

V.C.

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

September 5, 2018

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, of the June 2015 Special Session, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Wexler-Grant Community School in New Haven for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's September 5, 2018, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

Approved by a vote of _____ this fifth day of September, Two Thousand Eighteen.

Signed: _____
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 5, 2018

SUBJECT: Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan for Wexler-Grant Community School in New Haven

Executive Summary

Introduction

Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) establishes the Commissioner’s Network to provide new resources and flexibilities to improve student achievement in a subset of the state’s lowest-performing schools. The Network represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to empower teachers and leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner to participate in the Network for a period of three years with the potential for a 1 or 2 one-year extension beyond the initial 3 years. Network schools remain part of their local school districts; the districts and the CSDE secure school-level autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

Successful school turnaround requires flexible policy conditions and targeted investments in high-yield reform strategies. There is a demonstrated need for support, financial and otherwise, to fully implement the Turnaround Plan for Wexler-Grant Community School (WGCS) in New Haven. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to secure conditions that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

Background

On March 16, 2017, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from New Haven Public Schools (NHPS) volunteering WGCS for participation in the Network. On May 1, 2017, the Commissioner initially selected WGCS for possible participation in the Network based on the following factors: (a) the district’s expression of interest; and (b) the academic and developmental needs of the school’s students and the capacity of the district to address those needs. The school was approved for one year of planning and funding to develop a turnaround plan. Following initial selection, the New Haven Board of Education and the New Haven Federation of Teachers appointed members to serve on the school’s Turnaround Committee, and

the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for WGCS in accordance with C.G.S. §10-223h(d).

Turnaround Plan for WGCS

WGCS currently serves 424 students in Grades Pre-Kindergarten through eight. The majority of students (65 percent) are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Sixteen percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 5 percent are English learners. Approximately 21 percent of the students are Hispanic and 71 percent are Black.

The goal of the turnaround plan is for WGCS to adopt the Service Based Learning (SBL) Model. SBL is an educational approach, championed by the International Baccalaureate, to teaching and learning in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. A teaching method championed by the International Baccalaureate, SBL is most effective when students are working towards tackling an authentic need in the community. SBL will support WGCS's continued focus and sense of urgency on improvement of literacy and math achievement, with explicit instruction in reading which requires on-going professional learning and job coaching, and change in instruction which supports the implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards. SBL will also support teacher's analysis of the complexity of mathematical tasks and consider strategies for transforming grade-level tasks to increase the level of rigor. Teachers will be provided with additional time to collaborate to plan literacy and math instruction, review literacy and math data, and develop differentiated materials.

The following strategic components in the domains of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations speak to the transformative potential of the WGCS Turnaround Plan. Specifically, NHPS will:

Talent:

- Provide on-going support and job-embedded instructional coaching from Literacy How in effective literacy instruction focused on all components of comprehensive literacy instruction;
- Provide on-going professional learning and job-embedded instructional coaching from Math Solutions on effective math instruction, including the use of reasoning and discourse in mathematics;
- Build teacher capacity to develop Authentic Performance Assessments that will be incorporated throughout the course of each unit of instruction;
- Provide professional learning and coaching to create a comprehensive schoolwide behavior management system; and
- Contract with a Leadership Advisor to provide technical assistance and support to the Leadership Team in order to support academic progress in reading and math.

Academics:

- Implement a SBL model to support students as they acquire the critical thinking and other 21st century skills needed for college and career;
- Strengthen intervention programming by developing an interventionist's schedule to include regular collaborative meetings with the relevant literacy and/or math coach;
- Establish teacher data team protocols focused on prioritized standards, common assessments, key instructional strategies, and a consistent process for collaboration and decision-making; and
- Develop authentic performance assessments in grade level teams which allow students to engage with real-world projects and problem-solving, while assessing mastery of standards.

Culture and Climate:

- Restructure and strengthen Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS);
- Review and implement Restorative Practices;
- Implement the Assets, Skills, Professions, Interests, Relationships, and Environment (ASPIRE) Survey Tool to increase and align family engagement to the school's goals and curriculum. The ASPIRE Survey provides an opportunity to assess the collective talent pool of all parents and adults associated with a school; as well as the assets of the community itself;
- Develop community partnerships for enrichment opportunities; and
- Utilize a systematic approach to support students and families on attendance through: recognition of attendance for students; home visits; and on-going discussions and support to identify and resolve the obstacles preventing the child's regular attendance.

Operations:

- Restructure school schedule to maximize instructional and intervention time;
- Focus budgetary priorities based on school's individual needs; and
- Schedule common planning time for staff.

The CSDE shall make a final determination regarding the allocation of funds, following the Turnaround Plan's approval by the State Board of Education. The Chief Turnaround Officer and Turnaround Office consultants will collaborate with district leadership and the Turnaround Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process.

Through this budgeting process, NHPS will work to evaluate and repurpose existing funding streams (e.g., local, state, federal, and grants) to support Network reform efforts and foster long-term sustainability. Funding for WGCS is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be based on the transformative potential of the Turnaround Plan, as well as the size of the school.

WGCS will benefit from increased flexibility and additional resources in exchange for heightened accountability. Over the course of the school's participation in the Network, the Commissioner and/or Chief Turnaround Officer will review: (a) school progress relative to

implementation of the Turnaround Plan and annual plan amendments; and (b) school performance relative to identified goals and leading and lagging performance metrics. WGCS will participate in periodic monitoring sessions, including school and classroom walkthroughs, progress monitoring, NetStat sessions, and annual school audits. In addition, the CSDE will provide ongoing support and technical assistance to support WGCS through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

Recommendation with Conditions

The CSDE is recommending that the Board approve the Network Plan for Wexler-Grant Community School, which would be conditional on the successful completion of the following outstanding items:

1. By September 30, 2018, New Haven Public Schools shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined here in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations as part of participation in the Commissioner's Network.
2. The Superintendent, on behalf of the WGCS Turnaround Committee, shall submit Turnaround plan amendments to the CSDE Turnaround Office on an annual basis in the spring, following school audits, detailing proposed strategies, budget requests, and implementation timelines for the following school year. The Commissioner or her designee may reconvene the Turnaround Committee to consider annual plan amendments, as appropriate and necessary. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact plan amendments or if the amendments are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at WGCS, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising any and all authorities prescribed in C.G.S. 10-223h.
3. WGCS shall comply with all fiscal and programmatic reviews, provide any information requested by the CSDE in a timely manner, and report progress against goals and metrics in the format and frequency established by the CSDE.

Materials

Please see enclosed:

1. WGCS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on May 16, 2017.
2. Turnaround Plan developed and agreed to by the Turnaround Committee.

Prepared by: Iris White
Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office

Approved by: Desi D. Nesmith
Chief Turnaround Officer

The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort VII

Form Number: ED 708
Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes

Date Issued: July 17, 2017

Wexler-Grant Community School

Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
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Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director, Title IX /ADA/Section 504 Coordinator
State of Connecticut Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard | Hartford, CT 06103 | 860-807-2071

PART I: THE NETWORK OVERVIEW

A. Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network (Network) established by Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-223h (2017) represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in 25 low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and authority to empower teachers and school leaders to implement evidence-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

Under the statute, the Commissioner is authorized, within available appropriations, to select, for participation in the Network, not more than 25 schools in any single school year that have been classified as a Category Four school or Category Five school pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223e. The Commissioner may select not more than five schools in any single school year from a single school district to participate in the Network. C.G.S. Section 10-223h(a).

The statute provides that the Commissioner shall give preference to schools: (1) that volunteer to participate in the Network, provided the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees mutually agree to participate in the Network; (2) in which an existing collective bargaining agreement between the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees will have expired for the school year in which a Turnaround Plan will be implemented; or (3) that are located in school districts that (A) have experience in school turnaround reform, or (B) previously received a school improvement grant pursuant to Section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301, *et seq.* C.G.S. Section 10-223h(a).

Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) may allow schools to continue in the Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. See C.G.S. Section 10-223h(h). At present, there are 15 schools participating in the Network.

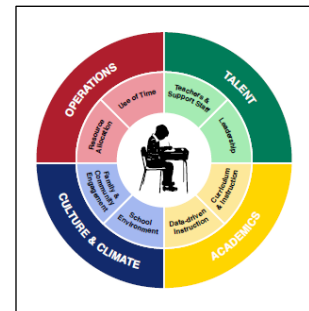
After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Network, the local board of education shall establish a Turnaround Committee pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b). Following the establishment of the Turnaround Committee, the CSDE shall conduct, in consultation with the local board of education, the School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). Once the audit is performed, the Turnaround Committee shall develop a Turnaround Plan for the school by completing this application. As stated in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), if the Turnaround Committee does not develop a Turnaround Plan, or if the Commissioner determines that a Turnaround Plan developed by the Turnaround Committee is deficient, the Commissioner may develop a Turnaround Plan for the school.

The CSDE is initiating the planning process for a seventh prospective cohort of Network schools, pending legislative authorization and the appropriation of funds to extend and expand the Network.

B. Turnaround Plan and Framework

The Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the School Governance Council, shall develop the Turnaround Plan in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(d) and the guidelines issued by the Commissioner. Accordingly, the Turnaround Plan must include:

1. Provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instructional audit.
2. Identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas.
3. Provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate, and retain top talent.
4. Summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction.
5. Outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate.
6. Develop operational structures to effectively utilize time and resources.



Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), the Turnaround Plan may include proposals changing the hours and schedules of teachers and administrators at the school, the length and schedule of the school day, the length and calendar of the school year, the amount of time teachers shall be present in the school beyond the regular school day, and the hiring or reassignment of teachers or administrators at the school. If provisions of the Turnaround Plan alter the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators and teachers employed by the local board of education, the local board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit for the affected certified employees shall negotiate concerning such provisions in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-153s.

The CSBE must approve the Turnaround Plan before the school may implement it. Once the Turnaround Plan is approved, Network school leaders will work with the CSDE Turnaround Office, and/or other partners, to operationalize the Turnaround Plan by planning and designing tools, systems, and/or policies including, but not limited to:

1. School bell schedule.
2. School calendar.
3. Annual assessment calendar.
4. Staff evaluation schedule.
5. Professional learning calendar.
6. Scientific Research-Based Interventions I processes and protocols.
7. School organizational chart.
8. Curricular materials (e.g., lesson plan templates, unit plans, pacing guides).
9. School budget.
10. Discipline policy.
11. Calendar of family and community engagement opportunities.

PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Instructions

Please review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. Please complete all of the required sections. The application will be deemed incomplete and/or deficient if required sections are not submitted. The specific timeline for this application will be determined by the CSDE. District leadership must participate in, at minimum, two benchmark meetings with the CSDE Turnaround Office to provide updates on elements of the draft Turnaround Plan as it evolves and receive formative feedback. Please be prepared to share draft Turnaround Plan components prior to these meetings.

B. Timeline Summary

Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-223h, the Network process is outlined below. As noted, the extension and expansion of the Network requires new legislative authorization; therefore, initial planning activities for a seventh prospective cohort of Network schools are underway, pending legislative authorization.

1. Commissioner initially selects the school for the Network.
2. Local board of education forms the Turnaround Committee.
3. CSDE conducts the operations and instructional audit of the school.
4. Turnaround Committee develops the Turnaround Plan and budget proposal.
5. Turnaround Committee reaches consensus or the Commissioner may develop a plan.
6. CSBE votes to approve or reject the Turnaround Plan.
7. Local board of education negotiates a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with collective bargaining units for certified staff, if necessary, to establish the working conditions for the school during its turnaround period.
8. Certified staff identified and/or selected to work at the school ratify MOUs on working conditions, if necessary.
9. CSDE awards resources to the school depending on available funds.
10. Network school begins implementation of the Turnaround Plan with support from the CSDE.

C. Freedom of Information Act

All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Section 1-200 *et seq.* of the Connecticut General Statutes. The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

D. Questions

All questions regarding the Network should be directed to:

Desi D. Nesmith
Chief Turnaround Officer
Connecticut State Department of Education
E-mail: desi.nesmith@ct.gov

PART III: THE NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	New Haven Public Schools		
Name of School:	Wexler-Grant Community School		
Turnaround Committee Chairperson: ¹	Dr. Iline Tracy		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	(475) 220-1396		
E-mail of Chairperson:	ILINE.TRACEY@new-haven.k12.ct.us		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	54 Meadows St.	
	City:	New Haven	Zip: 06519
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Mr. Darnell Goldson		
Signature of School Board Chairperson: ²		Date:	
Name of Superintendent:	Dr. Carol A. Birks		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	

¹ Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b)(1), the superintendent, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Turnaround Committee.

² By signing this cover page, the chairperson of the local board of education affirms that the board has established the Turnaround Committee in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), and that the superintendent has informed the board of the content of the Turnaround Plan.

Section 2: Turnaround Model
2.1. NEEDS AND ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Instructions: Using the spaces provided below, please identify the school’s greatest strengths and growth areas based on the results of the operations and instructional audit. Add/Delete rows, as necessary. Provide specific data points to support the analysis and include root causes for each of the identified growth areas.

Summarize the school’s greatest strengths as identified in the operations and instructional audit:

Strengths:	Data and Evidence:
Talent:	
<p>Staff Commitment: During the audit site visit, Wexler-Grant Community School students and school leadership reported the school’s staff are dedicated to the school and students.</p> <p>Improved (Emerging) Process for Administering Informal Evaluations: Wexler-Grant Community School’s leadership team conducts weekly classroom walkthroughs on look-` determined by the leadership team.</p>	<p>Staff Commitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and school leadership reported that the school’s staff are dedicated to the school and students. During the audit site visit, Administrators reported that the teachers are working extremely hard. The 2016-2017 teacher attendance rate was 97.4 percent. Parents, on the Turnaround Committee, reported that the teachers have a positive rapport with students. <p>Improved (Emerging) Process for Administering Informal Evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the online teacher survey, seventy-nine percent of teachers (N=22) strongly agree or agree that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.”
Academics:	
<p>District Curriculum and Assessment Initiatives: The district has well-defined, structured initiatives for the implementation of Connecticut Core-aligned curriculum and student assessments. Wexler-Grant Community School teachers participate in district-wide Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment meetings four times a year.</p>	<p>District Curriculum and Assessment Initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the online teacher survey, eighty-five percent of teachers (N=24) strongly agree or agree that the school has curricula for all grade levels and content areas aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards. During the last two years, teachers have received most of their support through these trainings.
Culture and Climate:	
<p>Family Involvement Committee (FIC): The FIC has planned monthly events to engage families in their child’s learning. Teachers also reported that they have made home visits in order to establish stronger relationships with families.</p>	<p>Family Involvement Committee (FIC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FIC consists of 10 teachers, 1 Parent Liaison, a Family Resource Coordinator, Administration, and a Library-Media Specialist. Planned events included a mix of academic with social: Wexler Olympics, Harvest Festival, Bingo, Science Night, Dancing with My Star (Parent and Child Dance), PJ Night, Book Fairs and a Talent Show.

Strengths:	Data and Evidence:
<p>Community Partners: Wexler-Grant Community School has identified a range of wraparound services to address students' academic and non-academic needs and has sustained several community partnerships. The school has a community partner liaison who is assigned to establish and sustain partnership opportunities.</p>	<p>Data and Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although attendance was low across events, the most well attended events were the ones that showcased student performances. <p>Community Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Clifford Beers Clinician provides counseling services for selected students (approximately 80) and other members of the agency offer care coordination services to families. Partnerships include Read to a Child, a lunchtime reading program, which brings adult volunteers into elementary schools for read-aloud sessions, as well as, United Way of Greater New Haven, and Alive.
Operations:	
<p>Technology: A School Improvement (1003a) Grant, awarded in 2014, has allowed Wexler-Grant Community School to upgrade its technology to provide most classrooms with an Eno Board and Chromebook cart. There is also a computer lab.</p>	<p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the online teacher survey, eight-six percent of teachers (N=25) strongly agree or agree that "teachers and students effectively use technology to enhance teaching and learning."

Summarize and provide a root cause analysis for the school's most significant growth areas as identified in the operations and instructional audit:

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
Talent:	
<p>Instructional Practice: The audit team observed 16 randomly selected classrooms across grade levels and content areas. In the observed classrooms, auditors saw primarily teacher-led lessons with low levels of rigor, differentiation, and student engagement. Students appeared disengaged and were not actively engaged in whole group or silent reading. Administration reported that while teacher lesson plans are well written, observations do not demonstrate the same level of rigor.</p>	<p>Instructional Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the online teacher survey, the quality of instruction was variable across the 16 classrooms observed by the audit team. Only 27 percent of teachers (N=8) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that "instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school." Teacher questioning and assignments required students to answer questions at Webb's Depth of Knowledge Levels 1 and 2. Instruction was primarily whole class, lecture-style with little opportunity for student-to-student discourse. Student performance levels on the 2017 Smarter Balanced Assessment, demonstrate only 21 percent of students meeting or exceeding the achievement standards in ELA, only 6 percent of students meeting or exceeding the achievement standard in mathematics and a Science Performance Index/Rate of 39.8 which is below the state average index rate of 55.3.

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Professional Learning: During the audit site visit, Administration reported that due to the limited schedule, teachers have not received enough professional learning on differentiation and behavior management. The quality of professional learning is inconsistent.</p> <p>Leadership Effectiveness: The school has a school improvement plan, but the plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. During the adult site visit, teachers reported that there was a lack of collaboration with the prior administration.</p>	<p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to administrative leadership changes, teachers have had different Instructional Managers for the past four years. <p>The staff lacks capacity, knowledge and skill set to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and staff engagement • Relevant and rigorous instruction • Differentiated instruction • Analysis of student data to adapt the learning process <p>Professional learning is needed to build teacher’s capacity in all root cause growth areas stated.</p> <p>Professional Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers were afforded one hour of professional learning after school every Wednesday during the 2016-17 school year which focused on restorative practices, social-emotional learning, student engagement, and differentiation. • On the online teacher survey, although 62 percent (N=18) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that the “professional development I received this year has improved my professional practice and allowed me to better meet the needs of my students.” <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for a comprehensive professional learning plan that provides practical application of strategies and on-going follow up and coaching as needed to support teachers as they implement. • Teachers need professional learning that models how to differentiate learning for students. For example, to model differentiation, the presentation should be structured to meet the diverse needs of the teachers. • During the audit site visit, administration reported that teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through professional learning. • Structures need to be put in place that intentionally help staff make sense of the professional learning plan and implement strategies consistently. <p>Leadership Effectiveness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the online teacher survey, only 52 percent (N=18) of teachers strongly agree or agree that “teachers are held accountable for their performance.”

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Teacher Retention: Administration and teachers both reported that there has been a high turnover in the middle grades. This turnover makes it difficult to establish and maintain a collaborative work environment.</p>	<p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the audit site visit, teachers reported that colleagues are not being held accountable for egregious behaviors, such as not showing up for posts and not attending faculty meetings. <p>Teacher Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall teacher retention rates for Wexler-Grant Community School has ranged from 89 percent in 2014-2015 to a current rate of 90 percent. The New Haven school district retention rate average is 95 percent. • During this time, Wexler-Grant Community School has had a total of 37 teachers and they have retained 28 of those teachers. <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the teacher survey, only 17 percent of teachers (N=5) strongly agree or agree that “interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful.”
<p>Academics:</p>	
<p>Academic Rigor and Differentiation: Most classroom visits were consistent with limited differentiation and surface-level questioning. Teachers reported a lack of common understanding of what it means to provide differentiated instruction. Administration reported that there is limited evidence of teachers engaging students in higher-order thinking and differentiated instruction.</p>	<p>Academic Rigor and Differentiation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Auditors did not find evidence of rigor and differentiation in 15 of the 16 observed classrooms. • Only one class out of the 16 showed evidence of teacher modeling followed by a small-group hands on lesson. • On the online teacher survey, only twenty seven percent (N=8) strongly agreed or agreed that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” • Only seven percent of teachers received ratings of strong or higher on the indicators related to differentiation. <p>Root causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers lack a common understanding of what it means to provide differentiated instruction. The professional learning that teachers have received has not adequately demonstrated how to differentiate in the classroom. • Teachers have not received follow up support on how to effectively differentiate instruction, after professional learning. • There is not a common understanding or guidance of what rigor is and what it looks like in the classroom. • There has not been clear communication and guidance around effective lesson planning. Teachers at WGCS are not required to use a specific lesson planning template and have not been given guidance on what components should be addressed in an effective lesson or sequence of lessons.

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Student Engagement: Teachers reported that they would like more modeling and support in how to effectively engage students in the classroom. The administration reported that they are interested in exploring expeditionary learning and inquiry-based learning in order to increase student engagement.</p> <p>Support for Special Populations and Implementation of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI): Administration reported that EL students are not being serviced on a regular basis. Although administration reported that there is a tutor who comes to the school four times a week, teachers reported that their EL students do not receive regular support.</p>	<p>Student Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of meaningful student engagement was evident in 15 observed classrooms, with 8 to 10 students per classroom observed to be unengaged in classroom activities, as evidenced by off-task behaviors, such as students with heads on desk sleeping, lack of responses to teacher questioning and lack of participation in silent reading and independent activities. • Most classrooms were teacher-led and offered very little opportunity for student-to-student discourse. • On the online teacher survey, only seventeen percent (N=5) of teachers strongly agree or agree that interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful. <p>Root causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of authentic engagement evident by student work production and behavior incidents. • Lack of strong teacher/student relationships. • There has not been clear communication, guidance, and professional learning provided to teachers on what student engagement looks like in the classroom. <p>Support for Special Populations and Implementation of SRBI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SRBI team only met twice during the 2016-2017 school year. • On the online teacher survey, only 48 percent (N=14) of teachers strongly agree or agree that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and ELs.” • IRIS, an outside organization, offers a tutoring service 3 times a week to students. <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the audit site visit, administration and teachers reported that they do not have the staffing to offer the services needed to meet the diverse needs of all students. • During the audit site visit, administration reported that the SRBI team met only twice last school year because the school was unable to secure substitute coverage. • During the audit site visit, administration reported that the school is good at identifying student issues, but not strong at finding strategies to support. School staff can diagnose, but are not good at prescribing. • During the audit site visit, administration reported that the student population is transient. • An EL tutor comes to the school 1-2 a month.

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Assessment System and Data Culture: During the audit site visit, administration reported that staff are good at diagnosing problems, but not at prescribing solutions.</p>	<p>Assessment and Data Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although on the online teacher survey, sixty-two percent of teachers strongly agree or agree that “this school has and consistently uses data to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction,” as stated earlier the SRBI team only met twice during the 2016-2017 school year. <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the audit site visit, administration reported that due to the departmentalization of grades 1-8, they no longer develop Common Formative Assessments. During the audit site visit, administration also reported that teachers no longer have grade level meetings. Without grade levels, scheduling data teams is difficult. Differentiated instruction does not meet student needs.
Culture and Climate:	
<p>Student Attendance: Chronic absenteeism remains high for Wexler-Grant Community School despite efforts of the attendance team. The attendance team, which consists of the assistant principal, District Truancy Officer, and social worker meets bi-weekly. Administration reported that they send out letters, personally deliver letters to homes, and make phone calls to the homes of students who are absent. The administration has also initiated restorative circles and invited parents to participate and discuss why their child is absent. They have been poorly attended.</p> <p>Interpersonal Interactions: Administrators and teachers reported that hurt feelings and past differences have strained staff-to-staff relationships. Teachers reported that the culture is reflected in the adult to adult interactions and then trickles down to student interactions.</p>	<p>Student Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school’s chronic absenteeism rate increased from 20 percent in 2015-2016 to 33.3 percent in 2016-2017. The rate is the highest for kindergarten at over 30 percent. Only seven parents showed up for the kindergarten attendance hearing and in 8th grade zero parents showed up. On the online teacher survey, only 10 percent of teachers (N=3) strongly agree or agree that “families are engaged in the school.” On the online teacher survey, only 17 percent of teachers (N=5) strongly agree or agree that “interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful.” <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wexler Grant has not emphasized to parents the learning that happens in Kindergarten and that attendance is essential. The early start time may impede on on-time arrival for the youngest students. <p>Interpersonal Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the online teacher survey, only seventeen percent (N=5) of teachers strongly agree or agree that interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful. <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During recent audit site visit teachers reported that unresolved issues have impeded staff relationships.

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Student Behavior: Principal reported that there has been a lack of fidelity of implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices.</p>	<p>Student Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the online teacher survey, only thirteen percent of teachers (N=4) strongly agree or agree that the school environment is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. • On the online teacher survey, only thirty seven percent of teachers (N=11) strongly agree or agree that the school implements an effective schoolwide behavior management system. • On the online teacher survey, only twenty-six percent of teachers (N=8) strongly agree or agree that the school has clear routines and procedures in place that are consistently followed by students and staff to help create a smooth and orderly environment. • The number of In-school suspensions, out of school suspensions, and Expulsions has increased from 205 in 2015-2016 to a total of 351 in 2016-2017. • The school’s suspension rate increased from 21 percent in 2015-2016 to 33 percent in 2016-17. • There are a number of repeat offenders to the In-school Suspension Room. <p>Root Causes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the audit site visit, administration reported that teachers have a matrix of consequences for behaviors, but it isn’t being used with fidelity. • Discipline is primarily punitive and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors.
<p>Operations:</p> <p>Adequate Instructional Time: Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase minutes for ELA.</p> <p>Use of Instructional Time: The audit team observed loss of instructional time in 15 of the 16 classes observed.</p>	<p>Adequate Instructional Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 3 has 1 hour and 45 minutes of ELA per day. • Grades 7 and 8 only have 55 minutes of ELA per day. • The schedule includes 310 minutes of instruction per day. <p>Root Cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective design of the schedule and school calendar does not allow for adequate minutes in ELA. <p>Use of Instructional Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of meaningful student engagement was evident in 15 observed classrooms, with 8 to 10 students per classroom observed to be unengaged in classroom activities, as evidence by off-task behaviors, students with heads on desk sleeping, lack of responses to teacher questioning and lack of participation in silent reading and independent activities. • Most classrooms were teacher-led and offered very little opportunity for student-to-student discourse.

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p>Use of Staff Time: During the audit site visit, both the leadership team and teachers reported that the school schedule does not allocate regular structured time for teachers to meet to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction. Teachers reported that they do not have the same preparation periods, which makes common planning difficult.</p>	<p>Root Causes: As stated earlier, the staff lacks capacity, knowledge and skill set to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student and staff engagement • Relevant and rigorous instruction • Differentiated instruction • Analysis of student data to adapt the learning process <p>Use of Staff Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only twenty-eight percent (N=8) of teachers strongly agree or agree that “teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction.” <p>Root Cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the audit site visit, administration reported that due to departmentalization, teachers do not have common prep meetings or grade level meetings.

2.2. ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Instructions: Network school progress will be measured against the leading and lagging indicators identified in the chart below. To the degree available, please complete using data found on EdSight:

<http://edsight.ct.gov/SASPortal/main.do>. Under the “Baseline and Historic Data” columns, please enter school data for each of the past two years.

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic		Current	Performance Targets		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Student enrollment (as of October 1)	425	455	424	424	424	424
Average daily student attendance rate (self-reported)	93%	90.8%	93.9%			
Chronic absenteeism rate	20%	30.8%	24.7%			
Number of In-school suspensions	118	210	7			
Number of Out-of-school suspensions	97	141	64			
Number of Expulsions	0	0	2	0	0	0
Suspension rate	8.2%	31.3%	8%	6.0%	4.7%	3.0%
Accountability index	57.1	48.7	N/A			
ELA Achievement-School Performance Index	53.9	53.0	N/A	56.4	58.1	59.8
Math Achievement-School Performance Index	44.1	39.9	N/A	45.3	48.0	50.7
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	53.9	56.7	N/A	63.4	66.7	70
Mathematics Smarter Balanced Growth Model	44.4	31.0	N/A	41.6	46.9	52.2
Grade _3_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	22.4	18.4	15			
Grade _4_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	22.0	30.4	20			
Grade _5_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	22.7	17.3	22			
Grade _6_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	16.1	23.1	30			
Grade _7_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	20.0	18.8	26			
Grade _8_ ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	28.1	17.9	15			
Grade _3_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	26.5	8.2	8			
Grade _4_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	6.0	10.9	5			
Grade _5_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-Level 3 or Above	4.6	1.9	2			
Grade _6_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 or Above	0	5.1	6			

Grade _7_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 or Above	2.5	6.3	3			
Grade _8_ Math Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 or Above	9.4	5.1	0			
Grade _5_ Science Connecticut Mastery Test- "At/Above Goal"	10.9	11.8	N/A			
Grade _8_ Science Connecticut Mastery Test- "At/Above Goal"	11.4	15.0	N/A			
(HS only) Grade 11 SAT—ELA Level 3 or Above	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
(HS only) Grade 11 SAT—Math Level 3 or Above	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
(HS only) Four-year Cohort Graduation Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of teachers rated "Exemplary" as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	5.9%	3.6%	N/A			
Number of teachers rated "Proficient" as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	85.3%	78.6%	N/A			
Number of teachers rated "Developing" as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	8.8%	10.7%	N/A			
Number of teachers rated "Below Standard" as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	0%	0%	N/A			

2.3. TURNAROUND MODEL

Instructions: Please select one of the following turnaround models described in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d). Using the space provided below, describe the core components of the model that pertain to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Model "E" Turnaround Committee Creates Its Own Model-Service Based Learning:

Wexler-Grant Community School (WGCS) will adopt the Service-based Learning Model: Service-based learning (SBL) is an educational approach in which students use academic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs. A teaching method championed by the International Baccalaureate, SBL is most effective when students are working towards tackling an authentic need in the community. Studies have shown that students understand and retain knowledge best when they are applied it in a practical, relevant setting. SBL combines instruction with meaningful community service experiences and reinvigorates the linkages between students and the school that serve the broader community. In addition, SBL supports the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) which emphasize real-world application of knowledge and the skills highlighted helping students to meet the goals of the CCS.

WGCS will focus heavily on strengthening the instructional core, including instruction, and assessment. SBL will support WGCS's continued focus and sense of urgency on improvement of literacy and math achievement, with explicit instruction in K-3 reading which requires on-going professional learning and job coaching, and change in instruction which supports the implementation of Connecticut Core Standards. Teachers will participate in job-embedded coaching and professional learning provided by Literacy How. A

team from WGCS will also participate in ReadConn to improve their ability to identify student needs around critical early literacy skills and how to deliver explicit instruction to them.

Students will strengthen their literacy skills by reading and conducting research, presenting their findings verbally and in writing, and utilize math skills by collecting data and evaluating the effectiveness of their actions. Students will use acquired knowledge to solve problems, design solutions, and complete work. SBL will also lend itself to opportunities for our teachers to authentically assess their students and provide them with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

WGCS SBL will provide the following:

FOR STUDENTS:

- Structured time for students to read, analyze, talk, and write about their experiences with the service activity.
- Literacy instruction with a focus on all components of comprehensive literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, vocabulary and morphology, syntax, and text comprehension and written expression.
- Deepen understanding of mathematics and use that understanding to reason about problems, make sense of new learning, and communicate their thinking to others.
- Opportunities for students to make valuable contributions to communities through active participation in organized service experiences coordinated with the school and community.
- Opportunities for students to use newly acquired academic skills and knowledge in service to their communities.
- Opportunities for students to extend and refine their acquired knowledge so they can draw upon this knowledge automatically and use it to routinely solve problems across disciplines.

FOR PARENTS/TEACHERS/COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- Opportunities to participate in on-site practical skill-building sessions to support their child's learning at home.
- Excitement to see children involved in something meaningful.
- Partner with the children to accomplish individual and community-based goals TOGETHER.

Talent:

WGCS teachers will be trained in SBL and implement SBL methods. Teachers will take the role of facilitator, work collaboratively with the Library Media Specialist, other itinerant staff and different community partners. They will have the opportunity to guide students to think critically, collaborate with others, fit into an increasingly diverse community, and make a smooth transition from school to work. Through professional learning and job-embedded coaching provided by Literacy How and participation in ReadConn, teachers will strengthen explicit instruction in reading. Through professional and job-embedded coaching provided by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH), teachers will analyze the complexity of mathematical tasks and consider strategies for transforming grade-level tasks to increase the level of rigor. Teachers will be provided with additional time to collaborate to plan literacy instruction, review student literacy data, and develop differentiated literacy materials. WGCS welcomed a new school principal in fall 2017; the new principal expresses the strong, urgent desire to improve student achievement.

Additionally, SBL lessons will require WGCS teachers to focus their instructional time on facilitating and participating in SBL projects and provides a context for building academic and work-readiness skills, rather

than on classroom management. Student engagement will be high and WGCS will create a safe, rigorous student-led learning environment.

Academics:

WGCS students learning through SBL will not only retain content longer and have a deeper understanding of what they are learning but will be provided the opportunities to make valuable contributions to communities through active participation in organized service experiences coordinated with the school and community.

WGCS students will attend SBL classes that are integrated into the core curriculum. Each grade will focus their time on projects associated with a theme. Teachers and students will be encouraged to come up with their own project idea—or find one that they truly support—and to connect that project to the curriculum in multiple ways. SBL will provide our students with an authentic learning experience utilizing all learning modalities in the process of researching and solving a problem, then communicating the solutions.

Culture and Climate:

SBL is a strategy we will use to close the achievement gap by engaging all students, and especially lower-achieving students as well as teachers, parents and community partners. SBL can also work to serve our diverse group of learners within our school population. In SBL classrooms, our students will demonstrate improved attitudes toward learning, student engagement will be high, and students will become more self-reliant and have better attendance than in more traditional settings. SBL will foster a culture of collaboration among our staff and students, promote parent involvement, and allow for our school to have additional opportunities for parents and families to attend and participate in events as we showcase our students' work.

Operations:

SBL and the use of technology will enable our students, teachers, and administrators to reach beyond the school building. With technology, our teachers and students will find resources and information to create products and collaborate more effectively with their peers, connect with experts, partners, community partners and audiences around the world. SBL also allows the integration of our itinerant staff and resources available within our school and surrounding community. Scheduling will allow students to have access to resources and time for research as well as serving their community. Heterogeneous grouping among classrooms within SBL will also allow all types of student learners to benefit from their peers. Extended time will be granted to teachers and staff to collaborate on and prepare service based interdisciplinary units.

Section 3: Talent

3.1. TEACHERS

Instructions: Using the space provided below:

1. Explain how the district and school will cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers.
2. Explain how administrators will have the ability to staff the school based exclusively on student and programmatic needs.
3. Describe how teachers will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions.

New Haven Public Schools (NHPS) values its teachers, leaders, and staff and understands the central role that staff will play in the Turnaround process. Several strategies will be implemented to ensure that WGCS identifies, develops, and retains an exceptional teaching and support staff. Core talent strategies include:

- Initial staffing and strategic hiring process;
- High-quality and school-specific professional learning;
- Afterschool extended meeting and collaborative time two days per week;
- Job-embedded coaching support aligned to teacher needs and school goals; and
- Fair, consistent, and consequential implementation of TEVAL and PEVAL.

Staffing:

By May 4, 2018, all incumbent teachers will review the work rules and determine whether they are willing and able to fulfill the responsibilities and expectations outlined herein. Teachers who are unable or unwilling to abide by these rules shall request a transfer to another district school by May 11, 2018. District administration shall work to ensure timely transfers; the Superintendent reserves all rights articulated within collective bargaining agreement.

Hiring:

NHPS will employ a competency-based hiring process to fill vacancies at WGCS with top talent. The hiring process will require mutual consent between the candidate and the school leader. The district shall utilize incentives to attract high-quality teachers aligned to school needs. In May 2018, incumbent teachers will participate in an interview with the principal. For those teachers who interview, the principal may decide whether to offer them a position at WGCS; teachers not receiving an offer shall be transferred to another district school. Teachers who choose to and are selected to work at WGCS must commit to teach at WGCS for at least three years. All staffing and staff placement decisions will be driven exclusively by student and programmatic needs; the district will not use seniority when filling openings that occur at WGCS. School leadership will have jurisdiction over teacher placement at the school based on performance and a determination of the teacher's fit and overall alignment with the school's vision, model, and goals.

Annual Staffing Evaluations:

WGCS teachers and administrators will fully implement the TEVAL process with fidelity. Implementation of TEVAL will be objective, timely, fair, and consequential. The TEVAL process will inform professional learning offerings and allow for targeted teacher feedback. At its core, TEVAL will increase educator effectiveness at WGCS. Particularly as a Network school, TEVAL ratings must inform staff placement and retention decisions. At the end of the 2018-19 school year, tenured teachers rated as “Developing” may be transferred out of WGCS and tenured teachers rated as “Needs Improvement” may be terminated, consistent with the existing collective bargaining agreement; non-tenured teachers rated as “Developing” or “Needs Improvement” may be transferred out of the school at the request of the principal or terminated.

Professional Learning:

School performance and student achievement is predicated on the human capacity of leaders and teachers. WGCS is acutely aware of this and is determined to support the school leaders and teachers by providing the necessary assistance through high-quality, job-embedded professional learning that:

- Changes the culture and mindset of all educators in the school to promote high expectations.
- Builds capacity of the building leader to be highly effective instructional leaders.
- Provides a strategic blueprint for improving student achievement.
- Aligns current school initiatives, tools and resources to maximize effectiveness and impact on student success.

Professional learning during the school year shall be consistent with the existing collective bargaining agreement; however, school leaders shall have additional autonomy to design and deliver site-based professional learning opportunities, which may be in lieu of required district professional learning.

Professional Learning for the 2018-2019 school year will focus on the following:

- High-quality, rigorous curricular units of study that integrates the Service Based Learning theme;
- Using data to drive instruction and determining needs of students;
- The role of reasoning and discourse in mathematics;
- Implementing classroom literacy instruction with a focus on all components of comprehensive literacy instruction; and
- Implementing and supporting the PBIS model and Restorative Practices.

Professional learning and job-embedded coaching and support shall, in part, be provided by the following partners:

Literacy How:

The Literacy How President met with the Principal during the summer of 2018, to develop a plan for the 2018-19 school year with the goal to target practices that sustain results in literacy centering on professional learning for K-8 teachers. Through Literacy How Inc., three Literacy How Mentors will provide training for K-8th grade teachers. Each mentor will be assigned three grades: K-2; 3-5; 6-8 and will support all of the teachers in those three grades. Each mentor will provide at least thirty-two full-days of embedded professional learning. This professional learning is designed to help teachers acquire a research-based perspective for implementation of classroom literacy instruction with a focus on all components of

comprehensive literacy instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics and spelling, vocabulary and morphology, syntax, and text comprehension and written expression.

During the summer of 2018, Literacy How provided an all-day workshop for K-8 teachers in WGCS. The workshop was designed to introduce teachers to a research-based perspective for implementation of classroom literacy instruction. During the workshop, Literacy How built the teachers' understanding of comprehensive literacy by using a common language of instruction for students.

The Literacy How Mentors will support Literacy Facilitators in assisting teachers with linking new concepts with their current instructional practices (i.e., CCS and NHPS curricula). Embedded professional learning will be provided to K-8th grade classroom teachers and workshops will be provided to those teachers as well as ancillary personnel serving students' literacy acquisition (i.e., reading specialists, special educators, speech-language pathologists, EL teachers). To make the professional learning relevant and immediately transferable, teachers will be encouraged to bring student work samples and assessment results to help identify students' instructional needs and to determine appropriate interventions based on those needs.

Literacy How Mentors will also support the internal Literacy Coach in providing guidance in the scope, sequence and methods of professional learning for teachers. In addition, the internal Literacy Coach will help facilitate the professional learning model in the building and will coordinate collaboration time that will take place at the school.

The Literacy How mentor will also assist the principal in the use of the *Literacy How Observation Protocols* as evidence of application of knowledge learned. These protocols include domain-specific information for each core component of comprehensive literacy so that principals know what to look for in terms of explicit and systematic instruction.

HMH Math Solutions:

During the summer of 2018, HMH Math Solutions developed a professional learning plan for WGCS designed to help teachers maximize every students potential to meet and exceed academic standards. This support will begin with a full day professional learning session, before the start of school. This session will introduce participants to the Standards for Mathematical Practice, with particular emphasis on the role of reasoning and discourse in mathematics. Teachers will analyze the complexities of math tasks and consider strategies for transferring grade level tasks to increase the level of rigor.

As part of their support, HMH will conduct a comprehensive instructional needs assessment through a series of online surveys and classroom walkthroughs. This data rich report will:

- identify math instructional strategies and opportunities for improvement;
- identify specific, prioritized best practice recommendations to address critical challenges;
- guide discussions on report outcomes and actionable next steps to promote instructional strategies that promote student achievement; and
- provide baseline data points to measure future project growth.

HMH will also provide job-embedded instructional coaching in mathematics. This side-by-side, individual coaching will help educators integrate new skills immediately into their practice. Individual coaching will include lesson modeling, which will provide teachers with professional learning before, during, and after lesson delivery. Teachers will work side by side with HMH Consultants to review highly effective instructional practices and collaborate with colleagues to implement mathematics tasks that align to the Connecticut Core

Standards for Mathematics. HMH Consultants will help teachers develop instructional expertise by answering program questions, modeling effective instruction, leading grade-level program sessions centered on evidence of student learning, and helping teachers select and achieve instructional goals.

The model lesson cycle will typically include:

- **Lesson Pre-Brief-** Math Solutions consultant and teachers co-plan the lesson he/she will teach. The Math Solutions consultant might teach or co-teach the lesson with the teacher.
- **The Lesson-** Math Solutions consultant teaches the lesson to a class of students, while teachers observe with a specific focus identified during the lesson planning sessions.
- **Lesson Debrief-** Math Solutions consultant facilitates as teachers collaborate to debrief the lesson with a focus on student learning and student misconceptions, identifying aspects and strategies used that supported student learning. Finally, the team reflects on next instructional steps for students. Finally, the team reflects on next instructional steps for students. In addition to model lessons, job-embedded coaching may include:
 - Support for implementing effective teaching practices aligned to their Standards
 - Strategies for differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students especially struggling students and those needing intervention
 - Opportunities to focus on developing and deepening content knowledge
 - Collaborative instructional planning and observation and observation of participant lessons to refine instruction
 - Cultivation of leadership skills to drive innovation and instructional change

Administration and teachers will be introduced to the Math Instructional Practices Inventory that will guide leaders and teachers to know what works best to create a model math classroom. It outlines best teaching practices and student learning practices and it is utilized in the assessment of the instructional needs of teachers.

The International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE):

ICLE, a division of HMH, will provide professional learning and coaching in Authentic Performance Assessment. An Authentic Performance Assessment is a collection of several related performance tasks, distributed through a unit of study, that progressively develop and reveal student understanding of the concepts, skills, and Big Ideas. Additional information regarding this professional learning and coaching is described in 4.1.

3.2. ADMINISTRATORS

Instructions: Using the space provided below:

1. Describe the process to secure an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment.
2. Explain how administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform leadership staffing decisions.
3. Describe ongoing supports and coaching opportunities for school leadership.

Leadership Selection/Identification: The WGCS leadership team will include the following members:

Principal: Mr. David Diah served his first year as WGCS principal in 2017-18. He will continue in his role as principal of WGCS through the duration and beyond the SBL Model. Mr. Diah will continue to serve as the instructional leader, setting and maintaining high expectations for students, staff, parents and community partners, designing and delivering professional learning opportunities, supporting, developing and evaluating teachers and holding and maintaining accountability for all stakeholders.

Assistant Principal: WGCS's assistant principal will serve as an additional instructional leader, provide support in setting and maintaining high expectations for students, staff, parents and community partners, assist in delivering professional learning, observe and provide coaching to staff, and support curriculum implementation.

Instructional Coaches: Instructional coaches at WGCS will promote educator effectiveness by structuring professional learning opportunities for staff, provide professional learning around content specific expertise, offer direct teacher coaching, offer feedback around observations, and give available support around instructional practices and pedagogy, and model/co-teach lessons. As such, they should spend the majority of their time in classrooms observing lessons, providing actionable feedback, coaching teachers, and empowering their staff to serve the school's students and families to the best of their abilities.

Climate and Culture Coordinator: This newly appointed individual will work alongside the school administration to help foster a positive culture and climate among our staff, students and parents. This individual will work with members of the WGCS leadership team to continue to implement our Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports model and introduce and sustain the Restorative Practices initiative. The Climate and Culture Coordinator will work to increase attendance and decrease chronic absenteeism by working with our district appointed attendance counselor, attendance team, Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator, and families.

Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator: This newly appointed individual will be responsible for developing school-based family engagement systems and activities that create strong partnerships that support teaching, learning, and student achievement. This Coordinator will also establish the Parent Team/Teacher Organization in outreach to families, communicating priorities and goals of the school, and engaging parents in the decision-making processes within the school. This individual will also collaborate with community partners to coordinate afterschool enrichment programming.

Other Positions: Climate Support Educator: A climate support educator will work with Wexler-Grant's principal, leadership team, teachers/staff and parents to ensure that all students rise, academically and socially, and that the school environment is positive, structured, consistent, caring, and disciplined. The person will provide professional learning and support to teachers dealing with children with challenging behaviors. They will work directly with children with challenging behaviors. By providing direct support to these children, their appropriate behavior will result in more time-on-task which will lead to improved student achievement through support, rather than discipline infractions. They will disaggregate achievement,

social, emotional and parent participation data to ensure that outcomes and expectations are equitable and fair. As teachers start to understand how better to meet the needs of children with challenging behavior, it is anticipated that time-on-task will increase and subsequent student achievement will improve. The principal, in turn, will have to handle fewer interruptions during the day and have more time to spend observing classroom practices and leading instructional practices.

Administrator Evaluation: All administrators will be evaluated annually in accordance with the NHPS’s approved principal evaluation system (PEVAL) and the work rules developed and agreed upon by the WGCS Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Committee and the WGCS staff. Implementation of PEVAL will be objective, timely, fair, and vital to ensure that WGCS leaders are continuously growing and meeting their leadership potential and duties. This evaluation of leadership must be contextual, individualized, and evidence based. At the beginning of each academic year WGCS school leaders will review solicited feedback from a multiple of sources including but not limited to: students, parents, community partners, staff, superiors, and subordinates to identify areas of strength and growth. In collaboration with the district, CSDE, and School Administrators Association the leadership of WGCS will develop annual targets for their own professional growth and school performance. WGCS school administration must exhibit continuous improvement in identified PEVAL growth areas.

Teacher Leadership and Growth Opportunities: WGCS is committed to providing opportunities for teachers who have been identified as “Exemplary” and “Strong” through the TEVAL process. It is through retention strategies teachers will be encouraged to apply for or take on leadership roles at WGCS and/or within NHPS. These roles can include but not limited to: teacher/leader, TEAM Mentor, new teacher mentor, member of the leadership team, and professional learning community facilitator. Those “Exemplary” and “Strong” teachers will become exemplars and will be encouraged to lead professional learning for staff in our school. Teachers will be encouraged to pursue opportunities for co-teaching and peer observations, contributing positively and constructively to teaching and learning.

Leadership Development: The Leadership Team will participate in a variety of leadership development opportunities: CSDE leadership development sessions, bi-monthly walk-through and feedback sessions conducted by the Commissioner’s Network and/or point personnel, district mandated professional learning and leadership development conducted by the Literacy How, HMM, and ICLE as it pertains to the new Service Based Learning Model and the Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan. A Leadership Advisor will be provided to the WGCS Leadership Team to provide technical assistance designed to reduce chronic absenteeism and suspensions and increase academic progress in reading and math. This technical assistance will include coaching, conducting observations, reviewing school attendance and academic data, and developing strategies that will result in a reduction of absenteeism and suspensions and support academic progress in reading and math. The Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator will participate in Friday CAFÉs (Community and Family Engagement). Friday CAFÉ is a monthly morning discussion and networking series for people who work at the intersection of families and learning. This individual will participate in other professional learning offered by the CSDE Office of Student Supports, including webinars.

Section 4: Academics

4.1. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENTS

Instructions: Using the space provided below:

1. Describe the school's academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the Connecticut state standards and frameworks.
2. Describe the school's early literacy strategy, including targeted interventions.

Instructional Philosophy: WGCS will focus heavily on strengthening the instructional core, including curriculum, instruction, and assessments. The core academic strategies include:

- Focus on early literacy and math;
- Afterschool enrichment programming;
- SBL projects for Grade K-8 students;
- Class size caps to promote personalized and relevant instruction; and
- Quarterly report card conferences and monthly progress reports.

WGCS students learning through SBL will not only retain content longer and have a deeper understanding of what they are learning, but will be provided the opportunities to make valuable contributions to communities through active participation in organized service experiences coordinated with the school and community.

WGCS students will attend SBL classes that are integrated into the core curriculum. Each grade will focus their time on projects associated with a theme. Teachers and students will be encouraged to come up with their own project idea—or find one that they truly support—and to connect that project to the curriculum in multiple ways.

School leaders and instructional coaches will support teachers in implementing the CCS and SBL. The school district will provide WGCS with autonomy around academic and non-academic program decisions by granting the school leaders and the leadership team the ability to modify or eliminate existing programs based on students' needs and school goals.

Lesson Planning Template:

Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, all lesson plans will be required to include at minimum, the following components: Learning Goal, Initiation, Assessment(s), Differentiation, Pre-planned questions for students (including higher order questions), and Closure. An optional template, which includes these components, will be provided to teachers upon their request. Focus sheets can replace the lesson plan for the particular groups as per district policy. Teachers will be required to submit weekly lesson plans in their designated folder on Google Docs prior to teaching the first instructional class for the week. These plans will be shared with administrators, coaches, special educators, and other support staff as determined by the leadership team.

Early Literacy Strategy:

WGCS will place a strong emphasis on developing students' literacy with a special focus on grades K-3. Literacy How will partner to provide teachers and other staff, professional learning in the essential components of comprehensive literacy instruction. Literacy How will conduct an inventory of assessment measures in order to make specific recommendations for the enhancement of Tier I instruction and to determine use of informal diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments to drive instruction. Teachers will

administer universal screenings and benchmark assessments every six to eight weeks or as specified by the NHPS and/or WGCS leadership team. These assessment results will inform small group placement for targeted instruction to meet students' individual needs and varying performance levels.

WGCS will send a team, which includes the Principal, Literacy Coach, two Special Education teachers, and two K-3 classroom teachers to ReadConn: A Special Education K-3 Reading Skills Professional Development Series. ReadConn, a collaboration between the CSDE and LearnZillion, is an initiative with a heightened focus on improving reading outcomes for students with disabilities. This series aims to develop the instruction and reading skill of special education teachers and their general education partners across the state. This series focuses on identifying students' needs around critical early literacy skills and delivering explicit instruction to address them. Participants in ReadConn will develop in-depth knowledge of teaching foundational reading skills to respond to the needs of all their students. They will participate in quarterly regional face-to-face professional learning workshops, engage in online self-paced learning modules, and create four classroom artifacts, one for each module.

In addition, the Literacy How Mentors will support and supplement the professional learning provided during ReadConn. Prior to the team's attendance at ReadConn, Literacy How reviewed the modules to ensure alignment between the professional learning and job-embedded coaching they will provide and the knowledge and skills teachers will acquire through ReadConn.

WGCS will implement a system of targeted assessment, focused instruction, and intervention cycles with the ultimate goal being to move students towards grade level proficiency or above. Teachers will place emphasis on improving Tier I instruction with the support of the coaches and administration. Coaches will provide support around planning and implementation of instruction, focused on differentiation. Administration will provide focused feedback utilizing the TEVAL rubric.

Authentic Performance Assessment:

A consultant from ICLE will work with grade level design teams to develop Authentic Performance Assessments that will be incorporated throughout the course of each and every unit of instruction. When planning engaging learning experiences, design teams will brainstorm learning experiences created as enrichment and extension activities and turn those into performance tasks to use with all students during the unit of study. These tasks will increase in rigor and complexity as the unit progresses. As part of the larger goal, it is the intention for the focus of the Performance Tasks/Assessments developed to be aligned to a community support focus. Students will see and experience learning within their standards based curriculum while making connections to the real-world community which surrounds and supports them.

4.2. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION

Instructions: Using the space provided below:

1. Describe how staff will use data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction, and provide remedial support to meet the academic and development needs of all students.
2. Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis, and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.

Data Culture:

WGCS will develop and create a transparent data culture that empowers teachers, school leaders, students, and families. This mindset will develop and instill a shared responsibility for improving student outcomes. Our school will visibly post data throughout the building and in classrooms displaying up to date information including but not limited to student attendance, benchmark assessment data, and behavioral data. Teachers will develop and maintain bulletin boards that highlight student work as well as communicating specific instructional goals. Bulletin boards will be updated every 4-6 weeks. With support, teachers will be expected to display data that reflects students' growth and progress; data will be updated quarterly. Teachers will collect and analyze student data, and use data to inform and differentiate instruction on a daily basis. During monthly grade-level data team meetings, teachers will identify and re-group students based on their most recent assessment data. These meetings will allow teachers to review and discuss individual student progress, student trends by standard, student/school trends over time, and grading policies. This partnership will promote data-driven decision-making and the effective use of assessments. Assessment data will be kept in student portfolios for easy access and utilized during data team meetings and conferences with students and parents. Assessments may include but are not limited to: district required assessments, benchmark assessments, quarterly assessments, common formative assessments, and state assessments.

Portfolios/Data Binder:

Teachers will develop, collaborate on, and maintain the use of student portfolios to measure student growth. Teachers will maintain an individual data binder that is updated frequently with student data and current data cycles. At a minimum, portfolios shall include the Student Profile Sheet and student work that: shows evidence of growth with a particular skill over time, contains teacher feedback and evidence of student responding to feedback, shows evidence of differentiation and of the gradual release model. Portfolios will be reviewed quarterly using a specific protocol developed by the school leadership team.

Instructional Data Teams:

WGCS will extend the teacher day to promote and facilitate collaborative planning time. Grade level data teams will meet for one hour per month, from 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. ICLE will help WGCS develop a collaborative model for implementing data-driven decision making at the instructional level. Professional learning around data driven instruction will be purposeful and support teachers in identifying students' areas of growth. Teachers will develop their capacity to specifically identify areas of student need and collaboratively decide on the best instructional approach in response to those needs. The support provided by ICLE will be customized to meet the needs of teachers and students at WGCS. The support will take the form of facilitation of data team meetings, professional learning on using data to improve instruction, selecting strategies to meet the needs of your students, and measuring and monitoring the effectiveness of your instruction. If students are not acquiring the skills and knowledge from instruction, the teams will look at their own practice and determine how it needs to be expanded, improved, or replaced in order to facilitate student learning. These decisions concerning the professional practice of the team members in service to the identified student outcomes now become the primary focus of a data team. The teams will utilize the *CSDE Standards for Instructional Data Teams* to assess the extent to which the team is successfully engaging in this process to inform continuous improvement.

School Data Team (SDT):

Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, WGCS will establish monthly SDT meetings. The purpose of the SDT will be to identify and carry out the high priority and high leverage adult actions. This will be implemented at the school level to achieve the goals and student outcome indicators that have been identified by the district.

Implementing a SDT will produce many benefits for the WGCS. Some of these benefits include:

- Assurance that the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is focused on the student outcome indicators created by the district, thus assuring alignment;
- Identification of the highest priorities to focus upon in terms of student outcomes, and adult actions thus assuring focus;
- Coordination of the work of the many IDTs, enhancing internal alignment and focus; and
- Creation of a common mission for the school.

The SDT will accomplish the above through a collaborative team process that moves through a continuous improvement cycle. This cycle includes implementing the SIP; monitoring the effectiveness of the plan; and adjusting the plan in response to the continuous flow of data concerning causes and effects.

The team will utilize the *CSDE Standards for SDTs* to assess its effectiveness in achieving the student outcomes it desires.

Report Cards and Progress Reports:

At the end of the first three marking periods, all teachers shall schedule and lead parent-teacher conferences for each student. The purpose of these conferences is to discuss students' strengths and growth areas, identify opportunities to promote academic success, and review student work. Report cards will be distributed to parents at the end of each marking period. For the months report cards are not distributed, progress reports will be mailed home to update families on students' academic and behavioral strengths and growth areas. Teachers in Grades 3-8 will utilize Power School to input grades to best represent students' progress. Teachers are encouraged to input grades weekly. At a minimum, student grades on Power School must be updated on a bi-weekly basis. A grading system for K-2 will be developed that includes progress monitoring and record keeping.

Strengthening of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and System of Support: Interventions:

WGCS will strengthen intervention programming by developing an interventionist's schedule, which will include regular collaborative meetings with the relevant literacy or math coach; job descriptions, and professional learning. WGCS will strategically deploy its team of instructional coaches to support grade-level intervention/enrichment blocks. For example, coaches may rotate throughout the school to staff math and literacy blocks as they occur during the school day in different grade levels, which would allow grade-level teams to engage in flexible and differentiated groupings for both reading and math, beyond core instruction. The schedule will reflect the SBL model and a targeted intervention block for our most struggling students. Literacy How will conduct a Needs Assessment to inform WGCS's SRBI model and intervention schedule and design. The WGCS will continue to utilize Read 180 and Math 180, intervention programs designed to address the needs of struggling students, in Grades 5-8.

In alignment with the document *CSDE Framework of Response to Intervention: Using SRBI: Improving Education for all Students*, the leadership team will closely monitor the number and concentrations of students being referred to Tier II and Tier III interventions, as this often is an indication of a lack of rigor and differentiation in Tier I instruction. The WGCS Leadership Team will also utilize the *CSDE Guidelines for*

Training and Support of Paraprofessionals document to develop roles and responsibilities for paraeducators and provide teachers with professional learning and guidance on the effective utilization of paraeducators in the classroom.

Section 5: Culture and Climate

5.1. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

Instructions: Using the space provided below, describe the school’s behavior management system and strategies to shape a positive school culture.

Climate and Culture Coordinator:

This newly appointed individual will work alongside the school administration to help foster a positive culture and climate among our staff, students, and parents. The Culture and Climate Coordinator, with the support of the WGCS Leadership Team will implement strategies to improve staff relationships and promote a collaborative work environment.

The Climate and Culture Coordinator will also work with members of the WGCS leadership team to continue to strengthen fidelity to the PBIS model and begin and sustain implementation of our Restorative Practices initiative. This new individual will also oversee the Student and Staff Support Team (SSST) process. Lastly, the Climate and Culture Coordinator will work to increase attendance and decrease chronic absenteeism working in conjunction with our district appointed attendance counselor, attendance team, Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator, and families.

Attendance Strategies:

Student attendance and chronic absenteeism are significant areas of concern at WGCS. The Leadership Team utilized the *Attendance Works Tool for Self-Assessment and Attendance Team Functioning Rubric* to assess the current level of effectiveness of their efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism. The results of these assessments led to the refining of a comprehensive, actionable, and tiered approach to improving attendance. This tiered approach will begin with prevention, focused on Tier I universal schoolwide strategies that encourage attendance for all students. The following strategies provide a sampling of WGCS’s planned attendance strategies:

- Align practices between school and district on how chronic absenteeism data is calculated to ensure accuracy;
- Define and communicate the expectations regarding the role of teachers in reducing chronic absenteeism;
- Provide teachers with a list of students who were chronically absent in the past year;
- Partner with community agencies that offer resources that can help engage students and their families and remove barriers to attending school;
- Daily posting of classroom attendance outside each classroom;
- Create a school community that is warm and welcoming for students and families and offers culturally competent and enriching learning opportunities;
- Recognize perfect and improved attendance through shout outs, positive calls home, and attendance celebration breakfasts like the one pictured below;
- Identify students who have been chronically absent or at risk of being chronically absent in the past and set up individual meetings with those families at the beginning of the school year; and
- Develop individualized learning plans for high risk students and address prior attendance along with low academic performance.

Restorative Practices:

CSDE Turnaround Office staff in cooperation with WGCS administration will conduct a walkthrough of the school facility and classrooms to assess alignment with restorative practice (RP). The purpose will be to identify areas of strength and those in need of improvement.

In the summer of 2018 (e.g., late-August, September) WGCS administrators, certified, and non-certified staff will attend a full-day overview of school culture and climate, bias and cultural competence, and RP offered by the CSDE Turnaround Office staff. In the fall of 2018 a team from WGCS, including the principal, and interested family/board/community members should attend the CSDE's RP Training.

WGCS will educate families around positive behavior management and Restorative Practices, so as to ensure home-school consistency and reinforcement. Throughout the day, teachers will find ways to model and showcase expected behaviors, and to build upon student-teacher relationships.

SSST (Student Staff Support Team): WGCS will continue to rely on its SSST to mobilize the resources of the school, the district, and the surrounding community to meet the developmental needs of students. The SSST shall include, but not be limited to, administration, psychologist, social worker, and special education teacher.

5.2. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Instructions: Using the space provided below, explain how the school will promote strong family and community connections to support academic achievement.

Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator:

WGCS will work to improve parent and community engagement by utilizing the ASPIRE (Assets, Skills, Professions, Interests, Relationships, and Environment) Survey Tool to increase and align engagement to the school's goals and curriculum. The ASPIRE Survey provides an opportunity to inventory a school community's "human capital" and utilizes the database of collected skills and interests to support and enrich student's learning experiences. The ASPIRE Tool will help WGCS to identify resources and personnel to support the inquiry-based/service learning model and also encourage parents to share their talents and skills with the school community.

WGCS's Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator will work with community partners and the district to engage parents and family members through school events and on-site practical skill-building sessions (e.g., supporting their child's learning, financial literacy, computer training, career training). Through these programs we will support efforts to create a bright and welcoming school environment that is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Through additional grant opportunities the Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator will provide and supplement enrichment opportunities for programming.

The Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator will facilitate the work of the existing Family Involvement Committee and the Leadership Team and encourage family engagement through:

- Employing multiple means of communication (e.g., website, email, Twitter, Facebook, text messages, Parent-link, newsletters);

- Developing a year-long calendar of fun and engaging family events at the school (e.g., music performances, art shows, cultural events, academic celebrations);
- Facilitating communication exchange of information between the school and family regarding school-wide goals and activities;
- Providing families with easy access to their child's attendance and academic data;
- Creating and cultivating an active PTO;
- Providing translation services and childcare during family events in order to promote a welcoming and inclusive school environment;
- Collaborating with agencies and service providers in the community to build capacity and partnership to support families and program services; and
- Leading home visits and canvassing of the neighborhood.

All teachers will develop and share grade-level newsletters with students' families regarding classroom activities, academic content, and academic expectations. At a minimum, newsletters shall be developed and shared monthly. Each teacher shall maintain a class-based webpage through the school website. Webpages will include, at minimum, classroom activities, academic content, and academic expectations. At a minimum, each teacher's webpage will be updated monthly. Teachers will respond to all parent e-mails and phone messages within one school day to acknowledge receipt of the message. Resolution may require more than one school day based on the content of the parent communication. Teachers will be strongly encouraged to plan and attend whole-school family engagement activities. In addition to Open House and orientation, teachers shall participate in at least two family and/or school community events.

Afterschool Enrichment Programming:

WGCS will offer multiple opportunities for students to partake in enrichment, service-based projects and extracurricular activities. Our afterschool and enrichment programming will (2:15-5:00 PM) focus on an academic, and enrichment component leveraging the Service-Based Project model and areas of students' interests. Afterschool programming will specifically offer students instructional, tutoring, intervention, and enrichment opportunities (e.g., arts, drama, music, intramural sports, community service projects/activities, crafts, etc).

WGCS and NHPS will engage in performance-based partnerships with organizations able to provide afterschool and enrichment programming for WGCS's students and families. Partnerships must align to and reinforce school goals and academic programs; in other words, the schools' goals and students' needs must drive the nature and format of all afterschool and enrichment programming. Partners will be accountable for results. Partners must also have clear performance-based contracts with NHPS, detailing specific expectations regarding services, cost structure, participation rates, deliverables, performance benchmarks, etc. All contracts related to afterschool programming shall be subject to approval by the Commissioner and/or NHPS.

This afterschool and enrichment programming will be offered Monday through Thursday through various partnerships funding and the Commissioner's Network funding for grades K-8. This focused programming will incorporate "Extended Learning Day Model" which will include technology and blended learning to support interventions and the SBL model. Students will have the opportunity through this programming to partake in enrichment activities as well as participate in service-based learning projects/activities with the community and local businesses. This partnership is financed and supported through the NHPS, city-wide initiatives, and funding from Commissioner's Network grant.

The 21st Century Program at WGCS ended last school year. To obtain and sustain an afterschool and enrichment programming in the 2018-2019 school year and beyond, WGCS will reach out and foster

partnerships with other local community partners. The goal will be to immerse K-8 students into a solid academic, service-based, and enrichment after school program as an extension of their learning day. We will continue to deliver community programming and resources to students at WGCS through the J-ZAMP Yale Afterschool Program as well as partner with Little Scientists and ARTE Afterschool Arts Programming.

The Connecticut Center for Arts and Technology (ConnCAT) shall serve as the school's anchor partner for afterschool programming. ConnCAT strives to prepare youth and adults for educational and career advancement through afterschool arts and job training programs. As the anchor partner, ConnCAT will open the ConnCAT Center at WGCS to provide afterschool programming five days a week for up to 100 students in Grades 5-8 between 2:15 PM and 6:00 PM. In 2018, WGCS will survey students and parents to assess their interests in order to inform ConnCAT's programming. ConnCAT will work in collaboration with WGCS faculty and staff, to ensure that these extended day programs align to and reinforce core instruction delivered during the school day. The new Family and Community Outreach Coordinator will report out monthly to provide oversight accountability for the school's partnerships and ensure successful implementation of afterschool programming. ConnCAT will work to engage parents and family members through practical skill building sessions (e.g., financial literacy, computer training, career training), both on-site and at ConnCAT, which is located at 4 Science Park. ConnCAT will also support efforts (e.g., mural painting) to create a bright and welcoming school environment that is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Importantly, ConnCAT will collaborate with other potential partners to turn Wexler Grant Community into a venue for community collaboration, hosting a variety of community events, including art shows, music performances, and guest speakers.

It is through these afterschool and enrichment programming that we will be able to continue to support students and their families. This programming will be an extension of our school day and help to support a positive learning environment that inspires creativity and excellence. As a result, students' expectations of themselves and others will inspire them to become life-long learners and community activists. In addition, WGCS is seeking to partner with other local community partners and the City of New Haven to embed an extended school day for identified grades. This extended school day will promote academics by supporting interventions and providing students with the necessary supports in areas of need. Partnerships with local community organizations will provide opportunities, but are not limited to: internship opportunities, community service-based projects, project-based learning initiatives, and enrichment activities.

Section 6: Operations

6.1. SCHEDULE AND USE OF TIME

Instructions: Using the space provided below:

1. Propose the length of the school day and year for students, and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task.
2. Propose the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning time.

Length of Day – Students:

Student Day: 6 hours and 15 minutes; 7:45 AM - 2:00 PM

- A. Student School Year: 182 days, consistent with the NHPS calendar.
- B. Students in grades K-8 will have the opportunity to participate in after school and enrichment programming from (2:15-6:00 PM). Such extended school day programming has the potential to increase student learning by up to three hours each school day, four days a week. NHPS will provide security and transportation to enable students to attend the school's afterschool programming.

Length of Day – Teachers:

Teacher Day: 6 hours and 45 minutes; 7:30 AM - 2:15 PM.

- A. Teacher School Year: 188 days; 186 contractual days, consistent with the NHPS calendar, with 2 additional school-based professional learning days in August from 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM.
- B. All certified staff will attend two afternoon meetings Tuesday and Wednesday of each work week (120 minutes total per week). Afternoon meetings will begin promptly at 2:30 PM and will end at 3:30 PM.
- C. The extended teacher day is designed to promote and facilitate collaborative planning time (e.g., vertical/horizontal planning, data teams, committees) and a rigorous, relevant academic program based on high-quality instruction. Individual teacher's schedules shall be determined by the school leader.
- D. After-school Student Programming: As part of the community school model, WGCS shall offer after-school student programming. Teacher participation in afterschool student programming is optional; if teachers elect to participate, they may apply to lead after school classes. Selected teachers will be compensated in the form of a stipend, based on funding availability.
- E. One Monday meeting each month (90 minutes total) will be scheduled to allow teachers to specifically plan for SBL units. This meeting will allow teams to discuss progress around the current unit of inquiry, modify instruction/research if necessary, and plan for upcoming units. The school leader may elect to use Mondays' staff meetings for alternate programming aligned to student needs and school goals.

Student Day					Teacher Day				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
7:45-8:00 Arrival					7:30-8:00 Breakfast/Transition				
8:00 – 2:00 PM Instructional School Day					8:00-2:10 PM* Instructional School Day (Some classes may extend to 2:10 due to dismissal schedule consideration)				
2:00-2:15 PM Transition/Dismissal					2:00-2:15 PM Dismissal				
After School and Enrichment Programming (Monday – Thursday) (Optional) 2:15-6:00 PM					2:30 – 3:30 PM (Tuesday and Wednesday) Afternoon Meetings				

School Schedule:

WGCS will reconfigure the daily instructional schedule to increase students’ exposure to literacy and numeracy blocks. The schedule will reflect the SBL model and a targeted intervention block for our most struggling students. In addition, 7/8 grade students will attend a “SBL” period three days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) to supplement their learning through intervention or enrichment. On Wednesdays students in grade 7/8 will attend an advisory class focusing on high school/college readiness, note taking, time management, and study skills. Instructional coaches will continue to work in collaboration with teachers to support staff in the implementation of the district curriculum as well as target instruction for interventions and enrichment blocks. Consistent with WGCS’s work rules, individual teacher’s schedules shall be determined by the school leadership team.

Professional Learning and Collaborative Planning Time:

As described in Section 3.1 of this plan, teachers will participate in nine professional development days throughout the school year, five of which will occur over the summer. Additionally, in 2018-19, teachers will participate in common planning grade level meeting time with different focus areas two days per week. This creates protected time for adult learning, promoting self-efficacy, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Budgeting Practices:

The district shall maximize site-based budgetary authority as much as possible pertaining to local, state, federal, and grant funds. In particular, the school leader and leadership team shall have decision-making authority with respect to the school’s Title I allocation and other supplemental funds. Over time, the district shall seek to increase school-level discretionary authority in a manner that is most responsive to student needs and school goals.

School Budget:

WGCS's school budget will be reviewed, revised, and considered for approval on an annual basis, so as to reflect the school's greatest needs and strategic priorities. Funding for WGCS is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be based, in part, on the transformative potential of this plan as well as the size of the school. The school's budget will leverage all available funding streams (e.g., state, local, federal, public, and private) to maximize impact and student outcomes. The CSDE, NHPS, and school leadership will work diligently to honor the commitments and strategies outlined in this plan. As such, CSDE staff will consult with the WGCS's Commissioner Network Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process. NHPS is committed to maintaining a substantial local investment in the school and evaluating and repurposing existing funding streams, in part to ensure the sustainability of reform efforts.

District Commitments:

To take collective responsibility for the success of WGCS and supporting its students and families to the fullest, the district shall commit to flexible work rules for the school's leadership, instructional, and non-instructional staff. The district shall also support the school's need to develop a culture of successful performance and learning, operate within redesigned work rules, modify the length of the instructional day and year, and create schedules, instructional programs, and pedagogy aligned to student needs and school goals. Thus, the district shall commit to specific transformation commitments (attached) regarding school-level staffing, class size, professional development, academics, enrollment, after-school student programming, budgeting, transportation, facilities, technology, and communication.

6.2. BUDGET PROPOSAL

After the CSBE approves the Turnaround Plan, the school is eligible to receive a Network grant in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(a).

Instructions: Using the Excel workbook provided, please create a one-year budget proposal outlining new costs associated with the Turnaround Plan and leveraging all available funding sources.

1. **Budget Cover Page:** Please enter the school name on the cover sheet. The remaining cells summarizing the entire budget workbook will be auto-generated as you complete the Network proposal, bond request, and Wraparound Grant proposal; do not enter cost information on the cover page.
2. **Part I: The Network Year 1 Budget Proposal:** Please insert information pertaining to the proposed The Network budget for the school. The budget should reflect all new expenditures contained in the Turnaround Plan and show the proposed funding source(s) for each new cost. Possible funding sources include, but are not limited to, the school's local operating budget, the federal budget, the Alliance District Grant, the Priority School District Grant, the Network Grant, and/or other grants. Please categorize proposed expenditures by Uniform Charts of Accounts codes (see Appendix B). For each expenditure, provide the following information in the appropriate columns: (a) label the position/service/item; (b) provide cost information and/or a budget justification (e.g., summary of the expense, number of units, cost per unit, etc.); (c) enter the total cost; (d) list all funding sources; and (e) show how the investment is strategically aligned to the Turnaround Plan by identifying the section of the plan that describes the corresponding strategy. The budget proposal will be evaluated for strategic alignment and anticipated impact as the award amount is determined by the CSDE after the Connecticut

State Board of Education approves the Turnaround Plan. When adding personnel through the Network Grant, please use the following formula for all salaries and benefits built into the plan.

Year 1: 75 percent paid through Commissioners Network funding/25 percent paid through alternative funding;

Year 2: 50 percent paid through Commissioners Network funding/50 percent paid through alternative funding; and

Year 3: 25 percent paid through Commissioners Network funding/75 percent paid through alternative funding.

Should the CSBE approve participation in the Network beyond Year 3, Network funding cannot be used to support salaries and benefits.

Section 7: Initial Implementation Timeline

Instructions: Using the project planning template provided below, develop an initial implementation timeline for the school during the 2018-19 school year. Please note the school leadership team, once identified, will be empowered to modify and/or expand upon the initial timeline below. Please create a timeline aligned to the contents of this Turnaround Plan, identifying:

1. **Activities:** What core activities, strategies, and/or initiatives will the school undertake to improve talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations at the school?
2. **Owners:** Who will be responsible for implementing the activity, strategy, and/or initiative?
3. **Timeline:** When will the activity occur and/or be completed?

Activity:	Owner:	Timeline:
Talent:		
1. Develop and solidify 2018-2019 PL schedule	David Diah and Leadership Team	August 2018
2. Post/Recruit/Hire Culture and Climate Coordinator	David Diah	September 15, 2018
3. Post/Recruit/Hire Operations and Family Engagement Coordinator	David Diah	September 15, 2018
4. Post/Recruit/Hire Climate Support Educator	David Diah	September 15, 2018
Academics:		
1. Hire Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Math Professional Learning and Job-Embedded Coaching	David Diah	May 2018
2. Hire Literacy How for Literacy Professional Learning and Job-Embedded Coaching	David Diah	June 2018
3. Hire the International Center for Learning in Education for Rigorous Curriculum Design and Data Driven Decision Making Professional Learning and Data Team Facilitation	David Diah	May 2018
4. Review and restructure meeting schedules for Data Teams, Curriculum Meetings, and Grade Level meetings	David Diah and Leadership Team	Ongoing
5. Restructure Academic teams/Grade level teams	Leadership Team	August 2018
6. Establish Academic Coaching model and walk-through calendar	David Diah and Leadership Team	Ongoing
Culture and Climate		
1. Team attends Basic School Climate and Restorative Practices Training	David Diah and Leadership Team	Summer and Fall 2018
2. Review and Restructure Attendance Protocols	David Diah and Leadership Team	August and September 2018
3. Walkthrough Audit to assess school climate and readiness for Restorative Practices implementation	CSDE Turnaround Office and David Diah and Leadership Team	September 2018

4. Restructure and prepare for re-launch of PBIS model and Implementation of Restorative Practices	David Diah and Leadership Team	October 2018
5. Professional Learning for Teachers and Rollout of PBIS Relaunch and Implementation of Restorative Practices	David Diah and Leadership Team	October 2018
6. Develop Family Engagement Calendar	David Diah, Leadership Team and Family Involvement Committee	October 2018
Operations:		
1. Form a Committee to review scheduling changes	David Diah and Leadership Team	Ongoing
2. Oversee technology investments and implementation of new technology	David Diah and Leadership Team	Ongoing

Section 8: Modifications

During the term of the school’s participation in the Network, the Commissioner shall review the progress of each school. The Commissioner or her designee may, on the basis of such review, convene the Turnaround Committee to, as part of its monitoring responsibility, address a lack of sufficient progress or other implementation issues at the school. The Turnaround Committee may consider and enact changes to the Turnaround Plan by consensus. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact changes or the changes are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at the school, including, but not limited to, finding the Turnaround Plan deficient and developing a revised Turnaround Plan.

PART IV: APPENDICES

Appendix A: Turnaround Committee Signatures Page

Please Note: Applicants *should not* sign this section of the application until the Turnaround Committee reaches consensus on the Turnaround Plan and is ready to submit a final copy of such plan to the CSDE.

We, the undersigned members of the Turnaround Committee, on the basis of a consensus agreement, submit this Turnaround Plan to the Commissioner for final selection of the school into the Network.

Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair

Date

Name of Superintendent (*typed*)

Signature of Board of Education-Appointed Parent

Date

Name of Board of Education-Appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Board of Education-Appointed Administrator

Date

Name of Board of Education-Appointed Administrator (*typed*)

Signature of Union-Appointed Teacher

Date

Name of Union-Appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-Appointed Teacher

Date

Name of Union-Appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-Appointed Parent

Date

Name of Union-Appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Commissioner of Education

Date

Name of Commissioner of Education (*typed*)

Appendix B: Budget Information

As noted in Section 6.2, please code all expenditures in accordance with the state’s Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	PERSONNEL SERVICES – SALARIES. Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personnel services rendered while on the payroll of the grantees.
200	PERSONNEL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personnel services.
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, technical assistance support organizations, school management partners, etc.
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES. Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. Persons other than grantee employees perform these services. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES. Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
600	SUPPLIES. Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.
700	PROPERTY. Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment. In accordance with the Connecticut State Comptroller’s definition equipment, included in this category are all items of equipment (machinery, tools, furniture, vehicles, apparatus, etc.) with a value of over \$1,000.00 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under \$1,000.00 and a useful life of not less than five years.
800	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE:

THE APPLICANT:

HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;

- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;
- L. **REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)**
References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

- (1) "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- (2) "Contract" and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- (3) "Contractor" and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- (4) "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.
- (5) “good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- (6) "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
- (7) "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;

(8) "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;

(9) "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and

(10) "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).

(b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the

provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.

- (c) Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.
- (d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.
- (e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §46a-56; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.
- (f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.
- (g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.
- (h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in

accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

- M. The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.
- N. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature:

Name: *(typed)*

Title: *(typed)*

Date:

Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report

Wexler-Grant School
New Haven Public Schools
May 18, 2017



Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
450 Columbus Blvd. | Hartford, CT 06103
www.sde.ct.gov



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Part I: Introduction

On May 1, 2017, the Commissioner initially selected Wexler-Grant School to participate in the Commissioner's Network, pending legislative authority to extend and expand the Commissioner's Network to include a seventh cohort of schools. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(b), the New Haven Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On May 18, 2017, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the Wexler Grant Community School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the audit.

The audit team would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Wexler-Grant School community for its hospitality on the day of the school visit. We appreciate the openness and transparency demonstrated by members of the school community. There is a willingness and desire on the part of the staff, parents, students, and community partners to improve the school.

Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. Subsection (h) of C.G.S. 10-223h establishes that the Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. At present, 14 Cohort (I, II, III, IV, and V) schools are participating in the Commissioner's Network.

Network schools make targeted investments in the following areas:

- **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.
- **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

As part of the operations and instructional audit, auditors identify school strengths and weaknesses in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Audits are conducted by impartial and experienced educators who produce unbiased and objective reports supporting school planning and transformation efforts.

Operations and Instructional Audit Overview

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(c), the operations and instructional audit shall determine the extent to which the school:

- (1) Has established a strong family and community connection to the school.
- (2) Has a positive school environment, as evidenced by a culture of high expectations and a safe and orderly workplace, and has addressed other nonacademic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, arts, cultural, recreational and health needs.
- (3) Has effective leadership, as evidenced by the school principal's performance appraisals, track record in improving student achievement, ability to lead turnaround efforts, and managerial skills and authority in the areas of scheduling, staff management, curriculum implementation and budgeting.
- (4) Has effective teachers and support staff, as evidenced by performance evaluations, policies to retain staff determined to be effective and who have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort, policies to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to the schools, and job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support programs that are tied to teacher and student needs.
- (5) Uses time effectively, as evidenced by the redesign of the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.
- (6) Has a curriculum and instructional program that is based on student needs, is research-based, rigorous and aligned with state academic content standards, and serves all children, including students at every achievement level.
- (7) Uses data to inform decision-making and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data.

Audit Process and Methodology

The operations and instructional audit involves three phases of data collection and review:

- (1) The CSDE obtains and auditors review school artifacts, data, and documentation to gain a better understanding of the school's history and context. The CSDE collaborates with school and district leaders to administer a teacher survey.
- (2) The auditors conduct a school site visit to observe school systems and classrooms, and meet with members of the school community. During the on-site visit, auditors conduct interviews and focus groups with a representative set of school and community stakeholders, including school and district administrators, staff, students, family members, community partners, and members of the School Governance Council and Turnaround Committee.

- (3) The auditors synthesize and use all available data to generate the operations and instructional audit report, identifying strengths and growth areas around talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Please note that while this Audit Report identifies areas for improvement, it does not prescribe interventions or offer recommendations. The Turnaround Committee is responsible for developing a Turnaround Plan that addresses the deficiencies identified in the audit.

Part II: School Information

Wexler-Grant Community serves 459 Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 students in New Haven. The school is located in the Dixwell section of New Haven. Approximately 71 percent of the students are Black and 21 percent of the students are Hispanic. Sixteen percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 5.5 percent are English learners. Sixty-five percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at Wexler-Grant is well below state and district averages in all grade levels and subject areas tested. The current principal is in her seventh year at Wexler-Grant having previously served as an assistant principal and special education teacher. The current assistant principal is in his first year at Wexler-Grant.

School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of Wexler-Grant's current and historic data, including information about student enrollment and demographics, personnel, school climate, school performance, and student academic achievement. All data below is self-reported except where indicated **.

Enrollment Data (2016-17):				
Grades:	PreK-8	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:	+25	
Student Enrollment:	459	Mobility Rate:	13.6%	
Personnel Data (2016-17):				
# of Administrators:	2	% of Teachers "Below Standard":	0	
# of Teachers:	28	% of Teachers "Developing":	10.7%	
# of Support Staff:	5	% of Teachers "Proficient":	78.6%	
# of Psychologists:	1	% of Teachers "Exemplary":	3.6%	
# of Social Workers:	1.4	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:	91%	
School Day Per Year (2016-17):				
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	180	Instructional Minutes/Day:	340	
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	182	Extended Day Program:	Y	
Student Demographic Breakdown (2016-17):				
% Black:	72.3	% Male:	52.9	
% Hispanic:	20.3	% Female:	47.1	
% White:	4.2	% EL:	5.3	
% Other:	2.2	% Students with disabilities:	16.3	
% F/R Meals:	63.4			
School Climate Data:				
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Student Attendance Rate:	91.4	91.3	93.0	91.3
Chronic Absenteeism Rate:	29.6**	32.5**	20**	30.8**

Total # of ISS/OSS/Expulsions:	108**	305**	205**	301**
Suspension Rates:	18.1%**	29.5%**	21.0%**	25.7%**
Teacher Attendance Rate:	90.9	89.4	91.1	97.4
School Performance Index:	2013-14	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
SPI:	N/A	54.6**	57.1**	48.7
Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data:	2014-15**	2015-16**	2016-17**	
Grade 3 – Reading	28.8	22.4	18.4	
Grade 4 – Reading	14.9	22.0	30.4	
Grade 5 – Reading	27.8	22.7	17.3	
Grade 6 – Reading	33.3	16.1	23.1	
Grade 7 – Reading	27.3	20.0	18.8	
Grade 8 – Reading	25.0	28.1	17.9	
Grade 3 – Math	15.4	26.5	*	
Grade 4 – Math	4	6.0	*	
Grade 5 – Math	8	4.6	*	
Grade 6 – Math	15	0	*	
Grade 7 – Math	6	2.5	*	
Grade 8 – Math	3	9.4	*	

*Data suppressed to protect student confidentiality

Part III: Audit Findings

Part III of the Audit Report provides a summative analysis of audit findings in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice	✓			
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture		✓		
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies		✓		
1.4. Professional development	✓			
1.5. Leadership effectiveness	✓			
1.6. Instructional leadership	✓			

Summary of Strengths:

- Staff Commitment:** Wexler-Grant students and school leadership reported the school’s staff are dedicated to the school and students. Parents, on the Turnaround Committee, reported that the teachers treat the students well and are patient with them even in the most stressful situations. Students reported that teachers care about students and want them to do well. Administrators reported that the teachers are working extremely hard. All groups commented that the school’s biggest asset is its teachers.
- Improved (Emerging) Process for Administering Informal Evaluations:** Wexler-Grant follows the district evaluation process. Wexler-Grant’s Leadership Team conducts weekly classroom walkthroughs on look-fors determined by leadership team. The Leadership Team consists of the Principal, assistant principal, Math Coach, Literacy/PBIS Coach, and an additional Literacy Coach. The team uses a template which assesses planning and preparation, classroom practice, higher-order thinking skills, reflections, and the use of data. Teachers reported that the process, led by the new assistant principal, has improved since last year. Teachers report that their Instructional Manager provides written feedback that is timely and actionable. On the teacher survey, 79 percent (N=22) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.”

Summary of Growth Areas:

- Instructional Practice:** The audit team observed 16 randomly selected classrooms across grade levels and content areas. The quality of instruction was variable across the 16 classrooms observed by the audit team as evidenced by poor pacing of lessons, limited differentiation, poor behavior management, and surface-level questioning. On the teacher survey, only 27 percent (N=8) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently

high at this school.” In the observed classrooms, auditors saw primarily teacher-led lessons with low levels of rigor, differentiation and student engagement. For example, in one classroom the auditor asked students what they were supposed to be thinking or looking for while reading, the students responded, “we were told to read.” In another classroom, teacher asked surface level questions regarding a story that the students had read the previous day. Students appeared bored and disinterested and were not actively engaged in whole group or silent reading. Only one class out of the 16 showed evidence of teacher modeling followed by a small-group hands on lesson. Administration reported that while teacher lesson plans are well written, observations do not demonstrate the same level of rigor. Members of the Turnaround Committee suggested the need for a stronger focus on foundational literacy and math skills. Smarter Balanced Assessment scores have declined across time. For example, grades 3, 5, and 6 ELA scores all declined between 2014-15 and 2016-17.

- **Professional Development:** Teachers are afforded one hour of professional development after school every Wednesday during the 2016-17 school year which has focused on restorative practices, social-emotional learning, student engagement, and differentiation. Administration reported that professional development topics are identified by informal surveys conducted by asking teachers what their growth areas are (this year, teachers indicated trauma informed practices and differentiation), learning walks, and trends seen in the data. Teachers reported that having professional development at the end of the work day makes it difficult to engage in the session and process the content. Teachers reported that while some of the professional development was beneficial to their practice, (e.g.,) restorative practices and social-emotional learning, the presentation should model what they would like them to do with the students. For example, to model differentiation, the presentation should be structured to meet the diverse needs of the teachers. Although the leadership team reported that fidelity is monitored through learning walks and informal and formal observations, teachers suggested that administrators do more follow up visits and more frequently monitor the implementation of the strategies taught during professional development sessions. Administration acknowledge that due to the limited schedule, teachers have not received enough professional development on differentiation and behavior management. Administrations also reported that structures need to be put in place that intentionally help staff make sense of the professional development plan.
- **Leadership Effectiveness:** Although the school’s vision statement focuses on building relationships and working in collaboration to foster excitement for learning, the principal reported her belief that scores are not improving because the relationships between staff and students is poor and staff relationships are not strong either. As a leader, she is responsible for culture, climate, and improvement. The school has a school improvement plan, but the plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making due to data team meetings and SRBI team meetings not being held, and the lack of a consistent, effective school-wide behavior management system. Administration reported that the school is good at identifying student issues, but not strong at finding strategies to support improvement. Administration reported that there is some evidence of the use of student to data to adapt the learning process. Administration did not demonstrate evidence of a plan to improve the utilization of data to improve the learning process. Administration reported that English Learner (EL) students are not being serviced. Administration did not indicate they had taken any action to make sure these students received services. Teachers reported that there is a lack of respect for the administration. Teachers reported that colleagues are not being held accountable for egregious behaviors, such as not showing up to posts, arriving late for work, and not attending faculty meetings. These teachers will be spoken to, but the behavior does not change. On the teacher survey, only 52 percent (N=18) of teachers strongly agree or agree that “teachers are held accountable for their performance.”

- Teacher Retention:** Administration and teachers both reported that there has been a high turnover in the middle grades. Overall teacher retention rates for Wexler-Grant have ranged from 89 percent in 2014-2015 to a current rate of 90 percent. During this time, Wexler-Grant has had a total of 37 teachers and they have retained 28 of those teachers. The New Haven school district retention rate average is 95 percent.

Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor	✓			
2.2. Student engagement	✓			
2.3. Differentiation and checking for understanding	✓			
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards		✓		
2.5. Supports for special populations	✓			
2.6. Assessment system and data culture	✓			

Summary of Strengths:

- District Curriculum and Assessment Initiatives:** The district reported that it has well-defined, structured initiatives for the implementation of Connecticut Core-aligned curriculum and student assessments. District curricula are securely connected to the Connecticut Core Standards. Five years ago, during workshops and training, the school’s leadership team made a conscious effort to unpack the standards in an effort to connect the standards to the curricula. Teachers participate in district-wide Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment meetings four times a year. During the last two years, teachers have received most of their support through these meetings.

Summary of Growth Areas:

- Academic Rigor and Differentiation:** Both administration and teachers reported that while the school’s common vision for effective instruction is planning for all levels of learning, there is little to no evidence of differentiated instruction in classrooms. Teachers reported a lack of common understanding of what it means to provide differentiated instruction. Administration did not indicate that they had a plan to address this concern. Administration reported that there is some evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Auditors looked for evidence of instructional rigor and differentiation such as student-focused instruction, opportunities for student-to-student discourse, small group instruction, and higher-order questioning. Auditors did not find evidence of rigor and differentiation in 15 of the observed 16 classrooms. Auditors only observed one classroom where the teacher modeled an activity, asked higher order questions, and promoted student-to-student discourse through small group instruction. It should be noted that this was the one classroom where the Assistant Principal was present to conduct a formal observation. Wexler-

Grant's performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment lags the state average by (-32.2) percentage points on proficiency in ELA and by (-36.7) percentage points on proficiency in Math.

Percent Proficiency (Levels 3+)				Average Percent of Growth Target Achieved			
2016-17 SBAC	State Avg.	Wexler-Grant	Diff.	District Average	State Avg.	Wexler-Grant	Diff.
ELA	54.2%	21.0%	-32.2	31.4%	55.4%	53.8%	-1.6 pts.
Math	45.6%	6.2%	-36.7	20.8%	61.7%	34.5%	-27.2 pts.

- Student Engagement:** In most of the 16 classrooms observed by the audit team, most students were behaved and compliant. Meaningful engagement which actively involves students in the lesson through student discourse, accountable talk, and hands on learning, however, was lacking in 15 observed classrooms. As many as 8 to 10 students per classroom were observed to be unengaged in classroom activities, as evidenced by off-task behaviors, such as students with heads on desk sleeping, lack of responses to teacher questioning and lack of participation in silent reading and independent activities. Teachers reported that they would like more modeling and support in how to effectively engage students in the classroom. The administration reported that they are interested in exploring expeditionary learning and inquiry-based learning in order to increase student engagement.
- Support for Special Populations and Implementation of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI):** Wexler-Grant has a total of five special education teachers. There is a special education teacher for every two grade levels (ex. 5-6) and both administration and teachers reported that caseloads are high.

Teacher	Grade Level	Number of Students
Teacher A (PPT Chair)	K-2	9
Teacher B	3-4	18
Teacher C	5-6	24
Teacher D	7-8	19
Teacher E (Bridges Program)	K-4	9

The Bridges Program is designed to help students improve their social skills. Special education teachers reported that the number of students is overwhelming because the students require a great deal of support. Teachers reported that there are limited opportunities for co-teaching with some classroom teachers stating that those are the special education teacher's "kids." Wexler-Grant's delivery model is pull-out rather than push-in. Administration reported that English Learner (EL) students are not being serviced. Although administration reported that there is a tutor who comes to the school four times a week, teachers reported that their EL students do not receive regular support. IRIS, an outside organization, offers a tutoring service 3 times a week to EL students. Administration reported that the SRBI team met only twice this year because the school was unable to secure substitute coverage. Both administration and teachers reported that they do not have the staffing to offer the services needed to meet the diverse needs of all students.

- Assessment System and Data Culture:** Wexler-Grant participates in district assessments, which include Scholastic Reading Inventory, Interim Assessment Benchmarks, and Fact Fluency. Administration reported that assessment data is shared on a Google Drive. Team meetings are scheduled for one hour after school twice a month on Wednesday. During these meetings, staff are

instructed to look at data and find strategies that should improve student outcomes. Administration reported that while the school does not have individualized plans for each student, they do try to plan for bands of students (low achievement, on-grade level, and above). Administration reported that due to the departmentalization of grades 1-8, they no longer develop Common Formative Assessments. Administration reported that the school departmentalized because they wanted teachers to become experts in different content areas. Administration reported that due to departmentalization, teachers no longer have grade level meetings. Administration reported that without grade levels, scheduling data teams is difficult.

Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. School environment		✓		
3.2. Student attendance	✓			
3.3. Student behavior	✓			
3.4. Interpersonal interactions	✓			
3.5. Family and community engagement	✓			
3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy		✓		

Summary of Strengths:

- Family Involvement Committee (FIC):** The FIC, which consists of 10 teachers, 1 Parent Liaison, a Family Resource Coordinator, Administration, and a Library-Media Specialist, have planned monthly events to engage families in their children’s learning. These events include: Wexler Olympics, Harvest Festival, Christmas activities, Bingo, Science Night, Dancing with My Star (Parent and Child Dance), PJ Night, Book Fairs, and a Talent Show. Although attendance was low across events, the most well attended occasions were the ones that showcased student performances. Teachers also reported that they have made home visits in order to establish stronger relationships with families. Administration has encouraged staff to make more positive phone calls and increase the number of classroom newsletters.
- Community Partners:** Wexler-Grant has identified a range of wraparound services to address students’ academic and non-academic needs and has sustained several community partnerships. The school has a community partner liaison who is assigned to establish and sustain partnership opportunities. These partnerships include Read to a Child, a lunchtime reading program, which brings adult volunteers into elementary schools for read-aloud sessions. Other partnerships, such as the one with The Russell Dance Studio gives students the opportunity to explore their talents. The Clifford Beers Clinician provides counseling services for selected students (approximately 80) and other members of the agency offer care coordination services to families. Teachers and administration both suggested that a more consistent and coordinated effort between community partners would be beneficial.

Summary of Growth Areas:

- **Student Attendance:** Chronic absenteeism remains high for Wexler Grant. The 2016-17 rate was 30.8 percent. This is an increase from last year's rate of 20 percent. The rate is the highest for kindergarten at 30 percent. Teachers reported that in the 1st grade there are students who are only present two days a week. Teachers also reported that some students are consistently late and have only been to homeroom 10 times this year. The attendance team, which consists of the assistant principal, District Truancy Officer, and social worker meets bi-weekly. Administration reported that they send out letters, personally deliver letters to homes, and make phone calls to the homes of students who are absent. The assistant principal has meetings with families and offers different incentives for students to attend school (i.e., field trips). They have even initiated restorative circles and invited parents to participate and discuss why their child is absent. These have been poorly attended, e.g., 7 parents showed up for the kindergarten hearing and in 8th grade, 0 parents showed up. Students and members of the Turnaround Committee expressed the need for more extracurricular activities to engage students and make coming to school more attractive. Teachers also reported the need for more extracurricular activities because students do not want to go home. Students expressed the desire for more after school programs like the Mentoring Program at Yale.
- **Interpersonal Interactions:** Administrators and teachers reported that hurt feelings and past differences have strained staff to staff relationships. Teachers reported that some of their colleagues have isolated themselves and the turnover rate, particularly in the middle school, makes it difficult to establish and maintain a collaborative work environment. Teachers reported that the culture is reflected in the adult to adult interactions and then trickles down to student interactions. Administration reported that, in her opinion, test scores are not improving because the relationships between staff and students isn't great, and staff relationships are weak as well.
- **Student Behavior:** Wexler Grant's number of in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions, and expulsions have increased to 350 year to date from a total of 205 during the 2015-16 school year. The school's suspension rate increased from 18.1 percent in 2013-14 to 21 percent in 2015-16. This is compared to the district rate of 7.5 percent in 2013-14 and 8.2 percent in 2015-16. Wexler Grant is currently in its 6th year of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation. PBIS rewards students for positive behaviors and they can earn points towards items in the school store. Students reported that the Student Council recommended that the rewards be extended to include open gym time and time in the game room. Administration reported that students respond at first to the rewards, but then lose interest quickly. The school has also implemented a Promise to be: Responsible, Independent, Dependable, and Engaged (PRIDE). The PRIDE slogan is posted throughout the school, including classrooms. Teachers have received professional development in social-emotional learning, trauma-informed practices, and restorative practices. Principal reported that the implementation of restorative circles is not working. Despite these efforts, administration reported that PBIS is also not working effectively; teachers have a matrix of consequences for behaviors, but it isn't being used with fidelity. Consequences are inconsistent. Teachers reported that students pick up on the inconsistencies. So many initiatives are started, but then the adults do not follow through and so students don't feel invested in it.

Operations				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
4.1. Adequate instructional time	✓			
4.2. Use of instructional time	✓			
4.3. Use of staff time	✓			
4.4. Routines and transitions		✓		
4.5. Financial management		✓		

Summary of Strengths:

- Technology:** Due to a SIG (School Improvement) 1003a Grant, awarded in 2014, Wexler Grant was able to upgrade its technology to provide most classrooms with an Eno Board and Chromebook cart. There is also a computer lab.

Summary of Growth Areas:

- Adequate Instructional Time:** Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The schedule includes 310 minutes of instruction per day in grades K-5 and 330 minutes for grades 6-8. All grades currently have at least 2 hours of English/Language Arts times per day, with the exception of grade 3 which has 1 hour and 45 minutes and grades 7-8 who only have 55 minutes per day. The school does participate in the 21st Century After-School Program for grades K-4. Sixty-five students participate in the program this year.
- Use of Instructional Time:** The audit team observed loss of instructional time in many classrooms due to poor pacing, lack of preparation, lack of student engagement, students entering class late, and student misbehavior. In one observed classroom, student entered the room late, disrupted the class by yelling, and teacher did not address the misbehavior. In this same classroom, 10 minutes of class time was wasted while teacher gathered and passed out materials.
- Use of Staff Time:** Both the leadership team and teachers reported that school schedule does not allocate regular structured time for teachers to meet to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction. The 2016-17 Teacher Handbook, states that teachers are “strongly encouraged to meet with colleagues whenever possible.” On the schedule, common planning time is listed for one hour a week, afterschool, but it is generally used for professional development, building level data team, and instructional team meetings. Teachers reported that they do not have the same preparation periods, which makes common planning difficult. As a result, staff members are unable to develop and/or share practices on a regular basis.

APPENDIX A: OPERATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIT RUBRIC

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
1.1. Instructional Practice	Teacher effectiveness is inconsistent and highly variable from classroom to classroom. There are significant concerns about instruction. Staffing decisions do not reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional quality is moderate; however, teacher effectiveness is variable from classroom to classroom. Staffing decisions do not always reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Most classes are led by effective educators, and instructional quality is strong. There are some systems in place to promote and develop teacher effectiveness and make appropriate staffing decisions.	100% of classes are led by deeply passionate and highly effective educators. There are strong systems in place to promote staff efficacy and make staffing decisions driven exclusively by student needs.
1.2. Evaluation and Professional Culture	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared, and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and few if any staff were formally evaluated 3 or more times in 2016-17. Instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Some teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2016-17, but most were not. Leaders communicate some expectations for and feedback on performance, but do not consistently follow-up to see whether or not the feedback is acted upon.	The school is a professional work environment. Most staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. Most individuals feel responsible for their work. Most teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2016-17 in alignment with SEED expectations. Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. All teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2016-17. Leaders conduct frequent informal evaluations and provide meaningful feedback. Individuals are held accountable for their performance.
1.3. Recruitment and Retention Strategies	The school and/or district lack systems to recruit and attract top talent. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern. The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders.	The school and/or district have components of a plan for recruitment and retention of quality educators (e.g., mentoring, induction). The plan is not fully developed or consistently implemented.	The school and/or district have systems for strategic recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	The school and/or district effectively implement a long-term plan for recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Deliberate, successful efforts are made to retain top talent.
1.4. Professional Development	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align to staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
1.5. Leadership Effectiveness	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue. The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community generally understands the need for change, however actions are more often governed by the status quo.	implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable goals. The plan may lack coherence and a strategy for sustainability. Leadership conveys urgency.	a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.
1.6. Instructional Leadership	Few staff can articulate a common understanding of what excellent instruction looks like. Instructional leaders do not demonstrate a commitment to developing consistent and high-quality instructional practice school-wide.	Some staff can articulate a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are enforced with limited consistency. Instructional leaders demonstrate some commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	Most staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are consistently enforced. Instructional leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	All staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. Educators relentlessly pursue excellent pedagogy. Instructional leaders have communicated and enforced high expectations school-wide.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
2.1. Academic Rigor*¹	Most observed lessons are teacher led. Teachers rarely engage students in higher-order thinking. Most students demonstrate a surface-level understanding of concepts. Observed lessons are indicative of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	Some observed lessons are somewhat student-centered, challenging and engaging. Teachers engage students in some higher-order thinking. Many students demonstrate only a surface-level understanding of concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	Observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging for most students. Teachers engage students in higher-order thinking, and students are pushed toward content mastery. Lessons begin to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	All observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging. Teachers push students, promoting academic risk-taking. Students are developing the capacity to engage in complex content and pose higher-level questions to the teacher and peers. Teachers promote high expectations.
2.2. Student Engagement*	Few students are actively engaged and excited about their work. The majority of students are engaged in off-task behaviors and some are disruptive to their classmates. Few students are truly involved in the lessons. Observed lessons primarily appeal to one learning style.	Some students exhibit moderate engagement, but many are engaged in off-task behaviors. Some observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lessons, but participation is more passive than active. Students are easily distracted from assigned tasks.	Most students are engaged and exhibit on-task behaviors. The observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is, at times, more passive than active. A handful of students are easily distracted from the task at hand.	All students are visibly engaged, ready to learn, and on task. Students are clearly focused on learning in all classrooms. Students are actively engaged in the lessons and excited to participate in classroom dialogue and instruction. The lessons appeal to and seem to support all learning styles.
2.3. Differentiation and Checking for	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and

¹ Ratings for the four sub-indicators marked with an asterisk (*) are largely based on a composite or average score generated from all classroom observations.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
Under-standing*	around the use data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	differentiate the learning process accordingly. Teaching feels individualized to meet students' unique needs.
2.4. Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and/or the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. As a result, pacing is inconsistent. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is ≥ 10 points below the state average.	The school has curricula for some grades and content areas, some of which are rigorous, standards-based. Curricula are implemented with some fidelity. Teachers struggle with consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is 6-10 points below the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for almost all grade levels and content areas, and are being implemented consistently across classrooms. Teachers demonstrate consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is within 5 percentage points of the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all grade levels and content areas. Curricula are aligned with the CCS and are being implemented with a high degree of fidelity throughout the school. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments meets or exceeds the state average.
2.5. Support for Special Populations	The school is inadequately meeting the needs of its high-needs students. IEP goals are not regularly met. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is not fully considered when making placements. The school lacks appropriate interventions and supports for ELs. There are significant achievement gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and no evidence of progress.	The school typically meets the needs of its high-needs students. Most special education students meet their IEP goals, but LRE is not always considered when making placement determinations. The school typically meets the needs of its ELs, and attempts to track progress and set content and language mastery goals. There are significant gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments and marginal progress over time.	The school consistently meets the needs of its high-needs students. Special education students regularly meet their IEP goals and LRE is a critical factor in placement determinations. The school meets the needs, tracks progress, and sets content and language mastery goals for all ELs. There are small gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and some signs of progress toward closing the gaps.	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. General and special education teachers work collaboratively to support students. The school tracks the effectiveness of language acquisition instructional strategies and adjusts programming accordingly. There is no achievement gap between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments.
2.6. Assessment Systems and Data Culture	The school lacks a comprehensive assessment system (including summative and benchmark assessments). Teachers rarely collect, analyze, and/or discuss data. The school lacks or fails to implement SRBI protocols linking data to interventions.	The school has some consistent assessments; however, there are major gaps in certain grades and content areas. There are some efforts to collect and use data. SRBI systems and processes are somewhat present.	The school implements a clear system of benchmark assessments. Some teachers are developing familiarity with regularly using formative assessments to differentiate instruction. The school has emerging processes in place to use the data to inform interventions.	Teachers consistently administer assessments throughout the year. Assessments are standards-based and provide real-time data. Teachers embed formative assessments in their daily lessons. The school has strong processes to collect, analyze, and use data to inform interventions.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
3.1. School Environment	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to no student work or data is displayed to help convey a sense of pride and high expectations.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean, displaying data and student work; however, some sections lack visual stimulation. The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in classrooms and communal spaces.	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Data and student work are visible and present throughout the school, inspiring students and teachers to do their best work. There is clear branding and consistent messaging throughout the school, promoting school identity and pride.
3.2. Student Attendance	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $\leq 88\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 20\%$.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 88\%$ and $\leq 93\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 15\%$ and $\leq 20\%$.	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 93\%$ and $\leq 97\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 10\%$ and $\leq 15\%$.	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily attendance is $> 97\%$ and chronic absenteeism is $\leq 10\%$.
3.3. Student Behavior	A school-wide behavior management plan may exist, but there is little evidence of implementation. Student misbehavior is a significant challenge and creates regular distractions. Disciplinary approaches appear to be inconsistent; students and staff do not have a common understanding of behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is greater than 20% (total # 2012-13 incidents/total enrollment).	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place, and there are some signs of implementation. Student misbehavior is a challenge and creates frequent disruptions. There may be confusion among students and staff regarding behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive, and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is between 15% and 20%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place and effectively implemented most of the time. Student behavior is under control. Misbehavior is infrequent with periodic distractions to instruction. Most students behave in a calm and respectful manner. Students and staff have a common understanding of the behavior policy. There is positive reinforcement of desired behaviors. The suspension/expulsion rate is between 10% and 14%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is consistently and effectively implemented. All students behave in a calm, orderly, and respectful manner throughout the school day. Classroom distractions are minimal, and immediately and appropriately addressed. Rewards and consequences are clear and appropriate, and are consistently applied across the school. The suspension/expulsion rate is $\leq 10\%$.
3.4. Interpersonal Interactions	There is a weak sense of community. The quality and types of student, adult, and student/adult interactions raise concerns. There are signs of divisiveness or hostility among students and with staff. There are minimal signs of connections between students and staff; interactions are	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There are some concerns around climate and tone. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school is an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/Adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
3.5. Family and Community Engagement	The school offers infrequent opportunities to involve parents in the school community. Family involvement is minimal. Teachers rarely reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers several family events throughout the year. Roughly half of families participate in school activities. More than half of all teachers reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers periodic, meaningful opportunities for parents/families to engage in student's education. Most families participate in school activities. Most educators communicate regularly with families.	The school frequently engages parents/family as partners in student's education. Almost all families participate in school activities. Nearly all educators communicate with families on a regular basis.
3.6. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community partners to expand services offered through the school.	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner engagement is spotty and event-specific.	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. The school has sustained community partnerships to help address student needs.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
4.1. Adequate Instructional Time	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. There is a significant amount of wasted time in the school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes ≤ 5 hours of instruction per day, and ≤ 60 minutes of ELA time. ²	Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes > 5 and ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time.	The school has taken steps to increase instructional time on task through extended learning opportunities. The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed. The schedule includes > 5.5 and ≤ 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 90 and ≤ 120 minutes of ELA time.	The school has multiple extended learning opportunities available to students. The school implements a thoughtful and strategic school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 120 minutes of ELA time.
4.2. Use of Instructional Time*	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task. Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time. Lesson schedules are moderately well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers could be	Most staff and students use time well. A handful of students require redirection; however, the majority of students transition quickly to academic work when prompted by the teacher. There is minimal downtime. Lessons are well planned, paced, and	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task. Students transition promptly to academic work

² The total amount of ELA instructional time per day at the secondary level can include reading- and/or writing-intensive coursework.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	to use class time in a constructive manner.	more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	with minimal cues and reminders from teachers.
4.3. Use of Staff Time	Educators lack adequate and/or recurring professional development and/or common planning time. Common planning time is currently disorganized and the time is not used effectively. As a result, staff members are unable to develop and/or share practices on a regular basis.	Most academic teams have common planning periods (less than 1 hour/week); however, the school has failed to secure vertical and horizontal planning. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	All academic teams have common planning periods (1-2 hours/week) and they are seldom interrupted by non-instructional tasks. Staff members use this time to discuss instructional strategies, discuss student work, develop curricular resources, and use data to adjust instruction.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning (more than 2 hours/week). Common planning periods are tightly protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established tight protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.
4.4. Routines and Transitions	The school is chaotic and disorderly. The safety of students and staff is a concern. The school lacks critical systems and routines. Movement of students is chaotic and noisy with little adult intervention. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore, this is very little direction.	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of day. Some staff make an effort to maintain procedures and routines; however, staff presence is also an issue and redirection of misbehavior is lacking.	The school environment is calm and orderly in most locations and during most of the day. Rules and procedures are fairly clear, consistent, and evident. Routines seem somewhat apparent and institutionalized. Adults are present to reinforce norms.	The school environment is calm and orderly. Rules and procedures are clear, specific, consistent, and evident. Routines are largely unspoken and institutionalized. Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.
4.5. Financial Management	The school and/or district do not make sound budgetary decisions based on student need and projected impact. Budget decisions are largely governed by past practice and do not account for sustainability. There is little to no evidence around school and/or district leaders successfully advocating for school resource needs.	Budget decisions are sometimes focused on factors unrelated to student needs and school goals. A number of expenditures and initiatives lack a plan for sustainability beyond the current school year. School and/or district leaders do not effectively advocate for school needs or pursue additional resources.	The school and/or district have emerging strategic budgeting practices. The school and/or district have begun to repurpose funds to align expenditures more closely with school goals and student needs. Sustainability may pose a concern. School/District leaders effectively advocate for school needs and pursue additional resources.	The school and district engage in strategic budgeting. The school and district invest in high-yield, research-based initiatives aligned to student needs and school goals. There is a clear sustainability plan for all major expenditures. School/District leaders effectively advocate for school needs, and build strategic relationships to pursue needed resources.