



# WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Annual Instructional Update 2017-2018

Presented to the  
Weston Board of Education  
Curriculum Committee  
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**William S. McKersie, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Kenneth G. Craw, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent of  
Curriculum and Instruction

# **WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **VISION STATEMENT**

Our commitment to excellence and continued, purposeful innovation will make Weston Public Schools the standard in designing educational pathways and environments that cultivate empowered citizens of the global community.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Weston Public Schools, as a caring and supportive community partnership, is to empower each student to achieve success and contribute to our global society by developing and cultivating character, knowledge and creativity through a dynamic learning experience that challenges each student to continually pursue personal excellence.

## **OUTCOME – GLOBAL CITIZENS**

Global citizens have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to achieve their personal goals and contribute to society. Our goal is to empower students to be innovative thinkers, creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and inspired learners prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world. These skills are commonly referred to as the four C's: Critical and Creative Thinking, Communication, Collaboration.

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## Contributors

Superintendent .....	Dr. William McKersie
Assistant Superintendent .....	Dr. Kenneth Craw
Director of Digital Learning & Innovation .....	Dr. Craig Tunks
Mathematics, Grades K-5 .....	Mrs. Carolyn Vinton
Mathematics, Grades 6-12 .....	Ms. Janine Russo
Science, Grades K-5 .....	Mrs. Carolyn Vinton
Science, Grades 6-12 .....	Mrs. Jamie Charles
Language Arts, Grades K-5 .....	Mrs. Andrea Noble, Mrs. Alex Bluestein
English, Grades 6-12 .....	Ms. Christine Cincotta
Social Studies, Grades K-5 .....	Mrs. Andrea Noble, Mrs. Alex Bluestein
Social Studies, Grades 6-12 .....	Ms. Christina Conetta
World Language, Grades K-12 .....	Mrs. Mercedes Fernandes
Visual Arts, Grades K-12 .....	Ms. Sydney Girardi
Performing Arts, Grades K-12 .....	Ms. Elizabeth Morris
Health and Physical Education, Grades K-12 .....	Mrs. Patty Powers
Technology Education, Grades 6-12 .....	Mrs. Jamie Charles
School Counseling, Grades K-12 .....	Ms. Lois Pernice
Project Challenge, Grades 3-8 .....	Ms. Lois Pernice

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## **ANNUAL UPDATE ON THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS**

Weston Public Schools is committed to the continuous improvement of its instructional programs and services to ensure students are prepared for a global society. The district is guided by a series of goals to achieve the outcome of fostering global citizenship. These goals include focusing academic excellence, promoting healthy learning environments, leveraging digital learning, gauging progress, and ensuring essential resources for learning. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. William McKersie, disseminated a link to these [district goals](#) in his initial communication with families at the start of the year.

Each spring, district curriculum leaders reflect on the progress made toward achieving district goals, as it relates to instructional programs and services. In the 2017-18 Annual Instructional Update, each Curriculum Instructional Leader highlights the goals of her department, key accomplishments, challenges, and the anticipated goals for the upcoming 2018-19 school year. These reflections are presented to the Weston Board of Education to provide a comprehensive update and plan for the following academic year.

### **Academic Excellence**

#### Curriculum Instructional Leader (CIL) Program Evaluation Follow-Up

In April 2017, the district received a report on the design, operation, and impact of Weston's CIL model. Noe Medina, of Education Policy Research in Boston, conducted an independent review of Weston's model. The written report consisted of several findings and a series of eight recommendations for enhancing the program. Significant progress was made in addressing the recommendations outlined in the [report](#).

One of the recommendations was to invest in training CILs in instructional coaching methodologies and strategies to enhance their ability to support classroom teachers. CILs spent three days of intensive training over the summer working with Nancy Love, a senior consultant at Research for Better Teaching based in Massachusetts. There were periodic opportunities throughout the school year for CILs to implement strategies with teachers and reflect on their coaching practices during online webinars with the consultant.

As a group, the CILs have a wealth of knowledge and expertise that they can share with each other to continue their professional learning. The CILs have established their own work group that will meet periodically to work through problems of practice. They have also expressed interest in identifying a common text on coaching to serve as a basis for discussion next year.

The report also contained recommendations to clarify the role of the CIL and their evaluation process. A small work group of CILs, guided by the Assistant Superintendent, is in the process of creating a series of professional standards for coaches, along with corresponding rubrics that delineate levels of performance. In the short term, these tools will be used for articulating the role, but there is the potential for the rubrics to promote self-reflection and collaborative discussion. Once drafts are complete, they will be brought before the Board's Curriculum Committee for review.

### Science Initiative

Curriculum instructional leaders have been working diligently with the faculty during year two of our science curriculum renewal process to align Weston's science program with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The shifts in curriculum and pedagogy are significant, so this initiative will require a sustained focus on professional and curriculum development. The CILs have been working closely with staff to provide the essential training and to oversee the piloting of new electronic resources to support the new units of study.

One of the challenges we are facing is the amount of time currently allocated for science in the K-5 master schedule is not sufficient to address the increased expectations for learning science. In order to effectively and fully implement the standards, the K-5 schedule will need to be modified at both HES and WIS for teachers to have sufficient time to teach the curriculum. The administration is working this spring to find more time for science in grades K-2 and grade 5 since these are the grade levels that will be implementing the new curriculum next year. In the following year, the amount of time in grades three and four will need to be increased as well when those grades transition to new units of study. It should be noted that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will begin assessing the new standards in science beginning in the spring 2019 in grades 5, 8, and 11.

In addition, it is very exciting to report out to the Weston Community that two new science courses have been added to the WHS Program of Studies beginning in the fall of 2018. AP Environmental Science is now being offered as an upper division elective, which is in response to student interest in the course. In addition, following a yearlong process of developing a Science Research Program, a new WHS Honors Science Research course will run under the guidance of Stacey Greenberg. Stacey is a veteran biology teacher and Weston's 2018 local recipient of the CT Teacher of Year Award.

### Literacy

For several years, the District has been engaged in a K-12 Writing Across the Disciplines Initiative focused on enhancing the quality of student achievement in this area through targeted professional development and purposeful programmatic changes. An independent evaluation of Weston's writing program was conducted in March 2018 by a visiting team of trained educators from the Tri-State Consortium, an organization consisting of similarly high-performing school districts. We are awaiting the written report from Tri-State detailing strengths and areas of growth, but we did receive some verbal feedback at the conclusion of the three-day on-site evaluation process.

The Visiting Committee observed that our students are "living writerly lives" meaning that they write for a variety of audiences and purposes with a high degree of volume and stamina. They also commended the system for the effectiveness of the WHS Writing Center and the eighth and tenth grade portfolio experiences. Further, the Committee suggested that we look at a few areas as we seek to improve our writing program. (1) As a system, we are encouraged to determine how best to use classroom level data to better inform instruction and grouping arrangements for differentiation purposes; (2) identify strategies for greater parent outreach and to be explicit with how writing and mechanics are taught in Weston; and (3) determine three objectives we most highly value in teaching writing and focus on those goals in all grades and subjects.

In terms of reading, this year the district began a [K-5 reading initiative](#) with an intense focus on professional learning, similar to our approach with writing. Our administrators and CILs, in collaboration with consultants from Teachers College (TC), Columbia University, provided ongoing on-site training in each school to assist teachers with the implementation of new units of study. As part of the training in the Readers Workshop model, there was an emphasis on modeling strategies for differentiating learning. This work will continue into the next school year.

Using assessment data effectively to inform reading instruction is another key skill area for teachers. Following a comprehensive review, the district has decided to employ the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment (F & P) in lieu of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). F & P assessments will provide teachers with more granular information regarding reading performance, which will enable teachers to have a more targeted approach to improving reading abilities. The WIS will begin training and implementing the F& P assessments at the beginning of the school year. HES will make this transition the following year since they will be focused on implementing the new science curriculum this fall.

### Special Education and Inclusion

This year, the district had a focus on fostering increased collaboration and communication between special education and general education teachers to strengthen inclusion models. At HES and WIS, we provided training to collaborative teacher teams consisting of special education and general education teachers on how to plan differentiated lessons for students with special needs. Teachers have indicated they will need more common planning time built into the schedule in order for collaborative teams to meet on regular basis to review student progress and plan instruction. Administrators will be looking to schedule this common meeting time more regularly.

### Curriculum Renewal

This has been a busy year for curriculum leaders involved in the curriculum cycles. As previously mentioned, we are in the middle of a comprehensive K-12 science curriculum review with targeted efforts to update curriculum, pedagogy, and pathways for learning. There were three other curriculum areas that were renewed and presented to the Board of Education for approval, including Project Challenge, health, and school counseling.

Project Challenge is a specialized program for students identified as talented and gifted in grades 3-8, and this program was reviewed using a similar process as we do in other subject areas. A district committee was convened to research and analyze the current program, as well as to collect feedback from students and parents regarding their experiences with Project Challenge. The findings of the committee culminated in a [report](#) presented to the Board of Education in January. The committee identified a series of eight recommendations for enhancing the curriculum, scheduling classes, and identifying students. The committee is in the process of working on addressing these recommendations, in accordance with the timelines set forth in the report.

Recently, the Board of Education adopted the updated health and school counseling curricula following discussions at the Curriculum Committee level. These areas were reviewed concurrently due to the overlapping nature of several of the topics (i.e. bullying, healthy choices) within both health and school

counseling. New State Statutes now require Connecticut school districts to educate students on CPR and sexual assault. Weston had already included these topics in the health curriculum before they became requirements, but our health teachers have reviewed and refined how we address them. The health and counseling curricula allow teachers flexibility when new issues emerge, such as with the recent opioid crisis. As a result, students benefit from classroom discussions and activities that are both timely and relevant. Press on the following [link](#) to access the scope and sequence for the health curriculum.

## **Digital Learning**

### WMS Chromebook Initiative

Overall, the deployment of Chromebooks at WMS has been a successful initiative. It has provided students on demand access to electronic tools and resources both at school and at home. Chromebooks are used in all disciplines as needed, with an appropriate balance of screen time. Teachers incorporate the Chromebooks into the learning process when it makes sense to do so.

There was a significant amount of discussion and professional development leading up to the rollout of the Chromebooks. They received training on the use of *Go Guardian*, a classroom management tool. Teachers have reported that this has been an important resource for ensuring students are using the devices effectively.

Students received training on the appropriate use and care of Chromebooks. They participated in digital citizenship training and attended presentations on Internet safety conducted by the WHS School Resource Officer. The middle school will continue to reinforce appropriate use and care of the devices when students transition to the next grade level.

### Data Warehousing System

Under the direction of Dr. Craig Tunks, the district selected a new data warehousing tool, Tableau. Key district data has been loaded into Tableau in the form of visualizations that present the data in a user-friendly format. Data can be easily disaggregated and analyzed with Tableau's search tools, which will enable data teams to answer questions they have about student progress.

The entire Curriculum Council, consisting of administrators and curriculum instructional leaders, participated in several training sessions to learn how to use Tableau. The monthly Curriculum Council meetings were used for this purpose to determine what data is most important to use when gauging progress.

### Learning Management System (LMS)

Last spring, the district selected a Learning Management System, Canvas, to be used as a resource to support digital learning. Canvas enables teachers to deliver courses and resources electronically to students. Other uses include facilitating discussion boards, administering and submitting student assignments, and tracking student progress. In phase one of this work, several pilot teachers developed and implemented their courses using the Canvas platform. Sydney Girardi, Curriculum Instructional Leader for Visual Arts has taken a lead role in providing training for piloting Canvas.

## MATHEMATICS, GRADES K-5

### I. 2017-18 Goals

- Continue instructional coaching for the purpose of reflection, increasing repertoire, and improving instruction. Coaching next year will continue to focus on support for further developing the instructional strategies leading to successful math learning in order to prepare students to be effective global citizens. This will include an emphasis on differentiation and digital learning.
- Continue to provide high-quality professional development opportunities for all teachers using both internal capacity and outside consultants. Professional development offered will be informed by data used to gauge district progress.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.
- Continue development of the K-5 math department website as a resource for parents and students.

### II. Accomplishments

- The professional development provided to Curriculum Instructional Leaders (CILs) by Nancy Love of RBT (Research for Better Teaching) was helpful in increasing coaching repertoire and effectiveness.
- Coaching and professional development provided by the CIL focused on differentiation and increased use of visualization for problem solving.
- Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) results were analyzed where possible, and work was done with teachers to identify areas of improvement.
- Two teachers from each grade, three through five, worked with the CIL to examine the SBA Interim Assessment Blocks questions. They then made Smart Board files for unit topics for teachers to integrate into their lessons. These files contained problems using similar language, complexity, and answer style as the SBA questions.
- Two fifth grade teachers, accompanied by the CIL, attended a full day Singapore Math professional development workshop in White Plains, New York, focusing on problem solving and anchor tasks.
- In the fall, five parent workshops were presented for K-5 parents. The morning and evening sessions at HES provided an introduction to the ways our primary students learn mathematics. The WIS sessions helped parents understand the instructional methods and content in the intermediate grades. Later in the fall, there were also sessions on problem solving for parents of grades two through five.
- The CIL and building principals collaborated on initial uses of Tableau to analyze grade level progress trends across math standards.
- Weston's Teacher Supervision and Evaluation Plan continued to be helpful in encouraging teachers to avail themselves of instructional coaching. This coaching was focused on instructional strategies, including an emphasis on differentiation.
- The CIL continued to attend the *Math in Focus CT Consortium* in New Haven when able. This provided no-cost professional development as well as networking opportunities.

- We had 42 students from grades four and five participate on our Mathematical Olympiad teams this year. These students met before school on Tuesday mornings. Our teams continue to excel in this international competition.
- The K-5 Math Department website was further developed to be a resource to parents and teachers.

**III. Challenges and Needs.**

- High-quality professional development, using both internal capacity and outside experts, continues to be necessary to build and maintain high-level instructional capacity.
- The amount of CIL focus needed for our science pilot and transition has impacted the availability for math coaching and necessitated a greater level of prioritizing. This will continue to have an impact next year as we move from pilot to implementation.

**IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Continue to provide coaching and professional development, increasing the instructional repertoire of our teachers, especially in the areas of differentiation.
- Work with second grade teachers to integrate their new technology effectively into their math lessons.
- Explore ways to assist teachers in analyzing their data using Tableau in order to help them enhance their instructional decisions.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.

## MATHEMATICS, GRADES 6-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Continue to emphasize planning for differentiation, particularly in the standard level classes at both the middle and high schools.
- Explore the possibility of offering an integrated Algebra/Geometry sequence for ninth graders to more fluidly follow from the eighth grade standard course.
- Explore the possibility of distance and/or digital learning opportunities for students who complete the WHS mathematics pathways prior to their senior year.

### II. Accomplishments

- Middle school teachers differentiated content using “mild, medium, and spicy” options in guided practice. On an almost-daily basis, students had the opportunity to self-select from different levels of problems to personally challenge themselves.
- Middle school teachers differentiated process by using cluster grouping techniques in situations where the class was co-taught with a special education teacher or a paraprofessional. Students were either self- or teacher-selected to receive small group instruction on particular concepts while the other teacher circulated around facilitating the other groups in the room.
- Standard Algebra 1 teachers (WHS) differentiated lessons by using various manipulatives to teach abstract concepts in a hands-on environment.
- Standard Geometry teachers used Quizlet to provide targeted extra practice to struggling students.
- High school teachers worked with curricular partners to create tiered lessons that were differentiated to meet the needs of the variety of levels of learners in standard classes.
- Standard Algebra 1, Standard Algebra 2, and Honors Algebra 2 teachers have consistently used Desmos Classroom Activities to introduce a new unit. These online activities enable students to explore and discover a new topic at their own pace and level of understanding. Teachers have the ability to monitor student progress throughout the lesson, and can intervene where necessary, or display student work for classroom discussion.
- Middle school Math Lab teachers used the IXL online platform to provide targeted extra practice on prerequisite and/or current skills. The platform allows teachers to monitor the progress of each student individually.
- Middle school teachers selected Khan Academy videos to offer as supplements to class instruction.
- Seventh and eighth grade teachers used digital tools to administer Performance Based Assessments in all courses.
- Middle school teachers created Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) Question Banks in Google Drive. The questions were infused into lessons of related content in order to expose students to the types of questioning used on the assessment.
- Middle school teachers used SBA Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) to expose students to the SBA platform.

- Middle school teachers used the data from the SBA IABs to inform future instruction, designing lessons to address the weaknesses indicated by these results.
- High school teachers created an SAT Question Bank on Google Drive, organized by course. Teachers infused these questions into lessons on a regular basis.
- Eighth grade teachers increased communication with the special education department through the use of a dedicated eighth grade math Google calendar. This provided better alignment with regard to content and instruction for students working on math in Math Lab, Organization and Study Time (OST), Strategies, etc.
- Multivariable Calculus was offered at WHS for the first time this year. There was one student enrolled in the class, who met with a dedicated teacher three times per cycle. The course was taught using a modified blended learning format. The teacher used open resources provided by MIT to supplement on the days when he did not meet with the student.
- With the combined efforts of middle and high school teachers, a scope and sequence for an Accelerated Algebra and Geometry course was proposed and accepted for the 2018-2019 school year.
- Two middle school and one high school teacher attended the ATOMIC (Associated Teachers of Math in Connecticut) conference in December.
- The WMS Math Team continued its participation in the Fairfield County Junior Math League.
- The WHS Math Team continued its participation in the Fairfield County Math League.
- Two WMS students participated in the Math Counts chapter competition in February, and one of those students was selected to participate at the state level.
- Seventeen WMS students participated in the American Mathematics Competition in November. One of the students earned an Honor Roll of Distinction, scoring in the top 1% nationally.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Significant summer work is needed to prepare for the new Accelerated Algebra/Geometry course.
- The scheduling arrangements for Multivariable Calculus presented challenges. While the arrangement was sufficient for the one student enrolled in the course this year, the time allotted for the class over an eight day cycle is not likely to fully meet the needs of students in the future.
- The sixth and seventh grade SBA Question Banks need to be revisited and resources added to better facilitate their use in lesson planning.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Design and implement the new Accelerated Algebra and Geometry course at WHS.
- Continue to emphasize planning for differentiation at all levels at WMS and WHS.
- Continue to seamlessly infuse SBA resources into the curriculum across all grades at WMS.

## SCIENCE, GRADES K-5

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Continue professional development, as appropriate, in order to prepare teachers to teach the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) curriculum as it was intended, in order to prepare our students to be effective global citizens.
- Continue to research the best available materials for use with new curriculum.
- Pilot NGSS materials in kindergarten, grade one, and grade two. This will assist with making good material choices. It will also allow certain teachers at those grades to gain experience that will help in the whole school transition.
- Provide CIL with training opportunities to build knowledge base and expertise with NGSS in order to strengthen coaching and support for our teachers.
- Explore connections between the science curriculum and the makerspaces in each school.

### II. Accomplishments

- Successful pilots of NGSS curriculum using Amplify Science took place at Hurlbutt in two classes at each grade level. These teachers received a day of professional development before school began in August and worked with their team members and CIL throughout the year.
- A smaller pilot took place in fifth grade for the final unit. It involved one teacher and two classes.
- To gain a fuller understanding of the piloted materials, the CIL took the lead on teaching three of the ten units in three of the seven classes. This allowed for us to more fully inform our decision, as well as gain greatest insight on how best to support teachers.
- In February, the CIL visited Brass City Charter School in Waterbury in order to observe Amplify Science lessons in third, fourth, and fifth grade classes. There was also the opportunity to discuss the merits of these materials with their science specialist who is a NGSX (Next Generation Science Exemplar System) trainer.
- The Hurlbutt classroom and special education teachers received further NGSS professional development led by the CIL and facilitated by the six pilot teachers.
- The CIL attended state updates on NGSS assessments and curriculum discussions held at Cooperative Educational Services in Trumbull.
- Collaboration took place between the CIL and Hurlbutt Library Media Specialist on makerspace connections with the new NGSS curriculum, including developing a shared engineering cycle for K-2 students.
- The Fourth Annual WIS Inquiry Science Fair was the largest one yet. It took place on April 4 and 5, and included 180 fourth and fifth graders.

### III. Challenges and Needs

- It will take a tremendous amount of support as we transition to NGSS in order to provide teachers with what they will need both in content knowledge and pedagogical shifts, as well as comfort with new materials.
- Scheduling changes will need to take place in order to allow the NGSS curriculum to fit in our students' day.

**IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- If adjustments to schedules are made, fully implement an NGSS curriculum using Amplify Science in kindergarten, grades one, two, and five.
- Provide the needed professional development opportunities for all teachers using both the internal capacity of CIL and 2017-2018 pilot teachers as well as Amplify consultants.
- Provide initial professional development to prepare grades 3 and 4 to implement NGSS curriculum in 2019-2020.
- Begin curriculum documentation in Rubicon Atlas.

## SCIENCE, GRADES 6-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Develop and implement NGSS-aligned curriculum in remaining WHS core sequence courses (chemistry, physics) during the 2017-2018 school year, including innovations in gauging progress relative to NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards).
- Develop and implement NGSS-aligned curriculum in remaining WMS core sequence courses at WMS (grades 7 and 8) during the 2017-2018 school year, including a plan to (a) phase in new units to ensure cohorts address relevant modules and (b) leverage the availability of digital instructional technologies.
- Continue to develop and implement a seventh/eighth grade STEM PFA (Practical and Fine Arts) pathway for independent STEM projects and encourage participation in competitions and events outside of WMS.
- Plan and propose a science research course (or sequence of courses) and implementation model for WHS to begin in the 2018-2019 year.

### II. Accomplishments

- NGSS-aligned curriculum shifts continued at WHS in both chemistry and physics classes. Both curricula were revised to highlight the key instructional components emphasized in the NGSS, especially phenomena-driven units of study as well as modelling, experimentation, and analysis of class content and explorations.
- New technological tools in physics courses (PASCO 550 Interfaces and CASTLE sets) afforded students the opportunity to engage with and interpret high-quality data and utilize that data to develop physical and computational models. The new devices not only make the collection of data more clear and efficient, but also use more modern interfaces that the students are better acquainted with.
- An honors level high school science research course was designed and approved for implementation starting in the 2018-2019 school year. Much effort was put into planning the design of the course, establishing funding for the laboratory, and advertising to the student body (grades 8-11). We currently have approximately 11 students enrolled in the first section of the course, which will be led by Stacey Greenberg. Work now continues to outfit the lab space with necessary instrumentation, materials, and equipment for the students to begin their research next year.
- The environmental science curriculum, now in its second year, has been enhanced with a variety of new lab activities, analytical activities, and tools from a variety of sources. One online source, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, provides a variety of interactive activities allowing students to process data from actual field work. These activities cover a range of topics and help provide the students with a more authentic learning experience.
- The high school science department has cultivated a strong partnership with Animal Embassy, based in Stamford. Animal Embassy's Chris Evers has visited our animal behavior classes for the past several years, bringing a variety of animals each time. These visits tie-in closely with the semester project in that course, helping the students understand the evolutionary

connection between behavior and environment. We have expanded that partnership into our environmental science classes, where Mr. Evers uses the animals to discuss conservation.

- The animal behavior classes were treated to visits from Jim Knox of the Beardsley Zoo, and Katherine Meier, a Ph.D. candidate at Yale in Anthropology and Forestry, and who recently completed a year-long internship in Indonesia, studying wild orangutans.
- NGSS-aligned curriculum shifts continued at WMS in grades 7 and 8. The eighth grade teachers developed and implemented new curricula in the areas of physics and biology, while the seventh grade team focused on developing and implementing a new unit on space systems, emphasizing Earth's place in relation to the solar system, galaxy, and universe.
- To leverage the availability of digital instructional technologies, all classes in grades 6-8 piloted various Amplify Science units throughout the year, as well as e-Reader textbooks from the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). Amplify Science allows students to engage in authentic learning in a multimodal fashion through digital instruction, computer simulation, and hands-on activities, while NSTA e-Readers provide digital access to content-rich text, online practice questions, video links, and more to support the classroom curriculum.
- For the first time, all seventh grade students participated in a field trip to the Yale Peabody Museum to participate in a presentation on Earth's landforms, as well as explore other exhibits on fossils, minerals, and additional geologic features found on our planet. The group also had the opportunity to view West Rock Ridge in New Haven, Connecticut during this trip to provide an additional authentic learning experience on Earth's landforms.
- All sixth grade classes had the opportunity to engage in an exploration of water conservation through a program run by the Aquarion Water Company. After experiencing one of the worst droughts since 1895, a drought emergency was declared throughout the region in 2016. In response, Aquarion created a program specifically tailored to middle school students with the goal of promoting the wise use of water in their homes. The presenter, Twig Holland, is already scheduled to return next year to once again engage the sixth graders with this important message.
- Interdisciplinary PADI (Performance Assessment Design Initiative) projects with social studies continue to enrich the sixth and ninth grade science courses. This year's Guardians of the Water Galaxy outreach efforts yielded several responses from experts in their fields, while ninth graders immersed in the Global Petri Dish project, focused their efforts on designing infographics that effectively captured the threatening nature of the diseases they researched.
- As an advantage to students choosing to participate in science fairs, WMS teachers continued to revise aspects of Science Discovery Workshop in order to more closely align student expectations with the Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair (CSEF) standards on science abstracts and research reports.
- Six eighth-graders participated in this year's CSEF at Quinnipiac University. These students engaged in the inquiry process by modifying and refining their seventh grade Science Discovery Workshop projects in preparation for the fair. Two students who collaborated together made it to the finals for their project, looking at adaptation rates of baker's yeast as climate changes. Another group of two students received third-honors for their project on natural pesticides.

- The WHS Science Olympiad team of 15 students participated in the state competition held at the University of Connecticut. The WHS team took home second place in Thermodynamics, and had a total of seven top ten finishes in various events. They prepared throughout the year with advisors Michael Chappa and Lucas Walker by studying topics such as forensics, constructing loadbearing towers, and mousetrap vehicles.
- Fifteen students from grades 9 through 12 worked diligently under the supervision of Michael Chappa preparing for the Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics, and Science (TEAMS). The two Weston groups submitted an essay about modifying prominent buildings in Weston to make them more energy efficient, then completed the nation-wide group multiple-choice exam, as well as the Design and Build Engineering Challenge provided from the Technology Student Association. The top Weston team finished fourth place in the state for their essay and sixth place overall.
- High school science classes continue to use the Interlace platform (now called Visual Classroom) to promote collaboration, meta-cognition, and provide opportunities for formative assessment.
- Students in grades 8 and 11 will participate in the Connecticut State Department of Education NGSS Field Test in May to help collect and analyze data and information relevant to the new NGSS assessment formally beginning in the spring of 2019.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Continue to explore instructional resources to support the NGSS-aligned curriculum at WMS, focusing on digital instructional technologies such as Amplify and NSTA e-Reader books that take advantage of the one-to-one device ratio now present at the middle school.
- Continue to review and revise curriculum as needed in grades 6-11 to ensure key NGSS content items and performance expectations emphasized on the newly designed state science assessments are addressed throughout the grade levels.
- Continue to revise curriculum to incorporate the science and engineering practices emphasized by the NGSS, as well as design and implement NGSS assessment style questions into classes, such as item clusters, phenomenon-driven responses, simulations, modeling, and experimental design and predictions.
- The annual end of year STEM Expo often does not involve much participation by the student body as it takes place in the evening. Possible revisions to this expo fair are being discussed to increase student participation and visibility at the middle school.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Design and implement several new higher-level courses at WHS: Honors Science Research, AP Environmental Science, and Physic C-Honors: Electricity and Magnetism.
- Continue to promote the Honors Science Research course to ensure increased enrollment in future years.
- Continue to revise and implement NGSS-aligned curricular units in core sequence courses in grades 6-11 during the 2018-2019 school year, including innovations in gauging progress relative to NGSS standards and science and engineering practices. Document these revisions in Atlas curriculum maps.
- Continue to review and integrate new instructional materials into NGSS-aligned curriculum at WMS, especially those that leverage the availability of digital technologies.

- Continue to develop and implement the seventh/eighth grade STEM PFA pathway for independent STEM projects and encourage participation in competitions and events outside of WMS, including providing guidelines at the start of these PFA courses outlining the expectations and requirements for participation in the CSEF as well as WMS STEM Expo held at end of each year.
- Revise the end of year WMS STEM Expo to allow for more student exposure to the various projects. In addition, investigate the possibility of merging the fair with projects developed through the new WHS Honors Science Research course (in addition to other possible high school STEM projects/innovations).

## LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADES K-5

### I. 2017-18 Goals

- We look forward to working with our critical friends at the Tri-State Consortium to gain feedback on our writing program during a visit planned for spring 2018.
- Ongoing refinement of literacy instruction and curriculum across reading and writing will continue to be a priority in all classrooms. This work will be done in conjunction with the units of study and assessments available from Teachers College.
- Integrating technology and digital learning into all aspects of our literacy program, inclusive of curriculum, instruction, and ongoing assessment, will continue to be a focus for both curriculum and professional development.
- The use of literacy data to strengthen differentiation of instruction within the workshop model will continue to be a primary focus of both professional development and instructional coaching.

### II. Accomplishments

- In March, we had a successful Tri-State visit inclusive of numerous commendations on our writing program, such as:
  - Students are living “writerly lives,”
  - Evidence of volume and stamina, and
  - High levels of student engagement.
- Ongoing partnership with our Teachers College (TC) staff developers that took place over five days, focused primarily on reading curriculum and instructional practices. Areas of focus included:
  - Reading volume and stamina,
  - Differentiated, small group instruction,
  - Leveraging assessment data to inform instruction (K-2), and
  - Strengthening written response to text (3-5).
- The Board of Education has approved our updated reading curriculum and scope and sequence (K-5).
- Implementation of TC reading units in all K-5 classrooms, in addition to “home-grown” units was an area of focus.
- In collaboration with our TC consultants in grades K-2, reading units of study have been refined.
- Ongoing reflection and refinement of our writing instruction continues to be a priority.
- Professional development on instructional coaching with Nancy Love from Research for Better Teaching took place periodically throughout the school year.

### III. Challenges and Needs

- Planning for the transition to a new data warehousing platform will necessitate additional professional development time.
- Time will be needed to support teachers in the transition to the new data warehouse platform.

#### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Professional development and ongoing training for the transition to the new data warehouse platform will be needed.
- Transition from DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) to Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments will begin at WIS in grades 3-5.
- Professional development and ongoing training in the use of TC reading assessments and Fountas and Pinnell assessments to inform instruction will take place in grades 3-5.
- Work with TC consultants on differentiated, small group instruction, and use of reading data to inform instruction K-5 will continue.
- Utilizing the recommendations from the Tri-State writing visit, specifically in the areas parental communication, cross-building consistency, and use of data to inform instruction will be an ongoing district goal.

## ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADES 6-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Continue to track student success in meeting our proficiency goals for writing and make adjustments to the plans as necessary.
- Continue to create and implement professional development opportunities to allow for cross-curricular connections with the Writing Center.
- Develop a vertically-aligned grammar curriculum for grades 6-10.
- Evaluate the writing program at both WMS and WHS in preparation for the Tri-State visit in spring 2018.
- Create and implement an assessment plan to gauge writing progress at WMS.
- Continue to incorporate digital learning opportunities into the English classroom that will enhance both instruction and learning.
- Continue to evaluate PSAT/SAT data and create professional development for teachers regarding these tests.

### II. Accomplishments

- All grade 9 English and social studies teachers regularly review student progress on common summative assessments to determine student success in meeting proficiency goals for writing. Students who did not meet benchmark are the primary focus. Teachers work with CILs and Writing Center coordinators, and are able to align best practices regarding writing so to best meet the needs of students.
- As of mid-April, Writing Center coordinators have held 661 individual conferences with students. They have met with approximately 38% of the student body in these conferences. They have also supported conferencing and led writing lessons in 131 classrooms, which doubles the amount of classroom visits from the same time period in 2017-2018.
- The Writing Center coordinators have met with teachers and CILs from a variety of departments, including English, social studies, science, fine arts, world language, and special education.
- The Writing Center shares space with CASE (Center for Academic Support and Enhancement) and is now located between the English and social studies areas at WHS. This new location allows for easier collaboration between teachers and the Writing Center. It is a more comfortable environment for individual conferences.
- The Writing Center coordinators met with the grade 8 students to review the expectations for the grade 8 writing portfolio. They, along with the English and social studies CILs, also conferenced with the grade 8 students for two school days. These efforts support the articulation of writing expectations across grade levels and schools.
- A grammar continuum was created for grades 6-9, building upon the skills taught in grades K-5. Teachers in grades 6-9 have integrated grammar instruction into their classes, allowing for common expectations across and between grade levels.
- Teachers at both WMS and WHS participated in a successful Tri-State visit, submitting a plethora of assignments and student writing samples for the visiting team to review. All ELA

teachers in grades 6-12 were either interviewed by the team or welcomed team members in their classrooms for observations.

- WHS students were among the winners in the 2018 Hudson-to-Housatonic Region Scholastic Writing Awards. One student was a gold key recipient, three students were silver key recipients, and five students received honorable mentions.
- WMS teachers continue to administer Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) for the SBA. These IABs not only gave students practice in test-taking skills, but also allowed teachers to examine the data so they could target instruction of specific reading, writing, language, and vocabulary skills.
- For the third year, WMS teachers worked with a consultant from Teachers College, Columbia University. Teachers continued to develop targeted reading and writing skills, particularly those related to argument writing, while developing vertically-articulated expectations in grades 6, 7, and 8.
- English and social studies teachers at WMS met to articulate writing expectations across grade levels; these meetings will culminate in a clear, horizontally articulated focus for writing for the upcoming school year.
- Grade-level partners continue to use their scheduled curricular partner time to collaborate on planning and assessments. Teachers also use this time to calibrate the scoring of student work. These efforts allow teachers to communicate common learning expectations to all students.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Since the Writing Portfolio is now a graduation requirement, we need to create a formal plan for supporting student writers who did not meet benchmark so that they do meet proficiency goals prior to graduating.
- Teachers at WMS need a continuum for the teaching of writing to help foster common expectations among and between grade levels.
- Teachers want to continue to use digital tools to enhance their instruction and need more professional development opportunities in this area. These tools are particularly helpful for the teaching and assessing of grammar skills.
- Teachers need training in methods on data collection and analysis that could inform instruction and impact student learning. This data analysis would pertain to the major standardized assessments such as SAT, PSAT, and SBA as well as the MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress); it would also support the collection of classroom data, which teachers could use to impact daily instruction.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Create a formal plan and implement supports for student writers who do not meet the benchmark on the Sophomore Writing Portfolio.
- Create and implement clearly articulated expectations for the teaching of writing across the grade levels which could be shared by both ELA and social studies at WMS.
- Revise and update the writing curriculum, as necessary, using the writing expectations created for WMS.
- Reflect upon the Tri-State report and use their recommendations for continuous improvement of our writing program.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES K-5**

### **I. 2017-18 Goals**

- Social studies units will continue to be refined and developed further in order to accommodate for additional standards in the framework that are not currently included in our units.
- Inquiry as an instructional practice will continue to be a focus of professional development.
- The development of additional authentic opportunities for technology integration will continue to be a priority in all social studies units.

### **II. Accomplishments**

- All second grade classrooms have utilized Google classroom for their integrated social studies/ELA biography unit.
- Grades 3-5 have developed and implemented one literacy unit that aligns with social studies standards.
- K-5 classrooms have created authentic, real world applications of social studies learning outcomes, utilizing technology where appropriate.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Instructional time competes with other curricular needs.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Instructional time for social studies needs to be revisited to ensure appropriate and consistent implementation.
- Continued reflection and refinement of curricular units, especially those related to current events, will be a focus.
- Further exploration and refinement of additional authentic opportunities for technology integration will be explored.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES 6-12**

### **I. 2017-18 Goals**

Department members will:

- Continue to support the district's digital learning initiative through integrating technology in the classroom in connection with research skills, digital resources, and tools to support student learning.
- Seek increased opportunities to integrate the inquiry model into coursework.
- Continue to support 6-12 student writing in effort to meet the district's writing goal in preparation for the Tri-State visit in the spring of 2018.
- Continue to seek increased opportunities for inter-departmental review of assessment practices.
- Continue to create opportunities for calibration of assessments and instructional practices to support a common understanding and gauge progress in regards to district and department goals in writing and inquiry.

### **II. Accomplishments**

- Utilizing 6-12 Social Studies Department meetings and professional development opportunities, the department further developed inquiry-based learning skills as outlined in the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards.
  - Eleventh grade American Studies teachers redesigned two assessments to follow the inquiry model: Western Crossroads and the My American Experience project at the end of the school year.
  - Tenth grade Modern World Studies revised the Interwar Inquiry Project based on student feedback, and created a tenth grade inquiry capstone to finalize the year.
  - Three high school teachers took part in an "Inquiry in the Social Studies Classroom" workshop led by 2012 Connecticut Teacher of the Year, David Bosso, at Fairfield University
  - One high school teacher attended an inquiry-based professional development workshop at the Mark Twain House in Hartford, Connecticut.
- Social studies department members supported grade 6-12 writing in effort to meet the district's writing goal in preparation for the Tri-State visit this past spring, 2018.
  - At the beginning of the school year, social studies department members worked as a 6-12 team to identify skills and assignments associated with argumentative writing. This served as a platform for vertical articulation, assessment calibration, and instructional practices.
  - Department members continue to participate, along with their ELA colleagues, in the eighth and tenth grade writing portfolios.
  - Writing Center coordinators met with ninth and eleventh graders in their social studies classes multiple times this year.
  - Eighth grade ELA teachers, social studies teachers, and CILs met to align expectations in regards to the writing portfolio. All, including the writing center coordinators, conferenced with students to support these expectations.

- ELA and social studies teachers at WMS met to articulate writing expectations across grade levels; these meetings will culminate in a clear, horizontally articulated focus for writing for the upcoming school year.
- The social studies department's interdisciplinary performance-based assessments continued to improve in their execution in sixth, seventh, and ninth grade.
  - The sixth grade Guardians of the Water Galaxy called upon students to participate in an inter-disciplinary project researching water issues and proposing solutions. Students received responses from a number of non-profit and corporate groups including the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the governor of California, and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California EPA.
- Social Studies and English teachers at WMS conducted an analysis of student performance data on Reading for Information common assessments associated with Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB). Teachers developed assessments designed to practice most-missed analytical reading and writing skills.
- AP Psychology was offered for the first time in 2016-2017, with 53 students enrolled. Ninety-eight percent of the students passed with a three or above, and the majority of students earned a four or five. This year, 97 students are enrolled in the course and will take the AP Exam on May 7.
- The eighth grade teachers collaborated with the Connecticut Regiment Colonial Reenactment group to bring Colonial Day to Weston Middle School
- The seventh grade teachers sought many guest speakers to support curricular units this year including representatives from Senator Chris Murphy's office and a Peace Corp volunteer.
- This past summer the AP United States History teachers developed a new website housing important documents from the historical record supporting the curriculum.
- Various department members had the opportunity to work with the Weston Historical Society in multiple capacities this school year:
  - The department met with the historical society to support their work on their 1960's exhibit.
  - The seventh grade team worked with the town historian in conjunction with their population project in the spring.
  - All eleventh grade students visited the historical society's 1960's exhibit this spring.
- Three Weston Middle School Mock Trial teams competed in the regional round of the state-wide mock trial championships. The eighth grade red team made it to quarter finals.
- Weston Middle School seventh grade student, Ian MacShane, won the school geography bee and qualified Connecticut State Geography Bee tournament.
- Department member, Thomas MacDonald, was a guest speaker with science teacher, Melanie Welsh, at two Sacred Heart University masters-level assessment seminars. The teachers presented the Guardians of the Water Galaxy projects as an example of a rigorous authentic assessment and conferenced with the students.
- Two department members presented at the district Best Practices and Digital Learning Fair.
- Various department members attended individual professional development opportunities this year to support department goals and initiatives.

- Two department members went on Tri-State visits in regards to social studies best practices and homework policies.
  - One department member went to a workshop on teaching and learning with iPads, Chromebooks, and Cloud-Based Computing.
- Department members, Daniel Passarelli and Christina Conetta, are taking fifteen high school students on a WWII inspired trip to London, Paris, and Munich this June.
- Various department members acted as advisors to social studies-specific clubs supporting numerous endeavors this year.
  - Two high school students participated in National History Day this year and won their respective category at the regional level. They move on to the state finals at the end of April.
  - The Young Progressives Club focused on many objectives this year including: highlighting awareness of money in politics, informing student body of the need for campaign finance reform to promote democracy as well as creating and then sending a poster to Stoneman Douglas High School in wake of the shooting.
  - Members of the high school's Model United Nations club went to the University of Connecticut and New York City to take part in two different Model UN conferences.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Summer curriculum time is needed to revise the American Studies curriculum based on interdisciplinary changes.
- Textbook inquiry and procedures need to be explored in order to adopt a new AP Government textbook based on the curriculum shift (2019-2020 school year).
- Teachers at WMS need a continuum for the teaching of writing to help foster common expectations among and between grade levels in both social studies and language arts.
- Teachers need to be trained on data collection and analysis in terms of SAT, PSAT and SBA, as per district gauging progress goals.
- There is a strong interest in pursuing external specialists to improve content knowledge and instructional practices especially regarding inquiry-based learning.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Continue to support the district's digital learning initiative through integrating technology in the classroom in connection with research skills, digital resources, and tools to support student learning with the support of our library media staff at both the high school and middle school.
- Seek increased opportunities to integrate the inquiry model into coursework through the support of experts in the field.
- Create and implement clearly articulated expectations for the teaching of writing across the grade levels which could be shared by both ELA and social studies teachers at the middle school.
- Revise and update the writing curriculum, as necessary, using the writing expectation created for WMS.

## WORLD LANGUAGE, GRADES K-12

### I. 2017-18 Goals

- Continue with curriculum renewal process with a focus on Spanish grades 3-12, French grades 7-11, and Chinese levels 2-4.
- Continue to provide subject-specific professional development opportunities for world language teachers.
- Continue to develop authentic learning experiences and assessments in all courses.
- Continue to seek enrichment opportunities for all languages outside of the classroom.
- Continue to enhance teaching with appropriate digital resources for world languages.

### II. Accomplishments

- Completed curriculum renewal for third grade Spanish with successful implementation of the new curriculum.
- Continued with revisions to Spanish FLES (Foreign Languages in Elementary Schools) program at WIS.
- Minor revisions were made to the K-2 Spanish curriculum.
- Revised and administered gauging progress assessment to second grade for FLES program at HES.
- Completed curriculum renewal for French and Spanish at WMS.
- Continued formal curriculum renewal process for Spanish, French, and Mandarin Chinese at WHS with successful completion of several courses.
- Continued alignment of curriculum with the newly revised World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages.
- Continued with vertical articulation of all language programs.
- Developed and implemented new authentic performance-based assessments at all levels.
- Engaged in professional development sessions with a focus on oral communicative proficiency.
- Enriched lessons with new digital resources (Seesaw, Memrize, Gimkit, Magistrula, and many others).
- Bi-monthly parent bulletins (El Boletín de Hurlbutt) were sent to HES parents, keeping them informed of the Spanish curriculum, highlighting units of focus, and interdisciplinary connections.
- Piloted a new series of French textbooks for WMS French program, which will be recommended for adoption in June 2018.
- Enhanced all languages with new ancillary materials (level readers, films, documentaries).
- WHS organized two field trips for Spanish students to a Spanish theatre in New York City.
- WMS organized and hosted French language workshops and a concert by Brice Kapel that benefited French and Spanish middle school and high school students.
- Seventh grade French students exchanged correspondence with a middle school in Artix, France.

- One French eighth grade student participated in the American Association of French Teachers in Connecticut (AATF) French Cultural Trivia Bowl 2018.
- Seventh grade Spanish students exchanged correspondence with a middle school in Santa Fe, Argentina.
- Eighth grade Spanish students continued with Spanish Club after school once a month.
- Eighth grade French students started a French Club after school once a month.
- Forty-eight eighth grade French students participated in the National French Contest. Gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded to these students as a result of their outstanding performance.
- Two hundred and twenty-five seventh and eighth grade Spanish students participated in the National Spanish Exam. Gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded to these students as a result of their outstanding performance.
- WMS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievements in Spanish and French classes at the annual World Language Celebration.
- WHS students participated in the National French, Spanish, and Latin Exams. Students received gold, silver, and bronze medals as a result of outstanding performance in the contests.
- Two high school French students were recognized for their performance in the National French Exam in Connecticut.
- One high school Spanish student was awarded a study abroad scholarship in Spain for July 2018 for her outstanding performance in the National Spanish Exam.
- WHS inducted students into the National French, Chinese, Latin, and Spanish Honor Societies. National French, Chinese, Latin and Spanish Honor Society members have actively participated in activities that promote the appreciation and promotion of World Languages (e.g. assisting in non-profit organizations in Bridgeport, tutoring students at WMS and WHS).
- National French, Chinese, Latin, and Spanish Honor Society members together with the Music National Honor Society members organized a “World Fair”, a music and languages festival at WHS to celebrate and promote languages and cultures.
- WHS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievements in world language classes at the World Language Celebration/National Honor Society Induction Night.
- Teachers participated in a variety of internal and external professional development opportunities. Some of the conferences dealt with: data analysis and collection, differentiation of instruction, improvement of students’ oral language proficiency, preparation of students for their AP language exams, implementation of new digital tools. One world language teacher presented a new digital tool at the WHS Best Practices and Digital Learning Fair.
- External assessments were researched and piloted for WHS in all languages in order to continue gauging students’ progress and to fulfill the requirements for the Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy for graduating seniors.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- More time is needed to finish with formal curriculum renewal process for French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese for anticipated adoption in the 2018-2019 school year.

- The sixth grade world language classes meet on an every other day basis, while the rest of the DRG A provides instruction on a daily basis. Additional staffing may be budgeted for everyday world language instruction for the 2019-2020 school year.
- Funds need to be budgeted for external assessments required to grant the Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy for graduating seniors.
- Ancillary cultural materials need to be identified and purchased for the Spanish 3-5 program.
- Continue to seek subject-specific professional development opportunities for all world language teachers.

#### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Complete curriculum renewal process for French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese at WHS.
- Develop fourth grade Spanish curriculum.
- Develop more curricular cross-disciplinary connections between world languages and other courses at WMS and WHS.
- Develop a departmental system at WHS to determine student readiness for external assessments to grant the Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy.
- Continue to provide subject-specific professional development opportunities for world language teachers.
- Continue to engage in systematic data collection to gauge student progress.
- Continue to develop authentic learning experiences and assessments in all courses.
- Continue to seek enrichment opportunities for all languages outside of the classroom.
- Continue to enhance teaching with appropriate digital resources for world languages.

## VISUAL ARTS, GRADES K-12

### I. 2017-18 Goals

- Continue to foster student pride in their work and model authentic artist exhibition opportunities for all grade levels through district and town art exhibitions.
- Continue to foster creativity and utilize digital tools, as appropriate, to support district initiative.
- Provide professional development (from local universities with coursework or in museum settings) that is directly aligned with updated curriculum content and research-based instructional pedagogy in the arts.
- Continue to monitor instructional time at all levels; exploring opportunities to expand visual arts opportunities for students.
- Explore possible resources for updating broken or aging classroom equipment and furniture.
- Implement the renewed Visual Arts curriculum with teachers monitoring and adjusting classroom instruction, unit assessments to positively impact student learning.
- Discuss and discover appropriate means of collecting data in the Visual Arts classrooms to inform instruction and provide meaningful analysis of student learning.

### II. Accomplishments

- The high school Visual Art Department collaborated with guidance and administration to devise strategies to reverse a decreasing enrollment trend in the visual arts. Some courses were combined or altered, some prerequisites changed and some course durations were changed.
- Grade 6 students created a colorful mural that will be mounted at WMS in the fall of 2018. Student contributions consisted of watercolor paintings based on specific aspects of color theory.
- Art teachers at all levels purposefully collected data to inform instruction. Data collection focused on before/after learning, progressive sketches/artworks to show learning, photographic evidence of learning and/or student reflections of learning.
- Sara Gibek won a \$3,000 scholarship for winning the Vantage Sports Net by Frontier VSN Video Award. Nathan Katz was a finalist for the same award.
- Arianna Berman, Hunter Burkard, Rachel Esslinger, Charlotte Glick, Caroline Gluck, Chase Isaacs, Saige Kanik, Lauren Neufeld, Kirk Perlik, Annie Prorokovic, Julia Reynolds, Elise Russell, Robert Weitzman, and Zoe Yung were chosen to exhibit work at the Norwalk Community College's Eighth High School Art Invitational.
- The "27th Annual Connecticut Regional Scholastic Art Award" was the largest juried student art exhibition in the state and featured select work from 150 participating Connecticut schools in grades 7-12. Selected from approximately 2,500 total art entries, 683 works were accepted for exhibit at the University of Hartford. From that accepted number, there were 259 Gold key awards (including 67 Gold portfolios), 197 Silver keys, and 225 Honorable Mention awards granted. The following Weston High School students were award winners at this prestigious show: Claudia Thompson, Gold Key Award; Taylor Sarnier, Honorable Mention; and Aidan Delgass, Honorable Mention.

- All computer-based art courses (Creative Computer Applications, Contemporary Media Design (CMD), Advanced Contemporary Media Design, and Publication Design) were completely rewritten this year on the new Learning Management System online platform, Canvas. In addition, some units of Photography and Crafts were designed on this new online Learning Management System (LMS). In doing so, some changes were applied to align more with the new curriculum. For example, Advanced CMD was changed to an options-based syllabus, in which students can choose which units to complete during the semester (they choose four out of nine units). This allows more individualized learning.
- All visual art teachers participated in professional development learning about the new LMS
- The visual art teachers attended the Chihuly exhibit at the New York Botanical Gardens in October. The exhibit was an excellent example of blending art and nature. Teachers benefitted from the informative exhibit as well as the professional dialog that accompanied it.
- Art students at the high school extended their learning outside of the classroom with meaningful field trips: AP Studio Art and Advanced Drawing students visited the Michelangelo exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, as well as Yale Center of British Art in New Haven; Photography students went to the Vivian Meier exhibit in Westport; and the Videography students took a tour of NBC Studios.
- National Art Honor Society (NAHS) students worked on a memorial mural for teacher Kevin Santiana, which will be displayed at HES. This mural is student designed and painted. They also worked as student docents during the Weston Arts Open Studio Day and completed seasonal window murals in the WHS Library, which were also student designed and executed.
- The “Fourth Annual Art Jam All District Art Exhibition” was held on May 17. Art teachers, NAHS students and music ensemble students worked together for a great collaborative artistic event. NAHS induction, WHS Art Department Awards and computer desktop art work selections/awards at all four levels were included in this exciting event.
- Ten students’ art works were exhibited at the Sacred Heart University’s “Teen Visions” 2018 Connecticut High School Art Exhibit: Arianna Berman, Isabel Birge, Thomas Bogaev, Tyler Bower, Georgia Burkard, Connor Golden, Sarah Johnson, Alexa Kripke (awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> prize), Jillian LaPalme and Caiti Levin.
- Ms. Weir’s second grade students participated in a pilot project for “self-portraits” using the “Chatter Pix” app on an iPad. The teacher took a picture of their finished self-portrait, drew a straight line where their mouth was and recorded their voice. Students had 30 seconds to talk about their artwork. Mary Reamer worked with library media specialist, Sharon Rodko, on this exciting new method of artistic reflection and expression. Each artwork had a QR scanner on it so parents could scan and listen to their child’s voice talk about their artwork at the Art Jam exhibition.
- The following students exhibited work at Westport Art Center’s Student Art Show: Arianna Berman, Alexa Kripke, Alexa Policano, Aidan Delgass, and Saige Kanik.
- Two student groups have been announced as finalists in the DMV Public Service Announcement Video Awards this year: Group One - David and Nathan Katz; and Group Two - Sofia Bara, Sara Gibek, and Anna Brosnihan. Winners will be announced on May 21 at the Connecticut Science Center.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- In Weston, the arts are highly valued; however, we are seeing declining enrollments in high school art courses. It is possible that growth in other elective programs (i.e., PLTW, computer science) may be impacting art enrollment. Alternatively, the effect of decreased classroom minutes at the elementary levels (5-6 years ago) may be contributing to reduced interest in high school courses.
- A long term equipment replacement plan is needed to support the program.
- Although the adjusted WMS schedule will address the inequitable access to art (currently only 75-80% of middle school students get visual art), instructional time in visual arts at all levels continues to be a concern.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Continue to foster student pride in their work and model authentic artist exhibition opportunities for all grade levels through district and town art exhibitions
- Continue to foster creativity and utilize digital tools, as appropriate, to support district initiative.
- Continue to monitor instructional time at all levels; exploring opportunities to expand visual arts opportunities for students.
- Continue to implement the renewed Visual Arts Curriculum with teachers monitoring and adjusting classroom instruction and unit assessments to positively impact student learning.
- Work with IT to design appropriate and specific objectives for data collection while continuing to collect data in the visual arts classrooms to inform instruction and provide meaningful analysis of student learning.

## PERFORMING ARTS, GRADES K-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Provide music and theatre arts teachers appropriate professional development that is focused on the artistic processes and artistic literacy as defined in the National Core Arts Standards.
- Utilize a variety of data sources to gauge progress and develop individual student goals and program goals that are directed at higher levels of performance.
- Continue to strengthen the K-12 music program and explore additional elective courses at the high school and increase community connections to the music program at various levels.
- Continue to foster creativity and utilize digital tools with up-to-date technology in appropriate arts courses.
- Continue to provide guidance and appropriate time for arts teachers to utilize digital resources like Google classroom and sites to strengthen classroom to home connections.

### II. Accomplishments

#### *Curriculum, Instruction and Instructional Technology*

- The K-12 music teachers began work on developing artistic literacy by exploring the National Standard for Connecting as part of their departmental goal. Artistic literacy is experiencing arts education in a way that allows a student to infer their own meaning about an artistic work; to be able to thoughtfully discuss why the work does or does not appeal to them and actively seek out music experiences.
- K-12 units and lessons included Connecting in a range of ways including relating music activities and repertoire to personal experience, preference for music, and culture.
- The high school bands, choirs, and orchestras toured Washington, DC. The Chamber Singers performed at the Basilica of the National Shrine and the bands, orchestras, and choirs performed a concert for our nation's veterans. All ensembles participated in master classes with faculty from George Mason University.
- Middle School band students have been successful at utilizing Smart Music's new online platform with their new Chromebooks for at-home practice and assessments. The Smart Music program allows each student to receive immediate feedback about their playing and apply it to their own performance for improvement. Teachers can create assignments from the instrumental lesson book or directly from band literature with effective practice charts. Each week students submit their assigned songs so that the teacher can listen to and assess student progress based on criteria selected by the teacher specific to each assignment. Smart Music has been an excellent tool for extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and allows more opportunities for the student and teacher to connect through the web-based teaching platform. The Chromebooks have made Smart Music more accessible to all students, and at times converted a band class into a recording studio.
- A variety of updated digital programs have provided students with a creative outlet and more ways to connect to their music making at home and in class. In eighth grade Music Technology, students create their own music samples using Garageband software, popular music sources, and their own recorded tracks. In the sixth and seventh grade guitar and piano lab programs, students are exploring composition using Noteflight software. Noteflight has

also been a beneficial extension for a fifth grade project challenge student with an interest in music. This student was able to hand write a melodic composition, and use Noteflight to revise and refine and create additional works.

- High School Music Technology and Music Theory courses are utilizing a variety of digital resources and some are industry level applications. Apps such as Eartrainer Lite and Musictheory.net allow students to practice music theory. Jamstudio, Soundation, and Audiotool allow students to create music online using different synthesizers and sounds.
- Our high school bands were exposed to new conductors and clinicians when the Weston High School Jazz Ensemble participated in a clinic with jazz saxophonist David Dejesus from the SUNY Purchase College of Music Jazz Faculty; the Wind Ensemble had a clinic and performance with guest conductor and composer, Jens Wendleboe; and the USMC Band Sargent Stacie Crowler and Sacred Heart Band Director Keith Johnson came to school for a clinic with the bands.
- For the fifth consecutive year, the WHS and WMS student mentoring program, Music Mentors, ran successful fall, winter, and spring programs where high school students mentor beginning band students after school one day a week. This year, the high school students added mentoring orchestra students to this successful program.
- Overall, the enrollment in our performing ensembles is steady. We continue to see interest in our performing groups at all levels. We have seen an increase in the fourth grade strings program this year and the middle school strings program over the last few years; and the middle school program is the largest that it has ever been.
- K-12 music teachers spent professional time looking at K-5 report card data, learning how to use a Google add-on to digitize rubrics and connect them to digital sound files and video submitted by students, and reviewing knowledge and skills assessments in grades 5 and 8.

#### ***All State, Regional Musicians and Music Honors***

- One WHS Band student, Jane Paknia, was selected by process of audition into the NAFME (National Association for Music Teachers) Honor Band.
- Eleven WHS band students, three orchestra students, and eight choir students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Western Regional High School Festival. (Maya Kallins, Rishav Khosla, Lyndsey Kundhardt, Ryce Aron, Ethan Klotz, Oliver Zych, Jane Paknia, Ben Rosenberg, Ariana Imperiali, Dan Curtis, Aarya Madan, Garrett Landen, Garrett Landen, Aarya Madan, Brooklyn Boehme, Emma Rogers, Jane Burdett, Josh Ronai, Thomas Valenti, Momo Burns-Min, Charlotte Chen, Alejo Navresse, Natalie Schreder)
- Four WHS band students, one orchestra, and five choral students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Connecticut All-State Festival. (Jane Paknia, Ben Rosenberg, Ariana Imperiali, Dan Curtis, Emma Rogers, Jane Burdett, Josh Ronai, Thomas Valenti, Momo Burns-Min, Natalie Schreder)
- Three WMS band and nine choir students were selected by process of audition to participate in the CMEA Western Regional Middle School Festival. (Karl Schulz, Gabe Paknia, Matthew Schreder, Kennedy Boehme, Bert Burns-Min, Lola Connelly, Jonah Frimmer, Konstantina Gotouhidis, Isabel Kusek, Michael Lagana, Audrey Mbwa-Mboma, William Stammer)

- Four fifth grade WIS choral students were selected to participate in the CMEA Elementary Honors Choir during the All-State Festival. (Clarisse Braun, Moby Lewis, Ava Aspen, Marissa McNeill)
- Two students in grade 7 were chosen via audition to participate in the Fairfield County Strings Festival. (Pia Lee was named principal, second violin in the honors orchestra and Sam Kurian was selected to play cello in the orchestra.)
- On May 11, the WMS Jazz Bands, WMS Chamber Orchestra, and the WMS Chamber Singers will attend Music in the Parks Adjudication Festival in Massachusetts. The WMS ensembles typically have a lot of success at this event.
- The Tri-M Music Honor society inducted 31 junior and 25 senior members into their respective chapters on May 1, bringing our total number of members to 119. The Tri-M Music Honor Society is the international music honor society for middle/junior high and high school students. It is designed to recognize students for their academic and musical achievements, reward them for their accomplishments and service activities, and to inspire other students to excel at music and leadership.
- The WHS senior and junior Tri-M chapters are very active and sponsored various music events throughout the year including the Harmonies for Hurricane's Concert benefitting hurricane relief efforts, the WHS Music Mentors Program, WHS World Fair, WMS Morning Show Music Jeopardy, the annual Caroling Fundraiser raising money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and K.E.Y.S. (Kids Empowered by Your Support) a local organization that provides music lessons for kids in Bridgeport.
- Several students were involved in area select ensembles such as the Fairfield County Children's Choir, the Norwalk Youth Symphony, the Bridgeport Youth Orchestra, the Ridgefield Youth Symphony and a variety of summer arts ensembles.

#### ***Music and Theatre Arts Performances***

- The WHS Music Department hosted and performed in "A Night with Mallet Legend Arthur Lipner." This concert featured professional jazz musician, composer, and WHS alum Arthur Lipner, other professional musicians and the Wind Ensemble, Jazz Bands, and Chamber Singers. The evening was organized by 11th grade student, Stephen Blinder, and was a popular event among the jazz musicians in the region.
- The WHS drama club, Company, presented the Arthur Miller classic *All My Sons* in the fall and the Rogers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific* in the spring. Each production at WHS benefitted from the talents of student artists, musicians, actors, costume designers, and technical theatre personnel who dedicated their time and talent to this very successful co-curricular program.
- Company will present a student-run production of *Dialogue* that will feature student written and directed one-act plays, scenes and multiple musical acts on May 20.
- Last June, Company students were nominated for nine HALO (Helping and Leading Others) awards and attended the HALO Awards at the Palace Theater in Waterbury, Connecticut. This awards night is the premiere high school competition in the state. Company students won for Best Hair and Makeup and Avery Roche received the award for Stage Management. This June, Company will be performing a musical number from *South Pacific* at the event. Nominations for this year's awards will be announced later in May.

- The WMS theatre group Short Wharf presented *Once on This Island, Jr.* this winter. The middle school performers benefitted from the talents of high school student artists, musicians, actors, costume designers, and technical theater personnel from Company who worked alongside middle school students to train them in areas of technical theatre.
- The WIS theatre group Show Stoppers presented the new children's musical *Giants in The Sky*. *Giants in the Sky* was the winner of the 2017 Children's Musical Theater Festival in New York City. The writers of the musical were in contact with the theater coordinator and while they were unavailable to attend the performance, they were sent a short video and some pictures. We look forward to working with them again.
- The WHS Jazz Program performed in the Berklee Jazz Festival in Boston, Massachusetts and received second place honors. They also performed with area ensembles in the Wilton Jazz Symposium where they performed well and participated in a clinic with Jazz educators. The WHS Jazz Combo performed at The Heights at Brother Vicks in New York.
- The WHS and WMS Jazz groups performed at a Jazz Cabaret at the middle school on February 23.
- Over 1,000 students in WHS, WMS, and WIS performed in winter and spring choral, band, and orchestra concerts in their various school music ensembles.
- Over 300 WHS and WMS students performed in the band Spectrum Concert on March 16.
- The WHS music clubs, Pep Band, A Capella, Share the Music, and Music Mentors were very active this year and performed at athletic and community events.
- WMS musicians participated in music making on Veterans Day by playing for the Veterans Day breakfast and the all-school assembly.
- All WIS students performed patriotic music at a Veterans Day assembly and performed multicultural holiday music at a winter sing along in December.
- WIS grade 3 performed a concert in the spring and HES Kindergarten through grade 2 will perform grade level concerts.
- A WHS and WMS marching band was formed for students to participate in the Memorial Day Parade.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Enrollment in our performing ensembles remains strong. We are fortunate to have seen an increase in participation and retention in our strings program, which has created a challenge when scheduling. This has presented the need to review our lesson grouping structure for size and time to determine if there is a need for additional staffing.
- There continues to be a scheduling challenge at the high school when scheduling students in our honors ensembles, as there are many singletons offered at the same time. We are examining ways to give priority to our highest level ensembles with scheduling when possible. In addition, Music Theory is a highly specialized course but necessary to complete a comprehensive high school music program. We will continue to examine ways to meet the minimum number of students.
- Many teachers, especially in the arts and humanities, would benefit from having a small space like a black box for presentations, larger group activities, speaker rehearsals and other activities that require a space larger than a classroom but more intimate than the high school auditorium.

- There is a need for additional theatre arts courses as students have expressed interest in musical theater and technical theater courses.

#### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Continue to provide music teachers appropriate professional development opportunities that are focused on the artistic processes and artistic literacy as defined in the National Core Arts Standards, which will continue to increase student connection to the music program at various levels.
- Transition the middle school band and orchestra lessons to slightly less instruction time to accommodate the new middle school schedule.
- Continue to provide guidance and appropriate time for arts teachers to utilize digital resources in their classes that are in line with industry standards to differentiate for student needs and foster creativity and independent thinking.

## HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION, GRADES K-12

### I. 2017-18 Goals

- Continue physical education curriculum renewal process.
- Evaluate high school physical education adjustment to junior and senior year curriculum.
- Seek Board approval for the updated health curriculum.
- Fully implement the updated health curriculum.
- Review student physical fitness data for both curriculum renewal information and fall lesson planning.
- Provide ongoing instructional coaching with new and experienced teachers.

### II. Accomplishments

- Integrated two new physical education/health education teachers into our program.
- Implemented technology into existing units (swimming, basketball, yoga) for instruction and reflection.
- Used a flip classroom approach to deliver swimming instruction and performance reflection.
- Expanded the use of IHT heart rate wrist monitors in grades 6, 7, and 8.
- Incorporated new assessments into existing units (basketball, swimming, track and field, and tennis).
- Continued work on physical education renewal with the completion of the Physical Education Curricular Assessment Tool.
- High school staff made adjustments and curricular changes to address new reduction in physical education credit hours for juniors and seniors.
- Incorporated more instructional visuals and bulletin boards at the middle school.
- Two teachers attended the Connecticut Association for Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD) conference in November.
- CIL joined the Southwest District PE/Health Coordinator Group and the CAAPHE (Connecticut Association of Administrators of Physical and Health Education) group to stay current with field trends, statutes, and regulations affecting health and physical education.
- Incorporated a fitness test goal-setting task for grades 3-10 to reflect upon past progress and set goals for growth.
- Presented the revised health education curriculum to the BOE Curriculum Committee.
- Revised where and how we implement emotional and mental health. Created a new grade 8 unit and performance based assessment.
- Held our first ever “Health Expo” highlighting our K-12 health education program.
- Created a K-12 health education informational brochure highlighting our K-12 curriculum.
- Piloted “parent connections” in grades 7-12 health classes.
- Incorporated a “health seminar” using a hybrid approach (Google Classroom and workshops) with the 42 students who were unable to fit health into their schedule.
- Increased opportunities for instructional coaching between CIL and physical education and health teachers.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- Physical education contact time for juniors and seniors was reduced from one semester to one quarter to allow students more time to engage in the college process. This created some curricular and scheduling issues for high school teachers. As a result, there was an increased amount of adjusting and collaborative planning time needed.
- New societal and community concerns caused the need to shift priorities within the health curriculum.
- New staff at the intermediate, middle, and high school levels resulted in an increased amount of mentoring and induction.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Make significant progress toward physical education curriculum update.
- Modify health curriculum in grades 3-5 to adjust to the one-third reduction in curricular time.
- Expand health education “parent connections” making them district wide. Increase opportunities for parent and community involvement.
- Incorporate more technology into both health and physical education to deepen learning.
- Offer more choice in both health and physical education to differentiate, create more interest, and to stimulate more personal investment.
- Continue and expand coaching opportunities for both health and physical education teachers.
- Foster an environment where all health and physical education teachers actively research current and innovative health and physical education trends.
- Improve existing, and create more meaningful assessments throughout the K-12 curriculum.
- Empower health and physical education staff to become “teachers” to other educators within our discipline and encourage life-long learning. Possibly present at the state CAHPERD conference and/or invite other educators to our district for professional development.
- Use Tableau to analyze Connecticut Physical Fitness Test data. Identify strengths and weaknesses and use this to create new goals and to inform future instruction.

## TECHNOLOGY, GRADES 6-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Plan for the continued growth of the high school curricular and co-curricular program with special attention to staffing, facilities, co-curricular opportunities, and female enrollment.
- Further explore opportunities for integration of engineering design and technology education skills in cross-curricular and interdisciplinary projects at the middle level such as science or future PADI projects.
- Examine new offerings and revisions from the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) organization and reaffirm our choices and/or consider alternatives/enrichments.

### II. Accomplishments

- As a previously certified Introduction to Engineering Design (IED) instructor, Physics teacher Lucas Walker joined the PLTW team at the high school and taught two sections of IED.
- The middle school Robotics Team increased participation by 60% and included an all-female team. All teams ranked in the top 10 for the Southern New England Regional Championship, and took home multiple awards. The all-female team was awarded the Energy Award. Of the other four teams, two were tournament champions and qualified for the National Open.
- The high school Robotics Team launched its first team and built a fully functioning robot. Students and supervisor Rebecca Kaplan are both enthusiastic and optimistic for the future growth of the high school team.
- In an effort to continue strong ninth grade enrollment in technology courses, WHS PLTW teacher, Mackenzie Robens, and selected students visited all eighth grade PLTW classes to speak about the offerings at the high school level.
- Projected growth in enrollment for the high school program continues. See table below.

Year	Introduction to Engineering Design	Computer Integrated Manufacturing	Principles of Engineering	Civil Engineering and Architecture	Total FTE
2015-16	50 (2 Sections)	20 (1 Section)	Off Year	30 (2 Sections)	1.2 FTE
2016-17	76 (3 Sections)	27 (2 Sections)	31 (2 Sections)	Off Year	1.4 FTE
2017-18	94 (4 Sections)	38 (2 Sections)	17 (1 Section)	20 (1 Section)	1.6 FTE
2018-19 (Requests)	108 students	40 students	17 students (may increase)	28 students (may decrease)	1.8 FTE

- Of the 108 students enrolled in Introduction to Engineering Design, 29 are female (27%). This maintains the recent trend of increased participation of females in PLTW.
- A PLTW stipend position was established to support the growth of the program. There are several tasks and responsibilities that need to be completed in order to facilitate the 6-12 program. Mackenzie Robens, who has been teaching PLTW since its inception, has taken a lead role in handling these tasks. Some of the PLTW managerial tasks include completing

end-of-course registrations and reporting scores to appropriate colleges and universities to ensure the opportunity for college credits for high school PLTW students.

- Female students enrolled in the PLTW program started a Society of Women Engineers Club at the high school under the advisement of Mackenzie Robens. The aim of the club is to foster the interest of technical fields for young women.
- All four PLTW courses offered at the high school were successful at running simultaneously. This continues to support program growth by giving upper level students the option of choosing Principles of Engineering or Civil Engineering and Architecture their junior or senior year, eliminating more scheduling conflicts than when all four courses were not offered during a semester.
- Honors level Principles of Engineering and Civil Engineering and Architecture courses were proposed to the Board of Education. They were presented to be run at the same time as standard level courses (similar to how the Language department provides course level options) in an effort to meet the growing needs and wants of students.
- The transition from Moodle Learning Management System (LMS) to Canvas LMS has been fully implemented in all four PLTW courses.
- There are now two 3D printers in the PLTW program that allow instructors to meet the growing printing needs required of larger enrollment numbers. Additionally, a new plotter was purchased to replace the previous outdated and damaged one. In addition to being used for PLTW classes, the plotter supports the library by providing larger prints for events and displays throughout the year.
- Middle school and high school student accounts have been set up for both Robotics Teams. As an extra-curricular activity, funds can now be managed by Rebecca Kaplan who serves as both the middle school and high school coach.

### **III. Challenges and Needs**

- The hardware and software demands of the PLTW program are significant, given the nature of the curriculum. IT has continued to make improvements in support of the PLTW program.
- There are now computers located in the high school library that have Autodesk software installed for students to work during free periods and until 4:00 p.m. each school day. However, current PLTW support guidelines recommend not installing their software in a virtual environment. This has impacted up by not being able to provide a work at home option.
- The Automation and Robotics program for eighth grade continues to build an inventory of VEX parts to accommodate eight simultaneous sections. While new kits have been purchased, there continues to be a shortage of some parts, causing one teacher or another to shift builds to different times in the curriculum. Students build over multiple periods and cannot break down parts for use by other periods. Continued investment in additional parts as well as storage is required to accommodate open-ended building experiences.
- Projected enrollment for the 2018-2019 academic year requires the use of an additional classroom with access to computers capable of running required curricular software. The plan to use G-0 is a great solution to the problem based on the classroom's proximity to the current PLTW classrooms and outfitted computers. Furthermore, if the program continues to grow in

future years, more periods throughout the day will need to use this additional space, which could potentially impact programming courses.

- Due to the growth of the Robotics Club both at the middle school and high school, there is need for additional storage space for VEX equipment. Based on the financial investment these kits require, keeping an accurate and separate record of the equipment for the middle school team, high school team, and PLTW curriculum, is necessary when it comes to projecting equipment needs for future years. Additional startup costs to cover equipment that complies with developing robotics competition specifications and the demand for additional high school teams is also needed.
- The change in schedule at the middle school results in a slight loss of instructional time for the PLTW program. The tradeoff is that all students will have access to the PLTW courses in grades 6-8. Teachers will modify their units to deliver the curriculum within the adjusted time schedule.

#### **IV. 2018-2019 Goals**

- Support the continually increasing interest in the middle school and high school robotics teams by providing adequate financial resources for equipment, registration, stipend, and storage needs. This will ensure that Weston can be competitive in local and potentially regional and/or national competitions.
- Implement honors level designations into the Principles of Engineering and Civil Engineering and Architecture curricula at the high school. Throughout the year, instructors will need to continuously reflect and develop the efficiency of offering these level options simultaneously with standard level students.
- Develop Canvas activities to better serve the high school PLTW population by utilizing more of the LMS features. If beneficial with the new schedule at the middle school, incorporate the use of Canvas to middle school PLTW classes.
- Increase enrollment in technology education courses at the middle school level with implementation of the newly revised WMS schedule, which allows for increased access to PFA courses.

## SCHOOL COUNSELING, K-12

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Continue to closely monitor the implementation of the Effective School Solutions (ESS) program at the high school and possibly the middle school with regular data collection with regard to the success of the implementation, as well as monitoring of the ESS staff and their interactions with students and families.
- Continue to monitor students and education programs at the high school regarding substance abuse concerns. Implement a community coalition group to address substance abuse concerns.
- Increase ability to offer more post-high school vocational opportunities for students.
- Continue to monitor the college application process at WHS with regard to managing the number of applications students complete, as well as assist families in understanding the process and the role of the school counselor.
- Present the school counseling curriculum renewal in conjunction with the health curriculum to the Board of Education.

### II. Accomplishments

- The Effective School Solutions program has been highly successful during the 2017-2018 school year. The staff has a better understanding of the program, and as a result, the referrals and numbers of students referred to the program have increased. ESS has also accepted referrals for eighth grade students this year, and currently several students have been accepted into the program which will assist with their transition to the high school.
- The district developed the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Community with many stakeholders from the community at large. The group, in conjunction with the high school and middle school principals as well as other districts, has substance abuse education and prevention as their priority goal.
- In the budget for the 2018-19 school year, a new position has been added to the counseling staff at the high school. There will be a certified school counselor who will run the College and Career Center in order to improve the process of transitioning to post high school for all students.
- The School Counseling and Health curriculum review was completed and presented to the Curriculum Committee and the BOE.

### III. Challenges and Needs

- The increase in the number of students at the elementary level with behavior and emotional regulation is cause for concern.
- There is an increase in the number of students at the middle school with more significant emotional and mental health concerns.
- There is continued concern regarding the increases in student substance use and substance abuse at the high school.

### IV. 2018-2019 Goals

- Hire an additional behaviorist to address the student needs at the elementary level.

- Hire a school social worker for the middle school to address student emotional needs.
- Continue to monitor the ESS program at the high school for effectiveness.
- Hire a new certified school counselor for the college and career center.
- Continue to coordinate with the district Substance Abuse Committee to provide for programming and interventions regarding substance abuse.
- Continue to incorporate the tenets of Emotional Intelligence into all aspects of individual and group counseling.

## PROJECT CHALLENGE, 3-8

### I. 2017-2018 Goals

- Finalize and present an updated Program Guide and curricular framework to the Board of Education.
- Plan a parent information night during the fall 2017 to provide an overview of the program and any updates to the identification process.
- Continue to monitor the Project Challenge classes and the enrichment opportunities for fidelity of implementation.

### II. Accomplishments

- The Project Challenge curriculum update process was finalized and presented to the Curriculum Committee and also the BOE. Some areas were identified for additional development and/or monitoring and have been transferred into program goals.
- A new teacher was hired for the middle school Project Challenge classes and this change in personnel has provided for improvement in the areas that were identified as concerns by the parent and student focus groups that had been held as part of the curriculum renewal process.
- The Project Challenge teachers at both WIS and WMS were able to attend professional development regarding programming as well as new state recommendations for identifying and supporting students identified as gifted.

### III. Challenges and Needs

- The number of female students identified in grade three is cause for concern as it is significantly lower than the number of male students identified for the past two years. It is important to review the identification process with these trends in mind to ensure that gender gaps do not persist.
- At the middle school level, scheduling constraints often require students to have to make choices regarding their participation in Practical and Fine Arts classes (PFAs) and Project Challenge. Scheduling at the middle school needs to be reviewed in order to provide equitable access to Project Challenge and PFAs.
- Review the effectiveness of the Enrichment Program at WIS.
- The Project Challenge curriculum for grades 3-8 needs to be documented on the Rubicon Atlas website.
- Provide opportunities for students to develop their leadership, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills.

### IV. 2018-2019 Goals

- Refine the identification process by reviewing the cut scores for the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test (NNAT). Consider a different test that looks more closely at creative skills.
- Further develop and document the curriculum for Project Challenge classes to serve as an extension of the core curriculum and engage students in broad, highly engaging themes.
- Improve the implementation process for the Master Project to more efficiently carry out the goals of the project and provide more students with the support and feedback they need to be successful.

- School counselors to work more closely with the teachers to provide programming for social-emotional learning.
- Review enrichment opportunities at WIS to provide the maximum effectiveness.
- Review the scheduling of the Project Challenge classes at both WIS and WMS.