Curriculum Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 12, 2021 9:00 AM
Via Zoom *Members of the public can view the meeting by watching the live stream on the WPS YouTube channel. Please view the Google Calendar on the District website for link and agenda., 24 School Road, Weston, CT 06883-1623

I. **Call to Order**

II. **Approval of April Minutes**

III. **Presentation of the 2020-2021 Annual Instructional Update**

IV. **Other Curricular Issues**

V. **Adjournment**

Curriculum Committee Meeting
April 7, 2021 9:00 a.m.
Via Zoom Dial In: 1 646-558-8656 Code: 624214

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am

Present Committee Members:
Taffy Miller (Chairperson), Gina Albert, Hillary Koyner

Present Administration:
Kenneth Craw, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent; Phillip Cross, Director of Finance and Operations; Lisa Wolak, WHS Principal; Janine Russo; CIL 6-8 Math; Carolyn Vinton, CIL L-5 Math and Science

2. Information and Discussion on Strategic Plan for Math Instruction 2021-22

Discussion:
Dr. Craw presented on the WPS Strategic Planning for Mathematics report.

- Math MAP testing results for grades 1-8 were examined comparing the previous year-to-year results as well as cohort comparisons.
- Dr. Craw reviewed six key strategies for addressing learning lag in math in 2021-22. Namely—setting goals for student growth, increasing math intervention personnel, providing the most up-to-date resources, professional learning for teachers, in-person summer learning for grades 1-8, and scheduling an external evaluation of our math intervention program.
- It was noted that the overall strategy is to create a positive atmosphere for continual teacher professional learning support and an enthusiastic urgency for student growth.

3. Information and Discussion on Summer Academy 2021

Discussion:

- Part of the strategic plan for addressing learning lag in reading and math is the implementation of a Summer Academy.
- While students who are currently receiving math or reading intervention are encouraged to attend Summer Academy, the program is open to all students entering grades 1-8.
- There is a fee to attend and registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.
- About one-third of those who were surveyed will require transportation. The District may possibly need to add two additional buses for the summertime (over the amount already in place for ESY).
- Committee members inquired about assessing student growth during Summer Academy and possibly measuring the overall impact for students who participate.

4. Information and Discussion on ESSER II Grant Application

Discussion:

- The ESSER II grant funds will be used to address learning loss due to the pandemic.
- Funds will be used to augment intervention staff across grades K-8. Two of the intervention positions that were part-time will become full-time.
- This grant funding will be used for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.
- Summer Academy will be partially supported by ESSER II funds.

5. Approval of March 2021 Minutes

Motion Passed: With a motion Taffy Miller and second by Gina Albert, the March 2021 minutes were approved.

3 Yeas - 0 Nays.

6. Other curricular issues

Discussion:
The Committee discussed the format Annual Instructional Update presentation that is scheduled for the next meeting on May 12, 2021.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

June Curiano

Weston Public Schools

Annual Instructional Update
May 12, 2021

Presentation Outline

- Historical context of 2020-21 performance data. (Ken Craw)
- 2020-21 trends in student performance. (Dan DiVito, ELA and Math CILs)
- Implications and strategies for addressing trends in performance in preparation for the 2021-22 school year. (Ken Craw, CILs, & Principals)
- Goal setting and professional development planning. (Ken Craw, CILs & Principals)
- K-12 subject area reports questions and answers. (CILs)

WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Annual Instructional Update

2020-2021

Presented to the
Weston Board of Education
Curriculum Committee
DRAFT - May 12, 2021

William S. McKersie, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Kenneth G. Craw, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VISION STATEMENT

Our commitment to excellence and continued, purposeful innovation will make Weston Public Schools the standard in designing educational pathways and environments that cultivate empowered citizens of the global community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Weston Public Schools, as a caring and supportive community partnership, is to empower each student to achieve success and contribute to our global society by developing and cultivating character, knowledge and creativity through a dynamic learning experience that challenges each student to continually pursue personal excellence.

OUTCOME – GLOBAL CITIZENS

Global citizens have the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to achieve their personal goals and contribute to society. Our goal is to empower students to be innovative thinkers, creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and inspired learners prepared to thrive in an ever-changing world. These skills are commonly referred to as the four C's: Critical and Creative Thinking, Communication, Collaboration.

WESTON DISTRICT GOALS

Academic Excellence **.** Healthy Learning Environment **.** Digital Learning **.** Gauging Progress **.** Resources for Learning

WESTON BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Anthony Pesco, Chairperson
Melissa Walker, Vice Chairperson
Ruby Hedge, Secretary/Treasurer
Gina Albert
Taffy Miller
Hillary Koyner
Victor Escandon

Contributors:

Mathematics, Grades K-5 …… Mrs. Carolyn Vinton

Mathematics, Grades 6-12 …….…….. Ms. Janine Russo

Science, Grades K-5 ……..……..Mrs.Carolyn Vinton

Science, Grades 6-12 ……..…….... Mrs. Jamie Charles

Language Arts, Grades K-5 ……...……..... Mrs. Andrea Noble, Mrs. Alex Bluestein

English, Grades 6-12 ……...……. Ms. Christine Cincotta

Social Studies, Grades K-5 ……..…..….Mrs. Andrea Noble, Mrs. Alex Bluestein

Social Studies, Grades 6-12 ……..……..Mr. Nicholas Torres

World Language, Grades K-12 ……..……..……..Mrs. Mercedes Fernandes

Visual Arts, Grades K-12 ……..……..…….Ms. Sydney Girardi

Performing Arts, Grades K-12 ……..…… …….. Ms. Elizabeth Morris

Health and Physical Education, Grades K-12 ……. ….. Mrs. Patty Powers

Technology Education, Grades 6-12 ……. …. Mrs. Jamie Charles

Special Education/Pupil Services, Grades K-12 ……..……... ..……Ms. Tracy Edwards

Project Challenge, Grades 3-8 ……..……...Kenneth Craw, Ed.D.

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Introduction

The 2020-21 school year was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulted in extraordinary changes to how teaching and learning was delivered in Weston and across the country. Summer preparations were devoted to planning for three different learning scenarios (in-person, hybrid and distance learning). The overarching academic goal was to ensure high-quality teaching and learning regardless of the delivery model. This required a targeted investment in professional learning and technology in the lead up to the school year and continuing into the fall.

Engaging the entire system in professional learning required detailed summer planning and changes to the school calendar. Curriculum Instructional Leaders (CILs) and administrators facilitated summer professional development for staff to learn how to implement new technologies and to adjust their teaching for the various scenarios. The calendar was adjusted to allow more time to prepare for the opening of school. All classroom teachers were provided with a Teacher Toolkit consisting of a laptop, portable camera and Zoom client software as essential resources for delivering instruction. The Teacher Toolkit gave Weston educators the flexibility to toggle back and forth between the various learning scenarios as needed.

A major adjustment for teachers was learning how to facilitate learning in a hybrid classroom, which was the primary mode of instruction at the beginning of the school year. Having half of the class in the room while the other half was at home learning required modifications to lesson plans, units of study and assessments. In addition, some families opted for Voluntary Distance Learning (VDL) for part of all of the school year, which led to increased efforts to personalize instruction for at-home students. The Annual Instructional Update (AIU) describes many of the accomplishments and challenges teachers faced in the hybrid and distance learning environments as well as some of the promising practices that resulted from it.

The AIU is presented to the Weston Board of Education Curriculum Committee each May as a comprehensive report on the accomplishments, challenges and next steps regarding the district's instructional agenda. Generally, the AIU has taken the form of a qualitative year-in-review with each curriculum leader reporting out on progress made in their respective content area. This edition of the AIU contains both a quantitative analysis of reading and math cohort data, along with the traditional narratives for each subject area.

1. **Quantitative Section -** The first half of the report provides the Board with a snapshot of cohort performance in reading and math in grades one through eight for the 2020-21 school year as compared to 2019-20. A cohort analysis looks at how a group of students is performing as they progress through the system. It also provides a good indication as to what extent the pandemic has had an impact on student performance.

2. **Qualitative Section -** The second half of the AIU is a compilation of reports from each CIL documenting the accomplishments of teachers teaching in a variety of different learning scenarios (in-person, hybrid and distance learning). There is much to celebrate as a school system as one reads through this section. The CILs also discuss the challenges educators faced teaching in changing learning environments. Also highlighted are the new learning strategies employed to advance the learning (e.g. flipped classroom). The resulting impact of the pandemic on teaching and learning is influencing planning for next year. CILs have been working closely with the administration to identify next steps, which is described in each subject area report.

Cohort Data

The purpose of this section is to report out on the progress of each cohort of students in reading and math in grades 1-8.

- Each slide represents approximate cohort data.
- This allows us to see how the same cohort of students performs longitudinally.
- Please note that there was some migration in and out of the cohort, so it is not a matched cohort.
- The left pie chart represents current year data; the right pie chart represents last year data in the previous grade.
- Each slide shows one grade and one subject.

Measurement Tools

Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment - F&P is a developmental reading assessment administered by teachers in grades K-5 in Weston. It provides teachers with information regarding fluency, decoding and comprehension that is used to inform instruction. The goal is to have students in the Meeting Benchmark (green) and Above Benchmark (blue) bands.

NWEA - The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment for reading and math is a national standardized assessment that Weston administers periodically to monitor progress in reading and math in grades 1-8. The goal is to have students above the 41st percentile (yellow, green, and blue) bands.

Key Takeaways

ELA:

- Most grade cohorts are performing similarly to how they did in the previous year except for grades 2 and 5.
- For cohorts where there are shifts in performance - it is typically students moving from the highest performance band to a lower one.

Math:

- The upper grade cohorts (6-8) are performing similarly to how they did in the previous year. Grades 2-5 have seen a decrease in performance bands.
- For cohorts where there are band shifts - there is an increase in students who are within the 41st-60th percentile (yellow) band, and the 21st-40th percentile (orange) band (Grade 5), which is a national trend for this school year, according to NWEA.

HES Reading Grade 1

2020-2021

Fountas and Pinnel Winter K-2

Independence Level

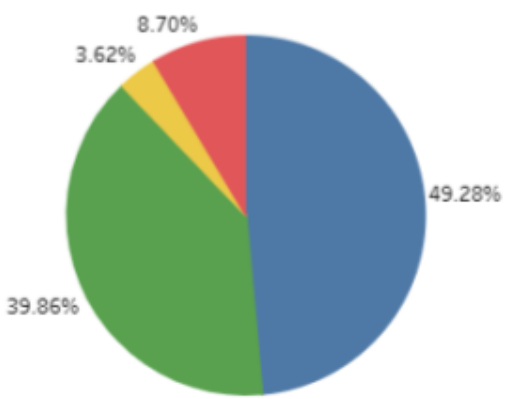
2019-2020

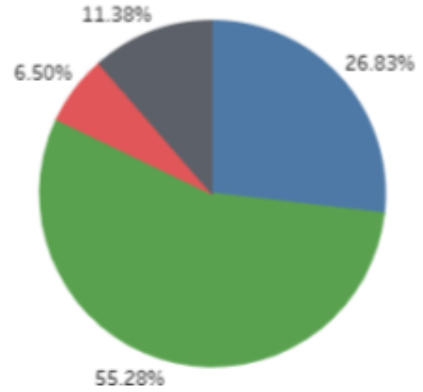
Fountas and Pinnel Winter K-2

Independence Level

Scoring Rubrics
- Above Benchmark
- Meeting Benchmark
- Approaching Bench...
- Below Benchmark
- Null

Strong result with 89% of students at Meeting Benchmark or Above Benchmark in grade 1. 22% more students in grade 1 are performing Above Benchmark in reading since Kindergarten.





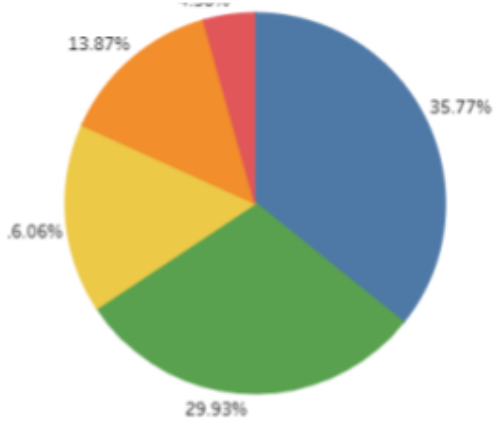
HES Math Grade 1

%tile Band
- 81%-100%
- 61%-80%
- 41%-60%
- 21%-40%
- Below 20th %tile

2020-2021
NWEA Math Winter
TestPercentile

Baseline data for the current grade 1 cohort The percentages of students in the blue, green and yellow bands is very positive.

Students begin taking the NWEA math assessment in grade 1.



HES Reading Grade 2

Scoring Rubrics
- Above Benchmark
- Meeting Benchmark
- Approaching Bench...
- Below Benchmark
- Null

2020-2021

Fountas and Pinnel Winter K-2

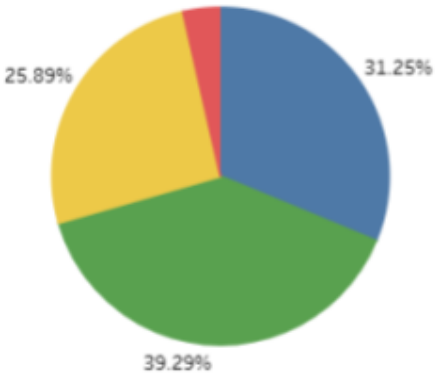
Independence Level

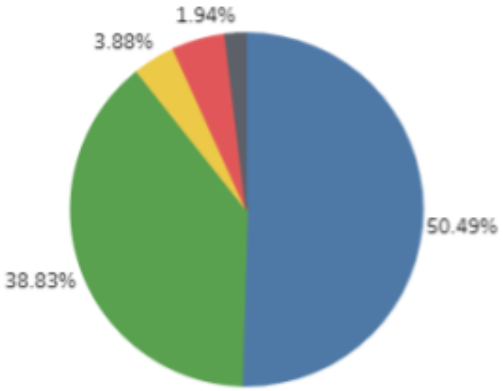
2019-2020

Fountas and Pinnel Winter K-2

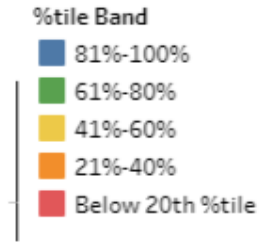
Independence Level

20% fewer students are Above Benchmark (blue) in grade 2, while the same percentage (39%) of students are Meeting Benchmark (green). 22% more grade 2 students are currently Approaching Benchmark (Yellow) in reading than when in grade 1. The assessment changes in winter of 2nd grade, so this is not uncommon in mid-year 2nd grade.





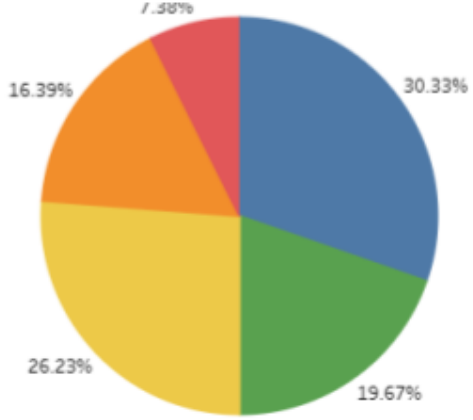
HES Math Grade 2

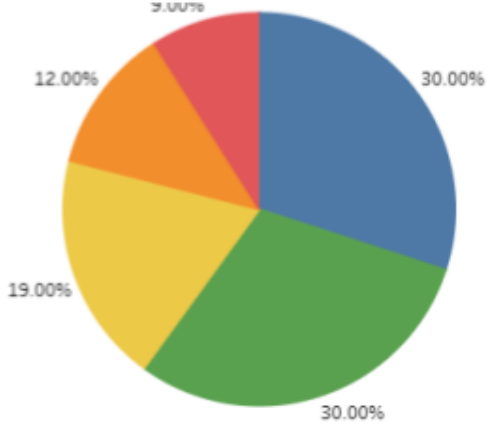


2020-2021
NWEA Math Winter
TestPercentile

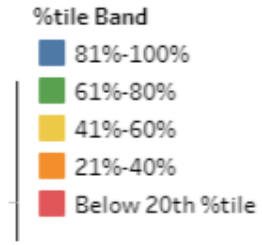
2019-2020
NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile

Percentage of students in the 81-100%tile band (blue) held strong at 30%. However, 10% fewer students in grade 2 performed in the 61%-80%tile band (green) in math when than in grade 1.





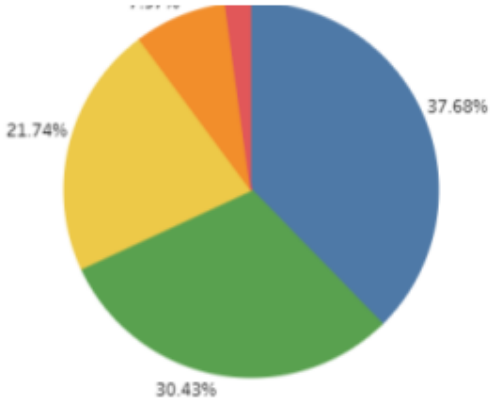
WIS Reading Grade 3

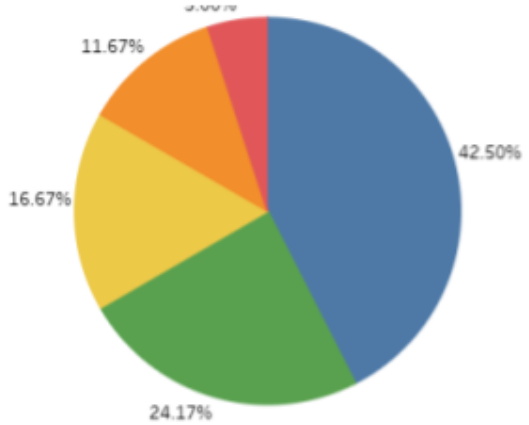


2020-2021
NWEA Reading Winter
TestPercentile

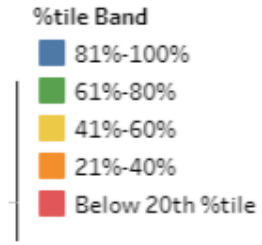
2019-2020
NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile

Grade 3 reading performance is trending similar to when the cohort was in grade 2. Focus will be on moving students into the next performance band.





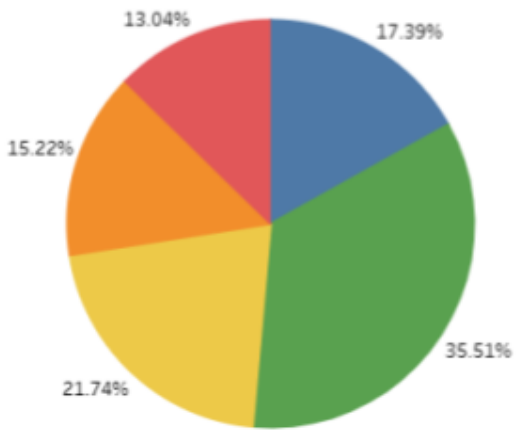
WIS Math Grade 3

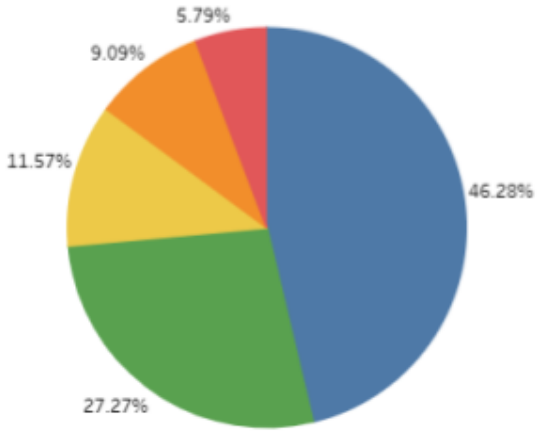


2020-2021
NWEA Math Winter

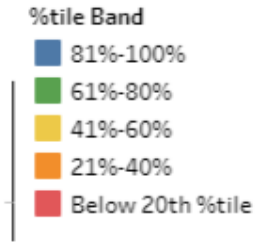
2019-2020
NWEA Math Fall

Performance in Grade 3 math is trending lower due to the pandemic. The percentage of students in the 81-100%tile band (blue) dropped by 29% as compared to when were in grade 2. The % of students in the red and orange bands has increased by 13%.





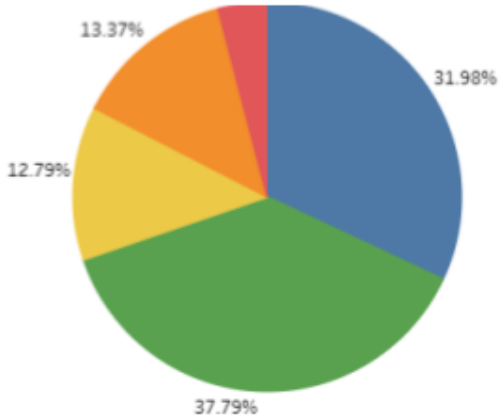
WIS Reading Grade 4

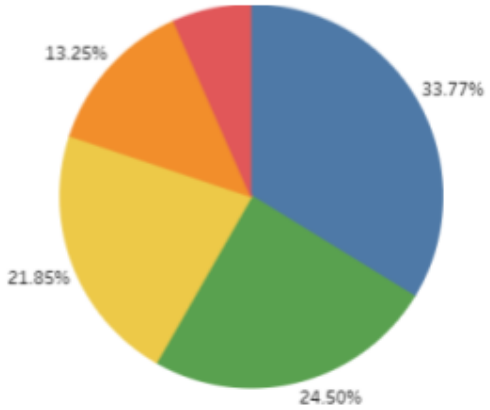


2020-2021
NWEA Reading Winter
TestPercentile

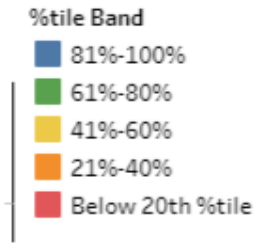
2019-2020
NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile

In grade 4, the percentage of students in the 81-100% (blue) band held strong and there was a very positive 13% increase in the percentage of students the 61-80%tile (green) band than when in grade 3.





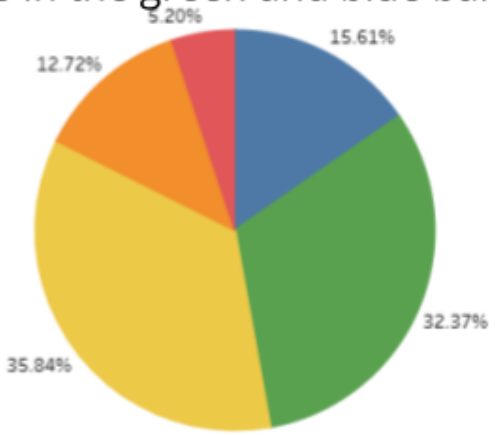
WIS Math Grade 4

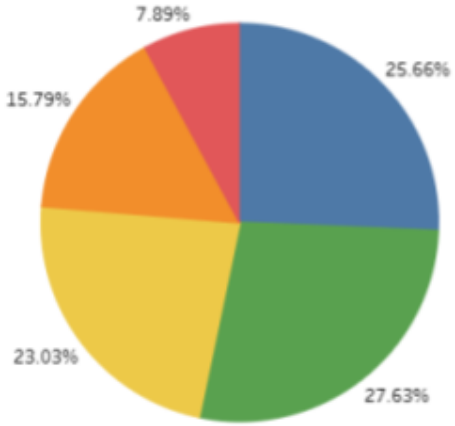


2020-2021
NWEA Math Winter
TestPercentile

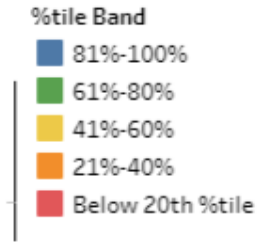
2019-2020
NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile

In grade 4 math, there was a 13% increase the number of students in the 41-60%tile band (yellow) and a corresponding decrease in the percentage of students in the green and blue bands combined.





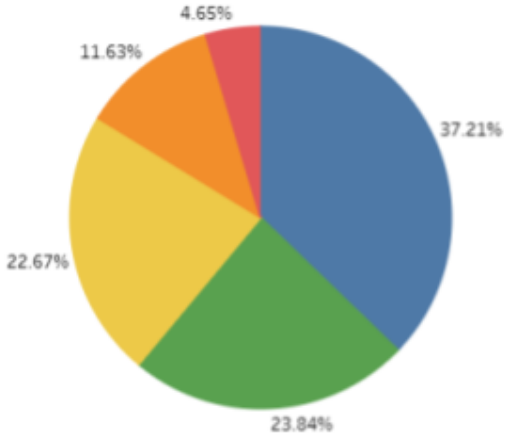
WIS Reading Grade 5

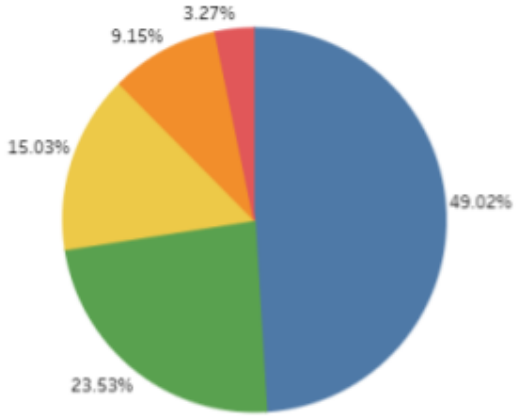


2020-2021
NWEA Reading Winter
TestPercentile

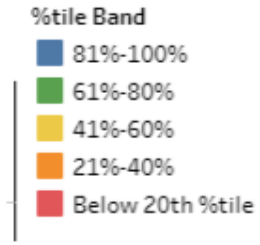
2019-2020
NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile

The percentage of students in the 61-80%tile (green) was the same as the previous year (24%). However, 12% fewer students are performing in the 81-100%tile band (blue), while the yellow band increased by 8%.





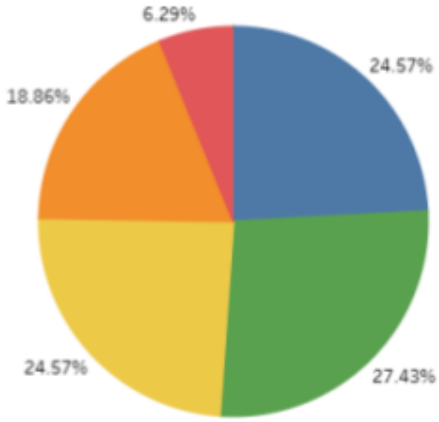
WIS Math Grade 5

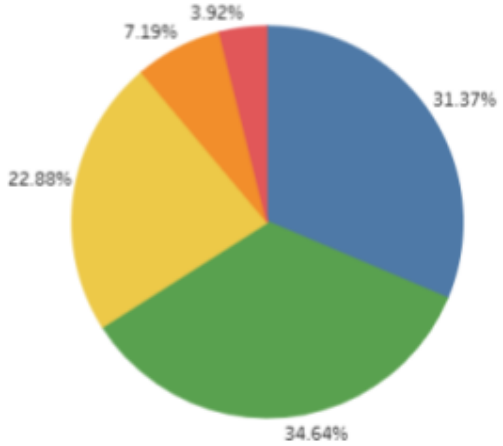


2020-2021
NWEA Math Winter
TestPercentile

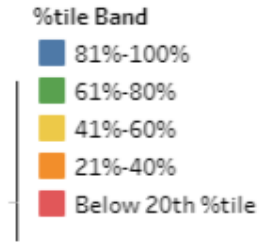
2019-2020
NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile

12% increase in the combined number of students performing in the yellow, orange and red bands in grade 5 math as compared to grade 4.



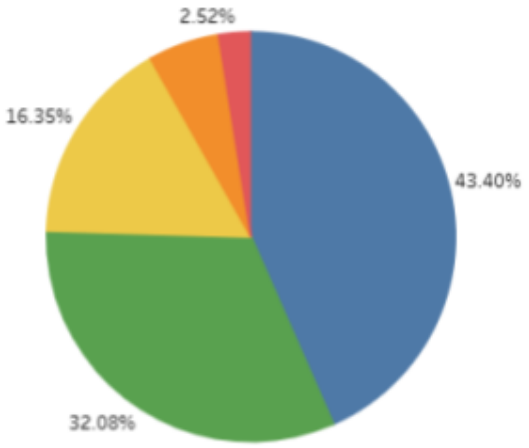


WMS Reading Grade 6



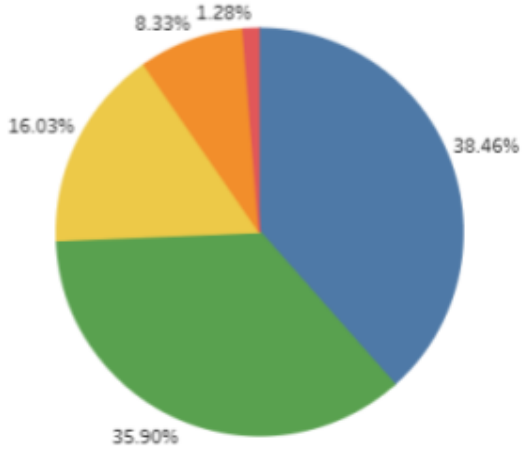
2020-2021

NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile



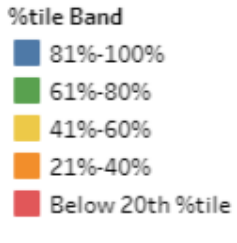
2019-2020

NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile



Grade 6 is a positive result with reading performance trending very similar to when students were in grade 5.

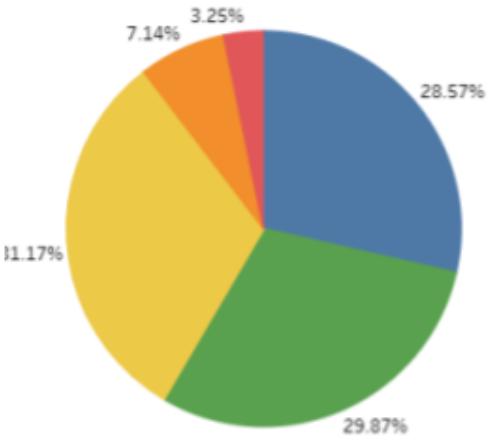
WMS Math Grade 6



2020-2021

NWEA Math Fall

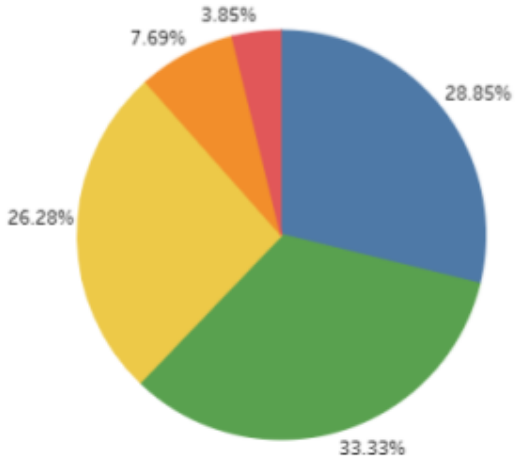
TestPercentile



2019-2020

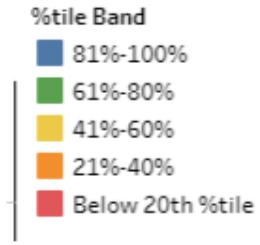
NWEA Math Fall

TestPercentile



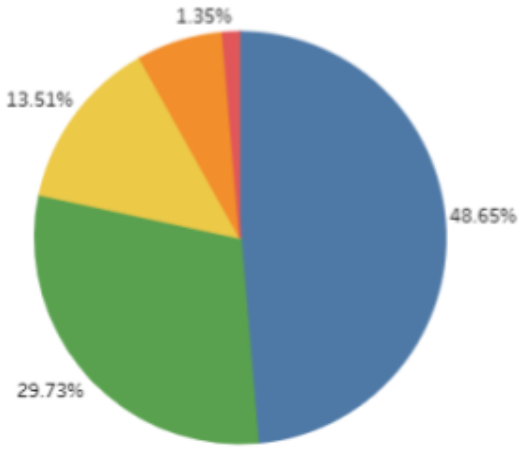
Grade 6 math performance is trending similar to when students were in grade 5. The goal is to reduce the percentage of students (31%) in the yellow bands.

WMS Reading Grade 7



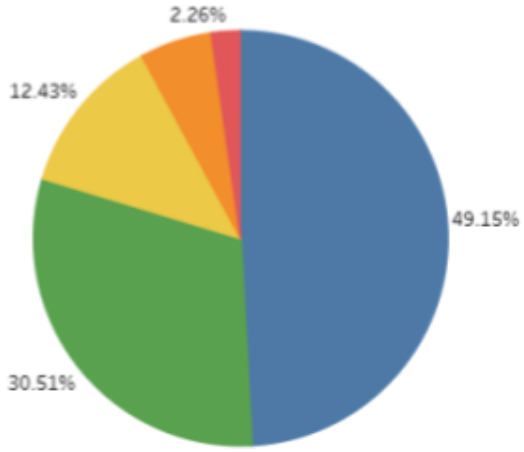
2020-2021

NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile



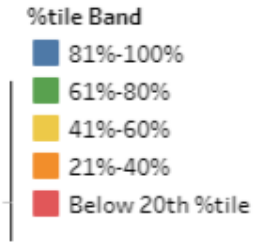
2019-2020

NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile



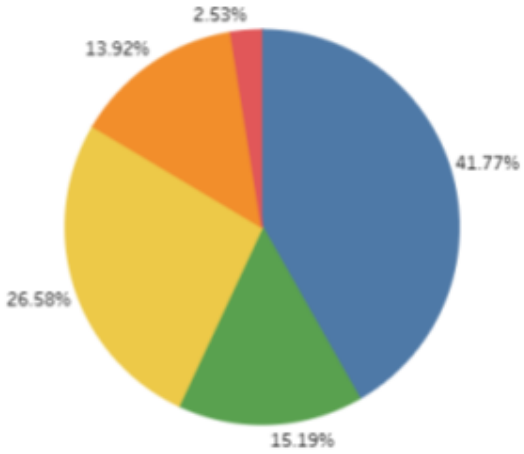
Grade 7 reading performance is a very positive result with performance trending similar to when the cohort was in grade 6.

WMS Math Grade 7



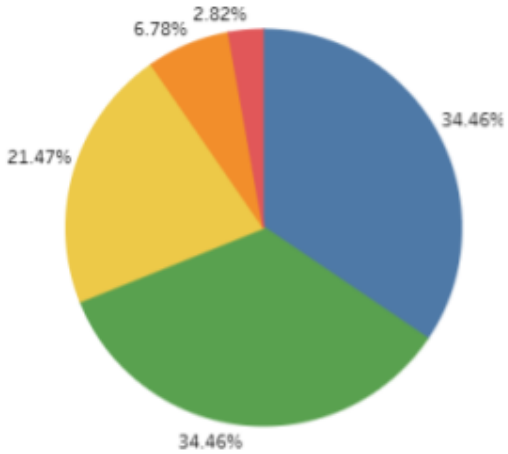
2020-2021

NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile



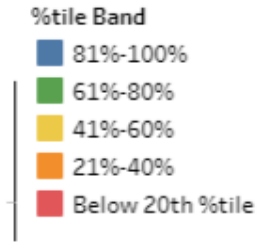
2019-2020

NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile



The percentage of students in the blue band increased while the percentage of students in the green band decreased. The combined percentage in the yellow and orange bands increased by 13%.

WMS Reading Grade 8



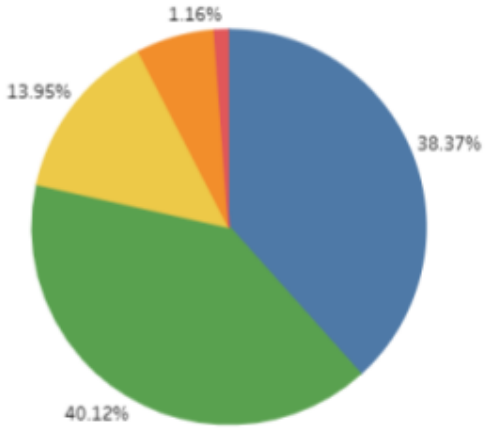
2020-2021

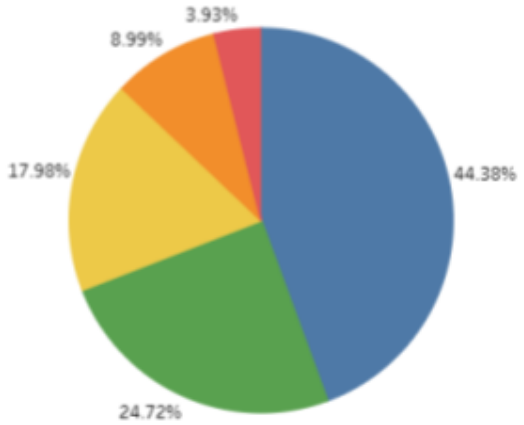
2019-2020

NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile

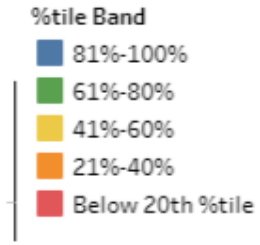
NWEA Reading Fall
TestPercentile

The grade 8 reading result is very positive. The combined percentage of students in the 81-100%tile (blue) and 61-80%tile (green) increased by 9%.



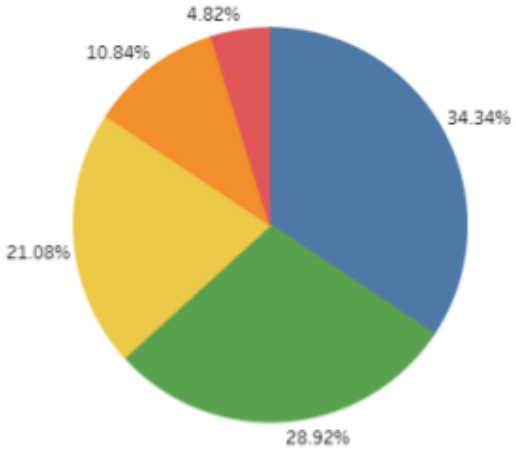


WMS Math Grade 8



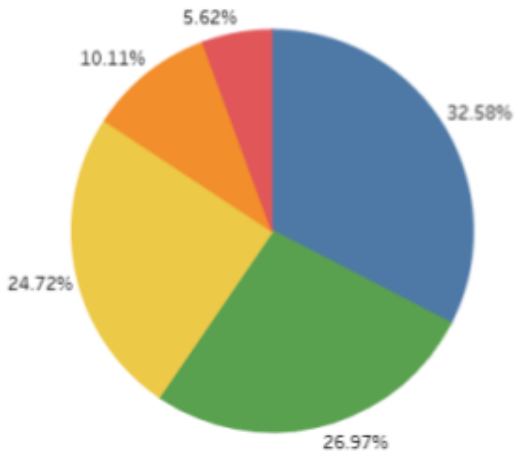
2020-2021

NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile



2019-2020

NWEA Math Fall
TestPercentile



The grade 8 math results for this cohort are encouraging. Grade 8 math performance is trending similar to when students were in grade 7.

Key Next Steps

1. **Goal Setting**: Establish district, school and teacher goals on assisting all students in meeting their growth targets in reading and math. While the administration will use multiple measures to assess performance, both quantitative and qualitative, the NWEA assessment will be a critical tool in grades K-9.

2. **Personnel:** Increase reading and math intervention personnel through the ESSER II grant funding.

3. **Resources:** Accelerate the procurement of the remaining Math in Focus resources listed in the 3-year purchase plan to have them in place for all grades K-8 by the fall.

4. **Professional Learning:** Provide K-12 teachers ongoing training on how to differentiate for math instruction, employ the new Math in Focus resources and effectively deliver SRBI services. Resume literacy training for all K-5 teachers through a renewed partnership with Teachers College.

5. **Curriculum Development:** Some modifications will need to be made to the curriculum in order to ensure smooth vertical articulation and fill in any gaps from the previous course.

6. **Summer Academy:** Provide an in-person opportunity for any student entering grades 1-8 to attend summer reading and math classes to avoid the summer slide.

7. **Feedback/Evaluation:** Schedule an upcoming external evaluation of our math intervention efforts through the Tri-State Consortium. The external evaluation will take place from March 30 through April 1, 2022. There is a Tri-State follow up visit for Writing scheduled for October 2021 as well..

Accomplishments, Curricular Impact & Next Steps

Mathematics, Grades K-5

Accomplishments

- Curriculum content was adjusted according to the direction of the State in their *Connecticut Priority Standards* document as to what to compact, eliminate, and emphasize. Adjustments were also informed by the content impacted by distance learning in the spring of 2020.
- Instructional practices were adjusted to involve as much manipulative use as possible under the limiting but necessary safety protocols.
- Teachers expended incredible effort in learning new technology and adapting to changing schooling scenarios in order to maximize math learning.
- We were able to keep our Math Olympiad teams (Grades 4 and 5) strong by utilizing Zoom meetings after school.
- Our fifth grade math teachers became the first to gain familiarity with the new edition of *Math in Focus* and benefited from all the technological upgrades.

Curricular Impact

- Some content was reduced or eliminated according to State guidelines. It should be noted that some of the impact we may see in our SBA results will be due to the State's recommendation of the elimination/reduction of some topics, but their inability to remove them from the assessment.
- There was a reduction in use of manipulatives, proximity between teacher and learner, partner and group work, and small group instruction.
- Several classes had extended time with long term substitutes due to leaves of absences.

Next Steps

- Plan curriculum supports for the areas eliminated and reduced this year to incorporate in the subsequent grade.

- Examine end-of-year and fall data extensively in order to inform curricular decisions. Work with teachers to fully understand their class data and differentiate appropriately.
- Provide professional development to strengthen instructional strategies, give needed support with updated materials, and assist teachers with individual goals according to the district and school-based math goals.

Mathematics, Grades 6-12

Accomplishments

- Teachers utilized technology in a way that engaged students throughout different schooling scenarios. They used applications such as Desmos and PearDeck for formative assessment, as well as Jamboard, Quizlet and Zoom Breakout rooms to foster collaboration.
- Teachers adapted hands-on investigation activities for remote and hybrid learning using applications such as Desmos, Geogebra, and Google Slides allowing students to actively discover concepts.
- Teachers used a flipped classroom model in many courses and units to help maximize student learning and problem-solving during in-person time. The flipped classroom model also aided in a more seamless transition between schooling scenarios.
- Teachers have effectively utilized Canvas and Google Classroom as organization and communication tools.
- Teachers used Zoom Breakout rooms to provide differentiated instruction to students in the remote and hybrid environments.
- Teachers used a variety of assessment strategies and tools to ensure students had multiple opportunities to demonstrate understanding and growth.
- Some math teachers transformed entire units into “playlists” - digital, interactive lessons that allow students to work through the modules at their own pace while having access to teacher assistance and support as often as necessary to ensure their understanding.
- WHS teachers revised and designed assured experiences for each of the core math courses - Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2.

- The math interventionist at WMS implemented a SRBI program for the first time at the middle school level. She held regular data team meetings with each grade level to review and recommend support for students.
- WHS piloted a Math Lab, offering both push-in and pull-out support for struggling groups of students, as well as opportunities for students to make individual appointments for extra support.

Curricular Impact

- The increased use of flipped classroom models helped to maximize in-person time. This has good implications for the future, as continued use of this model could create opportunities for more investigative learning and collaborative problem solving during classroom time.
- A wider range of types of assessments were implemented, which also has positive implications for the future as we look to vary assessment practices.
- Curriculum was modified and compacted at all levels to accommodate shortened class periods and various schooling scenarios. Decisions on modifications were made based on guidelines from the State, while ensuring that students would have the necessary concepts and skills to proceed to the next level.
- Some adjustments to curriculum will be necessary at the start of the 2021-22 school year to ensure smooth vertical articulation and fill in any gaps from the previous course.
- Assessments were shorter and covered less material, sometimes allowing students to use notes to avoid inequities between in-person and at-home learners. This raises concerns as students move on to college and take courses with midterms and larger assessments.
- There was a reduction in enrichment and differentiated opportunities for students, with teachers' attention divided between in-person and at-home learners.
- There was a reduction in collaborative, hands-on investigative activities.
- There was a reduction in opportunities to provide rich, collaborative, problem-solving activities.
- Some concepts were not covered in as much depth as in a typical school year.

Next Steps

- Continue to implement interactive digital resources, flipped classroom approaches, and other instructional tools that help to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the various learners in the classroom.
- Discuss vertical articulation to ensure a smooth transition for all students from course-to-course.

- Continue to refine our SRBI process at the middle school and implement an effective intervention program at both the middle and high schools.

Science, Grades K-5

Accomplishments

- Science units were adjusted to allow students to experience science learning despite constraints of time and Covid-19 safety protocols.
- Units that were not possible to teach as written with adjustments were completely re-written to address standards in alternate ways.
- Teachers expended incredible effort in learning new technology and adapting to changing schooling scenarios in order to maximize science learning.
- Where possible and appropriate, individual material sets were assembled to allow as many hands-on activities as possible due to the extraordinary effort and creativity of our K-5 science paraprofessional.
- The virtual modeling tools and simulations in Amplify Science played a crucial role in student learning.
- Third grade was able to teach their final new unit of our NGSS adoption.

Curricular Impact

- Significantly less content was presented due to maximizing already reduced learning time for reading and math.
- Use of certain hands-on materials and group work was limited.
- Fourth grade will have one final unit that will be new to them next year. This last unit from the NGSS adoption could not be adjusted as written.

Next Steps

- Provide teachers with the professional development and support to return to the full depth and pacing of their NGSS units.
- Provide fourth grade teachers professional development and support for their final new unit next spring.

Science, Grades 6-12

Accomplishments

- Science teachers enhanced their curriculum with a variety of interactive digital resources such as Gizmos, Amplify Science, Labster Virtual Experiments, Pivot Interactives, High Adventure Science, and AP Central to encourage high levels of student engagement during various learning models.
- Many teachers embraced a flipped classroom approach to their curriculum by converting units into digital online lessons that allowed students to work through the modules at their own pace, while accessing teacher assistance and support during class time to ensure their understanding.
- Classroom assured experiences were modified as needed based on the varying learning models, while still maintaining continuity of skills and essential objectives.
    - During remote learning, lab experiments were pre-recorded to allow students to visualize the procedures prior to analyzing data and constructing explanations.
    - During in-person learning, experiments were revised to allow students to work independently with materials and instruments to emphasize safety and efficiency.
- Teachers utilized a variety of tools and methods to encourage collaboration and engagement in their courses, such as Zoom breakout rooms, PearDeck, Jamboard, Kami, and others.
- Teachers employed a variety of formative and summative assessment strategies to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding and growth, such as Canvas Quizzes, Visual Classrooms, Google Quizzes, whiteboarding, and Zoom polls.

Curricular Impact

- This year has led to a greater reliance on flipping the classroom in several courses, which if continued in the future may lead to more class time to pursue activities that build student science skills (such as inquiry explorations and engineering design activities).
- Most content was covered in the various science courses, though not necessarily at the same depth or level of inquiry.
- Inquiry activities and problem-solving projects were removed or modified in several classes because of reduced class time.

- Students have had limited opportunities to develop their own research skills, design and carry out their own lab investigations, work with equipment and models, and engage in other hands-on activities.
- Assessments were often shorter, covered less material, and provided the opportunity for students to use their notes and resources (due to the inability to adequately proctor remote students). In addition, midterm and final exams were eliminated. This raises concerns about the readiness of students to take longer and more rigorous exams in the future.

Next Steps

- Embed time at the start of each course next year discussing and reinforcing strategies for success, including clarifying class expectations and strategies for studying, note-taking, and time management.
- Proper laboratory and research skills will need to be reviewed and reinforced in future years, as hands-on activities and the use of instruments and materials was drastically reduced this year.
- Continue to implement interactive digital resources, flipped classroom approaches, and other instructional tools that help to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the various learners in the classroom.

Language Arts, Grades K-5

Accomplishments

- All curricular units and standards were taught to some depth across the school year.
- Strong focus on rebuilding student reading and writing volume and stamina are yielding student performance and assessment data that is similar to previous years.
- Many students who started the school year having lost ground from March 2020 were meeting or exceeding grade level benchmarks by March 2021.
- An extraordinary amount of time and effort on the part of teachers was put into rapidly modifying and delivering adjusted curriculum, instruction, and assessment through the use of new technology and ever changing schooling scenarios.

Curricular Impact

- Curricular units were compacted and streamlined in order to adjust to beginning of year learning models as well as fluctuations in learning scenarios throughout the year (full remote, hybrid half-day, hybrid full-day). As a result, all

standards were taught, but not to the same depth as in a typical school year.
- Elimination of student Turn and Talk during hybrid and remote learning models was necessary but impacted student discussion and collaboration.
- Differentiated small group instruction needed to be modified due to social distancing requirements and changing schooling scenarios.
- In-person assessments required extra time during hybrid or remote learning scenarios.

Next Steps
- Return to a fully robust curriculum taught to depth across the entire school year.
- Recalibrate teaching practices that ensure ongoing, data-based, differentiated small group instruction.
- Establish learning targets for every student to ensure effective reading and writing progress across the school year.
- Rebuild student reading volume and stamina, as well as writing volume and stamina when using pencil and paper.
- Return to Turn and Talk to broaden students' communication skills and foster deeper comprehension.
- Continue to incorporate digital reading and writing instruction within curricular units where appropriate in grades 4-5.
- Determine and mitigate impact of fully remote, withdrawn, and/or homeschool instruction when returning to school in the fall.

English, Grades 6-12

Accomplishments
- Teachers refined or created units to incorporate more diverse perspectives and lenses into the curriculum throughout this school year. English teachers across the grade levels are committed to enriching our curriculum.
- Teachers have become more adept at incorporating technology tools into their classrooms. Lessons were enhanced while being adapted to a hybrid learning environment.
- Units are revitalized to become more obviously student-centered through using these technological tools and adapted instructional methods.
- Teachers used strategies from spring 2020 and are providing more frequent feedback by assigning shorter writing tasks. This regular feedback promotes continuous growth in our student writers.
- The WMS and WHS Writing Portfolios were both administered this spring. Receiving teachers will use this data to

support student writing goals in the 2021-2022 school year. The highly individualized feedback on each portfolio demonstrates our district's commitment to empowering students to achieve success.
- The Writing Center continues to be an essential resource at WHS. Writing Center teachers meet with students both in-person and virtually during scheduled appointments throughout the school day and during ELH (Extended Learning Hour).

Curricular Impact

- Units include more explicit opportunities for students to develop empathy and social-emotional learning skills (e.g., connecting with characters, particularly those whose experiences may be outside of their own).
- Teachers supplement with shorter texts throughout units, which provides more flexibility while teaching in various schooling scenarios and allows for more varied voices in the curriculum.
- While the various schooling scenarios impacted the pacing of the curriculum, teachers have found ways to focus on the essential skills and to assess progress through diagnostic benchmark assessments. Therefore, there are few instances of adjusted content.
- Regular classroom discussion and collaboration are difficult to sustain when teaching in multiple formats at one time. Teachers found methods to engage students in developing their thinking and communication skills through digital tools. These approaches are differentiated to allow all students to access each other's thinking.

Next Steps

- Revise and develop curriculum through the lenses of skill-building and equity.
- Create more opportunities to center student voice in the classroom through developmentally appropriate lessons and activities.
- Continue to use new or refined instructional methods that came out of pandemic teaching as we differentiate our lessons to meet the needs of all learners.

Social Studies, Grades K-5

Accomplishments

- Social studies units were taught to some degree in all grades when in full-day hybrid and all-in learning models.
- CILS began an audit and review of social studies units and standards through the lens of the DEI framework.

Curricular Impact

- During the early-release hybrid schooling scenario (September - November), social studies units could not be taught. As a result, units needed significant compacting to be taught in the remaining months of the year.
- Community service projects and engaging field trips were necessarily eliminated due to pandemic restrictions.

Next Steps

- Return to a fully robust curriculum taught to depth across the school year.
- As part of the curriculum renewal process, instruction and resources will be updated to incorporate more diversity instruction, especially related to Weston history.
- CES Social Studies Council is modifying their K-5 social studies framework next year. We await the outcomes and recommendations from this important work.

Social Studies, Grades 6-12

Accomplishments

- Teachers utilized technology to maintain student engagement (Jamboard, PearDeck, Padlet, Kami), and to develop valid assessments (Google Classroom, Nearpod, Canvas, AP Classroom) as instructional models changed.
- Teachers enhanced diversity and multiculturalism in curricula through expanded use of primary sources with non-dominant historical perspectives.
- Curricular teams created and delivered new assured experiences, which fostered connections between social studies content and the contemporary world.
- WMS teachers continued to use *Newsela* for targeted differentiation based on lexile to promote growth in reading comprehension.

- WMS teachers continued to align assessment and instruction to SBA reading strands.
- WHS ran two sections of Advanced Placement Human Geography as a new offering.
- WHS students in grades 9-11 engaged in the C3 Inquiry Process, and produced research papers that will be used to demonstrate growth in the writing process over the course of three high school years.

Curricular Impact

- Smaller formative assessments were used in order to gauge student progress with more frequency.
- Assessments became less oriented toward summative content knowledge, and more focused on the inquiry process, with the use of performance and project based assessments.
- Greater student choice in content, as well as process, as a result of individualized learning opportunities afforded by technology.
- Students engaged in virtual opportunities in lieu of traditional field trips, such as Smithsonian Museum digital exhibitions, virtual Holocaust Remembrance Day events, and guest speakers on Zoom.
- Small group discussions and teacher conferences were adapted to a socially distanced environment, resulting in the use of collaborative documents, Zoom extension sessions, and electronic feedback.
- Teachers facilitated meaningful discussions with students about salient social and political issues that have become significant throughout 2020-2021, such as race and equity, economic justice, environmentalism, and civil liberties.

Next Steps

- Engage in vertical grade-level planning meetings so that teachers can support each other in identifying areas of strength, and areas for improvement in rising student populations.
- Assess students in core literacy, writing, and inquiry skills early in the 2021-2022 school year in order to adapt instruction to unique student needs.
- Continue to expand the use of diverse primary source materials to bolster student exposure to multiple perspectives.
- Approach curriculum renewal using an equity lens, in order to reduce systemic barriers to educational access.

World Language, Grades K-12

Accomplishments

- Teachers embraced and excelled in the use of technological and digital tools provided by the district in order to ensure high quality teaching and learning in the different schooling scenarios.
- A variety of technological tools and digital resources aided teachers and students in ensuring clarity in daily instructional and learning activities, as well as for increased student engagement and providing immediate feedback to learners.
- The majority of the curriculum was delivered, and in many cases, it was improved and streamlined.
- There was more emphasis on the interpretive skills, reading, listening, and viewing, given the various schooling scenarios.
- Curricular units were revised to reflect improvements in the area of DEI. Teachers have become more adept at identifying and removing implicit biases, and enriching the curriculum through a greater variety of voices.
- Students participated in standardized assessments and national language contests.
- Students benefited from more direct instruction during ELH.

Curricular Impact

- Teachers and students have had more opportunities to learn about and discuss multicultural issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Daily lessons have run seamlessly in all teaching and learning scenarios thanks to the technological and digital resources and teacher and students' confidence in the use of those resources.
- Digital resources were fundamental in monitoring student engagement and providing immediate feedback during lessons.
- Teachers have become more flexible and creative in redesigning lessons and assessments.
- The various scheduling scenarios during the year impacted the pacing of the curriculum but teachers managed to focus on the essential skills for the course and have remained on target with curriculum delivery.
- It was more challenging for teachers to monitor and provide immediate feedback during speaking activities due to the various learning scenarios, particularly, when students were VDL (Virtual Distance Learners).
- Teachers administered more frequent formative assessments and less summative assessments due to the different teaching and learning scenarios.

- Grades 3-5 were the most impacted due to a one third reduction of instructional time in Spanish at WIS and the various schedule changes. Grade 6 was also very much impacted by the scheduling in cohorts and due to the fact that it already is a grade that receives world language instruction every other day.
- K-2 Spanish was suspended at HES, therefore, those three grades did not receive Spanish instruction this school year and this will have an impact on curriculum and instruction in the following years.

Next Steps

- Provide enrichment opportunities for the summer of 2021 for students to continue improving their language skills.
- Continue to use a variety of technological and digital resources to engage learners and differentiate instruction.
- Revise some curricular units in all languages based on this year's assessment of curriculum delivery and in order to continue the DEI focus.
- Revise Spanish curriculum for grades 1-6 to account for the loss of instructional time in grades K-5.
- Finish writing and revising curriculum in Atlas to complete the renewal cycle.

Visual Arts, Grades K-12

Accomplishments

- For the most part, Visual Art courses were successfully rewritten to accommodate the unique learning set up this year. This was due to exceptional effort on the part of the teachers - in some cases, entire courses were rewritten.
- In some cases (CMD, Advanced CMD, Painting, AP Studio, Studio, Advanced Drawing), the art curriculum was not affected by the changing learning modalities - students completed the same amount of curricular work as in previous years.
- Many art teachers have created a great library of video demonstrations that can be used and added to in future years.

Curricular Impact

- HES: Grade K-2 students were still introduced to the elements of art and given opportunities to express themselves creatively; however, they were limited in their opportunities to learn how to use various art tools and experiment with art materials and techniques. The students were unable to complete as many projects as in previous years.

- WIS: Grade 3-5 students touched on most general art theory concepts that are usually presented but not as deeply as in a non-Covid year. They were limited in materials as students carried their artwork, tools and materials home and back to art class each week. As a result, some areas of the curriculum were not covered.
- WMS:
    - Grade 6 students had one trimester to complete two dimensional and three dimensional artworks. Normally students have three projects however we were only able to complete two of those projects in school.
    - Grade 7 & 8 grade students had two trimesters to complete two dimensional and three dimensional artworks. Normally students have six projects, however we were only able to complete four of those projects.
    - All students have missed fundamental skill building opportunities involving tools, techniques and supplies available in the art studio.
- WHS: With the exception of the courses referenced above, course curricula suffered from the restrictions of Covid. Course content was generally reduced and in some cases had to be diluted or changed completely to accommodate remote learning. There was some trouble getting materials home to VDL students. Some content was lacking in overall quality due to lack of equipment, resources, and in person collaboration. Some students had trouble keeping up with content.

Next Steps

- Discuss and collaborate on ways to get students caught up next year. Crucial content that was missed this year will be included in the next level classes. As this may push out other content, it may take several years before the curriculum is fully covered at all levels.
- Finish rewriting and obtain approval for the Visual Arts curriculum by the end of next year. This will include revisions for the additional course content at WMS and revised courses at WHS. Consider infusing some changes made as Covid-era revisions (such as additional video demonstrations).
- Continue to infuse Visual Arts curriculum with global responsibility, cultural diversity and differentiated content.

Performing Arts, Grades K-12

Accomplishments

- K-12 music content and methods were modified to provide students opportunities for connection to the music program in the remote and hybrid environments while implementing the various changes to the CSDE Addendum 7 and NFHS recommendations for the performing arts.
- Auditioned Music Honors: four Band, five Choir, two Jazz Band and one Orchestra in CT Western Regional High School Festival. One Band, two Choir and one Orchestra student in CT All State High School Festival. Two Choir students in NAfME Eastern Region Honors Ensemble.
- Theatre Arts: WHS Company successfully produced an on-demand streaming of the play *Vintage Hitchcock* in the fall and will be performing a livestream of *Shrek the Musical* this spring. WMS Short Wharf produced a fully digital production of student- created scenes and accompanying music called *Voices from a Middle School Yearbook*.
- Music technology use increased with the expansion of online music teaching platforms K-5 and content-based software and online programs in grade 6-12 ensembles. These programs were vital to maintaining skills and musicianship in remote and hybrid environments.
- Teachers participated in workshops on Social-Emotional Learning and Music Education and many infused lessons on *Self and The Music Within* into their courses and ensembles.

Curricular Impact

- K-5: Students engaged in music within a very limiting classroom environment. Students became familiar with music concepts but couldn't apply rhythm and melodic learning to instruments, sing in tune with proper technique or engage in any gross motor movement activities, song games, or recorder playing. WIS ensemble students began the year on Zoom but many instrumental students had difficulty getting started. The online lesson progress has been much slower and ensemble playing is mostly unison. Choral students began in-person rehearsal in January with social distancing, but are still working on lower level repertoire.
- 6-12: Students who participated in general music and music technology were able to move forward with parts of curriculum that utilize digital tools where access to the music lab is not needed. The pacing of the units was slower and some projects were eliminated. Some 6-12 ensembles were able to play in class but there were various limitations to playing and singing when remote or hybrid. Individual technique and musicianship were addressed but the level of ensemble literature has been severely affected. Remote lessons focused on analyzing music, composing melodies and other projects about music with no ensemble work.

Next Steps

- Pre-assessments will give a baseline for what concepts and skills will be retaught. We anticipate a heavy review of rhythmic writing, decoding and melodic notation. Proper vocal production and technique will be a main area of focus in general music with hopes of application to recorder in grades 3-5. Instrumental music will begin with the basics of tone production and beginning reading.
- In the upper level ensembles, we will begin with ensemble techniques, proper playing and singing and ensemble retention. We will continue to monitor requirements for indoor playing and singing and may need to reduce ensemble class sizes for fall.

Health and Physical Education, Grades K-12

Accomplishments

- Successfully modified units to meet the needs and demands of full in-person, hybrid, and full remote learning environments. Created new learning experiences and assessments to successfully address as much curricular content and skills as possible given the restraints present due to the pandemic.
- Grade 10 Health successfully incorporated the second half of the DBT Steps-A Program into the existing curriculum.
- Middle School Health assessments yielded growth, and often exceeded, progress from previous years.
- Successfully expanded use of technology across the entire K-12 Health and PE department. All teachers have a richer skill set and have diversified lessons, activities, and assessments to meet the needs of all learners.
- PE teachers K-12 incorporated the use of fitness logs/calendars/activities to promote fitness outside of school. A heavy emphasis was placed upon the fitness and emotional health connection at all levels.

Curricular Impact

- Reduced time for K-5 Health made it extremely difficult to address curricular content as designed. Many assessments needed to be removed or significantly changed.
- Hands-on activities were not possible in most cases.
- Collaborative projects and experiences needed to be eliminated or modified. The collaboration that did occur happened mostly with shared documents, slideshows, or with other online tools.

- Sensitive discussions (e.g., sexuality, puberty, and abuse) were very difficult to have in full in-person, hybrid, and full remote learning environments.
- Due to Covid restrictions, there was a shift to socially distant individual activities in PE K-12, and some team sports and group activities were not possible to cover due to those restrictions.
- Less cardiovascular, and more perceptual/fine and gross motor activities incorporated. Concerned about the impact on this year's Connecticut Physical Fitness Test.

Next Steps

- Teachers will communicate with colleagues (up and down levels) to discuss student progress levels at the end of the school year as well as to communicate helpful suggestions for next school year. Professional development at the start of next school year will focus on curricular adjustments that will need to occur to address any deficits.
- Next year's planning will include keeping pandemic related changes made this year that will continue to benefit students.
- Special attention will be placed upon pre-assessments that will be administered districtwide to uncover curricular area strengths and weaknesses.
- Ensure the return of hands-on and collaborative activities in both Health and PE K-12.
- Continue to use technology and maintain at-home fitness and skill expectations.
- Use Connecticut Physical Fitness Test scores to inform planning for PE units in grades 4-10.

Technology Education, Grades 6-12

Accomplishments

- Project Lead the Way curricular resources were modified for remote learning to allow the opportunity for students to engage in the content and skills of engineering and design in a virtual manner, such as through the use of VEX Virtual Worlds to teach robotics and both Tinkercad and OnShape to teach design and modelling.
- Supplies and manipulatives were made available to students learning remotely when necessary to help them stay engaged in hands-on projects and support their learning and skill-development.
- Students in all technology education classes have shown growth and competency in the engineering design process, 3D modelling skills, and maintaining effective science engineering notebooks.

- Hands-on projects were safely implemented that allowed the students to work individually while still engaging collaboratively for peer feedback and ideas. Projects were differentiated for student choice. These included the 3D design and modeling of creative charms, the milling of keepsake boxes, the building of bridge trusses, the engineering and building of gear toys, and the compilation of a residential design project portfolio.
- The cardboard boat regatta project was reinstated in a safe and collaborative manner for both seventh and eighth graders to allow all students to experience this highly-engaging, cumulative engineering design project.
- Sixth graders demonstrated much growth in computer programming knowledge and competency with online tools and resources due to the additional computer use requirements associated with remote learning.

Curricular Impact

- The full scope of the curriculum was not covered in some courses, while the depth of content and/or skill-development has been sacrificed in other courses.
- Although some hands-on activities were incorporated into the courses, much of the interactive lessons were taught virtually and therefore the depth of understanding gained through physically designing, manipulating and operating the various components and instruments has likely been impacted.

Next Steps

- Additional time for hands-on experience with proper use of manipulates and instruments in future courses, such as the robotics equipment and the various components in the woodshop.
- Teachers may need to provide additional time and support for students to be adept at utilizing certain software programs associated with PLTW (Project Lead the Way) curriculum.
- Engage in vertical curricular planning meetings so that teachers are best prepared to identify and address areas of strength and areas for improvement in rising student populations.

Project Challenge, Grades 3-8

Accomplishments

- Throughout the year, teachers collaborated during professional learning days to continuously reflect on and refine our progress across both WIS & WMS.
- Planned for and implemented a new simulation for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Teachers continued the work on curriculum mapping grades 3-8, determining where specific skills will be introduced and mastered.
- Within this mapping work teachers also continued to discuss a focus on Thinking Skills goals for each grade level in order to help build capacity for independent learning, shifting away from prescribed thematic units in grades 3-5, instead using the collective interests of the class to guide unit content. The implications being that learning in Project Challenge would more closely represent how we learn in the "real world."

Next Steps

- Review the scheduling of Project Challenge classes at WIS.
- Discuss feasibility of implementing a dedicated and robust schoolwide enrichment program.
- Review the Project Challenge identification process. Previously, there were discussions around a plan to pilot the Torrance assessment as one of our identification tools in addition to other ways to refine our identification process. However, no concrete conclusions were reached. The Project Challenge committee will resume this discussion.

Special Education and Pupil Services, Grades PK-12

Goals and Accomplishments

- Completed all evaluations and Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings for the period of school closure during Fall 2020.
- Developed and updated Learning Model IEP Implementation Plans for all special education students in the district (more than 250 plans total) to align to building schedules within each of the schooling scenarios.
    - Created a central organizational system for the plans in each building to ensure access for related service providers and administrators.

- Offered in-person learning opportunities for full days throughout the school year for all high needs students.
    - Provided opportunities for all elementary special education students to begin to attend school for full days in November 2020.
    - Provided opportunities for middle school and high school students to attend for full days daily based on individualized learning needs.
- Provided professional development to the middle school and high school teams to strengthen the post-secondary transition process.
- As of April 30, 2021, the district will have conducted 585 PPTs during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Conducted monthly department meetings to review best practices, along with regular meetings for PPS leadership, special education team leaders and school psychologists.
- Continued districtwide capacity building in Physical Management Training (PMT) strategies by training 10 new staff and recertifying 26 staff from the prior year.
- Presented a districtwide Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) workshop to families in Spring 2021 to share strategies to support students during the pandemic and return to school.
    - Applied DBT skills in IEP goal development, small group and individual counseling sessions.
- Provided ongoing medical support to our schools through our school nurses and nursing supervisor, and provided mental health support to our students through the work of our counselors, school psychologists and social workers during the pandemic.
- Developed a new filing system for IEPs and special education documentation that will be implemented preschool through post secondary.
- Proposed and planned an in-house program for students who present with complex social, emotional and behavioral needs at Weston High School called Alternative Pathways.
- Developed a process to ensure that program books and data collection systems are consistent across buildings for high needs students.
- Offered professional development for elementary school paraeducators using Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM).
- Restructured and strengthened the transition process for special education students transitioning within the district (HES to WIS, WIS to WMS, WMS to WHS).

Next Steps

- Implement a comprehensive, in-person Extended School Year program.
- Formally launch Alternative Pathways at Weston High School during the 2021-2022 school year.
- Provide enhanced mental health supports to students throughout the district in response to the pandemic.
- Prepare the district for the rollout of the new IEP system effective July 2022.
- Strengthen implementation of transition and post-secondary services.
- Fully integrate the new special education filing system Preschool-12.
- Deliver targeted professional development opportunities to paraeducators using The COMPASS online modules.
- Systematically train staff to support the implementation of PMT strategies and techniques.
- Further embed the work of DBT in counseling supports and services and the health curriculum.
- Reintroduce regular Special Education Roundtable discussions with families.
- Develop processes and procedures to ensure consistent practices in special education and 504 districtwide.

APPENDIX

Curriculum Renewal Cycle 2018- 2025

Year	Art	Music	English 6-12	Reading K-5	Writing K-5	Social Studies K-5	Social Studies 6-12	Science	Tech-nology	Phys Ed	Health	World Lang	K-12 Math	Project Challenge	Counseling
2018-19			YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 4	YEAR 3		YEAR 3			**YEAR 1**	YEAR 3			
2019-20	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 5	YEAR 4		YEAR 4		YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 4			
2020-21 PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE	YEAR 3	YEAR 5	PAUSE	PAUSE	PAUSE
2021-22	YEAR 2	YEAR 1	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 1	YEAR 5	YEAR 1	YEAR 5	YEAR 1	YEARS 2 & 3	YEAR 4		YEAR 1		YEAR 1
2022-23	YEAR 3	YEAR 2	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 2	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 4	YEAR 5		YEAR 2	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
2023-24	YEAR 4	YEAR 3	**YEAR 5**	YEAR 1	YEAR 3	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 5			YEAR 3	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
2024-25	**YEAR 5**	YEAR 4	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 4	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 3	YEAR 4				YEAR 4	YEAR 3	YEAR 4

Year 1 Research
Year 2 Development
Year 3 Implementation
Year 4 Monitoring
Year 5 Evaluation

Annual Instructional Update Advance Questions from Board Members
May 11, 2021

Question 1. To provide some more context, can you discuss whether (based on your experience) some of the significant changes in performance data are "COVID-related" vs. changes that you have also have observed during "normal years." It's hard to assess significance without some historical context. For example, if we have seen swings in performance data in normal years it will be difficult to assess the "COVID" related informational content of the 19/20 20/21 comparisons.

Answer 1.
In general, performance data is stable year to year. There are always slight fluctuations between cohorts each year that are to be expected. However, there are significant differences in performance during the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19 as compared to normal school years.

Question 2. It would be helpful to discuss specific interventions where the data clearly shows significant performance decline.

Answer 2. The primary strategy for addressing performance fluctuations is to return to teaching our full curriculum with students in an in-person learning environment. During the 2020-21 school year this is the single most important variable that contributed to a lag in performance.

Question 3. When will we be able to compare the 19/20 vs 20/21 with what other surrounding districts have observed?

Answer 3.
DRG A comparables will be available at the end of the school year. Standardized testing results for the grades 3-8 Smarter Balanced Assessments, grades, 5, 8 and 11 Next Generation Science Standards assessment and the grade 11 School Day SAT will be available at the end of June.

Question 4. Overall I am looking for more specific action items - can you be more specific explaining to us what exactly the teacher goals will be and admin goals?

Answer 4. District/department goals, accompanying action steps and indicators of success are developed over the summer. Individual teacher goals are crafted and submitted to their respective evaluators at the beginning of the year.

Question 5. Are you making specific curriculum changes? I see "curriculum supports "- I am not sure what you mean by this- please clarify.

Answer 5. What is meant by the phrase “curriculum supports” on page 24 of the AIU is that teachers will need to embed skills in the subsequent grade if they missed teaching those skills during this year.

Question 6. When is external evaluation? Over the summer before pd?

Answer 6. The Tri-State Consortium evaluation for math intervention (SRBI) will take place in March 2022.

Question 7. Can we get more specifics around the professional development agendas?

Answer 7. The professional learning plan is under development. Student performance data will inform the plan; however, the district will not have all of this data until the end of the current school year. A key emphasis of professional learning K-12 will be on improving math outcomes. Each school/department at the secondary level will have a focus for professional development as well.

Question 8. What’s the plan for continuous quality improvement?

Answer 8. Key strategies for continuous improvement in math and reading are listed on page 23 of the AIU. While these strategies are specific to reading and math, improvements in the various subject areas rely on a process of goal setting, action planning, professional learning, implementation and monitoring results.

Question 9. Can you explain how often teachers are analyzing data and next steps? Should we hold parent teacher conferences earlier in the year?

Answer 9. Teachers are constantly examining student performance data and communicating with parents. At the K-5 level, teachers keep parents regularly updated regarding student performance especially if there are concerns. The parent conferences in early November are an additional opportunity for teachers to meet with parents to discuss a child’s progress.

Question 10. Spanish grades 1-6- it says “revise curriculum” can you elaborate ? We are keeping the same number of instructional minutes? Should we review instructional minutes per grade? (Mercedes)

Answer 10.
We need to revise curricula to adjust to the fact that the K-2 program was suspended for a year and to the fact that the contact minutes were reduced in grades 3-5 this year. K-2 students did not receive any language instruction the current year; therefore, we need to make the necessary curricular modifications to condense the content and skills they need to acquire next year and the following years. In addition, we also lost three months of instructional time during the last academic year, and that has also impacted student learning.

We will return to the number of minutes allocated to WL pre-pandemic. As a reminder, K-2 has Spanish 40 minutes per week, and 3-5, 60 minutes per week. 6th grade WL meets 2-3 times a week for 40 minutes. Additional time allocated for WL would be beneficial, but that time would need to be reallocated from other subjects.

Question 11. The impact of teacher absences and use of substitute teachers -it seems like there are inconsistencies in that some teachers leave full lessons and others are not as prepared. How is this addressed ?

Answer 11. For short-term absences, the classroom teacher is responsible for leaving lesson plans for their classes. When a teacher is on leave for an extended period of time, the long-term substitute is responsible for planning and generating lesson plans. The CILs assist the long-term substitutes in orienting them to the curriculum and assisting them with planning. In cases when long-term absences are anticipated, we build in time for the teacher to overlap a couple of days with the substitute to review the unit plans.

DRAFT

Weston Public Schools
Annual Instructional Update
May 12, 2021

Implications and strategies for addressing trends in performance in preparation for the 2021-22 school year.

Curriculum Implementation

1. Implement the full K-12 curriculum for all subjects for the 2021-22 school year.
2. Identify, by subject area, any learning standards, content or skills that were not taught in 2020-21 that are necessary for future learning.
3. Return to a normal schedule of classes and restore the full number of minutes allocated to each subject area.
4. Offer summer learning opportunity (WPS Summer Academy) and continue to provide families with suggestions for summer reading and math practice.

Use of data to inform instruction

5. Review all relevant data in grade level team meetings, department meetings and data team meetings.
6. Identify students requiring extra support based on our universal screening data from the spring and the fall (SRBI).
7. Use data for the purposes of differentiation at the classroom level to respond to individual student needs.
8. Add additional intervention teacher support for small group and individual students identified for targeted instruction (ESSER II grant).

Professional learning

9. Resume professional learning plans that were paused this year due to the pandemic (e.g. literacy, differentiation).
10. Initiate new professional learning initiatives (e.g. math)
11. Outline the district/departmental professional learning plan.
12. The annual goal setting will be based on student performance data and aligned with a professional learning plan.