

IX.B.

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

To Be Proposed:

June 1, 2022

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, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Hamden Middle School in Hamden for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 1, 2022, 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 first day of June, Two Thousand Twenty-two.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan for Hamden Middle School

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 3 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 Hamden Middle School (HMS) located in Hamden, CT. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to create conditions that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

Background

On April 14, 2021, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from the Hamden Public Schools (HPS) volunteering HMS for participation in the Network. On May 27, 2021, the Commissioner initially selected HMS 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 to develop a turnaround plan. Following initial selection, HMS and the Hamden Federation of Teachers appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on October 4, 2021. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for HMS in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d).

On May 19, 2022, Hamden Superintendent Goeler and HMS Principal Michelle Coogan appeared before the State Board Accountability and Support Committee to discuss the school's turnaround application to improve student outcomes.

Turnaround Plan for Hamden Middle School

HMS, identified as a Turnaround School based on the Accountability Index under the Next Generation Accountability System, serves 867 students in Grades 7 and 8. Approximately 46 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 17 percent of the students are identified as needing special education services; 3 percent are English learners (ELs); 32 percent of the students are Black; and 25 percent are Hispanic.

The goal of the HMS Turnaround Plan is to implement strong Tier I instruction while focusing on targeted improvement centered around climate and culture, that holds students to high expectations while meeting their diverse needs through a learning environment that is inclusive, rigorous, collaborative, and engaging. This model emphasizes the use of targeted instructional practices around student-centered learning that prioritizes research-based strategies to meet the needs of all students with a focus on supports for teachers around differentiation for special populations and enrichment. These practices will result in a culture of achievement and a commitment to continuous improvement through practitioner reflection and shared beliefs in collective efficacy.

The following strategic components in the domains of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations speak to the transformative potential of HMS Turnaround Plan. Specifically, the school, in collaboration with HPS, will:

Talent:

- Provide professional learning for administrators and teachers to build increased collective teacher efficacy focused on fostering Professional Learning Communities that focus on continuous growth for all, Instructional Rounds, Data Teams, and Effective Feedback;
- Embed targeted professional learning into weekly department and grade level meetings that are aligned with district and school goals that support all staff;
- Coordinate in-house, building-based leadership and supports for new members of the staff that will be focused on school operations, curriculum, and effective instructional practices designed by school administrators and teacher leaders; and
- Continue to support school and district administrators with consistent and effective implementation of the Teacher Evaluation Plan that is aligned with best practices and provide ongoing professional development to support the delivery of effective and timely feedback.

Academics:

- Strengthen Tier I instruction to implement instructional structures and strategies to increase student engagement, increase rigor, and differentiation based on checks for understanding; and
- Develop the processes, structures, and strategies for academic intervention by designing and implementing a continuum of academic interventions for students who need additional support through a Scientific Research-Based Intervention model.

Culture and Climate:

- Promote positive behavior through the consistent implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention System and implementation of a systemic approach to restorative practices;
- Implement a tiered system of supports for behavior interventions;
- Promote family engagement by introducing new students to HMS through summer student orientation programming, fostering relationships between elementary and HMS staff and students, and collecting and analyzing data from current and incoming students to HMS through surveys;
- Promote family and community engagement by recruiting/hiring a family engagement coordinator to collaborate with the Parent Teacher Association; and
- Enhance enrichment programming at HMS through after-school programming, intramurals/sports and clubs, and inclusion of community partners in enrichment programming.

Operations:

- Restructure the school schedule to maximize instruction, provide interventions, and create time for high-quality teacher collaboration;
- Establish a schedule for protected professional collaboration time with grade level and content areas; and
- Develop a summer teacher leadership institute to increase teacher efficacy and deepen expertise in high leverage instructional strategies to improve co-teaching models with a focus on interventions for students with disabilities.

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 Turnaround Office will collaborate with district leadership and the Turnaround Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process.

Through this budgeting process, HMS 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 HMS 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.

HMS 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 CSDE Turnaround Office 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.

HMS 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 HMS through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

Recommendation with Conditions

I recommend that the Board approve the Network Plan for HMS, which would be subject to the successful completion of the following items:

1. By September 30, 2022, HPS shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined 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 HMS Turnaround Committee, shall submit 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 HMS, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising all authorities prescribed in C.G.S. Section 10-223h.
3. HMS 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 Enclosed

1. HMS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on October 4, 2021.
2. HMS Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application.

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Approved by: Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer

Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit

Hamden Middle School
Hamden Public Schools
October 4, 2021



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Hamden Middle School
October 4, 2021 | 1

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Part I: Introduction

On May 27, 2021, the Commissioner initially selected Hamden Middle School to participate in the Commissioner's Network. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), the Hamden Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On October 4, 2021, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the Hamden Middle 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 Hamden Middle 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. To that end, 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, 15 Cohort (VI, VII, VIII, IX, and X) 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; and
- (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 involve 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 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

Hamden Middle School serves 836 students in Grades 7 and 8 in Hamden Public Schools. Approximately 31 percent of the students are Black, and 24 percent of the students are Hispanic. Seventeen percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 3 percent are English Learners. Forty six percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at Hamden Middle School is well below state and district averages in all grade levels and subject areas tested. The current principal is in her 4th year at Hamden Middle School having previously served as Principal for 14 years as an administrator with ACES, before joining Hamden Schools as the principal at West Woods Elementary for 6 years.

School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of Hamden Middle School'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 with **.

Enrollment Data (2021-22):				
Grades:	7-8	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:		861
Student Enrollment:	867	Stability Rate:		NA
Personnel Data (2021-22):				
# of Administrators:	2	# of Psychologists:		2
# of Teachers:	91	# of Social Workers:		3
3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:	79.3%	# of Support Staff:		14
School Day Per Year (2021-22):				
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	180	Instructional Minutes/Day:		952
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	186	Extended Day Program:		No
Student Demographic Breakdown (2021-22):				
% Black:	31.6%	% Male:		52%
% Hispanic:	24.5%	% Female:		48%
% White:	31.6%	% English Learner Students:		3%
% Other:	12.3%	% Students with Disabilities:		16.9%
% Eligible for F/R Meals:	46.4%			
School Climate Data:	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020 ¹ through March 2020	2020-2021
Student Attendance Rate:	93.1%	93.6%	94%	93%

¹ For the 2019-20 school year, school climate data calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020.

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent**:	18.3%	15.6%	14.4%	38.8%
Suspension/Expulsion Rate**:	21.8%	15.7%	9.0%	NA
Classroom Teacher Attendance (Average FTE Days Absent):	91.5%	91%	NA	NA
Next Generation Accountability System**:	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020²	2020-2021
Accountability Index:	57.4	54.8	51.6	NA
Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data** Met or Exceeded:	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020³	2020-2021
Grade 7 – ELA	47.7%	49.6%	NA	NA
Grade 8 – ELA	42.2%	42.9%	NA	NA
Grade 7 – Math	38.5%	44.4%	NA	NA
Grade 8 – Math	27.8%	35.2%	NA	NA
Grade 8 – Science	NA	37.1%	NA	NA

NA= Data is not yet available

² Next Generation Accountability results are not available for 2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

³ Statewide academic assessments were cancelled in 2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 Growth Areas:

Instructional Practice

The Next Generation Accountability indicator for ELA Performance has shown limited growth over time as the rate slightly increased 2.7 percentage points from 59.3 in 2016-17 to 62.0 in 2018-19. The Math Performance Index similarly slightly increased 3.4 percentage points from 56.0 in 2016-17 to 59.4 in 2018-19. Both ELA and Math SPI are below district and state performance data. Fifty-one percent (N= 40) of teacher survey respondents either agree or strongly agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” The audit team observed 32 randomly selected classrooms across grade levels and content areas. Auditors observed most classrooms were primarily teacher-led lessons for whole group instruction with inconsistent levels of rigor as evidenced by most classrooms remaining at surface levels of questioning that did not challenge student thought or promote student understanding. Auditors also observed limited opportunities for developing student-centered discourse to allow students to engage deeply with the content they are learning. Most classrooms showed a lack of differentiation as evidenced by limited small group instruction or tiering materials or supports to meet individualized student needs. District leadership described instruction as, “Underutilized. There needs to be more small groupings, less teacher interaction, more student interaction, and more inquiry needs to be in play.” School leadership expressed that “the quality of instruction is an area of need and that it is often put aside to focus on behaviors.” Teachers stated that common vision for effective instruction was inconsistent and revealed that common instructional practice was communicated as the “85 student-centered/15 teacher centered split across the board, but don’t think its universally implemented.” Student performance on Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBA) are lagging behind state averages. While Math proficiency scores have shown some growth increasing 3.4 percentage points from 56.0% in 2016-17 to 59.4% in 2018-19, ELA scores have trended downward over time, decreasing 3 percentage points from 31.4% in 2015-16 to 28.4% in 2018-19.

Leadership Effectiveness

The Accountability Index has been inconsistent over time, decreasing 2.8 percentage points from 2016-17 to 2017-18 (55.1% to 52.3%), while increasing from 52.3% in 2017-18 to the current score of 58% in 2018-2019. Overall, Hamden Middle School (HMS) has increased a total of 2.9% over three years. On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, 77% (N= 61) of teachers strongly agreed/agreed on the survey that “school leadership effectively communicates a clear mission, vision and set of school wide priorities,” yet teacher and parent focus group participants struggled to define the specific strategic priorities of the school. All agreed there is a sense of urgency to improve the school. Eighty-one percent of teacher survey respondents agreed that “I am professionally respected and supported by the leadership team.” District leaders shared that one of the school’s greatest strengths is the school principal as “she is not top down when it comes to making change; she builds a team/coalition and allows them to have a voice in making that change” and that the principal displays strong leadership skills. Leadership capacity should continue to be developed within the school and district in which expertise can be spread across the school so that everyone can work individually as well as collectively to improve student outcomes. In addition, parent focus group participants praised the principal’s responsiveness to any concerns and her friendly, engaging demeanor, stating the principal and her team were among the best parts of Hamden Middle School.

Professional Culture

While 81% (N= 64) of teacher respondents on the survey either agreed or strongly that they “are professionally respected and supported by the school leadership team,” professional culture is inconsistent. School leadership reports that there are inconsistencies among staff in terms of planning, revising and implementing lesson plans and professional growth. The leadership team expressed that “There is evidence of emerging growth in professional culture, but we’re not doing enough yet.” District leadership has noticed a shift back to teacher-centered classrooms and instruction and that behavior has played a role in that shift. Finally, staff conveyed that “there is a lot of professional cynicism. A lot of initiatives that were implemented and then dropped later when something new comes up.” This is supported by low student achievement on state assessments.

The teacher evaluation process is administered by multiple administrators, including building leadership along with district level, content-based supervisors. On the teacher survey, 62% (N=49) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.” Teachers and leadership are in agreement that the formal evaluation process is clear based on teacher experience and department. Informal walkthroughs have become more frequent this year and are unannounced, but teacher focus group members report that both observations and feedback are inconsistent based on department and content area. Teachers report that “core classes at HMS are consistently observed and given feedback, however some staff members have not been observed once” and that “formal and informal observations are inconsistent depending on the evaluator and department.” This inconsistency can be attributed to staff evaluations and feedback being directed by department heads that are not housed within the HMS building itself.

Recruitment and Retention

Hamden Middle School has a 3-year teacher retention rate of __%. School and district leadership report that strategic and intentional changes were made in order to recruit, retain and diversify the staff. According to district leaders, Hamden Middle School is the “most diverse school in terms of staff in the district.” School leadership states that while there has been some turnover in staff for various reasons, overall, there is a balance of newcomers and veteran staff. Currently, all positions at HMS are filled.

District leadership revealed that in addition to student attendance, staff attendance is an area of growth and “when teachers are out, there is limited substitutes for adequate coverage.” New teachers are supported through mentoring within their department. The teacher focus group revealed new teachers also “have TEAM. Not just the TEAM system, which has the required 50 hours with their mentor, but veteran staff meets with all of our new teachers up to 10 hours per year, along with new teacher orientation for two days at the beginning of the year.”

Professional Development

Teacher survey results revealed that 49% (N=39) of teachers positively responded to the statement that “the professional development I received this year has improved my professional practice and allowed me to better meet the needs of my students.” Teacher focus groups report an inconsistency around the effectiveness of professional learning for HMS and state “most of the time the professional learning is not engaging, and we don’t get a lot of time or feedback from implementation in the classrooms. There is a lot of repeating of professional learning like the same introduction. This may be due to the high number of new teachers. Some concepts have good potential, but we are only hitting the surface on a lot of it.” Administration and teacher focus groups shared that professional learning is highly focused on “equitable practices and how can we make sure they are happening.” School leadership also revealed “the professional development is more reactive than proactive, deleveling and implemented new curriculum and to this point, we have not had worthy pd on the new curriculum, workshop model and de-leveling that has occurred at Hamden MS.”

Instructional Leadership

The Hamden Middle School leadership currently consists of the building principal that is in her fifth year in the role. There are two assistant principals supporting the building administrator. One assistant principal is in his first year in an administrative role at HMS, while the other is in her 10th year of administrative work at HMS. The superintendent shared that the principal is “committed to do what is right for her students.” On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, responses to the survey statement “there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at this school,” varied. While 63% (N= 50) strongly agree/agree, 22% (N= 18) strongly disagree/disagree and 15% (N=15) are neutral. Although teacher focus group participants agree that there is “a sense of urgency” to improve Hamden Middle School, teachers struggled to provide a clear definition of the school’s vision regarding what effective instruction looks like, with answers ranging by different content areas and departments. District leadership shared that once a month, department heads lead a 90-minute-long content area planning meeting but that there is a struggle to include planning between departments. District leadership also revealed that meetings have not occurred as consistently in the past. Current school leadership shared that “staff has a foundational idea of what effective instruction looks like, but there is inconsistency between the school and district on what that is for Hamden Middle School in the TEVAL process.”

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 Growth Areas:

Academic rigor and Differentiation

Fifty percent (N= 40) of teacher survey respondents agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” Furthermore, 72% (N= 57) agree that “teachers at this school engage students in higher-order thinking and push them toward content mastery.” Teachers focus groups report that implementing the new curriculum has been difficult as “meaningful professional learning around unpacking the curriculum and implementation” has not occurred. Pacing is a remaining issue.” School administration agrees and reports that the school is not meeting academic standards for rigor outlined by the Connecticut Core Standards and share that Hamden Middle School “has work to do. We have children who are exceeding, at or below the grade level benchmark. Teachers are struggling with meeting the differing needs of the students.” Parent focus groups agreed and expressed a desire for more challenging work in order to prepare the students for life beyond HMS.

During classroom walkthroughs when 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, the evidence showed that teachers were engaged in mostly teacher directed lessons with little student engagement. In the majority of the observed classrooms, higher-order Depth of Knowledge questioning was lacking and remained at the surface level. While this was evident in the majority of classrooms observed, several science lessons were observed where small group instruction was prevalent which included strong student to student discourse on grade-level standards. Parent and student focus groups agreed. While 75% of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, “my child is appropriately challenged”, it was also stated on the parent survey growth areas that parents would like to see their child be more challenged academically. Smarter Balanced proficiency levels at Hamden Middle School, as shown in the first chart below, fell below the state and district averages for both ELA and Math. In Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS) assessment, Hamden Middle School fell below state averages. Additionally, as a focus school with a targeted focus on ELA growth for the subgroups Free and Reduced Lunch, Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Black or African American students, SBAC data shows those subgroups to be significantly lower than the state, district and school in both proficiency and growth percentages:

Percent Proficiency (Levels 3+)					
2018-19 Assessments	State Average	District Average	Hamden Middle	Hamden Middle School (High Needs; F/R, EL or SWD)	Hamden Middle School Black or African American
SBAC ELA	55.7%	49%	46.2%	27.2%	30.6%
SBAC Math	48.1%	45%	39.7%	22.2%	20.2%
NGSS Science	52.2%	36.8%	37.1%	19.6%	16.7%

SBA Growth Rate					
2018-19 Assessments	State Average	District Average	Hamden Middle	Hamden Middle School (High Needs; F/R, EL or SWD)	Hamden Middle School Black or African American
SBAC ELA	59.9%	52.2%	45.5%	24%	23.2%
SBAC Math	62.5%	61.9%	54.7%	33.4%	27.7%

Student Engagement

In response to the survey statement that “students are engaged in their classes,” survey results showed 72% (N= 49) of teachers agreed. Auditors observed mainly compliant students in class and engagement in most classes consisted of students listening to teacher directions and were on-task with classroom work. However, meaningful student engagement was lacking in many classrooms. This is evidenced by 49% (N=39) of the teacher survey responses agreeing that “the school environment is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning.” School and district leadership, as well as teacher focus groups, also characterize student engagement as being low. Teacher focus group participants equated the difficulties with engagement due to behavior issues within the classrooms. Teacher focus group participants also specified that “right now the biggest issue is student behavior. It’s hard to let the students open up and be engaged with one another because classroom management this year is tough.” Other teacher focus group members stated that “behavior is a major issue. You want to have this fun interactive lessons but it’s very hard.” Sixteen out of sixteen student focus group participants reported being “bored” in class due to “teachers being repetitive”. One student stated that they have “been working on the same essay for a week” and that teachers “don’t have new work for us to do if we finish, but others are still working on the same thing.”

Supports for Special Populations

Hamden Middle School has 16.9% of students identified as receiving special education services with 11 special education teachers on staff with caseloads of approximately 160 students. Eight special education teachers are on grade level teams who supervise 15-16 students in various environments. Three additional special education staff are self-contained with smaller caseloads. Teacher respondents to the survey statement that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners” were divided. While 48% (N= 38) of teacher respondents agreed or strongly agreed, 33% (N= 26) disagreed and 19% (N= 15) remained neutral. While school administration shared that special education program “needs to evolve and become more effective for kids.”, they also highlighted the strengths of meeting the needs of their special education students. Hamden Middle School employs a team model, with co-teaching and pull-out for individual services. Additionally, there is

a “Life Skills program with three different classes taught by very dedicated teachers.” Teacher focus groups disagreed that supports for special populations are being met adequately and stated that “there are not enough staff to support this population. Our numbers have increased significantly. Caseloads can go up to 16 or 17 kids. Additionally, there’s not enough paras to support students with special needs.”

Curriculum and Alignment to Connecticut Core Standards

While eighty percent (N=63) of Hamden Middle School staff reported on the teacher survey that “the school has curricula for all grade levels and content areas aligned to the current content standards,” teachers, school leaders, and district leaders focus groups all report that, as of this school year, there has been inconsistencies in professional learning and implementation of the new curricula for staff. Teacher focus groups revealed “professional learning is not scaffolded to each individualized department nor is it in line with the focus areas of our content.” Additionally, teacher focus group members stated that “the curriculum is constantly changing across content areas. There is not enough time for proper professional learning, implementation and then feedback from this implementation.” While teachers believe they have high expectations for their students, and that the curriculum is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards, there is limited evidence from auditor observations to support that instruction is rigorous.

Assessment System and Data Culture

Forty-three percent (N= 34) of teacher survey respondents agreed that “this school has a comprehensive assessment system to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction.” Although Hamden Middle School has benchmark assessments in place, with a change this year from NWEA MAP to CFAs and IABs, data collection is just the first step. While 53% (N= 42) of teachers surveyed support that “teachers at this school use student assessment data to check for understanding to differentiate instruction,” teacher focus groups revealed that teachers rarely meet with the intention to discuss and analyze data in order to make improvements to instruction. School leadership revealed that data collection “varies department to department. We see it in some areas, but we don’t see it happening in other content areas. Hamden has changed how they are collecting the data.” Hamden Middle school also lacks cohesive and systemic SRBI protocols and interventions to support struggling learners, as SRBI was only implemented last year. Conflicting information was provided from teachers and leadership as to whether interventions were provided with teacher focus groups stating there was not enough staff in place to meet the needs of students while leadership identified it’s a work in process. School leadership also reported that HMS is currently in the process of building their SRBI framework and all staff have received training on referral processes. The school is building a focus on prevention and early intervention regarding academic and behavioral supports, evidenced by the hiring of literacy and math SRBI coordinators.

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:

School Environment

Hamden Middle School has taken steps to create a safe, clean, and welcoming environment that has engaging visuals that identify school values and inspirational quotes. The school is organized into distinguished houses by grade level and content area with student work visible in each house. Classroom observations reveal classrooms that are clean, with academic support/anchor charts and other learning materials posted on the walls. Some student work is displayed in the hallways and classrooms, and no large expanse of the building is devoid of either student work celebrations or achievement. It is evident that students and staff take pride in the school as evidenced by auditors observed clean, orderly hallways and common areas. Parents survey participants were high on the statement “The culture and climate at this school is welcoming to all learners and their families.” With 76% of participants either agreeing or strongly agreeing. Parent focus group members also shared that they believe the school environment is “A great sense of community... The grade level houses create a sense of small families.” Student focus participants agreed stating that the school has a sense of community and that most students feel comfortable and safe at HMS. Families, students, and teachers shared the increased social media presence communicating current happenings at the school as being very positive. The school is active on most social media pages, constantly sending out updates regarding the school community and many parent respondents on the survey positively commented on the strength of the school communication with families.

Family and Community Engagement

School leadership expressed that family engagement is a strength at the school. Teacher survey data show a mixed result with this as 39% agreed, 35% stayed neutral and 26% disagreed with the statement “Families are engaged in the school.” The school currently has a parent-teacher organization that meets bi-monthly. This group also has additional, separate meeting with school administration to discuss community events. School administration and teachers report that families are involved through “sporting events, parent teacher conferences, Open House, and informational meetings.” Parent focus group members express satisfaction with the communication they receive from administration and teachers, sharing that they reach out by telephone, virtual meetings and emails to share positive happenings and concerns and there is an active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. A weekly newsletter is sent home every Friday with communication from the school principal. Parent focus group respondents reveal the communication and engagement efforts at HMS

are a strength and state that “the staff is wonderful and very responsive.” While communication with families is seen as a strength at HMS, parent focus groups shared that families can do more to improve the engagement at HMS by having better attendance at community events provided by HMS.

Interpersonal Interactions

In response to the statement “Interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful,” 66% of survey participants agreed. The auditors observed positive interactions between staff and students at the start of the school day as students were greeted as they entered school by the principal and several staff members. Teachers had warm conversations with students and greeted them by their homeroom doors, asking how they were doing and what they did the previous night. District leadership reports that the administration in the building has been consistent leading to less changes to daily operations of the school and feelings of connectedness by students and staff. Leadership and teacher focus groups agreed and report that “we enjoy each other. There is great respect among staff members.”. Student focus groups expressed that they enjoyed coming to school and that “the teachers show they care and respect us.” Parent survey results showed they were happy with the interpersonal relationships at the school as evidenced by 92% agreeing with the statement “Interactions between staff, students and families are positive and respectful.” Additionally, 82% of parent respondents agreed with the statement “My child feels connected to the school staff.” While there is no scheduled advisory period weekly at HMS, one Wednesday a month is dedicated to HMS staff half day training on social emotional learning where lessons are created that are universal for all staff and students at HMS. This involves Sandy Hook Promise, Choose Love and Second Step for students. Staff also have access to community created PBIS lessons

Summary of Growth Areas:

Student Behavior

Auditor observations showed most classroom instruction, and routines were minimally impacted by student behavior. However, it was observed that classroom transitions in the hall consisted of heavy traffic with several instances of students arguing unattended. Additionally, while staff appeared diligent in getting students to class on time, auditors noted on multiple occasions where students were still located in and socializing in the hallway after the bell rang. There were mixed results with the teacher survey statement “the school implements an effective school wide behavior management system.” While 47% of teachers agreed with that statement, 27% disagreed with 14% remained neutral in their response. Hamden Middle School’s suspension rate in 2017-18 was 21.4%, well above the state average of 6.8%. In 2019-20, the suspension rate decreased to 9%, (however school climate data calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020). The principal reports that prior to her arrival in 2018, Hamden Middle School “operated in an order of conduct that was very black and white and suspensions, expulsions, and arrests were too high.” While there has been a targeted shift to PBIS and positive reinforcement through SERC training, school leadership revealed that there are inconsistencies around the buy-in and that some staff continue to want “a code of conduct to hold students accountable punitively for their actions.” Student focus group participants revealed a need to address behaviors. Teacher focus group participants agreed, stating that “behaviors have significantly impacted teaching, learning and student engagement.” Teachers also report that “this year we are trying to be more consistent and clearer with expectations. We feel like we’re working toward a common goal now.” District leadership expressed a need for “behavioral interventions to be in place so kids don’t need to be sent out of the room and miss instruction.” A new “Drago pride” ticket reward/initiative, in which positive behavior is highlighted and communication with home is a priority. District leadership agree that “behaviors are now being addressed in a more supportive and immediate way.”

Student Attendance

The percentage of students chronically absent has shown improvement, decreasing from 18.4% in 2017-18 to 14.4% in 2019-20, yet it is still above or equal to the state and district rates. In 2020-21, chronic absenteeism rose to 38.1% which is 6.2 percentage points above the district average (Note for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, data calculations were impacted by COVID pandemic.) Two notable demographic subgroups increased significantly in chronic absenteeism from 2019-20 to 2020-21. Of the 38.1%, Black or African American students accounted for 50.1%, which was an increase of 33.8% from 16.1% in 2019-20. Additionally, the Hispanic subgroup accounted for 48.8% of the total student population that were chronically absent, which was an increase of 28.9% from 19.9% in 2019-20. Hamden Middle School has a newly created attendance team consisting of the principal, both assistant principals, teachers and as well as some school counselors from Hamden Middle School that currently meet monthly on the last school day of each month. Leadership reports that staff are more aware of who is in attendance thanks to the implementation of PowerSchool, and when a student is absent the outreach is immediate. Parent focus group members agreed that “sending our kids to school every day is important. If my child is out, I get a phone call right away.” The school implements several strategies focusing on attendance including participation in the CSDE Talk Tuesday sessions, posters throughout the school encouraging attendance, monthly attendance awards, as well as other positive incentives to improve to or continue with excellent attendance. Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) is also a focused strategy at HMS as evidenced by the professional learning opportunities around building staff capacity in PBIS.

Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy

Focus groups revealed that Hamden Middle School is in the process of fostering community partnerships. Keefe Community Center (KCC) in Hamden is one focused organization that school leadership is working with to play a larger role at HMS. Currently, HMS students enrolled in the summer program utilize the Keefe Community Center as a mentorship program. Mentors engage students in building social skills, guest speakers around current events and topics relevant to middle school students, interaction with local law enforcement and weekly social emotional check-ins. School leadership has expressed a desire to expand this partnership from the summer program to year-round. Additionally, there is a partnership with Hamden Youth Connections that use facilities at Hamden Middle School and their focus is bringing mentors students from HMS. Focus groups shared that a more consistent and coordinated effort between community partners would be beneficial for both social emotional and academic efforts.

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		✓		

Summary of Growth Areas:

Adequate Instructional Time

Fifty-nine percent (N=47) of survey respondents agree that the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time. Students receive 45 minutes of English language arts instruction and 45 minutes of math instruction daily within a 7-period school day. Additionally, school administration shared that the schedule is broken down into an A day and B day schedule due to elective choices offered to students. As noted previously, students would benefit from increased SRBI and/or intervention time. The current schedule does not include opportunities for an intervention/enrichment period during the daily schedules; therefore, students receiving interventions do so in lieu of other coursework.

Use of Instructional Time

Use of instructional time is inconsistent from classroom to classroom. Teacher focus group members expressed that behavior has played a large part in decreased instructional time as the majority of that time is spent redirecting or correcting behaviors. In response to the statement “Teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time within the classroom,” 72% (N= 57) of teachers agreed. Technology issues also have led to staff losing instructional time. Teacher focus groups shared that even though HMS is a one-to-one school for devices, technology often doesn’t work properly and that “backup plans for technology to fail should always be ready.” Additionally, it was shared by leadership that technology infusion is lacking due to failing equipment, and if technology is used for instructional purposes, it is very teacher centered. The audit team observed loss of instructional time in many classrooms due to inconsistent pacing, limited student engagement, and missed opportunities for interactive learning. Additionally, teacher focus groups expressed difficulty in maintaining personal preparation period times, but also lack of time devoted to meeting with content or grade level teams for planning purposes.

Use of Staff Time

Teachers express a need for collaboration time in order to develop instructional plans and materials and review data. Twenty-one percent (N=6) of teachers agreed that “teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction.” While school leadership reports issues trying to find common planning time, administration is constantly reviewing the schedule in order to accommodate this need. The principal also shared that she is “constantly looking for ways to be more effective with scheduling.” Though teachers have a daily common planning time with their grade-level team as well as a personal preparation period, school and district responsibilities or staffing shortages causing teachers to be pulled for coverage. As a result,

teachers do not meet with their content area colleagues regularly to develop instructional plans and align content instruction. Teachers report that there is also no time for vertical collaboration.

Routines and Transitions

Fifty-four percent (N=43) of teachers agreed with the survey statement 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.” Auditors observed beginning of the school day and lunch transitions in which operations were efficient and systems and structures were in place to maintain a peaceful environment. While teachers and students report expected conduct is generally understood by students, as evidenced by a lack of need for constant reminders, auditors observed the middle school hallways to be less orderly. Teacher presence was evident during transition times as most monitored the halls from outside their classrooms, but it was observed that many students moved through the hallway unattended until necessary. This was evidenced by auditors observing multiple occasions where staff attended to students walking in the hallway and socializing after the bell rang to signify the instructional period had begun.

Appendix A: Operations and Instructional Audit Rubric

TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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. 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, 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 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. 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	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,	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	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers

TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	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 or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue. The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not 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.	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is 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.	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has 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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
2.1. Academic Rigor^{*4}	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	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	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	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

⁴ 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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	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 Understanding*	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence around the use data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding and differentiate the learning process accordingly. Teaching feels individualized to meet students' unique needs.
2.4. Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to Common Core State Standards	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) 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 CCSS 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	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	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	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. General and special education teachers work collaboratively to support

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	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.	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.	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.	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 MTSS 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. MTSS 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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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	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

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
			classrooms and communal spaces.	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 $> 94\%$ 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 # 2020-21 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 largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	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 students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	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 connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	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 strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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. ⁵	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.	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	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	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.

⁵ The total amount of ELA instructional time per day at the secondary level can include reading- and/or writing-intensive coursework.

Note: The rubrics draw from the CSDE's School Quality Review and Network Walkthrough Tool, and Mass Insight Educations' School Readiness Assessment.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail to use class time in a constructive manner.	executed. Teachers could be more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	are well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	Students transition promptly to academic work 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.

The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort XI

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

July 23, 2021

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard | Hartford, CT 06103
www.sde.ct.gov



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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

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Levy Gillespie

Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator (ADA)

Connecticut State Department of Education | 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505 | Hartford, CT 06103-1841 |

860-807-2071 | Levy.gillespie@ct.gov

PART I: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK OVERVIEW

A. Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network (the Network) is a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and empowers 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 participate in the Network for a period of three to five years.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(a), the Commissioner may select a school that has been classified as a category four or five school, as described in C.G.S. § 10-223e, to participate in the Network. The Commissioner gives preference for selection 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. § 10-223h

- authorizes the Commissioner to establish, within available appropriations, a Commissioner's Network of schools to improve student academic achievement in low-performing schools;
- authorizes the Commissioner to select not more than 25 schools in any single school year that have been classified as a category four school or a category five school pursuant to Section 10-223e to participate in the Network; and
- provides that the Commissioner may select not more than five schools in any single school year from a single school district to participate in the Network.

After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Commissioner's 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. If the Commissioner deems it necessary, the Commissioner may appoint a district improvement officer for a school to implement the provisions of a turnaround plan developed by the Commissioner.

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:

- provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instructional audit;
- identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas;
- provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate, and retain top talent;
- summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction;
- outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate; and
- 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. See C.G.S. § 10-223h(g).

The Board of Education 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 other partners, to operationalize the Turnaround Plan by planning and designing tools, systems, and/or policies including, but not limited to:

- school bell schedule;
- school calendar;
- annual assessment calendar;
- staff evaluation schedule;
- professional learning calendar;
- Scientific Research-Based Interventions processes and protocols;
- school organizational chart;
- curricular materials (e.g., lesson plan template, unit plans, pacing guides);
- school budget;
- school climate; and
- calendar of family and community engagement opportunities.

PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. 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 Turnaround Office to provide updates on elements of the draft Turnaround Plan as it evolves and receive formative feedback. Be prepared to share draft Turnaround Plan components prior to these meetings.

B. Timeline Summary

Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-223h, the Commissioner's Network process is outlined below. As noted, the extension and expansion of the Commissioner's Network requires new legislative authorization; therefore, initial planning activities for an eleventh 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, in consultation with the school governance council, develops the Turnaround Plan and budget proposal.
5. Turnaround Committee reaches consensus or the Commissioner may develop a plan.
6. SBE votes to approve or reject the Turnaround Plan.
7. Local board of education negotiates 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), C.G.S. Section 1-200 et seq. 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.


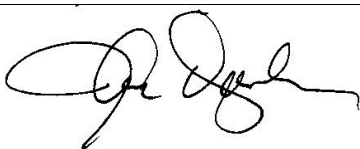
D. Questions

All questions regarding the Commissioner's Network should be directed to:

Lisa Lamenzo
Turnaround Office Division Director
Connecticut State Department of Education
E-mail: lisa.lamenzo@ct.gov

PART III: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Hamden Public Schools		
Name of School:	Hamden Middle School	Grade Levels:	7 & 8
Name of School Principal:	Michelle G. Coogan	# of Years Serving as Principal at this School	4
		# of Years in Total as Administrator	16
Turnaround Committee Chairperson: ¹	Michelle G. Coogan		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	203-407-7131		
E-mail of Chairperson:	mcoogan@hamden.org		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	2623 Dixwell Avenue	
	City:	Hamden	Zip Code: 06518
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Melissa Kaplan		
Signature of School Board Chairperson: ²		Date:	3/2/2022
Name of Superintendent:	Jody Ian Goeler		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	3/2/2022

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: Setting the Direction

An organization needs to know where it is and where it wants to be in order to improve. Effective organizations have a clear direction that informs the work of all employees. An organization's direction is used as a filter for all work. As noted in *Turnaround Leadership Domain* (Center on School Turnaround, 2017), turnaround leaders set the direction and expectations, and articulate the commitment to school turnaround. The leadership team also engages all employees and stakeholders in the process of sharing and gathering feedback and making needed revisions to finalize and communicate the direction to others. Each person needs to own the direction and understand how his or her role supports the mission. Setting a direction is important for any organization and it is particularly critical for those seeking to make rapid improvement—as is the case for the lowest-performing schools. To improve rapidly, the school needs to be willing to identify and address the root causes of its successes and failures to transform its systems and practices.

Instructions: Using the space provided, identify the district's and school's vision and theory of action. (Please note for this section there is a limit of 200 words per response box.)

A **vision statement** serves as a common direction of growth for your organization and its stakeholders. This statement describes the organization's clear and inspirational long-term desired change resulting from its work.

Theory of Action uses the "If we do X, then we can achieve Y" construct for transformative outcomes. For example, if the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA) or school focuses on implementing effective instructional practice, then the organizational goal of improved student performance is supported. Thinking through a theory of action allows organizations to more clearly see the chain of changes that will have to happen for the intervention to be successful. This can help in the planning stage to be sure the solutions that are chosen truly align with the impact that would like to be seen.

District Vision Statement (limit 200 words)

Hamden Public Schools envisions a professional learning culture wherein all members of the school community consistently put the needs of students first and foremost. In such a community, the exclusive focus of all our efforts will be to increase the achievement levels of all students, while simultaneously expanding the knowledge bases of all adult members of the school community.

The mission of the Hamden Public Schools is to ensure all our students learn to the best of their potential each and every day they are entrusted to our care.

District Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

Although Hamden Public Schools does not have a written Theory of Action, the Board of Education has identified five goals which, if achieved, will improve student achievement and result in increased college and career readiness. The goals are as follows:

1. All students will demonstrate accelerated growth in reading with the goal of meeting proficiency by the end of grade three.
2. All students will demonstrate accelerated growth in math, with the goal of achieving Algebra I readiness by the end of grade eight.
3. Increase student achievement in grades 9-12.
4. Increase equity district-wide.
5. Reduce chronic absenteeism district-wide.

A theory of action for these goals might be, if we believe and strive to ensure that students will: demonstrate reading growth to a goal of proficiency by the end of grade 3; acquire readiness for Algebra 1 by eighth grade; increase achievement levels in grades 9-12; reduce chronic absenteeism to below 13.2%; and increase equity districtwide, then we will keep our promise to ensure that all students are college and career ready.

Each goal has action steps with timelines and person(s) responsible. Additionally, progress on the goals are measured by specific benchmarks.

School Vision (limit 200 words)

Our students, families, faculty and staff strive to embrace diverse backgrounds and perspectives to build and work together in a safe, inclusive community. We will provide student-centered and engaging educational programming that ensures an equitable learning experience, so all students are challenged to perform to their highest potential.

School Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

If we nurture a positive and inclusive learning environment with structures and practices that promote positive choices and respectful interactions within our community, then attendance and behaviors will improve allowing more time for uninterrupted instructional activities.

If we provide challenging, engaging instructional experience and teach students at their individual instructional levels with proper support, then student achievement will improve.

Section 3: Leadership

One of the clear keys to successful turnaround is strong leadership at all levels (Herman et al., 2008). The objectives for both school and district leaders are to articulate a clear and compelling vision, create attainable short-term goals, define high performance expectations, hold faculty and staff accountable for those expectations, and continually celebrate wins (Leithwood, 2012). Research points to the importance of having a strong leader who can change culture and influence staff efficacy (Meyers & Hitt, 2017) and who demonstrates an intense focus and direction on academic outcomes (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, & Sobel, 2002). In addition, the district needs to embrace the turnaround effort as a district-led initiative. One study finds that the “district instructional leadership builds capacity by coordinating and aligning work of others through communication, planning, and collaboration” (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008, p. 318). Throughout the turnaround process, the district must coordinate the work by setting high performance expectations, sharing those expectations in a transparent way, continually checking progress on those expectations, and — with the school — co-developing further interventions, as needed, based upon the school’s progress (Leithwood, 2012). These types of leadership focuses can contribute to a productive, supportive and energizing school culture that enables adults in schools and district offices to collaboratively work toward improved outcomes for students (Kruse & Louis, 2009).

Instructions: In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the process to hire and retain an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment.

Michelle Coogan served as a school administrator for the past 16 years, in Hamden and ACES districts. In 1998, Ms. Coogan joined the Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School (WIMS), a K-8 ACES school located in Hamden. Over her 14 years with WIMS, Michelle was recognized for her exceptional skills as an instructional leader, and her role evolved; she served as middle school teacher, curriculum specialist, assistant principal, and then principal. In 2012, Ms. Coogan was hired by Hamden Public Schools to serve as the Principal of West Woods School. Under Ms. Coogan’s leadership, West Woods School was identified as a School of Distinction in 2018 based on High Growth in ELA and Math (All Students), as well as High Growth in ELA (High Needs Students). With her demonstrated instructional and leadership skills, Superintendent Goeler appointed Ms. Coogan to serve as the Principal of Hamden Middle School (HMS) in July 2018. At this time, HMS had been identified as a Focus School for three consecutive years.

Ms. Coogan was appointed to the middle school as a key part of HMS school improvement efforts. Although the past two academic years have been incredibly challenging due to the pandemic, several improvements to our middle school program are notable:

- In 2018-19, Ms. Coogan was able to help the faculty understand the connection between the Common Core State Standards and the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The team revised its plan to administer the assessment with a focus on creating a desirable testing environment for all. Improved results in 2019 were noted, including a 5.7 increase in the Next Generation Accountability Index. (from 52.3 in 2017 to 58 in 2018)
- Ms. Coogan has fostered a collaborative partnership with school and district leaders, including the assistant principals and curriculum directors. Together, they have reviewed and planned for school improvement initiatives, including academic and behavioral goals of increased student engagement. In addition, Ms. Coogan has gained the trust of the faculty and staff.
- With the district’s support, Ms. Coogan has formed a team of teachers willing to be trained in PBIS and to participate in the redesign of school-wide behavioral expectations. Schoolwide, there is a consistent focus on fostering a positive school climate, and reducing suspensions, expulsions, and chronic absenteeism.
- Ms. Coogan has worked with district leaders to prepare for the expansion of the middle school and its programs to incorporate sixth grade students - a district initiative planned to begin in the next couple

of years. She has served as a liaison between the architects, faculty and staff, and district leaders. Although challenging in many ways, the addition of sixth grade provides a perfect opportunity to make modifications to the program and scheduling for all grades at HMS.

- During Ms. Coogan's tenure, she has engaged the school and community in deep levels of change. For example, a performance gap between our high needs students and the overall student population is highlighted throughout the five years of Next Generation Accountability Reports (2015-2019). Ms Coogan worked with district and school leaders as well as educational consultants to examine the middle school's leveling practice and advocated for change. While the intention of leveling was to provide additional support to students who were placed in lower level ELA and math courses, the result was actually detrimental and limited student advancement, increasing the opportunity gap within our community. Ms. Coogan understood that it was important to stop leveling within courses, and that there would be a resultant need to better differentiate instruction and develop a system for support and enrichment. With the approval of the Hamden Board of Education, the HMS practice of leveling students was eliminated; heterogeneous grouping of students in all classes started in August 2021.

Ms. Coogan has been a dedicated member of the Hamden Public Schools team for the past ten years. During the pandemic, Ms. Coogan led the effort at HMS to plan for both in-person and remote learning. In collaboration with the two assistant principals, she navigated the ever-changing return to school. In the years to come, she will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure HMS is an exemplary school. Ms. Coogan is ready to embrace the opportunity to work within the CSDE Commissioner's Network to revise and improve our plan for accelerated school performance and student achievement.

Explain how administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform leadership staffing decisions.

The Hamden Middle School team is composed of a school principal and two grade-level assistant principals. They will continue to be coached and supported using the district evaluation plan for administrators. The plan guides school leaders to set goals for the school, and it also ensures that administrators receive formal and informal feedback based on observations. The superintendent will evaluate the principal of the school, and the school principal will evaluate the assistant principals. School leaders will work in collaboration with district department leaders to develop school improvement goals aligned with the district's vision and goals, as well as to identify indicators of success.

Describe the district's role in supporting and monitoring school administration in regards to implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget, if approved.

District leadership is committed to supporting school administrators through the school improvement process. When the improvement plan is approved, the superintendent and assistant superintendents will meet monthly with Ms. Coogan to monitor the implementation of the plan, as well as to review the budget. The collaborative meeting will be an opportunity to address concerns, offer suggestions, and provide support. Evidence of meetings will be captured in ongoing agendas and notes, including next steps.

Describe stakeholder (family, community, student, other) engagement processes and structures (planning and development, implementation, and revising of plan to meet current needs).

The partnership with families, students and community members is essential to our school's success. HMS will continue to ensure all stakeholders are represented on the Turnaround Committee. The Turnaround

Committee will continue to meet monthly to monitor and revise the implementation plan. In addition, the school principal is committed to sharing regular updates with stakeholders through weekly school newsletters, social media posts, BOE reports, PTA meeting reports, and more.

Section 4: Data and Needs Analysis

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Instructions: Network school progress will be compared to the leading and lagging indicators identified in the chart below. Under the “Baseline and Historic Data” columns, please enter school data for each of the past three years. The indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Milestone targets when determining performance targets.

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 YTD	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Student Enrollment	900	876	836	859	860	858	839
Next Generation Accountability Index	58.0	N/A	*	N/A	66.6	68.9	71.2
English Language Arts (ELA) School Performance Index (SPI)*	62.0	N/A	*	N/A	65.3	66.5	67.7
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth *	45.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	61.4	66.2	71.0
Math School Performance Index (SPI)*	59.4	N/A	*	N/A	63.3	64.8	66.2
Math Smarter Balanced Growth *	54.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.2	73.9	77.6
Average Daily Attendance Rate	93.6	94.2	87.1	90.9	91.5	93.0	94.5
Percentage of Students Chronically Absent*	15.6	14.4	38.8	24.8	10.9	10.1	9.4
Classroom Teacher Attendance (Average FTE Days Absent)	17.2	11	13.8	10.1	16	13	10
Suspension/Expulsion Rate	15.7	9.0	1.8	16.5	13	10	8

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 YTD	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grade 7 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	49.3	N/A	41.8	N/A	45	49	54
Grade 8 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	42.6	N/A	45.2	N/A	46.5	49	52
Grade 7 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	43.9	N/A	29.8	N/A	42	47	52

Grade 8 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	35.0	N/A	23.2	N/A	33	38	43
Grade 8 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	36.9	N/A	34.2	N/A	38	42	46
Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 YTD	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24

* Indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to ESSA Milestone targets

Root Cause Analysis

Using the school data, along with the school audit findings reported by the Turnaround Office as a foundation, the turnaround committee will conduct a root cause analysis. Root cause is defined as: “the deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative outcomes within any process that, if dissolved, would eliminate or substantially reduce the outcome”(). Root cause analysis is the process that allows us to move from data to action. The data analysis and identification of challenges and contributing factors tell us what is happening at our schools. Root cause analysis will tell us why it is happening. Once we understand the why, we can then develop targeted interventions to address the challenge. There are several resources available to conduct a root cause analysis. Two of the most common methods are the “5 Whys” model or the Fishbone Diagram. Root Cause Analysis: A School Leader’s Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems (Preuss, 2013), provides additional examples specific to schools. Additionally, the [CSDE Needs Assessment with Root Cause Toolkit](#) utilizes data collection, analysis and protocols to aid in the process of identifying those root causes. **The root cause findings should serve as the basis for school improvement plan development.**

Section 5: TURNAROUND MODEL

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

Hamden Middle School (HMS) will utilize Turnaround Model E to develop and monitor our school improvement plan. The Turnaround Committee reflected on the information presented in the initial audit, and identified areas in need of improvement. Then, committee members discussed strategies, methods, and best practices to guide the development of our three-year school improvement plan. The core components of the model that pertain to talent, academics, culture and climate and operations are as follows:

Talent:

Hamden Public Schools (HPS) is committed to recruiting and retaining highly-qualified, dynamic, diverse school leaders, faculty and support staff. District leadership works collaboratively with school administration to identify vacancies and to advertise career opportunities within the middle school. While Hamden can boast of strong teacher retention rates, we recognize new members join the team each year. For instance, Hamden Middle School (HMS), welcomed 12 new colleagues during the 2021-22 academic year, including an administrator, teachers, instructional specialists, SRBI Coordinators, and a member of the PSS Team. HPS is also committed to increasing diversity within the faculty to better reflect the student population. The need is clearly denoted in the 2020-21 data comparing the race/ethnicity percentages of students and staff. Our staff is predominantly white (80.2%) while a combined 56.1% of our students identify as Black or Hispanic/Latino.

In an effort to promote excellence within our academic setting, we understand the need to foster a Professional Learning Community (PLC) focused on continuous growth for all. As a school, we must establish and protect purposeful planning time for grade level teams and department colleagues. Together, we must create meeting norms and expectations to ensure consistency across grade level and department teams. It is also important to embed meaningful professional development during the school day, as well as dedicated professional learning time, before and after the student day.

When presented with opportunities to welcome new colleagues, we believe it is essential to provide ongoing support during their transition to HMS. As a result, school administrators and teacher leaders will design and host a series of workshops to supplement the district's plan; these will be focused on school operations, curriculum and effective instructional practices. We intend to create partnerships between new faculty members and dedicated members of the team. Our plan is to create a systemic approach to onboarding new colleagues.

Finally, feedback from the HMS faculty indicates that experiences substantially differ based on interactions with assigned evaluators. As a result, we will continue to support school and district administrators with the consistent and effective implementation of the Teacher Evaluation Plan (TEVAL). In year one, however, we are prepared to reorganize the TEVAL structure to include co-evaluators representing both the school and department. Then, we will provide ongoing professional development to support the delivery of effective, timely feedback.

The plan for Talent will require funding to:

- *Contract with educational consultants to provide professional development for administrators and teachers to build capacity focused on PLCs, Instructional Rounds, Data Teams, and Effective Feedback.*
- *Purchase professional resources, such as Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work by Richard Dufor.*

- *Provide a stipend for an in-house leader to oversee coordination of building-based supports for new members of the faculty and staff.*
- *Provide a stipend for an in-house leader to chair the professional development committee and oversee coordination of workshops.*

Academics:

The Turnaround Committee reflected on the initial audit provided by the CSDE. It was challenging to process constructive feedback, but the data overwhelmingly suggests that we must work toward improving Tier 1 instruction and establish a systematic approach to identify a structure for tiered interventions and supports. Tier 1 is the instruction all students receive each day in their classes, and we understand instructional practices must be researched based and aligned with state standards. As a result, the committee is studying the research of John Hattie, an educational researcher who considers the impact (or effect size) of instructional practices on student achievement. For example, we understand increasing that student engagement through discussions and promoting student-to-student collaboration has proven to increase student learning (0.82 and 0.83, respectively). In addition, we will focus on the research of Robert Marzano (Effective Teaching) and Richard DuFours (PLCs).

We seek to increase teacher expertise in implementing three varied instructional models: inquiry, seminar, and workshop. We also plan to continue reflecting on the “85/15” model, meaning our teachers will consider how to minimize teacher-led instruction and increase student engagement in all units and lessons. We also believe it is essential for teachers to learn how to form small groups for our purposeful instruction. Small group instruction will be prudent for co-taught classes designed to meet the needs of our students, including students with specialized learning needs. Improving Tier 1 instruction is a major part of the school improvement plan, and we intend to offer opportunities for teachers to learn and practice various structures and strategies.

Over the next three years, we must develop the processes, structures, and strategies for academic intervention and support. HPS has developed a systemic approach to offering support in each of the eight elementary schools. In 2020, Superintendent Goeler and the Board of Education made a commitment to expand our ability to offer intervention to students in need by creating two SRBI Coordinator positions at HMS. Then, in 2021, we hired two additional SRBI Coordinators with a comprehensive team of a Literacy and math SRBI Coordinator for both seventh and eighth grade. In spite of school closings, hybrid-models, and other challenges associated with the global pandemic, we began to pilot different models to provide interventions. We intend to follow research-based recommendations to establish a clear system at HMS.

The plan for Academics will require funding to:

- *Contract with educational consultants to provide professional development for administrators and teachers to increase teacher efficacy in the areas of instructional methods, assessment, individualization, and effective instructional strategies.*
- *Recruit, hire and retain an instructional specialist who can support the implementation and revision of curriculum, integrate literacy skills, and provide coaching to social studies teachers in seventh and eighth grade. This additional position will ensure that all core content teachers, English, mathematics, science and social studies, have embedded support.*
- *Provide professional development for our instructional specialists to strengthen their ability to coach colleagues.*
- *Purchase professional resources, such as Student-Centered Coaching by Diane Sweeney and Leanna S. Harris.*
- *Recruit, hire, and retain four academic tutors to support literacy and math intervention.*
- *Purchase diagnostic and progress monitoring tools for secondary students, such as an informal reading inventory, decoding, comprehension, fluency, and interest inventory.*

Culture & Climate:

Based on feedback from the CSDE Initial Audit, Culture and Climate is a relative strength for HMS. While we are proud of our accomplishments, we also understand there are outstanding goals and needs. We are eager to address specific priorities in our improvement plan. First, we intend to strengthen our implementation of PBIS in order to increase prosocial behaviors. We must build capacity by developing and strengthening the understanding of PBIS, as well as the ability and skills of all members of the faculty and staff. As a team, we must continue to develop the processes and resources for Tier 1 implementation, and establish systems for tiered intervention and support. In addition, we intend to build on past training in the area of Restorative Practices. Many teachers have experience with respect contracts and restorative circles. Our focus is to ensure all members of the faculty have an understanding of the neuroscience of behavior, restorative practices, and shifting away from punitive responses to behavior. Finally, we will consistently implement Tier 1 programs, such as Second Step and Choose Love, to ensure a common experience for all students. These lessons will focus on mindset and goals, prevention of bullying and harassment, and managing relationships and social conflict. We will also implement intervention plans, such as Check in, Check Out. Students who are identified through an analysis of behavioral data will be partnered with a mentor to work together to improve behavior. Through school improvement efforts, we intend to hire two Restorative Practice Coordinators to support all stakeholders. These individuals will promote PBIS and Restorative Practices. They will work closely with School Climate Coordinators and School Security to create a cohesive approach to teaching and supporting our students. Restorative Practice Coordinators will also work closely with grade level administrators to respond to behavioral referrals and parent communication. We believe these efforts will effectively address the student behavior concerns notes in the audit in a meaningful, productive manner.

Our second priority is to ensure all students and families feel welcome and connected to HMS. The newly appointed Family Engagement Coordinator would work closely with the school administrative team to lead the various initiatives designed to improve relationships between all members of the community. This individual would lead efforts to increase student attendance. They would also help connect our families to community resources, such as the Cornell Scott Hill School Based Clinic. As a faculty, we intend to accomplish this goal by increasing enrichment opportunities, including afterschool and summer programming. With our newly de-leveled classes, we understand the need to offer enrichment opportunities, such as book clubs, writing circles, STEM programming, and more. In addition, we want to offer support to students who need help completing assignments or studying for upcoming assessments. We plan to work collaboratively with the PTA and other community organizations to plan various opportunities for families to connect with each other.

The plan for Culture and Climate will require funding to:

- *Contract with educational consultants to provide professional development for administrators and teachers to build capacity focused on PBIS and Restorative Practices.*
- *Recruit, hire and retain grade level Restorative Practice Coordinators who will support the implementation of PBIS and Restorative Practices, as well as oversee student supports, and assist students.*
- *Recruit, hire and retain a Family Engagement Coordinator who will increase student attendance through outreach to families. This individual will help us build a family center with resources for parents, and promote after school, evening, and summer programming.*
- *Host after school programming, such as clubs that promote academic enrichment*
- *Host summer programming, such as an orientation Program.*
- *Purchase professional resources, such as Second Step.*

Operations:

Members of the HMS Faculty have expressed ongoing concerns about the school's bell schedule. Currently, there are seven 47-minute periods, and students transition from class to class. Each student is assigned to a

Core Team, including their English, math, science, and social studies teachers. Each team also has a special education teacher who works with students who have Individual Educational Programs (IEPs). Students also participate in Encore Classes, including World Language (Chinese, Italian, and Spanish), Health, Physical Education, Art, Music, and STEM. We believe there needs to be additional instructional time for literacy and math. In addition, we would like to consider additional Encore courses that may pique students' interest. As a result, we intend to form a scheduling committee to explore options during the 2022-23 academic year. They will make recommendations for new schedules, and well as to identify staffing changes and professional development needs. We are seeking an in-house chairperson to lead the committee and work collaboratively with school administration to implement and monitor the new bell schedule.

The Turnaround Committee understands there is a need for additional professional development time, and is requesting two delayed opening schedules per month. This uninterrupted time will be dedicated to fostering a PLC culture. Teachers will actively participate in professional tasks associated with planning engaging units and lessons for Tier 1 instruction, administering and analyzing student data, and identifying opportunities for Tier 1 interventions. In addition to the 18 hours of early morning professional time, we intend to hire additional school climate staff to support the management of our building. These individuals will assume responsibilities (duties) previously assigned to teachers during the school day, such as supervising the Student Center, Restore and Reset, bathrooms, and cafeteria. The school climate staff will also support other school initiatives, such as promoting PBIS, Restorative Practices, and the Check In, Check Out program. By relieving teachers of contractual duties, all members of the faculty will have daily planning time and team or department meeting time. We intend to establish meeting norms and expectations in order to ensure all professional learning time is purposeful and productive. Finally, we plan to recruit and hire four substitute teachers who will work exclusively at HMS. These individuals will support with class coverages. At times, they could teach classes in order to release teachers of the same content and grade. In addition, they will push into classes to offer additional support to teachers and students. By hiring a team of substitute teachers, we can provide training in the areas of PBIS, Restorative Practices, and Tier 1 instructional strategies. These individuals would be members of the HMS staff who would have the opportunities to form positive relationships with students and colleagues. The combination of delayed openings, daily team or department meetings, and additional staff to support building operations will provide ample opportunities for teachers to focus on developing their knowledge and skills.

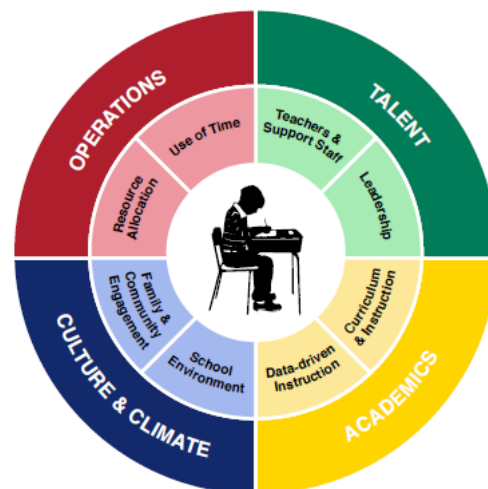
The plan for Operations will require funding to:

- *Plan for two delayed opening schedules per month (September-May). Teachers arrive on time per contract and students arrive at 9:45 p.m. This proposal will address our need for additional PLC time.*
- *Provide a stipend for an in-house leader to chair the scheduling committee and oversee the implementation of a new bell schedule in the 2023-24 academic year.*
- *Recruit, hire, and retain an additional six of school climate staff members to oversee school routines, including: building transitions, bathroom visits, student lunches, and programs: student center, restore and reset, and in-school suspension.*
- *Recruit, hire, and retain four building-based substitutes.*

Section 6: Turnaround Framework for School Improvement

The Commissioner's Network Plan is based upon the framework centered around four key overarching and research-based leverage points for school improvement: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations (TACO). Each of these domains play an integral role in the realization of school's goals to increase student outcomes.

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



Plan Development

➤ Prioritize

As a result of the needs assessment and root cause analysis, the Turnaround Committee should engage in a prioritization process to identify key priority areas for each TACO domain. Although more can be identified, going deeper in improving fewer areas is often more effective. In the table below, list 1-3 priority areas for each domain based on the needs assessment.

Talent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the culture of continuous professional growth • Offer a cohesive plan designed to develop the knowledge & skills of all faculty <p>Increase the consistency & quality of feedback</p>	Academics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Tier 1 Instruction • Develop the processes, structures & strategies for academic intervention
Culture and Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive behavior through the consistent implementation of PBIS & Restorative Practices • Ensure all students and families feel welcome and connected 	Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student opportunities for instruction, enrichment & intervention • Increase opportunities for professional learning

➤ Plan

Now that the priority areas have been identified in each of the TACO domains, a rigorous, yet attainable plan is created based on the needs assessment and root cause analysis. Each of the four domains will include two parts:

- **Part One** - A series of domain specific questions which provide an overview of high-level thinking regarding future actions.
- **Part Two** - An action plan which includes the following components:
 - **Goal:** A goal should be developed for each of the four domains including indicators, data source, baseline, and targets spanning three years. A goal performance measure is a means by which progress toward a goal is gauged.
 - **Root Cause:** Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the performance challenge.
 - **Strategies:** A strategy should address the identified root cause. Strategies should take two or more years to implement, often much longer (Layland & Redding, 2016). If a strategy can be accomplished in one year, then it is too narrow and is most likely a useful milestone within a broader strategy. **Strategies are powerful, high leverage work that builds capacity and changes practice, behavior, and belief so students are more successful.** One bold strategy can have more impact than a litany of poorly implemented strategies.
 - **Timeline:** The strategies (effective practices) to address root causes should be outlined over the course of three years.
 - **Indicators of success:** Indicators of success help to monitor how well the strategies are working to address the root cause, i.e. If we do what we said we were going to do, how do we know it made a difference?
 - **Owner:** The person in charge of making sure it is implemented.

Domain 1: Talent

Part One

Instructions: The Talent domain focuses on systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers and educator support specialists. In the boxes below, address the following:

Explain how the review of school data, school audit findings, and the completion of the root cause analysis will inform staffing decisions.

The HMS Turnaround Committee met regularly to review and reflect on the initial audit completed by the CSDE Turnaround Office. The school data and specific feedback from all stakeholders supported the process to identify priorities. Through the root cause analysis, we were able to identify flaws in our systems and a need to better support our faculty. For instance, teachers expressed a desire for protected time to develop a Professional Learning Community (PLC) focused on professional growth and student achievement. As educators, we must establish the infrastructure and norms that support regular meetings to enable collaborative work to improve teaching skills and students' academic performance. Through school improvement initiatives, we want to encourage teachers to share their experiences and expertise, and we want teachers to learn from their colleagues. Overall, we intend to increase teacher effectiveness by creating opportunities for professional learning and increasing knowledge and skills, thus building teachers' confidence.

Many view Hamden Middle School as a desirable place to teach because of supportive colleagues, access to technology, middle school team design, and the diverse student body. When considering our faculty and staff, we celebrated their commitment as evidenced by overall teacher retention statistics. There are 93 faculty members, and each year we welcome new colleagues to the team. In 2021-22, we welcomed 12 new faculty members, including an administrator, instructional specialists, SRBI Coordinators, school psychologist, counselors and teachers. As a result, we believe it will be imperative to create a school-based plan to welcome and support new colleagues. The plan will address the knowledge and skills needed by new members of the faculty, and our goal will be to strengthen the collegial relationships across the building among new and existing faculty.

When reviewing the Talent section of the school audit, we noted that many teachers reported inconsistent feedback regarding the Teacher Evaluation Plan (TEVAL). Feedback and support varied based on the assigned administrator. It is important for school administrators and directors to consistently provide high quality feedback and support for our faculty. This is an area of focus in the school improvement plan.

Explain how the district and school will cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers?

Hamden Public Schools is committed to attracting diverse, highly-qualified educators to join our team. The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources has employed many strategies to promote career opportunities within our district, including posting positions in multiple venues, attending teacher recruitment fairs, and establishing positive relationships with teacher preparation programs in various Connecticut colleges and universities. On the school level, we continue to promote our positive learning environment through social media posts. It is important for potential candidates to better understand our community; it is a great place to work!

In response to feedback gained from the audit, it is imperative to foster a professional learning community focused on continuous growth. Our school intends to identify all opportunities for ongoing professional

development, as well as reviews of past learning experiences. We will develop a cohesive plan that addresses district and school goals by training all staff then coaching and evaluating their implementation of 3-5 research-based instructional delivery models designed to increase engagement using both building and department meeting time. We must revise the school day schedule to ensure common planning time for both middle school teams and departments where we will develop the understanding of the curricula and plan for the effective delivery of lessons. In addition, we will work with teachers to establish meeting norms and expectations. Teachers need multiple opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills to address Tier 1 instructional needs, as well as methods to establish a positive classroom and school environment. Our approach of teaching that knowledge and skills, planning for implementation of that knowledge and skill, then coaching with feedback on the knowledge and skill sets us up for a more fair and consistent application of the TEVAL process. It also focuses on collective teacher efficacy which has been shown to have the potential to considerably accelerate student achievement.

Hamden Middle School is organized to enhance collective teacher efficacy (effect size 1.57) through the use of teams in a “House” model. The team model allows for smaller communities within the large community. Core teams are composed of a teacher of English, mathematics, science, social studies, and special education. Currently, each team supports approximately 110 students. Each team has a leader who represents them on the school leadership team. This model provides a safe, nurturing environment for both teachers and students. Our department teams further enhance collaborative experiences designed to promote reflection and improvement. HMS is moving toward a model during which teachers will have protected planning time with both their team as well as their department colleagues.

Explain how teachers will be evaluated to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions?

While Hamden Public Schools has a clear plan for Teacher Support and Evaluation, it is evident our teachers’ experiences differ based on their assigned evaluator. We intend to continue the work of setting goals and facilitating meetings between faculty members and assigned evaluators. We are proposing a partnership between school-based leaders and directors to co-supervise middle school teachers and faculty members. We would begin with training the evaluators on two key areas: processes for co-evaluating and on the content of evaluations. The training for processes would ensure clearly delineated roles and responsibilities with precise timelines for each evaluator. The training on content of the evaluations would prioritize a common understanding of the Domains and Indicators on the CCT, key “look-fors”, and effective written and verbal feedback. Through partnerships, we can maintain open dialogue focused on improved support for teachers to quickly address inconsistent understandings and messaging by evaluators. School-based administrators and directors will collaborate to complete formal and informal observations of teachers, as well as regular walk-throughs to develop a set of common best practices aligned with the CCT. This model will also help us to coordinate the messaging around the effectiveness of implementation of the training on instruction and instructional models. Finally, tapping the expertise of the content directors along with the school-based leaders will allow more specific instructional professional learning offerings to be planned and implemented quickly, especially given the changes to team and department planning time. Teachers failing to meet expectations of TEVAL will be placed on improvement plans and the subsequent processes based on meeting or not meeting CCT expectations.

Describe ongoing supports and coaching opportunities for staff and school leadership.

District leadership has demonstrated unwavering support of school improvement through staffing at HMS. Currently, there are three school administrators, and a comprehensive team of district-level content directors. Last year, the district increased curricular specialists in literacy, mathematics, and science at the middle school. Currently, two literacy specialists and two math specialists support teaching and learning in both 7th and 8th grade. In addition, one science specialist supports the implementation of the Investigating

and Questioning our World through Science and Technology (IQWST) curriculum. Through the Commissioner’s Network, we would like to hire an additional instructional specialist to collaborate with the Director of Social Studies to review and improve curriculum and to integrate literacy skills in grade-level units of study. While we recognize each of the curricular specialists have supported curriculum development, planning, teaching, and supporting educators, we also understand the need to create a cohesive plan for their work. For instance, they must collaborate to identify strategies to improve instruction and support each other with the coaching model. Specialists will design and lead professional development in both the department and team setting. Moving forward, specialists will receive ongoing professional development with an external consultant to improve their coaching knowledge and skills. Our coaching model will be based on the philosophy and structures of Diane Sweeney’s Student Centered Coaching, while drawing on the principles of Jim Knight. Additionally, we will integrate Elena Aguilar’s Coaching for Equity principles. We will also have to create common expectations on how specialists prioritize professional tasks and responsibilities. The same external consultant will work with administrators and directors to develop a common understanding of best instructional practices and to strengthen evaluation skills. Through ongoing collaboration between administrators and specialists, we can improve Tier 1 instruction and strengthen the system of support for teachers.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Talent three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year Talent Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-2019	Year 1: 2022- 23	Year 2: 2023- 24	Year 3: 2024- 25
ELA School Performance Index	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	62.0	66.5	67.7	68.9
Math School Performance Index	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	59.4	64.8	66.2	67.7
Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2021-2022	Year 1: 2022- 23	Year 2: 2023- 24	Year 3: 2024- 25
Teacher Retention 3 year rate	HPS Data	75.3%	80%	85%	90%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Talent goal.

Talent Priority: Strengthen the culture of continuous professional growth					
Root Cause: A lack of a cohesive professional learning community resulted in inconsistent practices leading to subpar achievement for students					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Directors, Curricular Specialists, Team Leaders & Teachers					
Strategies to address root cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Increase collective teacher efficacy (1.57)	Set PLC meeting schedule & norms for all meetings	Review PLC protocols, orient new team/department members; reevaluate meeting schedule & norms	Review PLC protocols, orient new team/department members; reevaluate meeting schedule & norms	Consistent meeting schedule, membership, norms & minutes Meeting feedback, observations	Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work
	Identify faculty members who would be interested in participating as lab classrooms for Instructional Rounds	Reintroduce Instructional Rounds with Administrators & Specialists to connect with the goals of professional development	Continue Instructional Rounds with the addition of teachers	Consistent Instructional Rounds schedule, norms, and notes	Professional development to support Instructional Rounds & Instructional Data Teams (workshops, books, TBD)
	Provide training on structures & facilitation moves for team & department meetings	Set a focus for student work analysis & implications for instruction and interventions	Set a focus for targeted small-group instruction based on analysis of student work (i.e. remediate, enrich)	Increased student achievement as measured by SBAC	Stipend for Professional Development Coordinator
	Establish building, team, & department goals (See Priority 2); reflect on goals throughout the year in various meetings with a focus on	Establish protocols and provide training for Instructional Data Teams (IDTs) within departments	Establish protocols for setting individual goals with students based on formal & informal data points	Increased student achievement as measured by SBAC	Stipend for Professional Development Coordinator

	celebrating successes & identifying next steps				
Create a school plan for supporting new faculty & staff members	Conduct Needs Assessment Survey for existing faculty with 1-3 years of experience at HMS Create and deliver welcome packages for new faculty	Survey new faculty from SY 2022-23 Use annual survey data to review three workshops & develop additional workshops	Survey new faculty & staff from 2023-24 and compare findings from SY 2022-23 Use survey data to review and revise various workshops, & determine need for additional trainings	Record of new faculty & staff by year Faculty & staff survey data	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new staff workshops Classroom supplies for welcome packages
	Establish monthly check-ins with new faculty members to support their transition to the building	Monthly check-ins for new faculty members focusing on trending/ individualized needs	Establish check-ins for new staff members (i.e. paraprofessionals, security guards, clerks)	Evidence of workshops	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new staff workshops
	Provide opportunities for new faculty to learn information presented in the previous year, such as (i.e. equity, PBIS, Restorative)	Establish a system to support new staff members, such as clerks, paraprofessionals & custodians	Maintain a system to support new staff members, such as clerks, paraprofessionals & custodians	HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new staff workshops
	Develop & offer three workshops to support new faculty with school operations & instructional practices	Develop & offer three different workshops to support new faculty with school operations & instructional practices	Develop & offer three different workshops to support new faculty with school operations & instructional practices	Workshop Artifacts	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new staff workshops
	Create a partnership between new	Maintain a system of creating partnerships	Maintain a system of creating partnerships	List outcomes of positive partnerships between new	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new

	hires & faculty volunteers	between new hires & faculty volunteers	between new hires & faculty volunteers	and existing faculty & staff	staff workshops
	Update HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook with necessary resources & relevant information	Continue to HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook with necessary resources & relevant information	Continue to HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook with necessary resources & relevant information	HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook	Stipend for faculty leader to organize & facilitate new staff workshops

Talent Priority: Offer a cohesive plan designed to develop the knowledge & skills of all faculty					
Root Cause: A lack of professional development offerings connected to common district & school goals resulted in inconsistent instructional practices schoolwide					
Person(s) Responsible: Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, School Administrators, Directors, Specialists, Team Leaders & Teachers					
Strategies to address root cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Establish a Professional Development Committee	Form a HMS PD Committee & meeting schedule	Review HMS PD Committee membership; orient new representatives; establish meeting schedule & norms	Review HMS PD Committee membership; orient new representatives; establish meeting schedule & norms	HMS PD Committee Membership & meeting notes	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
Develop an annual plan for professional development aligned with district & school goals	Set a focus on instructional models to increase student engagement (behavioral, cognitive, & emotional)	Set a focus on protocols utilized for data analysis	Set a focus on targeted small group instruction	HMS PD Committee Membership & meeting notes	Educational Consultants HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
	Review the district's PD plan & request modifications (as needed)	Develop a district and school PD plan with a variety of choices based on a continuous review of data and schoolwide focus Offer optional PD to non-certified staff	Enhance the school PD plan with a variety of choices to meet individual teacher needs (based on TEVAL and self reflection)	PD course catalogs	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
	Survey faculty to determine PD needs & desires, disseminate findings	Survey faculty to determine PD needs & desires, as well as effectiveness of offerings	Survey faculty and staff to determine PD needs & desires, as well as effectiveness of offerings	Faculty survey data PD evaluations	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
	Develop a cohesive plan based on the	Create a document to highlight PD	Enhance PD course offerings document to	PD course catalogs	HMS Professional

	school's focus for faculty meetings, including building & department meetings	plan with course offerings	highlight PD plan with increased teacher choice		Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
Support co-teachers (English, math, special education, and ML)	Provide specialized PD focused on effective co-teaching strategies in each of the instructional model (roles & responsibilities)	Provide specialized PD focused on collaboratively designing lessons & assessments that address IEP goals and provide access to all students (roles & responsibilities) Support based on individual needs of co-teaching pairs	Provide specialized PD focused on developing systems to support targeted small group instruction (roles and responsibilities) within a co-taught model Support based on individual needs of co-teaching pairs	Increased School Performance Index for subgroups	Educational Consultants HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee
	Survey co-teachers on knowledge of and/or experience with alternate assessments (ex. Fountas & Pinnell, Wilson)	Train co-teachers in alternate curriculum-based assessments (ex. Fountas & Pinnell, Wilson)	Train co-teachers in making decisions about instructional needs based on alternate assessments.	Inventory of assessments (when & why to use)	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee Training in and purchase of alternate assessments
Support Instructional Specialists	Establish a meeting schedule	Revise meeting schedule based on the needs of the team	Revise meeting schedule based on the needs of the team	Meeting Agendas & Notes	Educational Consultants
	Provide specialized PD focused on coaching skills & roles in team & department meetings	Provide specialized PD focused on facilitating data team meetings with a focus on student work	Formalize structures & systems for analyzing data & making instructional decisions	Evidence of PD offerings Meeting & Classroom Observations	Educational Consultants

		Support based on individual need of specialists	Support based on individual need of specialists	Specialists & Team Leader Summative Reviews	
Create a cohesive plan to embed PD into weekly department meetings	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on strategies designed to increase engagement	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on strategies to differentiate student output	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on targeted small group instruction	Evidence of weekly PD, including calendar, meeting agendas, handouts, electronic resources.	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS PD Committee PD resources, including books, supplies, etc.
Support Team Leaders	Establish a meeting schedule & norms	Revise frequency of meeting schedule based on building needs	Revise frequency of meetings on an individual basis	Meeting & classroom observations Team Leader summative reviews	HMS Professional Development Coordinator Restorative Practice Coordinators
	Create a plan for a summer retreat for Team Leaders	Train team leaders in analysis of SWIS data	Create a system for team leaders to share SWIS data on an ongoing basis	Documented protocols for data analysis & system for dissemination	Educational Consultants HMS Professional Development Coordinator Restorative Practice Coordinators
	Provide specialized PD focused on PLCs & roles as a team leader Provide specialized PD on PBIS & Restorative Practices, focus on Tier 1	Provide specialized PD on PBIS & Restorative Practices, focused on Tier 2 supports Provide specialized PD on PBIS & Restorative Practices related to trends identified in	Develop comprehensive collection of PBIS & Restorative Practices resources Provide specialized PD on PBIS & Restorative Practices, focused on Tier 2 supports	Evidence of PD offerings	Educational Consultants HMS Professional Development Coordinator Restorative Practice Coordinators

		SWIS data analysis	determined by SWIS data analysis		
Create a cohesive plan to embed PD into weekly team meetings	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on PBIS: Classroom Expectation & Team Routines	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on PBIS based on SWIS data specific to each team: Making decisions based on behavioral trends	Create monthly PD sessions with a focus on PBIS: Develop a System of Support	Evidence of weekly PD, including calendar, meeting agendas, handouts, electronic resources.	HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS Professional Development Committee Restorative Practice Coordinators

Talent Priority: Increase the consistency & quality of feedback					
Root Cause: A lack of consistency with effective feedback from evaluators across departments					
Person(s) Responsible: District Leaders, School Administrators, Directors & Faculty					
Strategies to address root cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Align TEVAL practices across HMS evaluators	Reorganize all HMS evaluators to create partnerships between directors & building leaders	Reevaluate the quality of co-evaluation partnerships	Reevaluate the quality and effect of co-evaluation partnerships with shifts for building leader	Formal & informal observations Faculty survey results	Educational Consultant Collaborative meeting times
	Create a meeting schedule for all building & district administrators	Revise meeting schedule for all building & district administrators to address roadblocks encountered from previous year	Re-establish meeting schedule to address shifts in co-evaluation partnerships	Meeting Calendar	Collaborative meeting times
	Participate in PD focused on effective evaluation practices & systems within the co-evaluator partnerships Create common feedback documents for formal and informals	Review strategies for effective feedback designed to promote reflection, including written & verbal (i.e questioning, reflection, etc.)	Offer individualized PD support for evaluators based on progress & need	Completed formal & informal observation common feedback document Summative reviews	Educational Consultant Collaborative meeting times CCT rubric for teaching HMS Instructional Look-for checklist
	Collect and analyze faculty feedback through brief quarterly surveys based on frequency of observations	Collect and analyze faculty feedback through brief quarterly surveys based on quality of feedback	Collect and analyze faculty feedback through brief quarterly surveys based on additional needs	Survey Results	Collaborative meeting times

Cross-reference CCT indicators to ensure implementation of best evaluation practices within the “85/15” model	Establish school- wide goal related to “look- fors” in three instructional models (inquiry, seminar & workshop)	Set school-wide goal related to differentiation based on teacher evaluations and student performance data	Set school-wide goal related to targeted small group instruction based on data	Data collected from look-fors Evidence of goals & action steps HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook	CCT Rubric for Effective Teaching Educational Consultant Evaluation “HMS Instructional Look-fors” checklist
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Domain 2: Academics

Part One

Instructions: The Academics domain focuses on how the school will redesign and/or strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment to increase student achievement. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards.

Over the course of several years, HMS has consistently failed to make adequate academic progress in math and ELA, with ELA trending downward over time, according to state assessments. The initial audit completed by the CSDE Turnaround Office indicated the majority of classroom observations consisted of teacher-led instruction with surface-level questioning and limited opportunities for student-centered discourse, as well as a lack of differentiation to support individualized student needs.

HMS adopted an "85/15" model in SY2021-22 as a means of increasing student engagement. The model aims to shift the work from primarily teacher-led instruction to the majority of student-led work. The initial work includes three structures to facilitate the "85/15" model: Workshop (The teacher delivers a brief mini-lesson on a skill, strategy, or content component while students practice independently, in pairs, or in groups.), Inquiry (Students grapple with a question, scenario, idea, material, etc. to think and talk through new learning.), and Seminar (The teacher gives a brief set of instructions and students are given time to synthesize the information in partnerships or small groups. The teacher calls students back and adds another layer of instructions and students are sent off again to synthesize. This is repeated multiple times throughout the period.) These structures allow teachers to serve as facilitators of learning and for students to actively engage in their learning process. By doing so, it also provides additional opportunities for differentiation and supporting students through small group instruction.

Describe how educators will use data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction, and provide remedial support to meet the academic and developmental needs of all students.

Tier 1 instructional interventions are a prime consideration in the models we are choosing. The professional development opportunities and structure will employ the strategies of microteaching (Effective Size 0.88). Our teachers will continue to engage in professional learning in the models, gathering data using key data points in each model, and then using that data to plan for targeted small group instruction. Through the professional learning experiences, we will empower teachers with research-based strategies to match the models to the needs of the students and the content to be learned and strategies for individualizing and providing targeted small group instruction. During team planning time and department planning time, teachers will work with specialists to learn strategies for formative assessment that match the curriculum and student need, how to interpret data, and how to use that data to form and plan lessons for targeted small group instruction. School leaders, directors, and specialists will meet monthly to analyze the data and the strategies being deployed so that there can be a common expectation for how the strategies are implemented with impact and measured on TEVAL. Teachers will implement the instructional structures and bring their reflections to the team and department planning times so that appropriate instructional strategies can be selected and refined. We want to establish a consistent process focused on this approach across all teachers and classrooms, as well as across team and department planning times.

Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.

We will use additional time gained from the operational changes to the schedule to allow time for teams and departments to collect, analyze and use data under the guidance of our specialists. Teachers will plan for the

use of the assessments that are in the curriculum. They will bring students' work and use protocols to calibrate the work based on the expectations from the curriculum. This will help to bring a common understanding of performance levels, thus becoming one of the ways to address rigor from the audit. This process will also put a focus on the curriculum to ensure that an appropriate level of rigor is built into the curriculum. Teachers will then plan small group instruction for Tier 1 (identified as a need in the audit), make recommendations for adjustments to the curriculum strengthening the areas shown to be in need, and track student progress to the year 1, year 2 and year 3 goals using the results from the assessments, again under the guidance of the specialists. The specialists, along with the school leadership, will be tasked with looking for trends and patterns across teams and departments to identify professional learning needs, and then adjust the professional development plan accordingly.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, the Academic three-year goal will include School Performance Index and Smarter Balanced Growth Model (as applicable) indicators for ELA and Math. The baseline and targets should reflect the ESSA Milestone Targets.

Three-Year English Language Arts Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-2019	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25
ELA School Performance Index	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	62.0	66.5	67.7	68.9

Three-Year Math Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-2019	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25
Math School Performance Index	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	59.4	64.8	66.2	67.7

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Academic goals.

Academic Priority: Improve Tier 1 Instruction					
Root Cause: Lack of in depth knowledge and opportunities to practice differentiated lessons/activities designed to engage all students in a heterogeneous classroom.					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Directors, Specialists & Teachers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Implement instructional structures & strategies to increase student engagement	Focus on lesson structure (workshop, inquiry, seminar) & how to maintain “85/15” across all content areas in order to engage students in learning.	Increase Student Engagement through instructional practices such as Seeking Help from Peers (Effect Size 0.83) & Classroom Discussion (0.82) & continued refinement & alignment of the 3 instructional structures.	Increase Student Engagement through instructional strategies such as Jigsaw (1.20) or Reciprocal Teaching (0.74) & continued refinement & alignment of the 3 instructional structures.	Increase in Smarter Balanced Scores & NGSS assessments Increased use of the structures & Tier 1 strategies Decrease in Classroom Referrals	John Hattie & Robert Marzano instructional practices books/articles
	Introduce PD related to instructional models to HMS faculty, & support through practical application in team & department planning, coaching, & the TEVAL processes.	Introduce PD related to differentiation HMS faculty, & supported through practical application in team and department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes	Introduce PD related to small group instruction HMS faculty, & supported through practical application in team and department planning, coaching and the TEVAL processes.	Increase in teacher support for implementing structures & strategies Principals and Directors will have a common understanding of high-quality instruction as a basis for feedback Feedback from Teachers	Educational Consultant HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS Professional Development Committee Furniture to support small group instruction
Implement instructional	Increase rigor through cognitive task	Increase rigor through Piagetian	Increase rigor through Summarizing	Increase in Smarter	John Hattie and Robert Marzano

strategies to increase rigor	analysis (1.29), the use of classroom discussion (0.82), & self-reflection and assessment (1.33).	Operational Stage Strategies (1.28) & Integrating with Prior Knowledge (0.93).	(0.79) & Elaboration & Organization (0.75)	Balanced Scores More students meeting academic targets	instructional practices books/articles
	Introduce PD to HMS faculty, & support implementation through practical application in team & department planning, coaching, & the TEVAL processes.	Introduce PD to HMS faculty, & support implementation through practical application in team & department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes.	Introduce PD to the whole faculty, & support implementation through practical application in team and department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes.	Increased use of the Tier 1 strategies Increase in teacher support for implementing structures & strategies	Educational Consultant HMS Professional Development Coordinator HMS Professional Development Committee
Implement instructional strategies for differentiation based on checks for understanding	Differentiation through response to intervention (special ed, ML) (1.29) & Feedback (0.70).	Differentiation based on checks for understanding through Transfer Strategies (0.86) and Scaffolding (0.82).	Differentiation based on checks for understanding through targeted small-group instruction (0.88) & Interventions for Learning Disabled Students (0.77).	Increase in Smarter Balanced Scores & NGSS assessments More students meeting academic targets Fewer students needing Tier 2 instruction More historically low performing students (ML and SpEd) meeting targets	John Hattie & Robert Marzano instructional practices books/articles Specialists, Directors & School Leadership Educational Consultant
	The PD related to feedback will be introduced to	The PD related to differentiation	The PD related to small group instruction will		Educational Consultant

	the whole faculty, & supported through practical application in team & department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes.	will be introduced to HMS faculty, & supported through practical application in team & department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes.	be introduced to the whole faculty, & supported through practical application in team & department planning, coaching & the TEVAL processes.	<p>Increase the use of the Tier 1 strategies</p> <p>Increase in teacher support for implementing structures & strategies</p>	<p>HMS Professional Development Coordinator</p> <p>HMS Professional Development Committee</p>
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Academic Priority: Develop the processes, structures & strategies for academic intervention					
Root Cause: A clearly defined & consistently implemented process for interventions has not been established					
Person(s) Responsible: Directors of Intervention, English, and Mathematics, School Administrators, SRBI Coordinators & Teachers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Design & Implement a continuum of academic interventions for students who need additional support	Identify specific data points and timelines for data analysis Establish clear entrance & exit criteria for various tiered academic interventions based on identified data points to ensure equitable practices	Evaluate the current systems to ensure students have equitable access to supports and make necessary adjustments	Re-evaluate the current systems to ensure students have equitable access to supports and make necessary adjustments	Meet School SPI Target for ELA and math	EdSight Secure Performance Matters data dashboard
	Research, determine & implement assessments to use as diagnostics & progress monitoring tools appropriate for the secondary level	Provide professional development to interventionists on administration of progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments to accurately identify targeted skills and provide targeted interventions	Individualize adult supports to effectively provide targeted interventions identified through diagnostic tools inclusive of students who are ML & students who receive special education services	Increased number of students meeting academic targets, including at-risk populations	Mary Howard's RTI from All Sides Funding for identified diagnostic & progress monitoring tools as well as potential intervention resources
	Collaborate with HMS Scheduling Committee to develop appropriate structures for implementation of high-quality interventions at	Implement processes & structures developed in year 1 to provide targeted interventions	Evaluate processes & structures to ensure students have equitable access to high-quality supports and make necessary adjustments	Documented systems of intervention	Directors of Intervention, Multilingual Learners, & PPS Specialists, Directors & School Leaders

	the secondary level				
	Identify common, significant academic needs based on trends in individual students & cohorts	<p>Research & develop standard treatment protocols to address common, significant academic needs</p> <p>Build adult understanding around process, structures, and strategies for tiered support systems that are inclusive of students who are ML & students who receive special education service</p>	Use student data, teacher feedback, & school leader observations to evaluate the quality & appropriateness of interventions & make modifications	Documented differentiated planning for tiered interventions	<p>John Hattie & Robert Marzano instructional practices books/article</p> <p>What Works ClearingHouse</p>
	Determine human resources needed to ensure students have equitable access to supports	Evaluate the current human resources & adjust as needed to ensure students have equitable access to supports	Re-evaluate the current human resources & adjust as needed to ensure students have equitable access to supports	Detailed roster of faculty supporting tiered interventions	4 SRBI Coordinators & 4 skilled tutors

Domain 3: Culture and Climate

Part One

Instructions: The Culture and Climate domain targets creating a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for all students and staff, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's behavior management system and strategies to shape positive school culture.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, representatives from the faculty participated in PBIS training hosted by the State Education Resource Center (SERC). We created a slogan, *Dragon PRIDE*, which represented our core values: **P**resent & **P**repared, **R**espect **E**veryone, **I**nsist on **S**afety, **D**etermined to be **Y**our **B**est, and **E**ngage in **Y**our **C**ommunity. Representatives from the PBIS committee met with teachers in small groups to explain Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and gain consensus on behavioral expectations. Then, the committee identified behavioral expectations in the different locations within our school, including classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, buses, library, gymnasium, and more. They developed the PBIS matrix (chart) that outlined the expectations for positive behaviors. As a school, we began to collect resources in our PBIS library, including the matrix, posters, lessons, and videos. The committee also drafted a *Continuum of Behaviors*, as well as the *Responses to Behavior*. They categorized behaviors as either minor or major, and created a new referral system. After training, we began to enter student behavioral data in the School-Wide Information System (SWIS). We began to explicitly teach students the identified behavioral expectations, and teachers worked in collaboration to write universal lessons and to publish videos that modeled Dragon PRIDE expectations. With an emphasis on the positive, we honored positive choices through the Dragon PRIDE ticket program. Teachers gave students tickets when they observed a behavior aligned with Dragon PRIDE. In addition, teachers made an effort to increase emails and phone calls home to reinforce positive choices at school. While we understood our school was at the beginning stage of PBIS implementation, there was a sense of progress and accomplishment.

Our positive momentum was paused due to school closures in March 2020. Since that time, we have made some progress. We established a Student Center, a room to recognize and reward positive choices. Teachers recognize students for their positive contributions through passes to the Student Center. When students visit, they can play games, make bracelets, build LEGOs, and socialize with faculty and staff. In addition, we created a Restore and Reset room. This space is reserved for students who are in need of a quiet space to reflect on an incident or relationship. Adults help students process their thoughts and emotions, and make a plan for mediation and restoration. These rooms are staffed by faculty, including teachers, counselors, social workers and psychologists. Unfortunately, staff shortages due to increased absences and a lack of substitute teachers have forced us to temporarily close these rooms. It is an issue we plan to resolve with additional school climate staff. Overall, we continued to improve school culture through positive events, including the school-wide Tie-Dye Day and grade-level field days.

As we plan and prepare for the next three years, we understand it is essential to build a continuum of support rooted in PBIS and Restorative Practices. We believe it is essential for our teachers, students, and families to develop an understanding of PBIS, as well as strategies to foster positive student behaviors. We believe the consistent implementation of PBIS will address the concern regarding student behavior identified in our school audit. The overall effort to consistently implement PBIS will have a positive impact on our school culture. In addition, we intend to hire additional school climate staff and increased school security staff. Through school improvement initiatives, we will train and support climate staff and security guards with de-escalation strategies and Tier 2 interventions, such as the Check-In, Check-Out Program (CICO). They will also learn how to support students in the Student Center and Restore and Reset Room. In addition, we want to build on our prior learning of restorative practices. Our goal is to have all faculty and staff trained in

restorative language, circles, and mediations. Our priority is to build capacity with all members of the faculty and staff in order to build meaningful relationships, support positive behavior and meet the individual needs of our students.

It is noteworthy to share that our shift to a PBIS model met many challenges. In the past, the HMS faculty and staff were accustomed to a Code of Conduct model based on a zero tolerance philosophy. Their behavior management system was punitive and resulted in high suspension and expulsion rates. While most stakeholders recognized the system was ineffective, many still believe in the value of strict, clear guidelines with associated punitive responses. In addition, we have welcomed new members to our faculty and staff over the past three years, thus creating a need for ongoing training. We also have welcomed new Team Leaders in both seventh and eighth grade, and they would benefit from additional support to learn and implement the PBIS model and restorative practices. At this time, it is evident that we must continue to build capacity through ongoing professional development and establish a clear infrastructure with a continuum of support in order to change the culture of the school.

Explain how the school will promote strong family and community connections to support school goals.

Our HMS families are dedicated to the success of their children and our school. Over the past couple of years, we have strengthened communication through our weekly newsletter, *The Dragon's Tale*. We increased our presence on social media through daily posts on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Parents consistently share positive feedback regarding the newsletter and school communications. We have adjusted formatting and presentation of information based on suggestions from parents. Parents and families appreciate the organizational updates, and they love the spotlights on students and learning. Each week, parents can reply to the emailed newsletter and directly correspond with Principal Coogan. In addition, parents regularly connect with teachers during Open House and conferences. Teachers respond to parent emails and phone calls, and they initiate contact with parents to share updates from the classroom. The partnership between educators and parents is valued, and we continue to embrace opportunities to strengthen positive relationships.

Our school PTA leadership understands the importance of nurturing a positive community, and they have hosted opportunities for families to gather together. For instance, they hosted a summer event at a local ice cream shop for students and families, and participation was outstanding! The PTA hosts bi-monthly meetings designed to inform stakeholders and provide parents with a "voice" in school affairs. The PTA Executive Board works closely with school administration to plan student and family activities, plan interactive meetings, and promote school and community events. Our commitment to strengthening our partnership with parents and families is unwavering, and we will continue to communicate and enhance family programming. When considering the post-pandemic experience, we plan to return to school events that allow families to come together for more events, such as team potluck celebrations, art shows, STEM family nights, and more.

We are committed to improving our community connections. In June 2021, HMS worked in collaboration with Arts for Learning Connecticut to plan the intensive, Tell Your Story. All students worked with visiting artists from the community each Friday during the last month of school. Our message was clear; we all have a story to tell. Visual artists, dancers, architects, spoken word poets, and musicians shared their story through the arts and empowered students to hear and see from members of our community. It also encouraged them to take pride in their journey – their story. This partnership created a lasting memory for our community and highlighted the power of community connections.

Hamden Public Schools has strong connections with businesses and agencies within our town. The summer of 2021, HMS partnered with the Hamden Youth Connections (HYC) to connect students with local mentors. For example, five students worked with local carpenters to build a LEGO wall for the HMS Student Center. Ms. Cheryl Kasprzycki, Founder of HYC, is eager to increase student participation, and we share her enthusiasm to

strengthen this community connection. We are also committed to continuing our partnership with the Juvenile Review Board (JRB). We have worked with the JRB to support students and families, and we want to strengthen the partnership in years to come. We plan to restore previous (pre-pandemic) programming, including Career Days, Pen Pals with Veterans, and the student basketball clinic with Hamden Police Officers. Finally, Hamden is surrounded by colleges and universities, including Gateway Community College, Southern Connecticut State University and Quinnipiac University. We would like to develop a positive relationship to enhance enrichment programming at HMS. As identified in the CSDE audit, enhancing community partnerships is an area in need of improvement.

Describe the school's attendance intervention system.

When students return to school in August, the HMS team communicates expectations for attendance, including how to communicate when a student will be absent. We stress the importance of student attendance, as it has a direct correlation with student achievement. The global pandemic has created challenges for students and families, including attending school. Our district has encouraged students to be cautious and remain home if they have any symptoms associated with COVID 19. In addition, students were placed in quarantine, as needed. We understand student absenteeism has increased; yet, we are committed to strengthening our practices to encourage daily attendance.

Over the past two years, our grade level attendance committees have been charged with identifying students who are chronically absent or in jeopardy of being chronically absent. Then, they must determine the reasons for absences. (Sickness, family illness or deaths, travel, and fear of in-school learning) Grade level committees meet each month and review attendance data. Our goal is prevention; therefore, we identify students who are absent more than 10% of the total school days. Members of the team reach out to parents and guardians to raise concerns and offer support. Team Leaders and teachers continuously monitor attendance and placing wellness calls to parents. School administrators, teachers, and members of the PPS team identify strategies to help students in need, such as counseling or developing incentive plans. Moving forward, we will expand the attendance committees to include additional members of the team, including grade level administrators, counselors, social workers, and SRBI coordinators. We also believe the Family Engagement Coordinator will lead initiatives to improve student attendance.

Describe how the school will address students' social and emotional well-being.

Over the next three years, HMS will develop a tiered approach to meet the varied social and emotional well-being of our students. For instance, we are strengthening Tier 1 Social Emotional Lessons (SEL) instruction by piloting Second Step, a universal, classroom-based program. All students in grades 7 and 8 are participating in weekly lessons delivered by members of the Core Team. The curriculum consists of four units and approximately twenty-five consecutive lessons. Each teacher is responsible for delivering a lesson once every five weeks. This revised plan ensures all students have consistent access to the SEL curriculum, as it was initially being taught by school counselors once every six weeks. We also have introduced lessons from the Sandy Hook Promise, including *Start with Hello*, *Say Something*, and *Signs of Suicide*. Finally, we must consistently, explicitly teach and model PBIS expectations to promote positive social interactions.

As we move forward with our school improvement plan, we must learn how to analyze student data to make informed decisions. We currently use SWIS to collect student behavior data, and we also collect teacher, student, and family feedback through climate surveys. We plan to establish a systemic approach to providing tiered intervention for students who demonstrate a need. Our goal is to develop specific, researched-based strategies to support students at tiers two and three. We intend to explore and implement programs, such as Check In, Check Out. In the process of developing a continuum of supports to address the social, emotional and behavioral needs of students within a tiered system. Currently, we have established a school-wide matrix

with school-wide behavioral expectations. At the Tier 1 level, Second Step is being implemented to increase students' social skills. For instance, a grade level team is piloting a plan to promote positive choices by earning time for a preferred activity. The team has noted a decrease in tardiness and feels positive about their unified commitment. As a school, we continue to develop our tiered supports, specifically for students who need additional support at the Tier 2 level. The school is moving towards implementing Check-in, Check-out (CICO) for students requiring additional support. Currently, there is a lack of interventions to reinforce prosocial behaviors and provide support for students who are struggling with prosocial behaviors. We will continue to build a continuum of support for alternatives to punitive discipline (currently, most reactions to inappropriate behaviors include detention, ISS, taking away things, so we are working on more targeted and positive support for students in need).

In addition, HMS will implement additional instructional opportunities through academic after school programming and summer school programming. After-school programming will be offered approximately 27 days of each 45-day marking period. The literacy and math programs will begin at dismissal at 2:29 p.m. and conclude at 3:44 p.m. (Approximately 75 minutes per session).

During the summer, we will offer a series of programs over the course of six weeks. During summer 2021, we piloted a seventh-grade orientation program, The Dragon Academy. The four-day program was offered for five consecutive weeks, and incoming students registered for one session. Students participated in team building experiences designed to foster positive relationships and comfort with their new school building. We would like to build upon our success by improving the program through increased academic enrichment opportunities. In addition to the Dragon Academy, we will offer summer programs designed to offer academic enrichment and interventions with a focus on engaging and preparing students for the start of a new school year.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Culture and Climate three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Culture and Climate Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2019-20	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25
Suspension Rate	EdSight	9%	13%	10%	8%
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	EdSight	14.4%	10.1%	9.4%	8.7%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Culture and Climate goal.

Culture and Climate Priority: Promote positive behavior through the consistent implementation of PBIS & Restorative Practices					
Root Cause: Lack of a comprehensive understanding of PBIS & consistency with the implementation					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Faculty, Staff, Students & Families					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Establish systemic approach to promote PBIS	Establish job description; recruit & hire two grade level Restorative Practice Coordinators; Provide training in PBIS & Restorative Practices; Support processing of minor behavioral referrals with a focus on restorative practices; Set weekly meeting schedule & norms with building leaders	Retain Restorative Practice Coordinators; Provide de-escalation & communication training; Host parent workshops to promote prosocial behaviors; Strengthen partnership between Grade Level APs & Restorative Practice Coordinators; Lead School Climate Committee; Analyze student behavioral data; Identify areas of need & address	Retain Restorative Practice Coordinators; Revitalize student spaces, such as the Student Center & Restore & Reset Room; Support processing of major & minor behavioral referrals; support regular implementation of restorative circles	Restorative Practice Coordinators Job Description Roster of Restorative Practice Coordinators Decline in student minor & major behavioral referrals Decline in suspensions & expulsions Increase in student attendance	Grade Level Restorative Practice Coordinators PBIS & Restorative Practices Resources Educational Consultants
	Form the School Climate Committee co-chaired by Assistant Principals & the Restorative Practice Coordinators; Create a meeting schedule & norms;	Review School Climate Committee membership; Solicit & orient new representatives; Establish meeting schedule & norms; Survey Teacher & Students to	Review School Climate Committee; solicit & orient new representatives; Establish meeting schedule & norms; Host monthly student programs to promote	School Climate Committee Membership, Meeting Schedule, Agendas & Minutes PBIS & Restorative Practice Artifacts	PBIS & Restorative Practice Professional Development Educational Consultants Sandy Hook Programs

	Participate in PBIS & Restorative Practice PD; Review PBIS matrix, analyze for culturally-responsive language & content; Analyze SWIS data; Present information to faculty & staff	gain Feedback on Climate & Culture; Analyze survey results to determine effectiveness of programming	prosocial behaviors; Visit other CT middle schools recognized for PBIS	SWIS Data Survey Data	
	Recruit student representatives for the Student Accountability Team (A-Team); Create a meeting schedule & norms; Participate in Climate Training; Plan & support school programming	Recruit student representatives for the Student Accountability Team (A-Team); Create a meeting schedule & norms; Train students to lead student-to-student workshops	Recruit student representatives for Student Accountability (A-Team); Consider multiple ways to recognize students; Lead students to support new student orientation	Student A-Team Membership, Meeting Schedule, Agendas & Minutes Artifacts of student programming	Stipend for Teacher Advisor Sandy Hook Resources
	Facilitate weekly grade level team meetings to discuss PBIS & Restorative Practice implementation plans; Train additional teams in Restorative Practices; Read & discuss Coaching for Equity; Monitor the Second Step & Choose Love implementation	Continue weekly grade level team meetings; Create team lessons to reteach & reinforce PBIS expectations; Collect PBIS Resources & post in the HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook; Train additional teams in Restorative Practice	Continue weekly grade level team meetings; Evaluate effectiveness of Second Step & Choose Love Tier 1 SEL programs; Evaluate consistent implementation of restorative circles;	Grade Level Team Membership, Meeting Schedule, Agendas & Minutes HMS Faculty & Staff Handbook PBIS & Restorative Practice Artifacts	Team Leader Training Elena Aguila's Coaching for Equity (20 copies)

Create in-school programming that promotes PBIS & Restorative Practices	Develop a series of grade level Town Hall Meetings (min. of 4 meetings); Address the needs of all students by creating a tiered behavioral intervention plan	Host bi-monthly Town Hall Meetings focused on behavior strengths & goal-setting; Seek guest presenters to support the school values as identified by PBIS	Host monthly Town Hall Meetings & the team assemblies	Evidence of Town Hall meetings, i.e. agendas, PP presentations, & student feedback	Student Activity Funds dedicated to guest presenters Community Liaison for student & family connections
Enhance supports for teacher implementation of PBIS	Develop an explicit process for reengaging students across all classrooms & train staff on its implementation ; Continue to import student disciplinary data into SWIS & establish a plan for regular analysis; Add visual supports to promote behavioral expectations throughout the building	Analyze behavioral data to assist in identifying staff strengths & areas in need of support for implementing PBIS Create & implement tiered behavioral interventions	Continue to implement the plan with teachers identified to support implementation of PBIS Reevaluate & adjust the plan to support teachers in need of support with aspects PBIS	Evidence of PBIS offerings in PD Walkthrough Data SWIS Data	Educational Consultant
Develop a tiered system of supports for behavioral interventions	Create a plan for tiered behavioral intervention; Implement Second Step & Choose Love Curriculum (Tier 1); Promote SEL lessons in school newsletters; Implement Check In-Check Out Program (Tier 2), Collect & analyze	Reflect on implementation of Second Step, Choose Love & Health Curriculum to identify similarities & create a SEL curriculum map; Create a plan for Tiers 2 & 3 behavioral intervention; Implement restorative practices	Document the tiered behavioral system of support, Evaluate & adjust the plan for tiered behavioral intervention	Tiered Behavioral Support Behavioral data from the PBIS database, SWIS	Educational Consultant

	behavioral data quarterly.				
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Culture and Climate Priority: Ensure all students and families feel welcome and connected					
Root Cause: A lack of robust programming to engage all students & families					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Faculty, Staff, Students & Families					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25		
Strengthen the transition to HMS for incoming students	Enhance the plan for orienting incoming students from the Hamden Elementary Schools; Foster positive relationships between elementary & MS colleagues; Improve communication with all stakeholders; Review SEL & health curricula & identify lessons designed to support new students	Revise the plan for registering & supporting all new students to HMS; Create monthly program to support newly enrolled students; Design student & family orientation programs	Implement the transition plan for new & incoming students	Orientation Plan & Evidence of Implementation Reduce Chronic Absenteeism	Assistant Principals; School Counselors
	Host a Summer Orientation Program for Incoming Students; Survey participating students & parents (Summer 2022)	Improve the Summer Orientation Program for Incoming Students based on student and parent feedback; Survey participating students & parents (Summer 2023)	Offer additional evening opportunities for incoming students to connect with peers, faculty & staff at HMS, such as summer book clubs & STEM nights, in addition to the orientation program (Summer 2024)	Evidence of new student orientation communication List of student participants Overview of Program Survey Results & Analysis of Data	Stipend Orientation Program Coordinator, faculty & staff Transportation Costs

Enhance enrichment programming	Survey students & families to gather insight on interest & need (Summer 2022)	Create a survey for incoming student & returning students to gauge success & interests (Summer 2023)	Survey parents to identify strengths & willingness to host after-school programming	Survey Results & Analysis of Data	After-School Coordinator Stipend
	Create an electronic course catalog for after-school programs with existing clubs, intramurals & sports	Evaluate the content & structure of existing after-school activities; Add academic clubs & intramural teams; Survey students to gain feedback	Increase academic after-school courses designed to extend the curriculum; Offer feedback to HBOE & HEA regarding existing stipends & proposed contractual changes	Quarterly Programming Catalog	Stipends for afterschool enrichment programs
	Promote office hours to students & families; Analyze the effectiveness of Office Hours by collecting data, such as student attendance	Work with Teachers to revise schedule of Office Hours to increase productivity, such as content specific workshops on designated days	Measure success of proposed changes by collecting data, such as students attendance	Increased participation in Office Hours Program Increased Student Achievement, such as fewer failing grades	
	Seek community partners to offer additional after-school programming (HYC); Promote community programming in newsletters, social media & course catalog; Survey participating students	Build relationships with local colleges & universities to enhance curriculum & enrichment programming	Solidify positive partnerships & set a system in place for ongoing collaboration	Quarterly Programming Catalog Student survey results	Network of instructors & programs (internal & external facilitators)
	Offer Increased Opportunities for Summer Programming for 8th grade	Evaluate effectiveness of summer programming; Make	Identify students in need of support in 7th & 8th grade using an		Stipend for Summer Programming Coordinator;

	students, including multi-week, weekly, and daily experiences; Collect program data	improvements & increase programming to meet needs of both 7th & 8th grade students	established criteria		Funds for supplies
Offer multiple opportunities for parents and families to connect with others	Create a job description; Recruit & Hire a Family Engagement Coordinator; Collaborate with PTA to build community; Survey parents; Offer events for families	Offer events for families (career fairs, multicultural potlucks, sport & club events) Address the needs of the Parent/Family survey Monitor & address absenteeism	Brainstorm wrap around services or establish protocol for monitoring engagement	Survey results	Job description of Family Engagement Coordinator

Domain 4: Operations

Part One

Instructions: The Operations domain focuses on systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources. In the boxes below, address the following:

Propose the length of the school day and year for students and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task for each major instructional/content area.

The school day (329 minutes) and school year (180 days) will follow the collective bargaining agreement between the Hamden Board of Education (BOE) and the Hamden Educator Association (HEA). However, the current schedule needs to be redesigned. Teachers have expressed a need for additional instructional time, especially for literacy and mathematics instruction. During the 2022-2023 academic year, a committee of HMS stakeholders will examine scheduling models, including increased instructional time through a block schedule. The scheduling committee will collaborate with our Central Office, BOE, and HEA leadership. In Spring 2022, Directors will survey faculty to solicit feedback and suggestions for an improved schedule. Then, district and school administrators will communicate a vision for scheduling changes, including non-negotiable concepts. The HMS scheduling committee will explore scheduling options and make recommendations for change. Upon approval, a new bell schedule will be implemented in the 2023-2024 academic year. It will be essential for the Turnaround Committee to support the process of revising the schedule, as well as to monitor the implementation of the new schedule.

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.

Hamden Public School teachers are ensured six full days (30 hours) and five half days of professional development (15 hours). In addition, middle school teachers currently have two non-teaching periods per day dedicated to team meetings, planning, and duty assignments (total 10 periods). Through the school improvement process, we are committed to increasing common planning time for grade level teams and departments.

We would like to reassign duties during the school day to non-certified staff members to ensure all teachers have five periods per week for individual planning. In addition, we intend to redefine meeting purpose for the remaining five periods per week to ensure there is adequate, protected PLC time for both grade level teams and departments.

To increase opportunities for new learning and collaboration, we are proposing our school introduce a bi-weekly “two-hour” delayed schedule. Teachers would arrive to work as outlined in the contract (7:40 a.m.) and participate in professional development for the first two hours of the school day. Then, students will arrive at school at 9:45 a.m. to participate in learning for the remainder of the school day. This revision to the schedule will increase professional learning opportunities for micro teaching (0.88) to explicitly support strategies in the Talent and Academic domains.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the school Operations three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Operations Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2018-2019	Year 1: 2022-23	Year 2: 2023-24	Year 3: 2024-25
ELA Performance	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	62.0	66.5	67.7	68.9
Math Performance	EdSight: ESSA Milestones	59.4	64.8	66.2	67.7

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year culture goal.

Operations Priority: Increase student opportunities for instruction, enrichment & intervention					
Root Cause: The current schedule lacks opportunities to provide individualized instruction, including limited & effective use of instructional time, as well as few elective course offerings					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Directors & Scheduling Committee					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1 2022-23	Year 2 2023-24	Year 3 2024-25		
Design a new daily bell schedule to increase instructional time for literacy & mathematics, as well as to increase Encore courses	Form a Scheduling Committee composed of various stakeholders; establish meeting schedule & norms	Review Scheduling Committee Membership; orient new representatives; establish meeting schedule & norms	Reduce Scheduling Committee Membership; establish meeting schedule & norms; plan to fade away the committee & communicate ongoing needs to administrators	Scheduling Committee Membership, Meeting Schedule, Agendas & Minutes	Stipend for Scheduling Committee Chair
	Research effective middle school schedules, including school visits; Review Faculty Survey; Recommend PD to support scheduling changes	Implement new bell schedule and monitor effectiveness Reviews student feedback; explores MS. elective options	Review survey feedback from stakeholders to identify strengths & needs Analyze student achievement data to determine initial impact of new bell schedule	Increased student achievement as measured by SPI	Professional Resources on Effective MS Schedules Site Visits to identified CT Middle Schools

	Survey faculty to gather feedback on scheduling ideas (Fall 2022) Survey students to gather feedback on elective courses (Spring 2023)	Survey all stakeholders to gather feedback on new schedule (Spring 2024)	Survey teachers & students to gather feedback on elective courses (Spring 2024)	Survey Results	Survey E-Tools
	Propose a new bell schedule for the 2023-24 academic year	Suggest necessary changes to bell schedule; Propose new elective choices in 7th & 8th grade	Propose modifications to bell schedule & elective courses, as needed	Proposed Bell Schedule	

Operations Priority: Increase opportunities for professional learning					
Root Cause: A lack of protected time for professional learning & collaboration					
Person(s) Responsible: School Administrators, Directors, Team Leaders & Teachers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1 SY 2022-23	Year 2 SY 2023-24	Year 3 SY 2024-25		
Establish a schedule for protected, purposeful collaboration time with grade level team members & department colleagues	Organize bi-monthly 2-hour delayed schedule for additional professional learning time; set a calendar of PD workshops focused on Tier 1 Instruction & PBIS/Restorative Practices	Revitalize Instructional Data Teams Set a focus for student work analysis & implications for instruction	Strengthen Data Team Culture Set a focus for targeted small-group instruction based on predictable misconceptions & enrichment opportunities	Schedule of PD offerings outlining professional responsibilities Instructional Data Team	Stipend for PD Chair <i>(See Talent)</i>
	Recruit & school climate staff; define expectations; train to supervise duties & support teams; build partnership between Deans of Culture & school climate staff; provide training on CICO	Retain school climate staff; hire, as needed; review progress & set annual goals based SWIS data; continue training with climate programs to support Town Halls Meetings	Review expectations for school climate & modify, as needed; identify progress;	School Climate Roster Job description & expectations Dean of Culture & school climate staff Meeting Schedule & Agenda SWIS Behavior Data	Hire 6 School Climate Staff In-house professional development Educational Consultant
	Recruit & hire building substitute teachers; Collect data on daily assignments	Analyze data & make modification on plan for subs; Retain substitute teachers; hire as needed; Collect data on daily assignments	Analyze data, determine value of building substitutes; make recommendations	Substitute Teacher Roster Data of Usage	Hire 4 Substitute Teachers

	Create a schedule to ensure consistent team & department planning times; Establish common meeting norms & expectations; embed micro teaching PD; survey teachers to gather feedback	Modify meeting schedule based on new bell schedule; revisit meeting norms & expectations; review teacher feedback to guide planning of embedded micro teaching PD; support focus on student work	Establish team collaboration time for goal setting with students based on formal & informal data points	Team & Department Meeting Agendas & Minutes Meeting Observations	Team Leader PD
Develop a summer teacher leadership institute to increase teacher efficacy (1.57)	Identify schedule for five days of PD Summer 2022 Redefine the role and responsibilities of Team Leaders	Identify schedule for five days of PD Summer 2023 Improve the Co-Teaching Model with a focus in interventions for students with learning disabilities	Identify schedule for five days of PD Summer 2024 Deepen expertise in High Leverage Instructional Strategies	Revised Team Leader job description & list of responsibilities	Teacher Stipends

Section 7: Sustainability Plan

Instructions: In the box below, describe the sustainability plan which addresses the following:

- How will the school build its capacity in order to sustain progress made using Commissioner's Network funds during Commissioner's Network participation years?
- How will the district support and monitor plans and activities subsequent to the end of Commissioner's Network participation?

The Hamden Middle School (HMS) Turnaround Committee has outlined a robust school improvement plan. The improvement plan was designed to address the needs identified through the Initial Audit. We are committed to using the Hexagon Tool to better understand how programs and practices meet the needs of our community and to evaluate our progress. We will continue to examine the need, as well as to collect evidence of new initiatives. Progress monitoring is essential to our future success.

There is a clear commitment to building capacity within the school community to ensure ongoing progress beyond the Commissioner's Network participation years. The intense professional development opportunities are designed to prepare teachers for the vast roles of their work. Professional development is focused on developing PLCs, improving Tier 1 instructional practices, understanding and developing MTSS, and improving school climate through PBIS and Restorative Practices. Our intent is to build teacher confidence and expertise in these areas, as well as to support new members of the faculty who join the team in the years to come. In addition, there is a focus on supporting instructional leaders with coaching and feedback practices.

Hamden Public Schools is committed to the success of all elementary and secondary schools. There is a keen interest in strengthening the middle school. Superintendent Goeler, Assistant Superintendent Highsmith, Assistant Superintendent Melillo and the team of content directors are prepared to work in collaboration with building-based administrators, faculty, staff, students and families to ensure the improvement plan is followed with fidelity. There is sincere excitement for the revised bell schedule with increased instructional time for literacy and mathematics, as well as for the commitment to protected PLC time for teams and departments. Over the next three to five years, we will learn and improve from our work. We will identify barriers and strategies, and we will make adjustments as we implement the plan to ensure ongoing progress and success.

Section 8: Budget Information

8.1 BUDGET PROPOSAL

After the SBE approves the Turnaround Plan, the school is eligible to receive a Network grant in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(a). The district and school will work with the Turnaround Office to develop a proposed Commissioner's Network budget aligned to the SBE approved plan. Please note that personnel funded through the Commissioner's Network grant, will need to use the following formula for all salaries and benefits:

- Year 1:** 75 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/25 percent paid through other funding
- Year 2:** 50 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/50 percent paid through other funding
- Year 3:** 25 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/75 percent paid through other funding
- Year 4:** 0 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/100 percent paid through other funding

Section 9: Modifications

During the term of the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network, the Commissioner shall review the progress of each school. The Commissioner or 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: APPENDIX SECTION

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 Commissioner's Network.




3/2/2022

Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair

Date

Jody Ian Goeler

Name of Superintendent (typed)



3/2/2022

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Parent

Date

Carissa Lockett

Name of Board of Education-appointed Parent (typed)



3/2/2022

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Administrator

Date

Michelle G. Coogan

Name of Board of Education-appointed Administrator (typed)



3-2-2022

Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

Michael Rocco

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)



Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

Gary Stanton

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)



3/2/2022

Signature of Union-appointed Parent

Date

Anna Lisa Aurora

Name of Union-appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Commissioner of Education

Date

Charlene Russell-Tucker

Name of Commissioner of Education (*typed*)

Turnaround Committee Participation

In the table below, please input the names and titles of the additional stakeholders not referenced above that were involved in the development of this turnaround application:

Name	Title
Faith Beasley-Howard	Parent Representative
Laura Boehning	Teacher, Art

Kara Breen	Instructional Specialist, Literacy & Future HMS Parent
Jennifer Britton	Teacher Special Education
Lauren Casini	SRBI Coordinator, Literacy
Jessica Coffey	Assistant Principal
Cora Johnson	Teacher, Science
Chris Melillo	Assistant Superintendent
Hector Ortiz	Assistant Principal
Amita Singla	Office Manager & Former HMS parent
Susan Smey	Director of Media, Assessment & Intervention
Glenn Xavier	Social Worker & Future HMS Parent

Appendix B: Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE:	<u>Commissioner's Network</u>	HEREBY ASSURES THAT:
THE APPLICANT:	<u>Jody Ian Goeler on behalf of Hamden Public Schools</u>	
	<u>Hamden Middle School</u>	

(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;

II. NONDISCRIMINATION

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 Charter;
3. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Charter Board;
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 C.G.S. § 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, unless the contract is a municipal public works contract or quasi-public agency project contract, (2) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in C.G.S. § 1-267, (3) the federal government, (4) a foreign government, or (5) an agency of a subdivision, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), or (4).

B. 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,

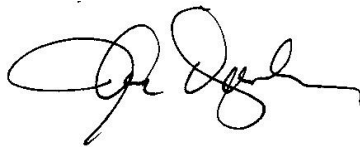
ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, status as a veteran, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to ensure 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, status as a veteran, 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 C.G.S. §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 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 C.G.S. § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, municipal public works contract or contract for a quasi-public agency project, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he or she will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works or quasi-public agency 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 in every subcontract entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a municipal public works contract for a quasi-public agency project, 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 C.G.S. §46a-56, as amended; 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 regarding the State contract, 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 C.G.S. § 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 C.G.S. § 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 C.G.S. § 46a-56, as amended; 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 regarding a State contract, 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)*

Jody Ian Goeler

Title: *(typed)*

Superintendent, Hamden Public Schools

Date:

3/2/2022

PART V: REFERENCES

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