teams actions include:

- Coherent and frequent monitoring of student learning data at the team, building and district level that includes screening, diagnostic and formative assessments for all students PK-3
- A collaborative process by grade level teams, support staff and building leadership with structures in place for collective responsibility for student learning (PK-3)
- A responsive RTI system that includes evidenced-based interventions for PK-3
- A commitment that each student will engage in learning activities within his/her zone of proximal development and participate in grade level core instruction PK-3



The chart below shows the increase in proficiency for Low SES and IEP students. The district is making progress toward the annual goal of reducing the achievement gap by at least 25% for all student subgroups in math and reading as measured by Iowa Assessment. The positive change is attributed to the following:

- Critical Question #1- What do we want our students to learn? - Team and student clarity on Essential Learning Targets. There is a commitment by all staff that all students have access to core curriculum and instruction.
- Critical Question #2 - How will we teach it? - Collaboration to ensure curriculum and instruction are responsive to student needs.
- Critical Question #3 - How will we know they have learned it? - Collaborative teams monitor student learning on a regular basis to inform instruction and respond to student learning needs
- Critical Questions #4 and #5 - How will we respond when they don't? And, How will we extend and enrich the learning for all students? - Collaborative teams respond to student learning needs both within the general education classroom and through Tier II and Tier III by collaborating with resource specialists.



Awards

- High School Breaking Barriers Award from Iowa DOE - Hispanic student proficiency rates of 98 on state math and reading assessments for three consecutive years
- Carlisle Elementary received an Exceptional Rating on Iowa School Report Card
- Carlisle High School High received an Performing Rating on Iowa School Report Card
- AP Index ranking improved from 42nd to -25th in state of Iowa over the past three years in ranking
- Selected to present at the 2018 Annual Visible Learning Conference on Systemic PLC
- Awarded state STEM Scale Up Grants to support the implementation of districts K-12 STEM course pathway for students.

Additional Resources

- Core Curriculum Resource Review and Implementation
- Hierarchy of Collaboration
- District PLC Guide
- District PLC Framework
- PLC Practices Survey Report