

Program and Goals for 2019-2020

1. What are the points of pride you would like to share with the Board and Community?

- The Middle School continues to use the Schools to Watch rubric and process to guide school improvement efforts. Our school applied for re-designation as a School to Watch in July and participated in a site visit on October 3, 2018. We just received word in February that we have earned our second re-designation.
- The Middle School has been steadily progressing with the implementation of the District's Vision 2020:
 - Last year was the first year that all Middle School students were provided with laptops that they carried from class to class. As is the case with any new initiative, there were some issues to be worked out. The most notable was that students carrying laptops in backpacks was not a good workable solution for how students should carry all their materials during the school day. Additionally, during the 2017-18 school year, we experienced a bit more damage to computers than the year prior. Overall, however, the One to World approach was successful and it set the stage for our school to take its next step, allowing laptops to go home with students at night.
 - This year, the Middle School and High School rolled out the District's newly offered laptop insurance plan. The intent of the plan is to provide families "peace of mind" as students are now granted greater access to laptops at home.
 - Also this year, our district committed to using Schoology, a learning management system designed to be a central hub for students' classroom learning materials. Teachers have been participating in training to use this new tool, and we are well on our way to full implementation in our building.

- Given that the Middle School's structure emphasizes teamwork, collaboration among staff has always been a point of pride. The recently negotiated contractual expectation of additional collaboration time after school has provided us more time to work together for the benefit of students. Specifically, the English, Math, Special Education Departments have been provided regularly scheduled times to analyze iReady assessment results; which is now leading to more routine planning of differentiated instruction. Additionally, teachers from different departments have created interdisciplinary lessons for students in more instances. An example of this is highlighted in the picture to the right. Cindy Morsheimer (Art) met with LOTE teachers to design an activity in which students create Day of the Dead masks in art class to meet Art Standards and then those drawings are used by students during Spanish classes to identify facial features during speaking activities. The contractual expectation of collaboration is being put to good use.

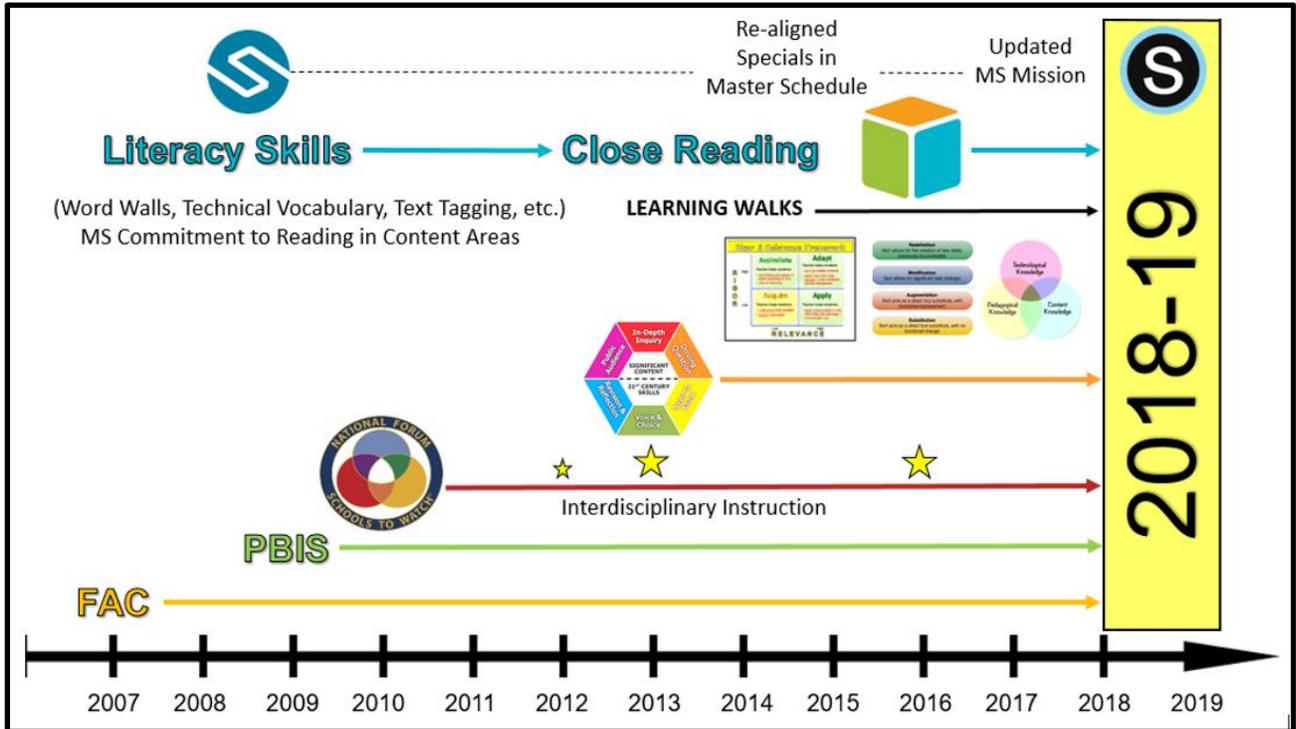


- Our school strives to nurture and maintain a culture where everyone belongs; a culture grounded in the belief that "we are all in this together." We are very proud that students and staff established, for the first time, a middle level Unified Basketball Team during the 2017-18 school year. We have always made efforts to encourage all students to fully participate in every aspect of our program; extra supports continue to be provided for students with disabilities to attend school events and participate in extra-curricular clubs. The Unified Basketball Team, however, more actively provided all participants with an authentic team experience. The first year of unified basketball was a great success and fine addition to our program. It has paved the way for our school to now pursue Best Buddies, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating opportunities for one to one friendships between students with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. As a School to Watch school, social equity matters. Unified Basketball and Best Buddies are wonderful opportunities that can enhance the experiences of all students in our school.





2. What are the common and most impactful ideas, themes, and learning that surfaced from PLC, Department, and SIT team meetings?



- Several initiatives have endured over time at the Middle School largely due to the oversight of improvement efforts by the School Improvement Team. In the timeline above, you can see the year each initiative began and how some efforts have evolved over time.



The Schools to Watch (STW) process has been the primary driver of school improvement since 2010. Our SIT has reflected upon the four domains of the STW rubric (Academic Excellence, Developmental Responsiveness, Social Equity, and Structure / Organization) to identify strengths and prioritize areas for growth. The cyclical nature of the STW process and the feedback offered from site visitors has been extremely valuable. The current SIT plan includes goals that were established based upon feedback from previous site visits.



Literacy has been an ongoing focus for our School Improvement Team. Given the importance of developing literacy skills in all content areas, our SIT has prompted staff to explore and utilize a variety of strategies in the instruction they provide: Word Walls, Text Tagging, Literacy Circles, and a variety of Close Reading strategies. Our District is currently in year three of iReady implementation. The computer-based instruction it provides is meant to fill gaps in learning that may exist for each individual student. The routine assessments also help us to reflect upon meaningful data in a timely fashion to develop and implement targeted instruction.



At the start of the 2013-14 school year, our teachers participated in training about Project Based Learning from the Buck Institute. Since that time, a number of projects have been designed and implemented that adhere to most or all of the 8 Essential Elements of a Gold Standard Project (see image to the left.) This year, we have embarked on a school-wide project for all students in grades 7 and 8. Students working together to explore the question, "What are the consequences of progress?" This project represents our efforts to help prepare students to succeed in a rapidly changing world.



3. What are your top goals for 2019-2020? How will their progress and success be measured?

Anticipated Program and Goals for 2019-2020

1. Achievement Goal:

By June 2020 (Window 3 of iReady Reading assessments), 56% of students will demonstrate one full year's worth of growth and 77% of students will score on grade level.

(Comparing 2019-20 Window 3 results to 2019-20 Window 1 results.)

(Comparing 2019-20 Window 3 results to 2018-19 Window 3 results.)

2. Engagement Goal:

By June of 2020, all students (grades 7 and 8) will demonstrate proficiency in collaborative problem solving and communication skills through the development and completion of a student-driven Project Based Learning experience with a service focus.

3. Middle school students will demonstrate an understanding of how to use technology effectively and responsibly in order to become empowered, future-ready learners.

** The anticipated goals for 2019-20 are natural extensions of 2018-19 SIT goals. Anticipated goals may be adjusted slightly based upon current end-of-year results. Given that our current PBL goal will only offer us baseline rubric-based data, it is logical that goal 2 could become a SMART goal next year.*

4. What resources are needed to implement and accomplish your 2019-2020 goals?

- Sustain staffing consistent with 2018-19 (see staffing recommendations w/ minor adjustments)
- Sustain funds for materials and supplies consistent with 2018-19 (w/ minor adjustments)
- Continue laptop replacement cycle at grade 6
- Sustain subscriptions for instructional software (eDoctrina, Schoology, iReady, etc.)
- Funds for curriculum writing: Next Gen Standards, new textbooks, revise assessments.
- Funds staff development: Schoology, Differentiated Instruction, Edoctrina, PLCs, PBL

*** Issue for consideration:**

- Given that most textbook companies are transitioning to subscriptions to on-line textbooks, it will be a growing need for our District to coordinate an on-line textbook replacement cycle.



Update on Program and Goals for the Current School Year (2018 - 2019)

1. Achievement Goal:

By June 2019 (Window 3 of iReady Reading assessments), 53% of students will demonstrate one full year's worth of growth and 74% of students will score on grade level.

HF-L Middle School School-wide iReady Reading Data Over Time

School-wide Performance iReady Reading	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19		
	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 1	W 2	W 3	W 1	W 2	W 3
2 or more below	21%	17%	16%	21%	16%	14%	18%	15%	
1 grade below	21%	16%	16%	18%	15%	15%	16%	13%	
On Grade Level	58%	68%	68%	61%	69%	71%	67%	72%	74%
% of students hitting SIT target (year's growth)	47% of students improved by 14 scaled score points			50% of students improved by 14 scaled score points			Goal: 53% of students will improve by 14 scaled score points		

* Based upon the first two years of iReady data, our SIT shifted its focus regarding goal setting for reading comprehension improvement. True SMART goals need to be attainable and reasonable. We will always strive to get every student to make a year's worth of growth, but we are setting this year's goal at 3% improvement over last year's results.

Action Plan:

- As per the new HFLEA contract, district-assigned collaboration time will be allocated for reading, math, and special education teachers to review iReady assessment results and develop differentiated lessons for implementation with students. This year's SIT focus is to further establish the use of data to increase student growth for all students.
- MS Counselors will continue to work with students to develop and monitor iReady goals in Naviance.
- The ELA Department will further their discussions about how they will challenge students who are on or above grade level with regards to reading comprehension.

2. Engagement Goal:

By June of 2019, all students will demonstrate proficiency in collaborative problem solving and communication skills through the development and completion of a student-driven Project Based Learning experience.

Action Plan:

- Every student in grades 7 and 8 will participate in a year-long collaborative project. (See project calendar to the right.)
- Driving Question: What are the consequences of progress?





• **Research Skills Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

- find and cite five or more relevant and credible sources.
- develop a thesis statement that answers the essential question as it relates to the topic and includes three or more stakeholders (a person or group that has an invested interest).
- gather information and media (texts, pictures, graphs, clips) that support the thesis.
- paraphrase or quote from a variety of sources.
- organize information as it relates to each stakeholder
- analyze our research for *balance*¹ and *bias*²
- pose additional questions to research further or fill in gaps

1 An equal representation of research for each stakeholder

2 Favoring some ideas or people over others

Day 1	Wednesday September 19 th	Entry Event Fieldwork at R.I.T.
Day 2	Wednesday September 26 th	Pre-search Explore topics of interest and choose a topic
Day 3	Wednesday January 9 th	Research Gather and organize high quality information
Day 4	Wednesday January 16 th	Refine Research Dig deeper...investigate the topic further
Day 5	Friday May 10 th	Prepare Learning Showcase Making a presentation engaging and effective
Day 6	Friday May 17 th	Assess the Practice Showcase Groups practice presentations/get feedback

• **Learning Showcase Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

- support their ideas with relevant evidence and well-chosen details from their research.
- communicate their perspective with an unbiased and balanced understanding of different perspectives.
- engage the audience in each of the perspectives using effective interactive and engaging strategies.
- organize and share their research in a logical and effective manner using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear enunciation.



• **Project planning and teacher training are ongoing.**

- A cadre of teachers have been working with BOCES PBL Consultant, Marybeth Elko, since last year to plan and implement the current project.
- At staff meetings, teachers have been provided with opportunities to learn about the project and their roles in its implementation. Logistics have been communicated. Opportunities for input / feedback about the project has been offered. A model learning showcase was presented and teachers were provided training regarding providing feedback to students via project rubrics.
- Alicia DiFranco, Library Media Specialist, has offered small group training to staff in the use of Noodle Tools and library databases.



3. Middle school students will demonstrate an understanding of how to use technology effectively and responsibly in order to become empowered, future-ready learners.

- Time was given at a staff meeting to revisit the digital citizenship standards and resource bank on the staff intranet.
- The Digital Citizenship Committee provided teachers with a laminated card of the HF-L Digital Citizenship standards to aid the integration of respectful, responsible, and safe technology use in everyday work.
- Some teachers have tagged these standards to lessons and/or projects with students and post them in the classroom.
- The Instructional Technology Specialist has worked with teachers to design meaningful activities for students that encourage responsible technology use: Skype connections with classrooms across the country, website design, Schoology discussions and student-to-student feedback, Public Service Announcements
- The Library Media Specialist collaborates with teachers on research projects with lessons focused on source reliability, citing sources, and other related skills.



Review of Program Goals for the Previous School Year (2017-2018)

1. **By May 1, 2018, teachers will individually or collaboratively create/enhance a unit through the incorporation of technology. (As evidenced by a completed unit in eDoctrina.)**

This can happen through continued focus on:

- Rigor and Relevance
- SAMR/TPACK Model
- Hattie's Visible Learning
- Common Assessments
- Project Based Learning

A Sampling of Actions Steps:

- Teachers were provided a variety of training opportunities to expand their understanding of current technologies available for instruction.
 - During the Superintendent's Conference Day in October, all teachers participated in technology microburst sessions provided by colleagues. Teachers were able to choose 3 of over 30 different sessions (organized into 4 strands).
 - Rob Sanford, the shared TOSA Instructional Technology Specialist, provided a variety of training sessions to staff (ex. Recordex Boards, Virtual Reality Goggles) and supported the planning and implementation of new instruction that made use of current technology (ex. Virtual Reality Goggle "field trips", "Story Trailer" videos)
 - Teachers were provided collaboration time during the April staff meeting to enhance an existing unit of instruction in eDoctrina to meet the building's SIT goal.

Outcome:

- **33 separate units were collaboratively completed by Middle School Teachers in eDoctrina.**

2. **By June 2018 (Window 3 of iReady assessments), every student will grow by one full year's worth of growth (at least 14 scaled score points) based upon a comparison of scaled scores between the fall and spring administrations of iReady assessments.**

A Sampling of Actions Steps:

- iReady was first implemented in the 2016-17 school year. The primary focus of that year was to train students and teachers to use the computer-based assessments and instructional lessons. Teachers and administrators participated in training to learn how to access assessment results and to collaboratively analyze the data provided by those reports.
- During the 2017-18 school year, school staff worked to refine the use of iReady:
 - Methods for improving how teachers communicated the need for technical support during assessments were developed (electronic chatting – Today's Meet, Tozzl)
 - Data reports and protocols for analysis were simplified for teachers in an effort to shift their discussions to how the results can be used impact instruction.
 - Initial efforts to provide differentiated instruction (based upon iReady assessment results) were developed and implemented.

Outcome:

- **While the vast majority of students made progress during the 2017-18 school year, only 50% of our students met the criteria of a year's worth of growth (14 scaled score points). We did increase the percentage of students performing on grade level (September to May) by 10%.**

School-wide Performance iReady Reading	2016-17			2017-18		
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3. **Expand and enhance existing instruction designed to promote digital citizenship, which we define as the respectful, responsible, and productive use of technology.**

A Sampling of Actions Steps:

- A small cadre of staff participated in a site visit to Cosgrove Middle School to learn about their digital learning path.
- The District's Digital Citizenship Committee:
 - reviewed our current practices and began work on a consistent K-12 plan
 - developed a poster explaining digital footprints
 - surveyed teachers to gather feedback regarding digital citizenship learning targets
 - met to develop a plan, gather resources, and update learning targets
 - Sep-Feb - District Digital Citizenship Committee continues to meet bimonthly to discuss new research and trends and to continue to get information out to parents and staff
 - Sep - Schoology group created for teachers to share ideas on how they are incorporating digital citizenship into their work with students (13 MS staff members currently in the group)
 - Oct - Superintendent's Conference Day workshops integrated an aspect of digital citizenship to model for teachers; one option devoted specifically to Digital Citizenship in the Classroom
 - Nov - Students were encouraged to participate in a poster contest for digital citizenship (I don't know if anyone did - I can check with Christina)
 - Nov - Learning Target cards distributed to all staff at faculty meeting
 - Jan - Learning Targets survey sent out to staff to gauge how well digital citizenship is being integrated
 - Jan - New Year's Resolutions focused on being a good digital citizen
 - Feb - Wellness Week "Digital Citizenship Pledge"
 - Feb - Digital Citizenship BINGO to encourage staff to practice and model for students

Outcome:

- **An awareness of digital citizenship and its importance in everyday technology use in the classroom was established. Teachers began exploring how to integrate the 6-8 HF-L Digital Citizenship standards into their daily work with students.**