



**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION  
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING**

**PACKET**

JUNE 5, 2023

07:00 PM

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA\***

(AGENDA SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAW)

**PUBLIC CALL TO ORDER**

6:00 p.m., Staples High School, Room 1025c

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Non-Union Personnel Compensation 2023-2024**

**RESUME PUBLIC SESSION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

7:00 p.m., Staples High School, Cafeteria B (Room 301)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION**

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (15 MINUTES)**

**MINUTES**

May 15, 17, 22, and 24, 2023

Attachment: [Meeting May 15 2023 Staples High School.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Meeting May 17 2023 Via Zoom.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Meeting May 22 2023 Via Zoom.pdf](#)

Attachment: [Meeting May 24 2023 Staples High School.pdf](#)

**DISCUSSION**

**A. World Language Program Evaluation**

Dr. Anthony Buono  
Ms. Maria Zachery  
Ms. Dawn Samples

Attachment: [Westport Exe. Summary 2023 revised .pdf](#)

**B. School Climate Improvement Plans**

Building Principals

**C. Strategic Plan Update**

Mr. Thomas Scarice  
Dr. Valerie Babich

Attachment: [Strategic Plan Update Student Voice June 5 2023.docx.pdf](#)

Attachment: [WPS Strategic Plan 2022.pdf](#)

i. **Strategic Objective #4 - Elevate Student Voice and Engagement**

ii. **Strategic Objective #3 - Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/ Emotional Capacities**

**D. Grade 9 Performance Indicators**

Dr. Anthony Buono  
Mr. Stafford Thomas

Attachment: [SHS Class of 2026 Performance Data.pdf](#)

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**A. Second Reading of Bylaw 9160, Student Representatives**

Mr. Kevin Christie  
Mr. Thomas Scarice

Mr. John Bayers

Attachment: [9160 Student Representatives on the Board of Education REDLINE 6-5-23.pdf](#)

**B. Gifts**

Mr. Thomas Scarice

Attachment: [Westport Public Schools Mail - External Call For Kindness Welcome .pdf](#)

Attachment: [2023 Call For Kindness Welcome Letter.pdf](#)

**C. Building Envelope Evaluations**

Mr. Elio Longo

Mr. Thomas Scarice

Attachment: [Building Envelope Study Bid Tabulation Analysis.pdf](#)

**D. Non-Union Personnel Compensation 2023-2024**

Mr. Thomas Scarice

**E. Discussion/Possible Request to Carry Over Funds**

Mr. Elio Longo

**F. Approval of 2023-2024 School Year Tuition Rates**

Mr. Elio Longo

Attachment: [Tuition Rates 2023-24.pdf](#)

**ADJOURNMENT**

\*A 2/3 vote is required to go to executive session, to add a topic to the agenda of a regular meeting, or to start a new topic after 10:30 p. m.

The meeting can also be viewed on Cablevision channel 78 and by video stream @[www.westportps.org](http://www.westportps.org)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WELCOME USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:

- Comment on non-agenda topics will occur during the first 15 minutes except when staff or guest presentations are scheduled.
- Board will not engage in dialogue on non-agenda items.
- Public may speak as agenda topics come up for discussion or information.
- Speakers on non-agenda items are limited to 2 minutes each, except by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers on agenda items are limited to 3 minutes each, except by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers must give name and address, and use microphone.
- Per Board policy, speakers must be town residents or employees
- Responses to questions may be deferred if answers not immediately available.
- Public comment is normally not invited for topics listed for action after having been publicly discussed at one or more meetings.

**General Attachments**

[- BOE Meeting Memo June 5 2023.docx.pdf](#)



**WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**THOMAS SCARICE**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

110 Myrtle Avenue  
Westport, Connecticut 06880  
Telephone: (203) 341-1025  
Fax: (203) 341-1029  
tscarice@westportps.org

To: Westport Board of Education Members  
From: Thomas Scarice, Superintendent of Schools  
Re: June 5, 2023 Board of Education Meeting  
Date: June 1, 2023

Provided below for Board consideration is an overview of the meeting agenda items for June 5, 2023.

**Discussion**

**1. World Language Program Evaluation**

The district is committed to the continual improvement and review of educational programs. A cycle of program evaluation has been established in the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to ensure alignment to academic standards and to assess the overall effectiveness of programs based on the vision and desired outcomes.

The first program considered for review is the K-12 World Language program, in particular, K-12 Spanish. The district secured the services of Avant, Language Assessment and Professional Learning Solutions. Director for Avant MORE Learning, Dawn Samples, conducted the comprehensive review. Since she is based out of Lexington, South Carolina, Dawn will join the Board meeting via zoom to present the findings of the program review.

Dawn served for 15 years as the Coordinator for World Languages and Immersion for Lexington School District One in Lexington, South Carolina. Her areas of expertise include designing and leading performance-based and proficiency-driven programs. As the Director for MORE Professional Learning at Avant, Dawn currently conducts program evaluations and supports professionals in language learning programs, with a focus on instructional practices and assessments.

The presentation is for informational purposes only for the Board. The K-12 Spanish team, under the direction of World Language Coordinator, Maria Zachery, and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Anthony Buono, will consider the report's commendations and recommendations over the summer. The team will return to the Board in the fall with their analysis and recommendations for program improvements based on the report provided Monday evening. These recommendations will be provided well in advance of the Board's budget approval process.

**2. School Climate Improvement Plans**

CT General Statutes Sec. 10-222d requires school districts to biennially administer a school climate assessment for each school in the district. Last year, the district conducted the first administration of the Panorama school climate surveys for all students, faculty and parents. The results of these surveys drove a good measure of the design of the "first 30 days" of the school year for each school in September.

Last summer, each building principal assembled faculty teams to analyze the spring (2022) survey results and developed "school climate improvement plans" for each school, with particular goals for students, faculty and parents.

This work naturally supports the "well-being" pillar of the strategic plan as it addresses the entire system at the school level. Feedback from the input gathered prior to the design of the strategic plan indicated a need to address climate and culture in the wake of the pandemic. Concerns in these areas preceded the pandemic, and were accelerated as a result.

This will be a sustained effort for the district over time. As this year is an "off year" based on the biennial requirement, the district targeted two subtopics in the comprehensive Panorama survey, "belonging" and "school climate". In this survey, "belonging" is defined as the degree to which students/faculty/etc. feel they are valued members of the school community. "School climate" is defined as the perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school. The building principals will use the data collected in the surveys of belonging and climate this spring to develop new plans for the 2023-2024 school year.

The building principals will provide an overview of their efforts this year and highlight the programs and strategies

employed as a result of their school based climate surveys last year, and their school climate improvement plans.

**3. Strategic Plan Update**

Please see attached memo for this agenda item. Dr. Valerie Babich, Coordinator for Psychological Services, and I will provide an update to the Board on the following two strategic objectives:

- Elevate Student Voice and Engagement
- Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities

**4. Grade 9 Performance Indicators**

The current grade 9 cohort experienced the combined middle schools at Bedford for their 6th grade year, and half of their 7th grade year. They also experienced the Covid shutdown in the spring of 6th grade and the hybrid model in 7th grade. In order to assess their progress and the subsequent impact of these experiences, the Staples administration has worked with Dr. Buono to develop a composite of informative indicators. This composite of indicators is intended to help inform the district of the progress of this cohort. It is not designed to be definitive as no one measure, or composite of measures, can definitively tell the story. Yet, there is great value in reviewing these indicators. The team is interested in improving this effort over time and broadening the list of useful indicators in assessing student performance.

The list for review for grade 9 performance (see attached in the meeting packet) includes: PSAT, GPA, special education referrals, mental health crisis referrals, academic support participation, attendance, and faculty recommendations for honors courses. Where possible, these numbers will be contextualized to compare to previous years.

Dr. Buono and Staples Principal, Stafford Thomas, will provide a brief overview and be available for questions from the Board.

**Discussion/Action**

**1. Second Reading of Bylaw 9160. Student Representatives**

Policy Committee Chair, Kevin Christie, and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and General Administration, John Bayers will share a recently reviewed draft committee bylaw for a second reading.

The district and high school administration has developed a process for the selection of two student representatives to the Board of Education.

The proposed model is designed to seat two student representatives to the Board, one junior and one senior. As the district increases student voice at each level, this effort is intended to provide student voice at the governance level, i.e the Board of Education. This is not intended to increase the number of students at governance level, only representation at this level.

The recommended process for student selection begins with students seeking a teacher to sponsor their candidacy with a faculty letter of recommendation. Recommended students will then be provided with a prompt and submit an essay related to their aspirations to serve. Interviews will be conducted by a team including the building principal, two Board members, and three additional faculty members or building administrators. At that point, the Board can receive the finalists for the final review and selection process.

The recommendation is to promote this opportunity this September, conduct the search process in October and to install the two new student representatives to the Board of Education following the November Election Day. In subsequent years, this process will be implemented in April and May for rising juniors in order to install a new student representative from the rising junior class for September of the following year.

**2. Gifts**

The Staples High School IDEA Club respectfully requests that the Board accept a grant award in the amount of \$1,000.00 from the Riley's Way Foundation 2023 Call For Kindness Fellowship. Any gift valued at \$2,000 or more must be approved by the Board. However, the original proposal was understood to be for \$3,000, prompting a request for approval at the May 15 Board meeting. Given the questions related to this gift at the last meeting, even though it is now below the threshold for required Board approval, this item will be returning to the agenda for Monday evening. Action is not required, but discussion is warranted for appropriate closure.

The IDEA Club (Inclusion and Diversity through Education and Awareness) focuses on teaching young children in the community about diversity and inclusion. Some of the club's activities include visiting preschools and libraries to teach appropriate and engaging lesson plans (which they create during club meetings). The club also discusses how best to teach children about topics such as identity, empathy, and respect, to achieve their collective goal of making Westport a more inclusive town by utilizing early education.

The Call For Kindness is a national contest that funds teen-led projects that inspire kindness, strengthen communities, and

bring people together. The award consists of a 12-month leadership development fellowship and a startup grant. Recipients receive one-on-one coaching and project support, virtual skill-building sessions, an in-person leadership retreat, networking with a peer community of other changemakers across the country, and mentorship opportunities. You can read more about this program here: <https://www.rileysway.org/call-for-kindness/>.

**3. Building Envelope Evaluations**

As part of the 10 year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) the district is conducting a comprehensive evaluation of building envelopes (i.e. windows, doors, roofs, etc.) for Bedford Middle School, Staples High School, Saugatuck Elementary School, Greens Farms Elementary School, and Kings Highway Elementary School. Coleytown Middle School was recently renovated, and separate evaluations have been done for Long Lots Elementary School and Coleytown Elementary School.

This project aligns with the value of the CIP in prioritizing building envelopes and mechanicals to ensure that our buildings are kept dry while optimizing comfort.

A competitive bidding process was used to solicit proposals to conduct the envelope evaluations. The Board will be presented with an award recommendation from the administrative team. The district's partner in our capital projects, Colliers Project Leaders, served in an advisory capacity in the RPF selection process.

Once approved, the evaluations will commence and final reports are expected to be provided to the Board in the fall. The evaluations will take advantage of seasonal changes in temperature and humidity to accurately assess the condition of building envelopes. Ultimately, these assessments will drive future capital decisions and requests for improvements.

The Board was presented with this item for discussion and is asked to take formal action to approve Silver Petrucelli and Associates to conduct the building envelope evaluations.

**4. Non-Union Personnel Compensation 2023-2024**

The Board will consider non-union compensation for the 2023-2024 school year in executive session and vote to approve at the meeting Monday evening.

**5. Discussion/Possible Request to Carry Over Funds**

The carryover fund was established in collaboration with the Board of Finance and RTM to manage unexpended funds at the end of the fiscal year. The carryover fund supports conservative management of funds and discourages poor fiscal practice, such as an annual "spend down" of funds just prior to the end of fiscal year.

The Board has judiciously used the carryover fund to reduce the burden on the operating budget. The optimal use of carryover funds is for "one time" projects as this does not result in supplanting ongoing expenses, consequently creating "funding cliffs".

The recommendation is to request to place all unexpended funds at the end of the 2023 fiscal year into the Board's carryover fund account. The maximum amount of the account, per the agreement, is 1% of the operating budget. That is approximately \$1.3 million. The account is nearly depleted and this deposit will serve to build the account up again. the estimated amount of the deposit at the end of the fiscal year is approximately \$300,000.

**6. Approval of 2023-2024 School Year Tuition Rates**

The district annually establishes tuition rates to cover the following circumstances:

1. to provide the basis for calculating the 25% tuition rate for the non-resident children of school employees;
2. to cover students who move out of Westport before April 1, who are permitted to complete the school year on a pro-rated basis;
3. to cover exceptional cases, such as when families enroll children expecting to move to Westport, and then fail to establish residency, or other unforeseen circumstances; and
4. to cover instances when students are accepted as tuition students for the year.

During the current 2022-23 school year there were 46 children of employees who attended our schools. The district anticipates approximately the same number for the 2023-2024 school year.

Several years ago, in response to a Board request, a formula was developed for tuition rates for the various grade levels which gave a close approximation of actual costs. (The base tuition figures do not include the cost of bus transportation between home and school as this service is not provided to non-resident students. It also does not include special education costs, which are assessed on an individual basis for students requiring special education.)

For the upcoming 2023-24 school year we have applied the total general budget increase of 5.24% to the 2022-2023 rates. The attached chart on the following page shows the current rates and the new rates for 2023-2024.



**\*\*\*Board will vote on this item on June 5, 2023.\*\*\***

Approval of Pathways Academy as Alternative Education Program for 2023-2024 School Year

**Be it resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the Pathways Academy as an Alternative Education Program for the FY 2023 -2024 school year.**

**MOTION: Christina Torres**  
**SECOND: Dorie Hordon**  
**RESULT: Passed unanimously**  
**VOTE: 7-0**

Gifts

**Be it resolved, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts with gratitude and appreciation, a grant in the amount of \$3,000.00 from the Riley's Way Foundation 2023 Call For Kindness Fellowship, for the Staples High School IDEA Club.**

**\*\*\*Board will vote on this item on June 5, 2023.\*\*\***

Budget Reconciliation 2023-2024

**Be it resolved that the Westport Board of Education adopts a final budget for the 2023-2024 school year in the amount of \$136,287,710, said amount representing a 5.24% increase from the 2022-2023 budget, as approved by the Representative Town Meeting of the Town of Westport on May 2, 2023.**

**MOTION: Liz Heyer**  
**SECOND: Christina Torres**  
**RESULT: Passed unanimously**  
**VOTE: 7-0**

**ADJOURNMENT:** Liz Heyer moved to adjourn at 10:55 p.m.; seconded by Christina Torres and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Neil Phillips, Secretary  
(Minutes written by Lisa Marriott)



**Meeting: May 22, 2023**

**Staples High School**

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Board Members Present:**

Lee Goldstein	Chair
Liz Heyer	Vice Chair
Neil Phillips	Secretary
Christina Torres	
Dorie Hordon	
Robert Harrington	
Kevin Christie	

**PUBLIC CALL TO ORDER:** 7:05 p.m., Staples High School room 1025c

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

Lee Goldstein moved at 7:05 p.m. to enter into executive session to discuss Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools; seconded by Liz Heyer and passed unanimously. Adam Rosen, Maria Zachary, Keven Cazetta, Lisa Marriott, Anthony Buono, Mike Rizzo and John Bayers participated in the meeting at the invitation of the board. The executive session adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Lee Goldstein moved to adjourn at 9:15 p.m.; seconded by Liz Heyer and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Neil Phillips, Secretary  
(Minutes written by Lisa Marriott)

**Meeting: May 24, 2023**

**Staples High School**

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Board Members Present:**

Lee Goldstein	Chair
Liz Heyer	Vice Chair
Neil Phillips	Secretary
Christina Torres	
Dorie Hordon	
Robert Harrington	
Kevin Christie	

**PUBLIC CALL TO ORDER:** 6:45 p.m., Staples High School room 1025c

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

Lee Goldstein moved at 6:45 p.m. to enter into executive session to discuss Performance Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools; seconded by Liz Heyer and passed unanimously. The executive session adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Lee Goldstein moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.; seconded by Liz Heyer and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Neil Phillips, Secretary  
(Minutes written by Lisa Marriott)



# Westport Public Schools, CT Spanish Program Review Spring 2023

Program Review Provided and Prepared by  
Avant MORE Learning  
Dawn Samples, Director of Professional Learning

## Executive Summary

### The Westport Vision

\*District Vision from <https://www.westportps.org/district/about-us>

The Westport School District vision states *“Our Mission is to prepare all students to reach their full potential as life-long learners and socially responsible contributors to our global community. We achieve this by fostering critical and creative thinking and collaborative problem solving through a robust curriculum delivered by engaging and dedicated educators. We are committed to maintaining an environment that supports inquiry and academic excellence, emotional and physical well-being, appreciation of the arts and diverse cultures, integrity and ethical behavior.”*

Westport School District is a growing school district located in the central, coastal area of CT. The post COVID era has created a growth in population that has exceeded district projections.

This growth has introduced a number of international families and a mix of cultures and backgrounds from NYC and surrounding areas into the community. While this may be challenging to manage and plan for as a district, it provides opportunities for the world language program in Westport to flourish and expand so they will not only meet the needs of their language learners, but also to provide new learning experiences and growth in language proficiency and in their



program offerings.

It is important to note that more than 770 global companies have subsidiaries in CT (Source: Global Business Alliance, 2020) International companies in Connecticut employ 114,800 U.S. workers. Approximately 36,200 of those jobs are in the manufacturing sector. With 778 international companies in the Constitution State, global investment grows Connecticut's economy. Global investment is growing Connecticut's economy and providing high-quality jobs in local communities. <https://globalbusiness.org/state/connecticut>  
PDF: <https://z71927.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Connecticut.pdf>

*International businesses in the state of Connecticut surround the Westport community and could prove to be a rich resource and incentive for real-world language use and experiences that would extend learning for Westport students beyond the boundaries of their current program and perhaps even impact their life pathways and offer them unprecedented opportunities for their futures.*

Westport Schools have a long history of providing learners with a well planned and executed pathway to proficiency for Spanish language learners. In 2013, The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) concluded at the end of an in depth study that, "The WPS study documents the benefits of articulated early start elementary school foreign language programs that begin in kindergarten and continue through eighth grade, providing extensive opportunities for students to hear and use the language" (Boyson, B. A. (2013). Westport Final Manuscript, Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.)

Boyson goes on to quote the Task Force for Educational Reform and National Security, which urges that "all students" should have access to high-quality foreign language programs starting in the earliest grades," (Klein, Rice, & Levy, 2012, p. 47).

The CAL study tested and analyzed proficiency data using CAL's SOPA (test with the Spanish learners in grades K-8 and compared this data with previous proficiency data of learners who only had language study in grades 5-8 vs. an early start. Boyson goes on to state, "The results of the WPS study, especially at the eighth grade level, provide powerful quantitative evidence to support the early start, long-sequence K-8 program as an effective model for developing



students' oral proficiency rather than the short-sequence Grade 5–8 program model. These findings challenge the Burstall, et. al. (1974) conclusions, that an early start cannot be justified. The WPS data support the observations of Donato, et al. (1994, p. 372) that “the early start may result in more uniform gains for the majority of learners in the long term.”

### **Proficiency Data of the Program**

While the CAL study was conducted 10 years ago, the research cited in 2013 remains valid and true to date. An early start to language learning increases the proficiency outcomes of the learners over those who do not begin early - when certain factors, structures and practices are in place. (The 2013 CAL Study)

Westport School District has tested for proficiency for several years in order to provide learners with the opportunity to obtain the Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy. The district has used two different tests, Samsung's Language Testing International test called the ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages® (AAPPL) and the Avant STAMP™ (STAndards-based Measurement of Proficiency) language test. The STAMP test has been used to award the Seal of Biliteracy for the last 3 years.

In addition to proficiency testing, the district previously administered other national language tests (National Spanish Exam, National French exam, AP exams etc...)to provide opportunities for language learners to showcase their learning and gain recognition and celebrate their language abilities. These tests are not typically considered proficiency - based tests.

The testing at the elementary level has not been conducted in a number of years because the district expressed concern about the AAPPL test instrument and its appropriateness for young learners. Prior to the AAPPL test, the only other proficiency testing at the elementary level that had been conducted was by CAL, which was the SOPA test (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment).

At the time of this review, the only proficiency testing being administered or proficiency data collected is for learners who are seeking to obtain the Seal of Biliteracy.



### **Program Review Process**

This program review is provided at the request of the Westport Superintendent of Schools, Thomas Scarice, the Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, Anthony Buono and the World Languages Coordinator, K-12, Maria Zachery. The world language program was the first of the content areas to begin the process of an annual curriculum review cycle in the district.

The challenges and areas of focus the district identified for the program review include but are not limited to:

- Concerns raised by stakeholders regarding the value and effectiveness of the district's K-5 Spanish FLES program
- Guidance and direction in taking the program to the next level of excellence
- Program articulation as it relates to practices that increase proficiency outcomes such as:
  - program goals and objectives
  - teacher effectiveness
  - scheduling
  - curriculum and assessment
  - best practices for instructional methods, planning, use of the language to provide quality instruction
  - data-informed decision making

In the fall of 2022, the supervisor for World Languages reached out to Avant Assessment to request information regarding the possibility of Avant MORE Learning assisting the program by conducting a program review.

Dawn Samples, Dir. of Avant MORE Learning (the professional learning division at Avant Assessment) and the senior leaders at the district office met to discuss the district's needs and created a plan for conducting the review. The district shared program information for review (units of study, recognitions, awards, data, instructional materials, student work exemplars, rubrics, historical documents, teacher schedules, program articulation and course pathways, proficiency targets, event documentation etc...).

In return, Avant created two detailed surveys to be conducted to elicit feedback from the program



stakeholders regarding their experiences. One survey was for parents, the other was for teachers. The district administrators had input on the questions as well. The surveys were conducted in winter 2023.

In spring 2023, Dawn Samples spent 3 full days onsite visiting classrooms, observing lessons, speaking with students, teachers and administrators, as well as parents and school board members in order to gain a holistic understanding of the program, practices, areas of strength and needs. Once the site visit was completed, the findings from a comprehensive study of the collected evidence and data were completed, then the Avant Rubric for Best Practices in World Language Education was used to provide a score based on evidence, and to provide feedback and recommendations for consideration. This rubric was created as a result of collaborative efforts between ACTFL, state agencies, school districts, educational leaders, research in the field and Avant MORE Learning in order to provide quality program reviews .

Scores were provided on the following domains:

- Program philosophy
- Program goals
- Teaching staff
- Scheduling
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Resources
- Instructional practices
- Daily lessons
- Use of the language
- Technology
- Data Informed Practices

The rubric helps to provide insights and guidance to strong practices that should be considered to create an exemplary language program. It is not common to find any program that exceeds expectations with compelling evidence in all areas. However, depending on the district priorities, community and student populations, areas of focus for growth and goals for the program, a strategic plan may be developed to help the district create action steps to be taken in the priority



that best meets their needs and resources available.

In addition to the rubric providing insights into the current performance of the program as it relates to the areas of best practice, the review also provides the district with commendations on the strengths of the program based on the evidence and observations as well as recommendations and considerations for next steps and improvements to support growth and opportunities for expansion.

Avant MORE Learning's team stands at the ready to support and provide guidance, learning and advisement as Westport begins its journey into the next level of excellence in language education.

### **Commendations**

These are things that the program has in place and is doing well!

#### **Program Model and History**

- ★ The longevity of the program and consistent support from administration, senior leadership and school board has been strong.
- ★ The elementary program meets minimum requirements to be considered an elementary FLES program vs. exploratory
- ★ The language pathway begins early, in 5K and continues through grade 12 with expanded offerings as learners progress through the program.
- ★ There is a well articulated progression from one course to the next elementary through high school.
- ★ Learners at every level have the opportunity to learn a language and spend the recommended amount of time in the language provided through their schedule - and this is district-wide.
- ★ Resources have been curated over time and are plentiful for all courses and teachers are highly appreciative.
- ★ Structures are in place at the high school level to expand learning through trips abroad



### **Teacher Effectiveness and Qualifications**

- ★ Teachers are native or highly proficient in the language of instruction.
- ★ Secondary teachers are certified and most of the Spanish teachers have several years experience teaching language.
- ★ There is very little transience of teachers, so teachers are well established and stable.
- ★ The homeroom teachers at the elementary level are supportive of sharing space with the Spanish teachers.
- ★ In classes that were observed (at every level), most of the teachers were intentional about providing many opportunities for students to engage in pairs or small groups and practice in the language in all 3 modes.
- ★ It was clear, in most classes, that teachers have worked hard to create a safe space for learners to take risks with language use and have a good rapport with teachers.
- ★ Teachers are willing to spend time after contract hours monthly to learn and grow through professional learning opportunities and collaboration time.
- ★ The elementary teachers have adapted well to being itinerant and were organized with their materials and activities.
- ★ The middle school teachers made excellent use of time and transitions.
- ★ The middle school team clearly plans very cohesively and collaboratively.
- ★ In both middle and high school the teachers used technology appropriately and effectively to allow learners to explore and engage using the language.
- ★ In many of the secondary classes teachers used the language 90%+ of the time, and learners were able to participate and respond, using the language themselves.
- ★ The middle school team works hard to take learners where they are coming from elementary school, and prepare them for high school.
  - This was recognized and appreciated by the learners at high school as well.

### **Course offerings, Recognitions, and Learning Support/Enrichment**

- ★ As learners move into the higher grades they have options to take or add other languages.
- ★ Students who are native in other languages are encouraged to test for the Seal of Biliteracy in as many languages as they speak.



- ★ High school students have many opportunities to show what they have learned and take on leadership through participation in National Honor Societies, National Society Tests (National French Exam, National Spanish Exam, AP Exams etc...) and through proficiency testing with STAMP for a Seal of Biliteracy.

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- ★ Large numbers of students have been recognized with awards based on their language achievements in their national societies.
- ★ The percentage of students who test for the Seal and achieve it is extremely high (~94%) and that average has been fairly constant for a number of years now!
- ★ Students have opportunities to travel abroad and experience many cultures and languages during their high school years.
- ★ There are celebrations and cultural events that highlight and showcase cultures, languages and student projects at every level.
- ★ The parents in the community voiced their support for learning languages and many of them are bilingual themselves.
- ★ The high school provides multiple tracks for Spanish language learners so that learners from all entry points and abilities are able to take a language.
- ★ The community appreciates the opportunity for learners to get support if they are struggling learners in Spanish.
- ★ The district funds testing and other opportunities for learners to pursue awards and recognition.

#### **Leadership at the Building and District Levels**

- ★ The district office administration supports the program and wants to see it evolve and grow to serve the students of the district in meaningful ways.

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- ★ There is involvement from various administrative positions at the district and school levels to support and plan with teachers for their program needs, schedules and resources.
- ★ The district benefits from a WL supervisor who is knowledgeable and experienced with regard to best practices, and who serves as an advocate for students and teachers.
- ★ The WL supervisor is actively engaged in observing, supporting and evaluating and providing feedback to teachers.
- ★ There is opportunity for teachers to take on leadership roles within the department (example: the book study led by teachers).
- ★ The district provides teachers with opportunities to have a voice and participate in writing units for study and in selecting instructional materials.
- ★ The WL staff have opportunities to participate in professional learning at various levels during the year (state, regional, national).
- ★ Teachers are able to pursue leadership opportunities and collaborate and support their colleagues if desired.
- ★ The curriculum units of study under development are based on backward design and will provide scaffolding for vertical articulation in the program.
- ★ The district has identified appropriate proficiency targets for every level and course of study for Spanish and other languages.
- ★ The district has created units and course curriculum are based on the ACTFL National Standards.
- ★ There is a desire on the part of the district leadership, students and teachers to learn more about proficiency and proficiency-driven practices.
- ★ There is a desire to increase performance-based practices and use internal proficiency data, and external data to inform instructional practices and district program planning.

### **Recommendations**

These are things that the district may want to consider based on best practices and to respond to concerns of stakeholders.

### **Program Philosophy**

*Challenge/Area of Need: No one at any level or position was able to articulate a common vision or goal aligned to the district vision for the world language program.*



It is recommended that the district create a strategic planning team comprised of representatives from all stakeholders (admins, teacher leaders, board members, select parents) to examine the program review, and define the WHY of the program. Once the WHY (purpose, mission and vision) of the program is clear, agreed upon and understood by all, then a strategic direction for 3-5 years with measurable goals can be created to begin moving the program forward in a manner that addresses concerns, builds on strong practices and increases performance and proficiency outcomes of the learners. When creating a vision, strong consideration should be given to the opportunities for learners and Westport graduates in the state of Connecticut due to the impact of the global community and business opportunities.

### **Program Goals**

*Challenge/Area of Need: Program goals are generally created in order to support and realize the program's mission and vision. There is currently no defined mission and vision statement for the program so program goals are currently being determined and/or acted upon and on a very individual basis without a common vision for set outcomes.*

Program goals will become integral to the planning process for the strategic planning team. There are some key indicators of successful programs that are indicated on the Avant Best Practices Rubric that will help provide guidance, however the goals should also meet the interests, needs and demands of the community the learners and teachers live in. Creating measurable goals will ensure that progress is monitored and that adjustments may occur to meet the needs of the program depending on the data.

### **Communication Plan**

*Challenge/Area of Need: Effective, frequent, and clear communication is an area that was repeatedly mentioned as lacking by teachers, parents and administrators. There is no organized, systematic practice or platform in place at any level (classroom to district level) for communicating program information, student progress, expected outcomes, celebrations, events, awards, or initiatives. Clear communication was requested to be a priority by parents.*



Some of the misunderstandings and miscommunications regarding the program could be easily resolved with more strategic communication. A strategic communication plan and use of social media platforms to inform the community of the wonderful things happening in the program, the goals for the program and events they can participate in would help to ensure that parents feel part of the program and understand what their learners are able to do in the language and how they are progressing.

### **Strategic Planning and Collaboration**

*Challenge/Area of Need: Surveys and interviews with teachers revealed a strong need and desire for teachers to have opportunities to collaborate, be strategic in their planning and more informed of what others are doing across the district (horizontally and vertically). The instructional materials, student comments and student outcomes support that this is a valid request and need in order to strengthen the program and proficiency outcomes.*

Teacher collaboration is key to ensuring a learning experience for all learners that is equitable and engaging. Providing dedicated time for professional learning and collaborative planning that supports areas of need in their instructional practice and units of study, materials and resources as well as strategies and methods will help them to become stronger and more effective teachers.

### **Supplemental Instructional Supports**

*Challenge/Area of Need: There were concerns voiced from teachers and parents about how to better support newcomers into the program as well as how to support learning that extends beyond the classroom.*

District and building level administrators are able to make critical decisions about scheduling, course creation and acquisition of resources that support the learning experiences. It is recommended that they work with the WL teachers and hear their concerns about challenges they face supporting newcomers or struggling learners in order to provide a solution through the schedule and curriculum that will ensure the all learners have access to learning a language in an environment that supports their needs. Additionally, high school learners have identified they would like to use language in more authentic contexts in real-world situations. Using technology and tapping into the global community around Westport, administrators are encouraged to



consider how partnering with classrooms abroad or with local global businesses may provide extension and enrichment opportunities for language learners in a real world setting.

### **Curriculum Units and Instructional Materials**

*Challenge/Area of Need: One commendation to the program is that there is a strong articulation and ample units and instructional materials for teachers and students. However, there are areas within the curriculum and how teachers are using the materials that are not proficiency-driven and could prohibit a focus on proficiency outcomes.*

As UbD units of study are developed, they should provide clear guidance from the beginning of what the proficiency target is for the unit, in addition to the course target. What learners will be able to communicate by the end of the unit should be clear and shared with the learners. Currently the units are heavily focused on grammar and vocabulary vs. communication and proficiency. While supplemental materials do address communicative practices, the unit is what drives instruction. It is highly recommended that teachers receive focused professional learning about how to make the shift to a proficiency-driven practice and instructional design that will accelerate and increase student proficiency outcomes and encourage engagement and use of the language.

### **Best Practices: Instructional Strategies**

*Challenge/Area of Need: While there were incredibly strong teachers and instructional strategies demonstrated during the observations, there was some inconsistency in some critical practices that high performing districts employ.*

It is recommended that the program create quality assurances and set expectations for certain instructional practices. Practices may include: 90+ use of the language of instruction, engagement strategies that increase practice of 4 skills, use of protocols, reduction in use of worksheets, proficiency targeted tasks and practice (without penalty), rating for proficiency, proficiency-based feedback, inclusion of student voice in activities and goal setting.



### **Best Practices: Learning Cycles and Assessment**

*Challenge/Area of Need: While the program does provide assessments that target the 3 modes/4 skills of communication, implementation and data collection from these assessments*

*are not part of the practice. Teachers and students said during interviews that they are not using them consistently or providing an instructional focus on the target proficiency outcome of the assessment (with the exception of middle school).*

Best practices in assessment involve a data-driven approach, knowing where learners are in the beginning, where they are going (target) and what they will need to get there. This creates the need for data collection along the way and a strong instructional learning cycle. In language learning the strongest strategies include models of gradual release, high engagement strategies that support reading, writing, listening and speaking, progress monitoring, use of proficiency rubrics, self-assessment, peer assessment and effective feedback. The observations concluded that this is not an instructional model adopted by the majority of teachers. It is recommended that the WL team receive focused professional learning regarding these practices and instructional coaching as they begin implementation.

### **Data Informed Practices**

*Challenge/Area of Need: There were no data-informed practices observed or shared when asked. The only data being collected and considered is at the district level, regarding the Seal of Biliteracy.*

For a WL program to become a program of excellence (which Westport is well within the reach of becoming), decisions must be made based on data-driven practices. This type of practice provides key insights into where learners are performing, where they are in need of support or excelling and what adjustments to the strategic plan and instructional practices should be made. Without using data, everyone is essentially on their own path and doing their own thing without a common shared vision and direction. This impacts the program from the beginning to the end. The program has experienced a high degree of success due to strong instructional practices



overall, however, the outcomes could exceed national averages if decisions re: program needs, learning experiences and instructional practices were data-driven. This is what parents expressed they wanted for their children and what was identified as a critical need by administrators and teachers alike. It is recommended that the program consider professional learning on how to

create and collect formative data, and that the program conduct proficiency testing at multiple levels in order to track proficiency growth and monitor progress.

### **The Elementary FLES Program**

*Challenge/Area of Need: Administrators and parents voiced serious concern about the purpose, outcomes and practices in the Spanish FLES program. Board members and some parents expressed a desire to shift to a different program model (possibly dual language immersion) and administrators voiced a desire to eliminate it completely if it is not yielding the desired outcomes and not changes are made.*

This review revealed that there are a considerable number of FLES teachers who are not elementary language certified teachers or who are not trained explicitly in teaching language to young learners. It is highly recommended that the district seek to hire highly qualified individuals who are certified or undergoing intensive training that supports teaching elementary age children a second language through effective instructional practices.

In response to concerns raised by parents and board members regarding the learners' experiences and language growth in the program, it is recommended that the FLES teachers create a communication plan and system that highlights and celebrates the learning happening in the program so that parents are able to see what their children are doing and capable of in the language vs. only hearing from their children.

It is also recommended that quality assurances with regard to strong practices be implemented along with professional learning that focuses on engagement and building language output. In addition, it is recommended that administrators receive some support and professional learning regarding what makes a FLES program successful, practices to look for and strategies for engaging and celebrating language with the school community at the elementary level. This



introductory level is a KEY experience for families as the foundation of the language experience learners will have throughout their pathway in Westport. Assessing the learners' proficiency levels would be another means of tracking actual growth in language and provide data to support what instruction and learning are taking place.

### Summary of Recommendations

1. Create a strategic planning team comprised of representatives from all stakeholders (admins, teacher leaders, board members, select parents) to examine the program review, and define the WHY of the program.
2. Create a strategic direction for 3-5 years with measurable goals to begin moving the program forward in a manner that addresses concerns, builds on strong practices and increases performance and proficiency outcomes of the learners.
  - a. When creating a vision, strong consideration should be given to the opportunities for learners and Westport graduates in the state of Connecticut due to the impact of the global community and business opportunities.
3. Create measurable goals that will ensure that progress is monitored and that adjustments may occur to meet the needs of the program depending on the data.
4. Create a strategic communication plan and use of social media platforms to inform the community of the wonderful things happening in the program.
5. Work to provide consistent, dedicated time for professional learning and collaborative planning that support areas of need identified for instructional practices.
6. Create an opportunity for WL teachers to share their concerns about challenges they face supporting newcomers or struggling learners in order to provide a solution through the schedule and curriculum that will ensure the all learners have access to learning a language in an environment that supports their needs.
7. Consider opportunities within the community and beyond to support the high school learners who have identified they would like to use language in more authentic contexts in real-world situations.
8. Provide focused professional learning about how to make the shift to a proficiency-driven practice and instructional design that will accelerate and increase student proficiency outcomes and encourage engagement and use of the language.
9. Provide professional learning and support to ensure strong UbD units of instruction for world



languages that focus on a strong progression of proficiency. Review and revise units of study to ensure that proficiency targets and alignment are clearly identified.

10. Create quality assurances and set expectations for certain instructional practices.
  - a. Practices may include: 90+ use of the language of instruction, engagement strategies that increase practice of 4 skills, use of protocols, reduction in use of worksheets, proficiency targeted tasks and practice (without penalty), rating for proficiency, proficiency-based feedback, inclusion of student voice in activities and goal setting.
11. Provide focused professional learning regarding strong learning cycles and assessment practices and instructional coaching as they begin implementation of these practices.
12. Consider professional learning on how to create and collect formative data, and that the program conduct proficiency testing at multiple levels in order to determine baseline proficiency levels, track proficiency growth and monitor progress.
13. Seek to hire highly qualified individuals who are certified or undergoing intensive training that supports teaching elementary age children a second language through effective instructional practices.
  - a. Explore opportunities to hire international, certified teachers through a teacher exchange program.
14. Create a communication plan and system that highlights and celebrates the learning happening in the program so that parents are able to see what their children are doing and capable of in the language vs. only hearing from their children.
15. Provide quality assurances for the FLES program with regard to strong practices to be implemented along with professional learning that focuses on engagement and building language output.
  - a. In addition, it is recommended that administrators receive support and professional learning regarding what makes a FLES program successful, practices to look for and strategies for engaging and celebrating language with the school community at the elementary level.



## Next Steps

### **District Level**

Review program review, collect thoughts, reflections and questions. Consider what really resonates and matches your district vision and purpose for your learners. Follow up with MORE Learning to discuss creating a strategic plan of action. Determine how and when to share the review with teachers and stakeholders. Set a time to meet with Avant MORE Learning for follow-up (Dawn Samples).

### **Avant MORE Learning**

MORE Learning is prepared to support the Westport WL program and district team moving forward in all areas of recommendation through advisement, facilitating discussions, professional learning and connecting with other programs.

For more information

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Avant Assessment, Avant MORE Learning

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**About Dawn Samples:** As the Director of Avant MORE Learning and MEDLI (MORE Effective DLI), Dawn works to coordinate the Avant MORE Learning team as they partner with language programs K16 and language organizations and agencies both domestic and abroad in building and sustaining strong, proficiency-driven programs.

Dawn joined Avant in 2019 following 16 years as the Coordinator for World Languages and Immersion for Lexington School District One in Lexington, South Carolina, where she created a national award-winning, completely performance-based and proficiency-driven program. Dawn has served as an adjunct for teaching in distance learning environments, and as an instructional language methodologies instructor for the University of South Carolina, the College of Charleston and The Citadel. Since her career began in 1992, she has worked as a consultant to and for ACTFL as she helped to develop the ACTFL Proficiency Descriptors for K12 (1998), the ACTFL Assessment Standards for the year 2000, and she has served on various other committees and task forces to support teachers and students' learning at the national, state and regional levels. Dawn is passionate about sharing her learning around her work in Lexington One where she and her team developed a completely proficiency-driven program, winning the NSBA's (National School Board Association) MAGNA Award for Innovation in 2014, and the ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award in 2015. Other recognitions of her work include the SCOLT Teacher of Excellence Award in 2009, the NADSFL (National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages), Supervisor of the Year Award in 2017, and the SCFLTA (SC Foreign Language Teachers Association) Lifetime Achievement Award in 2023.

Dawn's Avant MORE Learning team of expert practitioners specialize in supporting, advising, coaching and collaborating with educators in the field by supporting, expanding and seeding language learning programs, and supporting the teaching and implementation of strong, effective instructional practices and assessments that will help programs reach their proficiency goals. Her goal is for Avant MORE Learning to provide high quality professional learning opportunities and supports for educators that will increase proficiency for language learners and build a strong professional community of learners.

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**Avant MORE Learning Information**

<https://morelearning.avantassessment.com> (Professional Learning)

<https://avantassessment.com> (Testing Information)

Instagram: @more\_learning\_

Twitter: @more\_learning\_

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/morelearning>

Wakelet: @MORELearningatAvant

<https://www.youtube.com/c/AvantMORELearningchannel>

Avant MORE Learning Social Media

Contact us for MORE information!

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**WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**THOMAS SCARICE**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

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To: Westport Board of Education Members  
From: Thomas Scarice, Superintendent of Schools  
Re: Strategic Plan Update  
Date: June 1, 2023

On February 6, 2023, the Board of Education was presented with the final version of the district strategic plan (<https://play.champds.com/ATT/westportschoolsct/2023-02/d05101a26524a5e00ea85563a2dc8a2c09f716a2.pdf>) This plan is grounded in two primary pillars, well-being and collaborative problem solving, while supported by seven long-term strategic objectives, and approximately 27 initiative charters. The milestone timelines embedded in the initiative charters illustrate how the work is planned to be sequenced over the next 3-5 years. Changes in sequence and timing of specific milestones will be continually contemplated as the plan is implemented. These changes will be shared with the Board in interim updates, such as the one planned for Monday evening.

On Monday June 5, the Board will receive an interim update on two strategic objectives under the well-being pillar:

- Elevate Student Voice and Engagement
- Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities

Although work has been conducted across the scope of the seven strategic objectives over the past four months since the last presentation, and additional work is planned for the summer, an update on these two strategic objectives is timely. Dr. Valerie Babich, Coordinator of Psychological Services, will join me in providing this interim update.

Below is information for the Board’s consideration in advance of Monday’s meeting. The update will provide the Board with information on the milestones in select initiative charters. Many of these milestones are on schedule, while some have been paused in order to take advantage of additional time and faculty participation over the summer.

In short, I enthusiastically share the student voice opportunities that will be implemented at each level in September. These opportunities are captured below and will be discussed at the Board meeting.

**Strategic Objective: Elevate Student Voice and Engagement**

This objective is grounded in two primary initiatives:

- Student Voice: Student Advisory/Leadership/Governance Roles
- Student Feedback

**Student Voice: Student Advisory/Leadership/Governance Roles**

At the elementary level, a subcommittee was developed and the team identified existing structures that currently capture student voice at each school. The subcommittee reviewed best practices for student leadership at the elementary level and developed an application process with roles and responsibilities. This student leadership group will meet monthly with the building principal beginning in September for the purpose of providing student input on school policies and practices. Additional ideas will continue to be shared across all five elementary schools as the district implements year one of this effort.

The middle schools worked collaboratively to develop and identify existing structures that capture student voice at each school. Criteria was developed for the implementation of a student advisory board. A process is being fleshed out that will require a letter of interest from each student seeking to join the advisory board. A student representative from each team/pod will be selected to form this student leadership structure. The building principal will hold monthly meetings with this standing group for the purpose of providing student input on school policies and practices.

In both the elementary and middle school levels, details to the processes will continue to be ironed out over the summer. The entire scope of this effort (i.e. selection process, meeting structure, etc.) will be revisited after the pilot year in order to inform any necessary revisions.

The high school has two efforts to increase student voice in relation to current policies and practices. The “Student

Assembly” will be implemented as outlined on page 66 of the current Staples High School Student Handbook (<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1673640907/westport/viratungxjysk8dfvj0d/StaplesHighSchoolStudentHandbook2022-23.pdf>). This program has evolved over time and the school will return to the model in the handbook for the purposes of amplifying and increasing student voice and input on school policies and practices.

This model, “The Staples Student Assembly” is designed for the “promotion of student affairs and interests”. This student leadership body “serves as the student voice for the Collaborative Team and the school.” The structure calls for 40 members, 10 members from each class. The school will reinstate elections for the selection process and use the summer months to specify bylaws, the election process, and other pertinent operational details. The Student Assembly will meet twice a month, once with the building principal, and once with faculty advisors.

The other effort at the high school level is the selection of two student representatives to the Board of Education. The Board will vote on Bylaw 9160, “Student Representatives on the Board of Education”, Monday evening. In anticipation of Board approval, the team has worked to develop a process for the selection of the two student representatives.

The model is designed to seat two student representatives to the Board, one junior and one senior. As the district increases student voice at each level, this effort is intended to provide student voice at the governance level, i.e the Board of Education. This is not intended to increase the number of students at governance level, only representation at this level.

The recommended process for student selection begins with students seeking a teacher to sponsor their candidacy with a faculty letter of recommendation. Recommended students will then be provided with a prompt and submit an essay related to their aspirations to serve. Interviews will be conducted by a team including the building principal, two Board members, and three additional faculty members or building administrators. At that point, the Board can receive the finalists for the final review and selection process.

The recommendation is to promote this opportunity this September, conduct the search process in October and to install the two new student representatives to the Board of Education following the November Election Day. In subsequent years, this process will be implemented in April and May for rising juniors in order to install a new student representative from the rising junior class for September of the following year.

Again, additional work is planned over the summer to continue to refine all of the efforts outlined above.

#### Student Feedback

All three levels have discussed methods for student feedback on their school experiences and the learning process. The subcommittees have been mindful of the need to implement age-appropriate methods.

A subcommittee was developed at the elementary level and information was gathered on current feedback practices from all teachers. Results were reviewed and the team drafted survey questions, one set of questions for K/1st grade, and another for grades 2-5. The team is currently collecting teacher feedback on the draft before landing on the final version to pilot next year. Student feedback questions will be in place for September at the elementary level. The schools will solicit feedback three times a year, keeping this method aligned with Progress Reports.

The middle schools also developed a subcommittee and held initial meetings. The middle level team recommended continuing this work over the summer by continuing to research best practices at the middle level in gathering student feedback. It is likely that a bank of questions will be provided to faculty and a process for anonymous feedback will be ready to launch at the start of the school year. The team will flesh out the questions this summer and establish the frequency of soliciting student feedback, likely three times a year.

A subcommittee met at the high school level and shared initial ideas based on feedback data gathered at the March faculty meeting. It was determined that the current subcommittee was too small to provide broad adequate representation and the group would reconvene over the summer to fully analyze information gathered from teachers on current practices. Additionally, the summer will provide ample time for the team to research best practices on how to gather student feedback, and to develop a tool (e.g. a bank of survey questions for teachers to choose) which can be administered quarterly to allow for time to make adjustments before end of the course/semester.

Again, the Staples Student Handbook is instructive as it includes the following language to help guide the active pursuit of student feedback:

#### **(Page 35) FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS TO TEACHERS**

*At the conclusion of each course, students are given the opportunity to provide feedback to teachers about the course, teaching approaches and contents. Teachers use the feedback to improve learning experiences for students.*

The summer work will provide sustained focus and time to finalize all of these feedback efforts for full implementation for

the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.

**Strategic Objective: Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities**

As stated in the summary for the “Development of SEL Scope and Sequence”, the development of a PK-12 scope and sequence ensures explicit instruction in SEL competencies, which are inextricably linked with high levels of academic achievement. These SEL competencies represent the broad domains students should know and be able to do.

The initial focus over the last four months for this objective was not as ambitious as the “Student Voice: Student Advisory/Leadership/Governance Roles” objective. The focus over the past four months was to formally assemble subcommittees, begin an evaluation of the current SEL curriculum at each level, research new SEL approaches for the secondary level, and seek feedback on SEL curriculum options. Furthermore, to ensure that appropriate time is provided for SEL curriculum implementation, members of the SEL instructional team were to be assigned to the committees assigned to revisit the master schedule at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

The elementary level SEL curriculum is articulated and in place. The team will take advantage of summer time to evaluate current scope and sequence for RULER lessons and to review Responsive Classroom (RC) practices. A new professional development model is being considered which would train two leader teachers at each elementary school to develop expertise in training of RC approaches and strategies, while also providing refreshers and addressing issues specific to a particular school. The team will reintroduce bullying prevention lessons and analyze the current curriculum to ensure alignment with SEL standards

The middle schools and high school have each formed subcommittees and discussed Universal-Dialectical Behavior Therapy (U-DBT) as a potential SEL curriculum for secondary students. A training model is under consideration and is being discussed with a provider that would train all secondary staff to establish common SEL practices and language. The Connections advisors will be prioritized for training as this is an opportunity for curriculum implementation in the Connections program.

Finally, all three levels have administrators and/or members of the SEL instructional team, on the master scheduling committees at each level to ensure dedicated time will be provided for wellbeing initiatives and SEL curriculum implementation.

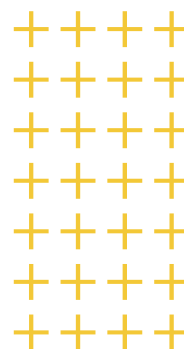
**Closing**

Although summer offers the most opportune time for sustained focus on work such as this, the district has been able to keep moving forward with this work. There has been progress in the other strategic objectives as well. I have secured four of the five slots for an advisory council for the Center for Leadership Development (CLD), and I am eager for that foundational work this summer related to mission/vision, administrative structures, etc. for the CLD. An interim report to the Board in the fall will reflect these efforts. A faculty driven committee, similar to the one on motivation theory and the use of time last summer, will be formed this summer to drive the growth mindset work. Finally, the ambitious collaborative problem solving pillar will advance their work in the coming months, particularly over the summer and fall. This will also be part of an interim report to the Board in the fall.

That said, the priority of amplifying and increasing student voice is imminent across the entire school community. The range of these structures is expected to be fully implemented at the start of the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.



**WESTPORT  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**



**2022**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

[www.westportps.org](http://www.westportps.org)

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# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1

Establish the Westport Public Schools "Center for Leadership Development"

2

Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students

3

Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities

4

Elevate Student Voice and Engagement

5

Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks

6

Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum

7

Revitalize Learning Spaces

## 1

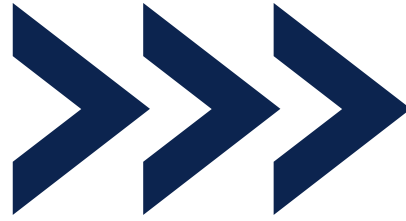
## Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Effective leadership is the ability to influence and help others maximize efforts towards the achievement of worthy goals. Leadership is more than a title or position. Leaders can be found at all levels of an organization, community, family, etc. Each individual is the leader of their own life. The capacities of effective leadership are necessary for an individual to thrive in the modern world, leading groups, teams, organizations, and in the personal development of their own life.

### WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

As a result of the demands of the modern world, and the limitless possibilities of leadership development for students, the Westport Public Schools will establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development” (CLD). The CLD will provide leadership development for all students in their pursuits of leading groups, teams, organizations and their own lives. Age-appropriate programs will be created to serve the entire K-12 system, targeted training will be delivered to active student leaders, and personal development programs will serve each student in leading their own lives. Programs will include leadership instruction integrated into the academic content in the district curriculum, guest speakers, seminars, a library, and supported resources. Ultimately, a physical location for the CLD will anchor dynamic and interactive learning experiences for all students across the system, offering a space for study, discourse and instruction.

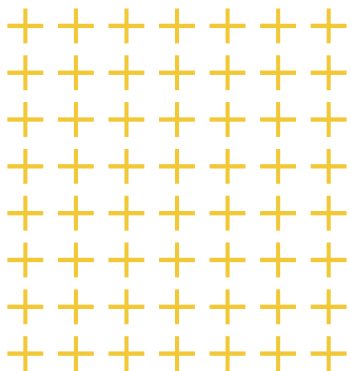


### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

The CLD will be served by an advisory board of established, successful leaders within the Westport community. Faculty, curriculum leaders, and leadership experts will guide the integration of leadership development capacities and the district curriculum. Student leadership opportunities will be expanded and training opportunities will be incorporated as part of these roles. Guest speakers and seminars will be identified to align with the developmental levels of students and academic content. A physical location will be secured to serve as the district hub of leadership development for training, seminars, guest lectures, with a vibrant library of leadership development resources.

### **INITIATIVES**

- CLD Advisory Council
- Secure Physical Location/Facility
- Develop K-12 Leadership Training Program/Curriculum Integration
- Expand K-12 Student Leadership Opportunities
- Develop Calendar of Leadership Topics/Speakers for Seminars/Lecturers

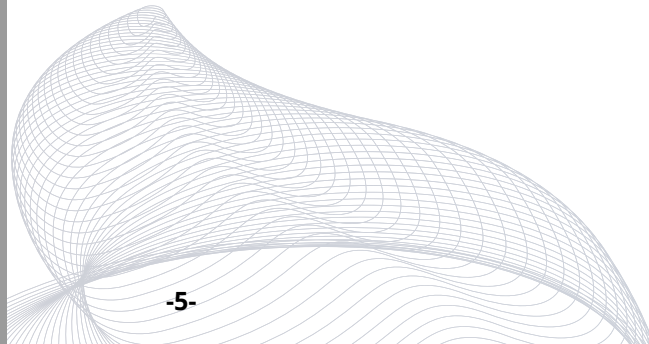


# 1

## Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”

<b>Initiative Name</b>	CLD Advisory Council	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	The formation of an “Advisory Council” for the Center for Leadership Development will provide thought partners in guiding the overall direction of the CLD over time. Networking among community experts in leadership and brainstorming in the sequencing of the CLD development are a couple of the functions an advisory council can serve.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting times, identification of worthy candidates to serve on the CLD Advisory Council		

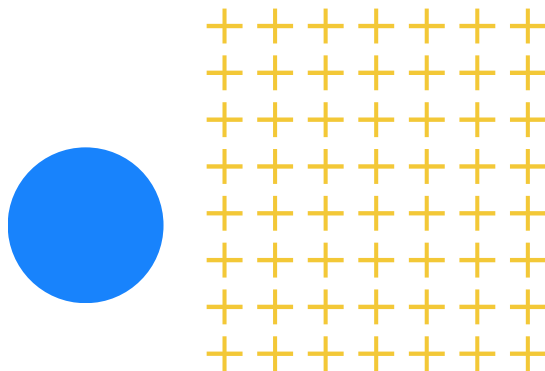
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Identification and formation of CLD Advisory Council	Feb 23	April 23	Pending
2	Establish written mission/vision for CLD within expectations of BOE strategic plan	April 23	Aug 23	Pending
3	Establish roles, responsibilities, expectations of CLD Advisory Council	April 23	Aug 23	Pending
4	Conduct brainstorming to assist in creation of administrative structures to support program development (i.e. seminars, lecture series, library, physical location, etc.)	April 23	Aug 23	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Secure CLD Physical Location/Facility	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Establish the Westport Public Schools "Center for Leadership Development"		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	A physical location for the CLD will anchor dynamic and interactive learning experiences for all students across the system, offering a space for study, instruction, and discourse through seminars and guest lectures.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Funding for instructional/multimedia resources, funding for physical space, travel		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Determine space needs based on programmatic aspirations (i.e. library of multimedia resources, study, instruction, discourse, seminar/lecture, etc.)	Sept 23	Feb 24	Pending
2	Research and visit leadership development centers in higher education and independent schools	Sept 23	May 24	Pending
3	Research and create a bank of alternative/creative funding streams (i.e. education foundation, previous successful fundraising experiences in Westport and other settings, etc.)	Sept 23	May 24	Pending
4	Identify list of potential sites within community	Sept 24	May 24	Pending
5	Secure final site	June 25	Sept 25	Pending

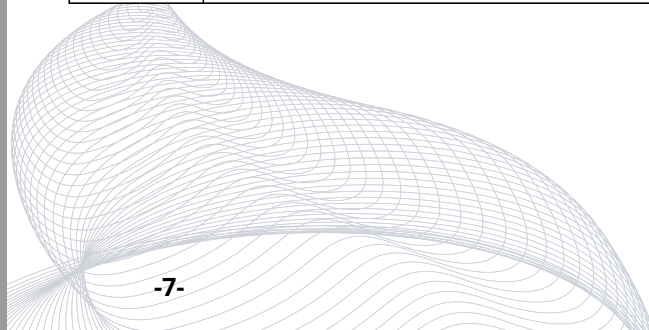


# 1

## Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Develop K-12 Leadership Training Program/Curriculum Integration	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	For a leadership program to have a material and positive impact on our students, a formal training program with authentic curriculum integration must be established		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Faculty time for research and program development		

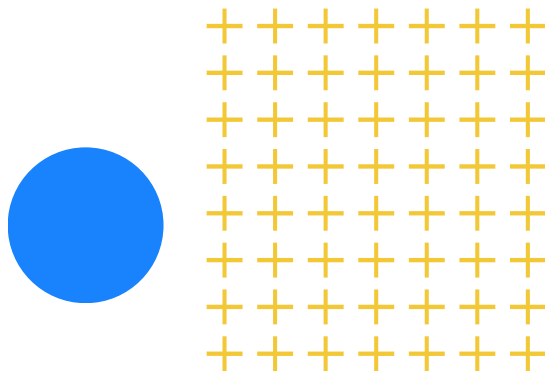
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form district wide team of faculty for leadership program development and curriculum integration, invite leadership experts to serve as advisors	April 23	May 23	Pending
2	Research formal, commercial leadership programs to identify resources for core training elements,	July 23	Dec 23	Pending
3	Determine if formal programs are suitable, if some elements of programs can serve as a foundation, or if there is need to develop a leadership training program from ground up with WPS faculty, identify primary programmatic themes	Jan 24	May 24	Pending
4	K-12 Program development (adopt formal program, create local program or hybrid of the two)	July 24	May 25	Pending
5	Identify authentic opportunities to integrate leadership training in existing WPS curriculum across disciplines	July 25	May 26	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Expand K-12 Student Leadership Opportunities	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Establish the Westport Public Schools "Center for Leadership Development"		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Building Principals		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	In order for students to develop leadership capacities there needs to be authentic opportunities to practice in actual leadership roles. Athletic captains serve as one example. Opportunities must grow for students to develop these skills.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Administrator and faculty time, consultation		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Each school will identify existing leadership opportunities for students in the classroom and school-wide	Sept 23	Dec 23	Pending
2	Building based teams will identify additional age-appropriate leadership opportunities for students (i.e. clubs, leading volunteer efforts, etc.)	Jan 24	May 24	Pending
3	Newly identified leadership opportunities will be developed and implemented for the 24-25 school year at each school	Sept 24	May 25	Pending
4	Assess success of new leadership opportunities from 24-25 school year and determine additional opportunities for the 25-26 school year	July 25	Sept 25	Pending

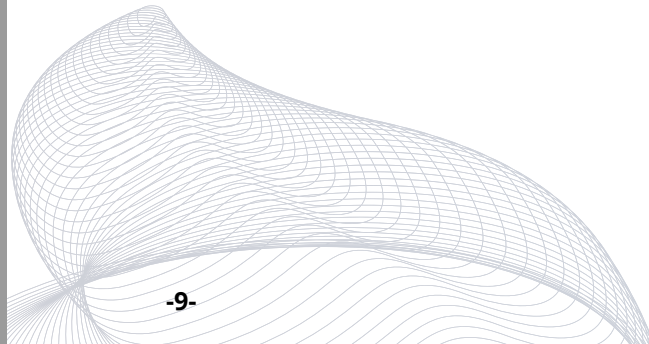


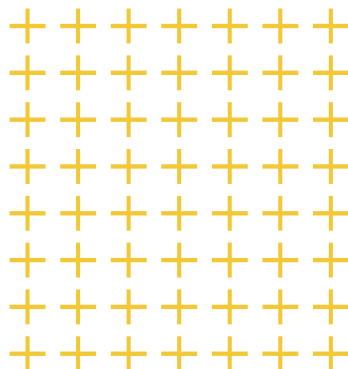
# 1

## Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Calendar of Leadership Topics/Speakers for Seminars/Lecturers	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Establish the Westport Public Schools “Center for Leadership Development”		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	A comprehensive leadership development program will include leadership instruction, integration of leadership instruction into the academic content in the district curriculum, and guest speakers/seminars. Providing our students with access to outside experts will grow their knowledge base of leadership beyond boundaries of their community.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Time, Funding for Guest Lecturers		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Identify programmatic priorities (see “Develop K-12 Leadership Training Program/Curriculum Integration”) for leadership themes for lectures and seminars	May 24	Aug 24	Pending
2	Determine annual seminar/guest lecture series (i.e. monthly, quarterly, etc.)	Aug 24	Dec 24	Pending
3	Determine budget needed for 25-26 implementation	Dec 24	Jan 25	Pending
4	Identify first guest lecture/seminar series aligned with programmatic themes	Jan 25	May 25	Pending
5	Implement inaugural guest lecture/seminar series	Sept 25	May 26	Pending





## 2

## Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Thriving and making a positive contribution in the modern world requires resiliency, intrinsic motivation, and adaptability in the face of constant change.

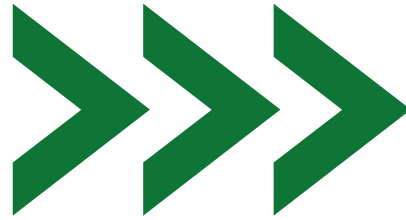
An individual's mindset and belief systems are consequential to the development of resiliency, intrinsic motivation, and adaptability. A belief system is a set of beliefs/principles that helps us interpret our everyday reality, understand, organize, and make sense of the world, individually held beliefs about what is, or should be, right and wrong and what is, or should be, true and false. One belief system is the distinction between a "growth" or "fixed" mindset. A growth mindset is the belief that an individual's most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and effective effort, that intelligence and talent are malleable and can grow over time. A growth mindset belief posits that individual success is dependent on persistence, time, and effective effort.

Conversely, a fixed mindset describes individuals who believe their intelligence and talents are fixed traits that are unchangeable and cannot grow, leading to the pursuit of proving oneself correct rather than learning from mistakes and experiences. The challenges our students will face as young adults warrant a deep belief in the growth mindset in order to foster resiliency, intrinsic motivation, and adaptability. The development of a growth mindset is affected by many practices in the school setting such as, adult verbal behaviors and choice of language, teacher pedagogy, school district policies/practices, student opportunities for choice and voice, and explicit instruction in growth mindset tenets.

### WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

In order to stimulate a growth mindset belief system in all students, the district will build common knowledge in the growth mindset tenets across the school community including faculty and parents/guardians. An audit of school policies/practices will be conducted to determine what "systemic" processes (e.g. code of conduct, feedback/grading, formative assessment, reward systems, student voice opportunities, etc.) encourage or inhibit the development of a growth mindset across students. Professional development will be delivered training teachers in the adult verbal behaviors, choice of language, and instructional moves that promote a belief in the growth mindset. Student opportunities for choice in the classroom, and student voice in the school setting will be expanded. Curriculum units will be developed for age appropriate explicit instruction in growth mindset tenets and delivered in the classroom setting for all students.

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### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

The district will engage guest experts in workshop settings for parents/guardians and school faculty to build common knowledge about the tenets and benefits of a growth mindset belief system. The entire school community will also be invited to participate in a “community-wide read”, an engaging shared reading experience where members of the community all read and discuss one book. A district-wide team of faculty and administrators will be formed to conduct an audit of district and school policies and practices to determine alignment with growth mindset principles. Teachers will be provided professional development in the adult verbal behaviors, choice of language, and instructional moves that promote a growth mindset. A team of faculty will study modern motivation theory and develop a white paper of guidance for policy/practice considerations. Curriculum development funds will resources the creation age appropriate instructional units for explicit instruction in growth mindset tenets.

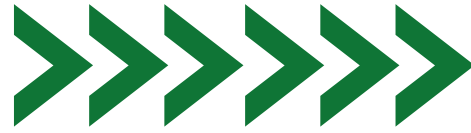
### **INITIATIVES**

- School Community Workshops
- One Book, One Community
- Motivation Theory White Paper
- Growth Mindset Policy and Practice Audit
- Growth Mindset Professional Development
- Growth Mindset Units of Instruction

## 2 Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students

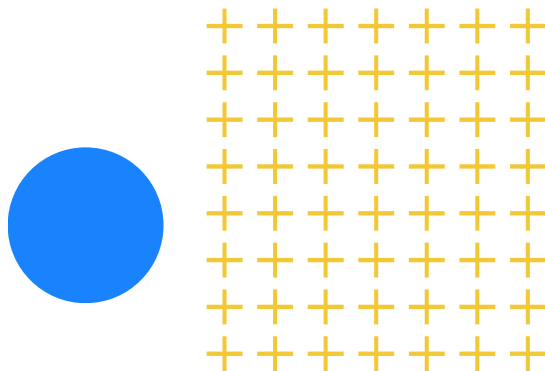
<b>Initiative Name</b>	School Community Workshops	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	TBD - Seeking Faculty Volunteer or Small Team of Volunteers		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	The district will build common knowledge in the growth mindset tenets across the school community including faculty and parents/guardians, in order to establish common language and understandings.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Speaker fees, space for public workshop/discussion		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Partner with PTA, community groups to identify workshops for families, faculty and community at large on the tenets of "Growth Mindset"	Sept 23	Nov 23	Pending
2	Take information from book discussion (see "One Book, One Community" to develop parent/community workshops	Feb 24	April 24	Pending
3	Host and facilitate first "Growth Mindset" community workshop	April 24	May 24	Pending
4	Identify workshop series for 24-25 school year	May 24	Aug 24	Pending



<b>Initiative Name</b>	One Book, One Community	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	TBD - Seeking Faculty Volunteer or Small Team of Volunteers		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	The district will build common knowledge in the growth mindset tenets across the school community including faculty and parents/guardians, in order to establish common language and understandings.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Books, space for public workshop/discussion		

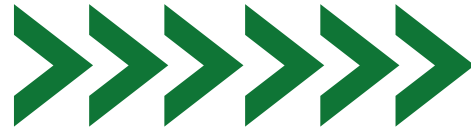
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Initiate community-wide read of "Growth Mindset" by Carol Dweck	Sept 23	Nov 23	Pending
2	Host and facilitate community book discussions (i.e. community wide, school based, etc.)	Nov 23	Nov 23	Pending
3	Identify volunteers to record common understandings and community consensus from book discussions	Nov 23	Nov 23	Pending
4	Assemble information from book discussions to identify additional learning opportunities	Dec 23	Feb 24	Pending



## 2 Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students

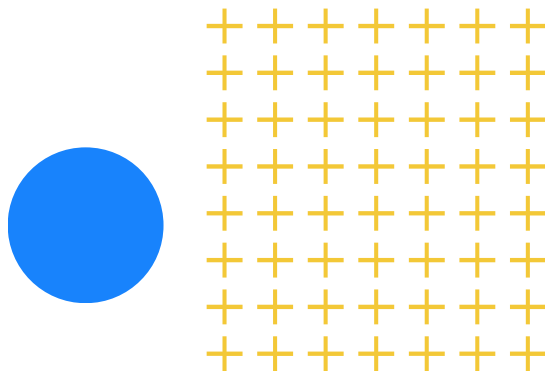
<b>Initiative Name</b>	Motivation Theory White Paper	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Michelle Walker and Jame'el Lawrence		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	Modern motivation theory is not well understood or effectively applied in the school setting. A thorough understanding of modern motivation theory is foundational to the fostering of a “growth mindset”. This white paper will serve as a resource when considering policy, practices and pedagogy that foster a “growth mindset”.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Time for faculty		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form faculty team to research and write a summary advisory white paper on current motivation theory literature	April 22	June 22	Completed
2	Conduct research and summarize findings	June 22	Aug 22	Completed
3	Develop white paper for publish and presentation	Aug 22	Sept 22	Completed
4	Publish and present findings, present final white paper to community	Sept 22	Oct 22	Completed



<b>Initiative Name</b>	Growth Mindset Policy and Practice Audit	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	TBD - Seeking Faculty Volunteer or Small Team of Volunteers		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	The development of a growth mindset is affected by many practices in the school setting such as, adult verbal behaviors and choice of language, teacher pedagogy, school district policies/practices, and explicit instruction in growth mindset tenets. This initiative will assess the alignment of policy and practice with growth mindset tenets.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Faculty time		

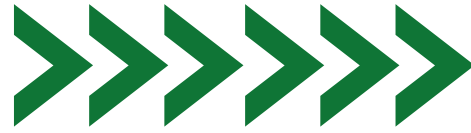
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form faculty team to begin assessment process	April 23	June 23	Pending
2	Identify the “systemic” processes (e.g. code of conduct, feedback/grading, formative assessment, reward systems, etc.) that encourage or inhibit a growth mindset	June 23	Dec 23	Pending
3	Prioritize one of the identified areas, make recommendations for policy/practice changes, present recommendations	Jan 24	April 24	Pending
4	Develop plan for remaining identified areas	June 24	Aug 24	Pending



## 2 Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students

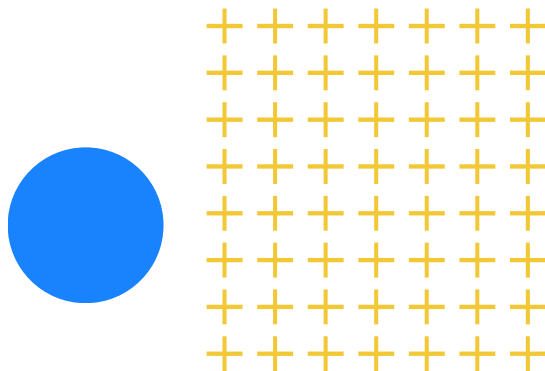
<b>Initiative Name</b>	Growth Mindset Professional Development	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Anthony Buono		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	Adult verbal behaviors, teacher language, and instructional moves all impact a student's development of a growth mindset. Formal training in these areas is necessary to increase student belief in a growth mindset.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Training, faculty time		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Identify training programs, professional development providers in verbal behaviors, teacher language and instructional moves that foster growth mindset belief systems	May 23	Aug 23	Pending
2	Identify professional development time (part of PD days, faculty/grade level/department meetings, and other opportunities)	May 23	Aug 23	Pending
3	Develop training opportunities within the district wide PD plan, pilot minimum of one training during 23-24 school year	Aug 23	May 24	Pending
4	Implement additional training opportunities for all staff	Aug 24	May 25	Pending
5	Develop and implement ongoing additional training plan	May 25	May 26	Pending



<b>Initiative Name</b>	Growth Mindset Units of Instruction	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Stimulate Growth Mindset Belief Systems in All Students		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Anthony Buono		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	In addition to the impact of policies and practices on the development of a growth mindset, students need direct instruction in the tenets, as well as opportunities to reflect.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Faculty time		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Assess social/emotional curricular scope and sequence (see Strategic Objective: "Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities") for opportunities to integrate growth mindset lessons	Sept 23	Dec 23	Pending
2	Develop a bank of age appropriate growth mindset lessons for integration with SEL curriculum	Jan 24	Aug 24	Pending
3	Pilot lessons at each level	Sept 24	May 25	Pending
4	Assess effectiveness of lessons and make modifications where necessary	July 25	Aug 25	Pending
5	Implement growth mindset lessons across all levels	Sept 25	May 26	Pending



# 3

## Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities

### **WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

Social and emotional well-being is inextricably linked to high levels of academic achievement. Many of the factors that will enable students to thrive as young adults include a broad range of social/emotional capacities, such as: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These social/emotional capacities represent the broad domains of what students should know and be able to do for academic success, civic engagement, health and wellness, and fulfilling careers. Students need explicit instruction and consistent opportunities to practice, and reflect on their social and emotional learning. Mastery of academic content is an absolute necessity for student success beyond formal schooling, however, without social/emotional mastery, it is insufficient.

### **WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?**

The district will provide dedicated time in the master schedule for explicit instruction in key social/emotional capacities. Instruction will be provided by highly qualified teachers based on the development of a clear curricular scope and sequence, which will be articulated in the same manner as academic content. Teachers will use active learning strategies and the district will commit to integrating social/emotional instruction with academic content and targeted authentic activities to provide students the practice and reflection needed for mastery.

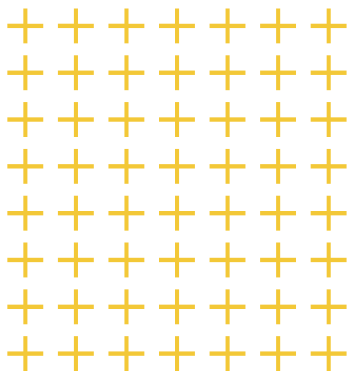


### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

A representative faculty team of curriculum writers will co-create a standards-based curricular scope and sequence based on the CASEL framework. Specific attention will be given to capitalize on authentic connections between academic content and identified social/emotional capacities. Master schedules will be reviewed to ensure time continues to be dedicated to direct, explicit instruction in social/emotional capacities. Professional development will be provided by qualified internal faculty members, and external experts (i.e. Responsive Classroom trainers, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, certified Dialectical Behavioral Training (DBT) specialists, etc.).

### **INITIATIVES**

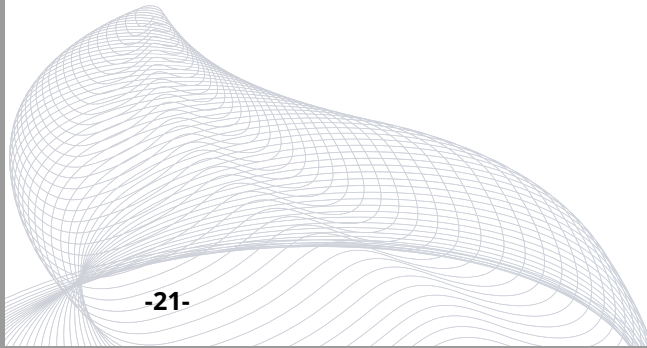
- Development of SEL Curriculum Scope and Sequence
- Dedicated Time for Instruction
- Social/Emotional Skill Instruction Professional Development (Paused Following Implementation of Beginning Initiatives)
- Authentic Connections for Practice and Reflection (Paused Following Implementation of Beginning Initiatives)
- Integrate with Academic Content (Paused Following Implementation of Beginning Initiatives)



# 3 Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Development of SEL Scope and Sequence	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Ann Neary and Valerie Babich		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	The development of a PK-12 Scope and Sequence will ensure explicit instruction in SEL competencies which is inextricably linked with high levels of academic achievement. These SEL competencies represent the broad domains students should know and be able to do.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Identified teams, meeting times, CASEL resources		

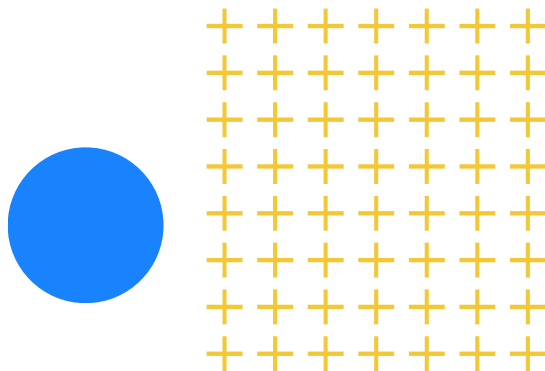
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form subcommittee at each level	Jan 23	Jan 23	Pending
2	Evaluate current SEL curricula at each level	Feb 23	April 23	Pending
3	Research new SEL curriculum for secondary level	April 23	June 23	Pending
4	Gather feedback from stakeholders regarding SEL curriculum options	May 23	June 23	Pending
5	Develop scope and sequence at each level	July 23	Aug 23	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Dedicated Time for SEL Instruction	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	In Progress
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Excel in Explicit Instruction of Social/Emotional Capacities		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Ann Neary and Valerie Babich		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	Master schedules will be reviewed to ensure time continues to be dedicated to direct, explicit instruction in SEL competencies.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	White Paper on Use of Time, meeting times		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Identify Wellbeing committee members (from SEL instruction team) from each level to join Scheduling committee meetings and serve as liaison between the committees.	Jan 23	June 23	In Progress
2	Wellbeing teams at each level develop recommendations about time for SEL instruction to the Scheduling committees.	July 23	Aug 23	Pending
3	Gather feedback from stakeholders regarding recommendations about time for SEL instruction.	Sept 23	Oct 23	Pending



## 4

**Elevate Student Voice and Engagement****WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

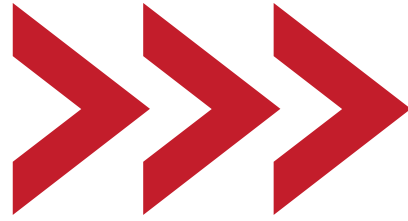
Student input and student voice are critical to a positive school climate.

Students have a unique perspective on how school policy and practices impact the day-to-day life of their school and their voices are critical to quality schoolwide well-being efforts. Student voices can help the district make informed decisions to support all learners. Furthermore, engaging students authentically as leaders, problem-solvers, and decision-makers, can position them as partners in how programs and services are delivered for their well-being. When done well, active involvement of student voice can provide an opportunity for the development of a sense of agency—the feeling of control over actions and their consequences, and their impact on the wider school community.

**WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?**

The district will create space for all students to provide their perspectives, share in decision-making, and lead and initiate action across the school community.

The district will actively solicit student input on key decisions affecting the school community, appoint students to serve on key leadership teams at the school and district level, explore alternative methods to report on their academic progress through approaches such as, student-led conferences.

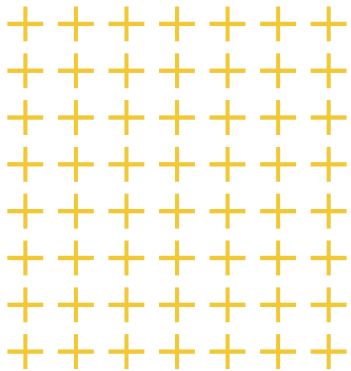


### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

A regular schedule of age-appropriate student surveys (school-wide climate surveys, end of course surveys, topical surveys, etc.) will be developed and implemented to actively gather student perspectives. Active student government, advisory councils to school and district administration, as well as student leadership opportunities will be identified and implemented K-12. A Board of Education policy enabling a student representative(s) to the Board will be adopted. A professional study team of faculty and administrators will identify alternative methods for academic progress reporting.

### **INITIATIVES**

- Student Feedback
- Student Voice: Student Advisory/Leadership/Governance Roles
- Professional Study: Alternative Methods for Academic Progress Reporting (Paused Following Implementation of Beginning Initiatives)

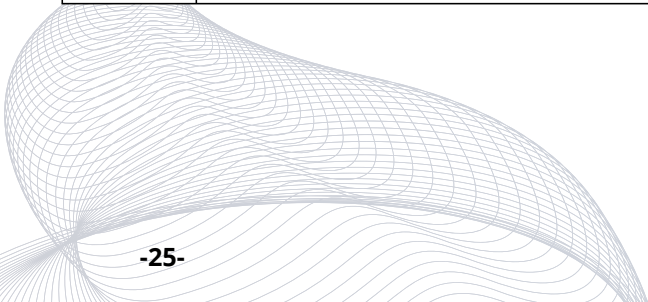


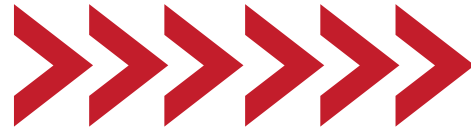
# 4

## Elevate Student Voice and Engagement

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Student Voice: Student Advisory/Leadership/Governance Roles	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Elevate Student Voice and Engagement		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Ann Neary and Valerie Babich		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	Student input and student voice are critical to a positive school climate. They provide a unique perspective on how school policy and practices impact the day-to-day life of their school and their voices are critical to quality schoolwide well-being efforts. Student voices can help the district make informed decisions to support all learners.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Identified teams, BOE Guidelines		

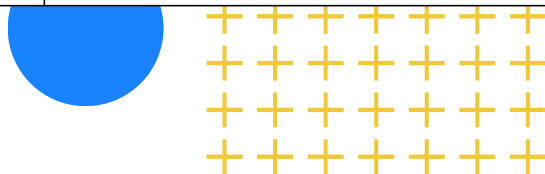
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form subcommittee for each level made up of administrators and faculty	Jan 23	Feb 23	Pending
2	Identify existing student groups/activities that capture student voice at each level (e.g. student assembly, student council)	Feb 23	March 23	Pending
3	Develop criteria for student leadership structure and purpose at each level	March 23	April 23	Pending
4	Establish student leadership structure and purpose at each level	April 23	June 23	Pending
5	Identify role and responsibilities for 2 SHS student representatives to the BOE	March 23	June 23	Pending
6	Name 2 SHS student representatives to the BOE	Aug 23	Aug 23	Pending
7	Implement one new formal method/structure for active student voice in school and district policies/practices at each level (elementary, middle, high school)	Sept 23	June 23	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Student Feedback	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Elevate Student Voice and Engagement		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Ann Neary and Valerie Babich		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	Student input and student voice are critical to a positive school climate. They provide a unique perspective on how school policy and practices impact the day-to-day life of their school and their voices are critical to quality schoolwide well-being efforts. Student voices can help the district make informed decisions to support all learners.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Identified teams, research and best practices on student feedback.		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Form subcommittee for each level made up of administrators and faculty	Jan 23	Feb 23	Pending
2	Gather information about how student feedback is currently shared both formally and informally	Feb 23	April 23	Pending
3	Research best practices in determining the type of student feedback that is needed and how to gather it (e.g. surveys, course feedback, focus groups)	April 23	June 23	Pending
4	Develop best practices for gathering student feedback at each level and coordinated approach	July 23	Aug 23	Pending
5	Gather feedback from stakeholders and develop timeline for student feedback	Aug 23	Sept 23	Pending
6	Implement one new formal method to gather student feedback at each level (elementary, middle, high school) (e.g. surveys, course feedback, focus groups)	Sept 23	Dec 23	Pending
7	Evaluate initial student feedback measures and plan adjustments, additions for 24-25 school year	Jan 24	March 24	Pending



## 5

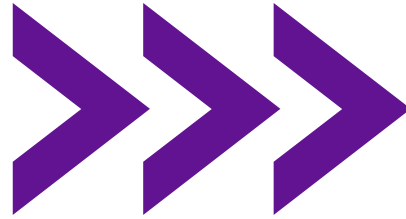
## Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) defines collaborative problem solving as: “students’ capacity to effectively engage in a process whereby two or more agents attempt to solve a problem by sharing the understanding and effort required to come to a solution, and pooling their knowledge, skills and efforts to reach that solution”. Our students will continually face extraordinarily complex challenges throughout their lives, most that do not even exist today. Their ability to collaboratively problem solve will be essential to contribute on an individual level, but also collectively as citizens of a democracy.

### WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

A learner-centered approach prioritizes student voice as central to the learning experience and requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning. Examples of this approach include project-based learning. The district will create resources (i.e. bank of instructional strategies, defined student competencies for collaboration, inquiry, growth mindset, etc.) to establish a common understanding and language for learner-centered tasks. Educators will build the knowledge and capacity to collaborate effectively as a professional learning community to develop and grow the highest quality instructional repertoire in advancing student mastery of the competencies that promote effective problem-solving. Interdisciplinary cornerstone tasks, open-ended, authentic, and highly engaging student learning experiences intended to anchor a curriculum, will be developed and built across the K-12 system at critical points (i.e. starting with grades 5 and 8). Priority learning outcomes of cornerstone tasks will bring the current rigorous academic standards to life, while also promoting necessary problem-solving skills and capacities.

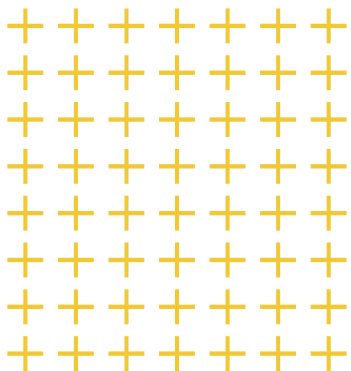


### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

To advance collaborative problem-solving throughout the district, a team of educators will develop a learner-centered task inventory. This will serve as a district-wide resource for identifying and defining instructional practices that support collaborative learning and students' agency in the learning process. Educators will engage in professional learning focused on the implementation of collaborative problem-solving instructional strategies within their school communities. This includes problem-solving collaboratively with colleagues and students to build and enhance learning communities throughout the district. Teams of faculty will work to develop high interest authentic interdisciplinary cornerstone tasks to pilot and implement across grade levels and subject areas.

### **INITIATIVES**

- Create Learner-Centered Task Inventory
- Professional Development to Promote Collaborative Problem-Solving Instructional Practices
- Develop Interdisciplinary Cornerstone Tasks Across K-12

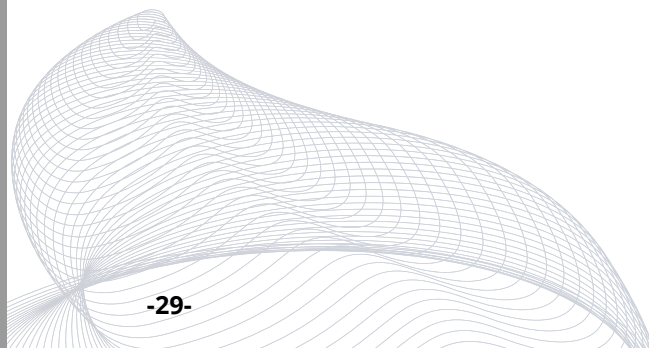


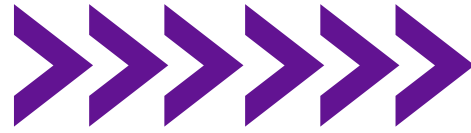
# 5

## Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Create Learner-Centered Task Inventory	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	In Progress
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Phaedra Taft, Keri Tighe, and Lauren Francese		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative will involve the creation of a learner-centered task inventory that serves as the foundational work for the development of cornerstone tasks. As students navigate their school years and prepare to enter an interdependent world, their ability to understand and appreciate different perspectives and worldviews and establish positive interactions with others is essential for learning. This initiative frames collaborative problem solving tasks in this context and begins the process of anchoring the curriculum with collaborative problem solving tasks.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting times, teacher release hours, website development support/hours		

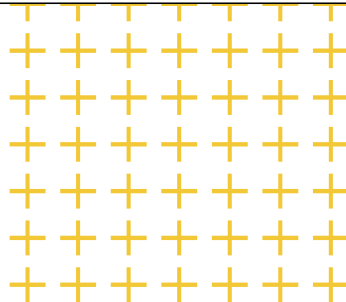
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Establish a team (sub-committee) to build consensus around collaborative problem solving tasks that connect students' local context to the world.	Feb 23	Mar 23	Pending
2	Draft criteria through which to identify examples of learner-centered tasks that incorporate collaborative problem solving in an instructional context (re: design thinking, problem solving, collaboration).	Mar 23	May 23	Pending
3	Reconvene steering committee to review and provide feedback on draft criteria.	May 23	May 23	Pending
4	Align criteria with illustrative examples and publish on the Teacher Curriculum Resources database.	May 23	June 23	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Professional Development to Promote Collaborative Problem-Solving Instructional Practices	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Natalie Odierna, Keri Tighe, Lauren Francese		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative establishes a multidisciplinary team to begin planning for professional development. Once school leaders, faculty, and staff have access to a learner-centered task inventory, they can focus on understanding and implementing new (and renewed) strategies to promote collaborative problem solving in their instructional practices. Through structured sharing of teacher and student work, educators will engage in collaborative analysis and reflection as a community of professionals.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting times, teacher release hours, website development support/hours		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Establish a team (sub-committee) to identify protocols for sharing student and teacher work that aligns with collaborative problem solving, including considerations for relevance to an ever-changing global environment.	Mar 23	July 23	Pending
2	Refine protocols for sharing student work during department and faculty meeting sessions. [leadership team]	July 23	Aug 23	Pending
3	Establish a plan for public teaching and classroom walkthroughs aligned with instructional practices for collaborative problem solving, including considerations for the use of digital media and technology, healthy decisions to enhance wellbeing, and respect for others.	Aug 23	Nov 23	Pending
4	Conduct focused public teaching and classroom walk-throughs K-12 and facilitate collaborative analysis and reflection about effective instructional practices using established protocols.	Nov 23	Feb 24	Pending

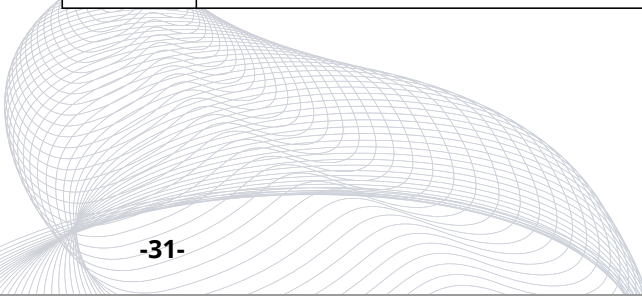


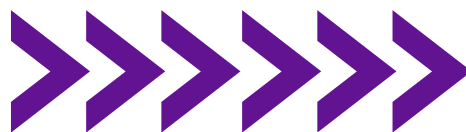
# 5

## Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Develop Interdisciplinary Cornerstone Tasks Across K-12	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Anchor the Curriculum with Collaborative Problem-Solving Cornerstone Tasks		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Anthony Buono		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	In the final stage of this initiative, teams of faculty will work to develop cornerstone tasks, which will be piloted and implemented across grade levels and subject areas. Student learning outcomes are emphasized in this phase as students engage in collaborative problem solving tasks that will prepare them for managing their own learning, build knowledge, engage in complex thinking about problems with no known or single right answer.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Professional development time and funding, website development support/hours		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Establish a team (subcommittee) to identify topics of local and global significance that invite disciplinary and interdisciplinary grounding for the development of cornerstone tasks K-12.	Aug 24	Nov 24	Pending
2	Design cornerstone tasks for grades K-12 that provide opportunities for students to engage in inquiry tasks that are collaborative, problem-based, and support global competences that connect students' local experience to the world.	Nov 24	Feb 24	Pending
3	Pilot, test, iterate, and refine cornerstone tasks through curriculum development, program evaluation, and renewal processes.	Feb 24	Feb 25	Pending
4	Establish a partnerships network with students' families, community members, and organizations to enhance students' learning experiences within the cornerstone tasks and the curriculum as a whole.	Feb 25	Aug 25	Pending
5	Publish cornerstone tasks within the Teacher Curriculum Resources database.	Aug 25	Sep 25	Pending





## 6

## Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Iterative problem-solving processes, such as design thinking, built into curriculum include opportunities for student discovery, interpretation and creation of ideas, experimentation, rethinking, and revision ([Iowa Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching](#), 2022). There is great value in using rigorous academic content to integrate the process of empathizing, substantive brainstorming, and prototyping across disciplines. Design thinking has a human-centered core and encourages a trained iterative mind. As the district endeavors to make our students what “futurist” Chris Bishop described as “future proof,” professional educators must first identify, then develop, the “micro-skills” that build design thinking competencies for students, and integrate student mastery of these problem-solving competencies, naturally in academic content. Student mastery of these iterative problem-solving processes requires abundant opportunities for practice across subject areas. This work will enhance an already strong academic program PreK-12, and take the program to bold, new levels.

### WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?

The district will provide dedicated time and professional development resources for curriculum review and revision to ensure that students are guaranteed curricular opportunities to master iterative problem-solving processes (including models of design thinking) across grade levels and content areas. Systemic changes in the content of professional development, and faculty/administrator evaluation will reflect the priority of effective instruction in student mastery of iterative problem-solving processes.

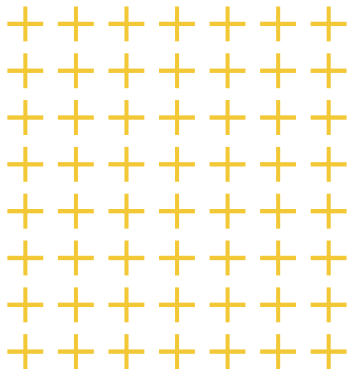


### **HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

Supported by the curriculum review guidelines, the district will identify the ways in which iterative problem solving processes can be grown and integrated into the academic curriculum. This will inform targeted professional development within targeted curricular areas where iterative problem-solving processes can be developed, shared, and revised. To further demonstrate the district's commitment to high-quality instructional practices, the professional development and evaluation committee will make revisions to the Professional Development and Evaluation Plan (PDEP) that prioritize student mastery of iterative problem solving processes.

### **INITIATIVES**

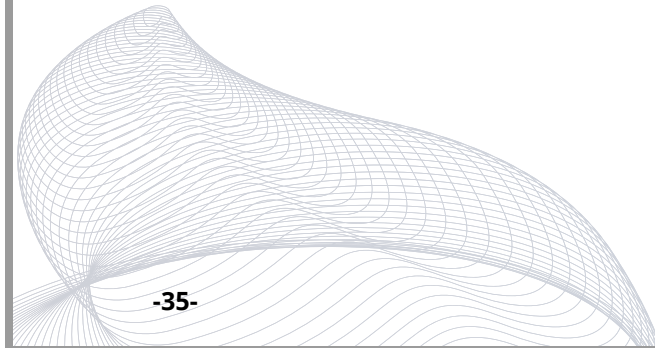
- Identify Existing Iterative Problem-Solving Learning Experiences
- Develop New Assured Iterative Problem-Solving Learning Experiences
- Align Professional Development and Evaluation Plan (PDEP) With Iterative Problem-Solving Pedagogy



# 6 Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Identify Existing Iterative Problem-Solving Learning Experiences	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Anthony Buono		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	In this initiative, collaborative problem solving learning experiences will be defined by the criteria set forth in Initiative 5. The criteria developed by Westport teachers and administrators will be shared with all educators, including illustrative examples specific to a grade band or department. A representative from each building or department will be identified to oversee the collection and submission of existing iterative problem solving experiences, which will be used in a program evaluation as a progress checkpoint for this pillar of the strategic plan.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting time and release time, Google drive		

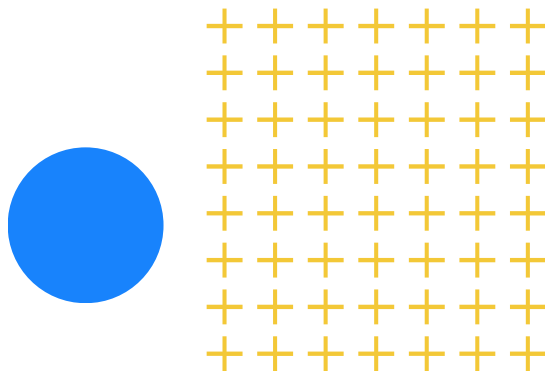
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Initiate a program evaluation of the written curriculum to identify iterative problem solving tasks and gather existing materials.[T&L, by committee]- name a facilitator	Oct 25	Nov 25	Pending
2	Share the review with coordinators and principals and invite them to work with grade level teams and/or course-alike groups to identify additional examples of iterative tasks.[Lauren Francese & Keri Tighe]	Nov 25	Mar 25	Pending
3	Conduct a tri-state visit and report on the program evaluation to the Board of Education Teaching and Learning Committee.[Kim Strazza]	April 25	June 25	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Develop new assured iterative problem-solving learning experiences	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Allison Moran, Keri Tighe, Lauren Francese		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative is focused on expanding professional knowledge and practice, specifically design thinking. Once the criteria for iterative problem solving experiences is established, the steering committee members will plan and facilitate design thinking workshops to develop guaranteed curricular opportunities for collaborative problem-solving processes across grade levels and content areas. This work will enhance an already strong academic program PreK-12, and take it to bold new levels.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting time, release time, summer work curriculum funding, website development support/hours		

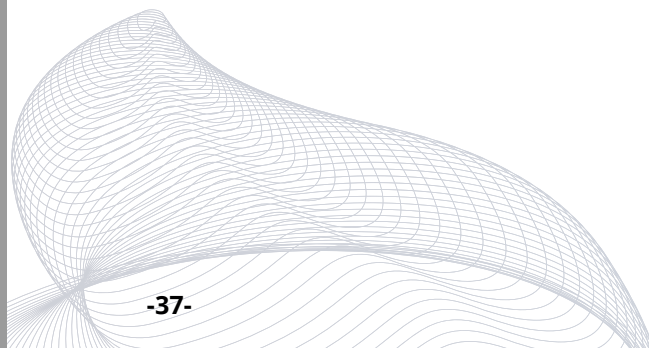
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Plan design thinking workshops. Participants will create and imagine iterative tasks in multidisciplinary teams.[Lauren Francese & Keri Tighe]- add steering committee members here Tech Plan Goal: Criteria and a timeline will be established to evaluate the impact of instructional and assessment tools (hardware and software)	Mar 25	Jun 25	Pending
2	Facilitate design thinking workshops[add steering committee members here]	Jun 25	Aug 25	Pending
3	Add design thinking examples and resources to the Teacher Curriculum Resources database.[Kim Strazza]	Aug 25	Sep 25	Pending

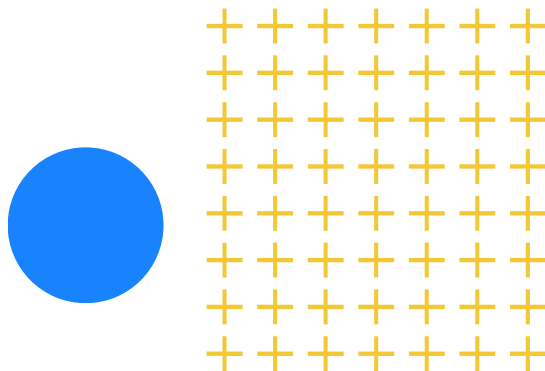


# 6 Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Align Professional Development and Evaluation Plan (PDEP) With Iterative Problem-Solving Pedagogy	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Integrate Iterative Problem Solving Processes into Curriculum		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Anthony Buono and John Bayers		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative will inform targeted professional development within curricular areas where iterative problem-solving processes can be developed, shared, and revised. To further demonstrate the district's commitment to high-quality instructional practices, the professional development and evaluation committee will make revisions to the Professional Development and Evaluation Plan (PDEP) in order to prioritize student mastery of collaborative problem solving processes.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting times, teacher release hours, website development support/hours		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Evaluate student performance on cornerstone tasks tasks that connect students' local context to the world (i.e.investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas, and taking action).	Aug 25		Pending
2	Incorporate language in the PDEP document that provides for the evaluation of meaningful, learner centered experiences that bring other cultures into the school/classroom, including evidence of collaborative curriculum development and instructional planning.	Aug 25		Pending
3	Add formal opportunities to the PDEP document for teacher analysis and reflection. Develop a system for reviewing teacher and student work using established protocols and considerations for relevance to an ever-changing global environment.	Aug 25		Pending





## 7

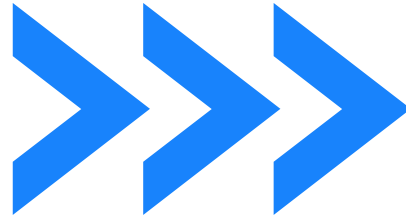
## Revitalize Learning Spaces

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**

Learning spaces are both physical and online environments where learning and teaching occur. Learning spaces must be designed with and for the current generation of students. "There is a deep longing among educators and parents alike for schools to be places where children want to be rather than have to be, places where they thrive and are eager to engage in their developmental imperative to connect with others, learn, and grow" (Tschannen-Moran & Clement, 2018). It is critical to provide sustaining spaces that support collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity. These revitalized spaces also offer increased opportunities to accommodate a broad range of innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

**WHAT ARE WE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH?**

The district will provide accessible and discovery-oriented educational spaces using feedback from students and educators. Potential considerations may include increasing knowledge mobility and reducing social stress.

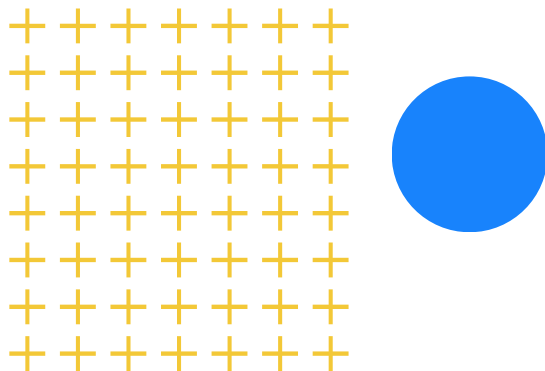


**HOW WILL WE ACCOMPLISH THIS?**

In order to revitalize learning spaces to enrich learning and teaching, the district will begin with an evaluation of the current physical and online spaces PreK-12. This evaluation will include recommendations for improvement, renewal, or reimagined spaces that foster student autonomy and support future-ready skills (i.e. leadership, collaboration).

**INITIATIVES**

- Evaluate Current Physical and Online Learning Spaces
- Design New (and Renewed) Physical and Online Spaces

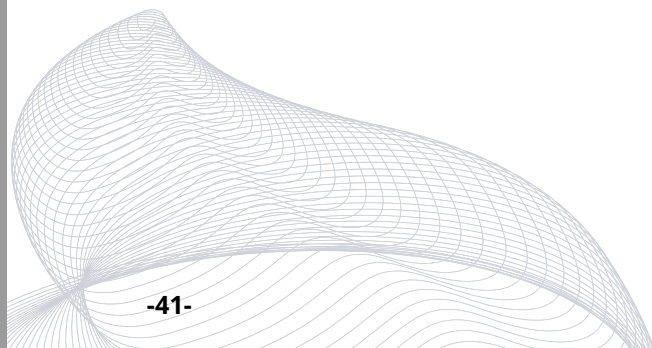


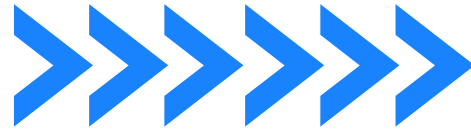
# 7

## Revitalize Learning Spaces

<b>Initiative Name</b>	Evaluate Current Physical and Online Learning Spaces	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Revitalize Learning Spaces		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice and Anthony Buono		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative is focused on the evaluation of both physical and online learning spaces. These revitalized spaces will offer increased opportunities to accommodate innovative instructional approaches to promote interconnectedness, collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Meeting time, curriculum release time, data collection/analysis support, travel funding		

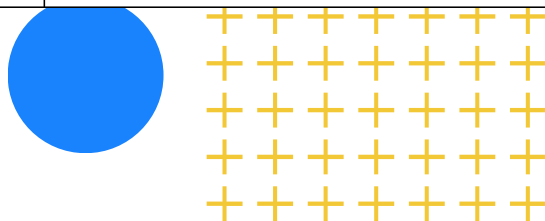
#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Send a district team to the <a href="#">EDspaces Conference</a> .	Nov 23	Nov 23	Pending
2	Create and implement a survey to all staff about school, classroom, online, and outdoor space.	Sept/Oct 24	Sept/Oct 24	Pending
3	Report findings to The Office of Teaching and Learning.	Nov/Dec 24	Nov/Dec 24	Pending





<b>Initiative Name</b>	Design New (and Renewed) Physical and Online Spaces	<b>Initiative Status:</b>	Pending
<b>Supports Objective</b>	Revitalize Learning Spaces		
<b>Initiative Owner</b>	Thomas Scarice, Keri Tighe, Lauren Francese		
<b>Initiative Summary</b>	This initiative will establish a plan for expanding the footprint of the school district beyond the classroom. Learning spaces are both physical and online environments where learning and teaching occur and new, renewed spaces must be designed with and for Westport students.		
<b>Resources Required</b>	Identify teams, teachers release time, walk throughs, conference space		

#	Milestones	Start Date	End Date	Status
1	Conduct evaluations of each school's physical and online spaces with considerations for supporting and sustaining a school culture that elevates collaborative problem solving, one in which issues of global significance are evident in hallway bulletin boards, cafeteria discussions, student work, library displays, school website, and events.	2025		Pending
2	Establish school-based teams to develop key partnerships with organizations and institutions that can enhance their focus on collaborative problem solving, with a focus on connecting students' local context to the world.	2026		Pending
3	Establish a plan for a school footprint beyond the classroom. Businesses, universities, museums, cultural organizations, government, and retail stores who have been identified through school-based partnership teams will provide support for cornerstone tasks and curricular programs as partners in supporting students' education that is responsive and relevant to an ever-changing global environment.	2026		Pending





**WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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Telephone: (203) 341-1025  
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To: Westport Board of Education Members  
From: Dr. Anthony Buono, Assistant Superintendent, Stafford Thomas, Staples High School Principal  
Re: Staples High School Grade 9 Performance Indicators  
Date June 1, 2023

The current grade 9 cohort experienced the combined middle schools at Bedford for their 6th grade year, and half of their 7th grade year. They also experienced the Covid shutdown in the spring of 6th grade and the hybrid model in 7th grade. In order to assess their progress and the subsequent impact of these experiences, the Staples administration has worked with Dr. Anthony Buono to develop a composite of informative indicators.

This composite of indicators is intended to help inform the district of the progress of this cohort. It is not designed to be definitive as no one measure, or composite of measures, can definitively tell the story. Yet, there is value in reviewing these indicators.

The list for review for grade 9 performance includes: First Semester Unweighted GPA, PSAT, Attendance, Crisis Forms (i.e. mental health crisis referrals), Referrals to Special Education, and Faculty Recommendations for Honors/AP courses. Where possible, these numbers are contextualized by comparing to previous years.

Dr. Buono and Staples Principal, Stafford Thomas, will provide a brief overview and be available for questions from the Board.

<b>First Semester Unweighted GPA</b>	Class of 26: 3.6025 Class of 25: 3.6007 Class of 24: 3.4951 Class of 23: 3.5357
<b>PSAT 9</b>	2019: 536ERW/524 Math 2020: 554 ERW/549 Math 2021: 544 ERW/536 Math 2022: 544 ERW/540 Math 2023: 537 ERW/534 Math
<b>Attendance</b>	2022- 96% daily avg. 2023- 95% daily avg.

<b>Crisis Forms</b>	2020-21=2	2021-22=14	2022-23=6
<b>Referrals to Special Education</b>	2020-21=16 (6 determined eligible)	2021-22=23 (9 determined eligible)	2022-23=36 (4 determined eligible, 7 pending, as of 5/26/23)
<b>Faculty Recommendation for Honors/AP</b>	2022=257	2023=232	

Based on the performance data gathered above, the numbers tell us that macro level performance metrics of our 9th grade class appear to be on par with prior cohorts of 9th graders. While this data does not tell the entire story or stories of specific students, it does provide a snapshot of the overall 9th grade performance. That said, we acknowledge and are aware that subgroups of students and individual students continue to require additional support, and our staff works collaboratively and creatively to meet these needs.

The PSAT example shows that 9th grade student scores were higher during the pandemic compared to the pre-pandemic numbers. The number of honors/AP recommendations for the class of 2026 heading into 10th grade was down a bit from the class of 2025 heading into 10th grade, but well within the year-to-year fluctuations of this data set.

Mean PSAT 8/9 scores for the class of 2026 taken this March reflect a slight decrease from the previous three years, yet an increase from 2019 when the test was taken pre-pandemic. We typically see this kind of variation year to year on the PSAT, SAT, ACT, and AP due to a variety of factors, most notably the academic strength of a particular cohort. In line with recent years, approximately 85% of students in the class of 2026 met standards in both Evidence-Based Reading & Writing and Math.

The average first semester unweighted GPA for the class of 2026 is actually higher than GPAs for 9th graders in previous years. Despite stresses and challenges they may face, our 9th grade students continue to perform at a high level academically. Overall, we are not seeing so dramatic of a change that would stand out beyond what we typically see in fluctuations year to year, cohort to cohort.

Crisis forms are completed for students who experience a mental health crisis in school or outside of school when the school becomes aware. These situations typically involve self-harm, suicidal ideation, or threats to self or others. Of course, the school takes these situations seriously, addressing them through established and research based protocols, collaboration with students and families, and working closely with community providers. The current 9th grade class has had fewer crisis forms completed than the prior year.

Special education referrals are higher this year than in previous years. This appears to be largely due to an increase in parent requests. Although we experienced an increase in referrals, the number of students that qualified for special education services appears to align with historical numbers. However, this still remains to be seen as we have a handful of referrals that remain pending.

9160

## Bylaws of the Board

### Student Representatives ~~on the Board of Education~~

The Westport Board of Education (the “Board”) values the opinions, perspectives, and input of students in the Westport Public Schools. In addition, student participation in Board-related matters allows students to learn from direct experience about how governing bodies function. Therefore, to promote student input into decisions affecting the schools and to create a unique opportunity for student learning, the Board shall allow two students from Staples High School to ~~serve on~~ participate in the Board as student representatives in a non-voting capacity (the “Student Representatives”). For the avoidance of doubt, Student Representatives are not elected, nor are they members of the Board within the meaning of Town of Westport Charter, Section C7-1.

The Student Representatives will be seated at the Board table during each Board meeting and will be expected to contribute to the Board’s decision-making process by offering their perspectives as students. However, the Student Representatives will not be permitted to vote on any motion or resolution given that they are not members of the Board. Unless the Board Chairperson decides otherwise in a particular circumstance, the Student Representatives will not attend executive sessions, non-meetings, or negotiation sessions, and will not have access to information or material associated with such events. The Board reserves the right to limit or prevent the participation of Student Representatives from other aspects of Board functioning as the Board may deem necessary or appropriate.

#### The following procedures shall govern the selection of the Student Representatives:

1. The Student Representatives shall be selected from the junior and senior classes at Staples High School. One Student Representative shall be a member of the junior class and one Student Representative shall be a member of the senior class.
2. The terms of office for the Student Representatives shall be two school years. In the 2023-2024 school year, the senior class Student Representative shall serve a one-year term. After 2023-2024, the Board shall fill the vacant junior class position each year, and the junior class Student Representative shall continue for a second year as the senior class Student Representative.
3. Students wishing to become a Student Representative may nominate themselves for the position. To be eligible to become a Student Representative, a student must:
  - a. Be a member of whichever class, either junior or senior, for which there is a vacant position on the Board.
  - b. Be in good standing as a student at Staples High School, as determined by the administration. For purposes of this provision, “in good standing” shall mean that the student’s academic, behavior, and attendance records demonstrate that the

- student is fit to participate in a public agency as a student representative.
- c. Confirm in writing that they will be available to attend regular meetings of the Board, except in cases of sickness and/or emergency or for other good cause.
- d. Complete the application process established by the Board and/or administration.

4. Eligible candidates will complete the application process established by the Board and/or administration.
5. The Board shall select the Student Representatives at the conclusion of the application process.

**The following principles shall guide the participation of the Student Representatives:**

1. Newly-appointed Student Representatives will be given an orientation session by the Superintendent of Schools or designee and an officer of the Board or designee.
2. Names and contact information of the Student Representatives will be posted on the Board's website and made known in each of the schools.
3. At least one Student Representative should be present at each regular meeting of the Board. If a Student Representative is unable to attend a regular Board meeting, the Student Representative must so notify the Superintendent's office and the Board Chairperson in advance of the Board meeting as soon as practicable, unless prior notice is not possible for emergency-related reasons.
4. A Student Representative shall:
  - a. Attend regular meetings of the Board, except in cases of sickness and/or emergency or for other good cause.
  - b. Be prepared and willing to speak on any issue on the Board meeting agenda or motion before the Board unless the Board decides to limit or preclude such participation.
  - c. As the Student Representative deems appropriate, recommend suggestions and topics to the Board Chairperson prior to a Board meeting for discussion and consideration by the Board.
  - d. Receive copies of all regular Board meeting agendas, minutes, and other pertinent publications and information, excluding executive session minutes and associated materials, when such materials are made available to Board members.
  - e. Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the expectations of an individual selected to participate in a public agency as a student representative.
5. A Student Representative shall not:
  - a. Vote on any motion or resolution.
  - b. Attend executive sessions, non-meetings, or negotiation sessions unless the Board

Chairperson decides otherwise in a particular circumstance. The Board reserves the right to limit or prevent the participation of Student Representatives from other aspects of Board functioning as the Board may deem necessary or appropriate.

6. The Board reserves the right by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Board members present to dismiss a Student Representative and call for the selection of a new Student Representative. Reasons for such dismissal may include, but shall not be limited to, inappropriate conduct during Board meetings or related to the role of Student representative; academic concerns; poor attendance at Board meetings or at school; disciplinary issues; and/or other actions that demean the position of Student Representative. Prior to taking any such action, the Board shall offer the Student Representative in question an opportunity to respond to the Board's concerns.

7. Beginning in or around April 2024 and before the start of the 2024-2025 school year, the Board shall review this Bylaw to determine whether any changes may be appropriate in light of the Board's experience implementing this Bylaw during the 2023-2024 school year. Such review shall follow the process set forth in Bylaw 9312 (Formulation, Adoption, Amendment, or Deletion of Bylaws). At a minimum, the Board must consider whether to amend, revise, or delete this Paragraph 7.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Westport, Connecticut



Elizabeth McVaney <emcvaney@westportps.org>

**[External] Call For Kindness | Welcome!**

2 messages

**Cheyenne Rosado** <crosado@rileysandler.org>  
To: leighmforan@gmail.com  
Cc: Naya Houchen <nhouchen@rileysandler.org>, emcvaney@westportps.org, rcolson@westportps.org

Mon, May 1, 2023 at 8:00 PM

Hi Leigh,

It is with great excitement that I am writing to let you know that your project, **IDEA**, is officially one of our winners for our 2023 Call For Kindness! Congratulations! We are so excited to have you as part of the Riley's Way family. Our judges, staff, and Ian & Mackenzie Sandler were so impressed by your application, and we can't wait to see the change you make in your community.

As a reminder, on Saturday, May 6, in honor of Riley Sandler's birthday, we will be announcing the winners of the 2023 Call For Kindness and celebrating you and the 2022 Fellows at our Call For Kindness Celebration. This will be held at 5:30 PM EST. We hope that you can make it, and share it widely with your community to join in the celebration! [Click here to register!](#)

We have put together a [Folder](#) for you with lots of information:

- Welcome letters [from me](#) and [the Sandlers](#).
- There are [sample social media posts](#) for you to share (be sure to tag and follow Riley's Way @RileysWayFoundation on Instagram!). We drafted some [language](#) for you, too. **Please do not post until after May 6!**
- We included a [sample press release](#) if you want to share with your local press. Feel free to make a copy for your own use. There is also an [example](#) of a previous winners' draft press release.
- A [folder with Riley's Way logos](#). We ask that you recognize us as a partner/sponsor where and when appropriate (i.e. website, flyers, social media, etc.).

On Thursday, May 11th at 7:30 PM EST, we will hold our first welcome workshop for all 2023 fellows. This workshop is open to all fellows and co-fellows between the ages of 13-22. A google calendar invite will be sent out tomorrow with a Zoom link. We kindly request that at least one representative from each project attend the workshop on 5/11.

If you have any questions with any of the items listed above, please let me know. Once again, congratulations, and a big thank you from Riley's Way!

Sincerely,

Cheyenne & Naya

--  
Cheyenne Rosado  
Program Director  
Pronouns: All Pronouns

Riley's Way Foundation  
30 Third Avenue, Room 203  
Brooklyn, NY 11217  
RileysWay.org



**Join Us:** On Saturday, May 6 (5:30pm EST | 2:30pm PST), the 2023 Call For Kindness (C4K) winners will be announced at a [virtual celebration](#) in honor of Riley's birthday. Celebrate past and present C4K Fellows and be inspired by the young changemakers making the world a kinder, better place.

**Register** for our free, virtual 2023 C4K Celebration [here](#) and learn how to become a C4K sponsor [here](#).

**Roy Colson** <rcolson@westportps.org>  
To: Cheyenne Rosado <crosado@rileysandler.org>  
Cc: leighmforan@gmail.com, Naya Houchen <nhouchen@rileysandler.org>, emcvaney@westportps.org

Wed, May 3, 2023 at 7:31 AM

Congratulations Leigh, well deserved!  
[Quoted text hidden]

--  
Roy W. Colson  
School Counselor  
Staples High School  
Westport, CT 06880  
[rcolson@westportps.org](mailto:rcolson@westportps.org)  
(203) 341-1232

**STUDENTS:**  
Subscribe to my calendar and meet with me today!  
[Mr. Colson's Calendar](#)  
(Important: Remember to add me as a guest to your invite!)

**Follow us:**  
 [stapleshighschool\\_counseling](#)  
 [SHS\\_Counseling1](#)



718.855.1855 T  
W  
[www.rileysway.org](http://www.rileysway.org)

30 Third Avenue, Room 203  
Brooklyn, NY 11217

May 1, 2023

Dear 2023 Call For Kindness Fellows,

Congratulations! On behalf of Riley's Way Foundation, we are honored to welcome you as a 2023 Call For Kindness Fellow. You will be awarded the funds to develop your project and become part of an inspiring cohort of teens from across the country who are working to make a difference in the world. As the Program Director, I am excited to get to know you and work with you. We loved your project and are thrilled to support it and watch it grow.

Here is what you can expect as a Call For Kindness Fellow:

- We will be in touch regularly to check in on your progress, provide support, mentorship, and coaching. We will also work with you on strategic planning and developing curriculum and materials, as appropriate, to build out your programs.
- You will become part of an amazing network of Fellows, where you can ask questions, build connections, and learn from each other.
- You will get to engage in a tailored leadership development program specifically for Call For Kindness Fellows. The workshops will be focusing on skill building, connection making and project support and will be held monthly. In addition, we will have one in-person Retreat in early 2024, with all travel and lodging expenses covered by Riley's Way.
- You will get to participate in other Riley's Way programming and connect with the entire Riley's Way community.
- You will get funding to make your project a success.

Throughout the year, we will ask you for a few things, including:

- Please recognize Riley's Way as a partner and/or sponsor on your website, social media, and other materials as appropriate. Here is a [link to our logos](#), also included in your welcome packet.
- Updates for our community three times over the course of the Fellowship. These can be written as blogs or you can film a short video message. We'd love pictures, too! These may be posted on our website or highlighted in other communication forums or media outlets. The last update will take the form of a grant report.
- Participation in the leadership development workshops.
- Participation in online networking and bonding events with other Call For Kindness Fellows.
- Possible interviews and participation in media opportunities to share your story and talk about your experience as a Call For Kindness Fellow. We are reaching out to press and will let you know of any opportunities that arise.

As we begin to work together, here are a few things to look out for in the next few weeks:

- [Please fill out this form](#) so we have accurate information for our Call For Kindness Celebration on May 6. We will send another form to all Fellows to collect your mailing address and media release form once we have this preliminary information.
- Register for our Call For Kindness Celebration on May 6 at 5:30pm EST, where we will be announcing you as our new cohort of Fellows! This will be a chance to learn more about Riley's Way

Leading Today for a Kinder Tomorrow.



and to hear from past Fellows about their work and experiences in the program. You can [register at this link](#), and we welcome you to invite your family, friends, and community to join in this celebration!

- We will schedule a call with you, your project mentor, and fiscal sponsor to get to know more about you and your project, talk about the program, and confirm where we will be sending the funds.
- **Save the date for Thursday, May 11 at 7:30pm EST for our first C4K leadership development workshop!**
- We will ask you to start writing a short piece for our website to introduce you and your inspiring work to our community.

We can't wait to support you on your journey as a Call For Kindness Fellow! At any point, please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or ideas. You can email me at [crosado@rileysandler.org](mailto:crosado@rileysandler.org).

Warmly,



Cheyenne Rosado  
Program Director  
Riley's Way Foundation



### BID TABULATION SUMMARY

#### Westport School District Building Envelope Study Westport Bid Package #23-016-RFP

##### General Contractor Bid Tabulation

Date: April 25, 2023

GENERAL CONTRACTOR BID PACKAGE		REQUIRED DOCUMENTS							ALTERNATES			Alternate Notes		
RANKING	FIRM	BID BASE FEE	BID PACKAGE NUMBER	Signed Bid Form (Yes / No)	(3) Architects Acknowledged	MBE/WBE Connection or Identification	Team Resumes and/or Certifications Chart	Reimbursable Classifications	No Conflict of Interest Certificates Filed	ALT. NO. 1 (ADD to provide Thermal Imaging on building envelopes)	ALT. NO. 2 (ADD for Destructive Testing)		Sum of Base Bid all Schools plus Alternate 1 and Alternate 2	
<b>AMA Architects, PC-Option 1</b>														
	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$ 20,200	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$3,002	\$49,680	\$72,882	Alternate #1 = Thermal imaging testing Alternate #2 = Air Tightness and Curtainwall Testing
	Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$ 23,800								Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$3,002	\$49,680	\$76,482	
	Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$ 23,800								Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$3,002	\$49,680	\$76,482	
	Base Bid-Bedford MS	\$ 31,300								Base Bid-Bedford MS	\$3,002	\$56,235	\$90,537	
	Base Bid-Staples HS	\$ 41,400								Base Bid-Staples HS	\$3,002	\$56,235	\$100,637	
	Partnership with Walter Martinez Architects													
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 140,500</b>								<b>\$15,010</b>	<b>\$261,510</b>			
Base Bid Sub-Totals w/ Alternate(s)										\$ 155,510	\$ 402,010	\$ 417,020		
<b>AMA Architects, PC-Option 2*</b>														
	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$ 31,660	1							Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	incl.	\$6,555	\$38,215	Alternate #1 = Thermal imaging testing-in base fee Alternate #2 = Dynamic water penetration testing  * Option #2 Bid is the Base Fee for Envelope Evaluation with quantitative energy audit including energy savings and ROI calculations for repairs. Refer to Proposal for details.
	Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$ 37,267								Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	incl.	\$6,555	\$43,822	
	Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$ 36,287								Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	incl.	\$6,555	\$42,842	
	Base Bid-Bedford MS	\$ 47,656								Base Bid-Bedford MS	incl.	\$13,110	\$60,766	
	Base Bid-Staples HS	\$ 69,353								Base Bid-Staples HS	incl.	\$13,110	\$82,463	
	Partnership with Walter Martinez Architects													
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 222,223</b>								<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$45,885</b>			
Base Bid Sub-Totals w/ Alternate(s)										\$ 222,223	\$ 268,108	\$ 268,108		
<b>Antinozzi Associates</b>														
	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$ 20,160	2	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$34,560	\$14,400	\$69,120	Alternate #1 = Thermal imaging testing Alternate #2 = Air Tightness and Curtainwall Testing  *Air Tightness test anticipated to be one test per school; cost is \$225/hr for additional days  *Curtainwall Testing = 5 windows per school in base bid; cost is \$2,000/window for additional tests
	Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$ 20,160								Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$34,560	\$14,400	\$69,120	
	Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$ 20,160								Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$48,240	\$14,400	\$82,800	
	Base Bid-Bedford MS	\$ 28,440								Base Bid-Bedford MS	\$58,800	\$14,400	\$101,640	
	Base Bid-Staples HS	\$ 43,800.00								Base Bid-Staples HS	\$102,720	\$14,400	\$160,920	
	Partnership with Walter Martinez Architects													
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 132,720</b>								<b>\$278,880</b>	<b>\$72,000</b>			
Base Bid Sub-Totals w/ Alternate(s)										\$ 411,600	\$ 204,720	\$ 483,600		



**BID TABULATION SUMMARY**

**Westport School District  
Building Envelope Study  
Westport Bid Package #23-016-RFP**

**General Contractor Bid Tabulation**

Date: April 25, 2023

GENERAL CONTRACTOR BID PACKAGE		REQUIRED DOCUMENTS							ALTERNATES			ALternate Notes		
RANKING	FIRM	BID BASE FEE	BID PACKAGE NUMBER	Signed Bid Form (Yes/No)	(2) Affidavits Acknowledged	MBE/WBE Connection or Identification	Team Resumes and/or Capabilities Chart	Reimbursable Classifications	No Conflict of Interest Certificates Filed	ALT. NO. 1 (ADD to provide Thermal Imaging on building envelopes)	ALT. NO. 2 (ADD for Destructive Testing)		Sum of Base Bid all Schools plus Alternate 1 and Alternate 2	
	<b>Russell &amp; Dawson, Inc.</b>		<b>3</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					Alternate #1 = Thermal imaging testing Alternate #2 = Air Tightness and Curtainwall Testing	
	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$ -	BP #							Base Bid-Kings Highway ES				
	Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$ -								Base Bid-Saugatuck ES				
	Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$ -								Base Bid-Greens Farms ES				
	Base Bid-Beafield MS	\$ -								Base Bid-Beafield MS				
	Base Bid-Staples HS	\$ -								Base Bid-Staples HS				
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 150,000</b>								<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>		
Base Bid Sub-Totals w/ Alternate(s)										<b>\$ 195,000</b>	<b>\$ 195,000</b>	<b>\$ 240,000</b>		
	<b>Silver Petrucelli + Associates</b>		<b>4</b>	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes					Alternate #1 = Thermal imaging testing Alternate #2 = Air Tightness and Curtainwall Testing	
	Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$ 9,000	BP #							Base Bid-Kings Highway ES	\$11,500	\$6,500		\$27,000
	Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$ 11,000								Base Bid-Saugatuck ES	\$14,000	\$6,500		\$31,500
	Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$ 12,000								Base Bid-Greens Farms ES	\$11,500	\$6,500		\$30,000
	Base Bid-Beafield MS	\$ 15,000								Base Bid-Beafield MS	\$14,000	\$8,200		\$37,200
	Base Bid-Staples HS	\$ 27,000								Base Bid-Staples HS	\$19,000	\$11,000		\$57,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 74,000</b>								<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$38,700</b>		
Base Bid Sub-Totals w/ Alternate(s)										<b>\$ 144,000</b>	<b>\$ 112,700</b>	<b>\$ 182,700</b>		



**WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**THOMAS SCARICE**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

110 Myrtle Avenue  
Westport, Connecticut 06880  
Telephone: (203) 341-1025  
Fax: (203) 341-1029  
tscarice@westportps.org

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Mr. Elio Longo, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Thomas Scarice, Superintendent of Schools  
Re: Tuition Rates for 2023-24  
Date: June 2, 2023

We annually establish tuition rates to cover the following circumstances:

1. to provide the basis for calculating the 25% tuition rate for the non-resident children of school employees;
2. to cover students who move out of Westport before April 1, who are permitted to complete the school year on a pro-rated basis;
3. to cover exceptional cases, such as when families enroll children expecting to move to Westport, and then fail to establish residency, or other unforeseen circumstances; and
4. to cover instances when students are accepted as tuition students for the year.

During the current 2022-23 school year there were 46 children of employees who attended our schools. We anticipate approximately the same number for the 2023-2024 school year.

Several years ago, in response to a Board request, a formula was developed for tuition rates for the various grade levels which gave a close approximation of actual costs. (The base tuition figures do not include the cost of bus transportation between home and school as this service is not provided to non-resident students. It also does not include special education costs, which are assessed on an individual basis for students requiring special education.)

For the upcoming 2023-24 school year we have applied the total general budget increase of 5.24% to the 2022-2023 rates. The chart on the following page shows the current rates and the new rates for 2023-2024.

**TUTION RATE: 2023-24 GRADES K-12**

Grade Level	Full Non-Resident Tuition		Employee Tuition	
	22-23	23-24	22-23	23-24
K-5	\$18,877	\$19,866	\$4,719	\$4,967
6-8	\$26,433	\$27,818	\$6,608	\$6,955
9-12	\$28,318	\$29,802	\$7,080	\$7,450

**TUTION RATES: 2023-24 PRE-SCHOOL**

The full rates for our integrated pre-school were established during the 2023-24 budget process by the Pupil Services Department in collaboration with the Business Office, and are competitive with other area pre-schools. Westport residents' children with special needs receive free tuition, as per federal mandate. Westport residents' children without special needs are admitted to the program at the tuition rates shown below. Employees' children are admitted only after all residents' children have been accommodated. As with K-12 tuition, employees pay 25% of the full rate.

	<b>Full Rate</b>	<b>Employee Rate</b>
<b>3-5 year olds 5 days per week (Half Day)</b>	<b>\$ 7,719</b>	<b>\$1,930</b>
<b>3-5 year olds 5 days per week (Full Day)</b>	<b>\$11,907</b>	<b>\$2,977</b>