

**V.B.**

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**TO BE PROPOSED:**

September 5, 2018

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

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

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

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**TO:** State Board of Education

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

**DATE:** September 5, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan for Windham High School

*Executive Summary*

**Introduction**

Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) establishes the Commissioner’s Network to provide new resources and flexibilities to improve student achievement in a subset of the state’s lowest-performing schools. The Network represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to empower teachers and leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner to participate in the Network for a period of 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 Windham High School (WHS) located in Windham, 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 29, 2016, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from the Windham Public Schools (WPS) volunteering WHS for participation in the Network. On October 25, 2016, the Commissioner initially selected WHS 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, WPS and the Windham Federation of Teachers appointed members to serve on the school’s Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on December 15, 2016. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for WHS in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d).

## **Turnaround Plan for Windham High School**

WHS, identified as a Focus School for English Language Arts under the Next Generation Accountability System, serves 581 students in Grades 9 through 12. Approximately 85.9 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 24.6 percent of the students are identified as needing special education services; 28.6 percent are English learners (ELs); 72.3 percent of the students are Hispanic; and 5.7 percent are Black.

The goal of the WHS Turnaround Plan is to establish Multiple Career Pathways to Student Success. This model will connect learning with the classroom with real-world applications outside of high school. It will also provide opportunities to integrate rigorous academic instruction with a demanding curriculum and field-based learning.

The Turnaround Committee and the WHS staff are committed to transforming WHS into a high-quality teaching and learning environment by providing hands-on career pathways in which students and staff are able to take intellectual risks, discuss continuous improvement, and cultivate a growth mindset. WHS will administer the i-Ready Assessment and the PSAT in both reading and math, to assess student growth over time. i-Ready is a computer adaptive test which identifies student strengths in reading and math. This assessment is designed to measure student growth and identify students who may need additional support. WHS will ensure that interventions are built into the daily schedule to support student's growth in literacy and math, as well as, support for special populations; English learners, and students with disabilities through Tier II and Tier III interventions. School leaders and teachers will make use of school and teacher data team protocols to support school improvement, and school leaders will work with Math Solutions to build their capacity to lead effective math instruction at WHS. Math Solutions will also provide the WHS Math Department with job-embedded coaching focused on increasing student engagement and math discourse while ensuring teachers are prepared to plan, implement, and assess rigorous grade level math instruction.

In partnership with Attendance Works and In Class Today, the school will continue improvements in chronic absenteeism rates. The school will implement a school-wide discipline plan focused on restorative practices and implementation of the RULER Program to support Social-Emotional Learning.

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

### ***Talent:***

- Provide job-embedded professional learning to build teacher and leadership capacity to implement:
  - effective career pathways for all students in Grades 9 through 12;
  - effective and engaging literacy and math instruction, including student discourse;
  - effective school and teacher data team protocols focused on planning instruction to improve student outcomes;
  - a school-wide discipline plan that relies on restorative practices and the implementation of the RULER Program which supports Social-Emotional learning; and
- Support Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention by participating in the RELAY Program and establishing a “Grow Your Own” Teachers program to attract and support qualified Paraeducators to the profession; and
- Leadership consultant to mentor the Principal and School Administrative Team to build their capacity to implement the Turnaround Plan.

### ***Academics:***

- Connect learning in the classroom with real-world applications outside of high school. The Career Pathways Model will integrate rigorous academic instruction with a demanding curriculum and field-based learning;
- Review PSAT and i-Ready data to assess student growth in both reading and math over time;
- Establish teacher data team protocols and five step process focused on academic outcomes and on adult actions to inform instruction; and
- Analyze the effectiveness of Tier 1 programming as it relates to adult actions and student engagement through department walkthroughs conducted by Central Office and WHS administrators and staff members. WHS will utilize these walkthroughs as an assessment of adult practice that they plan to connect to student achievement data over the course of monthly mini assessments.

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

- Contract with Attendance Works and In Class Today to build the capacity of the school’s attendance team, streamline the data collection process, and strategize for subgroups that are chronically absent;
- Utilize Thought Exchange Survey to gather community insight on educational issues and/or initiatives;
- Implement a school-wide discipline plan that focuses on restorative practices; and
- Support from a RULER Coach to provide ongoing guidance and coaching on implementation.

### ***Operations:***

- Restructure the school schedule to maximize instruction and provide interventions;
- Focus budgetary priorities based on WHS's needs and on sustainability of reforms;
- Create clubs and after school activities for students;
- Institute protocols for school-wide data team as well as for teacher data teams at both the course level (weekly) and by content level (monthly); and
- Modify current schedule to meet advisory goals by addressing student socio-emotional and career-readiness needs.

WHS 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 consultants of the 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. WHS 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 WHS through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

### **Recommendation with Conditions**

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

1. By September 30, 2018, the 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 WHS Turnaround Committee, shall submit plan amendments to the CSDE Turnaround Office, Charters, and Federal Programs on an annual basis in the spring, following school audits, detailing proposed strategies, budget requests, and implementation timelines for the following school year. The Commissioner or her designee may reconvene the Turnaround Committee to consider annual plan amendments, as appropriate and necessary. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact plan amendments or if the amendments are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at WHS, 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. WHS 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. WHS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on December 15, 2016.

Prepared by: Iris White  
Education Consultant, CSDE Turnaround Office

Approved by: Desi D. Nesmith  
Chief Turnaround Officer

# The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort VII

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

Date Issued: July 11, 2017

## Windham High School

Dianna R. Wentzell  
Commissioner of Education  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard | Hartford, CT 06103  
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### **AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The CSDE does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The CSDE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the CSDE’s nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

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



## PART I: THE NETWORK OVERVIEW

### A. Network Overview

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

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

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

Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. The Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) may allow schools to continue in the Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. See C.G.S. Section 10-223h(h). At present, there are 14 schools participating in the Network.

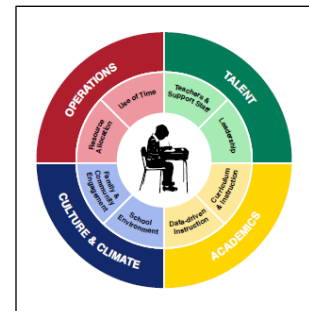
After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Network, the local board of education shall establish a Turnaround Committee pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b). Following the establishment of the Turnaround Committee, the CSDE shall conduct, in consultation with the local board of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

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

## B. Turnaround Plan and Framework

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

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



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

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

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

## PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

### A. Instructions

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

### B. Timeline Summary

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

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

### C. Freedom of Information Act

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

### D. Questions

All questions regarding the Network should be directed to:

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

## PART III: THE NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

### Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Windham Public Schools		
Name of School:	Windham High School		
Turnaround Committee Chairperson: <sup>1</sup>	Albert C. Harris		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	860-465-2526		
E-mail of Chairperson:	aHarris@windham.k12.ct.us		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	355 High Street	
	City:	Willimantic	Zip Code: 06226
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Lynne Ide		
Signature of School Board Chairperson: <sup>2</sup>		Date:	
Name of Superintendent:	Dr. Patricia Garcia		
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: Turnaround Model

### 2.1. NEEDS AND ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

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

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

Strengths:	Data and Evidence:
Talent:	
<p><b>Staff Commitment:</b> The WHS (WHS) leadership team, students and parents reported that the school’s staff is committed to their work and there is a genuine sense of pride at working at the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents reported that teachers are very involved and dedicated to students.</li> <li>• Students reported that student-teacher relations are generally positive.</li> <li>• Staff reports that athletics and extracurricular activities are well attended and supported by the students, parents, and community.</li> </ul>
Academics:	
<p><b>Data Teams:</b> Data teams meet at least once a week, depending on the department: PD, curriculum, culture, and operations. While teachers perceive data-teaming as a strength, there is also a disconnect with how rigorously data is used to design focused supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the teacher survey, 53 percent (N=18) strongly agreed or agreed that the “the school uses data consistently to measure student progress and inform instruction,” while 77 percent (N=26) strongly agree or agree that “data is used to differentiate instruction.”</li> </ul>
Culture and Climate:	
<p><b>School Diversity:</b> Students, teachers, and building leadership reported that the school’s diversity was a positive attribute.</p> <p><b>Extracurricular Activities:</b> WHS offers a wide variety of competitive sports, clubs and opportunities for students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff reported that students generally get along and will self-advocate.</li> <li>• Students reported that bullying incidents are minimal.</li> <li>• Students are connected to the school through sports. Sports seems to be integral to students and the community as evidenced by both the spirit students thought they bring as well as the community stakeholder discussion that ensued when a grade eligibility policy was recently revamped.</li> </ul>
Operations:	
<p><b>Adequate Instructional Time:</b> The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school’s schedule provides 385 minutes of instruction per day. The school’s daily schedule includes seven class periods of 55 minutes with a four-minute pass time between classes.</li> </ul>

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

<b>Growth Areas:</b>	<b>Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:</b>
Talent:	
<p><b>Alignment:</b> Evident lack of cohesiveness in vision, mission and expectations among staff.</p> <p><b>Professional Learning:</b> Teachers feel inadequately supported with respect to their professional growth in terms of coaching, evaluative feedback, and informal training.</p>	<p><b>Alignment of Vision, Mission, and Expectations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>68 percent of teachers (N=23) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “a clear mission/vision of school-wide priorities has been effectively communicated.”</li> <li>Additionally, 54 percent of teachers (N=19) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “job expectations are clearly defined.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2015-2016 School Improvement Plan provided was weak on specific actions the school will take that are aligned to student outcomes. The plan’s student achievement goals for both numeracy and literacy have not been met, with little or no direct explanation of additional improvement plan.</li> <li>Turnover of school administration, both principals and assistant principals (7 principals and assistant principals in 7 years). This turnover does not allow for a consistent and cohesive communication of vision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Professional Learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>76 percent of teachers (N=25) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “they receive helpful or actionable feedback, and informal training.”</li> <li>56 percent of teachers (N=19) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “professional learning has improved their practice.”</li> <li>Two thirds of teachers reported that they had not received formal or informal teacher evaluations which were behind schedule.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although WHS now has 9 department program leaders, the math coach position has not been filled leading to no job-embedded professional learning.</li> <li>The master schedule does not provide time for teachers to collaborate.</li> <li>The school does not have an annual professional learning plan that aligns to the needs of educators including planning of student learning objectives, data informed support especially to assess individual student needs, cultural responsiveness, needs of urban students, and instructional quality.</li> </ul>

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p><b>Instructional Practice and Leadership:</b> District leadership has identified training teachers and building high-quality and engaging instruction which impacts student achievement, teacher capacity, and school culture as a top need.</p>	<p><b>Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school and district leadership team lacks an evaluation system with structured protocols for evaluation and feedback loops aligned to school improvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Instructional Practice and Leadership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher effectiveness was highly variable across observed classrooms.</li> <li>• Common citations demonstrated low student engagement and lesson rigor/challenge, primarily teacher led lessons with little differentiation.</li> <li>• 64 percent of teachers (N=22) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “teachers are professionally respected and supported by the school leadership team.”</li> <li>• WHS student performance indices are substantially below state Smarter Balanced Assessment averages across ELA, Math, and Science.</li> <li>• Turnover in teaching staff, Windham High School Teacher retention rates (2015-16 – 92 percent, 2016-17 – 95 percent, and 2017-2018 – 71 percent) leads to a lack of a comprehensive implementation of school improvement action steps.</li> <li>• Turnover of school administration, both principals and assistant principals, leads to a lack of cohesive implementation of school improvement action steps.</li> <li>• Turnover in teaching staff (2015-16 – 92 percent, 2016-17 – 95 percent, and 2017-2018 – 71 percent) and in school administration leads to a lack of a cohesive implementation of school improvement action steps.</li> <li>• Turnover of school administration, both principals and assistant principals (7 principals and assistant principals in 7 years).</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of professional learning in areas that include planning of student learning objectives, data informed support especially to assess individual student needs, cultural responsiveness, needs of urban students, and instructional quality.</li> <li>• WHS does not currently administer a benchmark assessment, which limits the ability of teachers to analyze and track student growth over time.</li> <li>• Staffing records indicates that approximately 60 educators are evaluated by 3 administrators (each administrator would have an evaluation caseload of 20 educators).</li> </ul>
Academics:	

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p><b>Support for Special Populations:</b> School leadership and teachers both highlighted the lack of bilingual support, including the lack of bilingual teachers and social workers, and the discontinuance of the former bilingual program.</p> <p><b>Student Engagement:</b> Meaningful student engagement was not noted in most observed classrooms.</p>	<p><b>Support for Special Populations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to 2016-17 CSDE Accountability Index, there is an 18.7 point achievement gap between the ELA performance of Non High Needs (NHN) students and High Needs (HN) students (75.0 NHN compared to 56.3).</li> <li>• According to 2016-17 CSDE Accountability Index, there is a 19.7 point achievement gap between the math performance of NHN and HN students (70.3 compared to 50.6).</li> <li>• According to 2016-17 CSDE Accountability Index, there is 19.3 point achievement gap between the Science performance of NHH and HN students (59.8 compared to 40.5).</li> <li>• According to 2016-17 CSDE Accountability Index, there is 13.6 percent gap between the 6 year graduation rate of NHN students and HN students (92.7 percent compared to 79.1 percent).</li> <li>• Additionally, there is a 15 percent point gap in the Graduation Rate for High Needs students as reported by the State.</li> <li>• Teachers report that there is limited curriculum support for EI students. There is a need for professional learning on modifications and culturally relevant instruction.</li> <li>• 90-95 percent of classes were either dominated by teacher led instruction or focused on more low-engagement activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of bilingual support, including bilingual teachers and social workers, and the discontinuance of the former bilingual program.</li> <li>• A review and revision to the schedule is necessary to incorporate credit and interventions, including time for teachers to analyze data and plan lessons.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most observed classrooms offered very little opportunity for constructive student-to-student discourse.</li> <li>• 90-95 percent of classes were either dominated by one-way teacher-led instruction or focused much time on low-engagement worksheets where the teacher was only focused on helping a student or a couple of students at one time.</li> <li>• Common citings demonstrated low student engagement and lesson rigor/challenge, primarily teacher led lessons with little differentiation.</li> </ul>



Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
<p><b>Rigor and Differentiation:</b> Most observed classrooms were teacher-led and whole group. Instructional quality and delivery was relatively weak as a general observation and did not challenge students.</p> <p><b>Curricula Consistency and Alignment:</b> Teachers and administration reported that there is a low level of understanding of the Connecticut Core Standards among teachers.</p>	<p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers require professional learning in instruction which impacts student achievement, including student discourse, hands on learning, rigor, integration of technology, and differentiation.</li> <li>Poor utilization and training of support staff in classrooms. Support staff were observed floating and loosely helping across classrooms as opposed to focusing on students who needed extra support or to re-engage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rigor and Differentiation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41 percent (N=14) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed that “instructional quality and rigor are consistently high.”</li> <li>The instructional method in most observed classrooms were limited to teacher-led lessons, with very few higher-order questioning or advanced teaching techniques in Tier I instruction.</li> <li>WHS student performance indices are substantially below state Smarter Balanced Assessment averages across ELA, Math, and Science.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor utilization of support staff in classrooms. Support staff were observed floating and loosely helping across classrooms as opposed to focusing on students who needed extra support or to re-engage.</li> <li>Staffing records indicates that approximately 60 educators are evaluated by 4 administrators (each administrator would have an evaluation caseload of 15 educators).</li> <li>WHS does not currently administer a benchmark assessment, which limits the ability of teachers to analyze and track student growth over time or group students strategically.</li> </ul> <p><b>Curricula Consistency and Alignment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51 percent (N=18) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed “that the curricula is well aligned to Connecticut Core Standards.”</li> <li>Teachers reported a lack of curriculum and curriculum maps in both core content areas and electives.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Cause:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school lacks curriculum, curriculum maps, and scope and sequence that is aligned to Connecticut Core Standards and teachers lack understanding of how to use current instructional materials to support student learning.</li> </ul>

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
Culture and Climate:	
<p><b>Chronic Absenteeism:</b> The WHS chronic absenteeism rate has been well above the state average.</p> <p><b>Behavior Management Expectations:</b> Teachers reported that there is a lack of cohesiveness in terms of setting student expectations for behavior. Teachers see student behavior as a true challenge.</p>	<p><b>Chronic Absenteeism:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The chronic absenteeism rate has ranged from between 24 percent to 33 percent over the last three years.</li> <li>• According to 2016-17 CSDE Accountability Data, the chronic absenteeism rate for high needs students is higher than for non-high needs (33.8 percent compared to 31.6 percent).</li> <li>• Teachers report that students may come to school, but skip class. There is a lack of student engagement across the school.</li> <li>• Teachers report that there is a struggle with attendance and while there are strategies in place, more needs to be done to improve.</li> <li>• Students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade academy have a higher daily attendance rate and lower chronic absenteeism rate than students in higher grades. Chronic absenteeism rate for ninth grade is 27.68 percent. The average daily attendance rate for 9<sup>th</sup> grade during the 2017-2018 school year is 88 percent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation—students who live less than 2 miles from school are not provided bus transportation and there are no public transportation options for many students.</li> <li>• The attendance team lacks structured protocols and strategies to support initiatives to decrease chronic absenteeism.</li> </ul> <p><b>Behavior Management Expectations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers require professional learning in instruction which impacts student achievement, including student discourse, hands on learning, rigor, integration of technology, and differentiation.</li> <li>• 85 percent (N=28) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed that “the school implements an effective school-wide behavior management system, and that consistent behavioral processes are necessary.”</li> <li>• According to CSDE data, WHS suspension rate has ranged from 28.5 percent in 2014-15 to 30.1 percent in 2016-17, which is well above the 2016-17 state average of 6.7 percent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for more counseling and trauma support for students, as well as the need for a more streamlined SRBI process.</li> </ul>

Growth Areas:	Data, Evidence, and Root Causes:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited implementation of restorative practices and only some staff participated in training to understand how restorative practices can be used in the classroom.</li> </ul>
Operations:	
<p><b>Use of Instructional Time:</b> Instructional time is used ineffectively. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task.</p> <p><b>Use of Staff Time:</b> The structure for planning time should be revisited.</p>	<p><b>Use of Instructional Time:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom observations demonstrate much class time is wasted with non-productive activity, such as students entering class spending time settling in instead of immediately getting to work; additionally, students in quite a few classes were distracted or otherwise not engaged with instruction.</li> <li>50 percent (N=17) of teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed that “the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers require professional learning on protocols and routines that establish effective use of instructional time.</li> <li>Teachers require professional learning in instruction which impacts student achievement, including student discourse, hands on learning, rigor, integration of technology, and differentiation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Use of Staff Time:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56 percent of teacher surveyed (N=19) strongly disagreed or disagreed that “they have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, or improve instruction.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Root Causes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers require professional learning in instruction which impacts student achievement, including student discourse, hands on learning, rigor, integration of technology, and differentiation.</li> <li>Review and revision of schedule to allow more time for teachers at all grade levels to have more structured, collaborative time.</li> </ul>

## 2.2. ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

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

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

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic		Current	Performance Targets		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Student enrollment (as of October 1)	561	581	566			
Average daily student attendance rate (self-reported)	90.2%	90.7%	TBD			
Chronic absenteeism rate	31.8%	31.6%	TBD	27.5%	25.4%	23.4%
Number of In-school suspensions	331	243	TBD			
Number of Out-of-school suspensions	325	341	TBD			
Number of Expulsions	7	13	TBD			
Suspension rate	30.8%	30.1%	TBD			
Accountability index	58.0	58.6	N/A			
ELA Achievement-School Performance Indexes (SPI)	44.3	46.6		51.0%	53.2%	55.3%
Mathematics Achievement-School Performance Indexes (SPI)	39.7	42.9		47.9%	50.3%	52.8%
Grade_10__ Science Connecticut Mastery Test-“At/Above Goal”	18.1	7	N/A			
(HS only) Grade 11 SAT—ELA Level 3 or Above	25.7	38.8	N/A			
(HS only) Grade 11 SAT—Math Level 3 or Above	10.9	11.6	N/A			
(HS only) Four-year Cohort Graduation Rate	87.2	83.3*	N/A			
(HS only) Six-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate				85.6%	86.6%	87.7%
Number of teachers rated “Exemplary” as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	20	21	N/A			
Number of teachers rated “Proficient” as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	39	30	N/A			
Number of teachers rated “Developing” as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	0	1	N/A			
Number of teachers rated “Below Standard” as a proportion of total teachers employed at the school	1	0	N/A			

### 2.3. TURNAROUND MODEL

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

**WHS Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan Committee has selected Model E: The turnaround committee creates its own model: Multiple Career Pathways to Student Success.**

Career Pathways are programs of high school study that connect learning in the classroom with real-world applications outside of high school. Career Pathways integrate rigorous academic instruction with a demanding curriculum and field- based learning.

Career Pathways will be defined as comprehensive, multi-year programs of academic and technical study that prepare high school students for the full range of postsecondary options and productive careers. Career Pathway programs at WHS will contain: (1) an academic core that meets eligibility requirements for Connecticut’s public colleges and universities; (2) a technical core aligned with the needs of Connecticut’s major employers and industries; (3) a sequence of coordinated, high-quality work-based learning opportunities; and (4) academic and career-planning support services, especially supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics.

WHS will use the Multiple Career Pathways Approach to achieve the following:

- Improve student achievement;
- Prepare all students for success after high school;
- Position students to pursue a full range of postsecondary opportunities, including college degree and certification programs, formal employment training, apprenticeship, or military service;
- Challenge students with rigorous college-preparatory curriculum that meets the eligibility requirements for application to Connecticut’s public colleges and universities;
- Engage and motivate students by making school relevant through connecting challenging academics to demanding career and technical education;
- Allow students to choose a context for learning that is interesting to them;
- Support students who need help to succeed in their program by providing supplemental instruction; and
- Inform students of what they need to accomplish to achieve their postsecondary and career goals.

The mission of WHS is to provide a personalized educational experience to a diverse community that engages all students and provides a relevant and rigorous curriculum that meets or exceeds state and national standards. This will create opportunities for students to attain a strong educational foundation and foster confidence, empowerment, and community involvement that leads to students who are college and career ready. The Turnaround Committee and the WHS staff are committed to transforming WHS into a teaching and learning environment by providing hands-on career pathways in which students and staff are able to take intellectual risks, discuss continuous improvement, and cultivate a growth mindset.

In order to transform WHS into a learning environment that creates thinkers, leaders and creators who are prepared to excel in a global society, the administration, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community members believe in pursuing student excellence through supporting “Every Student, Every Day, in Every Classroom.” The school community approaches learning as a collective experience, fostering confidence, empowerment, respect and trust. Learning through the Multiple Career Pathways to Student Success model will foster high expectations for all students, create and maintain a college-going culture, demonstrate the

importance of work-ethic and work-readiness skills, create clearly defined performance expectations, and create a positive school culture and climate.

WHS is currently implementing a career pathway called the Early College Opportunity Program, Windham (ECO). The Early College Opportunity Program (Windham-ECO) is a P-Tech program, which runs through a partnership between Windham Public Schools, General Dynamics - Electric Boat, Quinebaug Valley Community College, Eastern Advance Manufacturing Alliance (EAMA), and Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board (EWIB). Windham-ECO is a 4-6 year program that is open to all students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade at the WHS. Students can earn an Associate Degree in manufacturing from Quinebaug Valley Community College at no out-of-the pocket cost while attending high school. Upon finishing the program, students will be first in line to obtain a job at Electric Boat and other manufacturing companies of Eastern Connecticut. Windham-ECO students can major either in Manufacturing Principles or Lean Manufacturing & Supply Chain Management. In the summer after their junior year, students who meet the criteria can apply for a paid internship at Electric Boat or other manufacturing companies. There are 70 students currently enrolled in the ECO program. There will be 25 incoming freshmen participating in the program for the 2018-2019 school year. The district will build on this success by creating additional career pathways that match employment needs in Connecticut and the interest of students with the goal of every student participating in a career pathway.

### **Career Counselor**

Windham High School will be hiring a Career Counselor to work with the students in their families to select and successfully accomplish the student's career pathway of choice. The Career Counselor's responsibilities will include the following:

- Advising students and parents on high school programs and academic curriculum, preparing them for college application, admission and career.
- Arranging dual/concurrent enrollment and Advanced Placement credits to prepare students for the rigor of postsecondary education.
- Planning and preparation for college admissions tests, SAT and ACT.
- Informing students about postsecondary financing that can be used to support advanced education and training.
- Developing career portfolios, which include test and grades results, examples of student work, and resumes and cover letters to prospective employers.
- Arranging job shadowing, work placements, and community-based learning programs to allow students to directly experience workplace situations.
- Sponsoring workshops, classes, focus groups, and special presentations that focus on job skills and personal development.
- Providing specialized counseling and intervention services to provide students with individualized attention.

To further implement the Multiple Career Pathways to Student Success, carefully orchestrated professional learning and coaching needs to be implemented for both administration and teachers. The following programs will be initiated to further develop administration and teachers:

WHS Administration Leadership program of development:

- Executive coaching
- Build administrators capacity to lead effective instruction
- High School That Works (HSTW) coaching and workshops focused on Career Pathways

- Teacher evaluation and feedback
- Restorative Practices
- Yale RULER social & emotional support

Teacher program of instruction and relationship building:

- Tier I instruction (Rigor, student engagement and performance/product based assessments)
- Effective small group instruction
- Intervention
- Differentiation
- High School That Works Career Pathway teacher preparation
- Effective data team process focusing on adult actions
- Restorative Practices

To support WHS's implementation plan of Multiple Career Pathways to Student Success, a variety of external partners will be utilized to educate "Every Student, Every Day, in Every Classroom".

### **High School That Works (HSTW)**

WHS will partner with HSTW to assist in the development and implementation of Career Pathways. HSTW will provide a school improvement framework and blueprint for setting college and career readiness goals. Following HSTW Career Pathways design principals and key practices connected to college preparatory academics and rigorous career pathway programs more students will graduate college ready, career ready or both. HSTW will assist in establishing at least three viable Career Pathways. HSTW will provide professional learning coaching empowering school leaders and teachers of grades 9-12 to align their instruction and assignments with readiness standards. Focus areas include literacy and math strategies, project based assignments, counseling for careers and college, and career pathway teacher preparation. HSTW will provide services focused on data driven curriculum and instruction and career pathway reviews that assist schools in identifying readiness gaps. HSTW will provide a curriculum with a clear scope and sequence, instruction and career pathways review conducted by a Southern Regional Education Director, Leadership consultant and state members. In addition, they will conduct and provide analysis of student and faculty surveys. HSTW will provide workshops empowering school leaders and teachers to design action plans that provide teachers the time they need to work in cross-disciplinary teams to plan engaging, standards-driven assignments.

### **Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) Math Solutions**

During the 2017-2018 school year, HMH Math Solutions, as well as International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) a division of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, provided professional learning for district leaders, instructional coaches and teachers. WHS will continue to benefit from this partnership during the 2018-2019 school year. HMH Math Solutions will continue to provide the WHS Math Department job-embedded coaching that is focused on increasing student engagement and math discourse while ensuring teachers are prepared to plan, implement and assess rigorous grade level math instruction presented in a gradual release of responsibility format. Representatives from HMH Math Solutions will also work closely WHS staff to conduct bi-monthly math department walkthroughs utilizing the Math Practices Inventory. This walkthrough data will then guide the professional learning opportunities HMH will provide to WHS.



### **Dr. Beryl Bailey, founder of Pages to Pedagogy, LLC**

Dr. Bailey has partnered with Windham for the past three years focused on literacy based professional learning for teachers in grades 6-12. During the 2018-2019 school year, she will continue her professional learning work with the English and Social Science Departments at WHS. The overarching focus of her work is ensuring literacy instruction meets the requirements of state standards in reading, writing and speaking. She has focused on developing rigorous tasks, ensuring high level evidence based questions, techniques for text analysis, written response and developing vocabulary in context. While she has primarily worked with the English and Social Science departments in the past, bi-monthly literacy walkthroughs that will provide the basis for a more comprehensive school wide approach to professional learning in all departments.

### **Restorative Practices – Joe Brummer**

WHS will be implementing Restorative Practices school wide to foster healthy relationships among all members of the school community and promoting positive discipline in the school. The WHS administration and teachers will partner with Joe Brummer to establish restorative practices. Joe Brummer is well trained and experienced in Restorative Practices/Justice (RJ), an innovative approach that moves away from punitive measures and towards approaches that focus on healing, accountability, and change. He has experience facilitating community conferences, restorative circles, victim/offender dialogues in the community and school setting. Joe Brummer will provide professional learning in the area of RP for educators, youth organizations, and workplaces.

### **Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, Marc Brackett – Yale RULER**

RULER is an evidence-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools, developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. RULER applies “hard science” to the teaching of what have historically been called “soft skills.” RULER teaches the skills of emotional intelligence — those associated with recognizing, understanding, labeling, expressing, and regulating emotion. Decades of research show that these skills are essential to effective teaching and learning, sound decision making, physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond.

RULER creates schools that are true safe harbors for our children. It does this by developing emotional intelligence in students from preschool to high school and in all adults involved in their education: school administrators, teachers, and support staff. Parents also participate in training so that they can reinforce the emotional skills that students learn at school. Our approach gives a unique depth and consistency to social and emotional learning that empowers school leaders and teachers to create a genuinely safe space for students to learn and grow.

### **The Center for Secondary School Redesign – Advisory Program**

To foster good citizenship and college and career readiness for all students at WHS, the Leadership Team is working with the Center for Secondary School Redesign on an advisory program. We will have a focus group of students, teachers, staff, and HSTW that will work on developing the curriculum.

#### **WHS Advisory Program**

The Advisory Program seeks to foster academic engagement, enhance social and emotional competencies, reduce risk behaviors, and facilitate supportive relationships within WHS community. Our goal is to prepare adolescents for adulthood both personally and professionally. The program will address Social and Emotional Learning Skills identified as critical to success in school, the workplace, and life skills: social awareness, self-



awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. It will provide students with the confidence they need to voice their high school and post-secondary goals and achieve them.

Commissioner’s Network Turnaround plan: Windham High School External Partners

<b>External Partners</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Audience</b>
High School That Works	Career Pathways	Establish Career Pathways	Administration Teachers
Joe Brummer	Restorative Practices	Establish a learning community focused on the whole child	Administration Teachers
Yale Ruler	Social & Emotional	Reduce chronic absenteeism and suspension rate	
Center for Secondary School Redesign	Advisory	Effective two day a week advisory	Administration Teachers
HMH	Math	Increase students math skills	Teachers
Dr. Bailey	ELA – Close Reading	Increase students literacy skills Increase student’s scores on the PSAT and the SAT	

As part of a comprehensive and cohesive turnaround plan, the superintendent, the Windham Public Schools leadership team, the CSDE and all external partners will meet on an agreed upon schedule to review data, monitor progress and discuss strategic next steps. These meetings will be essential in guaranteeing the alignment and sustainability of the Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan.

## Section 3: Talent

### 3.1. TEACHERS

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below:

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

#### 3.1 Teachers

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

Through our collaboration with higher education institutions we will continue to recruit high-quality teachers and create pathways to our District (e.g. Eastern State University and UCONN). Windham Public Schools will also continue with our recruitment efforts outside of Connecticut, particularly in Puerto Rico. We will be partnering with the RELAY program to support minority teacher recruitment and retention of our current paraprofessionals and tutors by attracting them to the teaching profession.

Currently, the district has a three-cycle new teacher induction that includes:

The following modules:

Module 1: Introduction and the profile of the Windham Public Schools Students;

Module 2: Strategies for the Classroom and Setting up the Classroom at the Beginning of the Year;

Module 3: Professionalism and Ethics; and an optional

Module 4: Topic selected by new teachers based on survey results offered during the professional learning days in the spring.

New teachers work with academic coaches and instructional consultants. We also assign new teachers a buddy from their school site and a TEAM mentor and have them meet quarterly with the Superintendent for support, input and questions.

For new teachers to WHS, we will implement a monthly meeting with the principal and a monthly meeting with the team leaders. These meetings will focus on issues facing the new teachers and provide support and strategies to help them be successful in their career.

For existing staff, we will continue with Professional Learning Communities with a focus on continuous improvement of teaching practices to promote student achievement. Professional learning will also focus on the elements of the WHS School Improvement Plan and District strategic goals.

**Explain how administrators will have the ability to staff the school based exclusively on student and programmatic needs.**

The administrators will have the authority to hire staff that is aligned with student and programmatic needs. The principal oversees the WHS budget and is able to design programs within the financial allocation to support student needs. Additionally, the administrators will meet with all current staff to ensure commitment to the WHS School Improvement Plan. Staff will continue to have the ability to apply for other qualified jobs in the district if they are available. In the event that staff do not have the qualifications for

vacancies or that we do not have openings available, we will offer two options. First, coaching support will be given to the teacher and specific guidance on how their skills and talents can be used to support the WHS school improvement plan. Second, in collaboration with Human Resources and in accordance with the Windham Federation of Teachers Collective Bargaining Agreement, steps for an involuntary transfer will be followed.

**Describe how teachers will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions.**

All certified staff will be evaluated on an annual basis as outlined in the Windham Public Schools Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan. The outline of the plan provides informal and formal observations with feedback as well as conferences for goal setting, mid-year conferencing, and summative evaluations. Also, based on school data team results, staff will be provided guided individual and group professional learning activities.

Activities may include:

- individual coaching for specific strategies,
- observations of colleagues with an administrator guide reflective practices afterward, team teaching,
- project based learning, and
- direct strategies to improve student improvement from professionals inside and outside the district.

Data from the evaluations will be used as a key factor in making staffing assignments and subject area teams.

### 3.2. ADMINISTRATORS

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below:

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

#### 3.2 Administrators

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

Administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis as outlined in the Windham Public Schools Professional Learning and Evaluation Plan. The outline of the plan provides for informal and formal observations with feedback as well as conferences for goal setting, mid-year conferencing, and summative evaluations. The Superintendent will evaluate the principal at Windham High School. The principal of Windham High School will evaluate the assistant principals at Windham High School. Additionally, through data collection and observations the Superintendent and/or the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Leadership will give feedback. Evaluative data and observations will be used to provide guided individual and group professional learning for principals and assistant principals. Data from the evaluations will also be used as a key factor in making staffing assignments and administrative teams.

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

An Executive Coach will be hired for the 2018-2019 school year to guide the current principal and administrative team three days a week. The purpose of the Executive Coach will be to assist the WHS administrative team, set up the systems needed for: instructional support, climate and culture for students and staff, and navigate the daily operations of an urban high school. The ideal candidate will be an experienced urban school or turnaround administrator who can successfully grow the existing administrative team at Windham High School. The Leadership Team will also participate in a variety of leadership development opportunities: CSDE leadership development sessions, bi-monthly walk-through and feedback sessions conducted by the Commissioner’s Network and/or point personnel, district mandated professional learning and leadership development conducted by the external partners.

**Interim Principal of Windham High School**

Vanessa Sosa served her first year as Windham High School principal in 2017-2018. She will continue in her role as principal of Windham High School through the implementation of the Career Pathways programs. Vanessa Sosa will continue to serve as the instructional leader, setting and maintaining high expectations for students, staff, parents and community partners. In addition, she will promote professional learning opportunities, support, developing and evaluating teachers and holding and maintaining accountability for all stakeholders.

**Section 4: Academics**

**4.1. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENTS**

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below:

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

**4.1. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENTS**

**1. Describe the school’s academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the Connecticut state standards and frameworks.**

WHS, following the district’s mission and vision, has a student centered, process oriented instructional philosophy grounded in a belief of equitable access, cultural and linguistic diversity, student engagement and the development of key skills that will assist in our students’ ability to be successful in all post-secondary endeavors. WHS acknowledges the need to ensure our students effectively communicate, think critically, problem solve, appropriately utilize technology and research, as well as demonstrate ethical social and civic character. WHS, like most comprehensive high schools in the state of Connecticut, offers a variety of coursework that falls under the categories of: Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Career and Life Skills and World Languages. Students in the graduating classes of 2018-2020 are required to earn at least 21 credits, while the Class of 2021 and beyond will meet the 24 credit requirements as established by the state.

WHS has already begun the work of aligning the curricula to Connecticut state standards and frameworks, Dr. Tracy Youngberg the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning will be overseeing the curriculum process. Utilizing the process of Rigorous Curriculum Design (RCD), professional learning has been provided

in order to prepare staff to generate curriculum maps, or units of study, that are driven by standards. To date, curriculum maps have been generated for all WHS core content courses in ELA, Math, Science and Social Science, as well as and some elective courses. During the 2017-2018 school year, district wide curriculum enhancements were done on the ELA and Math maps, Pre K-12. These enhancements were designed to increase student engagement and produce more examples of student generated work aligned to ELA and Math standards, as well as make our curriculum maps more comprehensive and user friendly. Core Learning Experiences, or CLE's, were added to our curriculum maps as the means for students to produce evidence of standards mastery through meaningful and authentic tasks linked to a challenging, yet realistic scenarios. The Science Department will embark on curricular enhancements in the spring and summer of 2018 with a focus on ensuring Windham High students are adequately prepared to meet the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Continued alignment of the Social Sciences Department maps will take place during the 2018-2019 school year with an emphasis on ensuring our current maps meet the intent of Connecticut's Secondary Social Studies Framework. Elective course curricula will be addressed on an on-going basis with a shared focus of aligning all curriculums to the grade level standards outlined by the CSDE. The process of curricular implementation, alignment, revisions, enhancements and adoptions will continue to rely on the involvement of Windham teachers, instructional coaches, building based administrators and central office staff. The district strongly values staff member input and understands the benefits of a multi-layered vetting process that allows for all stakeholders to provide feedback on the documents that drive our day to day instructional practices.

In addition to the extensive curriculum enhancement work being completed, the district continues to recognize the need to provide opportunities for students to meet rigorous academic expectations at WHS. One example of this is to ensure up to 50 incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders continue to attend our Summer Algebra Readiness Academy. This course works to increase the likelihood that students take and pass Algebra while in grade 8, allowing them access to higher level math courses at the high school level.

Another example of the district's philosophy and commitment to students was demonstrated when it paid for up to 40 WHS students to receive the nationally recognized Lentz & Lentz SAT Prep Course during the winter of 2017. This pilot course provided eight three hour learning sessions focused on both Math and Evidence Based Reading and culminated in a practice SAT exam. The district will analyze the impact of the course when student performance data is available and determined if it will be offered during the 2018-2019 school year. Regardless of this decision, the district plans to register 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> graders for the College Board approved PSAT in both the fall and the spring of the upcoming school year. This will ensure accuracy of data analysis, ample time between assessments and a need for our monthly mini SAT aligned assessments discussed further in 4.2.

## **2. Describe the school's early literacy strategy, including targeted interventions.**

In addition to a districtwide commitment to the Connecticut Kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Literacy Initiative (CK3LI) in all of our elementary schools, Windham has recently implemented a K-8 benchmarking system and intervention and acceleration process linked to the I-Ready platform and supporting resources. Our goal is to utilize this platform, in conjunction with a variety of additional literacy and numeracy resources, to track student growth over time, thereby reducing the number of students entering WHS below grade level. Keenly aware that this type of initiative requires more time than our current struggling high school students have and that we have a significant issue of student transience, WHS will work to transform the school culture (Tier 1) to one that requires 100 percent of the student body to meet or exceed their annual growth targets on i-Ready around the reading, writing, speaking and listening and language standards. This focus coupled with a continuation of an instructional delivery model that emphasizes the Gradual Release of Responsibility naturally allows WHS teachers to provide effective modeling (I Do), guided practice (We Do) and independent practice (You Do). These structures lends themselves to a more responsive classroom that addresses the literacy needs of students within ensuring differentiation and small group instruction are regularly provided.

Structural changes to the 2018-2019 Master Schedule will provide a 53 minute Intervention and Acceleration Block for all WHS students, allowing for Tier 2 literacy supports to be provided to those in need. In addition, Tier 3 supports will be offered to approximately 30 percent of the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders identified as significantly below grade level in both reading and math. These students, who have been identified through multiples data sources such as Grade 8 SBAC Data, I-Ready Diagnostic Data, PSAT data and Edgenuity's My Path Diagnostic Assessment, will receive daily "Wrap Around Supports". These scheduled daily supports will provide a second, highly focused and responsive instructional block of literacy and numeracy taught by their ELA and Math teachers. The goal of the wraparound supports is to provide a safety net that will both fill gaps in the students' mastery of key standards, while ensuring they successfully navigate grade level coursework. The grade level teams will be required to analyze student diagnostic assessment data, prioritize an instructional response, set individualized growth goals aligned to the identified resources and then progress monitor students every two to four weeks. This process will be supervised by the WHS Leadership Team and supported by their Instructional Coaches for math & literacy and the schools full time Instructional Consultant (IC).

WHS staff will continue to learn how to teach small focused groups in a blended learning format, with the goal of maximizing the impact of teacher student relationships, teacher content expertise and the digital resources currently available at WHS. In addition to teachers receiving continued training on our literacy based digital resources and blended learning, professional learning supports will be provided Dr. Bailey and HMH Math Solutions to the WHS staff on the following applicable topics: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Language), Differentiation and the Gradual Release of Responsibility, Analyzing Student Performance Data, Teacher Expectations and Collective Efficacy. Windham Public Schools Director of Accountability, Performance & Assessment Neil Weathers and the districts office of Accountability, Performance & Assessment will support Windham High Schools administration and teachers with student performance data. Further improvements to the school wide focus on literacy standards and student performance data will be outlined in section 4.2.

#### **4.2. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION**

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below:

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

#### **4.2. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION**

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

The structural changes to the Master Schedule will naturally provide the ability for WHS to more effectively intervene with struggling students. During the 2018-2019 school year, the District Management Group (DMG) will assist WHS and its leadership team in the full implementation of the Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS). MTSS is defined as "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2005). DMG will ensure interventions are built into the daily schedule to support student's growth in literacy and math, as well as, support for special populations; EL and students with disabilities through Tier II and Tier III interventions. The WHS Leadership Team, in conjunction with their Teacher Leaders and Central Office Administrators, will

establish a culture of high expectations for all students that is directly linked to teacher performance measures. A data team process for grades 9-11 focused on the PSAT and Mock SAT was established in February of 2017 and continued during the 2017-2018 school year. These structures allowed the Math, English, Social Studies and Science Departments to begin the work of analyzing student performance data on these practice assessments and then adjusting their daily instruction accordingly. All other WHS Departments had global responsibilities linked to these assessments, creating a school wide focus on student performance linked to the Mock SAT. One example of this would be the Visual and Performing Arts Department focusing on the Growth Mindset as a way to support our students' view of their own abilities and performance on the Mock SAT.

During the 2018-2019 school year, a school wide focus will begin on the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Anchor Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening and Language. These standards will allow our students to improve their overall literacy skills and will easily be applicable to all departments, including mathematics. By implementing a monthly protocol of mini SAT aligned assessments, WHS can implement a school wide data team process that will enhance the shared adult responsibility across departments and ensure students are regularly assessed on the skills required for college entrance and measured by the state of Connecticut in grade 11. Following the five step data team process, WHS staff will be collectively evaluating our students' ability to respond to grade level expectations in literacy and math and responding in real time within their grade levels, departments and individual intervention groups:

**Five Step Data Team Process:**

- Step 1: Collect and Chart Data
- Step 2: Analyze Data & Prioritize Needs
- Step 3: Set and Revise SMART Goals
- Step 4: Select Instructional Strategies
- Step 5: Determine Results Indicators

The student data from these monthly assessments will be collaboratively graded by WHS staff, analyzed and then reported out during full staff meetings. Instructional response plans aligned to the CCR and student deficits will be generated for each department and linked to monthly and bi-monthly walkthrough protocols, as well as professional learning supports. For example, if the SAT aligned mini assessment suggests that the majority of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are struggling with the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics then all departments working with 9<sup>th</sup> graders will identify ways in which they can support these skills within their content area whole group lessons, as well as during the small group intervention sessions. This process of linking student performance data back to a multidisciplinary and department wide response, allows WHS teachers to more effectively intervene on grade level expectations, while simultaneously demonstrating the fact that adult action drives student achievement. Utilizing the lesson planning tool developed during the 2017-2018 school year, WHS staff will be expected to generate lesson plans that ensure teachers are prepared to answer the following questions in response to the identified instructional focus areas:

1. What will my students know and/or be able to do?
2. How will they get there?
3. How do my plans ensure I am prepared to meet multiple levels of student understanding and demonstrate a Gradual Release of Responsibility?
4. How will I know when they have it?
5. What will I do when they don't have it? When they do?



Recognizing that not every staff member will be prepared to respond instructionally and that the school wide response is beneficial for our students, mini professional learning sessions will be provided to staff members at their request, as well as at the recommendation of the WHS and Central Office administrators. The goal of the mini professional learning sessions will be to ensure:

- WHS staff are comfortable planning, implementing and assessing lessons (whole and small group) for the identified literacy focus areas connected to their specific content
- Identifying the results indicators that will be observed during the non-evaluative classroom and department walkthroughs

While data from the walkthroughs will be non-evaluative it will be used to generate a list of next steps for the WHS staff, including lists of staff members who can be used as models for their colleagues, as well as who would benefit from further feedback and/or coaching supports from the school's ELA and Math Instructional Coaches. It will also inform WHS administrators as to which classrooms may require additional supervisory supports through the teacher evaluation platform. Walkthroughs will be conducted by Central Office and WHS administrators and WHS staff members, similar to the district walkthroughs protocol carried out during the 2016-2017 school year as a way to improve our Classroom Learning Environments. It is a formative assessment of adult practice that we plan to connect to student achievement data over the course of our monthly mini assessments. It is our belief that student assessment results will improve in the classrooms where WHS staff members are focused on providing high quality, differentiated instruction that hold students highly accountable for independently demonstrating the identified skills. During the 2018-2019 school year, a monthly district wide walkthrough protocol will be strategically connected to our professional learning sessions for building leaders and alternated through our district schools. WHS will reap the benefits of having walkthrough data gathered, analyzed and responded to on a monthly basis.

Citizenship and College & Career Readiness will anchor the school wide Advisory Blocks, allowing staff further insight into student needs, as well as access to research based strategies such as Restorative Practices and Social Emotional Learning, that will further support student engagement and academic success. The school wide, grade level process of analyzing student data and requiring the adults to engage in professional learning that will help them to respond instructionally to individual and small group student needs will naturally guide the next layer of work in the content specific teams or departments. We are essentially establishing a school wide structure for data analysis that can and should be replicated for all academic and nonacademic data points. In short, the WHS staff will regularly engage in the following steps designed to improve overall adult performance:

- Assessment of student performance
- Comparison to goals and expectations
- Adult Learning, where necessary
- Instructional Response Plans in all departments
- Monthly and Bi-Monthly Classroom Walkthroughs focused on Instructional Response Plans
- Specific Feedback provided to all departments
- Assessment of student performance
- Celebrations of Growth and/or Action Plans to Address Areas in Need of Improvement



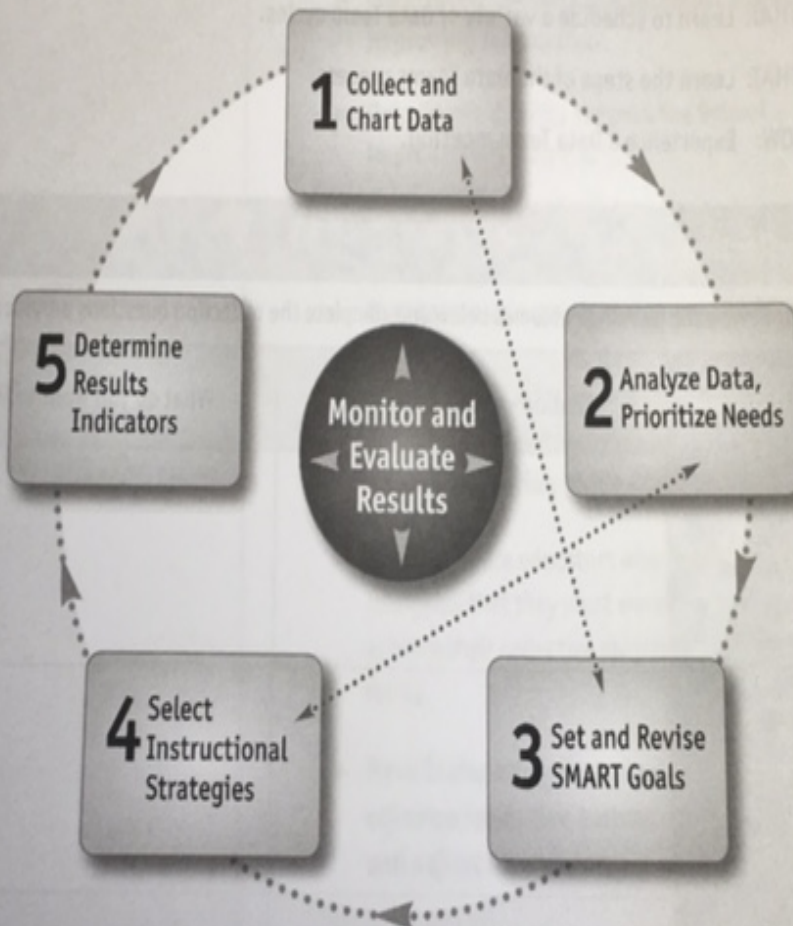
## **2. Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis, and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.**

By ensuring the WHS staff understands that transformative work requires both an academic and social emotional focus and that adult action drives student performance, we plan to enhance the school wide understanding of literacy standards, increase staff connections with students and develop staff capacity through frequent and aligned feedback regularly provided to our teachers. The professional learning sessions that support these initiatives will be facilitated or co-facilitated by members of WHS's Leadership Team, Teacher Leaders and/or Program Leaders as a way to enhance leadership skills, improve staff buy-in and increase the number of "resident experts". In addition to the district's 5 full professional days (August 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, October 9<sup>th</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>) and 4 early release half days (September 18<sup>th</sup>, December 5<sup>th</sup>, January 29<sup>th</sup>, and May 21<sup>st</sup>), WHS will utilize two monthly 90 minute extended Monday sessions to focus on the school wide analysis of student assessment data (academic and social/emotional) and detailed instructional responses organized by department. The format of all professional learning will be as interactive as possible with specific modeling done to further support instructional delivery in our classrooms. For example, a professional learning session may be designed around a blended learning format, or presented in a way that effectively highlights the components of a gradual release of responsibility. All professional learning opportunities will be linked back to specific high school data with the overarching goal of improving on all applicable school wide indicators. While not an exhaustive list, the following data sources will be utilized to drive professional learning during the 2018-2019 school year:

- WHS Accountability Index
- WHS Demographic Data
- 2018 SAT Grade 11 Student Performance Data
- Monthly Classroom Walkthrough Data (Academic and Advisory Blocks)
- Monthly Mini SAT Aligned Assessment (College and Career Readiness Standards)
- School Wide Teacher Evaluation Trends
- Student Diagnostic Assessment & Progress Monitoring Data
- Student Attendance, Discipline and Satisfaction Survey Data
- Staff Attendance Data and Satisfaction Survey Data
- Parent Satisfaction Survey Data
- Feedback provided from outside providers (such as HMH Math Solutions, Center for Secondary School Redesign and From Pages to Pedagogy, LLC, etc.)

The 2018-2019 implementation of a monthly school wide mini SAT aligned assessment platform will generate far more examples of student learning delivered in more digestible chunks that will naturally provide more opportunities for WHS staff to intervene with students and support one another instructionally. By having departments collaboratively score student work samples, analyze data and share in the presentation responsibilities to their colleagues, we are purposefully designing the school wide response to ensure all members share responsibility for our academic and social emotional improvement efforts. At the individual student level, grade level meetings will be held at least three times a year, ensuring that 100 percent of WHS students are on track to meet their growth targets on both the academic and social emotional indicators linked to school success.

## The Data Teams Process



### STEPS

STEP 1: Collect and chart the data (student work)

STEP 2: Analyze data and prioritize needs

STEP 3: Set, review, and revise incremental SMART goals

STEP 4: Select instructional strategies

STEP 5: Determine results indicators

### DATA TYPE

effect data

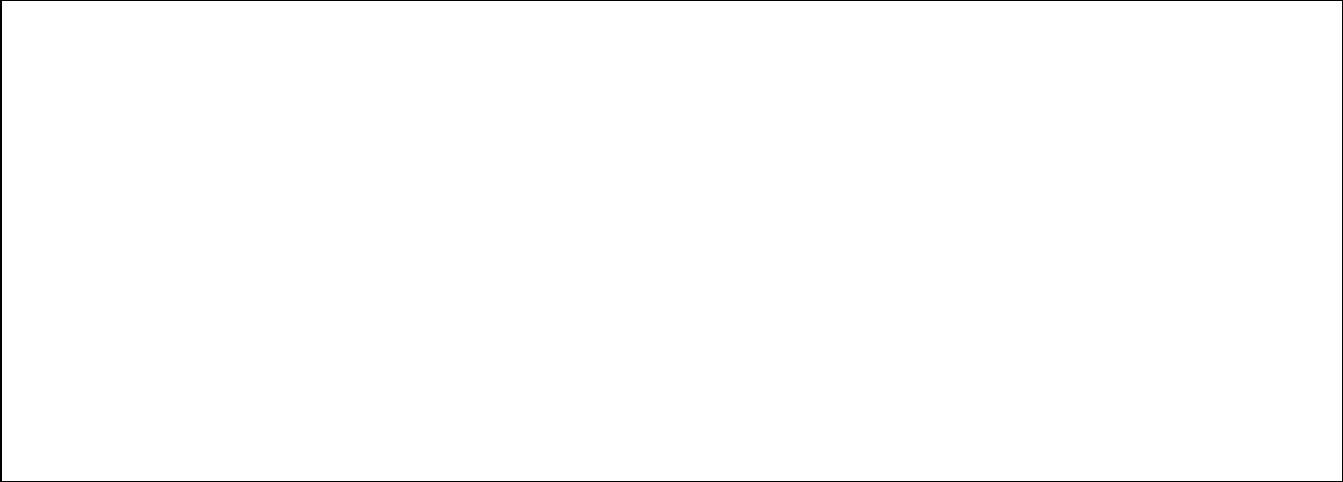
effect data

effect data

cause data

cause data

**Monitor and evaluate results:** Teachers monitor and evaluate both cause and effect data between the 5-Step Meetings.



## Section 5: Culture and Climate

### 5.1. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURE

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

WHS will focus on the following school environment and culture initiatives:

- Implement Restorative Practices school wide to decrease teacher referrals, in-school & out of school suspensions and expulsions, and build positive relationships between all members of the school community.
- Support student learning through social emotional intelligence
- Improve Student Attendance / Reduce Student Chronic Absenteeism

**Implement Restorative Practices school wide to decrease teacher referrals and in-school & out of school suspensions.**

Restorative Practices training will be conducted at the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic school year. Professional learning and coaching, along with strategic action steps for roll out, will ensure positive climate and culture changes at WHS. Restorative practice methods and strategies will be used to establish positive relationships between students and students and students and staff. This will improve relationships among all members of the WHS community and work to reduce disciplinary issues.

#### **Support for Student Learning**

As part of WHS's plan, the entire high school community will focus on the whole child both academic and social emotional. Windham Public Schools has partnered with Yale Center for Social Emotional Intelligence to provide staff development focusing first on developing adults in the school, both personally and professionally, so they can be role models and knowledgeable implementers of the skill-based instruction for students. Teachers will learn the necessary skills in order to engage students dealing with the effects of trauma. This partnership and staff development will begin with three days of training during the summer of 2018 and continue throughout the 2018-2019 year.

#### **Improve Student Attendance / Reduce Student Chronic Absenteeism**

WHS chronic absenteeism rate for 2017-2018 is 30 percent. WHS will partner with Attendance Works to reduce the school's 30 percent chronic absentee rate and overall student absenteeism through building the capacity of the school's attendance team. The goal of the partnership with Attendance Works is to build the capacity of the principal and the attendance team to facilitate a schoolwide culture of attendance, using the Teaching Attendance e-curriculum and workshop to apply the best practices for an effective attendance team. Attendance Works will also facilitate four training sessions for the attendance team and provide ongoing coaching support.

A building attendance committee composed of administrators, social workers, attendance coordinator, family liaison and counselors was formed this year to deal with the high level of chronic absent students at WHS. The WHS attendance committee worked on building school capacity to reduce chronic absenteeism through weekly principal-led attendance meetings. The WHS attendance committee has implemented several attendance incentives this year: Super Bowl Challenge, March Madness, and the Major League Attendance Challenge. The 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy attendance team is comprised of has an Assistant Principal and 6 academic teachers. The 9<sup>th</sup> grade team of teachers meet 4 days a week and monitor the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students' academic progress and

attendance. Freshmen students who have attendance issues use daily check-in sheets monitored by an Assistant Principal.

Windham Public Schools is sponsoring the district wide attendance initiative “In Class Today”. “In Class Today” is a tool used to target specific chronically absent students. In Class Today motivates families and students using positive, empowering messages. They structure their tier 1 intervention programs to meet the needs of districts. All they need is limited district attendance data. At the end of each school year, In Class Today provides the district with a report detailing the results and the work performed.

Continuing research revealed that the biggest push for action came not from the social comparison, but from “correcting parents’ beliefs about how many days their kid has missed.” Todd Rogers, director of the Student Social Support R&D Lab at Harvard University, started doing research in schools, he found focusing on parents could offer big returns.

Mailings are composed of three different regimes:

1. The Reminder regime reminded parents of the importance of absences and of their ability to influence them.
2. Total Absences regime adds information about students’ total absences.
3. The Relative Absences regime further added information about the modal number of absences among target students’ classmates.

WHS will continue using In Class to reduce chronically absent students. In Class will send three targeted mailings.

WHS follows the “Attendance Works” System of Tiered Supports. Tier 1 interventions are universal schoolwide strategies that encourage good attendance for all students. For example Tier 1 interventions may include: reward improved and outstanding attending during achievement assemblies, hold class, team or grade level attendance competitions with rewards, and set attendance improvement goal and share progress weekly with staff. Tier 2 interventions are individualized strategies responsive to the needs of frequently absent students. Examples of Tier 2 interventions may include: attendance committee members make home visits to students on their subcommittee list and attempt to connect families with appropriate resources, attendance committee members refer students to the School Based Health Center when necessary and provide parents with the appropriate paperwork. Tier 3 interventions are intense and individualized strategies for students who miss the most school. Examples of Tier 3 interventions may include: attendance committee members make appropriate referrals to outside agencies. WHS has customized these interventions to its school population. This allows a more personalized treatment for the students and parents.

### **Afterschool and Extra-curricular Activities**

WHS lacks after school and extra-curricular activities. Our students are talented in many areas, and these activities would serve as an outlet for creativity, focusing also on good citizenship.

These are the activities or clubs that the staff is interested in offering.

- Gay Straight Alliance
- Robotics
- Theater Club
- Art Club
- Science Club: students are interested in a variety of careers in the medical field.
- Outdoors/ Adventure Club
- Book Club

- Open Gym / Fitness Club
- Yearbook Club
- School Newspaper: Electronic Edition
- Social Justice Club
- Dominos Club
- Dance Club
- Homework Club
- Peer-mentoring Club
- Community Service Club

## 5.2. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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

WHS will continue to develop and implement family engagement and strengthen community partnerships.

### Family Engagement Plan

Family and parental involvement is essential for student success. At WHS there is a family liaison who works directly with families to assist them with accessing all educational offices and programs at WHS. The family liaison assists families with their child's academic, behavioral and attendance issues. The following events promote family engagement at WHS: School Wide Open House, Freshman Open House, Parent teacher conferences twice a year, and college nights. In addition, through the sports programs there are Coaches Nights in the Fall, Winter and Spring. Parents also visit WHS for athletic events, musical performances and arts programs.

The current parents groups at WHS include:

- Latino Parent Coalition
- Parent Teacher Student Organization
- School Governance Council
- Windham Whippets Sports Booster Club

WHS is investigating ways to implement activities and execute strategies that will increase family engagement.

- Parent Center: where parents can come in and have access to computers and internet.
- Parent and Community University: Presents workshops for parents on topics; attendance, special education services, leadership roles, School Governance Council training, etc.

### Community Partnerships

WHS has been developing partnerships with the community organizations such as; Eastern Connecticut State University, Rotary Club and the Soroptimist Group. The Soroptimist International of Willimantic is a global volunteer organization working to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. In addition, WHS has developed a partnership with Electric Boat through the

ECO program. WHS sees that through implementing career pathways, community partnerships will develop and strengthen as student engagement increases.

### **Thought Exchange Survey**

Thought Exchange Survey is an interactive tool used to gather community insight on educational issues and/or initiatives. It allows school administrators to identify families' perspectives on issues. In addition, administrators can utilize the tool to compare responses of community stakeholders.

### **Communication Plan**

A communication plan will be formulated to include the voices of parents and community partners to discuss the implementation and development of the Career Pathways at WHS. Components of this plan will include:

- Parent community conversations
- Information session with town officials, businesses, and local universities and colleges
- Informational workshops for High School and Middle School staff
- Parent-student conferences will be held to help

## Section 6: Operations

### 6.1. SCHEDULE AND USE OF TIME

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below:

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

**1. Propose the length of the school day and year for students, and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task.**

#### Daily Schedule

The school day for Windham Public School students is from 7:30 – 2:35 for a total of 7 hours and 5 minutes. During this time the students have seven 53 minute classes. The students have 180 days in an academic calendar year. The school day for Windham Public School staff is from 7:15 – 3:05 for a total of 7 hours and 50 minutes. The staff has 186 days in an academic calendar year; 180 instructional days and 6 professional development days. The teachers schedule includes; 5 classes, 1 preparation period and 1 period for professional learning community (PLC).

#### Create a master schedule designed to maximize instruction and provide interventions.

An intervention block will be added to the WHS Schedule to support students who need intervention in Literacy and Math. During the 2018-2019 school year, DMG will assist WHS and its leadership team in the full implementation of the MTSS response built into the daily schedule to support student's growth in literacy and math, as well as, support for special populations; EL and students with disabilities through Tier II and Tier III interventions. These targeted interventions classes in grades 9 and 10, it will increase grade promotion and graduation rate. The intervention classes for grades 11 and 12 will provide opportunities to recover credit and support literacy and math.

#### Develop an advisory program

To foster good citizenship and college and career readiness for all students at WHS, the Leadership Team is working with the Center for Secondary School Redesign on an advisory program. WHS will have a focus group of students, teachers, staff, and HSTW that will work on developing the curriculum.

### WHS Advisory Program

Advisory for WHS 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades will meet two times per week; Tuesdays & Thursdays.

The advisory session will meet for 25 minutes for a total of 50 minutes per week.

Teachers need training in Restorative Practices and Yale Ruler Social & Emotional through Professional Development. Tentative: High School and Middle School Teacher/staff restorative practice / social & emotional professional learning on August 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.



Additional programs to support student academics and engagement include:

- Expansion of the ECO program or similar experiences for students (I know this is something Dr. Garcia has mentioned and is passionate about). Example: ECO already has a summer learning and career internship component that could potentially be expanded to more students.
- Bringing back DECA or other state and/or national organizations or competitions that naturally incorporate academic and social/emotional skills and tie directly back to college and career readiness. This can also be done by naturally expanding what is being done in the academically based After School Clubs like School Newspaper/Literary Magazine, Geography Bee, Robotics Competitions and Performing and Visual Art Shows.
- After school and weekend learning experiences that combine college and career readiness standards and community based service learning activities. Example: WHS students propose, advertise, organize and coordinate a National Youth Service Day in April for WHS.
- Ensure students are utilizing every minute of their school day. Example: Identified students will utilize the 25 minutes between breakfast and period 1 for digital supports in ELA and Math. Incentives offered to students for attendance.

**2. Propose the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning time.**

The WHS teachers will meet in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) by grade level four times per week to focus on common planning, data teams and student academic and behavioral issues. The teacher PLCs will meet for 50 minutes a day, four days per week. Instructional consultants and coaches will work with the teachers during the data teams to assist them with data analysis, creating common formative assessments and implementing instructional strategies.

Given the district's understanding of the positive impact of collective teacher efficacy on student engagement and achievement levels, Windham Public Schools is deeply interested in ensuring a comprehensive professional learning response for WHS Staff. The overall focus of all of our professional learning opportunities will be to ensure WHS staff members have the tools they need to effectively respond to the academic and social/emotional needs of the students of WHS. On the academic side, we will ensure a school wide data team process that is based on SAT aligned mini assessments, collaborative scoring and data analysis, shared responsibility for presenting the data, as well as detailed department response plans that can be monitored through classroom walkthroughs, informal and formal observations. This school wide response will be further detailed within each WHS department, focused on closing achievement gaps and increasing the number of students meeting grade level expectations. On the social emotional side, we will balance the professional learning needs of Restorative Practices, Social Emotional Learning through Yale University and College and Career Planning.

From September through June teachers in Grade Level PLC's will meet 3 days per week x 53 minutes. In addition, Content Specific PLC's will be meet during the specific after school Monday PD times. In addition to weekly obligations within their Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), WHS staff will be expected to take part in monthly professional learning built around these two key areas of improvement. WHS will develop a yearlong professional learning calendar in consultation with our external partners.

## 6.2. BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Section 7: Initial Implementation Timeline

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

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

Activity:	Owner:	Timeline:
<b>Talent:</b>		
1. High School That Works Audit, Leadership and Staff Development and Coaching	Leadership Team under the guidance of High School That Work Consultants	To begin October 2018
2. Redesign of Guidance Counselor and Social Workers Roles and Responsibilities	Leadership Team under the guidance of High School That Work Consultants	Fall 2018
3. Support and Guide the Windham High School administrative team	Executive Coach	Fall 2018
4. Support and Guide Windham High School students during high school and post-secondary planning	Career Counselor	Fall 2018
<b>Academics:</b>		
1. High School That Work Audit: Status of Career Pathways Focus	Leadership Team under the guidance of High School That Work Consultants	To begin October 2018
2. School That Work Leadership and Staff Development and Coaching	Leadership Team under the guidance of High School That Work Consultants	To begin December 2018 and ongoing
3. Provide math instruction professional development for teachers, coaches and administrators. Job embedded group coaching for WHS math teachers	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH)	August 2018
4. Literacy based professional development for teachers and administration	Dr. Bailey, Pages to Pedagogy, LLC	August 2018
5. Provide professional development for time & resource management, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and coaching responsibilities	DMG	August 2018
<b>Culture and Climate:</b>		
1. Training for Windham High School Team and support services; ½ day of whole staff training,	Trauma Based Restorative Practices	August 2018

2 days of technical assistance & 1 day training support	Joe Brummer	
2. Training for WHS administrative team and teachers on integrating social and emotional learning into schools	Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence – Yale Ruler Marc Brackett	July 2018
3. Advisory Program for Windham High School		
4.		
Operations:		
1. Support programs for WHS attendance team	Attendance Works	Fall 2018
2.		

## Section 8: Modifications

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

## PART IV: APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Turnaround Committee Signatures Page

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Union-Appointed Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Union-Appointed Teacher (*typed*)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Union-Appointed Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Union-Appointed Teacher (*typed*)

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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*)

## Appendix B: Budget Information

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

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	<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 \$1,000.00 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under \$1,000.00 and a useful life of not less than five years.
800	<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.



## STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES  
GRANT PROGRAMS

**PROJECT TITLE:** Commissioner's Network

**THE APPLICANT:** Windham Public Schools HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

WHS

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Superintendent Signature:

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Name: *(typed)*

Dr. Patricia Garcia

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Title: *(typed)*

Superintendent of Schools

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Date:

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# Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report

Windham High School  
December 15, 2016



Turnaround Office  
State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103  
[www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov)



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## Part I: Introduction

On October 25, 2016, the Commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) initially selected Windham High School (WHS) to participate in the Commissioner's Network, pending legislative authority to extend and expand the Commissioner's Network to include a fourth cohort of schools. On December 15, 2016, the CSDE conducted, in consultation with Windham Public Schools, its board of education, and the WHS School Governance Council, 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.

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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. To that end, the Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools participate in the Network for a period of three to five years.

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; and
- (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 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 nor offer recommendations. The Turnaround Committee is responsible for developing a Turnaround Plan that addresses the deficiencies identified in the audit.

The audit team would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Windham High School community for its hospitality on the day of the site 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.

## Part II: School Information

Windham High School (WHS) is the Windham Public School's comprehensive high school. The school serves 590 students in Grades 9 through 12. Approximately 73 percent of the students are Hispanic, 6 percent are Black, and 20 percent are White. Twenty-five percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 28 percent are English learners. The majority of students (86 percent) are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. WHS employs a seven-period daily schedule. The current principal assumed the principal position in July 2016 after having served as principal at another Commissioner's Network school in Norwich.

### School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of the Windham High School current and historic data, including information about student enrollment and demographics, personnel, school climate, school performance, and student academic achievement.

Enrollment Data (2016-17):*					
Grades:	9-12	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:	-12.3%		
Student Enrollment:	590	Mobility Rate:	22.9%		
Personnel Data (2016-17):*					
# of Administrators:	4	% of Teachers "Below Standard":	1		
# of Teachers:	56	% of Teachers "Developing":	0		
# of Support Staff:	52	% of Teachers "Proficient":	39		
# of Counselors:	2.3	% of Teachers "Exemplary":	20		
# of Psychologists/Social Workers:	0.3	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:	68.7%		
School Day Per Year (2016-17):*					
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	180	Instructional Minutes/Day:	385		
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	185	Extended Day Program?	No		
Student Demographic Breakdown (2016-17):*					
% Black:	5.7	% Male:	58.9		
% Hispanic:	72.9	% Female:	41.1		
% White:	19.6	% EL:	28.2		
% Other:	2.4	% Special Education:	24.6		
% F/R Meals:	86	% Eligible for HUSKY Plan, Part A:	n/a		
School Climate Data:		2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Student Attendance Rate:	90.0	91.9%	90.2%	90.7%*	
Chronic Absenteeism Rate:	33.2%	23.8%	31.8%	31.6%	
Total # of In-School Suspensions:	516	219	331	243	
Total # of Out-of-School Suspensions:	576	245	325	341	
Total # of Expulsions:	22	7	7	7	

Teacher Attendance Rate:		95%	93%	96%
<b>School Performance/Accountability:</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
SPI:	(Science only) 36.6	56.6	58.0	N/A
<b>Connecticut Mastery Test at or above Goal:*</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
CAPT – ELA/Math	62.5/34.5	--	--	--
Grade 10 – Science CMT/CAPT	9.4	9.8	18.1	--
<b>Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 &amp; 4 Data:</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
Grade 11 - Reading	--	17.7	--	--
Grade 11 - Math	--	9.7	--	--
<b>SAT Grade 11 (HS Only):</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
Percent Meeting Level 3 or 4 in ELA	--	--	25.7	38.8
Percent Meeting Level 3 or 4 in Math	--	--	10.9	11.6
<b>Graduation Rate (HS Only):</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	74	81.1	82.2	80.7

\* Self-reported school data

## 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. Evaluative score categories are: 4 (Exemplary), 3 (Proficient), 2 (Developing), and 1 (Below Standard).

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 (PD)	✓			
1.5. Leadership effectiveness		✓		
1.6. Instructional leadership	✓			

### Summary of Strengths:

- Staff Commitment:** The WHS leadership team report that the teachers and staff are committed to their work and there is a genuine sense of pride in working at the school, also validated by teachers who have worked at the school for a long period of time. Students feel supported by teachers and believe that student-teacher relations are generally positive. Parents believe that teachers are very involved and dedicated to students, and teachers discuss a sense of collaboration, though opportunities to increase and improve collaboration are evident with regards to coaching and planning as evidenced by limited such interactions across classrooms and departments.

### Summary of Growth Areas:

- Alignment:** There is an evident lack of cohesiveness in vision, mission and expectations among the staff, with 68% of teachers (n=23) surveyed disagreeing that a clear mission/vision of school-wide priorities has been effectively communicated, and 54% (n=19) saying that their job expectations are not clearly defined. The 2015-16 School Improvement Plan that was provided is weak on specifics; the plan's student achievement goals for both numeracy and literacy have not been met, with little or no direct explanation of additional improvement plan.
- Professional Development (PD):** Survey results reveal teachers feel inadequately supported with respect to their professional growth in terms of coaching, evaluative feedback, and informal training. Seventy-six percent of teachers surveyed (n=25) feel they do not receive helpful nor actionable feedback from administrators, and over half (56%, n=19) feel that available PD has not improved their practice. Lack of department program leaders as well as vacancies in the coaching staff have negatively contributed to this issue, but in addition, there was not much evidence of teachers collaborating in other ways to improve such as visiting other classrooms, working across disciplines, etc. Roughly two-thirds of teachers in the focus groups had not received formal or informal feedback or final evaluation for 2016-17 which were behind

schedule. In their words, teachers feel “rudderless.” District and school leadership echo this concern indicating teacher coaching and training gaps in areas that include the design and planning of student learning objectives, coaching and evaluation by objective parties, data-informed support especially with regard to assessing individual student needs, cultural responsiveness, needs of urban students, instructional quality, and using PLC’s. Formal PD training was generally characterized as “fly by”, sporadic, repetitive not progressive, and lacking in practical ideas and best practices. PD also seemed isolated to certain individuals or groups (eg. restorative practices training delivered only to brand new teachers, while more experienced teachers were not even in the communications loop on the implications of this training). Staffing records indicates that approximately 60 educators are evaluated by 4 administrators. Each administrator would likely have an evaluation caseload of 15 educators. Caseload size does not appear to contribute to lack of feedback or final evaluations.

- **Instructional Practice and Leadership** – Teacher effectiveness was highly variable across classrooms and there are concerns from both classroom observations as well as district and school leadership on the quality and efficacy of instruction. Nearly all classrooms in session (approximately 19 classes), across all grades, were visited by the audit team during the observation window on the visit day (with the exception of ELA students in formative testing). Common citations across classrooms included that most evidenced low student engagement and lesson rigor/challenge, primarily structured as teacher-led lessons with that singular instructional format. Teachers showed little to no differentiation in whole-class instruction, over-utilized independent worksheets during class time, had varying levels of student behavior control (as described below under Student Engagement), and sub-optimally utilized the second adult in classrooms which had one (those observed mostly did not do much more than float around the classroom to assist with a few student’s questions). With WHS student performance indices substantially below state SBAC averages across ELA, Math, and Science, instructional improvement is an imperative. Training teachers and building high quality and engaging instruction which impacts student achievement, teacher capacity, and school culture is identified by district leadership as a top need.

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 Common Core Standards	✓			
2.5. Supports for special populations	✓			
2.6. Assessment system and data culture		✓		

### Summary of Strengths:

- Data Teams:** 53% of teachers surveyed (n=18) indicate that the school uses data consistently to measure student progress and inform instruction, while a full 77% (n=26) say that this data is used to differentiate instruction. However, it is not entirely clear how differentiated instruction is put into practice since very little, if any, was observed during classroom visits. Data teams meet four days per week to cover one of four strands: PD, curriculum, culture, and operations. There was no evidence provided that the data teams were expected to follow a particular process or structure. Additionally, it is not evident what teachers were expected to do in these areas as a result of the data. While teachers perceive data-teaming as a strength, there is also a disconnect with how rigorously data is used to design focused supports.

### Summary of Growth Areas:

- Student Engagement:** In the classrooms observed, most students were relatively compliant during the period. Meaningful engagement, however, was lacking and more than a few students in over half of classrooms observed seemed inattentive and disengaged from classroom activities. Behaviors observed during class, in the presence of teachers, included students who were allowed to talk excessively in small group social conversations, who wore headphones and put their heads down on desks during class lectures, as well as some who used (sometimes hiding their use of) cell phones for non-class related purposes (including a student who was playing a video game on his phone). 90-95% of classes were either dominated by one-way teacher-led instruction or focused much time on low-engagement problem worksheets where the teacher was only focused on helping a single student or couple students at a time. Observed classes offered very little opportunity for constructive student-to-student discourse with the exception of one higher level science class where students constructively worked in small 3-4 person groups on a defined project. Even in their focus group, students mentioned a lack of opportunity for student voice in their classrooms.
- Curricula Consistency and Alignment** – Teachers in focus groups remarked how often instructional tools were changed and that they needed more clarity in their use. 51% (n=18) believe that the curricula is not well aligned to CT Common Core standards even if curriculum standards have already been formalized and adopted. School leadership concurs that there is little evidence of Connecticut Core Standards understanding by teachers, stating that it has not

been a priority, and that the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. Teachers spoke to a lack of curriculum and curriculum maps in both core content areas and electives. Again, there needs to be a better understanding of what has been produced versus what is, in fact, understood to be in place. There was mention in several focus groups and interviews of adding new academic programs such as TEALS (Microsoft program integrating literacy with technology), computer science, and DECA (business education), but this should be simultaneously weighed against the primary need for high quality core curriculum and rigorous Tier 1 implementation in core subject areas.

- **Rigor and Differentiation:** Rigor and differentiation were significantly lacking in most all classrooms. This included a lack of challenging instruction and ineffectively checking for student understanding across the room. The instructional method in most observed classes was limited to teacher-led lessons, with very few using higher-order questioning or advanced teaching techniques in Tier 1 instruction. As discussed above, teachers showed little in the way of differentiated instruction. Even in several classes that had a second adult, they were mainly seen floating and “loosely” helping students across the entire class, as opposed to focusing on those students who needed extra support or needed help to re-engage. From observation, it appeared that students who were disengaged in class were simply allowed to “slip by” without having to participate. Strategies to check for student understanding were essentially non-existent beyond helping with worksheet problems. Instructional quality and delivery was relatively weak as a general observation and did not challenge students, but mostly just conveyed lecture material. Teachers seemed to concur, with 41% (n=14) surveyed disagreeing that “instructional quality and rigor are consistently high.”
- **Supports for Special Populations:** Only 24% (n=8) of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners.” For a school with 28% of students identified as English learners (in a district that ranks #1 of all non-charter districts in the state in its percentage of EL students), 25% identified as special education students, and a significant 86% being from low income households, it is critical to address this need. WHS “High Needs” students show a more than 10 percentage point achievement performance gap versus non- High Needs students, and the 15 percentage point gap in Graduation Rate for High Needs students, reported by the State as being a statistically significant outlier, further evidences this need. School leadership and teachers both highlighted the lack of bilingual support, including the lack of bilingual teachers and social workers, and the discontinuance of the former bilingual program as issues, particularly given the prevalence of EL’s and new arrivals. Both teacher focus groups discussed the fact that this lack of support leads to students who are neither ready nor engaged. Further, parents cited deficiencies in special education support in under-delivery of IEP supports such as speech therapy, and teachers referenced what some felt was “inequitable special education support.”



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

**Summary of Strengths:**

- School Diversity:** Consistently mentioned by students, teachers, and building leadership was the positive attribute of school community diversity. Students remark how they learn from each other and help each other out. Teachers also share that they feel students generally get along and will self-advocate. There is a takeaway feeling of “family,” and in this environment, students say that bullying is minimal. This is potentially an asset to leverage, in a town such as Windham which has undergone a substantial demographic shift over the years toward being a largely minority community. See page 6 for student demographics.
- School Environment:** The atmosphere in the building is calm; student interactions were mostly positive and respectful, and hallway transitions were quite orderly, despite a notable lack of adult presence between classes. The physical plant is adequate, though average at best when it comes to branding the school or conveying high expectations. School occupancy is only about half its physical capacity. Ironically, it should be noted that 79% of teachers surveyed (n=27) felt that the school environment is not conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. The root factors of this response needs to be further explored.
- Extracurricular Activities:** WHS offers a wide variety of competitive sports, clubs and opportunities for students. Sports seem to be integral to students and the community as evidenced by both the spirit students thought they bring, as well as the community stakeholder discussion that ensued when a grade eligibility policy was recently revamped.

**Summary of Growth Areas:**

- Chronic Absenteeism:** Though WHS has made some inconsistent improvements, its chronic absenteeism rate over the past three years has been well above state averages, ranging between 24% and 33%. Additionally, average daily student attendance is stubbornly stuck at only the 90-91% range. The school has an attendance committee that has become more focused on chronic absenteeism than on truancy, as it had been in the past, but is perceived by teachers to not be heavily enough focused on Tier 1 strategies. In addition, the district has recently formed a district-wide attendance committee to better address the issues. In their focus group, parents voiced that the communication and enforcement of chronic absenteeism policies coming from the district have tended to come across as highly punitive rather than

better communicating the importance of school attendance. While chronic absenteeism did come up when prompted during the day-long audit visit, it did not appear to be as high a priority and as salient to teachers and administrators as it needs to be given the significantly high rate.

- **Behavior Management Expectations:** Teachers consistently noted that there is a lack of cohesiveness in terms of setting student expectations. This ranges from behavior to uniform policies to social norms. An overwhelming 85% of teachers surveyed (n=28) do not believe the school implements an effective school-wide behavior management system, and that consistent behavioral intervention processes are necessary. Teachers see student behavioral issues as true challenges. They perceive minimal and inconsistent discipline now, and they remark how they have had no PD in this area either. Teachers feel that discipline issues have become too dependent on teachers, and feel that administrators are forcing teachers to deal with it without support. Students voiced (and teachers concurred) that some students see the current disciplinary punishment system as not being taken seriously by their peers, with some even saying that it is seen as an easy way to get out of class. The need for more counseling and trauma support for students, as well as the need for a more streamlined SRBI process was raised by school leadership. Teachers commented that the way referrals are handled, the inconsistent consequences, and the fact that students with egregious behavior are just returned to the classroom have all caused issues that obstruct effective teaching. Finally, as reported above, teachers generally believe that nothing has come of the limited restorative justice training that was conducted, and that those invited to the PD included and was limited to only the newest teachers.

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

### Summary of Strengths:

- Adequate Instructional Time:** The school's schedule provides 385 minutes of instruction per day. The school's daily schedule includes seven class periods of 55 minutes with a four-minute pass time between classes.
- Routines and Transitions:** From observations on the day of the visit, transitions, breakfast and lunch were calm and orderly, though there was a definite lack of adult presence in the halls. That said, 79% of teachers (n=27) disagreed that there were clear routines and procedures in place to help create a smooth and orderly environment. This response may dovetail with teachers' general perception that the school lacks consistent behavior management structures, as noted earlier.

### Summary of Growth Areas:

- Use of Instructional Time:** Classroom visits suggest that much class time is wasted with non-productive activity. Students entering class spend time settling in instead of immediately getting to work. Similarly, during class time as noted earlier, students in quite a few classes were distracted or otherwise not engaged with instruction. In one class, the completion of a class debate led to the teacher giving the class over five minutes of free time before the bell rang. These are all missed opportunities to maximize available class time. In several classes, it was observed that the end-of-class bell was an unplanned interruption, essentially stopping activity in mid-stream. A more planned use of instructional time by teachers would be beneficial. With 50% of teachers surveyed (n=17) agreeing that the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time, teachers are split down the middle on this item. While they may feel that the official calendar and schedule appear adequate on paper, it may also be that what happens in practice is not sufficiently effective.
- Use of Staff Time:** 56% of teachers surveyed (n=19) do not believe they have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, or improve instruction. The root cause may or may not be the total amount of time allocated, however. Teachers report that data teams and PLC's are not working as fully intended and along with insufficient staffing of program leaders and a mandatory PLC discussion agenda which they see as too constraining to get into depth on some topics, it may be that the structure for planning time should be revisited.

## Appendix A: Operations and Instructional Audit Rubric

TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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 the previous year. 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 the previous year, 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 the previous year 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 the previous year. 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 or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue. The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community generally understands the need for change, however actions are more often governed by the status quo.	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable goals. The plan may lack coherence and a strategy for sustainability. Leadership conveys urgency.	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.

TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>1.6. Instructional Leadership</b>	Few staff can articulate a common understanding of what excellent instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are not clear. Instructional leaders do not demonstrate a commitment to developing consistent and high-quality instructional practice school-wide.	Some staff can articulate a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are enforced with limited consistency. Instructional leaders demonstrate some commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	Most staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are consistently enforced. Instructional leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	All staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. Educators relentlessly pursue excellent pedagogy. Instructional leaders have communicated and enforced high expectations school-wide.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>2.1. Academic Rigor*<sup>1</sup></b>	Most observed lessons are teacher-led and whole group. 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. Observed lessons primarily appeal to one learning style. Few students are truly involved in the lessons.	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. The lessons appeal to and seem to support all learning styles. Students are actively engaged in the lessons and excited to participate in classroom dialogue and instruction.
<b>2.3. Differentiation and Checking for Understanding*</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 around the use of data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and differentiate the learning process accordingly. Tight feedback loop between monitoring efforts and instruction.
<b>2.4. Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to Common</b>	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and/or the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. As a result, pacing is inconsistent. The percentage	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	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	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all grade levels and content areas. Curricula are aligned with the CCSS and are being implemented with a high degree of fidelity throughout the school. The percentage of

<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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>Core State Standards</b>	of students at or above goal on state assessments is > 10 points below the state average.	students at or above goal on state assessments is 6-10 points below the state average.	students at or above goal on state assessments is within 5 percentage points of the state average.	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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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 ≤ 88% and/or chronic absenteeism is > 20%.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is between 89% and 93%	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is between	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily



CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
		and/or chronic absenteeism is between 16% and 20%.	94% and 97% and/or chronic absenteeism is between 11% and 15%.	attendance is > 97% and chronic absenteeism is ≤ 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 # 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 primarily 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 < 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 largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school has an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
<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	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	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 ≤ 5 hours of instruction per day, and ≤ 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 ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time.	The school has taken steps to increase instructional time on task through extended learning opportunities. The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed. The schedule includes > 5.5 and ≤ 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 90 and ≤ 120 minutes of ELA time.	The school has multiple extended learning opportunities available to students. The school implements a thoughtful and strategic school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 120 minutes of ELA time.
<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 to use class time in a constructive manner.	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 more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	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 executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Students transition promptly to academic work with minimal cues and reminders from teachers. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task.
<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, there is very little re-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 minimal 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.
<b>4.5. Financial Management</b>	The school and/or district do not make sound budgetary decisions based on student need and projected impact. Budget decisions are largely governed by past practice and do not account for sustainability. There is little to no evidence around school and/or district	Budget decisions are sometimes focused on factors unrelated to student needs and school goals. A number of expenditures and initiatives lack a plan for sustainability beyond the current school year. School and/or district leaders do not effectively	The school and/or district have emerging strategic budgeting practices. The school and/or district have begun to repurpose funds to align expenditures more closely with school goals and student needs. Sustainability may pose a concern.	The school and district engage in strategic budgeting. The school and district invest in high-yield, research-based initiatives aligned to student needs and school goals. There is a clear sustainability plan for all major expenditures. School/district leaders

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

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



OPERATIONS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
	leaders successfully advocating for school resource needs.	advocate for school needs or pursue additional resources.	School/district leaders effectively advocate for school needs and pursue additional resources.	effectively advocate for school needs, and build strategic relationships to pursue needed resources.