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## CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Hartford

### TO BE PROPOSED:

June 3, 2020

**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 West Side Middle School in Waterbury for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, 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 third day of June, Two Thousand Twenty.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary  
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

**FROM:** Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education

**DATE:** June 3, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: West Side Middle School, Waterbury

***Executive Summary***

**Introduction**

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

Successful school turnaround requires flexible policy conditions and targeted investments in high-yield reform strategies. There is a demonstrated need for support, financial and otherwise, to fully implement the Turnaround Plan for West Side Middle School (WSMS) located in Waterbury, CT. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to secure conditions that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

**Background**

On April 5, 2019, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from the Waterbury Public Schools (WPS) volunteering WSMS for participation in the Network. On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected WSMS 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, WSMS and the Waterbury Teachers Association appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on September 26, 2019. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for WSMS in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d).

## **Turnaround Plan for West Side Middle School**

WSMS, identified as a Turnaround School based on the Accountability Index under the Next Generation Accountability System, serves 1,040 students in Grades 6 through 8. Approximately 88 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 20 percent of the students are identified as needing special education services; 15 percent are English learners (ELs); 56 percent of the students are Hispanic; and 21 percent are Black.

The goal of the WSMS Turnaround Plan is to improve teaching and learning through the use of research-based best practices of instruction that have proven to be effective in increasing student performance. Specifically, WSMS will target Tier I instruction by teachers through the use of strategic and specific professional learning opportunities geared toward improving Tier I instruction. WSMS will provide high quality professional learning for teachers and administrators to increase rigor and establish what high quality teaching and learning looks like. In addition to strengthening Tier I instruction, a tiered system of supports will be implemented. To improve the school climate, WSMS will establish PBIS and Restorative Practices to ensure there is a common understanding and approach to student well-being. Efforts will also focus on ensuring WSMS is inviting to students and families, including branding efforts that focus on positive messaging and high expectations. In addition, the daily schedule and school calendar will be redesigned to increase instructional time in mathematics for students and provide increased opportunities for professional learning.

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

### ***Talent:***

- Design and implement a professional learning series for high quality instruction on topics including explicit instruction, student engagement, formative assessment, and scaffolding instruction;
- Design a professional learning calendar rooted in adult learning theory that provides a balance between school/district initiatives and teacher interest and need;
- Increase high quality instruction by supporting teachers through content area department leadership and providing job-embedded coaching in literacy and math; and
- Articulate and brand a shared vision for teaching and learning that is aligned with state and district standards.

### ***Academics:***

- Create and implement a tiered system of instruction that prioritizes high-quality Tier I instruction that includes:
  - Professional learning for teachers on differentiating core instruction;
  - Research-based interventions by tier on a continuum to support the varied needs of struggling students;

- Creating a Math and Reading Lab for students demonstrating need to receive a daily extra period of support; and
- Adopt and implement a standards-based curriculum in mathematics with supportive professional learning for teachers.

### ***Culture and Climate:***

- Foster healthy relations and promote positive discipline through a redeveloped Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support system and Restorative Practices;
- Partner with external agency to create a welcoming walkthrough protocol in order to make students and families feel welcome; and
- Create an engaging and welcoming school environment through the development of a formalized strategic plan to address the culture, climate and physical plant of WSMS.

### ***Operations:***

- Restructure the school into a horizontal model to ensure all students are a part of a smaller learning community in order to create shared expectations of student behavior, increase collaboration, and promote a sense of community;
- Redevelop the daily schedule to increase instructional time in mathematics; and
- Increase opportunities for professional learning through a school calendar redesign that allows one half-day per month for professional learning for all staff.

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

Through this budgeting process, WSMS 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 WSMS 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.

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

## **Recommendation with Conditions**

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

1. By September 30, 2020, WPS shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined here in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations as part of participation in the Commissioner's Network.
2. The Superintendent, on behalf of the WSMS 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 his 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 WSMS, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising any and all authorities prescribed in C.G.S. Section 10-223h.
3. WSMS shall comply with all fiscal and programmatic reviews, provide any information requested by the CSDE in a timely manner, and report progress against goals and metrics in the format and frequency established by the CSDE.

## **Materials**

Please see enclosed:

1. WSMS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on September 26, 2019.
2. Turnaround Plan developed and agreed to by the Turnaround Committee.

Prepared by: Jennifer Webb  
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Approved by: Lisa Lamenzo  
Division Director, Turnaround Office

# Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report

West Side Middle School  
Waterbury Public Schools  
September 26, 2019



Dr. Miguel A. Cardona  
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## Part I: Introduction

On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected West Side Middle School to participate in the Commissioner's Network, pending legislative authority to extend and expand the Commissioner's Network to include a ninth cohort of schools. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(b), the Waterbury Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On September 26, 2019, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the West Side 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 West Side 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.

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### Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. Subsection (h) of C.G.S. 10-223h establishes that the Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. At present, 8 Cohort (IV, V, VI, VII, VIII) 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.

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## **Operations and Instructional Audit Overview**

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

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

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## **Audit Process and Methodology**

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

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

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

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

## Part II: School Information

West Side Middle School serves 1,040 Grade 6 through Grade 8 students in Waterbury. Approximately 21 percent of the students are Black and 56 percent of the students are Hispanic. Twenty percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 15 percent are English learners. Eighty-eight percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at West Side Middle School is well below state averages in all grade levels and subject areas tested. The current principal is in her eighth year as the school leader at West Side Middle School having previously served as an assistant principal and special education teacher at this school.

### School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of West Side 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 (2019-20):				
Grades:	6-8	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:		+20
Student Enrollment:	1,040	Mobility Rate:		18.20%
Personnel Data (2019-20):				
# of Administrators:	4	% of Teachers “Below Standard”:		0
# of Teachers:	96	% of Teachers “Developing”:		0
# of Support Staff:	40	% of Teachers “Proficient”:		62.2
# of Psychologists:	1	% of Teachers “Exemplary”:		37.7
# of Social Workers:	2	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:		95%
School Day Per Year (2019-20):				
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	181	Instructional Minutes/Day:		329
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	186	Extended Day Program:		No
Student Demographic Breakdown (2019-20):				
% Black:	21.4	% Male:		50.2
% Hispanic:	55.8	% Female:		49.8
% White:	15.4	% EL:		15.3
% Other:	7.3	% Students with disabilities:		19.7
% F/R Meals:	87.9			
School Climate Data:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Student Attendance Rate:	93.7	93.8	93.8	98.5
Chronic Absenteeism Rate**:	19.8	18.1	18.9	17.6
Suspension Rate**:	33.6	35.3	28.0	NA

Teacher Attendance Rate:	94.1	91.4	91.9	91.6
<b>School Performance Index**:</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
SPI:	53.3	50.8	50.3	NA
<b>Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data**:</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Grade 3 – Reading				
Grade 4 – Reading				
Grade 5 – Reading				
Grade 6 – Reading	18.4%	22.1%	19.2%	24.8%
Grade 7 – Reading	22.0%	21.4%	17.5%	27.1%
Grade 8 – Reading	23.6%	21.3%	25.5%	24.2%
Grade 3 – Math				
Grade 4 – Math				
Grade 5 – Math				
Grade 6 – Math	12.5%	11.0%	11.2%	10.1%
Grade 7 – Math	9.6%	11.0%	10.2%	10.3%
Grade 8 – Math	9.3%	8.0%	12.1%	8.0%

\* Data suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

NA = Data is not yet available.

## 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**

Smarter Balanced Assessment scores are significantly lagging below state averages. English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency scores in 2018-19 are 30.4 percentage points below state average and math proficiency scores are 38.6 percentage points below. While on a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, 40% (N=23) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school” and 65% agreed that “teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time within the classroom,” teacher focus groups report that the quality of instruction at West Side Middle School is a “work in progress...due to the variance in curriculums and how often things change here.” Auditors saw primarily teacher-led lessons with low levels of rigor, differentiation and student engagement in the observed classrooms. Multiple students that were questioned were unable to articulate learning targets. District leadership report that there is a misalignment between teacher effectiveness ratings and student achievement. District leadership shared that “teaching strategies are primarily low level...checking for understanding tends to be a one student response without looking for extension or reasoning.” In line with administrator comments and low levels of student achievement, support going forward needs to include developing teachers’ ability to identify and implement strong instructional practices.

#### **Evaluation and Professional Culture**

West Side Middle School staff describe the school culture as “changing” due to the recent reconfiguration. School leadership reports that there is a “collaborative and supportive” school culture with “connections that exist beyond teams and grade levels.” Teachers report the size of the school is a challenge in connecting with colleagues which leads to segmented groups based upon proximity. Teachers describe the performance evaluation process as variable depending upon the evaluator with “inconsistent practices among them.” Approximately half of the teacher respondents, 53 percent (N=31,) strongly agreed or agreed that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.” While administration adheres to the teacher evaluation process, teachers report that informal walkthroughs do not provide actionable

feedback and often focus on redirecting student behaviors while in the classroom. School leadership report that they each have about 25 teachers to evaluate which presents challenges, and while they do conduct independent informal walkthroughs often, calibration among the team is infrequent. District leadership shared that there is a lack of a formalized process to align teacher goals with targeted professional development and that expectations need to be revisited with the campus team. District leadership stated a “need to build an environment of high expectations” and moving away from “the status quo” being acceptable.

### **Recruitment and Retention**

The 3-year teacher retention rate for West Side Middle School is 95% and there are currently three staff vacancies, including a special education position. While teachers tend to stay at the school, teachers attribute this to a sense of dedication to the students. A mentoring program does exist for new teachers, but teacher focus group members report that it is a challenge for new staff “to catch up initiatives and they are put into PD mid-stream without having the full context.”

### **Professional Development**

Teachers conveyed a sense of concern regarding their professional learning. Thirty-eight percent 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.” The district provides five days of professional learning and the monthly half-day sessions are building based. The principal reports that she has latitude in the choice of topic. Last year’s focus was on student engagement and this year will be on learning targets. District leadership expressed concern about the evidence of effectiveness of the building based professional learning and how implementation is measured and the follow-through that is provided. Teachers report that professional learning on the new content and curricula has been the focus for the past five years, but there is little guidance on instructional strategies, rigor and differentiation. Teachers expressed that while they do use planning time to meet with their grade level colleagues and in data teams, they do not have time for vertical planning or alignment.

### **Leadership Effectiveness**

School performance is on a downward trend with the School Performance Index dropping from 53.3 in 2015-16 to 50.3 in 2017-18. The West Side Middle School leadership consists of the building principal that is entering her eighth year and three “house” principals that each oversee a grade level and specific content area. Although seventy-six percent of survey respondents strongly agreed/agreed that “school leadership effectively communicates a clear mission, vision and set of school wide priorities,” teacher focus group participants could not articulate the school’s common improvement goals. Teachers expressed that there is a sense of urgency to improve the school, especially in recent weeks, but they conveyed that there is not a well-articulated mission and/or vision for the school. The principal agreed that it is time to revisit the school’s mission as the last one was developed when they were part of the University of Connecticut’s CommPACT Community Schools Collaborative many years ago. District leadership conveyed a concern for the progress of West Side Middle School, citing a lack of urgency and high expectations for students and staff.

### **Instructional Leadership**

Seventy-four percent (N=43) of teachers who responded to the survey agreed that “I am professionally respected and supported by the leadership team.” Teachers, parents and students all agree that leadership is visible and accessible. While sixty percent of teachers surveyed responded that “there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at this school,” teacher focus group members could not articulate beyond the focus on learning targets and the focus area of mathematics what effective teaching should look like at West Side Middle School. One teacher shared that “while a focus area is communicated each year, a broader vision isn’t. We are responsible for operationalizing, but we’re not sure what that looks like.” School leadership reports that the school goals, mission and vision are evidenced in site-based professional

development, the integration of school-wide academic goals as part of the teacher evaluation process, and weekly data teams, but teacher recognition and ownership of school-wide priorities is a growth area.

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**

Forty percent of survey respondents agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” School leadership indicated that there has been “a battle between teaching at the level of the standards and teaching basic skills that students need.” Teachers shared that new programs such as StudySync have increased the rigor, but resources are needed to fill the gaps between the level of the programs and the abilities of the students. District leadership report that questioning, tasks, and instruction do not meet the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards, which is coupled with low expectations for student achievement. Teacher focus groups revealed a culture of low expectations due to “gaps” in students’ learning. Parent focus group participants shared concerns about how well students are academically prepared for high school. Leadership stated that “there is a lack of progress being made” along with a “lack of clear, coherent messaging of the expectations of what makes an effective lesson.”

Sixty-seven percent of teachers surveyed agree/strongly agree that “teachers at this school use student assessment data to check for understanding to differentiate instruction.” During classroom observations, the audit team found only a few examples of challenging instruction, scaffolded instruction, or encouragement of student discourse to provide evidence to support their thinking or rationale for responses. Based upon focus group questioning and administrator feedback, teachers are not sufficiently knowledgeable or supported in what it means or how to deliver rigorous and well-differentiated instruction. While an assessment system is in place, it is not clear how well teachers use this information to drive instruction and provide supports based upon the data. As shared by the district leadership team, a strong Tier 1 approach is lacking and differentiation is not widely evidenced.

Smarter Balanced proficiency levels at West Side Middle School, as shown in the chart below, are significantly below the state averages for both ELA and Math, with math being of particular concern as proficiency has dropped to single digits. Of note, the average percentage of growth target achieved on the Smarter Balanced Assessment for reading is only 1.2 percentage points below the state average and West Side Middle School exceeded the district average.

Percent Proficiency (Levels 3+)				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	West Side	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	55.7%	30.3%	25.3%	-30.4
Math	48.1%	20.2%	9.5%	-38.6

Average Percent of Growth Target Achieved				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	West Side	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	59.9%	57.8%	58.7%	-1.2 pts.
Math	62.5%	53.8%	35.5%	-27.0 pts.

### Student Engagement

Sixty-one percent of survey respondents agreed that “students are engaged in their classes.” Although professional learning was provided by the school principal in the previous school year on classroom engagement, practices are still emerging. In 18 out of 23 classrooms observed, instruction was primarily whole group and opportunities for small group work were limited. Students shared that engagement varies widely from class to class with some providing opportunities for hands-on learning or student discourse, but in others student descriptions included “all they (teachers) do is talk” and “we’re expected to work independently almost all the time.” In classroom walkthroughs auditors observed students that were on task and focused during the lesson, but primarily passive. As school leadership observed, “teachers are teaching, but students are not engaged.” District leadership shared that instructional rounds also evidence a lack of student engagement, that teachers often “mistake compliance for engagement” and voice a concern regarding a disconnect between feedback and the utilization of effective practices.

### Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards

Fifty-one percent of West Side 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.” While the curricula for English language arts, math, and science are solidly in place and aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards, teachers and school leadership report that social studies does not have the materials required for full implementation. Teachers report that professional development is provided on new curricular initiatives such as StudySync, the new English language arts program. While focus groups stated curriculums and programming are in place, auditors found limited evidence of instruction that met the rigor inherent of the standards. As referenced in the charts above, student achievement at West Side Middle School continues to significantly underperform the state averages. Auditors observed instruction with mainly surface level questioning, limited student discourse to reveal evidence and reasoning, as well as inconsistent pacing. While teachers spend time working collaboratively in reviewing curricula content, developing instructional materials, and analyzing student work, instruction that is aligned with the rigor of the standards is lacking as evidenced by classroom walkthroughs.

### Assessment System and Data Culture

Approximately half the teacher survey responses, 52%, agree that West Side Middle School “has a comprehensive assessment system to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction.” While teacher focus group participants support that an assessment system is in place, utilizing the data to inform necessary interventions is deficient as teachers

report that the SRBI system is not well established. There is not a dedicated block for interventions or enrichments, with teachers reporting that students are regularly pulled from Tier 1 instruction in order to receive support. Intervention programming and classroom differentiation emerged as growth areas through the audit process.

### Supports for Special Populations

Teachers expressed concerns regarding the academic programming and support services for students with disabilities. As reported on the teacher survey, 52% (N=30) disagree with the statement that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners.” With approximately 20% of West Side Middle School’s population identified for needing special education services, West Side Middle School has fourteen special education teachers with an average caseload of twenty students. Both leadership and teachers agree that additional supports are needed to support students with disabilities. School leadership and teachers expressed concerns that the school was not meeting the requirements and service hours identified in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for special education students. Teachers reported a need for more paraprofessionals and shared a concern that attendance is a problem with paraprofessionals which in turn impacts supports for students. District leadership report that “special populations are not receiving the intensive differentiation of instruction” that students with disabilities may need.

Fifteen percent of West Side Middle School’s populations are identified as English Learners (EL), with supports provided by five teachers; three teachers providing ESL services and two teachers providing sheltered instruction. Teachers describe concerns about non-Spanish speaking ELs students receiving limited services and would like to see an expansion of supports. District leadership shared that EL supports are in place at the school and resources such as StudySync provide supports for English learners, but there is a “lack of understanding” of effective strategies and a “strong Tier 1 approach is lacking”

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 Growth Areas:

#### School Environment

Providing a welcoming and stimulating learning environment is a growth area for West Side Middle School. Forty-five percent (N=26) of the teacher survey responses supported that “the school environment is

conducive to high-quality teaching and learning.” There are many places in the building that are unkempt, rundown, and in need of fresh paint. Parent focus group members expressed that the “building environment is not very inviting...it’s dirty and in dire need of paint and sprucing up” and wondered “how can you take pride in this school when it’s evident from the surface that no one cares. The building sets the tone for students and teachers to take the school seriously and it needs help here.” Auditors observed little student work or data displayed throughout the school and limited evidence of school branding. Although there are pockets of warm and inviting classrooms with visual displays and bulletin boards, many were sterile and devoid of student work or supporting artifacts. Although there was evidence of effective strategies such as learning targets posted in multiple classrooms and individual classrooms had materials such as anchor charts to support instruction, furniture layouts were frequently in rows and did not promote small group work or student discourse.

### **Student Attendance**

While the chronic absenteeism rate trend shows improvement, decreasing from a high of 19.8% in 2014-15 to 17.6% in 2018-19, it is still above the state and district rates. West Side Middle School implements several strategies to improve attendance ranging from robo-calls on the day of an absence, personal calls from teachers, letters home, and home visits by the social worker and truancy officer. School leadership and teachers both expressed that there needs to be better follow-up with families, but teaching duties make it difficult to make these calls. Attendance teams are established in each “house” to work with guidance counselors on developing success plans for individual students. Parents noted that the school advocates for improved student attendance and students shared that they are encouraged to come to school every day.

### **Student Behavior**

West Side Middle School’s suspension rate in 2017-18 was 28%, well above the state average of 6.8%. Forty-six percent of survey responses disagreed with the statement that “the school implements an effective school wide behavior management system.” The principal shared that “there is a very detailed policy, but sometimes our staff have a punitive mindset for infractions. There needs to be additional training and a shift in mindset for the adults.” School leadership report that “there is a high suspension rate because of the behaviors exhibited by students and the mismatch with interventions and restorative practices.” Parent focus group members stated that “teacher attendance needs to improve so that classrooms do not have to be split, which impacts student learning and behavior.” Staff report that there are “inconsistencies in behavior management” and “the district has not adopted and implemented a restorative practices program.” While there are elements of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) implemented, there is a recognition from leadership and teachers that positive behaviors need an increased focus. A reward system for positive behaviors and attendance is in place, but students report it is used inconsistently. School leadership report that the Student Council is beginning a kindness initiative to recognize positive acts.

### **Interpersonal Interactions**

In response to the statement “Interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful,” 54% of survey responses strongly agree/agree, while 28% disagreed and 18% were neutral. Teachers shared a belief that staff and student relationships are important and report that teachers work to build individual relationships with students. Students also report that “some teachers really care about the students. There is a good support system here and the counselors are helpful when students have problems.” Student focus group members did express that they “did not like that the focus is on being quiet here. We’re often told to be quiet when we just want to be heard every once in a while.” Reports on staff relationships varied, with some individuals reporting there is a “family-like” atmosphere at West Side Middle School, while others report a “toxic” environment with hurt feelings among staff.

### Family and Community Engagement

Fifty-six percent of teacher survey respondents disagreed with the statement “Families are engaged in the school,” while another 21% were neutral. Parents and teachers communicate through email, phone calls, and notices posted electronically and sent home. Some teachers utilize apps such as Remind or Class Dojo to increase communication. School leadership appear to have positive relationships with students and families as parent focus group members praised the principal and her team for their open door policy and availability to discuss concerns. Of note, the school has an active PTA that sponsors family activities such as Math Night and Game Night. School leadership, teachers, parents, and students all referenced Community Day as a strong event that is well attended and teachers shared that the Open House had increased attendance this year. West Side Middle School has a parent liaison at the school that works with families and also has an established Family Resource Room just off the main entrance. District leadership report that “parents are interested and involved” at West Side Middle School, but offerings need to be expanded.

### Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy

Focus groups revealed that West Side Middle School lacks a range of wraparound services to address students’ academic and non-academic needs. The school has fostered a positive relationship with Wellmore Behavioral Health, yet other partnerships have not been maintained. All stakeholder groups referenced Community Day in which agencies have informational tables and resources for families. The principal shared that in previous years West Side Middle School had a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center program and they were interested in continuing this work in the future. Teachers and parents both suggested that increased efforts to coordinate relationships with community partners would be beneficial.

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:

#### Instructional Time

Seventy-three percent of teacher survey respondents agree that the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time. While the schedule provides 329 minutes of instruction per day, school leadership stated that “there does not seem to be a concrete plan for adjusting schedules to optimize instruction in the core academic areas.” Teachers report that instructional time is not maximized due to having to split classes because of a lack of substitute coverage for teacher absences and there are frequent interruptions for announcements. Teachers also shared a desire for increased time for math as students currently receive 47 minutes of math instruction per day, but have a double block that is 90 minutes for English language arts instruction. Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time.

**Use of Staff Time**

On the teacher survey, 62% of respondents agree that “teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction.” Teachers report that they have ten planning periods per week, with two used for collaborative planning or data teaming. Although structures are in place to provide substantial planning time, the staff needs to work collaboratively with colleagues engaged in co-planning in order to embrace a clear, shared vision of what high-quality Tier 1 instruction looks like within the frameworks of the newly adopted curricula. Time is not allocated for vertical collaboration, an area of need voiced by the teacher focus groups.

**Routines and Transitions**

In response to 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,” 53% agree/strongly agree while 33% disagree/strongly disagree. Students report that when entering the school in the morning the atmosphere is calm, but dismissal is “chaotic” because of where students exit the building and bus placement. Students report that “drama in the hallways” tend to follow into classrooms and can disrupt the learning environment. Auditors observed adult presence in the main hallways, but stairwells did not have a strong adult presence and noise levels escalated there.

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## APPENDIX A: OPERATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIT RUBRIC

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
<b>1.1. Instructional Practice</b>	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.
<b>1.2. Evaluation and Professional Culture</b>	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared, and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and few if any staff were formally evaluated 3 or more times in 2018-19. Instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Some teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19, 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 2018-19 in alignment with SEED expectations. Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. All teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19. Leaders conduct frequent informal evaluations and provide meaningful feedback. Individuals are held accountable for their performance.
<b>1.3. Recruitment and Retention Strategies</b>	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.
<b>1.4. Professional Development</b>	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align to staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
<b>1.5. Leadership Effectiveness</b>	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has

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

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
<b>2.1. Academic Rigor<sup>*1</sup></b>	Most observed lessons are teacher led. Teachers rarely engage students in higher-order thinking. Most students demonstrate a surface-level understanding of concepts. Observed lessons are indicative of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	Some observed lessons are somewhat student-centered, challenging and engaging. Teachers engage students in some higher-order thinking. Many students demonstrate only a surface-level understanding of concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	Observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging for most students. Teachers engage students in higher-order thinking, and students are pushed toward content mastery. Lessons begin to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	All observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging. Teachers push students, promoting academic risk-taking. Students are developing the capacity to engage in complex content and pose higher-level questions to the teacher and peers. Teachers promote high expectations.
<b>2.2. Student Engagement*</b>	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.
<b>2.3. Differentiation and Checking for</b>	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and

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

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

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
<b>3.1. School Environment</b>	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to no student work or data is displayed to help convey a sense of pride and high expectations.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean, displaying data and student work; however, some sections lack visual stimulation. The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in classrooms and communal spaces.	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Data and student work are visible and present throughout the school, inspiring students and teachers to do their best work. There is clear branding and consistent messaging throughout the school, promoting school identity and pride.
<b>3.2. Student Attendance</b>	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $\leq 88\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 20\%$ .	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 88\%$ and $\leq 93\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 15\%$ and $\leq 20\%$ .	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 93\%$ and $\leq 97\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 10\%$ and $\leq 15\%$ .	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily attendance is $> 97\%$ and chronic absenteeism is $\leq 10\%$ .
<b>3.3. Student Behavior</b>	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 # 2017-18 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 $\leq 10\%$ .
<b>3.4. Interpersonal Interactions</b>	There is a weak sense of community. The quality and types of student, adult, and student/adult interactions raise concerns. There are signs of divisiveness or hostility among students and with staff. There are minimal signs of connections between students and staff; interactions are	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There are some concerns around climate and tone. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school is an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/Adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
<b>3.5. Family and Community Engagement</b>	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.
<b>3.6. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy</b>	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community partners to expand services offered through the school.	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner engagement is spotty and event-specific.	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. The school has sustained community partnerships to help address student needs.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
<b>4.1. Adequate Instructional Time</b>	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 $\leq 5$ hours of instruction per day, and $\leq 60$ minutes of ELA time. <sup>2</sup>	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 $\leq 5.5$ hours of instruction per day, and $> 60$ and $\leq 90$ 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 $\leq 6$ hours of instruction per day, and $> 90$ and $\leq 120$ 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.
<b>4.2. Use of Instructional Time*</b>	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task. Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time. Lesson schedules are moderately well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers could be	Most staff and students use time well. A handful of students require redirection; however, the majority of students transition quickly to academic work when prompted by the teacher. There is minimal downtime. Lessons are well planned, paced, and	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task. Students transition promptly to academic work

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

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	to use class time in a constructive manner.	more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	with minimal cues and reminders from teachers.
<b>4.3. Use of Staff Time</b>	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.
<b>4.4. Routines and Transitions</b>	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 IX

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

Date Issued: August 9, 2019

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona  
Commissioner of Education  
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### AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education’s nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie

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

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## 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 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 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 shall give 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 (2019):

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

- 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.
- 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 a ninth 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 Bureau Chief  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
E-mail: [lisa.lamenzo@ct.gov](mailto:lisa.lamenzo@ct.gov)

## PART III: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

### Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Waterbury Public Schools		
Name of School:	West Side Middle School	Grade Levels:	6-8
Name of School Principal:	Mr. Peter McCasland	# of Years Serving at this School	2 months
		# of Years in Total as Administrator	7 years
Turnaround Committee Chairperson: <sup>1</sup>	Dr. Verna L. Ruffin		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	203-574-8000		
E-mail of Chairperson:	vruffin@waterbury.k12.ct.us		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	236 Grand St.	
	City:	Waterbury	Zip Code: 06702
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Mr. Charles Pagano		
Signature of School Board Chairperson: <sup>2</sup>		Date:	
Name of Superintendent:	Dr. Verna L. Ruffin		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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 one-sentence 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)

All Waterbury Public School students will graduate ready to transform their world.

### District Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

**IF schools have:**

**Strong Leadership:** A principal to prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency, monitor goals, customize and target support to meet needs

**Instructional Transformation:** Processes and supports that help teachers collaborate to improve standards-based instructional practice so that students can engage in deep learning tasks, respond to student learning needs, provide rigorous evidence-based instruction, and remove barriers while providing opportunities

**Culture Shift:** Staff ensure collective responsibility for both the quality of instruction and student learning and success, engage students and families in pursuing education goals

**Talent Development:** Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent, target professional learning opportunities, while setting clear performance expectations

**THEN schools will dramatically improve, and student learning will increase**

### School Vision (limit 200 words)

All West Side Middle School students will receive a high quality education and opportunities using research-based instructional practices so as to support student creativity, and instill an emphasis of life-long learning for all students, so they can meet the challenges of an ever changing world.

### School Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

If we develop and sustain collaborative practices in an engaging and inclusive environment that emphasizes high expectations and continuous growth for all students, then all students will be prepared for their future endeavors.

### 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 ensure an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment, is in place.

The district has replaced the principal of West Side Middle School for the 2019-2020 school year with an outstanding leader that has a proven success in student improvement in an urban environment. The district was looking for a turnaround leader who can build relationships while not accepting the status quo. Sustainability and laser-like focus on improving teaching and learning are key components for the leader needed at West Side Middle School. Mr. McCasland was selected from Kennedy High School who has taken on several initiatives at the school that have yielded positive results, which includes increasing graduation rates and reducing suspensions rates. It is important to note that West Side Middle School is a feeder school to Kennedy High School, in which Mr. McCasland already has a well-established reputation within the community.

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

Administrators will be evaluated annually using the district evaluation plan for administrators using the SEED model. Specifically, for Turnaround schools, the assistant superintendent will be evaluating the principal of the school and monitor the evaluations of all assistant principals of the school. The district has recently provided additional training and support in setting rigorous Student Learning Objectives that are directly aligned to district and school goals.

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.

The district, under the leadership of the Deputy Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer and Assistant Superintendent, will conduct monthly roundtables for all Commissioner Network and Turnaround Schools. At this roundtable, a specific protocol will be used to establish expectations, monitor the implementation of the turnaround plan, analyze data, provide support and guidance, and monitor the budget.

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

Stakeholders were invited to the planning and development stage of the plan and are represented on the Turnaround Committee. They have been meeting on a bi-weekly schedule to create and refine the plan. If admitted to the Commissioner’s Network, the Turnaround Committee will continue to meet monthly following the district monthly roundtable to monitor and revise the implementation plan.

## 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.

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Student enrollment	973	972	978	1040	N/A	N/A	N/A
Accountability Index	50.8	53.4	56.1	N/A	58.7	61.3	63.9
English Language Arts (ELA) School Performance Index (SPI)*	49.8	50.0	53.6	N/A	55.6	57.6	59.5
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model*	42.3	44.6	58.7	N/A	60.1*	64.5*	68.9*
Math School Performance Index (SPI)*	40.2	41.5	42.0	N/A	48.2	50.9	53.6
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model*	40.8	41.7	35.5	N/A	54.4	59.0	63.6
Average daily attendance rate	93.8	93.8	98.5	93.6	99	99	99
Chronic absenteeism rate*	18.10	18.90	17.60	19.8	14.1	13.1	12.1
Teacher attendance rate	91.4	91.9	91.6	92	92	93	94
Suspension rate	35.3	28.0	N/A	33	24	22	19
In-school suspensions (count)	637	545	594	103	475	375	275
Out-of-school suspensions (count)	570	336	383	209	325	275	200
Expulsions (count)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Grade 3 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Grade 6 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	22.1	19.2	24.8	N/A	29.8	34.8	39.8
Grade 7 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	21.4	17.5	27.1	N/A	32.1	37.1	42.1
Grade 8 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	21.3	25.5	24.2	N/A	29.2	34.2	39.2
Grade 3 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	11.0	11.2	10.1	N/A	15.1	20.1	25.1
Grade 7 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	11.0	10.2	10.3	N/A	15.3	20.3	25.3
Grade 8 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	8.0	12.1	8.0	N/A	13.0	18.0	23.0
Grade 5 NGSS Science Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 8 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	19	N/A	24	28	32
Grade 11 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 ELA SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 Math SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of Students enrolled in dual enrollment or AP courses	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate-High Needs Students (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* 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 symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom” (Preuss, 2003, p. 3). A root cause analysis addresses the problem (weak demonstration of an effective professional practice), rather than the symptom (low student achievement), eliminates wasted effort, conserves resources, and informs strategy selection (Preuss, 2003). 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. Identifying the root cause will help determine which practices are most appropriate to address weaknesses. *Root Cause Analysis: A School Leader’s Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems* (Preuss, 2013), provides additional examples specific to schools. **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.

West Side Middle School – Commissioner’s Network Model E.

Through participation in the Commissioner’s Network, West Side Middle School will improve the teaching and learning through the use of research-based and best practices of instruction, that have proven to be effective in increasing student performance. Specifically, WSMS will target Tier 1 instruction by teachers, through the use of strategic and specific professional learning opportunities, geared toward improving Tier 1 instruction.

Talent: WSMS will provide high quality professional learning for teachers and administrators to address the deficits identified in the audit in three methods

1. Professional learning sessions during identified time in the calendar
2. Job-embedded opportunities (content department heads and coaches in literacy and mathematics).
3. Self-directed professional learning using an online system

The professional learning will provide teachers with the strategies they need to increase rigor, and establish what high quality teaching and learning looks like at WSMS. Professional learning will specifically address strategies and instructional practices:

- Explicit Instruction
- Student engagement
- Formative Assessment and feedback
- Teaching cognitive & metacognitive strategies to students
- Systematically designing and scaffolding instruction
- Utilizing Instructional Technology

In addition, the audit demonstrated a need for increased leadership effectiveness at WSMS. In particular, the need for a clear vision of teaching and learning at the school that needs to be communicated and implemented and progress monitored continuously. To address leadership effectiveness, administrators will attend the Harvard School Turnaround Leaders Institute in addition to a monthly Waterbury Turnaround Roundtable to support and monitor progress.

In the Talent domain, the recruitment and retention of Mathematics and Science teachers continues to be an issue in providing high-quality teachers for students. To address this critical shortage in Math and Science, WSMS will coordinate with central office to provide fellowship opportunities to increase teacher effectiveness for Mathematics and Science teachers through paid stipends.

Academics: WSMS is need of establishing a mathematics curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards. The school will also focus on strengthening Tier 1 instruction while establishing a tiered system of supports for students in English Language Arts and Mathematics. To address the achievement gap, teachers will employ high leverage practices for instruction aligned to Talent Section of the Turnaround Plan.

Culture & Climate: WSMS was cited as having a school environment that is uninviting to students and families and is thus not a learning environment. WSMS will establish PBIS and Restorative Practices to

ensure there is a common understanding and approach to student well-being. The school will also partner with a regional agency to conduct Welcoming Walkthroughs to ensure WSMS is inviting to students and families. The initiative aims to make parents and students feel welcomed to celebrate the diversity of the school community, and set unique goals to improve how inviting the school appears to its community, which ultimately have a positive impact on student achievement. The school will prioritize strategies based on the initial Welcoming Walkthrough data. School branding strategies will focus on positive messaging and high expectations through a series of multimedia efforts. In addition, all staff will participate in and utilize restorative practices.

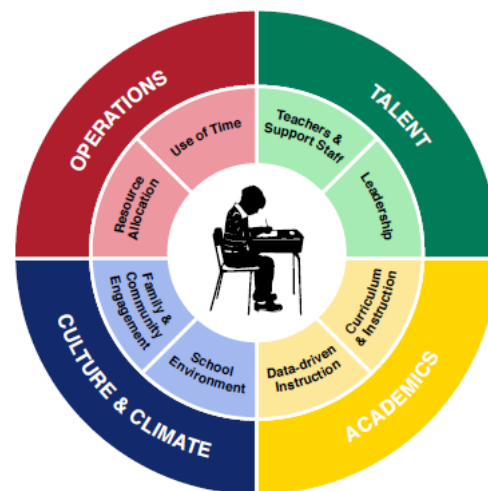
Operations: WSMS will extend time for students to engage in mathematics and science while also extending professional learning opportunities for teachers.

In addition, the school will be organized in a horizontal model to ensure that students are all a part of a smaller learning community. The research suggests that smaller learning communities provide many opportunities to develop meaningful relationships between teachers and students. These relationships are an integral factor in increasing student achievement. A smaller learning community also creates an atmosphere of shared expectations of student behavior, collaboration, teaching and learning and helps to promote a sense of community for both teachers and students. There are approximately 110 students on each team, and each house has three teams of five teachers.

## 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.

<b>Talent</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Quality Instruction</li> <li>• Develop a shared vision for teaching and learning</li> </ul>	<b>Academics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve academic rigor and high teacher expectations for students</li> <li>• Create a Standards-based Math curriculum for students</li> </ul>
<b>Culture and Climate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesign, Implement and Progress Monitor WSMS PBIS &amp; Safe School Climate Program</li> <li>• To create an engaging and welcoming school environment for parents and community members</li> </ul>	<b>Operations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelop WSMS daily schedule to increase math instructional time for students</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for professional learning through a school calendar redesign</li> </ul>

#### ☐ 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:** Who is in charge of ensuring the plan 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 support staff. 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.

After a review of school data, audit report findings, and the completion of the root cause analysis, the following staffing decisions will be created and addressed. Given low performance in math at WSMS (2018-2019) Math Performance Index - 28.0/50.0), there is a need to further professionally develop the math department at WSMS, especially in the area of Tier 1 instructional practices. These instructional practices will include but are not limited to: differentiation of instruction, project-based learning, and higher order questioning technique. In addition, the numeracy specialist position needs to be expanded into more positions to support struggling students in Tier 1 instruction. This position must be redeveloped and assigned a new curriculum that is aligned horizontally and vertically to district benchmark assessments and standardized tests. This existing position is very important to support identified students who need extra remediation in math skills and content. Furthermore, the creation of an ELA coach would assist in implementing research-based Tier 1 strategies for teachers to utilize in their classes. Although ELA data show an increase for the 2018-2019 school year, the scores lag behind the state average and ELA needs a refocus and remediation strategies implemented and monitored. It is essential that the ELA coach has a structured protocol for coaching cycles in the school and is focused on job-embedded professional learning.

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

WSMS teachers are in need of authentic and expert professional learning, especially in the area of Tier 1 instruction. The district has created a competitive beginning salary schedule to attract new teachers to the district. Also, the district has begun created job fairs, in an effort to attract new talent. In an effort to support, develop and retain high-quality teachers, professional learning is a necessity for WSMS. Professional learning needs to be offered on a more consistent basis and preferably building-based and content-based. This learning must be high-quality and research-based, to meet teacher needs. Teachers must be given choice in professional learning, but also mandated to take professional learning that aligns directly to the school's mission and vision. It is the focus of the WSMS administration to retain high quality staff, specifically in the shortage areas. WSMS will collaborate with the district leadership to provide a fellowship for teachers in the STEM field, starting specifically in mathematics to provide opportunity for additional professional learning and stipends for teachers who apply and are accepted. This would be modeled off of similar initiatives in New York City, such as Math for America.

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

WSMS teachers will be evaluated using the Connecticut SEED Model for Educators. Continued progress-monitoring is needed ensure high-quality instruction and expectations are being facilitated and held by teachers. Teacher evaluations will consist of both formal and informal evaluations and teachers will be provided with constructive and formative feedback. School administration and content-area supervisors will collaboratively conduct informal observations and walk-throughs and use this process to develop a set of "look-for" for instruction.

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

There is currently 1 math coach position at WSMS that is critical to facilitating math IDT meetings as well as supporting teachers with Tier 1 instruction in their classrooms. Unfortunately, this coach is shared with three other buildings, in the district. WSMS is in need of a math coach assigned strictly to our building. Currently, there is no other instructional coach who works with the core content areas at WSMS. To continue progress recently made in ELA, a full-time coach would be needed to provide ample opportunities for effective coaching cycles. Commissioner Network money is vital to establish these two

positions at WSMS. In addition, WSMS is in need of instructional leaders for each department, similar to department heads in high schools, to ensure that instructional practices and Tier 1 instruction are aligned to curriculum, common-core standards and district benchmark assessments, as well as coaching department members in Best practices of instruction. The coaches, instructional leaders, content supervisors and the building-based administrators will collaborate regularly to develop and implement a strong coaching system. The coaches and instructional leaders will support the teachers on a weekly/daily basis. The level of support will depend on the developmental needs of the teacher, as well as the teacher's experience. Through continuous collaboration and input from teachers and instructional leaders, the coaches will provide frequent and embedded coaching through model lessons, co-teaching and observations. The coaches will also help to lead, structure and facilitate common planning time and school-based professional development. To address leadership effectiveness, administrators will attend the Harvard School Turnaround Leaders Institute in addition to a monthly Waterbury Turnaround Roundtable to support and monitor progress.

***This plan for Talent will require:***

- *1.0 FTE Mathematics coach and 1.0 FTE Literacy coach*
- *Stipends for Department Leaders based on number of teachers in the department*
- *Professional learning for Turnaround Leaders at the Harvard Graduate School of Education*
- *Contract with an external partner for math professional learning (9 days)*
- *Contract with an external partner to work in collaboration with the administrative staff to establish high quality instruction and professional learning series (15 days)*
- *Contract with an external partner for an on-line learning platform for educator professional learning*

**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:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Average Percentage of Target Achieved in Mathematics	Smarter Balanced	35.5%	54.4%	59.0%	63.6%
Average Percentage of Target Achieved in ELA	Smarter Balanced	58.7%	60.1%	64.5%	68.9%

### 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.

<b>Talent Priority:</b> High Quality Instruction					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Teachers lack the knowledge and skills of Best Practices of Instruction					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Central Office, Instructional Leaders and Coaches					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Create Content Area Department Leadership and provide job-embedded coaching with literacy and math coaches</b>	<p>Establish job descriptions and Hire content area leaders</p> <p>Define content area department leadership expectations and establish protocols and coaching cycles</p> <p>Establish job descriptions and hire a literacy and mathematics coach</p> <p>Provide coaching professional learning for all department heads and coaches</p>	<p>Monitor impact of content area department leadership by using an established system of walkthrough data and student learning</p>	<p>Continue to monitor impact of content area department leadership by using an established system of walkthrough data and student learning</p>	<p>Smarter Balanced School Index and Growth scores in Mathematics and English Language Arts</p> <p>i-Ready Scores</p> <p>CREC Science Scores</p> <p>StudySync Scores</p> <p>NGSS scores</p> <p>Walkthrough data</p>	<p>Department Head Agreement with high schools</p> <p>Coaching model professional learning</p>
<b>Establish school-wide high quality instruction vernacular and expectations</b>	<p>Design and implement a professional learning series for high quality instruction starting with a focus on opportunity gaps and lesson design (Explicit Instruction and Student engagement) that establishes an intentional instructional planning guide</p>	<p>Professional learning for high quality instruction will focus on Formative Assessment and feedback Teaching cognitive &amp; metacognitive strategies</p>	<p>Professional learning for high quality instruction on systematically designing and scaffolding instruction and Utilizing Instructional Technology</p>	<p>Lesson plans</p> <p>Smarter Balanced and NGSS Scores</p> <p>Walk-through observation data</p>	<p>Professional learning series calendar</p> <p>External partner for high quality professional learning</p>
<b>Design a professional learning calendar that provides a balance</b>	<p>Professional learning for select staff to attend the</p>	<p>Professional learning for additional staff</p>	<p>Professional learning for additional staff</p>	<p>Number of staff attending the Turnaround</p>	<p>Professional Learning Calendar</p>

between school/district initiatives and teacher interest rooted in adult learning theory	Turnaround Leader Institute at Harvard	to attend the Turnaround Leader Institute at Harvard	to attend the Turnaround Leader Institute at Harvard	Institute who also present and take on leadership roles within the school	Achieve the Core Professional Learning Standards
	Professional learning for all math teachers aligned with new curriculum and mathematical standards/practices  Identify teacher interest in professional learning and research systems that provide professional learning on demand for staff	Professional learning for all math teachers aligned with new curriculum and based on student data  Purchase and utilize on-line professional learning system and monitor usage	Professional learning for all math teachers aligned with new curriculum and based on student data  Utilize on-line professional learning series to create a badging system that allows educators to earn “badges” as they take advantage of more professional learning opportunity	Smarter Balanced Growth and Performance data  Utilization of the on-line platform  Number of teachers earning unique badges for professional learning	Online professional learning systems  Contract for mathematics curriculum

<b>Talent Priority:</b> Create and Implement a shared vision for teaching and learning at WSMS					
<b>Root Cause:</b> WSMS faculty and students lack a clear and specific articulated vision for teaching and learning					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Assistant Principals, Faculty, Students, and Parents					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Articulate and brand a vision for high quality instruction and learning that is aligned with state and district standards</b>	Through survey and focus groups of WSMS staff, the vision and mission will be visible and aligned to daily teaching and behavior expectations.	Vision is constantly articulated and visible in the school community and that vision is progress monitored and reevaluated.	Monitor and revise process as necessary  Based on implementation, update the Intentional Instruction Planning Guide	All stakeholders are able to communicate the school vision and know how it aligns to state and district standards.	Posters in every classroom depicting vision.
	Intentional Instruction Planning Guide for all classrooms will be posted and monitored via administrative and department head walkthroughs	Monitor implementation		Instructional planning guide posted  Walkthrough data  Student scores in mathematics, science and ELA	Assignments are created that align to the vision and are stated on the assignments. Instructional planning guide posters  Staff meetings to establish expectations

## 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.

WSMS is a 6-8 comprehensive middle school that functions on a team-centered philosophy. Both the district and the school have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as the basis for educating students and have aligned district curricula to meet those standards. Some district curriculum, such as math, is in the process of being redeveloped to align more efficiently to the CCSS. The ELA curriculum is current and being used daily by teachers. The science curriculum is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and is currently utilized by science teachers. All students take the core English, math, science and social studies course for the respective grade they are in, as well as physical education/health, and a variety of unified arts options. The instructional philosophy is to expose students to the standards that they are responsible for knowing and meeting, as well as exposure to a variety of selective opportunities that may elicit interest by the students to further pursue those areas.

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

WSMS staff will, through the use of instructional data teams (IDT), common planning meetings (CPT), and through the creation of a school wide data team and department-based meeting times run by the instructional leader of the department, will analyze both standardized testing data, district benchmark assessments and teacher-created assessment data to inform their instructional practices. The role of the school-wide data team will be to ensure that through collaborated practices, the team will analyze the effect of adult actions on identified student outcomes. In the case of WSMS, the areas of concentration are: increasing ELA and Math outcomes for all students. All teachers are required to post their "Learning Targets" each day for all students to see and understand. In addition, since the arrival of the new principal, all teachers are required to do a "Do Now" activity at the beginning of each class to focus student learning. Common Planning Time (CPT) allows teachers to discuss the academic strengths and weaknesses of students, who they share on their team, and discuss strategies that have proven successful to enhance student understanding. This time allows teachers to tailor their instructional approach to each student, to teach the specific skills and content needed by the student, as necessary. Teachers will also create lesson plans that incorporate specific questions utilizing the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) guidelines, and create opportunities for student discourse.

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

WSMS currently does not have many opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction at a school-wide level. The IDT meetings currently taking place at the school are beneficial to teacher instructional practices and creating grading calibration for assessments. WSMS must create a school-wide data team to build teacher capacity and drive instructional practices and differentiation strategies for teachers. Also, WSMS seeks to create instructional leadership chairs (department chairs) who act as the instructional leaders of the various departments. They will be responsible for instructional leadership and guidance within the various departments and function as a means of support for teachers in a specific content area. These instructional leadership chairs will interact regularly with content-area supervisors to calibrate on instructional and assessment practices, data dissemination, and vertical alignment among discipline specific grade levels. These instructional leadership chairs will impact teaching and learning by providing teachers with instructional strategies, assessment strategies, data analysis, facilitate department meetings, but most importantly, provide vertical alignment and awareness between grade-level, content-specific teams.

***This plan for Academics will require:***

- *Contract with a provider to assist in designing an SRBI system*
- *Mathematics curriculum for grades 6-8*
- *3 FTE teachers for mathematics for intervention*
- *3 FTE teachers in Reading/ELA for intervention*

**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:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
ELA School Performance Index	Next Gen Accountability	53.7	55.6	57.5	59.5
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	Next Gen Accountability	58.7	60.1	64.5	68.9

**Three-Year Math Goal:**

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Math School Performance Index	Next Gen Accountability	42.0	48.2	50.9	53.6
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	Next Gen Accountability	35.5	54.4	59.0	63.6

### 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.

<b>Academic Priority:</b> Improve academic rigor and high teacher expectations for students					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Lack of high expectations by teachers for students creates gaps that persist in student learning					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Coaches, Department Leaders, Teachers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Create a tiered system of instruction that prioritizes high quality tier one instruction aligned to the “Talent” Section of the Turnaround application</b>	Create a Tiered Intervention approach to meet the needs of struggling students	Evaluate SRBI Tiered system and make adjustments as necessary.	Modify as needed per student data outcomes	Increase in teacher use of Tier 1 instructional strategies	Evaluations Walk-through observations
	Research-Based Interventions that are accessible by teachers, by Tier that are on a continuum	Evaluate and redesign most used interventions, and analyze their effectiveness in student learning and achievement	Modify as needed per student data outcomes	Decrease in students needing Tier 2 or 3	IDT meeting outcomes Evaluations
	Provide PD to all teachers around differentiation Tier 1 core instruction, in an effort to reduce the need for Tier 2 & 3 interventions	Assess teacher needs for Tier 1 and analyze any needed Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions	Modify as needed per student data outcomes	Smarter Balanced performance and growth measures in mathematics Increase in use of Research-based strategies	Walk-through observations IDT meeting outcomes Evaluations
	Create a Math and Reading Lab for identified struggling students who will have an extra period of math and reading support each day	Evaluate the effectiveness and resources of the tiered support		School wide data team meetings. Decrease in need for Tier 2 or 3 instruction  Decreased enrollment in math lab  Increase in student achievement in math scores	Walk-through observations IDT meeting outcomes I-ready data  SBAC data  District benchmark data

<b>Academic Priority:</b> Create a Standards-based Math curriculum for students					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Lack of a math curriculum aligned to the CCSS standards					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> District Supervisors, Principal, House Principal’s, and Math Coaches & Teachers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Adopt and implement a standards based curriculum in mathematics</b>	Provide PD for all teachers, department chairs and coaches in the new curriculum	Evaluate the effectiveness and resources of the new curricula, and provide further PD as needed	Modify as needed per student data outcomes	Walk-through observations  IDT Meeting outcomes I-Ready data or a similar student assessment model	What Works Clearinghouse  Math programming  Curriculum Management Cycle

				Smarter Balanced performance and growth measures in mathematics	
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### 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.

Although WSMS has a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) system in place, it is not being utilized on a regular basis, at the moment. A PBIS committee coordinator and committee must be established and this committee will meet monthly to analyze behavior data and to create a rewards system for both students and teachers. Through this system, WSMS will create and foster a school culture and climate that celebrates, expects and encourages strong character, positive behaviors and positive interactions. Currently, each grade does hold a monthly, "Town Hall Meeting" that rewards success by students and teams in the areas of academics and behavior, as well as reminding students of expectations of behavior and effort. This process will be expanded to allow students, homerooms, and teams to earn rewards for positive behaviors and interventions. This committee will identify ways to incentivize good behavior (ie. pizza parties, monthly movie day, activities, cultural assemblies, etc..). In addition, WSMS will educate families, via our parent liaison, school literature, and monthly PTA meetings, to ensure a continuum between school and home. The PBIS committee and teachers will proactively teach and instruct using positive reinforcement of behavioral expectations. Also, these expectations will be posted visually in classrooms and throughout the school.

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

Through PTA meetings, School Governance Meetings and the annual community day celebration, WSMS will promote strong family and community connections to support school goals. Also, community partnerships must be created and fostered to assist in promoting and strengthening the school's expectations and vision for learning and behavior, within the community. Also, the Parent Resource Center will aim to attract parents and community members to WSMS to use computers, receive literature regarding school events, programs, and provide community outreach program opportunities (i.e. Wellmore, Family Intake Center, Health Department, etc.).

Describe the school's attendance intervention system.

Currently, WSMS has one attendance counselor to oversee the school's attendance policies and leads Chronic Absentee Teams (CAT). The attendance counselor provides the building principal and house principals with weekly reports highlighting the current state of affairs with student absences. The attendance counselor also follows a tiered system for making phone calls to students' homes who demonstrate poor attendance. This is done when students attain 4, 8 and 12 absences, respectively. Also, referrals to outside community agencies takes place as well. However, this attendance system will be tied to the newly redeveloped PBIS system and reward students for good attendance and provide interventions when attendance is not in good standing. Also, school social workers and counselors do "home visits" to students' homes who demonstrate poor attendance, so that the parents and students understand the importance of good, frequent attendance and that the school wants them to attend regularly. In addition, there is an automatic notification system that calls the parent of a student who is marked "absent" for a particular day. Finally, WSMS needs to create an atmosphere and school environment that is welcoming and causes students to want to attend school on a regular basis. Aside from a redeveloped PBIS system, school branding, updates to the physical plant and a more aesthetic look is mandatory.

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

Currently, WSMS has two social workers, three school counselors and a school psychologist who take the lead on addressing students' social and emotional well-being. In addition, there is a prevention specialist who addresses and counsels students who exhibit social and emotional distress. WSMS will also create a "Relaxation Room" that will be

used to de-escalate students who are experiencing emotional distress. All support staff and administrators will be trained in de-escalation techniques by trained facilitators. A check in/Check out process will be implemented for struggling students, as well as a “Friendly Face” program. The friendly face program will allow struggling students to identify one adult in the building to seek out as needed, in the event of emotional distress.

***This plan for Culture and Climate will require:***

- *PBIS and Restorative Practices training for all staff*
- *Contract with a RESC for School Personnel Development (PBIS, SRBI, Welcoming Walkthrough)*

**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:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Out of School Suspensions	School Data Profile	383	209	325	275
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	School Data Profile	17.6%	15.1%	14.1%	13.1%

**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.

<b>Culture and Climate Priority:</b> Foster healthy relationships and promote positive discipline					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Lack of continuity and follow through of existing PBIS program by school staff					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, PBIS Committee Chairperson, PBIS Committee					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Create a formal/structured program that guarantee each student is recognized for their positive behavior and is known by an adult</b>  <b>Implement RISE Program for Behavior Students</b>	Implement a redeveloped PBIS Program  Ensure PBIS & Safe School Climate Committee meetings take place and use data to make systemic changes  Professional Learning for faculty/staff in PBIS delivery/expectations  Create monthly calendar to hold PBIS rewards celebration	Evaluate the effectiveness of the program and correct as needed  Create community partnerships with YMCA, PAL and other community organizations to help incentivize the PBIS Program	Evaluate and correct as needed	PBIS/ Safe School Climate Committee meeting minutes  Monthly Celebration Events  Decrease in negative behaviors (suspensions) by students  Decrease in chronic absenteeism	PBIS curriculum  Network money to incentivize monthly awards, professionally develop all staff, and communicate the school mission through the program

<b>Culture and Climate Priority:</b> To create an engaging and welcoming school environment for parents and community members					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Lack of a strategic plan to address the physical needs of the campus					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Teachers, Support Staff, Custodians, Skilled laborers					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Create a formalized strategic plan to address the culture, climate and physical plant of WSMS</b>	<p>Conduct the initial round of Welcoming Walkthroughs with an external partner</p> <p>Address priority areas with the local school climate team</p> <p>School Branding occurs and school-branded items are evident in building</p> <p>Create a daily maintenance plan for custodial staff</p>	<p>Conduct follow-up work with the external partner to establish data for next steps and implement strategies</p> <p>Review and modify as needed</p>	<p>Create a formal structure to embed welcoming walkthroughs as a constant structure at WSMS to ensure sustainability</p> <p>Review and modify as needed</p>	<p>Data on the Welcoming Walkthrough</p> <p>Parent Surveys</p> <p>School branding is evident in and throughout the building</p> <p>Formalized plan created in conjunction with school inspector and custodial staff</p>	<p>Welcoming Walkthrough protocol</p> <p>Student and Staff shirts, school mascot displayed on all school literature</p> <p>Meeting time to discuss feasibility of desired outcomes</p>

## 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 and school year will follow the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Waterbury and the Waterbury Teachers Association. This includes start times and dismissal times. However, the current school schedule is in need of revision. Currently, elective teachers teach students in 90 minute blocks, whereas academic teachers meet only for a 47-minute period. Students need more instructional time in their academic classes, especially in mathematics. The new schedule will provide at least 60 minutes of instruction in math and science. In addition, after-school and summer programs will be established for students in mathematics and science. The after-school program will run three eight-week session for 90 minutes a day, three days a week. The summer program will be run for 20 days in the summer for 3.5 hours a day.

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.

The length of the school day and year for teachers and staff will follow the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Waterbury and the Waterbury Teachers Association. WSMS currently meets once a week for instructional data teams and once per week for common planning time. Also,  $\frac{1}{2}$  professional learning opportunities occur 3 times per year where teachers are afforded professional learning during that time for a two-hour period. Currently, teachers must also attend two/one hour staff meetings per month that can be used for professional learning. To build on this time, WSMS will provide a total of 10,  $\frac{1}{2}$  day professional learning sessions.

### ***This plan for Operations will require:***

- *Contracting with a local organization to provide students with enrichment opportunities that align to school goals during  $\frac{1}{2}$  day professional learning*
- *Stipends for teachers, materials and transportation to increase in math and science instruction during an afterschool academy summer program.*

### 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:	Target 1 Year:	Target 2 Year:	Target 3 Year:
Math School Performance Index	Next Gen Accountability	42.0	48.2	50.9	53.6
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	Next Gen Accountability	35.5	54.4	59.0	63.6

### **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.

<b>Operations Priority:</b> Redevelop WSMS daily schedule to increase math instructional time for students					
<b>Root Cause:</b> Lack of creativity and effort to create a new, student-needs driven schedule					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Assistant Principals, Schedule Committee					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Increase math instructional time for students</b>	Implement a new school schedule that provides for at least 60 minutes of math a day  Design and implement an afterschool STEM instructional block for students	Continue to implement new school schedule and progress monitor its effectiveness  Implement an afterschool and summer program designed to increase student time in STEM	Make revisions as needed  Continue the summer and afterschool program	Student achievement in math, as measured by SPI and growth  Student achievement in math and science, as measured by SPI and growth	Sample schedules from other MS. Wallace Foundation Research on Summer programming  Sample afterschool programs

<b>Operations Priority:</b> Increase opportunities for professional learning through a school calendar redesign					
<b>Root Cause:</b> The school calendar is not designed to provide enough opportunity for ongoing professional learning driven by campus needs					
<b>Person(s) Responsible:</b> Principal, Assistant Principals, Schedule Committee					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
<b>Redesign the school calendar to allow for one half day per month that is dedicated to professional learning for all staff</b>	Calendar is created and implemented in collaboration with the Academic and Operations Department  Collaborate with a community partner to provide student services during half days	Monitor impact and adjust as needed	Monitor impact and adjust as needed	Student achievement in math and science, as measured by SPI and growth	Professional Learning Plan  Professional Learning Rubric

## 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?

West Side Middle School will build capacity in order to sustain progress by professionally developing all leaders and teachers in best practices for teaching and learning, improving school climate and culture, and developing meaningful relationships over three years. WSMS will develop teacher leaders who can lead this work in data team meetings, professionally develop new staff, and continue to drive the school vision. School leadership will seek out community partnerships that can help support this vision that will allow students to have enriching experiences and focused support in academics during half-day professional learning sessions. If additional professional learning is not provided, students will experience much of the same throughout the day, therefore the student learning time is a purposeful trade off to ensure the time students are in the school is more productive. By developing the master schedule and providing more instructional time for mathematics, students will have 45 more hours of math instruction and learning. The district, under the leadership of the deputy superintendent, chief academic officer and assistant superintendent, will conduct monthly roundtables for all Commissioner Network and Turnaround Schools. At this roundtable, a specific protocol will be used to establish expectations, monitor the implementation of the turnaround plan, analyze data, provide support and guidance, and monitor the budget. This Roundtable will continue for all schools after exiting the Commissioner's Network until they have reached category 3 or higher on the Accountability Index. In addition, the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools will collaborate with central office and building administrators to ensure financial stability.

## Section 8: Budget Proposal

### 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).

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Superintendent (*typed*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Board of Education-appointed Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Board of Education-appointed Parent (*typed*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Board of Education-appointed Administrator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Board of Education-appointed Administrator (*typed*)

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 Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

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 Date

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 Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

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 Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

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 Date

---

 Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

---

 Signature of Union-appointed Parent

---

 Date

---

 Name of Union-appointed Parent (*typed*)

---

 Signature of Commissioner of Education

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 Date

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 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
------	-------

## Appendix B: Budget Information

As noted in Section 8.1, please code all expenditures in accordance with the state's Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	<b>PERSONNEL SERVICES – SALARIES.</b> Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personnel services rendered while on the payroll of the grantees.
200	<b>PERSONNEL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.</b> Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personnel services.
300	<b>PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES.</b> Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, technical assistance support organizations, school management partners, etc.
400	<b>PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES.</b> Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. Persons other than grantee employees perform these services. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
500	<b>OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES.</b> Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
600	<b>SUPPLIES.</b> Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.
700	<b>PROPERTY.</b> Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment. In accordance with the Connecticut State Comptroller's definition equipment, included in this category are all items of equipment (machinery, tools, furniture, vehicles, apparatus, etc.) with a value of over \$5,000 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under \$5,000 and a useful life of not less than five years.
800	<b>OTHER OBJECTS.</b> (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

## Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

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

**PROJECT TITLE:** Commissioner's Network

**THE APPLICANT:** \_\_\_\_\_ **HEREBY ASSURES THAT:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General

Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

**L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)**

References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

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

- i. “Commission” means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- ii. “Contract” and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- iii. “Contractor” and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- iv. “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.
- v. “good faith” means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- vi. “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;
- vii. “marital status” means being single, married as recognized by the State of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
- viii. “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;
- ix. “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
- x. “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) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an “affirmative action equal opportunity employer” in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers’ representative of the Contractor’s commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and 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, 46a-68f and 46a-86; 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 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.
- (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)* \_\_\_\_\_

Title: *(typed)* \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## PART V: REFERENCES

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