

Watertown Public Schools

Watertown Middle School Improvement Plan 2017-2018 DRAFT 5/30/17

DISTRICT STRATEGIC GOALS
<p>Support High Academic Achievement The Watertown Public Schools will ensure that each student becomes an accomplished learner in the arts, humanities, mathematics, physical sciences and social sciences. The school system will provide all students with a learning environment that sets high expectations and stimulates thinking, problem-solving, inquiry, creativity, and hard work.</p>
<p>Foster the Capacity for Life-Long Learning The Watertown Public Schools will ensure that each student develops a capacity for life-long learning through comprehensive skill development, exposure to a broad universe of knowledge and disciplines, and support for a diversity of learning styles, future plans, and personal interests.</p>
<p>Promote Local and Global Citizenship The Watertown Public Schools will ensure that each student becomes informed about and participates in local and world affairs. Students will strive to understand people of different backgrounds and cultures and the interconnectedness of the contemporary world.</p>

MISSION STATEMENT: The Middle School in partnership with the community and family will provide a supportive and challenging learning environment where every student feels safe, respected, and valued. As a place for transition, the Middle School will nurture the development of self-esteem and the unique emotional, social, ethical and academic growth of each student.

KEY STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	KEY MEASURES	PROGRESS TO DATE
<p>Curriculum Alignment with Massachusetts Frameworks and Common Core Evaluate the enacted middle school curriculum in all subject areas according to state standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Review common assessments in each subject area and map their objectives to the state frameworks -- Improve common assessments so that they more closely align to grade-level standards and standards of practice -- Identify the standards of practice enrichment classes are meeting and ensure that culminating assessments and projects help students to meet these standards -- Identify ways to provide students regularly with increased challenge opportunities within the curriculum 	Principal, coordinators, teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Common assessments all reviewed and improved (when necessary) by June, 2018 -- Enrichment classes, with their summative assessments, reviewed by June, 2018 -- All core subject teachers have a set of challenge options/assignments by June, 2018 -- All core subject teachers provide at least one challenge opportunity for students per week by June, 2018 	

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<p>Achievement Gap Close achievement gaps in literacy, math, and science as students progress through sixth, seventh, and eighth grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Employ school-wide reading and writing assessments and ELA MCAS scores to identify those students who need improvement. Make the data accessible to all teachers across all content areas. -- Develop school-wide math and science assessment systems using current common assessments and math MCAS scores to identify quickly those students who need improvement. Make the data accessible to all teachers across all content areas. -- Restructure the school's Tier II academic support system to allow for more collaboration among teachers and more responsiveness to student needs -- Restructure special education and ESL staffing so that there are more opportunities for co-teaching within the school day -- Provide faculty-wide professional development on effective co-teaching strategies -- Explore ways to support students who are receiving Ds and Fs on their report cards to receive after school academic support 	<p>Principal, coordinators, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Students needing improvement in literacy skills identified by November, 2017. Data made available to all teachers. -- Students needing improvement in math and science identified by April, 2018. Data made available to all teachers. -- Restructured Tier II academic support system in place by September, 2017 -- Restructured special education and ESL staffing in place by September, 2017 -- Professional development on co-teaching during faculty meetings from October 2017 through March 2018 -- Taskforce to address the needs of students performing poorly in classes created by September, 2017. Plan to support students receiving Ds and Fs on report cards in place by January 2018. 	

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<p>Literacy Instruction and Assessment</p> <p>Continue the development of the middle school reading assessment system that accurately and efficiently measures reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and decoding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Link middle school data from MCAS ELA, Fontas & Pinnell benchmarking, MAZE, San Diego, and Quick Phonics Screener assessments to elementary data, tracking reading growth from kindergarten through eighth grade -- Create a system of reading data entry and access so that teachers can have access to student reading scores in a more timely manner 	<p>Reading teachers, reading coordinator, data specialist, principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- K-8 reading data system complete by June, 2018 -- Reading assessments available to teachers by November, 2017 	
<p>Emphasize the three school-wide reading practices established in 2016-17: The AAA pre-reading strategy (accessing, anticipating, & acknowledging); partnered reading strategies; and the 3-point play for response to reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Refresh faculty at the beginning of the year of the three school-wide reading strategies -- Train new teachers in the three school-wide reading strategies -- Assess teacher use of the three school-wide reading strategies through teacher observation 	<p>Teachers and coordinators across all content areas, principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Refresher and new teacher training complete by September, 2017 -- Teacher observations ongoing throughout the 2017-18 school year 	
<p>Convene a team of writing teachers to review writing assessment and instruction throughout the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Create a writing implementation plan similar to the reading plan formed two years ago -- Determine a coaching / professional development model that would best support teachers' writing instruction in all departments 	<p>Literacy teachers, reading coordinator, English coordinator, principal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Writing team formed by January 2018 -- Writing implementation plan, complete with coaching and professional development model, complete by June, 2018 	

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<p>Global Competencies Improve global competency across all three grades, particularly in the areas of investigating the world, recognizing perspectives, communicating ideas to diverse audiences, and taking action as citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Provide time and support for teacher teams to develop, expand, or revise curriculum and instruction that helps students investigate the world, recognize perspectives, communicate ideas, and take action as citizens -- Further develop Kingian Non-Violence Training so that all fifth and sixth grade students have exposure to basic concepts and more seventh and eighth grade students become certified trainers -- Expand Kingian Non-Violence Training to the community at large -- Assess and refine the seventh grade X-block curriculum that promotes collaborative problem solving -- Enhance the eighth grade Choosing to Participate capstone project to allow students to take community action more effectively 	<p>Principal, coordinators, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Professional development choices for global competency projects created by October, 2017 -- Kingian Training to fifth grade complete by May, 2018 -- Kingian Training in sixth grade advisory complete by March, 2018 -- Two Kingian Nonviolence training enrichment classes, Part I and Part II, completed by June, 2018 -- At least two Kingian Nonviolence community training sessions complete by June, 2018 -- Seventh grade X-block curriculum revisions in place by June, 2018 -- Improved Choosing to Participate capstone project to be completed by June, 2018 	
<p>Develop academic partnerships with schools in other parts of the world</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Train or retrain teachers with iEarn, a technology tool / forum that allows classroom teachers to connect with other teachers across the world 	<p>Principal, foreign language coordinator, social studies coordinator, foreign language and social studies teachers</p>	<p>At least four foreign language or social studies teachers in an international partnership by June, 2018</p>	

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<p>Inquiry- and Project-based Teaching and Learning Help teachers learn inquiry-, project-, and technology-based pedagogies that facilitate student inquiry and design in the literacy, STEAM, and global competency fields</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Provide time, structures, and professional development so that teams of teachers can collaborate to plan and execute curriculum and instruction in the science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics fields, that foster deep learning, inquiry skills, and creativity through the design process -- Continue to offer inquiry-based learning professional development and coaching through Critical Explorers -- Provide project-based learning professional development through the Buck Institute -- Train teachers in the Project Lead the Way program and pilot three enrichment classes for students -- Offer more STEAM-based enrichment classes across all grades -- Provide more opportunities for academic showcases, where students can present their learning to an authentic audience 	<p>Principal, coordinators, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Professional development choices for teachers on STEAM projects created by October, 2017 -- Continuance of Critical Explorers coaching, resulting in at least two new teachers and two new units -- Buck Institute Training for project-based learning in Summer, 2017 -- Project Lead the Way training for teachers in Summer, 2017, resulting in three new enrichment classes in 2017-18: Design and Modeling; Green Architecture; and Medical Detectives -- New STEAM enrichment classes include Crafty Creations, Design and Modeling, Graphic Design, Green Architecture, Medical Detectives, Percussion Ensemble, and Structural Engineering for 2017-18 -- At least six more academic showcases for broad, authentic audiences in 2017-18 	

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<p>Technology Integration Assess and refine the 1:1 Chrome book program for the seventh and eighth grade and pilot the 1:1 laptop initiative for sixth grade</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Assess the infrastructure for the 1:1 computing initiative for the seventh and eighth grade. Along the same lines, prepare infrastructure for sixth grade. -- Expand and assess the professional development program for teachers (both online and face-to-face) that focuses on Google Classroom and other Google tools, assistive technology, and best practices for incorporating technology into instruction -- Communicate to incoming students and families benefits, challenges, and expectations of 1:1 computing -- Expand the Chrome book checkout system to allow more students to bring Chrome books home -- Prepare for computer-based MCAS testing for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade -- Implement the district plan that serves to protect student privacy 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, technology coordinator, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- 1:1 Chrome book program expanded to all three grades by September, 2017 -- Infrastructure and professional development assessed in summer, 2017 -- Professional development choices for technology integration in place by October, 2017 -- Student and parent meetings about the 1:1 laptop initiative held in September 2017 -- New checkout system in place by September, 2017 -- Computer-based MCAS testing plan to be implemented in Spring, 2018 -- Privacy plan in place by June 2018 	

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<p>Develop technology curriculum and explore technology tools to enhance teaching and learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Begin to create a scope and sequence of technology skills for grades 6-8, integrated in a district-wide K-12 technology curriculum -- Create subject-specific task forces to research technology and other online texts and materials that can enhance instruction, creativity, and productivity -- Assess current use of smart boards in science, technology, and math and determine the feasibility of installing smart boards or similar devices in all classrooms 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, technology coordinator, coordinators, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Working group to address technology scope and sequence in place by December, 2017 -- Coordinators to research technology-based products for their departments by June, 2018 -- Smart board assessment completed by December 2017 	
<p>Enhance maker space tools and expertise to more fully integrate maker space technology into instruction, assignments, and projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Continue to incorporate maker space tools and expertise into the general curriculum -- Develop new enrichment classes using maker-space technologies -- Enhance maker-space after school programming 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, technology coordinator, library media specialist, maker space specialist, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Teachers' use of the maker space to increase by 30% in 2017-18 -- New enrichment classes: Design and Modeling, Crafty Creations, Structural Engineering in 2017-18 -- Maker space after school participation to increase by 20% in 2017-18 	

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<p>Continue to develop PowerSchool for Watertown Middle School to make it more flexible and useful for staff and families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Continue to operationalize PowerSchool so that it provides easy access to contact information, attendance, grading, scheduling, medical and discipline systems -- Enhance the PowerSchool parent portal to include grading, attendance, and other important information -- Improve the PowerSchool School Messenger system so that school personnel can more effectively communicate with families -- Continue to train staff on PowerSchool so that there is more expertise at all levels within the school and district 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, district technology team, technology coordinator, teachers, support staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- PowerSchool fully operational and accessible to staff and families by June, 2018 -- The ability to produce customizable reports from PowerSchool for WMS realized by June, 2018 -- School messenger groupings and email templates developed by September, 2017 -- Staff training at beginning, intermediate, and expert levels to continue in 2017-18 	

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<p>Healthy School Climate and Culture Continue to enhance advisory curriculum and instruction</p>	<p>-- Ensure that teachers are given enough time for the following critical advisory units: sixth grade Kingian non-violence training, seventh grade X-block activities, eighth grade high school transition activities, preparation for student-led conferences -- Continue to provide professional development for teachers on effective advisory practices</p>	<p>Principal, assistant principal, guidance counselors, coordinators, teachers</p>	<p>-- Advisory schedule for the year planned by October, 2017 -- Advisory professional development/coaching ongoing throughout 2017-18</p>	
<p>Continue to develop, distribute, and analyze school culture surveys for students, parents/guardians, and teachers</p>	<p>-- Redistribute this year's parent survey next year when we can get more response -- Use the analysis of results of 2016-17 surveys to design 2017-18 surveys -- Implement surveys, analyze results, and present findings</p>	<p>Principal, assistant principal, guidance counselors, survey team</p>	<p>-- Parent survey redistributed to seventh and eighth grade parents at Back-to-School Night, and then to be analyzed by November 2017 -- Teacher survey to be designed, distributed, and analyzed by January 2018 -- Student survey to be designed, distributed, and analyzed by May 2018</p>	
<p>Explore ways to integrate movement and mindfulness into classes</p>	<p>-- Develop a movement and mindfulness working group to develop micro-approach options for teachers during the 2017-18 school year and a more comprehensive plan for 2018-19</p>	<p>Principal, assistant principal, guidance counselors, teachers</p>	<p>-- Movement and mindfulness working group to be organized by October, 2017</p>	

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<p>Address and improve cleanliness, physical surroundings, and aesthetic appeal to help create a warm and welcoming place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Replace all windows in the West Jr. High building -- Develop a plan to beautify the courtyard and make it more useful area for students and staff -- Implement first steps of the courtyard beautification plan -- Provide more signage throughout the school for non-English speaking families -- Expand the WMS recycling initiative to all classrooms as well as the cafeteria -- Increase the number of bulletin boards throughout the school and encourage teachers to display student work more frequently -- Provide funding for classroom décor that enhances student learning and showcases student work -- Work with the custodial staff to develop a checklist of items needing daily, weekly, and monthly cleaning -- Provide routine announced and unannounced inspections on the cleanliness of the building 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, facilities manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Windows to be completed by the end of October, 2017 -- Working group to plan the courtyard to be organized by October 2017; plan to be completed and vetted by February 2018 -- Signs to be ordered and put up by September, 2017 -- Working group to plan recycling to be organized by October 2017, possibly in conjunction with courtyard group -- At least eight more bulletin boards up by September, 2017 -- Funding for décor available for teachers by August 2017 -- Custodial checklists developed by December 2017 -- Inspections to be conducted throughout the 2017-18 school year 	

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<p>Home/School Connections Increase opportunities for dialogue among students, parents, and teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Implement clear procedures for addressing parents' questions and concerns, including what to do when there is no or inadequate response -- Develop PowerSchool, School Messenger, and Google Classroom reports that allow families to access important information – including progress reports, grades, missing work notices, absence reports, and community announcements – clearly and efficiently -- Continue to expand and refine student-led conferences to further encourage student reflection, communication, and empowerment 	<p>Principal, coordinators, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Procedures outlined in student handbook, to be released in August, 2017 -- PowerSchool, School Messenger, and Google Classroom reports created throughout the 2017-18 school year -- Student led conferences in December, 2017 and March 2018 	
<p>Enhance the WMS parent liaisons program for non-English speaking families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Evaluate the program started in 2016-17 by interviewing groups of families in focus groups -- Continue to develop communication and closer relationships with Spanish-, Portuguese-, and Pushtu-speaking families -- Explore how to scale up the liaisons program to encompass all schools in the district 	<p>Principal, assistant principal, liaisons, teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Community liaisons program evaluation completed by September, 2017 -- Initial meetings to be held in September 2017 for all language groups; at least four meetings for each language group throughout the 2017-18 school year -- Working group to explore scaling up at a district level to be formed in October, 2017 	

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Increase parent participation in Watertown Middle School information sessions, events, and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Increase the number of academic showcases that involve parent and community participation -- Bolster parent participation in the PTO and school site council 	Principal, assistant principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- At least six more showcasing opportunities for students that allow for parent participation -- 20% increase in PTO and site council participation 	

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FRAMEWORK DEFINITIONS

Goal

- What is the over-arching Teaching & Learning Goal, or through-line?
- Each Teaching & Learning Goal aligns with one or more of the District Strategic Goals.

Key Strategies

- What are the various sub-goals which are essential and important in order to accomplish the overall goal?
- Each key strategy is its' own goal or specific target of accomplishment, but is tied to the overall goal.

Actions

- What will you do to accomplish the sub-goal?
- This is a list of action steps that leads to accomplishing the target sub-goal.

Responsibility

- Who will provide the leadership to assure that these strategies and action steps are accomplished?
- List who is primarily responsible.

Key Measures

- What will you use to know you have reached your sub-goal?
- What indicators/evidence will demonstrate progress in the implementation of these strategies and action steps?
- How will you gather the evidence needed to demonstrate progress of these strategies and action steps?
- This is a list of specific evidence that represents benchmarks.

Milestones

- What is the ongoing timeline for these strategies and action steps?
- This is a running record list of dates and benchmarks reached.