



WESTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

Annual Instructional Update 2014-2015

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WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 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.

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MATHEMATICS, GRADES K-5

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Complete implementation of *Math in Focus* by transitioning grade five to the full implementation of these materials.
- Build on the first year of experience of third-and-fourth grade and second year with full K-2 implementation to further improve instruction at these levels.
- Continue instructional coaching to provide observational data to teachers in mathematics for the purpose of reflection, increasing repertoire, and improving instruction. Coaching will focus on support for teachers implementing *Math in Focus* for the first time, as well as further supporting the pedagogy of teachers in their second and third year of *Math in Focus*.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.
- Continue to refine draft of K-5 progress report standards and align with rubrics and assessments for rollout in fall 2015.
- Complete curriculum revision using Atlas Rubicon electronic mapping for grades K-2 during the summer of 2014.
- Use our upcoming Tri-State Consortium math visit, March 2015, as an opportunity to gain valuable insights to inform the continuous growth of our program.

II. Accomplishments

- The *Math in Focus* program was successfully implemented with all students in grade five in order to complete our K-5 transition plan.
- Professional development was provided to assist in this implementation. Professional development was led by the CIL, with support from an international consultant.
- This year's professional development began in August with two half-day workshops led by the CIL for fifth-grade teachers. The professional development days in the fall continued to support the grade five transition through CIL-led professional development. Grades three and four also received professional development to support them in year two.
- Dr. Yeap Ban Har, one of Singapore's foremost educational leaders, visited in March to model lessons and debrief with every K-5 teacher. He spent extended time with fifth graders, teachers, CIL, and administrators, consulting on our transition thus far. Subsequent professional development time followed up on this visit with teachers.
- Specific professional development, on both curriculum and instructional practice, was provided to teachers new to the district or new to a grade.
- Grade-level meeting time was used to continue supporting the growth of elementary teachers in their instructional strategies.
- Instructional coaching provided data and questions for the purpose of reflection, leading to improvement of instruction and greater differentiation. Weston's Teacher Supervision and Evaluation Plan continued to be helpful in encouraging teachers to avail themselves of instructional coaching.
- Curriculum revision using Atlas Rubicon electronic mapping for kindergarten through grade two was completed during the summer of 2014.
- Throughout the year, preparation for our Tri-State Consortium math visit, March 11-13, 2015, involved teachers from each grade level, including special education. This was a valuable professional development experience for teachers as they collected and analyzed artifacts from their teaching, including student work.

- In the fall, seven parent workshops were offered and well attended by 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 2-5.
- Progress report work continued, allowing teachers to reflect on both assessment and parent communication.
- 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.

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 of our teachers.
- We need to examine our data sources and use of data as we begin to use a new warehouse system.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Continue instructional coaching to provide observational data to teachers in mathematics for the purpose of reflection, increasing repertoire, and improving instruction. Coaching next year will focus on support for further developing the instructional strategies leading to successful math learning for teachers of kindergarten through grade five, and including an emphasis on differentiation and blended learning.
- Continue to provide high-quality professional development opportunities for all teachers using both internal capacity and outside consultants.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.
- Assist with implementation of new K-5 standards based progress reports and corresponding rubrics and assessments for rollout in fall 2015.
- Complete curriculum revision using Atlas Rubicon electronic mapping for grades three through five during the summer of 2015, bringing these revised documents to the Board next year.
- Reflect on findings of Tri-State Consortium math visit, March 2015, to inform the continuous growth of our program, implementing suggestions where appropriate.
- Begin exploration of the use of performance assessments at the elementary level.

MATHEMATICS, GRADES 6-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Continue the revision of our placement process in each grade.
- Continue revision of curriculum and implementation of *Math in Focus* in grade seven, implement *Math in Focus* in grade eight, align CCSS with geometry in grades eight through ten using the new textbook, and align CCSS with Algebra 2 and Honors Algebra 2. We will need to examine the impact of changes made in the curriculum in the past year in terms of its impact in pre-calculus.
- Further development of performance-based assessments should continue and all teachers in 6-12 mathematics should have at least two units prepared and implemented by the end of the year.
- Modify and develop the current curriculum for the trigonometry course and develop the curriculum for the planned computer programming course.
- Continue to explore blended learning opportunities that will enhance the delivery of math instruction in meeting the needs of all learners.

II. Accomplishments

- Eighth-grade has implemented the CCSS through the utilization of the *Math in Focus* program.
- Standard and Honors Algebra 2 teachers are working with curriculum written to align with the CCSS.
- A new geometry textbook fully aligned to our curriculum and CCSS was used in eighth-grade, as well as standard and honors geometry at WHS. Identical concepts and skills are being explored at both the standard and honors levels, with the pacing and depth differing based on the needs of the class.
- New semester-long courses in trigonometry and computer coding ran for the first time this year at the high school. Curriculum for those courses was developed last summer and documented in Atlas.
- As a result of the success of the computer coding course, the need for a second semester extension of that course was identified. An advanced coding course will run during the 2015-2016 school year.
- All math courses have documented curriculum in Atlas.
- The Honors Algebra 2 placement test was reviewed and refined, using information gathered from last year's administration of the test.
- The sixth-grade placement test (administered to fifth graders at the end of April) was reviewed and edited to reflect the CCSS as well as the new fifth grade curriculum implemented using the *Math in Focus* program.
- WMS special education teachers, in conjunction with the CIL, have adopted a universal screening tool to help identify areas of mathematical deficiency for their students. This tool will be used at various times throughout the school year to measure growth, and can be used with any student.
- WMS special education teachers have worked closely with the CIL this year to open the lines of communication and help bridge the gap between direct math and mainstream classes.

- Eighth-grade algebra and geometry students participated in a 90-minute workshop through the *Engineers in Algebra* program, facilitated by Mr. Mark Love, and sponsored by the WMS PTO. The workshop aligned with the Common Core Practice Standards and allowed students to delve into problem solving in the real-life situation of analyzing and planning traffic intersections.
- All middle school and four high school math teachers, along with administrators, participated in a one-day workshop in March facilitated by Dr. Yeap Ban Har; an international authority on Singapore Math. Dr. Yeap Ban Har guest-taught one seventh -rade and one eighth-grade class and debriefed with the teachers following each lesson, focusing on the principles and methodology of the Singaporean philosophy.
- All 6-12 teachers engaged in many hours of intensive self-study as part of their preparation for the Tri-State visit.
- High school teachers continue to design instruction that targets persevering through problem solving and critical thinking.
- All 6-12 teachers participated in professional development, working on performance based assessment development and refinement with a consultant, from Learner Centered Initiatives.
- All levels of 6-12 math courses implemented at least one performance based assessment during the school year. Some courses implemented two or more.
- All 6-12 teachers participated in professional development on the importance of formative assessment, which highlighted effective formative assessment techniques.
- Many 6-12 teachers began using Google Forms to administer pre- and post-assessment of skills for particular curricular units.
- Some teachers have implemented Google Sites and/or Google Classroom as part of their daily classroom routine. The sixth-grade field trip performance-based assessment was administered and submitted entirely using Google Classroom.
- We have continued to explore the web-based program MathXL for School. This program provides interactive assistance, practice problems, homework, and testing to the students. Progress, results, and time spent is provided to the teacher. Several individual middle school students have used the program to help build their foundational skills in their current courses. One eighth-grade student used the program to fill in some gaps in order to move from 8-1 to Algebra early in the school year. Students in sixth-grade Math Advantage have used the program to supplement the grade level course content and provide additional skills practice.
- Sixteen students participated on the WMS Mathematics Team at five competitions with the Fairfield County Junior Math League this year.
- The WHS Mathematics Team entered its sixth year in the Fairfield County Mathematics League.
- Twenty-four ninth and tenth-graders and 10 upperclassmen participated in the 2015 American Mathematics Competition.

III. Challenges and Needs

- More work needs to be done in aligning the courses common to the middle and high schools. The depth at which concepts are explored in algebra and geometry should be the same at all levels, though the pacing should differ.
- We will be identifying a new textbook for Algebra 2 at all levels and we will need to continue to align the standards and prepare for transitional gaps. There continues to be a need to

develop a data team to examine progress, placement, and needs at every level in math courses grades 6-12 for intervention and acceleration. The needs must be clearly identified and aligned with current learning and curriculum objectives.

- There continues to be a need at WMS to create pathways for success for all learners. We hope to begin to explore this with our sixth-grade pilot program for the 2015-2016 school year.
- We need to continue to refine the placement process in order to ensure the retention of our students at the double accelerated level.
- Examine the impact of the changes in our middle school curriculum on our high school courses. This includes both curricular changes as well as pedagogical changes.
- Examine the impact of the changes in our early high school curriculum on our precalculus courses.
- Explore the idea of a math lab at the high school, to help meet the needs of students looking for help at all levels of math.
- Continued professional development on varying assessment (particularly at the honors level) in order to help meet the needs of all of our learners, and open more opportunities for students to access the more rigorous coursework.
- Continued professional development on the use of Google Classrooms and other blended learning tools to enhance teaching and learning.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Pilot a sixth-grade program that allows all students identified for grade-level math the opportunity to take the single accelerated course over seven to eight periods a week, as opposed to the typical five periods.
- Vertically align the content and depth (not the pacing) of courses common to the middle and high schools (Algebra, Geometry).
- Continue revision of curriculum and implementation of *Math in Focus* at WMS, including the development of a sixth grade pre-algebra curriculum that utilizes the *Math in Focus* program.
- Continue revision of curriculum and alignment with the CCSS in all Geometry and Algebra 2 courses at the middle and high schools, including the adoption of a new Algebra 2 text.
- Continue the development of performance-based assessments, and all courses should aim to have one PBA implemented in each semester next year.
- Develop a curriculum for the Computer Coding 2 course.
- Continue to explore blended learning opportunities that will enhance the delivery of math instruction in meeting the needs of all learners.

SCIENCE, GRADES K-5

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Continue the implementation and explore the development of AIM units in all grades, K-5.
- Focus instructional coaching on implementation of inquiry and clarity of instruction, utilizing the Skillful Teacher training.
- Examine the impact of Connecticut's decision on NGSS and project and plan for curriculum adjustments that might be necessary.

II. Accomplishments.

- Coaching was focused on teachers new to the district or to their grade level.
- Half-day professional development sessions were conducted for fourth-grade teachers new to teaching science.
- AIM units continued to be refined based on teacher reflection.
- Our students continued to take part in rich science experiences involving inquiry, the use of science notebooks, and thinking deeply about their science content.
- WIS held its first science fair March 2015 thanks to the support of the PTO. This was an inquiry based science fair with students selecting a question of their own interest that could be investigated through the inquiry process. We had 110 fourth-and-fifth graders take part, working either independently or in a small group. This represents approximately one third of our students.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Time and study will be needed to assess areas where we may need to adjust curriculum if and when Connecticut adopts the new national NGSS. The State Board of Education has stated it expects to consider NGSS adoption early in 2015.
- Consistent weekly time allotted for science instruction needs to be determined, articulated, and scheduled for each grade level, K-5. Teachers need several substantial blocks of time each week to implement the initiatives of inquiry, science note-booking, hands-on activities, and critical thinking. While some grades experience this consistently, scheduling makes it difficult for others to accomplish in other grades.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Continue the implementation and explore the development of AIM units in all grades, K-5.
- Focus instructional coaching on implementation of inquiry and clarity of instruction, utilizing the Skillful Teacher training.
- Examine the impact of Connecticut's decision on NGSS and project and plan for curriculum adjustments that might be necessary.

SCIENCE, GRADES 6-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Identify, teach, assess, and track the Science and Engineering Practices through the 6-12 Science Curriculum.
- Begin discussion on another critical thread of science education in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-instruction on the Nature of Science.
- Continue to expand efforts in performance-based assessment to ensure access to high-quality performance assessment throughout courses, levels, and sections.
- Continue to expand the WHS science department's use of Interlace as a tool for AIM and Science and Engineering Practices desired outcomes.

II. Accomplishments

- WHS and WMS teachers worked together during district-wide professional development sessions to create rubrics assessing student progress in the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices. Teachers now adapt these rubrics for use in course-specific assessments, ensuring a common language and paving the way for systematic progression in skill development. Further, as part of their department goal, science teachers at WHS are tracking student data relative to the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices.
- In addition to work on the Science and Engineering Practices, science teachers 6-12 participated in professional development in two other threads of the NGSS-explicit instruction in the Nature of Science and incorporating Engineering Design into the science classroom. Teachers will include at least one experience in these areas in the curriculum this year. For example, as part of the Food Production and Preservation unit (seventh grade), Cathy Collins and Patty Nizlek will introduce students to primary academic literature regarding modified atmosphere packaging.
- Science and social studies teachers created a cross-disciplinary performance assessment for ninth graders as part of Cohort III of Performance Assessment Design Initiative (PADI). Students will use concepts from freshman science courses and the World Studies course and create a public service announcement-style video to address the question "What infectious disease poses the greatest threat to us?" The science teachers involved are: Lauren Hauser, Stacey Greenberg, Tom Grace, Dawn Boulton, Darcy Ronan, Jamie Charles, and Anna Balouskus. Sixth-grade science teachers are part of Cohort IV, designing an inter-disciplinary performance assessment for use during the next school year.
- WHS Science teachers continue to use Interlace as a classroom tool to promote collaboration and to support teacher use of formative assessment. Teachers are also exploring how Interlace and Google Classroom can be applied together. For example, biology students participate in a "big data" genetics investigation in partnership with their peers in New Canaan, pooling data online.
- WMS science teachers have begun examining the content of the NGSS relative to current Connecticut Standards. They have identified areas of alignment, anticipated content shifts, and potential new units.
- WMS science and technology teachers have begun to discuss the concept of integrated STEM education, exploring resources and identifying other programs making strides in this area.

- The AP Physics C and AP Physics I audits were completed and accepted by the College Board.
- All freshmen in the fall of 2015 will take either Honors or Standard Biology. This change will position students for the anticipated changes related to the NGSS and also promotes access to upper division electives for all Weston students.
- Summer curriculum work supported efforts to greater align Standard and Honors Biology courses, moving the Evolution unit to the start of the year, and adding an Ecology unit at the end of the year.
- At WHS, a co-teaching model supported high-needs sections of Standard Biology and Standard Chemistry.
- Students in Honors Chemistry are the beneficiaries of a next course textbook
- The scope and sequence of all science courses has been uploaded into Atlas Rubicon.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Significant revisions of the curriculum, including potential reorganization of courses and course sequences, will be required to bring Weston's curriculum into alignment with the NGSS. For now, this work awaits adoption of the NGSS at the State level.
- The Standard Biology textbook is over 12 years old and will need to be replaced. We are awaiting the arrival of NGSS-aligned textbooks on the market.
- As we shift all freshmen to biology courses, we will have a "bubble" of students taking biology (2015-2016), then chemistry (2016-2017). We believe we are well-positioned in terms of personnel to cover the fluctuation in sections but challenges may arise. We will also need to develop and adopt new courses, especially at the standard level, when next year's freshmen are upperclassmen.
- The configuration of the laboratory stations in biology and chemistry limits the implementation of select inquiry-based experiments when class sizes exceed the number of stations.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Prepare for curriculum renewal process and potential adoption of NGSS by continuing to examine and map our current curriculum relative to the NGSS.
- Participate in professional development experiences related to NGSS as they become available, pending adoption.
- Continue to expand efforts in performance-based assessment to ensure access to high-quality performance assessment throughout courses, levels, and sections. Specifically, develop the sixth grade PADI assessment and share its principles with the rest of the WMS science teachers.

LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADES K-8

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- As a natural part of the curriculum renewal process, we will work to reflect upon and refine our curriculum on an ongoing basis. This will ensure that we are current with best practices in both literacy and pedagogy.
- Next year will be the second year of the curriculum renewal process at WMS. As such it will be imperative to continue to reflect upon and refine the units and assessments we have developed over the past three years.
- Fully addressing the instructional shifts presented in the Common Core State Standards will continue to be a priority.
- Refinement of existing AIM units and assessments in alignment with the PADI model will be a priority in all grades.
- Differentiated professional development and ongoing instructional coaching will continue to be a priority.
- There is a need to further develop leadership capacity within grade level teams in order to establish shared responsibility for implementing district initiatives.

II. Accomplishments

- Teacher's College Units of Study in Opinion, Narrative, and Information Writing have been implemented in all grade levels K-5 in order to increase writing stamina, volume, depth, and rigor.
- Additional writing units have been revised in consideration of the Teacher's College units of study and the instructional model they utilize.
- Common writing assessment rubrics have been used to pre-and post-assess student writing in all grades K-8. This assessment data is used to differentiate instruction and provide targeted feedback to writers.
- Professional development has focused primarily on building volume and stamina, and on strategies for conferring with writers in the workshop classroom.
- Administrators and Curriculum Instructional Leaders have embedded themselves in classrooms as coaches and co-teachers, providing models for classroom teachers on writing mini-lessons and conferences.
- Specific AIM rubrics have continued to be modified in alignment with the PADI work that was begun last year.

III. Challenges

- Making ourselves available to teachers across buildings during districtwide professional development days has been a challenge. This is mainly the result of common districtwide initiatives that have been prioritized during these times.
- The length of WMS language arts blocks (49 minutes) remains a challenge given that language arts is truly two different curricular areas (reading, writing). In addition, seventh- and eighth-grade teachers teach these two areas in one period per day.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- 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 available from Teacher's College.
- A number of staff will be participating in the district's summer institute led by members of Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project. We will need to facilitate professional development for the remaining staff members who may not be able to attend this institute.
- Integrating technology into all aspects of our literacy program, inclusive of curriculum, instruction, and ongoing assessment, will be a primary focus for both curriculum and professional development.
- A restructuring of the literacy departments at both HES and WIS will necessitate our working closely with all staff to strengthen both the intervention and instructional models.
- 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.

ENGLISH, GRADES 9-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Review the data from the 2014 Sophomore Writing Portfolio and make revisions to the process as needed.
- Complete the rollout of the Sophomore Writing Portfolio.
- Implement specific curricular strategies for vertical alignment with eighth grade.
- Implement additional content-specific professional development opportunities.
- Continue the curriculum renewal process.

II. Accomplishments

- The entire tenth-grade class participated in the Sophomore Writing Portfolio. The portfolio team made revisions to the rubric, including the addition of a “commendable” level, after reviewing the assessor feedback from last year.
- The creation of the eighth-grade Writing Portfolio helped to align eighth-and ninth-grade writing expectations. The rubrics for both portfolios outline similar writing outcomes and hold students to similar standards.
- Teachers participated in professional development workshops on student responses to complex texts. Teachers explored instructional strategies for including revision and metacognition in their classes.
- English teachers have collaborated with the school library media specialist throughout the year to bring research methodology and skill development into their lessons and assessments.
- The English 9 team is collaborating with the school library media specialist and the Writing Center teacher to create a culminating experience, with an emphasis on project-based learning, for the freshmen.
- The Public Presentation teacher worked with the school library media specialist to encourage the use of high quality resources to improve arguments. Together, they developed a rubric and models of an annotated bibliography. They co-taught classes where students were instructed on the proper methods of searching for, evaluating, and citing sources.
- The Writing Center opened in early 2015 as a pilot. Students have been meeting one-on-one with the Writing Center teacher. Most students are working on particular course assignments, while others went to get help on particular areas of need with their writing portfolios.
- Teachers have been actively working on curriculum renewal and courses will be completed during the upcoming school year.
- Two English teachers and a social studies teacher (Christine Cincotta-CIL, Michael Mezzo-English, and Christina Conetta-social studies) presented at the New England Association of Teachers of English conference in Mansfield, MA in October. Their workshop, “From PB&J to World War II and Everything in Between: Stimulating Creativity While Building Interdisciplinary School-Wide Portfolios” presented methods and assessments, including student work samples, that have creatively tapped students’ writing potential while at the same time urging those students towards rigorous and meaningful standards.
- Michael Mezzo was selected to participate in a seminar funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. With a select group of educators from around the country, he will study

Dante's *Divine Comedy*, which he teaches in Honors Humanities, in the place that inspired it—Siena and its neighboring areas.

- The English faculty continues to be very active in co-curricular positions, acting as advisors for the sophomore class, newspaper, and literary magazine. An English teacher also organized and chaperoned the trip to China this past April.

III. Challenges and Needs

- As teachers continue with the curriculum renewal, they see where they could work with the Writing Center teacher to incorporate additional opportunities for process writing.
- Although we have made progress in aligning eighth-and ninth-grade, we need to continue to improve student understanding of skills requirements between these grades. We need to create additional opportunities for teachers to meet to share curriculum and instructional methods.
- Teachers in other curricular areas need training and support so they could include opportunities for writing to ensure similar standards for all learners.
- Teachers need to be supported as they incorporate blended learning into their instruction.
- The portfolio team needs to explore the data from this year's Sophomore Writing Portfolio and make suggestions for revisions as we move forward.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Complete curriculum renewal.
- Continue with implementation of content specific professional development with an emphasis on revision and metacognition in the English classroom.
- Implement additional specific curricular and instructional strategies for vertical alignment between grades eight and nine.
- Create and implement professional development opportunities to allow for cross-curricular connections with the Writing Portfolio.
- Explore blended learning opportunities for the English classroom that will enhance both instruction and learning.
- Review the data from the 2015 Sophomore Writing Portfolio and make revisions as needed.

SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES K-5

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- When the State of Connecticut adopts their Social Studies Curriculum Framework, we will need to assess alignment and prioritize current units based upon the adopted standards.
- Ensure alignment of resources in light of curricular changes.
- Modify performance-based assessments, as needed.

II. Accomplishments

- The state of Connecticut finally adopted new social studies frameworks in February, 2015.
- We began to analyze the new frameworks as they are and are not aligned with our current Social Studies units.
- Plans for focused revisions to social studies curriculum, instruction, and assessment are being made to ensure alignment with the state standards.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Additional curriculum work had been tabled for most of this school year as we awaited the publication of the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Now that the State of Connecticut has adopted their Social Studies Curriculum Framework, we can more specifically assess alignment and prioritize current units based upon the adopted standards.
- Ensure alignment of resources in light of curricular changes.
- Modify performance-based assessments, as needed.

SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES 6-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Full implementation of the tenth-grade writing portfolio.
- Implementation of two interdisciplinary performance-based assessments around the PADI model. These will include a science/social studies and an English/social studies performance-based assessment.
- All social studies courses will be brought into alignment with the new Connecticut Social Studies Framework and the National Council for Social Studies C3 framework, which aims to prepare students for the challenges of college, career, and civic life.
- Teachers at each course level will collaborate in unit planning in an effort to support collaborative work in lesson planning. In addition, a series of best practice sharing opportunities will be set up to foster collaboration among teachers who do not teach common courses.

II. Accomplishments

- Department members continued to create, revise, implement, and reflect upon common PBAs which incorporate the department-created 21st century design standards. Additionally, student rubrics were created to accompany PBAs.
 - Our seventh-grade team completed their revisions and testing for validity of the Performance Assessment Design Initiative performance-based assessment on Weston's population dilemma.
 - WHS teachers worked with their colleagues in the science department to implement an interdisciplinary assessment as part of the PADI. This assessment focused on disease and the impact of disease on society.
 - Numerous PBAs were revised and course wide rubrics were revised for many of these PBAs.
- The new sixth-and ninth-grade courses have been successfully implemented and are aligned with both national standards and the State framework. Students have been highly engaged in these new courses and viewing social studies through the lenses of geography, history, civics, and economics in different places around the world.
- Weston Middle School eighth-grade student Adam Levin won our school geography bee and went on to compete at the National Geographic Bee State Finals.
- Teachers at each course level have collaborated in unit planning. This was greatly assisted by scheduling common planning time.
- WHS Mock Trial team won the state championship on March 4 in Hartford, CT, and have advanced to the National Mock Trial competition representing Connecticut in Raleigh, North Carolina in May.
- A 6-12 analytical thinking rubric was designed and has been used to score and give feedback to students.
- Curriculum Instructional Leader Brian Scott was selected to present an EdTalk at the Kappa Delta Pi Convocation. Kappa Delta Pi is the International Honor Society in Education.
- Seventh-grade students participated in presentations on WPS enrollment trends. This was part of a performance-based assessment created by Barbara George and Andrew Marone. A

special thank you to our community leaders and school board members who gave constructive feedback to the students, pushing their thinking on this problem.

- Students in the Introduction to Economics course participated in presentations to local business owners in a restaurant project. This was a performance-based assessment that allowed students to receive feedback from real restaurant and business professionals on the development of economic models and business plans. The panel included Don Kendall of New Fork Capital, Paul Coniglio of Colony Grill, and Andre Santelli of Chartwells. The panel selected the teams of Laurence Roberts/Sam Glasberg and Owen McCarthy/Alex Fruhbeis as runners up and the team of Zach Regenstein/Matt Watt with their presentation on Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwiches as our winners.
- Department members Dan Passarelli, Christina Conetta, Andrew Jorge, and Brian Scott collaborated with Weston Historical Society members Ken Edgar and Neil Horner this school year to develop a field trip and student attendance program for the Weston Historical Society's exhibition on World War I.
- Department member Bill Moeder was invited by The College Board to attend the Advanced Placement United States History reading in June, 2015.
- In the Fairfield Regional History Day in Connecticut, Weston students won in the Junior division in Regional competition:
 - First place group documentary-D. Bonhoeffer (eighth-grade boys);
 - Second place group documentary-Sir Nicholas Winton and the Kinder transport (seventh graders); and
 - Second place group performance-Wild Bill Donovan (sixth-grade girls).
- Department member Bill Moeder participated in the National Math and Science Initiative as an AP Consultant. In this role, Mr. Moeder works with inner city teachers and students in preparing them for AP Exam.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Continued professional development time will be needed to revise those courses that will be rewritten this year, aligning with the new Connecticut Social Studies Framework.
- Summer curriculum time is needed to create digital textbooks for revised courses. For courses in which digital textbooks are not written, textbooks will need to be purchased to keep courses in alignment with State Framework and College Board AP Course Audits.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Establish vertical teaming opportunities for teachers to collaborate on writing.
- Implement Weston's writing standards, in alignment with eighth and tenth grade writing portfolios.
- Increase implementation of this year's pilot of the eighth-grade writing portfolio.
- Increase inter-departmental collaboration around the PADI Performance Based Assessments.
- Work towards greater curricular partner collaboration for all departmental common performance based assessments.
- Provide more frequent opportunities for collaborative planning to revise and update written curriculum and assessments.
- Increase peer feedback and alignment among teachers from different departments through programs such as critical friends.

WORLD LANGUAGE, GRADES K-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Redesign and implement the elementary Spanish curriculum as we re-introduce Spanish in kindergarten and grade one.
- Use common planning time to continue the design of performance-based assessments and AIM units/assessments.
- Host the spring 2015 World Languages SHARE meeting in the WHS Library with colleagues from all districts in Fairfield County, collaborating with ways to embed 21st century thinking skills into the curriculum.
- Begin the formal curriculum renewal process for world language.

II. Accomplishments

- K-2 Spanish at HES completed year one of curriculum renewal and successful curriculum implementation.
- A new daily schedule was created to support an immersion model-10 minutes, four times per week.
- Monthly parent bulletins (El Boletín de Hurlbutt) sent to HES parents helped keep them informed of Spanish curriculum, highlighting units of focus and interdisciplinary connections.
- WIS Spanish courses have gradually started to look like the HES FLES (Foreign Language Elementary School) program that has been so successful.
- Hosted Spring 2015 12th Annual World Language SHARE meeting with K-12 World Language colleagues from all districts at WHS.
- WPS world language teachers presented their ideas and collaborated with colleagues from all districts at the SHARE meeting.
- Eighth grade Spanish and French students participated in the National French Contest and National Spanish Exam for the first time. More than 175 students participated in the contests. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals were awarded to WMS students as a result of outstanding performance.
- Four eighth-grade students were recognized nationally and at State level for performance on National Spanish Exam with a 99% final score.
- WHS students participated in national French, Spanish and Latin exam contests. Students received gold, silver, and bronze medals as a result of outstanding performance in the Contest.
- Latin students participated in State Latin Day in May.
- WHS inducted students into the National French, Chinese, Latin and Spanish Honor Societies.
- WHS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievements in World Language classes at the World Language Celebration/National Honor Society Induction Night.
- WMS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievements in Spanish and French classes at the World Language Celebration.

III. Challenges and Needs

- WHS French 2 enrollment for 2015-2016 is lower than previous years.
- Curricular partner time between WMS & WHS French program is essential to ensure continuum between WMS & WHS courses.

- Teachers are interested in world language specific professional development (e.g. attend conferences, workshops, etc.).
- WIS Spanish courses need updates as second graders who have participated in new FLES program move to third grade. Current third-grade Spanish program needs to be revised for incoming third graders.
- Students are interested in field trips in their world language classes at WHS & WMS. This will be looked into for more ways to expand opportunities for students in the target language.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Continue formal curriculum renewal process with a focus on third grade for next year.
- Continue with improvements to K-2 FLES program and implementation of new curriculum.
- Send out monthly parent bulletins to keep parents and community informed about Spanish program at HES.
- Align textbooks to newly revised curriculum.
- Articulate alignment between WMS French program and WHS French program to ensure higher enrollment retention; continue to monitor French 2 enrollment.
- Design extracurricular opportunities for WMS French/Spanish students (Spanish club/French club, Spanish & French Junior National Honor Societies, etc.)
- Continue the development and design of performance-based assessments and the embedding of AIM units when possible at all levels.
- Ensure that students inducted into the National Chinese/French/Latin/Spanish Honor societies are promoting the study of languages and meeting the requirements of the society.
- Continue professional partnership with New Canaan Spanish colleagues.
- Attend and present at 13th annual World Language SHARE meeting held at school to be determined in Fairfield County.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS, GRADES K-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Align the district arts curriculum with the new National Core Arts Standards.
- Continue the process of research and development in the curriculum renewal cycle for the K-12 art and music standards-based curricula.
- Begin to use the electronic mapping tool, *Atlas*, to map curriculum and courses.
- Successfully implement a beginning strings program in fourth grade.
- Successfully implement a new Publication Design course, an updated Advanced CMD course, and an updated Drama course at the high school.
- Continue refining common assessments and rubrics in Visual Arts and Music.
- Continue collaboration between departments on teaching 21st century thinking skills and developing effective performance assessments.
- Identify collaborative planning time for all building level departments to meet and discuss updated methodologies, review scope and sequence, and vertical alignment.
- Continue to provide professional development (from local universities, with coursework, or by bringing in clinicians) that is directly aligned with updated curriculum content and research-based instructional pedagogy in the arts.
- Continue to review K-12 scheduling and determine the most effective way to schedule classes and courses to ensure all students are able to participate in the arts programs that they desire.
- Establish a comprehensive Visual and Performing Arts department that includes support for a district Theatre Arts program.
- Organize a district-wide arts event that features the work of student artists, filmmakers, and student performances at all levels.

II. Accomplishments

Curriculum, Instruction, and Instructional Technology

- The K-12 music and visual arts teachers began the rewrite of the curricula to align with the new National Core Arts Standards and began to input units in the digital mapping tool, *Atlas*.
- The new Digital Publication Design was offered in the first semester where students created flyers, programs, and other digital publications. As a result of this additional course, Contemporary Media Design and Advanced Contemporary Media Design were updated to include new technologies and processes. Advanced CMD now includes coding and web design, previously limited to our Web Design course. In addition, CMD is now a prerequisite for Photography, which ensures that all students who are taking technical art courses begin with the same digital foundation.
- The WHS concert choir and orchestras completed a composition project this spring. Music theory and voice leading principles from the 17th century were utilized to create their compositions which consisted of rounds, folk songs and pop tunes. Students collaborated to perform for their classes.
- Instrumental lessons on band instruments at WHS have been very valuable in supporting students at all levels. This time was specifically helpful with audition preparation and providing the underclassmen individualized instruction and support. Sixty-eight percent of the band program is in ninth and tenth grade. Weston was represented with 18 band students

auditioning for regions and All-State. Six of the seven Western Regional students were in ninth-and-tenth-grade and two tenth-grade students represented us at All-State.

- An overview of theatre arts elements and processes needed to support a high school level curricular and co-curricular program that includes multiple levels of acting/performance, stagecraft/technical theatre and script writing/directing was created to guide future planning and course development.
- The WHS visual arts teachers continue to gather student work in grades 9-12 to include in digital portfolios, providing a central location to organize student work, showing artistic progress and eligibility for advanced courses. This is a large undertaking and teachers have begun to take digital photos of student work, filed by graduation year and class. Some have been uploaded into a common folder. Each year, the process will continue so that students who take art at WHS will be represented.
- The WHS bands implemented a new method, “Superior Bands in Sixteen Weeks”, which focuses on developing greater skills in tone production, intonation, balance (blend), and technique. This method ensures that students are focused on how they are playing and not just what they are playing.
- Videography student Eric Benninghoff worked tirelessly last month to create an amazing documentary that highlights Autism awareness, disability awareness, and acceptance in and around the WHS community to fulfill his Independent Study in Videography. This project was extraordinary and Eric conducted countless interviews during and after school and even worked weekends at school to edit and complete the project for his April 2 deadline that coincided with *Light it Up Blue* for Autism Awareness day. The video can be seen by clicking on the following link: https://youtu.be/q_oATe0qzAI . He also produced a very impactful documentary about David Gelfand, a fellow WHS student that was born with photosynthetic photon flux density (PFFD). The video can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/IYcWKzPNZb4> .
- A collaborative instructional approach was piloted in the AP Studio Art class where focused lessons for AP Studio and AP Photo were taught by the teacher specializing in that area. This allowed students exposure to a variety of instructional methods and depth in the content.
- An Adaptive Art class ran during the second semester and included students from our Community Class who enjoyed drawing, painting, and working with clay.
- The Television Production classes completed a new unit and produced in-studio interviews that included many members of the high school community including some of our staff members and students.
- The WMS General Music classes (Group Guitar, Piano Lab and Music Technology) are all utilizing Google Classroom. Use of this resource, allows students to share and submit work, track assignments and link to instructional videos that allow students to review material previously introduced by the teacher.
- The fourth -grade beginning strings program began this year with 70 students. This is a large number, and we will monitor enrollment over the next few years to determine retention in the program.

All State, Regional Musicians and Music and Visual Arts Honors

- ART JAM!, the first ever district-wide art show, was held on May 7. Visual Arts students displayed work, filmmakers showed film, and student musicians performed, creating a unique artistic experience across the district.
- The WPS Music Department was recognized as one of the 2015 Best Communities for Music Education by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM).
- The WMS Jazz Bands, WMS Chamber Orchestra, and the WMS Chamber Singers took honors at the Music in the Parks Adjudication Festival in Massachusetts. The WMS Chamber Singers took first place in their division with a Superior rating and also won the award for “Best Overall” Middle School Choir. The WMS Jazz Band, received the second place honor and a rating of Excellent and The WMS Jazz Lab Band received a third place honor and a rating of Excellent. The WMS Chamber Orchestra took first place in their division with a rating of Excellent.
- Six WHS band and three WHS choral students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Western Regional High School Festival. Two WHS band students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Connecticut All-State Festival.
- The WHS Concert Band has been selected to work with featured clinician and Grammy Foundation Teacher of the Year winner Jarred Cassidy at the 2015 Connecticut Music Educators Conference.
- The WHS Wind Ensemble has been accepted to play at Boston Symphony Hall at the 2016 US Bands Concert Band Series sponsored by Youth Education in the Arts and Yamaha.
- Eight WHS choristers performed at the American Choral Director’s Association Conference.
- Nine WMS choral students and three WMS band students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Connecticut Music Educators Association Western Regional Middle School Concert Festival. Liz Morris and Jeff Holmes served as the festival chairs.
- Four WIS students were selected to participate in the Connecticut Music Educators Association All-State Elementary Honors Chorus.
- A chapter of the National Art Honor Society was chartered this school year and will induct 16 junior and senior members. NAHS provides opportunities for serious visual arts students to complete arts related community service, apply for members only scholarships, and advocate for the arts.
- The Tri-M Music Honor Society inducted 32 junior and 32 senior members into their respective chapters in April. 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.
- Several students were involved in select ensembles such as the Fairfield County Children’s Choir, the Norwalk Youth Symphony, the Bridgeport Youth Orchestra, the Ridgefield Youth Symphony, the Fairfield County Strings Festival, and a variety of summer arts ensembles.
- Several students in our senior class were accepted into a variety of art programs and art schools including: RISD, Parsons, Mass Art, SCAD, and programs at University of Delaware, UConn, Leslie University, Skidmore, University of Virginia Commonwealth, and University of Maryland.

Performances & Art Exhibitions

- Two successful main stage WHS productions with Company, *The Laramie Project* and *Barnum*, were performed at WHS and benefitted from the talents of student artists, musicians, actors, costume designers, and technical theatre personnel.
- The WHS spring musical benefitted from the talents of 24 of our high school instrumental students who performed in the pit orchestra under the direction of our WHS band teacher.
- Company will present a student-run production of *Dialogue* that will feature five student written and directed one-act plays, one student directed series of scenes, and multiple musical acts.
- One successful main stage WMS production with Short Wharf, *The Music Man Jr.*, was performed at WHS and benefitted from the talents of student artists, musicians, actors, costume designers, and technical theatre personnel.
- One successful WIS musical production with Show Stoppers, *At the Bandstand!* was performed at WIS and benefitted from the talents of students.
- The WHS Concert Choir and the WMS Chamber Singers will perform at the World Language ceremonies in May. They will sing in Estonian and Latin.
- Students from Company will perform a variety of fables and stories during a children's theatre performance at the Weston Public Library.
- The WHS String Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, and Symphonic Orchestra will join forces for OrchestraFest and perform music through the ages beginning with B Bach from the Baroque period, Beethoven from the Classical period, Tchaikovsky, and Offenbach from the Romantic period and a mildly from Les Miserables. Ninety students will combine their talents in this presentation.
- The WHS Jazz Band performed in the Darien High School Jazz Festival where they performed well and participated in a clinic with Jazz educator Joyce DiCamillo. This is the first time the WHS Jazz Band has been adjudicated and they received valuable feedback and notes for improvement.
- WHS, WMS, and WIS students performed in winter and spring choral, band, and orchestra concerts.
- Over 300 WHS and WMS students performed in the band Spectrum Concert on March 12.
- The WMS eighth-grade orchestra participated in the Music for Youth Orchestra Exchange with the Haven String Quartet and students from High Horizon's and Multi-Cultural Magnet schools in Bridgeport. A concert featuring all student musicians and the quartet was held at WHS on April 24.
- A WHS and WMS marching band was formed for students to participate in the Memorial Day Parade on May 25.
- Ten sixth-grade band students were selected to perform at the annual "Play with the Westport Community Band".
- The WMS eighth-grade band and chorus combined to perform the National Anthem at the Veteran's Day assembly.
- All WIS students performed patriotic music at a Veteran's Day assembly where they video-conferenced with the brother of our music teacher, Lisa Moretti, who is an officer stationed in Afghanistan. Students also performed multicultural holiday music at a winter sing along in December.

- WIS third graders performed the concert “Folk Songs around the World” on March 31 and April 2.
- WHS students exhibited at the Sacred Heart Regional high school art show at Sacred Heart University.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Quaver Music was piloted in K-5 music classrooms in the 2013-2014 year. This digital tool provides a comprehensive digital resource that aligns with the district elementary music curriculum. Music teachers would like to obtain this resource.
- There is a need for an AP Music Theory and/or a Music Theory course at our high school. The CIL is working to develop possible scenarios to fill this need for their classes.
- Many of the computers used in our labs at WMS are outdated and it would be beneficial that they be replaced. The existing Mac minis and older PCs will not support the new software that is needed to maintain the level of work in our courses.
- An examination of course content for courses being offered at WHS in room B9 is important in order to determine the space needs, including proper ventilation, and configuration to ensure delivery of the curriculum.
- The Spectrum concert presented a variety of challenges with space and lighting. The WMS and WHS team will review the process to determine needs moving forward.
- Art and music teachers are interested in continuing to identify high-quality professional development in their content areas to support their personal and professional growth.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Continue to align the district arts curriculum with the new National Core Arts Standards, revise and refine curriculum, and input units into the Atlas Rubicon.
- Provide guidance and appropriate time for arts teachers to review and determine the best way to use digital resources like Google classroom and sites to strengthen classroom to home connections.
- Develop a plan to reintroduce AP Music Theory or music theory at WHS.
- Continue to refine and develop curricular and co-curricular programs that align with the overview of theatre arts elements and processes.
- Create a plan with the IT department to deploy the appropriate technology, both hardware and software, to support all of our arts courses.
- Continue to foster creativity and utilize digital tools in appropriate arts courses to support district initiative.
- Determine the most appropriate way to ensure a yearly auditorium review that includes safety inspections, inventory, and maintenance.
- Provide professional development (from local universities, with coursework, or by bringing in clinicians) that is directly aligned with updated curriculum content and research-based instructional pedagogy in the arts.
- Continue to review K-12 scheduling and determine the most effective way to schedule classes and courses to ensure all students are able to participate in the arts programs that they desire.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, GRADES K-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Begin curriculum renewal process in health, with attention to aligning with the school counseling lessons.
- Continue focus on AIM unit development in grades K-12.
- Schedule weekly blocks of CIL coaching time for each school.
- Monitor the updated Pool Safety Plan and refine as needed.
- Develop a recording and storing system for students' physical fitness data district wide.

II. Accomplishments

- K-12 physical education teachers earned their professional CPR and First Aid certification as a result of districtwide training.
- Life guard certification for all WMS physical education staff.
- Held Project Adventure course update training.
- Began curricular renewal process for health using Atlas Rubicon.
- Reworked sixth-grade physical education to include mandated health topics as a result of eliminating the FaCS program.
- Monitored the updated Pool Safety Plan.
- Data coordinator completed a database for the storing of physical fitness scores.
- Designed letter in PowerSchool to be merged with fitness results to send home to parents with each students physical fitness results from year to year.
- Held monthly department meetings.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Adjust the seventh-and eighth-grade health curriculum to include nutrition.
- Equalize class sizes amongst periods for WHS health and physical education classes.
- Schedule external school visits for physical education teachers in preparation for curriculum development.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Complete the health curriculum renewal process.
- Obtain the Pool Safety Plan approval.
- Make adjustments to WMS health curriculum to absorb health units from the Family and Consumer Science course.
- Conduct school visits for upcoming physical education curriculum renewal process.
- Explore flexible implementation of physical education curriculum.
- Continued focus on building performance-based assessments in both health and physical education.
- Schedule and attend weekly blocks of CIL time in each school.

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION, GRADES 6-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Implement a coding unit in the sixth-grade PLTW module.
- Purchase and implement VEX kits to replace the Fischertechnics kits at WHS.
- Continue to monitor the eighth/ninth-grade transition in technology, particularly for female students.
- Ensure that aerosol spraying booth is moved from WMS to WHS prior to next school year in order for curricular experiences to be implemented without the need for modification.
- Explore possibility of creating Robotics clubs at WMS and WHS.

II. Accomplishments

- With funding from the Weston Education Foundation, the WMS Robotics Club began in November 2014. Over 70 students participate in this highly popular club, led by Vincent Lore (technology), George Hayes (science), and Greg Ferro (math). Two teams (twelve students) competed in a MS/HS Vex competition in Danbury, passed inspection and placed 24th and 37th in their very first competition. All robotics students will have the opportunity to participate in an internal competition and showcase at WMS later this year.
- During summer curriculum work, the sixth-grade PLTW module was revised. As this module is short (approximately 30 sessions), it was determined that coding instruction would not advance the primary goal of introducing students to the engineering design process. Instead, the unit was revised to include an experience with bridge-building, addressing an area of the CT Science Standards that was not otherwise covered in the 6-8 science or technology curricula.
- The eighth-grade module Automation and Robotics was revised to provide students with greater scaffolding in learning mechanisms and coding basics, while providing more time for students to explore and create.
- New VEX kits were purchased and implemented for the WHS PLTW program.
- In an effort to boost ninth-grade enrollment in PLTW courses, WHS PLTW teacher Mackenzie Moosbrugger and her students visited eighth-grade PLTW courses to speak about offerings at the high school level.
- The paint spray booth was moved to WHS and installed with proper ventilation. This infrastructure upgrade allows aerosol spraying indoors.
- The rapid prototyping machines (3D printers) at WMS receive regular use and have been incorporated into the curriculum, allowing students to print the designs they have created through modeling software.
- Mackenzie Moosbrugger successfully solicited funding for a laser engraver, a device which would allow students to design and manufacture many high-quality custom-designed products.

III. Challenges and Needs

- The hardware and software demands of the PLTW program are greater than other curriculum areas. There have been difficulties in maintaining high levels of functionality at the student/classroom level. A close working relationship between Technology Education and Instructional Technology will benefit students and teachers in PLTW.

- One of the PLTW classrooms at the WMS is a general purpose classroom. While awaiting more dramatic renovations as part of a building project, current furniture, infrastructure, and storage provisions should be reviewed and addressed in the interim. A plan for repurposing existing computer desks from within WMS will address the most pressing issue- computer work stations.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Plan for the growth of co-curricular Robotics offerings at WHS.
- Continue the WMS Robotics Club, with the goal that all students will be prepared for the 2016 competition season.
- Continue to monitor the eighth/ninth-grade transition in technology, particularly for female students.
- With NGSS adoption pending, explore opportunities for collaborations between science and technology, particularly in the seventh-and eighth-grades. These grades are a particularly suitable arena to explore the possibilities of STEM education, with all students enrolled in the same science and technology courses.

SCHOOL COUNSELING, GRADES K-12

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Continue to maintain the creativity and enthusiasm in the PBIS program so that it remains a part of the culture at each school and assists in decreasing bullying behavior.
- Work with area districts to develop high school level alternative programming for student with emotional and/or truancy concerns.
- Communicate with staff and parents direct information about the Student Success Plans.
- Continue professional development and student education programs on drug and alcohol usage. Provide consultation for families in need of assistance with this issue.
- Begin the renewal process for the school counseling curriculum.

II. Accomplishments

- PBIS programs are clearly embedded at each school and staff continue to expand the programs in creative ways to ensure the engagement of the students and staff. A School Climate survey was completed with students and parents. The results of the survey showed both students and parents expressing that they felt the schools were safe and students felt comfortable. There were minimal individual expressions of concern regarding bullying behavior at each of the levels, both face-to-face and through social media. One area at the elementary level that was more concerning was the bus rides, which we will review more closely. The results of the survey were presented at a BOE meeting and are available online. The Family University program will be held this year in the fall and we will utilize information from the survey for topics in this area.
- In reviewing programs for WMS and WHS for students with emotional concerns, we looked at a program called Effective School Solutions (ESS). This program provides clinical services in district to students and their families allowing student to stay in Weston where they can continue to benefit from a strong education while getting the assistance needed. We continue to review the funding for this program and hope to have it in place for the 2015-2016 school year.
- The Student Success Plans at both WMS and WHS were shared with the BOE curriculum committee, the BOE, and parents. Each student in grades 6-12 meets with their counselor each year to review and update their plan.
- The school counseling staff work individually with students and their families regarding drug and alcohol concerns. Professional development was provided for staff on topics related to these issues, particularly in the area of group counseling. We have also worked closely with Weston's Youth Commission to provide speakers for parents and students on this topic, as well as referrals for additional assistance outside of school.
- The school counseling staff have begun the curriculum renewal process of self-reflection this year, looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum. One of the challenges is to intersect all of the PBIS and Student Success Plan information with the previous curriculum as both of these initiatives had not begun at the last renewal cycle.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Address increased concern for students with emotional difficulties at WMS and WHS, particularly students with anxiety and/or depressive symptoms and/or truancy issues.

- Present a clear implementation plan for the Effective School Solutions program at WHS which meets the needs of the students and provides for sound financial planning, with the goal of moving the program to WMS as well.
- Decrease of one school counselor at the elementary level next year will require restructuring of the counseling staff and supports.
- Continue work on the school counseling curriculum document in order to integrate the current new programs.
- Increase focus for students at WHS and WMS through the Student Success Plans on both career and college planning to ensure more variety of pathways to success are considered. Additional focus in this area through the College and Career Center at WHS will be implemented as well.

IV. 2015-2016 Goals

- Complete the School Counseling curriculum review and integrate the new programs into the document.
- Monitor HES counseling needs due to the reduction of one counselor. Monitor the transition of the newly hired WHS school counselor.
- Provide additional training to the staff at the elementary level regarding students with behavioral/emotional concerns. Training to include strategies for assisting students with these concerns.
- Continue to explore the proposal to bring in the Effective School Solutions program into the district to address WMS/WHs student concerns.
- Increased focus on possible career opportunities post high school for students who may not be pursuing a 4-year college degree.

PROJECT CHALLENGE, GRADES 3-8

grade	# of new students reviewed based screening process	# of parent referrals	Total students reviewed 2014-2015	Newly Identified	Total identified	% of grade level
3	18	4	22	16	16	9%
4	15	0	15	4	16	9%
5	10	1	11	3	10	5%
6	19	2	21	3	20	9.5%
7	5	0	5	0	20	10.5%
8	4	0	4	0	21	9.5%

I. 2014-2015 Goals

- Begin planning for the curriculum renewal cycle. Teachers and building committees to complete self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the identification process and program.
- Work with Connecticut Association of the Gifted for assistance with the curriculum review process.
- Review all current enrichment opportunities for students.
- Continued review of curriculum compacting and cluster grouping strategies.

II. Accomplishments

- The self-evaluation will be completed by July 2015.
- Review all current enrichment opportunities to be completed by July 2015.
- Highly successful enrichment opportunities are available at WMS and WIS (e.g. Mock Trial, Odyssey of the Mind, and Robotics).

III. Concerns/Needs

- Assist parents in the understanding of the Project Challenge program versus enrichment opportunities.

IV. Goals for 2015-2016

- Review the previous Project Challenge guide and gain feedback from current school committees.
- Work with curriculum consultant and utilize Atlas Rubicon for curriculum development.
- Examine student placement data for the last four years to review trends in Project Challenge enrollments. DO WHAT
- Determine a plan for next steps as part of the curriculum renewal cycle.