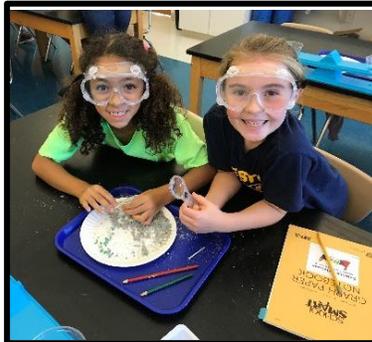




WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Annual Instructional Update
2018-2019

Presented to the
Weston Board of Education
Curriculum Committee
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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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MATHEMATICS, GRADES K-5

I. 2018-19 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 in order to help them enhance their instructional decisions.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.

II. Accomplishments

- Coaching and professional development provided by the CIL focused on differentiation and increased use of visualization for problem solving, number sense development, and virtual tools.
- The newly available target data from the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) were analyzed by grade level. In addition, individual teachers were supported in analyzing target data for their classes. At both of these levels, some adjustments in SBA preparation were made.
- Professional development with grade 5 teachers focused on their new teaming model and book study of *Mathematical Mindsets*, by Jo Boaler.
- 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.
- We had 41 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.
- The amount of CIL focus needed for our science implementation 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 have two more grade levels in first year implementation.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Continue to provide coaching and professional development, increasing the instructional repertoire of our teachers, especially in the areas of differentiation.
- Work with teachers to integrate their technology effectively into their math lessons.
- Continue the math mindset work and include all grades K-5.
- Continue to explore ways to use the SBA target data with teachers from the beginning of the year when it becomes available.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parent education at all levels.

MATHEMATICS, GRADES 6-12

I. 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Two middle school and two high school teachers met in the spring and summer of 2018 to design the scope and sequence for a new Accelerated Algebra and Geometry course for ninth graders at WHS.
- The new Accelerated Algebra and Geometry course was implemented for the first time during the 2018-19 school year. It is geared toward students who have completed the Math 6, 7 and 8 sequence at WMS and have demonstrated a high level of mastery of the middle school curriculum. The new course uses an integrated approach to allow students to complete their study of foundational algebra and geometry concepts which began in middle school, in order to prepare them to take Algebra 2 in tenth grade.
- Middle and high school teachers differentiated content by planning tiered problem solving lessons using a variety of modalities (technology, manipulatives, games, etc.) to engage students in problem solving targeted at the students' individual level of readiness.
- Some high school teachers differentiated process by instituting "parking lots" for student questions that don't get addressed during the course of the class period. This approach was established to better address the needs of learners who struggle with some of the foundational knowledge. Students get the answers to their "parking lot" questions by scheduling additional help times with their teacher.
- Teachers of upper level math classes (Pre-Calculus in particular) identified foundational algebra skills that are integral to success in calculus. These teachers provided additional practice in these skills to students who were recommended for and/or expressed an interest in taking calculus, to better equip them with the prerequisite knowledge to help them succeed at higher levels of mathematics.
- Teachers of all levels of courses at the high school provided students with scaffolded classwork, where the problems are arranged in a way that they get progressively harder. In this way, students who worked quickly, or came to an understanding more readily, had the opportunity to try more challenging problems related to the same content, while at the same time allowing teachers to address the needs of the students who took longer to grasp concepts.
- The coding teacher differentiated content for students who completed required classwork by offering opportunities to learn other coding languages.
- High school teachers used applets and other technology tools to demonstrate abstract concepts to visual learners.
- Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus teachers used UTexas problem sets as a tool to provide extra challenging practice to students. These assignments encouraged collaboration and brainstorming and helped students develop problem solving skills in a low-pressure, multiple-attempt online format.
- Several math teachers at the high school experimented with offering flipped classroom/blended learning opportunities by creating their own lesson videos to teach concepts or to supplement a lesson.

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- AP Calculus AB was taught by a teacher new to the course this year. There was significant productive collaboration between the previous teacher and the new teacher in order to ensure a successful transition as well as maximize success for the students.
- Students in AP math classes had many opportunities to experience AP exam questions through the use of partner assessments and other group activities that promoted collaboration and encouraged students to demonstrate their learning and understanding to their peers.
- Math teachers at WHS had more of a presence in Structured Study this year in order to facilitate the needs of struggling learners. Teachers in this assignment reported that it was helpful to be made aware of the different approaches teachers of all disciplines used to reach and assist these students.
- Middle school teachers adopted an “Infuse, Intervene, Inspire” approach to SBA preparation.
 - Infuse:
 - SBA question banks were completed and/or revised at all grade levels, using resources provided by the SBA, as well as additional supplemental free and open resources such as Illustrative Mathematics.
 - SBA questions were embedded into math journals and guided practice.
 - When creating assessments, grade-level partners worked to revise “traditional” questions with SBA-type questions.
 - Intervene:
 - Students in all classes completed three Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs).
 - Data from the IABs, coupled with classroom performance, was used to enter and exit students into and out of Math Lab, as well as to gauge overall progress.
 - Teachers used the data provided by the IABs to inform lesson planning. Each IAB identifies the “five most commonly correct” and “five most commonly incorrect” items on each block. Teachers used the incorrect items as warm up problems in the days following the IAB, taking the opportunity to discuss with the students the common misconceptions and errors that could lead to incorrect answers.
 - Inspire:
 - Teachers discussed the importance of taking the SBA seriously, encouraged their students to do their best and show off their hard work from this year.
- A middle school teacher led professional development in August (for math and special education teachers) and March (for all subject areas) surrounding the ideas of Infuse, Intervene and Inspire.
- Two middle school and two high school teachers attended the NCTM Regional Conference in Hartford in October. At a department meeting that followed, each of them shared-out on the most valuable sessions they attended.
- One teacher presented a well-attended session at the NCTM Regional Conference on the use of breakout boxes in the math classroom.
- Two math teachers attended a one-day conference in November on understanding the NWEA and how to effectively use the data provided by the NWEA to inform lesson planning, grouping strategies, and intervention.
- One teacher attended a one-day conference in December provided by the Connecticut Council for Leaders of Mathematics, participating in sessions on the effective use of IAB data, as well as implementing SRBI support in secondary mathematics.
- The WMS Math Team continued its participation in the Fairfield County Junior Math League.

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- The WHS Math Team continued its participation in the Fairfield County Math League.
- Three WMS students participated in the MathCounts chapter competition in February, and one of those students was selected to participate at the State level in March.
- Eight WMS students and one WIS student participated in the American Mathematics Competition 8 exam in November. One of the students earned an Honor Roll of Distinction, scoring in the top 1% nationally.
- Seven WHS students and two WMS students participated in the American Mathematics Competition 10/12 exam in February.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Identifying students for, and providing SRBI support at WMS has been a challenge. Math Lab provides the structure to offer the support, but we need to look at revising the way that time is used for some students. Additionally, middle school teachers do not feel they have the training and resources necessary to provide true SRBI support.
- While budget constraints and practicality issues do not allow us to offer multivariable calculus to small numbers of students, we do have several students each year who are in the position to finish our math curriculum prior to their senior year. We need to further explore other options for these students in order to meet their needs at the higher levels of mathematics.
- The scope and sequence for the new Accelerated Algebra and Geometry course proved ambitious for the first year. We need to reflect on the implementation of this course and make revisions where necessary, while maintaining the integrity of the course and the foundational instruction and learning inherent in it.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Continue to emphasize planning for differentiation at both WMS and WHS.
- Explore the possibility of revising the structure of Math Lab at WMS to better accommodate students in need of SRBI support.
- Implement a new AP Computer Science Principles course, using the blended learning platform, Edhesive, facilitated by the coding teacher.
- Continue to explore our secondary mathematics pathways to consider options for students that allow them to achieve at the highest levels.

SCIENCE, GRADES K-5

I. 2018-2019 Goals

- If adjustments to schedules are made, fully implement a Next Generation Science Standard (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.

II. Accomplishments

- Kindergarten, grades 1, 2, and 5 implemented NGSS using the Amplify Science resource.
- Grade 5 implemented a new teaming model in which four of the eight teachers focused on math and science instruction. Students had two hours of math and science instruction each day allowing for grade five to include one fourth grade unit as well as the four NGSS units for fifth grade.
- Curriculum writing was completed in Atlas Rubicon for grades K–2.
- New progress report standards were written for grades K–2 and 5. Rubrics for each corresponding standard were also written for these grades.
- A consultant from Amplify Science came for one of the August professional development days. He ran two half-day training workshops, one for K-2 and one for grade 5.
- Professional development for K-2 was greatly assisted by our pilot teachers from last year as time was devoted during team meetings and common planning periods almost weekly.
- Grade 5 science teachers used a half day release before each unit to become familiar with content and focus on NGSS pedagogy. These four teachers are to be commended for the countless hours of preparation needed to make this year as successful as it has been.
- Grade 3 and 4 teachers have their initial NGSS training in May. Each grade will have a half day release to begin this transition.
- Pilot work was done for the grade 3 compacted life science unit drawn from multiple resources.
- The CIL attended state updates on NGSS assessments and curriculum discussions held at Cooperative Educational Services in Trumbull.
- Grade 5 teachers and students gained familiarity with the NGSS assessment type questions through the Interim Assessment Blocks available.
- Further collaboration took place between the CIL and the Hurlbutt Library Media Specialist on makerspace connections with the new NGSS curriculum. As part of this, first graders culminated their light and sound engineering unit by developing and presenting a shadow puppet scene in the makerspace.
- The annual WIS Inquiry Science Fair took place on April 3 and 4, and included 165 fourth and fifth graders.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Scheduling will need to allow for some larger blocks weekly in order for grade 3 and 4 to incorporate the NGSS curriculum.
- It will continue to take a tremendous amount of support as we transition the last two grades 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. The challenge of prioritizing this for the CIL will result in less focus on some other areas.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Provide the needed professional development opportunities for grade 3 and 4 teachers using both the internal capacity of CIL as well as Amplify consultants.
- Provide year two support and coaching for grades K-2 and 5.
- Complete curriculum documentation in Rubicon Atlas for grade 5.
- Create new progress report standards and corresponding rubrics for grades 3 and 4.
- Analyze the data available from the first NGSS assessment for any useful implications.

SCIENCE, GRADES 6-12

I. 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).
- 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).

II. Accomplishments

- The Honors Science Research course had a successful first year. The laboratory is fully operational, except for some minor work still to be done with the gas chromatograph. Eleven students are completing their individual projects, which included experimentation in analytical chemistry, genetic engineering, behavioral ecology, and computer science, among other topics.
- Honors Science Research students had the opportunity to compete in various fairs throughout the state. Three students participated in the CT STEM Science Fair in February at Amity Regional High School. One student applied to the Connecticut Junior Science and Humanities Symposium held at UConn Health in Farmington and was one of only 16 students selected to give an oral presentation on her work. All students will participate in the Weston STEM Expo showcasing WMS and WHS students in June.
- Enrollment in the Honors Science Research course for 2019-2020 is holding steady with students currently registered for the course. Next year's project proposals branch out into the fields of engineering, plant biology, and animal behavior. Promotion of the course continues at both WMS and WHS, as plans are being developed to increase enrollment for future years.
- Various members of the middle school and high school science departments participated in professional development opportunities aligned to NGSS instructional shifts and curricular enhancement, including a SciCamp “unconference” to collaborate with regional science

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teachers; NGSS Assessment Evaluation and Design workshops; a workshop on biodiversity and conservation held at the American Museum of Natural History; and a conference on integrating computational thinking into the physical sciences.

- Several WHS and WMS science teachers took the initiative during the Best Practices Fair to begin developing common rubrics that can be used to assess the NGSS science and engineering practices that are heavily integrated into the new science standards and revised curriculum. This work will continue throughout department and professional development sessions until the rubrics are completed.
- Physics continues to align curriculum with NGSS standards and practices, while maintaining an emphasis on project-based learning and technology. All curricular units have been transformed into an "experiment first" structure, allowing students to interpret data in order to develop conceptual and computational models. In addition to previously utilized technologies, Pasco Capstone software was incorporated to allow students to experience video analysis techniques, and Pyret coding software lets students work in pairs to write code for simulations of the physical systems they are studying, then gather data from the simulation and in real life to see if their simulations match the real world.
- Through the "Skype a Scientist" program, Honors Physics students conferenced via Skype with an astrophysicist, which allowed them to not only ask questions relating to the nature of science careers and the mysteries of space, but also specific questions on their current study of exoplanets and gravitational force.
- A member of the physics department was invited to the National Science Foundation funded conference on *Advancing the Integration of Interdisciplinary Computational Thinking in the Physical and Life Sciences* this May in Maryland. This experience will help build a foundation for teaching problem-solving through computer programming in an integrated way in the high school physical science curriculum, which is a prominent and challenging part of the NGSS standards, but one that most science departments are not well-equipped to address.
- Environmental science, chemistry, and biology courses have seen continued NGSS-alignment shifts with particular emphasis on the development of new activities and assessments that reflect the scientific practices and cross cutting concepts highlighted in the new standards. Several online resources, such as the Concord Consortium and PhET simulations, have been added to better reflect the experience students will encounter on the new standardized NGSS test, where students must manipulate and interpret models, analyze data, and make arguments from evidence that students generate in self-directed online simulations.
- This year marked the successful roll out of the new AP Environmental Science course at Weston High School.
- Through a generous grant provided by the Weston PTO, the 'Trout in the Classroom' program was introduced this year in the environmental science courses. This allows students to participate in the hatching and raising of trout, which are later released into the wild as part of an ongoing conservation effort.
- Students in standard and AP environmental science courses have begun several 'green' initiatives in the school laid forth by the Weston Green Team such as maintenance of the school garden, recycling initiatives, and improvements to the surrounding natural areas on campus.
- Several community relationships have been fostered over the year to allow students in environmental science courses to participate first hand in local environmental and sustainability issues. Connections with Lachat Farm, Weston Sustainability Committee, Wakeman Town Farm (Westport), Earthplace (Westport), Future Frogmen (water

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conservation non-profit), Wilton Zero Waste Initiative, and others have been established, with students participating in such activities as volunteer projects, documentary and speaker presentations, and the plastic bag ban initiative.

- To wrap up their year, all environmental science classes will be touring the Aquarion drinking water treatment plant in Easton and the Georgetown sewer water treatment plant, allowing students to have a better understanding of the ways in which our water supplies are treated both before and after residential use.
- The WHS science department continued its strong partnerships with Animal Embassy and the Livingston Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy. Chris Evers from Animal Embassy 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. Similarly, educators and animals from the waterfowl conservancy have visited our biology classes for many years and engage the students in ways in which the various waterfowl are adapted for survival in their environments, as well as current threats that exist to those delicate environments.
- The Animal Behavior classes had the opportunity to hear a presentation from artist and conservationist, Robin Huffman. Robin has spent years as a caregiver to primates in a sanctuary in Cameroon, and she is known for the large portraits she paints of the primates she cares for.
- High school science classes continue to use the Visual Classroom platform to elicit student understanding and misconceptions, promote individual accountability as well as collaboration, and provide opportunities for formative assessment.
- The WHS Science Olympiad Team competed against 47 other Connecticut teams in science and engineering tasks on March 30. The team landed one bronze finish in Protein Modeling, as well as three other top five finishes in the Forensics investigation, Water Quality experience, and Thermodynamics event.
- Once again, a team of students between grades 9-12 worked diligently under the supervision of Michael Chappa preparing for the Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science (TEAMS). The A-level team placed third overall in the state, while the B-level team scored second place in the essay contest.
- Middle school science teachers continue to explore and implement various instructional resources that support their NGSS-revised curricula. NSTA eReaders provide support for student learning, while Amplify units have been further revised to best support the learning expectations of the NGSS. In addition, a new online resource called Gizmos was piloted this year with much success. Gizmos incorporate online simulations that require students to perform experimental tests, gather and analyze data, and generate and manipulate models in a similar fashion to what will be seen on the new standardized NGSS state test. Some examples of Gizmos include studying Pangaea and continental drift (seventh grade), food chains and ecosystem interactions (sixth grade), and the complexities of photosynthesis (eighth grade).
- All sixth grade classes once again had the opportunity to engage in an exploration of water conservation through a program run by Twig Holland of 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.
- Amy Leonard from SoundWaters gave an interactive presentation to every sixth grade class in March. Students were allowed to explore various sea creatures from Long Island Sound and

learned important features that the animals have to best survive in their environment. This in-class presentation is followed by a trip in May to the SoundWaters laboratory in Stamford that allows the students to perform follow-up explorations on human impacts on the environment.

- Guardians of the Water Galaxy, the interdisciplinary project with social studies, continued to enrich the sixth grade science classes. This year's outreach efforts yielded several responses from experts in their fields, including The Ocean CleanUp, Louisiana State University, Great Lakes Alliance, Michigan's Department of Natural Resources, and the Republic of South Africa, to name a few.
- Once again, 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. Students used field notebooks to record learning experiences at the museum.
- One eighth-grader participated in this year's CT Science and Engineering Fair at Quinnipiac University by modifying and refining her seventh grade Science Discovery Workshop project. This project provided the opportunity to engage in comprehensive data collection and analysis to elicit any correlations between physical characteristics and swim race times. As a result of her efforts, she earned third-place honors in the middle school life science category.
- Students in grades 8 and 11 will participate in the CT State Department of Education NGSS Science Assessment in May, which uses real-world science applications to gauge student ability at using science and engineering practices to demonstrate their understanding of science content. This will be the first year that scoring data is made available at the district, school, student, and science standard levels.
- To help prepare for the NGSS science assessment, students in grades 6 through 11 have been practicing using the Interim Assessment Block questions released by the CT State Department of Education. Teachers are able to formally administer the questions and then analyze scoring data to determine areas of competency as well as deficiency and therefore adjust their instruction accordingly.
- The STEM Expo fair has been modified this year to include a display of both middle school and high school science and engineering projects. This allows for students, staff, family, and community members to appreciate the diverse opportunities available in grades 6-12 for research and design, as well as the variation in research complexity that often occurs from the middle school to the high school. To allow for optimal exposure, this year's event features an evening fair followed by a morning session that will provide students and teachers the opportunity to view the various projects.

III. Challenges and Needs

- The loss of the science department paraprofessionals at both the middle and high school will require significant adjustments when preparing for experimental investigations, ordering science materials and specimens, and organizing the various supplies, instruments, and chemicals throughout the departments.
- Continue to review and revise curriculum as needed in grades 6-11 to ensure key NGSS content items and performance expectations emphasized on the new CT state science assessment are addressed throughout the grade levels.
- Continue to revise curriculum and design rubrics to effectively gauge student progress in the science and engineering practices of the NGSS, as well as design and implement NGSS assessment style questions into classes, such as item clusters, phenomenon-driven responses, simulations, modeling, experimental design, and predictions and justifications.

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- Continue to explore instructional resources to support the NGSS-aligned curriculum at WMS, focusing especially on areas in the curriculum not heavily supported by existing resources.
- As revisions to the NGSS science curriculum and instruction become more refined, teachers must continually plan to implement effective differentiation strategies throughout each class to help meet the needs of individual learners in areas of science content, science practices, and three-dimensional science assessments.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Continue to promote and support the Honors Science Research course to ensure increased enrollment and student success in future years.
- Continue to revise and implement NGSS-aligned curricular units in core sequence courses in grades 6-11, including innovations in gauging progress relative to NGSS standards and science and engineering practices.
- Continue to focus on effective methods of differentiation in science classes to better meet the needs of all learners when teaching the demanding content standards through the use of science practices and various instructional methods.
- Continue to review and integrate new instructional materials into NGSS-aligned curriculum at WMS, especially those that engage students in the science and engineering practices of the NGSS.
- Continue to promote STEM research opportunities available during enrichment periods for seventh and eighth graders and encourage participation in events outside of WMS, such as state-level fairs as well as the 6-12 STEM Expo held at the end of each year.
- Develop and implement engaging opportunities for learning and discovery in the greenhouse at WHS, now that necessary updates have been made to the space.

LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADES K-5

I. 2018-19 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Grades 3-5 successfully transitioned to the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, while K-2 has begun their pilot with full implementation in 2019-20 school year.
- Grades 3-5 administered, scored, and analyzed Teachers College pre and post assessments for all TC reading units to inform differentiated instruction.
- Grades 3-5 spent focused professional development time examining SBA targets and questions to further develop teacher understanding of the assessment and how students are required to engage with it.
- Grammar and conventions instruction had a renewed focus in K-5 classrooms with particular attention to sustainment and accountability for standards that have been taught.
- In addition to learning multiple small group instructional strategies, ongoing instructional coaching was provided to support teachers with expanding their instructional repertoire when using data to plan and implement instruction.
- Fifth grade teachers hosted sixth grade teachers and administrators in their writer's workshop classrooms in February for a successful vertical articulation conversation about rigor, volume, and stamina in writer's workshop. Third grade will visit second grade later in the spring.
- New this year was the creation of a K-12 Reading Committee to initiate cross-building discourse and ensure alignment of data, intervention programs, and best practices in literacy instruction. Inclusive in this committee, are administrators, reading specialists, and special education teachers throughout the district.
- As a result of an articulated need from the Reading Committee, SRBI Data Teams have successfully transitioned to the use of PowerSchool for data warehousing. History of SRBI services and data can now be accessed and shared within and across buildings.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Meeting the academic and emotional needs of an increasingly diverse student population will require professional development and resources.
- As other curricular areas renew their curriculum, we will need to work collaboratively to ensure all curricular areas are taught with fidelity in the instructional minutes provided.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- K-2 classrooms will transition to full implementation to the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System.
- K-2 will transition to the use of the updated DIBELS 8 as a universal screening tool.
- Instructional read aloud, shared reading, and interactive writing as part of reader's and writer's workshop will continue to be a focus in K-2 classrooms.
- K-5 teachers will continue to refine their practice in the use of multiple data points to inform whole class and small group differentiated instruction.
- Cross-building articulation visits will continue in the fall with second grade visiting third and fifth grade visiting sixth.
- The Tri State Consortium will visit again in spring 2020 to follow up on our implementation of their recommendations from last year's visit.
- Successfully modify curriculum, instruction, and assessment to best meet the needs of our special education population will continue to be a focus in all grades.

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADES 6-12

I. 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Writing Center teachers and the CIL created and implemented a plan for all students who did not meet benchmark on the WHS Writing Portfolio. Writing Center teachers met with identified students multiple times during the first semester. With the support of the Writing Center and classroom teachers, 81% of these students met benchmark on the resubmitted portfolio.
- The Writing Center continues to be one of the most vibrant resources at WHS. As of April 1, Writing Center coordinators have held 576 individual conferences with students. Fifty-five percent of these visits represent students who have used the Writing Center multiple times this year. Coordinators met with approximately 32% of the student body in these conferences. They also supported conferences and led writing session in 134 classrooms, which allows them to meet with multiple students at one time.
- The Writing Center coordinators and the CIL visited all grade 8 classes at WMS to review the expectations for the writing portfolio. These teachers, along with grade 8 English language arts and social studies teachers, conferenced with grade 8 students on their writing for two days in April. These meetings with grade 8 students are important moments that support the transition between the schools.
- This year, the scorers for the grade 8 portfolio were a representative group from both grades 8 and 9. As a result of scoring these portfolios, teachers were also able to discuss trends in student writing and make plans to revise curriculum and instruction in both grades to best support the needs of all students during this transition.
- Both English language arts and social studies teachers in grades 6-8 at WMS administered and scored benchmark argument prompts three times during the school year. Respective teachers and CILs reviewed the data and then made adjustments to instruction to best meet the needs of our students. This evaluation of data, as suggested in the Tri-State report, and our tracking of student growth in the use of evidence and elaboration, help our teachers align writing expectations.
- The WHS English department participated in a professional development session facilitated by a Fairfield University English professor. The workshop focused on developing strategies for teaching revision and running effective writing conferences with students. Teachers have been working with curricular partners and the CIL as they integrate more opportunities for revision and reflection in their courses.
- Four WHS and WHS teachers attended a workshop titled "Teaching Through Hope: Building Your Holocaust Instructional Materials" at Cooperation Educational Services in Trumbull.

Grade 8 and grade 9 English teachers are working together to create units related to genocide education to both raise the awareness and build empathy in our students.

- WMS teachers continue to administer the SBA Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). Teachers, working in cross-curricular teams of English language arts and social studies, examined this data and use their findings to provide additional supports for students.
- As recommended in the Tri-State report, grade 6 English language arts teachers visited WIS to meet with the grade 5 English language arts team and to observe their classes. This sort of professional development is invaluable as we find more ways to support our students in the transition between schools.
- *Filament*, WHS's literary and arts magazine, was nationally recognized as a "superior" publication by the National Council of Teachers of English.
- WHS students were among the winners in the Hudson-to-Housatonic Scholastic Writing Awards. One student was a silver key recipient and three students received honorable mentions.

III. Challenges and Needs

- The WHS Writing Portfolio has been in place since 2014. We need to review the process to ensure that the writing requirements are representative of current curricular changes and that teachers provide opportunities for revision and reflection for all students.
- There is always a concern among the CIL and Writing Center coordinators regarding how well we support all students throughout the WHS Writing Portfolio process. More explicit support plans need to be communicated to all teachers, particularly those in both English and social studies.
- The Writing Center is not available all periods of the day due to limited staffing. Since appointments book up quickly, many students have expressed concerns that they cannot utilize this resource when they need it. Although the teachers have been as flexible as they could be (e.g. meeting before school, after school, or even during a period when the Writing Center is closed), a fully staffed Writing Center would help alleviate these issues.
- The grade 6 curriculum needs to be updated to allow for the strongest transition between WIS and WMS. Additional meetings among these two teams need to be scheduled throughout the 2019-2020 school year. There also needs to be more built-in opportunities for grade 8 and 9 teachers to meet to calibrate their instruction and assessment practices.
- Additional support is needed for teachers as they work towards strengthening their differentiation skills. Teachers who have already mastered these skills need opportunities to share their methods with their colleagues.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Form a group of stakeholders from various departments and evaluate the effectiveness of the WHS portfolio process and school-wide writing rubric. Make revisions to the portfolio process and update all materials, as needed.
- Work with WHS administration to create a plan to guarantee that all students receive the same support throughout the WHS Writing Portfolio process.
- Update the grade 6 English language arts curriculum to ensure that teachers continue to meet the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms.
- Provide meeting time for teachers involved in the grade 5 to 6 transition and the grade 8 to 9 transition. These meetings will help teachers align expectations and curriculum.
- Create a department goal regarding differentiation and then coach teachers as they continue to hone these skills so that all students, regardless of the course they enroll in, have the same opportunities to succeed.

SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES K-5

I. 2018-19 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Grade 2 has successfully integrated the use of one-to-one iPads in the cross-curricular biography unit.
- Grade 3 began collaboration with the Weston Historical Society to plan for needs in upcoming years as a result of a grant the WHS received.
- Grade 5 revised their social studies curriculum to accommodate reduced instructional minutes by integrating with language arts units where appropriate.
- Integration of PBIS, Emotional Intelligence, and social studies outcomes have been explored.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Instructional time for social studies has been a challenge to sustain as new curricular needs have emerged.
- Grade 5, which currently has the most social studies historical content to teach, has been working to teach that content in less time than in prior years.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Ensure all social studies standards are taught with fidelity in all grades.
- Continue to integrate PBIS and Emotional Intelligence outcomes into social studies instruction.
- Balance needs across all curricular areas in all grades.
- Continue to refine curriculum and assessments in all grades.

SOCIAL STUDIES, GRADES 6-12

I. 2018-19 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.

I. 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.
- Social Studies teachers in grades 6-12 had an opportunity to participate in a trip to the Mark Twain House where they participated in an inquiry workshop using objective sources focused on evidence-based learning.
- Social studies teachers in grades 6 and 7 participated in a professional development session hosted by the National Geographic Education Foundation's Connecticut chapter. Teachers were introduced to inquiry-based lessons associated with National Geographic themes and the process to be a National Geographic trained educator.
- AP US History, American Studies, and eighth grade American History classes created virtual museum exhibitions drawn from the Mark Twain House professional development experience.
- Tenth grade Modern World Studies piloted a Global Interdependence Inquiry capstone.
- The social studies department's performance-based assessments complement district interdisciplinary writing, research, and technology goals. Examples include:
 - American History students created virtual museum exhibitions in AP US History and American Studies drawn from the Mark Twain House professional development experience.
 - Ninth grade students worked with both the library media specialist and the technology integrator to create infographic PSAs in regards to Global Diseases in World Studies and Biology.
 - 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 Pollution Control Board in India, Australian Water Association, Water for South Sudan, Louisiana State University Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Alliance for the Great Lakes, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Republic of South Africa.
- The social studies department welcomed numerous guest speakers to support and enhance curricular needs. The department celebrates our connections with the local community and embraces opportunities to work with them in multiple capacities.

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- Sixth Grade students met the Connecticut state candidates running for our State House and Senate seats in regards to our state's geographic location, our use of natural resources, energy consumption, and also questions about becoming a public servant.
- Seventh grade students met with various town stakeholders on Weston's changing demographics and population challenges facing the town and the schools.
- Eighth grade teachers collaborated with the Connecticut Regiment Colonial Reenactment group to bring Colonial Day to Weston Middle School.
- Eva Brust Cooper, a survivor of the Holocaust, spoke to our sixth and seventh grade students, about her childhood and her family's emigration to the United States.
- AP Government students participated in Constitution Day at Fairfield Ludlow High School where they met with Senator Richard Blumenthal.
- Students in Psychology met with Hilary Misiano who spoke about bringing mindfulness practices into schools.
- Students in Introduction to Economics attended a Personal Reality Fair in Danbury at Western Connecticut State University to gain a greater understanding of how personal financial decision making is impacted by credit score.
- Members of the Israeli Youth Emissaries visited all social studies classes at the high school.
- Tenth grade students had the opportunity to meet and converse with guest speakers who lived in the Soviet Union during the Cold War and its transition period of the early 1990s.
- The social studies and English language arts departments continue to collaborate on district writing initiatives.
 - As cited in the English language arts section, ELA and social studies teachers at WMS met to articulate writing expectations across grade levels; additionally, they scored benchmark argument prompts three times during the school year. These teachers along with the CILs reviewed the data and then made adjustments to instruction to best meet the needs of our students.
 - 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.
 - As cited in the English Language Arts section, WMS teachers continue to administer the SBA Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs). Grade level teachers focused their attention on the Evidence and Evaluation portion of the rubric identifying focused areas to adjust instructional practices.
- A social studies teacher completed his first year teaching AP Macro Economics and AP Micro Economics after attending TAFT sessions in the summer.
- Social Studies teachers and administration volunteered at Staples High School's Financial Reality Fair to gain insight on possible opportunities for Weston's students in the future.
- AP Government has been approved to run as a full year course as a result of the College Board's redesign of the course.
- The Model United Nations club participated in two conferences this year at the University of Connecticut and in Boston. Both these trips were advised by members of the social studies department.
- Andrew Castro placed first place in the State of Connecticut in an Economics essay contest "Investwrite" as part of the Stock Market Game program. He wrote an essay on John D.

Rockefeller that was adapted from an in-class assignment within the Introduction to Economics course.

- Timothy Allen represented WMS as school champion at the state level of the National Geographic Bee.

II. Challenges and Needs

- Summer curriculum time is needed to revise the World Studies-Biology project 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 need to be further trained on data collection and analysis in terms of SAT, PSAT and SBA, as per district gauging progress goals.
- The department needs to start investigating the curriculum renewal process at all grade levels including the elective experiences.
- There is a strong interest in revising the introductory psychology and sociology courses.
- There is a strong interest in pursuing external specialists to improve content knowledge and instructional practices, especially regarding inquiry-based learning.

III. 2019-2020 Goals

- Explore, evaluate, and begin the curriculum renewal process for social studies courses, grades 6-12.
- Continue to cultivate opportunities to integrate the inquiry model into coursework through the support of experts in the field.
- Support the continued efforts between ELA and social studies to align expectations, language, and instructional goals, especially regarding analytical writing at the middle school.

WORLD LANGUAGE, GRADES K-12

I. 2018-19 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Completed curriculum renewal for fourth grade Spanish with successful implementation of the new curriculum.
- Completed most of curriculum renewal process for French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese at WHS with expected adoption in the fall of 2019.
- Continued alignment of curriculum with the 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.
- Provided professional development opportunities between the Fine Arts and World Language Departments to promote cross-disciplinary connections.
- Collaborated with the Fine Arts Department in the organization of the induction ceremonies for the respective honor societies and in showcasing our programs to parents.
- Piloted for the first time standardized world language assessments with all juniors in French, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish to determine their level of language proficiency. These exams assess students' proficiency in interpersonal communication, reading and listening comprehension, and writing.
- Piloted the first time a standardized world language assessment in the interpersonal mode of communication in Spanish with four sections of fifth graders in order to determine their present level of proficiency and make appropriate curricular adjustments before completion of the fifth grade curriculum renewal.
- CIL provided three sessions of professional development to world language teachers about high-leverage teaching practices in world language instruction.
- Teachers and CIL participated in a variety of in-district and out-of-district professional development opportunities. Some of these experiences were in the form of webinars as well as national and regional conferences.
- Continued to enrich lessons with new digital resources and supported student learning with the new learning management system, Canvas.

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- Bi-monthly parent bulletins (El Boletín de Hurlbutt) were sent to HES parents keeping them informed of the Spanish curriculum and highlighting units of focus and interdisciplinary connections.
- Implemented a new series of French textbooks for the WMS French program.
- Enhanced all languages with new ancillary materials (level readers, films, documentaries).
- Seventh grade Spanish students exchanged correspondence with a middle school in Santa Fe, Argentina.
- French and Spanish middle school students continued with French and Spanish Club after school once a month.
- Forty-two eighth grade French students participated in the National French Contest. Gold, silver, and bronze medals were awarded to these students as a result of outstanding performance.
- Two hundred and 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 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 these contests.
- WHS students were recognized for outstanding academic achievements in world language classes at the World Language Celebration/National Honor Society Induction Night.
- 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 fellow students, etc.
- National French, Chinese, Latin and Spanish Honor Society members together with the Music National Honor Society and Fine Arts National Honor Society members organized a “World Fair,” which is a music, languages, and arts festival at WHS to promote languages and celebrate cultures.
- WHS hosted 33 exchange students from France and their teachers.
- International guest speakers from France and Argentina visited our middle and high schools to discuss topics related to daily lifestyles with our students. Students and guests were able to engage in Q&A sessions.
- WHS teachers organized field trips for Spanish students to visit a Spanish theatre in NYC, and for Latin students to attend State Latin Day, where all things Latin are celebrated.
- WHS Spanish students engaged in video conferences and correspondence with students from Toledo, Spain to discuss a variety of topics, as well as draw cultural comparisons and make connections.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Continue to examine WMS schedule in order to have everyday world language instruction for sixth grade at WMS.
- Consider budgeting funds for instructional resources to support English language learners (ELL) and their teacher.
- Monitor Spanish enrollment at WHS.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Develop fifth grade Spanish curriculum and complete FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) program renewal.
- Complete world language K-12 curriculum renewal process for anticipated adoption in the fall of 2019.
- Provide coaching to support new ELL teacher.
- Develop a plan to increase student proficiency in all languages in identified areas of need after administering the standardized world language assessments to fifth graders and juniors for the first time in 2019.
- Monitor Spanish enrollment at WHS and develop a plan to increase student retention.
- Increase differentiation of instruction for world language learners.

VISUAL ARTS, GRADES K-12

I. 2018-19 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.

II. Accomplishments

- HES hosted guest artist, Andrew Hamilton Reiss, who worked with first and second graders during their art time to create a “Conceptual Garden Sculpture.” Mr. Reiss is a sculpture artist who graduated from WHS and is a member of Weston Arts. He gave a presentation assembly in the LRC the week prior to working with students.
- For the first time, an art enrichment class was added to the WMS schedule for grades 6, 7, and 8. This unique experience allowed students to drive their own learning by exploring topics to study, making selections for concentrations, and experimenting with studio art techniques. The areas of study for each grade evolved through this self-directed exploration. In addition to experimenting, students were encouraged to bring a project from their chosen area to completion.
- With the new middle school schedule, students were no longer pulled out of art classes for a variety of other programs. As a result, access to art in sixth, seventh and eighth grades increased from 75-80% to nearly 100%.
- AP Studio Art and Advanced Drawing students extended their learning outside of the classroom with a field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Ten students’ art works were exhibited at the Sacred Heart University’s Teen Visions 2019 Connecticut High School Art Exhibit. Three students received second place awards for their works.
- National Art Honor Society (NAHS) students continued their art-focused community service by acting as docents for the Weston Arts Open Studio Night in Weston. They also volunteered at the Plein Air community painting event at Lachat Farm in Weston.
- Cady Carroll, art teacher at WIS, focused on integrating the Emotional Intelligence mood meter into her art classrooms this year. She found that this focus helped tremendously with student frustration, anxiety and behavior in the classroom.
- The Visual Art and World Language departments (K-12) met in August to discuss possible co-curricular projects. This collaboration has resulted in a great deal of dialogue about integrating world culture into the art curriculum and one great co-curricular project at HES—first graders learned the color wheel in Spanish and created an “Alebrijes” (an imaginary 2D animal based on Mexican folk art).
- Six students exhibited work at Westport Art Center’s Juried Student Art Show.

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- The Annual Art Jam All District Art Exhibition will be held on May 23, 2019. Art teachers, NAHS students and music ensemble students worked together for a great collaborative artistic event. NAHS induction, HS Art Department Awards and IT computer desktop art work selections/awards at all four levels will be included in this exciting event. This year the event will be held in collaboration with the World Language department's World Language Night, and English teachers who contributed creative writing illustrations and a poetry creative readings by students and faculty'..
- The 29th Annual Connecticut Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards was the largest juried student art exhibition in the state and featured select work from Connecticut schools in grades 7-12. Selected from approximately 3,000 art entries, 787 works were accepted for exhibit at the University of Hartford. From that accepted number, there were 256 Gold key awards (including 13 Gold portfolios), 262 Silver keys and 247 Honorable Mention awards granted. Two Weston High School students were awarded Honorable Mention at this prestigious show.
- A Weston High School student was chosen to provide an artwork for the WHS permanent art collection in recognition of a retiring PTO board member.
- Three WHS students received an Honorable Mention in this years' nationwide C-Span Documentary competition. Their video was chosen in the top 120 out of 3,000 student entries. Students in grades 6-12 were asked to create a short (5-6 minute) video documentary on a topic related to the new 2019 competition theme, "What does it mean to be American? Choose a constitutional right, national characteristic, or historical event and explain how it defines the American experience." The honored WHS students selected the Pentagon Papers and freedom of the press as their topic.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Long term equipment replacement continues to be a budget concern.
- Instructional time in visual arts at the elementary levels continues to be a concern – it is well below state and national recommendations. It is imperative that we stress the importance of the arts to our students in order to foster their creative growth.
- There are facilities needs at WMS and WHS that affect the delivery of the curriculum. At WHS, room B9 needs air circulation brought in for the ceramics and crafts courses to be up to standards.

IV. 2019-2020 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.
- Begin the revision process for the K-12 visual arts curriculum in accordance with the ongoing curriculum cycle; implement and monitor changes to new and reworked courses for the 2019-20 school year.
- Continue to collect data in the visual arts classrooms to inform instruction and provide meaningful analysis of student learning.

PERFORMING ARTS, GRADES K-12

I. 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.

II. Accomplishments

- The K-12 music teachers continued their work on developing artistic literacy by revising the list of essential questions and enduring understandings that are connected to our K-12 music curriculum and revising measurement tools for student feedback.
- K-12 music teachers participated in professional development on utilizing essential questions in music instruction as a way to systemically connect the music content.
- Our high school bands were exposed to new conductors and clinicians when the Weston High School jazz students worked with composer/clinicians Jens Wendleboe and David DeJesus on their original compositions.
- The enrollment in our 4-12 performing ensembles is steady and participation in co-curricular ensembles, societies and clubs continues to grow at the high school. We have seen a strong retention in the strings program at the middle school as the program continues to thrive.
- The Weston High School Music Department traveled to Festival Disney 2019. Students participated in Disney workshops and prepared full concerts for performance on the Disney stage. Choir students worked with a former Broadway/Actor's Equity musician to put together the soundtrack to the *Lion King*, which was then set to a short film featuring scenes from the original animated film. Band students worked with a professional saxophonist in their workshop, learning to sight-read scores on the spot, and finishing with a recording of a *Moana* score, set to scenes from the movie and orchestra students worked with a Disney composer/conductor on their skills as an ensemble before setting scenes from *Beauty and the Beast* to a live-recorded score. Each ensemble performed a concert on the Disney Springs Amphitheater Stage for families, Disney guests, and for their peers.
- For the seventh 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 and orchestra students after school one day a week.
- One WHS choral student, Joshua Ronai, was selected by process of audition into the NAFME All National Honor Choir and performed in Orlando in November.
- Five WHS band, six orchestra, and thirteen choir students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Western Regional High School Festival.
- Two WHS band students and six choral students were selected by process of audition to participate in the Connecticut All-State Festival.
- Two WMS band and 13 choir students were selected by process of audition to participate in the CMEA Western Regional Middle School Festival.

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- Four fifth grade WIS choral students were selected to participate in the CMEA Elementary Honors Choir during the All-State Festival.
- Four fifth grade WIS orchestra students were selected to participate in the CMEA Elementary Honors Orchestra.
- One fifth grade band student was selected to participate in the CMEA Elementary Honors Band.
- On May 3, the WMS Jazz Bands, WMS Chamber Orchestra, and the WMS Chamber Singers attended 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 will induct new junior and senior members into their respective chapters on May 28. The total number of members for 2018-2019 is 71 at the high school and 44 at the middle school.
- The WHS and WMS senior and junior Tri-M chapters are very active and sponsored various music events throughout the year, including assisting with the Halloween Haunt in October, the WHS Music Mentors Program, WHS World Fair, Art Jam music, Veteran's Day breakfast performances and the annual Caroling Fundraiser, raising money for victims of the California wildfires.
- Many of our music students were involved in select area ensembles such as the Fairfield County Children's Choir, the Norwalk Youth Symphony, the Bridgeport Youth Orchestra, the Ridgefield Youth Symphony, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Nordic Sound Youth Jazz Orchestra and a variety of summer arts ensembles and pre-college programs.
- The WHS Jazz Ensemble performed in the Berklee Jazz Festival in Boston, MA. The Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Bands performed with area ensembles in the Wilton Jazz Symposium and Norwalk Jazz Show. They performed well and participated in clinics with jazz educators.
- The WHS jazz groups will perform at a Jazz Cabaret at the high school on May 21.
- WIS Choral Students performed a winter concert at the Weston Senior Center in December.
- 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 13.
- WMS Band and Orchestra students performed at the Veteran's Day all-school assembly.
- A WHS and WMS marching band was formed for students to participate in the Memorial Day Parade.
- 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 students performed a concert in the spring and HES Kindergarten through grade 2 will perform grade level concerts.
- The WHS drama club, Company, presented the John Cariani comedy, *Almost, Maine* in the fall and the Andrew Lippa musical *The Addams Family* 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 the Company Showcase, a student-run production that will feature student written and directed one-act plays, scenes and multiple musical acts on June 2.
- The WMS theatre group, Short Wharf, presented *Alice in Wonderland, Jr.* this winter. High school students assisted with backstage and some technical elements of the production.
- The WIS theatre group Show Stoppers presented the children's musical *101 Dalmatians Kids*.

III. Challenges and Needs

- There is a need for appropriate rehearsal spaces for the high school ensembles to rehearse. We are in need of flooring and soundproofing in the music rooms, practice rooms, and a space for sectional and small ensemble work.
- It has been challenging to maintain the aging instrument inventories at the middle school and the high school. Our inventories are old and many of our instruments are in need of replacement. We will need to ensure that the current inventory and any new donations are cared for properly. Any new instruments that have been purchased over the past five years have been from outside sources.
- Two sections of AP Music Theory will be running next year and we are in need of appropriate materials for this course including textbooks and online resources.
- Beginning band students in sixth grade are receiving less instruction than the beginners in fifth grade due to the number of lesson blocks available at the middle school. It is important to keep beginning groups homogeneous and appropriately sized. Currently, they are either in a large heterogeneous lesson group once a week, or a small homogeneous group once every two weeks. This is inconsistent with the fifth grade beginners.
- The intermediate and middle school strings programs have grown and additional staff is needed to accommodate those additions at both levels. Some of our current lesson groups have 10 students in them and many are mixed instrument. At the beginner level especially, this has become a challenge for our students and we need to ensure they have the appropriate time allotted for lessons.
- It has been challenging for the middle school general music teachers to continue to deliver high level instruction to students as the average class size has increased and the percentage of students with individual needs has also increased. In all of these classes, the majority of students who typically have additional support in academics, do not have supports during class or outside of class.
- There is a growing interest in our music technology courses and we are in need of space for a recording studio to update the next level course for our advanced students. Additionally, we need to develop a plan to update our middle school music technology equipment and software.
- 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.
- Students continue to express interest in musical theater and technical theater courses. A general theater production course would begin to accommodate their continued requests.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Continue to provide music teachers appropriate professional development opportunities that are aligned with building comprehensive musicianship through performance and on the artistic processes as defined in the National Core Arts Standards.
- Provide support at the middle school for changes in increased size of lesson groups in band and orchestra with less instruction time; music literacy instruction in the choral program as class sizes increase; and updates to guitar, piano lab, and music technology courses to accommodate the new middle school schedule.
- Continue to provide guidance and appropriate time for arts teachers to transition to Canvas.

HEALTH/PHYSICAL EDUCATION, GRADES K-12

I. 2018-19 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 due to the piloting of a one trimester technology class.
- 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 the compendium of assessments throughout the K-12 health and PE 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Reviewed and enhanced our vaping education lessons at each grade level.
- Worked on improving our relationship with Weston Youth Services and ADAP.
- Successfully incorporated one new .5 PE/health teacher at WIS, and successfully transitioned another PE/health teacher to the middle school full-time.
- Made significant progress toward renewing our physical education curriculum.
- Continued with our efforts to create and implement more health “parent connection” assignments across all levels.
- Grade 8 health hosted “Emotional Health Fairs” for students, staff, and parents. Parent resources were made available, as well as the opportunity to discuss important topics with their child’s teacher as well as students.
- Middle school health topics were adjusted to address the need to incorporate sexual harassment earlier. The nutrition unit was moved to grade 6 and the sexual harassment unit was moved to grade 7 from grade 8. The emotional health unit has been expanded in grade 8.
- Four staff members attended the Election Day Health and Physical Education Conference at Hamden High School.
- CIL attended annual CTAHPERD conference in Cromwell, CT, as well as Emotional Intelligence refresher workshops at Yale University.
- All PE teachers completed two full days of Project Adventure refresher training.
- Expanded grade 7 PE Dance Unit to include a newly formed Performance Based Assessment. A group of four students walked to the WIS and taught their created dance to two grade 5 classes.
- High school health teachers hosted speakers from the Domestic Violence Crisis Center to discuss dating violence and healthy and unhealthy relationships with sophomores. They also

had speakers from the Rowan Center in to discuss sexual assault and harassment with our seniors.

- The Weston Police Department provided self-defense training to seniors during physical education classes.
- School Resource Officers were involved in health classes in all grades 6-12.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Changes in the CT Physical Fitness Test testing window caused some scheduling/managerial issues.
- New State graduation requirements resulted in the need to rearrange department priorities.
- Staff experienced difficulty arranging common time to work on physical education curriculum renewal and revised high school health education scope and sequence.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Successfully incorporate the new health units and lessons that were created to meet the new State graduation requirements.
- Integrate dialectical behavioral therapy DBT Steps-A program into our grade 9 curriculum, create supporting lessons in grades 10-12, and lead-up lessons in grades 6-8.
- Continue to expand “parent connection” opportunities for K-12 health.
- Incorporate caffeine effects and addiction into grade 7 and 8 substance abuse units.
- Integrate sleep needs and deprivation issues into all stress relief and emotional health units grades K-12.
- Present the renewed physical education curriculum to the Board of Education for adoption.
- Incorporate updated and/or newly created assessments in physical education.
- Explore the value of assessing physical skills at the K-2 level.
- Successfully integrate a new PE/health teacher into our program.
- Provide and/or facilitate more professional development for health and PE staff.
- Examine research based grading practices for physical education K-12.
- Incorporate Canvas learning management system into grades 9-12 and introduce it in grades 6-8.
- Explore and research the effectiveness of role-play in K-12 health education.

TECHNOLOGY, GRADES 6-12

I. 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 (Project Lead the Way) population by utilizing more of the LMS (learning management system) 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.

II. Accomplishments

- Approximately 64% of students enrolled in Civil Engineering and Architecture elected to take the course at an honors level designation. Approximately 85% of students enrolled in Principles of Engineering elected to take the course at an honors level designation. Both standard and honors students took each respective class during the same period. Differentiation during formal assessments as well as extension activities and/or projects were given each quarter to reflect an honors level architecture/engineering course which resulted in a greater depth of understanding for those students.
- During the course of each instructional unit, instructors are migrating activities and projects into Canvas pages, assignments, etc. The majority of curriculum materials are distributed through Canvas which reduces the amount of paper being used, allows anytime access to students on the mobile app, and provides a central location to post due dates and submit assignments.
- Video instruction is heavily used in certain areas of the PLTW curriculum which has significantly impacted the timeline and depth of knowledge taught in a positive way while providing a stronger platform for differentiation. For example, during the Tiny Home Project in the Civil Engineering and Architecture course, students save an average of nine class periods and accomplish more than what they previously did in a more traditional teacher-directed instructional technique. Working at their own pace, students are able to review areas that are more challenging to them while others work ahead. The availability of Canvas as a LMS has allowed this type of growth in instructional practice to take place, and as a result is implemented in other areas of the PLTW program with similar success.
- All four PLTW courses offered at the high school simultaneously ran successfully. This continues to support program growth by giving upper level students the option of choosing Principles of Engineering (POE) or Civil Engineering and Architecture (CEA) their junior or senior year, eliminating more scheduling conflicts than when all four courses were not running. Furthermore, projected enrollment from CIM (Computer Integrated Manufacturing)

to POE or CEA has maintained a consistent growth for the upcoming 2019-2020 academic year.

- As a result of the new schedule introduced at the middle school, enrollment in all sixth, seventh, and eighth grade Technology and Engineering classes have increased compared to the 2017-2018 school year. Sixth grade enrollment in Computer Programming increased from 77% to 99%, seventh grade enrollment in Design and Modelling increased from 81% to 98%, and eighth grade enrollment in Automation and Robotics increased from 87% to 100%.
- Technology enrichment classes in 3D Modeling and Printing started in a pilot format at the middle school this year during seventh and eighth grade extended learning time (ELT) periods. Forty students participated in the course pilot. Coursework included instruction in the Tinkercad web-based 3D modeling software, use and maintenance of the Ultimaker 3D printers, and Cura slicer-engine 3D printing software.
- Funded by a grant from a former student, Technology and Engineering teacher Mackenzie Robens attended the 81st Annual ITEEA (International Technology Education and Engineering Association) in Kansas City, MO. At the conference, she was able to collaborate with other technology educators about current trends and the future of technology education including the integration of STEM and how the subject area ties into other academic areas. Presentations covered a wide scope of content from elementary implementation, robotics, hydroponics, electronics, architecture, to special education.
- The high school robotics team had a very successful year. The team quadrupled in size and fielded four robots this year, up from one robot last year. This year, the team upgraded all of their electronics systems to the newest V5 system with new brains, motors and controllers. This was done with generous donations from the high school technology department, First Selectman Chris Spaulding, and many Weston Robotics Team parents. The team attended three tournaments, and earned a Sportsmanship Trophy and places in the final tournament brackets at two of the tournaments.
- Middle school Robotics Team upgraded their systems this year as well and fielded five teams, with two robots earning hard-won spots at the New England Regional Championships in Framingham, MA. The middle school team attended four tournaments and earned a Sportsmanship Award at the University of New Haven Tournament.

III. Challenges and Needs

- The hardware and software demands of the PLTW program are greater than other curriculum areas. Though there have been improvements, there are still difficulties in maintaining high levels of functionality at the student/classroom level.
- There are now computers located in the high school library that have Autodesk software installed for students to work during free periods and until 4pm each school day. However, there is still no work at home option for middle school or high school students.
- While increased enrollment for the 2018-2019 academic year required the use of room G-0 to run additional sections of Introduction to Engineering Design (IED), it was found that the available space is not ideal to support the type or size of the class. Limitations in space and storage in the classroom provide challenges for instructors to deliver the curriculum as effectively as delivered in room G-4. Project staging for materials, software difficulties throughout the year, lack of space for drawing, and close proximity when taking assessments are all areas that would benefit from capping the class size in G-0 to a suggested 18 students. Even with a reduction of total population, this room will always present challenges for certain activities throughout the curriculum but it would significantly help if students had a more flexible space.

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- There was a reduction of the number of incoming ninth graders requesting IED for next year. Several factors may have contributed to this. While the cause of the enrollment decrease is unknown, this will impact our staffing approach for 2019-20 school year.

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	92 (5 Sections)	38 (2 Sections)	13 (1 Section)	22 (1 Section)	1.8 FTE
2019-20 (Requests)	47 (2-3 Sections)	44 (2 Sections)	22 (1-2 Sections)	31 (2 Sections)	1.4-1.8 FTE

- Upper level PLTW courses POE and CEA benefit greatly from smaller class sizes due to the nature of technology and engineering curricula. Paired with the combining of both standard and honors courses in one class period it is suggested that courses be capped to 18 students to allow for the most effective use of equipment and to provide a reasonable balance to the student to teacher ratio in a project based curriculum.
- Class sizes for all middle school technology and engineering classes were considerably larger this year due to the ELT scheduling change at the middle school, requiring the addition of four Windows-based computers across the department. The largest class sizes reached 26 students per class in the seventh grade. Teachers will need to continually reflect on and adjust class projects and instructional practices to maximize student learning success in these courses.
- 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.
- 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 imperative 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.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Design and implement a strategy to promote interest and increased enrollment in high school level PLTW courses for the eighth grade students
- Continue to develop Canvas activities to better serve the high school PLTW population by utilizing more of the LMS features. Explore additional way to incorporate the use of Canvas in middle school PLTW classes.
- Prepare for the comprehensive overhaul of Introduction to Engineering Design, which is anticipated to be presented at the start of the 2020-2021 school year. Additional teacher training and preparation may be required to adequately support our students and curriculum.

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- Continue to support the growth and development of the high school and middle school robotics teams, including effective ways to manage the increase in team demands through one coach housed at the middle school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/PUPIL SERVICES, K-12

I. 2018-2019 Goals

- Increase the effectiveness of our internal systems for program management.
- Develop the capacity of our building based teams to develop and implement student programs.
- Develop parent partnerships through increasing transparency and providing information regarding the special education process.

II. Accomplishments

- Provided professional development on IEP best practices to teachers, related service providers, and administrators.
- Reviewed and clarified roles and responsibilities of the Planning and Placement team to develop efficacy and efficiency.
- Provided professional development opportunities on reading assessment and instructional strategies for regular education and special education teachers, including best practices for data collection PreK-12.
- Provided professional development on conducting comprehensive evaluations for students.
- Collaborated with district Emotional Intelligence (EI) committee on the development and implementation of EI programming within the district.
- Provided professional development on working with students who are emotionally dysregulated.
- Conducted Special Education Roundtable discussions (5) with information on specific special education topics and additional parent information sessions with specific topics of interest.
- Conducted update and informational sessions to BOE, Committees, and Town representatives.

III. Challenges and Needs

- Continuing to build consistency in practice and procedures.
- Conducting comprehensive and conceptually driven assessments.
- Using data to drive decision making for student programming.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- Increase the effectiveness of our internal systems for program management.
- Develop the capacity of our building based teams to develop and implement student programs.
- Develop parent partnerships through increasing transparency and providing information regarding the special education process.

PROJECT CHALLENGE, 3-8

I. 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.

II. Accomplishments

- WMS implemented a new master schedule that includes an Extended Learning Time (ELT) for each grade level. This change has resulted in a significant improvement in the delivery of the practical and fine arts curriculum for Project Challenge students. Previously, middle school Project Challenge students were unable to access the full complement of courses.
- The Master Project timeline and process was streamlined, and students successfully presented their project as the recent fairs.
- Both WIS and WMS teachers enhanced their thematic units of study through the curriculum revision process.
- A new delivery model for math enrichment was implemented this year. Rather than pulling students out for math enrichment, the enrichment teacher pushed in to classes, thus allowing all students to benefit from biweekly enrichment lessons.

III. Challenges and Needs

- The scheduling of WIS Project Challenge classes continues to be a challenge because of the loss of instructional time from the general classroom. However, this issue has been mitigated somewhat by reducing the number of pull outs due to math and writing enrichment over the past two years.
- The Project Challenge identification process needs to be updated to ensure that we are identifying a broad range of giftedness.

IV. 2019-2020 Goals

- To implement refinements to Project Challenge identification process.
- Review the scheduling of Project Challenge classes at WIS.
- To continue to refine the Project Challenge thematic units in grades 3-8 and to continue to enhance the Master Project.