

## **Johnson County Central Schools School Continuous Improvement Process**

### **District Goal: “Improving Student Learning Through a Growth Mindset”**

Johnson County Central (JCC) staff and administration determined that our school improvement process should focus on improving student engagement and learning. To accomplish this goal, JCC faculty determined that the school improvement goal for the new cycle would be to “Improve Student Learning Through a Growth Mindset.” This goal was selected during the 2021-2022 school year. To help students develop a growth mindset, staff worked to learn more about teaching strategies and core beliefs of a growth mindset so they could enable students to work towards personal and academic goals.

During the 2022-23 and 2024-25 school years, staff participated in collaborative reading groups to learn more about ‘Growth Mindset’ and how to help students develop the belief that they could learn and achieve—that their effort directly affected the outcome of their success. All staff members, including support staff, read the book: *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol Dweck. After reading each chapter, the staff met to discuss the main points and complete an interactive learning lesson together. Staff commented on how the book helped them with teaching strategies in the classroom, and it also enabled them personally with how to talk to their own children and family members. Staff worked to implement a growth mindset in their teaching methods and classroom expectations to help students achieve this goal. Throughout the 2022-2025 school years, staff helped students learn that their abilities could be developed through effort and persistence. Enabling students to believe that their learning was tied to their efforts helped to increase student achievement.

### **The Continuous Improvement Process**



After the conclusion of the school improvement accreditation cycle in 2016, Johnson County Central Schools transitioned from AdvancedED to Frameworks as the template for the district's school improvement process. JCC Schools officially transitioned to The Nebraska Framework in the spring of 2017. Nebraska Framework was the guide for the last continuous improvement process (CIP) during the last visitation for Johnson County Central Schools in March of 2021.

During the last visitation cycle, and prior to the 2022-23 school years, Nebraska Multi-Tiered Systems and Supports (NeMTSS) and the school improvement process were considered to be two separate processes. During the 2022-23 school year, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) revised the processes for the Nebraska Framework and NeMTSS problem-solving model. NDE developed the Nebraska Continuous Improvement (CIP) plan which combined Nebraska Framework and NeMTSS.

Upon the conclusion of the 2021 school visitation, the main recommendation for Johnson County Central Schools was to formalize the MTSS process for the district. Since the beginning of the 2021-2022, JCC staff and administration have worked to formalize the NeMTSS process for the four buildings in the district. Through this process, building leaders worked to formalize the NeMTSS process while addressing areas needing improvement from the annual AQuESST report.

Beginning with the 2022-23 school year, staff were trained during in-services about NeMTSS, the tenets of AQuESTT and the continuous improvement process. The district invested in a new data warehouse, EduClimber, which helped collect student data and formalize the MTSS process. School

administrators share student data with staff during the training and throughout the year to help provide information to guide student learning and engagement.

**What is AQuESTT?** AQuESTT is the Nebraska Department of Education accountability system. It is the Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow. AQuESTT has 6 tenets. Below are a description of tenets and areas JCC has worked to strengthen over the past four years.



### **1. Positive Partnerships, Relationships & Student Success:**

JCC Schools works with faculty, staff, administration, the school board, parents/guardians, and community organizations to engage and improve student learning opportunities.

Examples include:

- Individualized Learning Plans and 504 Plans created to serve individual needs.

- Establishing volunteer and student work opportunities with local businesses.

- Formalized MTSS process with regularly scheduled meetings. Staff use EduClimber to create and share

documents to support student learning.

- Participation in 1184 meetings and working with local officials including: the diversion director, county attorney's offices, law enforcement and DHHS when necessary to help increase student success in school.

- Formal letters are mailed to parents to address academic or attendance concerns when needed. Administrators work to meet with families to create student success plans.

- Reading buddies, art club-other high school/elementary collaborations, BUDS (social, voluntary), unified sports, Houses at the Cook site, open college and career visits, SENCA Backpack Program, Red Ribbon Week, participation in Patriots Pen, Americanism Essay, Voice of Democracy, Poppy Poster Contest, Snowplow contest NDOT, Local organizations who contribute to student success (Dairy Queen, Pizza Hut, Tecumseh Chamber of Commerce, Fire Department Fire Safety Week, Emergency Management training with students. Extension office (UNL) after school program. NRCS-trees, Dental Screening-Brighter Smiles active PTO and Booster Club. Title 1 Pumpkin Night and Book Bingo, grades PK-8.

- Partner with SCC and Peru to provide college courses through dual-credit. Students can take classes with JCC teachers for dual credit. Classes are also available through Peru for dual credit (not paid for by district, reduced rate).

- Providing fobs for community members, working with organizations to give access to the gym and facilities.

**2. Transitions:** JCC staff work with parents and faculty to ensure a smooth transition for students between grade levels, programs, district buildings and post-high school plans.

Examples include:

- Implementation of the Graduation Planner through PowerSchool for the 25-26 school year.

- Transitional opportunities are provided to students to visit teachers, buildings and classrooms when entering into a new district building. This includes Kindergarten Round-up, third-grade orientation, fifth-grade orientation and eighth grade orientation.

- Open Houses for all grades-Preschool through 12th grade each fall.

- Pass along transitional documents created for students in grades K-5.

- Title 1 information nights (along with activities)

- coaches and teachers working at different levels to provide support and transitions through programs.

**3. Educational Opportunities and Access:** Administration and staff have worked to promote educational opportunities to students and families. This includes campus visits for middle and high school students, career planning classes in high school and middle school. Scheduled time for ACT preparation for high school students using John Baylor Test Preparation, which is provided to all students free of charge. Handbooks available on the school website. Updating the registration handbook to indicate requirements for graduation, courses for college credit, differentiating instruction in academic areas such as Mathematics, ELA and Science.

JCC is an official ACT testing site. Staff provide this opportunity to increase ACT access for students. The district also helps to pay for ACT testing to promote student access to the ACT.

Students can receive college credit through dual-credit classes in high school. The district will pay for 2 classes per academic year and books/supplies.

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, high school students enrolled in a computer literacy class. This is a transitional class for middle school students who are required to take keyboarding, computer science and computer science and web design. Other technology courses provided in the district include middle school technology and Striv. Students in grades K-12 have 1-1 access to iPads. Throughout their students have access to digital learning and citizenship .

Other Educational Opportunities available to students include: Drivers education, Comprehensive Nursing Assistant classes (CNA), campus visits for students in grades 8-12., EducationQuest College Fair, UNL Sports Pep Rally for 8th grade students, Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) campus and business visits. JCC Staff arrange for many great learning opportunities for all students. The above list is just a few examples of the wonderful opportunities students receive each year. JCC high school staff

also work with students who have credit deficiencies or missing graduation requirements through an online program: Odysseyware.

**4. College & Career Ready: Johnson County Central Schools prepares students for educational opportunities and to pursue personal goals post-high school graduation.**

JCC offers a variety of rigorous classes for students in all content areas including Advanced English for students in eleventh through twelfth grades. Other advanced courses include: Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Statistics, Advanced English III, Advanced English IV, Physics, Trig, Finite, CNA, Art III & IV and Welding III. Classes for college credit offered through classroom teachers include: Botany, Zoology, Human Development, Psychology and Introduction to Education.

Lessons in career education are provided by staff using resources such as EducationQuest, Nebraska Career Connections, Move This World (replaced this school year with CharacterStrong), and classroom lessons provided by teachers in content areas and counselors during class lessons. Guidance lessons taught to students in grades K-5 and Middle School. JCC staff throughout the year bring in speakers and collaborate with local businesses for career education opportunities.

Beginning in Middle School, to help students learn about their areas of strength and careers that connect to personal interests, students participate in Kuder career exploration and strengths inventories. The Nebraska Career Connections website provides information to students about careers, education pathways and possible openings in Nebraska for students in the career fields.

**5. Student Assessment:** JCC believes that students should be assessed in a variety of ways including national, state and classroom based assessments.

Students at Johnson County Central Schools participate in a variety of standardized assessments to help staff teach curriculum, learn more about student learning levels and abilities and to prepare students for each academic year.

Currently students participate in; Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in grades K-11; Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) in grades 3-8; ACT is required in grade eleven, however, students may test any year, PSAT in grade ten; Wonders assessments; Envision Math assessments and classroom-based assessments. ASVAB (juniors), Star assessments grades 1-8. State standard aligned lesson plans to evaluate and student growth. Students also take formative and summative classroom assessments.

**6. Educator Effectiveness:** The JCC administration and school board provide many learning opportunities to staff, at no cost, to increase their knowledge and experience to help students learn and grow.

To develop educator effectiveness and staff leadership, a culture of expectation and success has been established. Staff, including coaches, are supported with resources to successfully grow and develop student learning. Professional development opportunities through school in-services, Educational

Service Unit workshops, Nebraska Department of Education trainings and Nebraska Schools Activities Association are encouraged by administration and district leadership.

The JCC administration team continues to strengthen the mentor/mentee orientation program with the addition of an orientation day to help onboard new staff prior to the beginning of the year in-service days.

Johnson County Central Schools continues to grow and improve each year.

