Committee Members   Administrative Representative
Jermaine Johnson, Chair   Marco Andrade, PhD
Laura Clancey, Vice-Chair
Tracy Novick

OFFICE OF THE
CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MA 01609

AGENDA #2

The Standing Committee on SCHOOL AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE will hold an **in-person meeting**:

        on: Monday, June 26, 2023
        at: 5:00 p.m.
        in: Room 410, Durkin Administration Building, 20 Irving Street, Worcester

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I.   Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. General Business

     gb 3-170.1 Administration
             (June 8, 2023)
     To consider approval of the innovation school renewal plans.

IV. Adjournment

                        Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
                        Clerk of the School Committee

School and Student Performance Agenda

General Business   ITEM: gb 3-170.1
Administration   Meeting: 6-26-23
(June 8, 2023)

ITEM:
To consider approval of the innovation school renewal plans.

PRIOR ACTION:
6-15-23   On a voice vote, the motion to refer to School & Student
             Performance was approved.

BACKUP:
Annex A (9 pages) contains the presentation from the Administration
Annex B (40 pages) contains the Goddard Scholars Academy Innovation Plan
Annex C (40 pages) contains the University Park Campus Innovation Plan
Annex D (27 pages) contains the Worcester Technical Innovation Plan

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:
Approve

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION:
Approve

WPS Innovation School Plan Renewals
June 26, 2023

Marco Andrade, PhD, Director of Research and Accountability
Shannon Conley, Principal, Goddard Scholars Academy at Sullivan MS
Kaitlin Kelley Snow, Principal, University Park Community School
Drew Weymouth, Principal, Worcester Technical HS

From Here, Anywhere....
Together

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Agenda Page 3

Overview of Innovation Schools

Key aspects of the Innovation Schools initiative as described by DESE:

- Component of An Act Relative to the Achievement Gap signed into law by Governor Patrick in January 2010
- Provides opportunity to create new in-district and autonomous schools that can implement creative and inventive strategies while keeping school funding within districts
- Autonomy and flexibility in six key areas:
    - Curriculum;
    - Budget;
    - School schedule and calendar;
    - Staffing (including waivers from or exemptions to collective bargaining agreements);
    - Professional development; and
    - District policies and procedures

Overview of Innovation Schools

Innovation Schools Statute: Mass. General Laws Chapter 71, Section 92

- Excerpt regarding renewal of Innovation Schools:

  - (o) At the end of the period of authorization of an Innovation School approved under subsection (m), the leadership of the school may petition the school committee to extend the authorization of the school for an additional period of not more than 5 years.

Schools requesting renewal:
- **Goddard Scholars at Sullivan MS**
- **University Park Community School**
- **Worcester Tech HS**

Schools not renewing:
- **Goddard ES**

Schools eligible to continue in SY24:
- **Claremont Academy**

Innovation School Renewal Requirements

Requirements for renewal of authorization of Innovation School status:

- "The leadership of the school shall convene a selection of school stakeholders, including, but not limited to, administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents and external partners, as applicable, to discuss whether the innovation plan at the school requires revision and to solicit recommendations as to the potential revisions."

- "After considering the recommendations of the stakeholder group, the leadership of the school and the applicable superintendent shall jointly update the innovation plan as necessary; provided, however, that a proposal regarding a new waiver or exemption from the local teacher's union contract shall be approved by teachers at the school…"

- Majority approval of the school committee

Participating Schools

School	Grades Served	SY13	SY14	SY15	SY16	SY17	SY18	SY19	SY20	SY21	SY22	SY23	SY24
Claremont Academy	7-12												
Goddard Scholars Academy at Sullivan MS	6-8												
Goddard School of Science & Technology	Pk-6											will not renew	
University Park Campus School	7-12												
Worcester Technical HS	9-12												

Goddard Scholars | Autonomies & Flexibilities

Teacher vote passed with greater than two-thirds approval

	Requested	Description
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	✓	• 6th Grade Seminar Class • Creation &Implementation of Common Assessments • Restorative and Community Circles across all grade levels
Budget	✓	• Continue to fund academy needs (technology, supplies, transportation for field trips and afterschool programs)
Schedule & Calendar	✓	• Flexible scheduling to accommodate enrichments • Flexible scheduling allows for teacher CPT and PLC meetings
Staffing	✓	• Committee to select new staff
Professional Development	✓	• Weekly PLC and CPT meetings • School-wide enrichment model
Policies & Procedures	✗	• NA

UCPS | Autonomies & Flexibilities

No teacher vote required	Requested	Description
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	✓	• Heterogeneous, all-honors curriculum • Common instructional framework, gateway assessments and school-wide expectations rubrics
Budget	✓	• Continue to fund summer academies for grades 7 and 9 • Staffing assignment autonomy
Schedule & Calendar	✓	• 7th and 9th grade summer academies • 2-hour common planning time
Staffing	✓	• Committee to select new staff • Interview panels and demonstration lessons
Professional Development	✓	• Vertical and horizontal planning time, curriculum mapping time PLC time, pre and post rounds
Policies & Procedures	✗	• NA

WTHS | Autonomies & Flexibilities

Teacher vote passed with 80% approval

	Requested	Description
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment	✓	• Align the school into full academies • Prepare curriculum that is common across multiple shops/academics • Increase employer engagement at all grades
Budget	✗	• NA
Schedule & Calendar	✓	• Add 4 minutes to the daily schedule to meet time on learning and add basic professional skills for students to start their day. Same contractual time for teachers. • Flexibility to change the schedule to benefit students with some language to guide process and potential changes
Staffing	✓	• Immediate external posting for staff vacancies with language for WPS candidates. Inclusive of paraprofessionals/teachers/administrators in EAW contracts. • Hiring committee to handle staff vacancies
Professional Development	✓	• Add up to 9 half-day PD days to employ common planning time for academies and support project based learning PD and planning
Policies & Procedures	✗	• NA

Thank You

The Goddard Scholars Academy Innovation School Plan

June 20, 2023

Table of Contents

INNOVATION SCHOOL PLAN CERTIFICATION STATEMENT
Date Submitted: March 24, 2011   Recertified: March, 2014

Innovation School Name: **Goddard Scholars Academy**
Plan for Conversion School   **City of Worcester**

Stakeholder's Meetings   **May 10, 2023**
Stakeholder's Committee Members:

Affiliation   **Name**

Lead Applicant: Andrea Ostrovsky/Kendra Cox
Superintendent designee: Marco Andrade
School Committee Member: None attended
Parent with one or more children in the school: Serenity Sullivan-Jacques
Teacher employed by the district:
Teacher employed by district, union selected
Principal: Shannon Conley
Member:
Member:
Member:
Member:

INNOVATION SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

Primary Contact Name:
Andrea Ostrovsky/Kendra Cox
Primary Contact Phone Number: 508 799-3350
Primary Contact FAX number: 508 799-8244
Primary Contact Email Address:

ostrovskya@worcesterschools.net

Coxkl@worcesterschools.net

Will this school serve multiple districts? No

Innovation School Opening: School Year 2011-2012, Reauthorization – , 2017, 2023

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment	Total Number of Staff
First Year 2011-12	7,8	48,48	Equivalent of 6 full time positions 1/5 technology enrichment
Second Year 2012-13	6,7,8	48,48,48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Third Year 2013-14	6,7,8	48,48,48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Fourth Year 2014-15	6,7,8	48,48,48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Fifth Year 2015-16	6,7,8	48,48,48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Sixth Year 2016-17	6, 7, 8	48, 48, 48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Seventh Year 2017-18	6, 7, 8	48, 48, 48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Eighth Year 2018-19	6, 7, 8	48, 48, 48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
Ninth Year 2019-20	6, 7, 8	50, 48, 48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
10th Year 2020-21	6, 7, 8	50, 50, 48	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
11th Year 2021-22	6, 7, 8	50, 50, 50	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions

12th 2022-23	6, 7, 8	50, 50, 50	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions
At full enrollment	6,7,8	150	Equivalent of 9 full-time positions

Executive Summary

The Goddard Scholars Program is the middle school component of a college preparatory course of study conducted in collaboration with South High School and Clark University. Currently, the program is comprised of 50 sixth, 50 seventh, and 50 eighth grade students for a total of 150 students from throughout the City of Worcester, and it provides rigorous and accelerated academic learning in a safe, nurturing, and personalized atmosphere. Its curriculum lays the groundwork for students to engage in higher level courses, including Advanced Placement and Early College classes in high school. Cornerstones of the foundation include developing pride, discipline, and integrity in student's work through reading, writing, discourse, the arts, social interaction, and application of critical thinking to become civic-minded lifelong learners and leaders. This program has and continues to serve a significant role in the district, as Worcester's innovation plans focus on becoming the "school district of choice."

The Innovation School initiative is aimed at improving underperforming schools and providing supportive and challenging learning environments for all public school students. Since Goddard Scholars students consistently score in the Advanced and Proficient MCAS categories, they cannot be considered underperforming according to MCAS standards. However, Goddard Scholars students do not measure up to their peer groups in the state and the nation based on other criteria. The program itself must reform to better serve the students of the Worcester Public School system and to ensure that students reach their full potential. This proposed school aims to strengthen and enhance five distinct areas of the existing program: student achievement, development of practices that promote social justice and civic responsibility, equitable access to the program, student retention in the program, and caregiver and community involvement. In order to improve these areas, GSA has added two sixth grade classes, provides targeted enrichment experiences, engages in cross-curricular collaboration, and expands recruitment efforts.

Student Achievement
The primary innovations address the peer group achievement gap GSA students experience by incorporating the 6th grade year into the program and exercising autonomy over curriculum and scheduling. Since the Common Core State Standards and the Massachusetts State Frameworks present 6-8 curricula, having the 6th grade in-house affords the opportunity to fully align instruction through those years. This allows teachers to broaden and deepen instruction and to provide students with more rigorous highly relevant experiences. Technology and digital curricula make individualized tiered learning accessible to all GSA students.

Development of Social Justice and Civic Responsibility
GSA students have increased opportunities to develop and hone the skills necessary to become civic-minded thinkers due to the following innovations to the program: an infusion of civics across the subject areas, and the use of restorative and community circles in the classroom, the three-year curriculum, and focused enrichment courses.

Equitable Access to the Program
Qualified students regardless of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other factors throughout the Worcester Public School System have access to GSA based on a plan to improve recruitment, awareness and outreach to underrepresented populations.

Parent and Community Involvement
Caregivers and community partners play a critical role in achieving academic success. Research shows that students perform better when caregivers and community members are actively involved. The GSA forms strong partnerships with caregivers and community members to provide more opportunities for involvement in all aspects of the GSA.

Public Statement
Goddard Scholars Academy is an innovation school that is housed within a larger school: the Goddard Scholars Academy (GSA) at Sullivan Middle School. The Goddard Scholars Program is currently an option for sheltered instruction of academically advanced students in the Worcester Public Schools. The GSA includes 150 students in grades six through eight at full enrollment. The innovation school aims to strengthen the program in five distinct areas: development of practices that promote social justice and civic responsibility, equitable access, student retention, and community and caregiver involvement. GSA students are more fully equipped to compete at the national level for college admissions and career readiness.

I.

A. Mission Statement

The Goddard Scholars Academy (GSA) provides a rigorous and accelerated academic program in a safe, nurturing and personalized atmosphere. The student body is a select group of Worcester Public Schools' students, grades 6th through 8th, who have demonstrated academic proficiency. GSA develops students' abilities and gifts into talents and skills. GSA is the middle school component of a college preparatory program conducted in partnership with South High School and Clark University.

B. Vision

The Goddard Scholars Academy (GSA) lays the foundation for students to reach their full potential, to engage in higher-level course work, and to prepare students to compete nationally at high academic levels. Cornerstones of the GSA include developing pride, discipline and integrity in engaging with challenging academics. This is accomplished through reading, writing, discourse, the arts, social interaction, and application of critical thinking skills and digital literacies. GSA students engage in practices that promote social justice and civic responsibility.

C. Statement of Need - Rationale for Innovation

The Innovation School initiative is aimed at improving underperforming schools and providing supportive and challenging learning environments for all public school students. Since GSA students consistently score in the Advanced and Proficient MCAS categories, they cannot be considered underperforming according to MCAS standards. However, GSA students do not measure up to their peer groups in the state and the nation based on other criteria. The program has reformed in order to better serve the students of the Worcester Public Schools. This innovation school strengthens and enhances five distinct areas of the existing program: student achievement, development of practices that promote social justice and civic responsibility, equitable access to the program, student retention, and community and caregiver involvement. With the changes in place, GSA students are more fully equipped to compete on the national level for college admission career readiness.

Student Achievement

GSA students typically perform at the highest level in the district on various standardized tests. However, the program is designed to provide an environment in which academically advanced students can thrive in order to reach their full potential and become prepared to compete nationally as leaders in college and beyond. Therefore, these students must be compared to the top tier of 7th and 8th grade students across Massachusetts and nationwide.
GSA students are enrolled in a targeted program for academically advanced students and as such should be growing at a high rate. Since this program is specifically designed to meet the needs of the top 5% of the students of our district, the GSA plans to strengthen the academy so that its students reach the top 5% on statewide and national standardized measures as well. The primary innovations that address the peer group achievement gap GSA students experience include incorporating the 6th grade year in the program, exercising autonomy over curriculum and scheduling, and infusing technology throughout the program.

Development of Social Justice and Civic Responsibility
The current Goddard Scholars Academy provides its students with the access to tools and individuals that value their input while making them feel valued and physically and emotionally safe. GSA students regularly participate in restorative and community circles with Guidance and School Adjustment Counselors, in conjunction with their academic teachers. Circles have become a regular part of GSA classes. The academy-wide incorporation of Civics allows students to think critically about their responsibility to the communities they are a part of and identify their role within those communities to enact change by incorporating authentic tasks, problem solving, inquiry-based learning, investigation, collaboration, and communication across the curriculum, ultimately culminating in the 8th Grade Civics Action Project. Finally, GSA's flexible curriculum and schedule enhance opportunities for GSA students to make community connections and engage in interest-based enrichments that result in a product, service, or performance for an authentic audience.

Equitable Access to the Program
The GSA is a program in the Worcester Public Schools that offers sheltered instruction to qualified academically advanced students. Goddard Scholars Academy, as a program, aims to serve a population that strives to mirror the demographics of the entire district. GSA informs Kindergarten through grade 5 caregivers of the program features and invites them to an Open House. Those unable to attend the Open House are able to view the presentation on the GSA website. Students who qualify for the program are sent letters explaining the program, the application process, and an application for the program. Correspondence is sent in both English and the preferred family language for languages supported by Worcester Public Schools translation requirements.

Autonomies
The Goddard Scholars Academy seeks curriculum/instruction/assessment, schedule, staffing, professional development, and budget autonomies to strengthen teaching and learning for all students while increasing academic achievement and leadership skills by focusing on the following:

- Inclusion of sixth-grade students to provide a three-year preparatory program aligned with the Common Core State Standards and Massachusetts State Frameworks

- School schedule to allow for Common Planning Time and Professional Learning Community meetings
- School schedule that incorporates different enrichment courses and activities than are currently offered based on students' interests
- Curriculum that incorporates the use of technology
- Assessments that involve technology, performance, and public speaking skills
- Professional Development plans for each teacher that aligns with school-wide goals and meets the needs of our students

D. Primary and Proposed Partners:

The GSA staff works to develop and strengthen partnerships including, but not limited to the following:

1. WPS Elementary teachers
2. South High (students, teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors)
3. Clark University (student teachers, Model U.N., college readiness, and professional development)
4. College of the Holy Cross (science demonstrations, Office of Multicultural Education)
5. WPI (college readiness)
6. Worcester State University (college readiness)
7. Women's Initiative through the United Way (Dollar Scholars)
8. Hanover Theatre (live theater performances, workshops, other drama education opportunities)
9. Music Worcester (concerts and other performances)
10. Worcester Chamber of Commerce and the Webster Square Business Association
11. AbbVie Laboratories
12. MassEdCo Talent Search Program (college readiness)
13. Community Harvest Project

GSA also establishes strong partnerships with caregivers and provides opportunities for caregivers and guardians to become more involved in their child's education, realizing that caregiver involvement is a vital component in ensuring and promoting greater academic success.

II. How Autonomy and Flexibility will Be Used to Improve School Performance and Student Achievement

    A.   Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

The innovation plan utilizes autonomy in curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to add rigor and relevance to student learning as well as to improve student achievement. The pillars of Goddard Scholars Academy's instructional philosophy include shaping students into independent, active learners who possess strong content-knowledge and preparing them for college and careers.

Addition of 6th Grade

The Common Core State Standards defines middle school from 6th - 8th Grade. Phasing in a sixth grade component to the GSA in 2012-13 provides teachers and students with a year during which a transition to middle school can effectively occur. All curriculum continues to align with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Frameworks, Common Core State Standards, and MCAS performance descriptions, which are aligned vertically for 6th to 7th to 8th grades. GSA gives teachers control of the scope and sequence for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, in order to allow for more in-depth studies, acceleration, cross-curricular collaboration, and opportunities for student- centered extensions of the curriculum. In addition, reading, writing, and math skills are infused in all of the content areas. Current curriculum materials are supplemented on a regular basis.

Finally, the core subject curricula include Digital Age Literacy to provide rigor and relevance for students in all three grades. Each discipline reaps the benefits of adding the sixth grade in different ways.

The Goddard Scholars Academy uses the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment autonomy to improve student performance in the following ways:

- Support the development of 21 Century skills
- Offer three sessions (3 weeks) of Enrichment Clusters to assist in flexible grouping according to interest and product presentation preference
- Read and write across the curriculum to support greater fluency in language, written and oral
- Establish Professional Learning Community meetings and Common Planning Time meetings for teachers to support student needs and to plan and support interdisciplinary themes
- Develop Student Exhibitions of Learning
- Utilize on-line technology and resources to communicate with students and caregivers regarding curriculum, grades, standards-based assessments, assignments, and school calendar

Combining Best Practices with Innovation

Enrichment Clusters
Enrichment clusters, a component of the School-wide Enrichment Model, infuse more enrichment into the standards driven curriculum. Enrichment Clusters are designed to increase authentic learning via the application of relevant knowledge, thinking skills, and interpersonal skills to the solution of real-life problems. Enrichment Clusters are scheduled during the weekly Gifted and Talented Class time, guaranteeing that time is devoted to the kind of learning that makes school an enjoyable and engaging place.

Teachers offer two sessions of enrichment clusters, one in the fall and one in the winter/spring, on a topic of interest. Among the topics are Engineering and Design, Social Change, Community Service, Plagues, Forensics, Digital Photography, Animal Ambassadors, Magic, Spanish Cuisine, Pop-up art, Recycling, Problem Solving, Healthy Habits, Friends of Vets, Puppetry, and Knitting. Teachers serve as the "guide on the side," thus giving students a greater opportunity to take on the leadership and direction of the cluster.

Cross-grade level groupings of students participate in the clusters based on their interest. Students work collaboratively and develop skills in self-directed learning and in taking ownership for decision making, pacing and presentation of a product or service, which is shared with an authentic audience. Each cluster exposes students to advanced content, authentic methodology and is student driven. Students increase engagement, understanding of a real word problem, and presentation skills. As teachers become more familiar with Gifted and Talented strategies, implementation of the School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM) will be incorporated into the school schedule.

Implementation:
GSA students participate in three sessions of Enrichment Clusters in cross-grade level groupings based on students' interest, learning and presentation styles preferences. Students develop skills in self-directed learning and take ownership for decision making, pacing and presentation of a project. The focus and outcome of each cluster is a product or service that is shared with an authentic audience. Each cluster exposes students to advanced content, authentic methodology and is student driven. Students deepen engagement, understanding of a real word problem, and presentation skills.

Digital Curriculum:
Technology instruction is included as part of the sixth grade seminar class. Students develop awareness of digital footprints, internet safety and online security, appropriate use of AI in the classroom, movie production, Google Products, and other technical skills.

Implementation:
All teachers regularly infused technology strategies in their classes and also to offer opportunities for students to showcase digital skills in their work.

<u>Reading and Writing Across the Curriculum</u>
Writing across the curriculum is accomplished through low, mid and high stakes writing assignments in every class. This allows students to develop their ideas and critical thinking abilities and increase mastery of written language fluency in all subject areas. GSA teachers incorporate common instructional practices to provide continuity and consistency between classes. Some of the common practices include the use of focused note-taking, the use of graphic organizers for prewriting assignments, Socratic seminars, Philosophical Chairs, the adoption of common writing formats and rubrics, levels of questioning, Bloom's revised taxonomy, close reading, and a standard set of classroom rules and roles for discussion, debate, and listening.

To engage students, teachers use formative assessments and other strategies to access students' prior knowledge and maximize understanding of new material. Students work as a whole class, in small groups, pairs or individually on assignments. Gradual release, I -do, we -do, you –do, approach is utilized when teaching new skills.

The effective use of data from STAR tests, MCAS, teacher observation, formative assessment, and other forms of classroom assessment is used to flexibly group students to scaffold each student's success to meet standards. The GSA collects and uses STAR scores and MCAS scores as a way to measure student progress and compare their achievement to their peer groups, state and nationwide.

Developing students' academic and content vocabulary is on-going and across all content areas.

Implementation:
Instruction incorporates the use of common writing formats and rubrics and the sharing of strategies for teachers and students to facilitate discussions and collaboration in all subjects.

<u>Common Meeting Time</u>
Collaboration among teachers is a key ingredient to enhancing curriculum, instruction, and assessment within the GSA. Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and Common Planning Time (CPT) Meetings provide teachers with the opportunity to use data, examine student work to inform planning, assessment and adjustment of instruction. The meetings also allow for conferences with caregivers, students and other support personnel and a forum in which professional texts are read and discussed in order to incorporate new ideas into teaching practices.

Core subject teachers work together to develop content-rich, meaningful, relevant, and student centered lessons and assessments. The core subject teachers use AP Strategies from Laying the Foundation Summer Institutes, Gifted and Talented Confratute, AVID Strategies, and Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, which promote the development of academic skills across the curriculum. In addition, teachers develop common language for reading and for writing and answering open response questions in all subject areas. This common language ensures consistency regarding students' ability to read and write across the curriculum. Finally, teachers collaborate to create meaningful interdisciplinary assignments and extensions.

Implementation:
Teachers work together to identify common themes in subject areas. Once identified, these common themes are used to develop cross-curricular essential questions that drive instruction in order to have students make connections between subject areas.

In order to schedule weekly PLC and CPT meetings, it is necessary for the GSA to modify the schedule so teachers can meet before or after school and during lunch.

Exhibitions of Learning
The Goddard Scholars Academy maintains an assessment philosophy that requires students to achieve at high standards and to demonstrate their understanding in different ways. A variety of assessments accommodate the GSA students' diverse learning styles and draws on their strengths, interests, and abilities.

Portfolios are kept in each subject area as evidence of student work and to provide the opportunity for students to evaluate their learning, work products and progress in each class throughout the year. Student work aligns with the depth and breadth of curriculum standards.

Formative and Summative assessments are used in an on-going manner to measure students' understanding. These assessments include a variety of presentation forms: using technology, oral presentation, written work, artistic and creative displays. Effective questioning is a key component of these assessments, along with peer editing, thoughtful written feedback, conferencing and self-evaluation. Bloom's Revised Taxonomy is posted in each classroom and incorporated in the instructional language of each teacher and student to connect learning with meaning.

An annual Fine Arts Night is held in the spring to give students the opportunity to showcase musical performances and pieces of visual art they have created.

Students' grades, assignments long and short term are posted on Google Classroom, facilitating communication between students, teachers, and caregivers.

GSA uses the district grading system for interim reports and quarterly report cards. Caregivers and guardians are invited to attend Know Your School Night and Fine Arts Night and to schedule individual caregiver conferences through the Guidance Department to review progress and to set goals for their child.

Implementation:
The formal opportunities for caregivers to observe student performance and product are:

    Fall: Know Your School Night
                   First Quarter celebrations for students
                   Monthly PBIS Celebrations

    Winter: Second Quarter celebrations for students
                   Monthly PBIS Celebrations
                   Discovering Justice

Spring: Science Fair
District Auditions for band and Districts concert
Third and Fourth Quarter celebrations for students
Fine Arts Night - Band Concert & Art Exhibition
8th Grade Graduation
Spoken Word
National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony
Monthly PBIS Celebrations
Discovering Justice

English

The fundamental objective for the study of English by all students is to master all forms of communication and to be able to apply skills as writers, readers, and speakers to make sense of the world around them. These skills are not taught in isolation, but rather as a means to connect with other disciplines, explore new perspectives, and discover unfamiliar material.

With the addition of sixth grade, English teachers have an extra school year to teach writing skills in a consistent manner in order to prepare seventh grade students for long composition writing, open response writing and writing research papers. It is also possible for teachers to implement more creative writing assignments and projects that lead to publishable works. Writing skills and grammar are developed through lessons by following the skills progression of *Laying the Foundation*- Pre-AP materials.

Students attain proficiency in the conventions of writing, such as English grammar as well as how to vary sentence structure, and introduce voice, mood, and tone. Author's purpose and audience are addressed and reinforced in each grade. Teaching academic vocabulary and acquiring meanings of new words, including Classical roots, is addressed on an on-going basis in context.

Various forms of writing are part of each grade's curriculum: narrative, descriptive, expository, persuasive, and informative. Teachers conference with students and tier instruction for each type of writing to scaffold and strengthen skills.

Reading fiction, literary nonfiction, informational texts, poetry and drama is part of each year's curriculum. Cross-curricular writing also takes place on a regular basis, along with the development of discussion and listening skills. Discourse and collaboration are key aspects to promote students' understanding, analysis and evaluation of text.

Selections of poetry, short stories, novels, literary nonfiction and informational texts at each grade level and are further augmented with materials that meet the needs of each child's reading and Lexile levels.

Math

The math curriculum closely follows the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics. Acceleration in the Goddard Scholars Academy allows for students to master the standards for grades 6-8 plus a full Algebra 1 course over the three years. The acceleration plan follows the recommendations in the Massachusetts Common Core Frameworks for Mathematics for an

accelerated middle school course that includes a full Algebra 1 course. Sixth graders complete the regular 6th grade standards, then 7th graders complete all of 7th grade standards and half of 8th grade standards and 8th graders complete the rest of 8th grade standards and all of the Algebra 1 standards. In addition to delineating the mathematical content to be learned by students, the Common Core also emphasizes eight habits of mind that are infused in all three years of instruction.

Students engage with rigorous relevant problems that encourage multiple methods of solution, collaboration, and creativity, and that require persistence. Regular practice in oral and written communication of solutions and methods using relevant mathematical vocabulary and logical reasoning allow students to develop their ability to communicate as mathematicians. Students fit a variety of models to real-world data sets and use statistical measures to measure the goodness of fit of these models. Computer and graphing calculator support are used to give students authentic experiences with the tools real mathematicians and scientists use for modeling.

Looping, in conjunction with close collaboration between math teachers in the program, ensures that students recognize the connections between the problems, methods and solutions they experience one year and those of the following years. In addition, science and math teachers collaborate to make sure that students recognize the close connections between the tools and methods they learn in math class and their applications to scientific study.

Teachers use a wide variety of instructional resources to support student learning, including traditional textbooks (Go Math in grade 6, Glencoe pre-Algebra in grades 6 and 7, and McDougal Littell Algebra 1 in grade 8), research-based curricula (Connected Math Program in grades 6, 7, and 8), on-line resources and other sources. Differentiation is designed, particularly through the use of on-line resources, to shore-up students in need of more practice on specific standards and to provide meaningful extensions to learning for those who have attained mastery.

All students are expected to master the full mathematics curriculum and be ready to enter Geometry as freshmen in high school. Appropriate interventions are used throughout the middle school years to bring all students to that level. However, since the skills of Algebra 1 are essential to success in higher mathematics. At the end of 8th grade the teacher identifies any students who have not attained mastery. These students are recommended to double Algebra 1 and Geometry freshman year to get students back on track with their classmates for the sophomore year.

<u>Science and Technology/Engineering</u>
The purpose of Science instruction in the GSA is to provide students with the skills, knowledge and habits of mind to understand the natural processes they see around them and to understand the processes by which scientific knowledge is applied to create useful technologies.

The GSA curriculum employs an integrated approach to provide Earth/Space Science, Physical Science, Life Science and Technology/Engineering instruction through the three years. Cross-curricular connections are made with math and ELA so students are using skills acquired in those classes to perform analysis and to read and write in science. Student experiences focus on inquiry, experimentation and scientific literacy using engaging real-life problems, hands-on

investigations, engineering design problems and current scientific literature. Students use technology to prepare and present their results.

All students are able to formulate hypotheses, design and conduct experiments (specifying variables to be changed, controlled or measured), use scientific equipment and technology to make quantitative observations, and present and explain data (using appropriate terminology) in multiple forms.

A wide variety of curriculum materials will be used in the Science and Technology/Engineering courses. These include the district approved textbooks and on-line sources.

The Massachusetts Frameworks for Science and Technology are written for grades 6-8. The variety of science experiences from all feeder schools make it impractical to depend on any of the standards being mastered in the sixth grade. Inclusion of the sixth grade in the GSA allows much more time for lab experiences, more in-depth investigations and adherence to the Worcester Public Schools scope and sequence.

Social Studies
The Social Studies curriculum requires students to examine the ways in which history, geography, and current events intertwine and provide a fundamental understanding of how the Earth's structure has impacted the development of human society. Students trace man's progress across time from simple hunter-gatherer communities to more complex and advanced civilizations, kingdoms, and imperial empires. They use this historical foundation to make relevant and concrete connections to today's issues and global events as well as to other academic disciplines.

With the inclusion of the sixth grade to GSA, Social Studies teachers have the opportunity to fully establish the necessary understanding of basic geographical principles and their relationship to the study of human history. In addition, teachers are able to spread instruction across three years, which allows for a more in-depth and detailed study of each of the major eras and topics defined by the Massachusetts and Common Core standards.

Students study specific content areas during each year in GSA. Grade 6 classes focus on basic geographic skills, human origins, river valley societies, and ancient cultures including early North American, Mesoamerican, and South American civilizations, China, India, Africa, and the Middle East. Grade 7 classes explore ancient Egypt, the Isreaelites, Phoenecians, followed by Islamic Empires and the rise of Islamic society. They complete the year by focusing on ancient Greece and Rome. In 8th Grade, students explore the United States Government and Civics. Students study the roots and foundations of democratic government through primary documents, such as the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions; how and why government institutions developed; how government evolves through legislation and court decisions; and how individuals exercise their rights and civic responsibilities to maintain a healthy democracy in the nation and the Commonwealth. A variety of both traditional and non-traditional assessment tools are used to account for the multiple intelligences and learning styles of the students.

In order to help students make solid connections between the past and present, parts of the Model

UN curriculum are infused into the study of human history and ancient civilizations. Students have the opportunity to research historical issues and current events simultaneously, and this research culminates in a simulated United Nations Committee Meeting where students assume the role of delegates from countries around the world. The simulation nature of the Model UN approach gives students a deeper and personal appreciation of the commonalities and differences between our past and present worlds. Cross-curricular skills such as public speaking, negotiation, research, persuasive writing, and cooperative problem solving are also strengthened.

Students also have the opportunity to participate in Discovering Justice Mock Trial (Fall) and Mock Appeal (Spring). This program, run in conjunction with the Worcester County Bar Association, pairs middle school students with legal professionals to explore the judicial system, analyze a legal case, and practice the civic skills needed to persuasively argue cases.

Foreign Language
The Foreign Language curriculum follows the Massachusetts Frameworks for Stage 1 foreign language development and allows students to complete a Level 1 course in a foreign language.

The primary focus of the curriculum is to enable students to communicate with a wider range of the population in another language, utilizing the four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Emphasis on these skills is the prime focus in the classroom using an abundance of resources. Speaking and listening skills are enhanced by the use of music and other multimedia technology to develop cultural understanding, reinforcement of skills, and to provide creative extensions of language development. Virtually visiting countries by the use of google maps and other resources enhances cross-curricular opportunities with social studies.

Connecting with other disciplines, especially English, through the study of grammar, sentence structure helps to reinforce students' writing skills. In an increasingly global society, language skills are an asset for college admission and careers.

Music
Music is the primary enrichment for GSA students as members of the Goddard Scholars Concert Band. Countless studies have examined the relationship between music and academic achievement. Results indicate a positive correlation as students who engage in instrumental music do better in math, reading, history, geography and citizenship. Practicing music also benefits students' ability to learn how to study, focus and manage their time.

The music curriculum includes three years of studying an instrument in a performance band setting. Performance skills are taught, reinforced and refined through individual instruction, group rehearsals, sectionals, at home practice, music theory, and ear training. Reading and writing is incorporated to include music literature and the history of various genres.

Through music education, students easily associate music with the expression of their emotions and creativity, intellectual stimulation, and cultural illustration. Performing, creating, and responding to music opens a door for personal development and growth. With confidence in music comes the understanding of contemporary and historical cultures, as well as self-awareness and knowledge or understanding of students' own motives and behavior.

The middle school band curriculum frames instruction around essential competencies and skills. Instructional planning is guided by demonstrating an understanding of children's musical development. The music lessons reflect the vision of the students as confident learners and include a variety of lessons such as hands-on learning activities and materials, opportunities for movement and a sequential development of musical concepts, knowledge and skills. A collection of authentic methods is used to assess students including partnered and small group activities, individual performances, written assessment, and whole class activities.

Learning activities are implemented where students interact with materials, one another, and the teacher in order to build their knowledge of musical concepts as well as their appreciation of various types of music by singing and playing a range of songs, listening to different musical genres, and reading musical notation on their musical instruments. Music is integrated with other content areas of the system-wide literacy goals, and by making connections through historical and geographical origins of music.

Students become responsible learners and citizens of our school as expectations for students' behaviors and work habits are outlined during music class. All students are expected to actively participate in all aspects of the music lesson and to act in a positive manner, creating a supportive environment in which students are more willing to try new activities. Feedback is provided to individual students, small groups, and the class as a whole. The teacher models the skills, work attitude and musical processes that the students should follow. Students' eagerness to be creative and to succeed will be encouraged through classroom lessons, instrumental lessons, band practices and performances.

Seminar
The 6th Grade Seminar course enables students to develop the right habits of mind to meet success in middle school and beyond. Students engage in activities designed to recognize and work with their distinct learning styles, and develop proper study, organizational, textbook, and test taking skills. Students will work on both individual, and group projects and activities to enrich both classroom content and develop general learning and collaborative skills. Students explore their academic talents and career interests while strengthening academic and interpersonal skills. Additionally, students in the 6th grade Seminar participate in digital literacy lessons, and regular restorative and community circles.

Enrichments
Enrichment experiences are scheduled at every grade level to address student interest and to include exposure to relevant topics, guest speakers, leadership training, college and career awareness. Students develop public speaking skills and participate in community service learning. These enhanced experiences allow students to connect academic learning to their lives and future careers.

Enrichment topics include:
- Music, art, health, graphic arts, and physical education
- School-wide enrichment opportunities based on student interest
- Enrichment Clusters on a wide variety of topics

Social Emotional Needs

GSA meets the social and emotional needs of students through the following innovations:

Advisory Program:

- A balanced number of students from each grade are assigned to homerooms to create multi-grade advisee groups, which will allow students in each grade the opportunity to get to know members of the other grade(s).

- Advisors are responsible for welcoming the students to school each day, making sure they have organized the necessary materials for their classes, communicating important school information to the advisees, and providing opportunities to address character education themes.

- Eighth graders serve as role models for seventh graders. Both seventh and eighth graders serve in this leadership role for the sixth graders. A buddy system is set up in each homeroom with the expectation that the older students look out for the younger students in the hallways, at lunch and to and from school on the buses or walkways. The buddies are able to help the younger students set social and academic goals by sharing experiences and strategies to overcome obstacles they may have faced in achieving their goals.

- Advisors are responsible for identifying and addressing the needs of struggling students in their respective advisory. Once identified, a plan is established to set goals and connect the students to appropriate supportive services, for example counseling or tutoring.

- Advisors review each advisee's academic progress regularly, especially at interim and quarterly grading periods, and have a conversation with each student to monitor and evaluate progress, difficulties- academic or social, and areas in need of improvement.

- Advisors, the Department Head, and the guidance counselor and school adjustment counselor will schedule student-teacher- caregiver conferences as needed.

- Each advisory includes several student ambassadors who serve as leaders for communication with teachers and fellow students. The ambassadors are responsible for meeting with the ambassadors from the other advisories to plan social events and other activities. A teacher advisor volunteers to supervise and coordinate the student ambassadors

Implementation:

Students apply to become Student Ambassadors, and once accepted, providing instruction and experiential opportunities for Student Ambassadors to develop leadership skills are a focus. Student Ambassadors will also help facilitate recruitment and other GSA events.

Looping
Teachers teach students from at least two grades and in some cases all three grades. This consistency fosters student-teacher relationships. With the benefit of having the same teachers, seventh grade becomes an anchor year for the GSA students, minimizing transitions. Research supports looping to foster students' higher self-esteem and positive attitudes toward school.

Access to Guidance and School Adjustment Counselors
GSA students have access to guidance counselors and school adjustment counselors available at Sullivan Middle School. The Student Support Process (SSP) is used as the referral tool when teachers have academic or socio-emotional concerns about issues a student may be encountering. The goal of this process is to ensure that students' needs are being met in a timely and efficient manner to minimize disruption to their education. Outreach to community organizations will be made to address issues and make referrals on as needed basis.

Healths Enrichment
Students participate in Health Enrichment activities and classes during the three years. The focus is on topics including transitions, organization, time and stress management, relationships, bullying, appropriate socialization, other health issues and leadership skills.

College Readiness
College readiness is a component of the Innovation. Each year, but particularly in the eighth grade, students meet with college admission officers, guidance counselors at Sullivan and South High, and other community members to discuss college preparation as middle school students and as students transitioning to high school.

Physical Education Classes
All grades take part in physical education classes. Scheduling is done in cooperation with Sullivan Middle School and/or with the district, if an itinerant is needed to meet overall scheduling needs.

Social Events
Social events are planned each quarter by GSA staff and advisory student-representatives. Students also participate in monthly incentive-based activities created by the school PBIS team.

Extra-curricular Opportunities
The following extra-curricular activities may be available to GSA students, depending on teacher availability:
- Book club, or producing a literary magazine or school newspaper
- Strategy games
- Writing contests and attending external writing conferences
- Math Team (after school club and regional competitions)
- Model U. N. (after school club and conference)

- Choir
- WEDF Spring Concert
- Tri-M (Music Honor Society)
- Science Olympiad (state-wide competition)
- Discovering Justice Mock Trial & Mock Appeal
- Chess Club
- Project 351
- Regional and State Science Fair Participation
- Weekly extra help sessions in each subject area
- Community service learning opportunities

Diverse Learners

GSA meets curriculum and instruction needs for its diverse learners.

English Language Learners

Although the Goddard Scholars Academy's current English Language Learners (ELL) population does not reflect the district's numbers, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) strategies will be implemented as needed for ELLs.

Students with Identified Disabilities

The number of students with disabilities is also underrepresented in GSA. However, students with disabilities are admitted to and succeed as part of the program. All students who meet admission criteria are provided with appropriate support and accommodations. Students with disabilities are encouraged to apply and can succeed in the GSA.

Student Grouping

Assessment data is used to organize flexible groups to support high levels of learning.

B. Schedule and Calendar

Goddard Scholars Academy's autonomy with regard to the daily school schedule allows for common meeting time among teachers and targeted enrichment activities.

The daily schedule follows Sullivan Middle School's hours of operation. However, GSA's specific instructional schedule will run independently of the rest of the larger school to allow for special programs, guest speakers, volunteers, band rehearsals, snow delays, and to minimize substitute coverage.

GSA follows the Worcester Public Schools yearly academic calendar.

The key features of the daily schedule are:

- All students have the 5 core academic classes every day.
- A daily Enrichment block for targeted enrichment experiences in full academy assembly, advisory groups, or enrichment clusters. All faculty participate.
- Sixth grade students have a technology class incorporated in their seminar class
- Teacher duty periods are used to perform academy functions such as recruitment/admissions, work with caregiver groups and community partners, lunch duty, bus duty, and to provide coverage of classes when necessary.

The following is a representation of the quarterly schedule:

Monday

	Period 1 8:47-9:40	Period 2 9:43-10:30	Period 3 10:33-11:20	Period 4 11:23-12:10	Period 5 12:13-1:00	Period 6 1:30-2:17	Period 7 2:20-3:07
Seminar	X	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	X	X	Meeting
ELA	8-1	Bathroom	7-2	Enrichment	7-1	8-2	x
SS	7-2	7-1	X	Enrichment	6-2	6-1	X
ELA/Civics	6-1 ELA	Office	8-2 SS	Enrichment	8-1 SS	6-2 ELA	X
Math	8-2	8-1	X	Enrichment	7-2	7-1	X
Science	6-2	8-2	8-1	Enrichment	6-1	x	X
Math/Sci	7-1 Sci	6-2 Math	6-1 Math	Enrichment	Coverage	7-2 Sci	X
Spanish	CPT	7-2	7-1	x	8-2	8-1	6-2
Band	CPT	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	x	Music 8	8-2
Period 7 Classes						
	6-1	6-2	7-1	7-2	8-1	8-2	
	Art	Spanish	Health	PE	Guidance	Band	

Tuesday

	Period 1 8:47-9:40	Period 2 9:43-10:30	Period 3 10:33-11:20	Period 4 11:23-12:10	Period 5 12:13-1:00	Period 6 1:30-2:17	Period 7 2:20-3:07
Seminar	X	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	X	X	8-2
ELA	8-1	x	7-2	Enrichment	7-1	8-2	x
SS	7-2	7-1	X	Enrichment	6-2	6-1	X
ELA/Civics	6-1 ELA	x	8-2 SS	Enrichment	8-1 SS	6-2 ELA	X
Math	8-2	8-1	X	Enrichment	7-2	7-1	X
Science	6-2	8-2	8-1	Enrichment	6-1	x	X
Math/Sci	7-1	6-2	6-1	Enrichment	x	7-2	X
Spanish	Bathroom	7-2	7-1	x	8-2	8-1	6-2
Band	Bathroom	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	x	Music 8	7-2
Period 7 Classes							
	6-1	6-2	7-1	7-2	8-1	8-2	
	Health	Spanish	Art	Band	PE	Seminar	

Wednesday

	Period 1 8:47-9:40	Period 2 9:43-10:30	Period 3 10:33-11:20	Period 4 11:23-12:10	Period 5 12:13-1:00	Period 6 1:30-2:17	Period 7 2:20-3:07
Seminar	X	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	X	X	CPT
ELA	8-1	x	7-2	Enrichment	7-1	8-2	CPT
SS	7-2	7-1	X	Enrichment	6-2	6-1	CPT
ELA/Civics	6-1 ELA	x	8-2 SS	Enrichment	8-1 SS	6-2 ELA	CPT
Math	8-2	8-1	X	Enrichment	7-2	7-1	CPT
Science	6-2	8-2	8-1	Enrichment	6-1	x	CPT
Math/Sci	7-1	6-2	6-1	Enrichment	x	7-2	CPT
Spanish	x	7-2	7-1	x	8-2	8-1	6-1
Band	x	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	x	Music 8	8-1
Period 7 Classes							
	6-1	6-2	7-1	7-2	8-1	8-2	
	Spanish	Art	PE	Health	Band	Guidance	

Thursday

	Period 1 8:47-9:40	Period 2 9:43-10:30	Period 3 10:33-11:20	Period 4 11:23-12:10	Period 5 12:13-1:00	Period 6 1:30-2:17	Period 7 2:20-3:07
Seminar	X	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	X	X	8-1
ELA	8-1	x	7-2	Enrichment	7-1	8-2	x
SS	7-2	7-1	X	Enrichment	6-2	6-1	x
ELA/Civics	6-1 ELA	x	8-2 SS	Enrichment	8-1 SS	6-2 ELA	x
Math	8-2	8-1	X	Enrichment	7-2	7-1	x
Science	6-2	8-2	8-1	Enrichment	6-1	x	x
Math/Sci	7-1	6-2	6-1	Enrichment	x	7-2	x
Spanish	x	7-2	7-1	x	8-2	8-1	6-1
Band	Bathroom	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	x	Music 8	7-1
Period 7 Classes							
	6-1	6-2	7-1	7-2	8-1	8-2	
	Spanish	Health	Band	Art	Seminar	PE	

Friday

	Period 1 8:47-9:40	Period 2 9:43-10:30	Period 3 10:33-11:20	Period 4 11:23-12:10	Period 5 12:13-1:00	Period 6 1:30-2:17	Period 7 2:20-3:07
Seminar	X	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	X	X	SEL CPT
ELA	8-1	x	7-2	Enrichment	7-1	8-2	SEL CPT
SS	7-2	7-1	X	Enrichment	6-2	6-1	SEL CPT
ELA/Civics	6-1 ELA	x	8-2 SS	Enrichment	8-1 SS	6-2 ELA	SEL CPT
Math	8-2	8-1	X	Enrichment	7-2	7-1	SEL CPT
Science	6-2	8-2	8-1	Enrichment	6-1	x	SEL CPT
Math/Sci	7-1	6-2	6-1	Enrichment	Bathroom	7-2	SEL CPT
Spanish	x	7-2	7-1	x	8-2	8-1	SEL CPT
Band	x	6-1	6-2	Enrichment	x	Music 8	7th/8th Band
Period 7 Classes							
	6-1	6-2	7-1	7-2	8-1	8-2	
	PE	PE	Band	Band	Band	Band	

C. Staffing

GSA has autonomy for staffing the innovation school. GSA positions will not be posted as bid positions for the union.

At full implementation, nine full-time teachers comprise the core staff of GSA. In addition, GSA has access to enrichment classes in each of the four quarters which allow for students to participate in classes such as physical education, art, health, and other enrichments available from Sullivan Middle School.

Any additional staff or new staff vacancies will be filled by a Hiring Committee, which will be comprised of:
- 1 current administrator
- 3 current GSA staff members
- 1 caregiver with a student currently enrolled in the Goddard Scholars Academy

Applications of teachers interested in a position in this school would be forwarded from Central Administration to the Hiring Committee for consideration. The Hiring Committee interviews candidates and reviews the applicant's qualifications, prior performance or recommendations, and willingness to support the vision and mission of the Goddard Scholars Academy. An applicant's seniority with the system may or may not be a factor in the selection process. Successful applicants must gain a simple majority or better vote from the Hiring Committee.

One of the teachers will serve as the Department Head. In addition to teaching daily classes, the responsibilities of the Department Head will be to coordinate the day to day and long-term administrative needs of Goddard Scholars Academy. These responsibilities will include: yearly and alternative scheduling to accommodate special programming, the daily Enrichment class, snow delays or teacher absences, planning and facilitating weekly PLC and CPT Meetings, communicating with the greater school administration, coordinating fundraising efforts, coordinating recruitment for new students, engaging community partners, planning field trips, and supervising the overall operational aspects of GSA.

D. Professional Development:

Teachers in the Goddard Scholars Academy are granted autonomy to create their own content-rich professional development plans according to the needs of the students and faculty of the school. Teachers in the Goddard Scholars Academy have access to any professional development opportunities offered by the district or Sullivan Middle School.

E. District Policies and Procedures:

Recruitment and Application Process

Recruitment:

Goddard Scholars Academy accepts 50 6th grade applicants each year. Applicants must be residents of Worcester—GSA is not a school-choice school. If a student leaves the program during the first quarter of 6th grade, that seat will be filled from the waiting list. Total enrollment for the school is 150 students, with 2 classes in each grade 6, 7 and 8.

Recruitment materials are prepared and disseminated and events will be scheduled to:
- Raise general awareness of the Goddard Scholars Academy district-wide
- Address concerns among 6th grade teachers, principals, students and caregivers

Printed Information

A letter containing information about GSA and the application process is mailed to qualifying candidates in March of their 5th grade year. In January/February, elementary students and caregivers are invited to an Open House.

Web Presence

Goddard Scholars Academy maintains its own website.

Expectations

Goddard Scholars Academy is an accelerated program designed for highly motivated, high achieving students. The faculty of the GSA expects that all students will complete all classwork and homework to the best of their abilities. We expect that students will do approximately one to two hours of homework each night. If students finish their homework early, we expect that they will spend their extra time engaged in reading, independent research or other academic pursuits that will help prepare them for the rigors of high school. We expect students to maintain a grade average of 80% or higher in all subjects. If a student drops below 80% in any particular subject, he or she will arrange to get extra help from the teacher of that subject after school.

A Student Support Plan is put in place for struggling students with input from teachers, the guidance counselor, and other stakeholders, such as caregivers and the school adjustment counselor. The SSP includes goals and a date three to five weeks out to reconvene to gauge the student's progress, effort and commitment to GSA. At this time the SSP process may or may not continue. If it continues, goals will be reviewed and amended as needed.

Recruitment Events

An Open-House is held in the winter each year. Students who accept a spot in GSA for the upcoming school year will be invited to a Google Classroom that will disseminate important information and provide students with opportunities to meet their teachers, ask questions, and get to know their future classmates.

Acceptance

Admittance criteria was updated as it was reliant upon MCAS scores. This went through district approval.
GSA CRITERIA - 6TH GRADE

Goddard scholars academy begins in the 6th grade. We accept 50 students to each class. Students apply to the GSA by **invitation**. Invitations to apply will be **sent** to 5th grade **Worcester residents** who received STAR Scores in both reading and mathematics that are above the 75th percentile. We will look at the district recorded 4th grade spring, 5th grade fall, and 5th grade winter scores and use the highest of those scores for each area. If a child only took one of those test, then we will just take that one score, if they only took two we will just look at the two. Once invitations are sent out applicants will be put into two tiers:

Tier 1
STAR scores in reading and math in the 85th percentile or better

Tier 2
STAR scores in reading and math in the 75th percentile or better

Selection Process:
There are a total of 50 seats available.

Tier 1
Students who apply will be ranked and accepted in that order. A public lottery will be used to fill the remaining seats after the ranking if needed.

Tier 2
In the case that we do not fill seats from tier 1 then Tier 2 will be chosen during a public lottery to fill the remaining 50 seats.

A waiting list will be created during the lottery to fill any open seats that become available through the end of the first quarter of 6th grade. Seats that become available will be filled from the ranked tier 1 waiting list if there are no students remaining it will go to lottery of tier 2. Students who commit attend to the GSA in the 6th grade will negate their opportunity to attend Hanover Academy or UPCS for middle school grades 7&8. GSA students who maintain academic qualifications will automatically be accepted in the GSA at South High for grades 9-12. GSA students entering high school may choose to apply to any program in the city, but we strongly encourage students to remain in the GSA program at South High.

Wait List
If a seat is vacated in the 6th grade class during the first quarter, the next student on the waitlist will be offered the seat. If this occurs during the first quarter, the students must transfer to GSA immediately. The wait list will be maintained until the end of quarter 1 in 6th grade.

Addressing Sixth Grade Concerns

GSA expects that elementary school teachers and principals may have some concerns about sending their students to the Goddard Scholars Academy for sixth grade rather than seventh grade. GSA works with the caregivers, executive directors, subject area liaisons, and principals to help explain the reasons why it is important for sixth grade to be included in the program. It is GSA's belief that recruiting Goddard Scholars from the sixth grade elementary school will allow other student leaders, who may have been overshadowed by Goddard students, to rise to a higher level. GSA also seeks to initiate a way to recognize home elementary schools for the foundation they have provided to our students and those who continue in the program. Each year students write letters to elementary school teachers for Teacher Appreciation Week to express gratitude for being prepared for the rigor of GSA.

Retention in the Program

GSA also addresses the drop-out rate from the program at the high school level. All of the students who enter the GSA in the 6th grade do not graduate from the program at South High. GSA attempts to identify key reasons as to why students, who do not complete the program, choose to drop out of GSA in high school or decide to attend other secondary schools. In order to improve the retention rate in the program at the high school level, the teachers in GSA Program prepare students to manage the demands and to cope with the challenges that they will experience in high school. Incorporating the 6th grade in the program provides sufficient time to foster a sense of commitment and loyalty that will carry all of our students through 12th grade. It will also allow time to help our 8th graders transition from GSA to the independent and less sheltered high school environment.

Outreach is also made with GSA students who continue in the program at South providing workshops or focus groups to talk about time management and the transition to high school. Some initiatives are in place to help retain a larger percentage of the students through high school graduation.

- Multi-grade advisories will ensure that when a student arrives in grade 9, they already know some 10th and 11th graders in the program.
- Invite South High staff to make a presentation to caregivers at GSA's Know Your School Night and Open House
- Targeted enrichment experiences in the middle school centered on health and wellness themes such as time management, study skills, and stress management will better prepare students for the less structured and more intensive high school program.
- Coordinate events with the guidance department at South High School to participate in college fairs, college acceptance days, and band concerts

Enrollment

The student body is recruited from Worcester Public elementary schools students**,** who are residents of the City of Worcester. In order to provide equitable access to the program, the Goddard Scholars Academy seeks district support and cooperation from District Administration in recruiting new students through web support and other outreach initiatives.

- Fifty sixth grade students will be recruited for each school year
- Any open seats will be filled from the waitlist until the end of quarter 1 in 6th grade

Homework Policy

GSA students can expect a minimum of 60 minutes of homework each night.

Code of Conduct

Students admitted to the Goddard Scholars Academy are expected to maintain a high level of appropriate behavior and conduct in and outside of school. GSA also follows Sullivan Middle School's implementation of the PBIS Behavioral Norms, which emphasizes the Three Rs:

Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn and requires a commitment to high behavioral expectations for all students.

Leadership

The Department Head provides the day-to-day administration of the school and works with the principal to oversee the implementation of the innovation plan. Each faculty member is accountable for at least one area of responsibility regarding the operations of GSA in addition to their course load. Teachers follow protocols for decision-making in the Goddard Scholars Academy as a way to establish a professional and collaborative culture.

The Goddard Scholars Academy depends on the administration of Sullivan Middle School for severe disciplinary intervention, support of implementation of the innovation plan, staffing issues, supervision before and after school, when classes are not in session, and during lunch.

Staff Performance Evaluation

Goddard Scholars Academy uses the established Worcester Public Schools performance evaluation process and forms for all WPS employees. Staff engages in peer observation and learning walks-through on a regular basis. This data is not part of any staff member's evaluation conducted by the principal or his/her designee.

Promotion and Graduation Standards

GSA follows the promotion and graduation guidelines set by the WPS.

Caregiver Involvement

The GSA creates an environment and structure that fosters an increase in family involvement and presence in carrying out academic, social and emotional goals and practices of the school. This structure also creates a pattern of family involvement that is sustainable over time.

By providing a structure with a variety of options for involvement, caregivers will find a role that will fit their comfort level and availability. Many of these opportunities will directly impact the child's school environment, thus providing the opportunity for caregivers, teachers and students to establish relationships extending beyond the classroom to ensure academic success in the classroom.

Communication with caregivers is on-going and regular through newsletters, email, the GSA website, phone calls, Google Meets, student-teacher-caregiver conferences, and Google Classroom.

F. Budget

Goddard Scholars Academy operates on a cost neutral basis with regard to the district. Goddard Scholars Academy shares resources of the larger school (Sullivan Middle School), but seeks budget autonomy with regard to the per pupil allocation. The amount appropriated to the GSA is used for supplies and instructional material for GSA.

Operation of the physical plant and access to supportive services such as Health Services via the school nurse and health center, professional development initiatives, guidance, library services, gym, access to the adjustment counselor, data collection and dissemination, and administrative support for behavioral issues, teacher evaluation, technology support, web support, use of computer labs, use of copy machines, transportation, cafeteria services are maintained by Sullivan Middle School and the district.

III. Capacity of Current Faculty

The current faculty of GSA consists of the current teachers, who are committed to the mission and vision of GSA. The group's capacity to make the school a success stems from teaching experience, a commitment to professional collaboration, and a collective desire to improve the GSA students' academic performance so they will reach their full potential.

The current faculty is as follows:

Michele Fulk, M.Ed. has been a science and math teacher at Sullivan for the past twenty-three years, nineteen of which in GSA. Michele brings a wealth of experience as a scientist and a mathematician to the classroom. Michele's knowledge of technology and web design is an asset to the GSA.

David Crompton, M.Ed. has been a teacher for the Worcester Public Schools for the past twenty-three years, twenty-one of which have been at Sullivan. He has been a teacher for the Goddard Scholars for the past sixteen years. For the past twelve years, he has coordinated the Model U.N. Team at Sullivan. He also brings experience in drama and debate, which enhance student instruction in public speaking.

Patricia McKeon, M.Ed. has been a science teacher for the Worcester Public Schools for the past nineteen years. A former nurse and Spanish speaker, she brings real world experience to her science classes through frequent labs and she frequently enhances the science curriculum with challenging nonfiction texts for students to read and discuss.

Marcela Villarroel, Ph. D., a native of Chile, offers students the opportunity to learn Spanish from a native speaker. Her first-hand knowledge of Spanish culture and wealth of experience provide students with an authentic exposure to speaking, listening, and writing of a foreign language. She has been a Goddard Scholars teacher for the past eleven years. Her ability to speak Spanish fluently is important in communicating with caregivers.

Greg James, M.Ed/M.B.A., a career changer from Higher Ed project management to B2B Client Services, before entering his middle school teaching career 14 years ago, brings a wealth of life experiences from his professional fields, combining it with an innovative pedagogical approach to 8th grade Civics and 6th grade English Language Arts. He utilizes critical thinking strategies in his classroom, integrating technology platforms into his curriculum, while highlighting the humanities, showing how literature and government structure are reflected in how historical and current events unfold, to make learning more meaningful. Mr. James has been a teacher for the Goddard Scholars Academy for the past three years.

Andrea Ostrovsky, M.Ed., a former high school history teacher, brings a high level of rigor and complexity to her classes. She leads the faculty with her broad knowledge of technology and offers her students tremendous opportunities to incorporate technology in their work. She has been a teacher for Goddard Scholars Academy for the past twelve years and currently serves as the Goddard Scholars Academy Department Head. As the GSA's Department Head, she coordinates the implementation of the plan and takes responsibility for continually moving GSA forward. She meets with the principal of Sullivan Middle for guidance in her leadership role. Her assets are organizational skills for scheduling,

establishing community partners, planning field trips, school events, writing grants, newsletters and other correspondence.

Emma Baker, M.A.T., is a 2015 graduate of Clark University's M.A.T. Program in English. She provides students with the skills they need to be successful in middle school and to be well prepared for critical reading, writing, and thinking expectations in high school. She has been a teacher for Goddard Scholars Academy for the past nine years.

Casey Preston, M.M.Ed., the Band teacher for the Goddard Scholars for one year, has been teaching for the Worcester Public Schools for the past year. In her first year as a music teacher for the district, she was a member of the Common Assessment team alongside middle school music teachers of Worcester Public Schools. Her professional experience outside of the classroom provides a real-life connection for students who are interested in pursuing music as a career or a vocation. She has been teaching at UMass Lowell, assisting with two programs: Mary Jo Leahey Symphonic Band Camp and New England Youth Wind Ensembles. She partners with South High School through vertical alignment concerts and MICCA festivals.

IV. Measurable Annual Goals

Goddard Scholars Academy maintains consistent high levels of attendance, safety and discipline, achievement in course grades, the MCAS, STAR, and progress in the areas of underperformance as specified by this proposal. The specific Measurable Annual Goals of the Innovation Plan will mirror those of the School Accountability Plan, which is available on the District website (www.worcesterschools.org).

GSA Strategic Goals Year: 2023-24

Student Achievement: ELA

100% of students will show improvement in ELA as demonstrated by the administration of the MCAS ELA test. No less than 75% of GSA students will show growth in their performance level. The remaining 25% will show growth to the next performance level.
100% of students will show growth in STAR reading scores.

Action Steps:
Examine and analyze test items for patterns in student responses
Develop a three-year scope and sequence in all core curriculum based on MA frameworks and the Common Core Standards
Implement the collection of student work with the use of student portfolios in all subjects
Implement use of common writing rubric
Implement effective higher order questioning
Consistently connect Starter questions to unit themes
Implementation of consistent after school help offered daily
Support the development of authentic literacy in all content areas
Consistently provide opportunities for students to reflect on learning through evaluation of work during and after completing a significant assignment, such as a research paper, essay, or new form of writing
Continued use of school-wide best practices: Focused Note Taking, Graphic Organizers, Common Writing Strategies and Rubrics
Support the ELA in the development of authentic literacy lessons for all content areas

Measure of Success:
Adult Data Source: PLC Binders, PLC Minutes, feedback from formal and informal observations, instructional rounds, lesson plan feedback, department meeting notes, and CPT notes.
Student Data Source: Student STAR results, MCAS results, formative assessments, common assessments, interim, quarterly grades.

Student Achievement: Math

100% of students will show improvement in Math as demonstrated by the administration of the MCAS Math test. No less than 75% of GSA students will show growth in their performance level.

100% of students will show improvement in STAR math scores.

Action Steps:
Examine and analyze test items for patterns in student responses
Develop a three-year scope and sequence in all core curriculum based on MA frameworks and the Common Core Standards
Implement the collection of student work with the use of student portfolios in all subjects
Consistently provide opportunities for students to reflect on learning through written evaluation of work during and after completing a significant assignment, such a project or multi-skill problems.
Implementation of consistent after school help offered Tuesday through Friday
Focused direct instruction on vocabulary in each unit (e.g., journals, word walls, vocab quizzes)
Monthly math department meetings to develop common curricula, best practices and assessments
Use formative assessment training and strategies to continuously assess student performance and to adjust weekly lesson plans
Assessments will include MCAS-type items (multiple choice, short answer, open response)

Measure of Success:
Adult Data Source: PLC Binders, PLC Minutes, feedback from formal and informal observations, instructional rounds, lesson plan feedback, department meeting notes, and CPT notes.
Student Data Source: Student STAR results, MCAS results, formative assessments, common assessments, interim, quarterly grades.

Student Achievement: Science

100% of students will show improvement in Science as demonstrated by the administration of the MCAS Science test. No less than 75% of GSA students will show growth in their performance level. The remaining 25% will show growth to the next performance level. 100% of Needs Improvement will move to Proficient and 100% of Advanced will maintain a score within this performance level. The goal is to achieve 100 cpi points in Science.

Action Steps:
Examine and analyze test items for patterns in student responses
Develop a three-year scope and sequence in all core curriculum based on MA frameworks and the Common Core Standards
Implement the collection of student work with the use of student portfolios

Consistently provide opportunities for students to reflect on learning through written evaluation of work during and after completing a significant assignment, such a project or multi-skill problems.

Implementation of consistent after school help offered Tuesday through Friday

Focused direct instruction on vocabulary in each unit (e.g., journals, word walls, vocab quizzes)

Monthly Science department meetings to develop common curricula, best practices and assessments Use formative assessment training and strategies to continuously assess student performance and to adjust weekly lesson plans

Assessments will include MCAS-type items (multiple choice, short answer, open response)

Measure of Success:

Adult Data Source: PLC Binders, PLC Minutes, feedback from formal and informal observations, instructional rounds, lesson plan feedback, department meeting notes, and CPT notes.

Student Data Source: Student STAR results, MCAS results, formative assessments, common assessments, interim, quarterly grades.

Goal to reach highest achieving students:

100% of our students will participate in three sessions of Enrichment Clusters based on students' interests, learning, and presentation styles preferences.100% of these students will show growth in self-directed learning and in taking ownership for decision making, pacing and presentation of their projects.

Action Steps:

- Prepare Google Slides Presentation for students to understand Enrichment Clusters
- Offer students the opportunity to select three clusters of interest per session
- Assign approximately sixteen students to a cluster based in indicated interest
- Develop rubric for teacher assessment of each session of the clusters
- Develop a post-evaluation for students for each session of clusters
- Teacher Facilitators serve as "guides on the side" to facilitate students taking on different roles, inviting guest speakers, providing opportunity for exposure to advances content, authentic methodologies, an authentic audience, and timelines for completion of the product
- Encourage students to work collaboratively with a small group of peers who share the same interest to ultimately create a product, service, or performance which addresses a real-world problem
- Meet with assigned students weekly to facilitate progress, guide project product or service, and to meet deadlines
- As the GSA staff changes, teachers will participate in the professional development regarding the rationale, focus, and emphasis of the School-wide Enrichment Model and Enrichment Clusters as designed by UCONN's Neag School of Gifted Education and Talent Development. During a cluster session, students keep a log to record progress and to evaluate the progress of the cluster. Teachers serve as "guides on the side" to facilitate students taking on different roles, inviting guest speakers, and providing opportunity for

exposure to advanced content, authentic methodologies, an authentic audience. and timelines for completion of the product.

Measure of Success:
Google Slides Presentation
Self-identification and student evaluation
Journal of Cluster meetings
Rubric (google form) and
Timeline
Student evaluation
Produce Presentation to an authentic audience

Parent Involvement Goal:
100% of caregivers will be involved in school-based activities, events or programming at least twice per year.

Action Steps:
Create a school year calendar for GSA events in print and on-line
Design and maintain an up-to-date database of caregivers who volunteer to help with an event, or activity and send reminders
Communicate with caregivers via a quarterly newsletter, reporting on GSA news, outlining information about upcoming events, procedures, reminders, and expectations in print and on-line
Communicate with caregivers about positive student behavior and achievement, as well as academic, and socio-emotional concerns
Identify caregivers who prefer to have communication sent home in another language other than English. Identify caregivers who prefer to have communication sent home in another language other than English
Monitor caregiver attendance at GSA events and activities
Engage with community partners who offer services, workshops and other opportunities to GSA students
Participate in direct and indirect services available at Sullivan Middle School

Measure of Success:
Adult Data Source: Sign-ins and community and caregiver participation, baseline data, CPT logs, caregiver conference logs, evidence folders
Student Data Source: Baseline data, interims and report cards

Equitable Access Goal:
The proportion of applications from each demographic group will approximate the representation of that subgroup in the district.

Actions Steps:
- Form focus groups with stakeholders targeting strategies to encourage marginalized student application to GSA
- Cease use of MCAS scores as determining eligibility for invitation to apply
- Distribute GSA information more widely to targeted community organizations.

- Create a targeted mailing to students with district cooperation to identify qualified students.
- Ongoing information meetings for all caregivers in the Worcester Schools
- Utilize Web presence.
- Provide literature in all district identified languages.

Measure of Success:
The number of applications from each ethnic group reported on the WooEdu student snapshot ethnic code as compared to district summary statistics.

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS SCHOOL

INNOVATION SCHOOL PLAN

INNOVATION SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

Proposed Innovation School Name:	**University Park Campus School**
Full/Partial Conversion or New:	**Partial Conversion**
School Address:	**12 Freeland Street Worcester MA 01603**
Primary Contact Name:	**Kaitlin Kelley Snow**
Primary Contact Phone Number(s):	**508-799-3591**
Primary Contact Fax Number(s):	**508-799-8159**
Primary Contact Email Address:	**snowk@worcesterschools.net**

Executive Summary:

University Park Campus School was founded with the mission of preparing all students for college. As an Innovation School, UPCS will continue to provide a strong and rigorous curriculum where every student is exposed to the necessary reading, writing, thinking, and problem-solving skills to be ready for a postsecondary life of college, career, and civic readiness.

The Main South community of Worcester has a challenged demographic as it pertains to college acceptance and perseverance. Nationally, only a small percentage of students from low-income families enroll in college. Even a smaller number obtain a degree or certificate. The statistics are also bleak for students of color and first-generation college goers. UPCS will challenge these statistics.

Being an Innovation School will permit UPCS to make consistent and measurable gains towards both college acceptance and success for every one of our graduates. Having autonomy in curriculum, instruction, and assessment will allow classroom teachers to carefully craft the content for their students. Freedoms in instruction will allow the faculty to have a shared definition of high-quality teaching and learning. Further, instructional coherence will provide a consistent approach to learning for all classes irrespective of course content. Both formative and summative assessments will be used to assess student learning and acquisition of key content and habits of mind, and the school will use a variety of assessments to ensure that it is living up to the core values, vision, and mission set forth.

Autonomy in the area of budget will afford the school the opportunity to make critical resource decisions that best serve the students at the school, and the daily schedule will be created to ensure maximum learning time for students at all levels. Moreover, the daily schedule is handcrafted to ensure that certain classes, where students demonstrate greater need, are longer than others. UPCS will exercise important staffing autonomies that will afford the community of the school to determine who will be hired when openings exist. Panels of teachers, parents, and students will be involved in interviewing and vetting potential teacher candidates. Further, while evaluation of teachers will follow the current collective bargaining agreement, teachers will also receive feedback on their use of the school's common instructional framework and definition of high-quality teaching and learning.

The school will have a strong, embedded professional development program. Teachers will be valued as professionals; they will be enriched and will thrive. Teaching as a reflective art where professionals observe one another and provide feedback on practice will be the norm. Workshops on the common instructional framework, developed by colleagues, will be the source of professional development for current teachers.

As an applicant group, the teachers and administration of University Park Campus School is uniquely positioned to ensure that the school will be a success well into the future. No one knows our students, families, and neighborhood better than the teachers who work at UPCS. With the autonomies outlined in our Innovation School Proposal comes great responsibility. The dedicated and talented group of teachers and administrators at UPCS accept this responsibility wholeheartedly, and are, frankly, too stubborn to allow it to fail.

Public Statement:

University Park Campus School, a Worcester Public School, is excited to announce that it has submitted a plan to the Worcester School Committee for consideration as a partial conversion-model Innovation School. Located at 12 Freeland Street and servicing 240 students, grades 7 thru 12 from the Main South neighborhood immediately surrounding Clark University, University Park has had a twenty five-year track record of success with urban youth. Maintaining status as an Innovation School represents a commitment to an innovative, national model for urban education. Linked closely with its founding partner, Clark University, UPCS will provide a first-class, college-ready, education for all students in an all honors, highly coherent instructional setting.

I.   Innovation School Mission, Vision, and Statement of Need

A.   ***University Park Campus School***
Mission
"For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you." - Whitman

University Park Campus School exists to provide a first-class education to a traditionally disadvantaged population. Situated in the economically challenged Main South section of Worcester, UPCS is a public, 7-12 school that accepts neighborhood students of all abilities and prepares them for success in college.

Students will be taught to read, write, and think on their own, with the realization that hard work develops a strong intellect. Every single student pursues a rigorous academic program consisting of all honors classes. At the same time, instruction is individualized to connect to each student's particular level of development. There is no tracking. Instead, there are small, heterogeneous classes centered on active student inquiry and collaborative group work. UPCS utilizes extended learning blocks, morning and afternoon academic help sessions, a rich variety of extracurricular activities, and a range of powerful summer learning opportunities to develop well-rounded, deep-thinking individuals.

Students study in a building that is small, nurturing, intimate, and comfortable, but one that is inextricably connected to Clark University. The Clark University Hiatt Center for Urban Education is an important partner in developing and implementing effective teaching strategies. In addition, Clark offers UPCS students access to a number of facilities, including a research library, gymnasiums, classrooms, commons area, etc. In addition, every UPCS student will take at least one college course from Clark or from another member of the Worcester College Consortium.

The mission at UPCS is to produce students who are confident and who understand that desire and hard work beat adversity.

B.   *VISION*

The vision of University of Park Campus School is for each student to graduate prepared for success in college. This includes the ability to work collaboratively with different people, to communicate effectively in a number of formats, to think independently, to persist in difficult tasks, to be reflective, and to contribute to society in a positive manner. Students should have plans to pursue post-secondary studies, and they should have all the confidence and skills necessary to pursue those studies successfully.

As an institution, the goal of UPCS is to continually reflect upon both our successes and our shortcomings, and to use this reflection to revise instructional practices to best serve our students.

FOCUS STATEMENT

To ensure that all students are college ready, University Park Campus School will focus on teaching kids to read, write, and think analytically and critically.

UNIVERSITY PARK CAMPUS SCHOOL

CORE VALUES STATEMENT

The goal at UPCS is to produce resourceful, reflective, and responsible scholars who approach new learning situations with a unique sense of eagerness and confidence. Whilst engaging in college preparatory content, UPCS students are expected to evaluate, analyze, infer from, retain and apply information. This becomes possible, we believe, when students are trained as thinkers—when they are encouraged to practice, to notice, to inquire, and to experiment. Under these circumstances, instruction must be personalized, content taught alongside study skills relevant to the 21st century, and both latter and former tied to real world application. It is also necessary, if students are going to go on to pursue post-secondary course work and eventually become leaders within their chosen fields, that learning be framed as an ongoing process—complete with pitfalls. Failure cannot be seen as reason to give up, but rather the

opposite, a catalyst to do better next time. Our students shall discover that persistence coupled with real, focused effort, will pay off. All are deserving of success, but none can achieve it without hard work. Our teachers will embolden students to pursue their passions, encourage them to value the journeys they take to reach their goals, and allow them to take responsibility for and ownership of their own learning.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Academic Expectations

Read: Read and deeply understand a variety of genres across all subject areas.

- **Comprehension**
- **Analysis**
- **Application**
- **Locate and Evaluate Relevant Data from Tech Sources**

Communicate: Write and speak to communicate ideas and demonstrate learning.

- **Writing to learn**
- **Providing and using evidence**
- **Writing Style**
- **Clarity of Spoken Communication**
- **Use Technology to Communicate Ideas**

Think Critically: Persevere through complex tasks, synthesize information, and demonstrate understanding.

- **Purposeful questioning**
- **Problem Solving**
- **Synthesizing**
- **Use Technology to Solve Problems**

Collaborate: Facilitate and take ownership of learning.

- **Dependability**
- **Shared responsibility**
- **Respect for multiple viewpoints**

Reflect: Reflect on academic growth.

- **Realistic self-evaluation**
- **Setting goals and making plans**
- **Follow-through/Implementation**

Social and Civic Expectations

Develop and maintain the collaborative UPCS culture.

- **Preparation**
- **Leadership and mentoring**
- **Attendance and punctuality**
- **Classroom behavior**
- **Work Ethic**
- **Ethical Use of Technology**

Contribute to the greater global community.

- **Historical awareness**
- **Respect diversity / Cultural awareness**
- **Environmental awareness**
- **Community Engagement**

C. Statement of Need:

University Park Campus School (UPCS), a public, grades 7-12 school was created in 1997 and has served students of the Main South section of Worcester Massachusetts. Main South is one of the city's most economically challenged areas and as a result, the neighborhood has felt a significant decline for the past several decades. Along with the economic problems, the neighborhood has also been challenged by a high concentration of crime and gang involvement. Yet, the neighborhood also has many important and significant resources that can drive improvement; Clark University, the Boys' and Girls' Club, St. Peter's Church and several businesses also call Main South home. In this way the neighborhood is uniquely positioned to face its challenges head-on and make a difference in the lives of its young people.

As a secondary institution, UPCS has had a twenty five-year history of success especially in light of its demographic. The ethnic make-up of the school mirrors that of the neighborhood. It has an 80% free or reduced lunch population and 65% do not speak English as their primary language. In these ways, the population at UPCS has narrowed or eliminated the achievement gap that has persistently plagued our nation's schools. More impressive than test scores, UPCS has a record of 100% college acceptance and of this amount, 95-100% of its graduates go on to college; nearly 80% of those students who matriculate to college have or are on track to graduate from college within six years. Most of these students attend four-year college institutions and less than 10% of our students are required to take remedial courses in college, a number that has been dwindling.

Yet, we are not without our challenges. Our schools' promise has all students getting into college and making it through. We need to ensure that every child is ready for college, career, and citizenship. We need to ensure that no student, not one, needs remedial course work when entering college and we need to strengthen our college partnerships with those schools where our students matriculate.

UPCS has also felt budget crunches throughout its illustrious history. Originally planned with an extended school day, this was lost as a result of budget cuts that came years ago. Moreover, since the school is small, with such a cohesive and coherent culture, filling open positions has historically been a real concern. We believe that the Innovation Schools' autonomy of staffing and hiring will empower the school community to choose the teachers and staff that best serve us.

UPCS tracks its alumni in very unique ways and our senior and junior year schedule provide opportunities for students to practice "college ready" skills. The autonomies of scheduling and curriculum will ensure that these opportunities are continued and enhanced.

The staff and faculty as well as the Site Council and Parent Council have had several discussions regarding the opportunity for UPCS to continue its status as an Innovation School. It has met

with resounding approval. The staff believes that in many ways, maintaining Innovation School status will ensure that UCPS continues to work in innovative ways to achieve student success.

The essential autonomies for the school will ensure a continued enhancement of our college, career, and civic readiness. In addition, it will allow us to make significant movement on our school improvement plans of increasing the amount of college ready students and decreasing the number of students who will need remedial courses. It will also ensure that our school will have the control over budget, staffing, and curriculum such that changes and modifications can be exercised when necessary and allow the school to monitor and assess the progress of students in the school and alumni.

UPCS prides itself on individualized instruction. Teachers continuously assess student learning and make appropriate standards-based adjustments. STAR and MCAS scores, as well as our UPCS School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes, indicate that a great majority of University Park students enter grade 7th performing below grade level. Curricular autonomy will ensure that teachers can adequately meet students at their levels and proceed accordingly. This may mean that teachers do not follow the prescribed city curriculum, select their own textbooks, or dedicate less time to standardized testing, particularly the winter administration of STAR. In addition, autonomy in Professional Development will enable teachers to target specific PD for specific grade levels, subjects, and student needs. Ultimately, the benefit is a vertically aligned six-year curriculum that is capable of taking kids who are years behind grade level, and preparing them for college. In a unique building like UPCS, curricular autonomy is a must.

Such flexibility will also allow the faculty of UPCS to address the needs of students who struggle, particularly English Language Learners and Special Education students. As reflected in our School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes, these subgroups of students are in need of extra support. The flexibility of an Innovation School will give us the ability to truly individualize instruction for these students. Perhaps they will need one-on-one tutoring from a teacher; perhaps a targeted summer program could focus on particular skill development.

Such flexibility is also important in the high school grades. UPCS students embark on an arduous journey to college that includes classes modeled after college syllabi, courses taken at Clark University, Worcester State, and Quinsigamond Community College, and Junior and Senior seminars intensely focused on the college application process. We also partner with groups such as "Upperward Bound" to raise SAT scores. In addition, students are tracked after they leave UPCS in order to gather data on college persistence and success. UPCS needs flexibility in curriculum, staffing, and schedule to make these initiatives possible. One necessary addition to further this work will be a second guidance counselor.

In recent years, University Park has noted an increasing need in the area of students' mental health. Currently, the staff at UPCS works hard to identify resources when it becomes clear that students are in need of help. The addition of a full-time adjustment counselor when this plan began has been key to addressing this issue. Our student population faces some of the greatest challenges that children can face—they deserve to have someone at school equipped to handle the most difficult of circumstances and to coordinate efforts to help, in school and out.

The smallness of University Park's staff has caused numerous difficulties. Having only one custodian means that the faculty has limited access to the building. In the urban neighborhood of UPCS, the safety net provided by an open school building is a necessary support for teachers and coaches leading students in after-school activities, whether running on their cross country course, practicing for the school play, or participating in a program such as, "Gal Empowerment" or "IVOC." As such, we request faculty access to the building without the presence of a custodian, as well as the option to add a custodian or allow for a flexible custodial work schedule.

Finally, the faculty of University Park would like to place a focus on the increased use of technology in its efforts to educate the whole child in the 21st Century. While we fully acknowledge that the teacher in the room is the most powerful force in the education of students, technology can be a compelling supplement to the classroom, and a valuable tool for parent outreach.

D. Proposed Partnership:

University Park Campus School (UPCS) was conceived in partnership with Clark University, motivated by the belief that every neighborhood student can qualify to attend college and develop the foundation for a good adult life. The school continues to be a "partnership school" dedicated to this mission. Partnership is woven into the life of the school—into its identity, curriculum, culture, and practices. The Clark campus is as much a part of the school space as its home base on 12 Freeland Street, Clark Master of Arts in Teaching students and Education faculty support learning at the school just as the permanent teachers do, the permanent teachers help guide the Education graduate students in their development as teachers just as the Education faculty do, and upper-level UPCS students take introductory Clark courses just as Clark students do. Clark University and UPCS have been inseparable since the school's beginning and that fundamental relationship will be essential to the school's identity as an Innovation School.

Below we identify the understandings, commitments and basic practices that will define UPCS as an Innovation School partnership with Clark.

1. Mission: The core mission of the partnership is to prepare and qualify all students in the defined University Park Partnership area of Main South for postsecondary education. As an Innovation School, UPCS will continue to play a critical role in the revitalization and stabilization of the Main South neighborhood. It will serve also as an incubator for effective educational practice and knowledge about practice in an urban setting, a model site for teacher preparation, and an example and active support for other schools in the neighborhood following the same path, working in tandem with Clark's planned Adam Institute for Urban Teaching and School Partnership and Hiatt Center for Urban Education to enact a philosophy that puts students as powerful thinkers at the center of learning.

2. Neighborhood student eligibility: UPCS will continue to serve students living in the prescribed University Park Partnership area near the University in Main South. All eligible students and their families will be informed of their eligibility by the end of 6th grade and invited to enter the school's lottery. Students will be selected for enrollment by lottery; siblings of enrolled students will automatically qualify to attend the school.

3. <u>Principles of operation and governance</u>: The partnership operates with the following understandings:

- University Park Campus School will function as an Innovation School under the auspices of the Worcester Public Schools and Worcester School Committee.

- The principal and teachers of the school will have primary responsibility for determining, assessing and developing the internal practices and policies of the school. The principal will keep the Director of Clark's Adam Institute for Urban Teaching and School Partnership and/or Clark's Vice-President for Community Affairs apprised of developments in these areas and will ask for feedback and/or support as appropriate.

- For matters concerning the partnership, Clark's Vice-President for Community Affairs and the Director of Clark's Adam Institute for Urban Teaching and School Partnership, or their designees, will serve as primary consultants and colleagues in decision-making; other Education faculty are also available as colleagues and resources. These Clark representatives, or their designees, will also serve on the school's Advisory Board and have an opportunity to interview principal candidates should the position be open.

- A <u>Partnership Committee</u>, consisting of Clark's two primary representatives, the Chief Academic Officer of the Worcester Public Schools, another representative of the Worcester Public Schools, and the school principal will meet if and when needed to discuss particular school or partnership issues, to consider modifications to the policies of the school (for example, student enrollment), or to review the progress and performance of students at the school.

- The UPCS principal and designated teachers will meet with the Director of Clark's planned Adam Institute for Urban Teaching and School Partnership and faculty members, as agreed upon, to assess goals and activities in teacher education, professional development, curriculum, and/or academic support for students.

- The Director of the Adam Institute or designated faculty member will have an opportunity to participate in the review of prospective teacher candidates, should a

position be open, either as part of the school Advisory Board if the Advisory Board is involved or as part of another group in the process.

4. <u>Institutional Commitments</u>: In meeting its partnership commitment, the University will:

   ● Provide a tuition-free undergraduate education for all students who have lived in the target neighborhood for at least five years and who meet University admissions requirements.

   ● Provide qualified UPCS students with opportunities to take University courses on a space-available basis each semester.

   ● Provide up to five graduate education courses for teachers on a tuition-free basis.

   ● Provide additional professional development opportunities for individual teachers and groups of teachers, based on current professional development goals, interests and availability (for example, participation on Adam Institute Curriculum Teams).

   ● Prepare and assign a group of graduate teacher interns from the Master of Arts in Teaching program to learn to teach and share teaching responsibility in the school from the beginning of the school year until the end of the University academic year unless otherwise agreed upon.

   ● Help develop and coordinate programs that build college awareness and aspiration for postsecondary education, including a mentor program that pairs University students with UPCS students at targeted grade levels.

   ● Provide work-study students and volunteers to help with before and after school tutoring, and to assist in school operations, as agreed upon, and as they are available.

   ● Arrange short term academic seminars taught by University faculty to introduce UPCS students to University academic and intellectual life.

   ● Allow use of facilities such as the gymnasium, athletic fields, and library as available and mutually agreed upon.

   ● Work in tandem to secure external funds to enhance curriculum, academic learning, and professional development.

In meeting their partnership commitment, the teachers and principal will:

   ● Build a strong culture of learning and achievement at the school consistent with the school's mission and vision.

- Develop and assess the middle school (grades 7-8) program so that it builds the capability and confidence of all students as readers, writers, and thinkers who enjoy and value learning.

- Develop and assess the grades 9-11 program so that students develop core content understandings, habits of mind and learning in line with the way of knowing of each discipline, and the capacity to handle rigorous college-level work;

- Develop and assess the 12th grade program so that it serves as a transition to college.

- Work collaboratively to build a strong culture of professional learning, in which teaching practice is shared and transparent, based on a commitment to excellence; collaborate on curriculum planning, analysis of student performance, assessing and responding to student needs, and Rounds.

- Work collaboratively with Clark education faculty on the activities above, as mutually agreed upon.

- Support the teacher education programs of the planned Adam Institute for Urban Teaching and School Partnership (in particular the Master of Arts in Teaching program) by serving as demonstration teachers and Mentor Teachers, hosting Rounds, assisting in course instruction and assessment, and other activities, as mutually agreed upon.

- Support the effort of the Promise Neighborhood initiative to build a strong set of schools and school-connected services for neighborhood students.

- Host and inform visitors from other schools and universities interested in the Partner School work.

- Participate in collaborative research with University faculty as mutually agreed upon, and as approved according to district and University guidelines.

II. How will the Autonomy and Flexibility Be Used:

A. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Every Student Can and Will

The instructional philosophy at University Park Campus School is based on the belief that all students can learn, all students can achieve at high standards, and all students can be successful in college. As stated in our mission, we take on the responsibility, obligation, and promise to prepare every child, regardless of background, ability, and circumstance, for success in college. To accomplish this goal, our curriculum, instruction, and assessment must be rigorous, individualized, and designed to foster confident thinkers. Most importantly, however, is the need for teachers to be stubborn in their insistence that each student succeed, persisting to find a way to get through to each child. We dedicate ourselves to finding innovative ways to motivate, encourage, teach, assess, and instruct all students, while striving to build students' confidences as thinkers, learners, and contributing members of the community and eventually society as a whole.

In an effort to ensure all students meet high standards, we refuse to track according to ability. Research, time and time again, has found that grouping students in lower-ability tracks further perpetuates the Achievement Gap, as these lower tracks have been found to contain disproportionate numbers of minorities and students of low socio-economic status   Students in lower levels are often limited by the belief that they "can't" and are not exposed to higher order thinking skills or appropriately challenged. The classes at UPCS will not be tracked; they will be heterogeneous. All students will be enrolled in an honors curriculum that will communicate high expectations, regardless of academic ability or background. Teachers will work tirelessly to support each student in completing rigorous course material. Instructional practices and teacher actions will support the UPCS "can do" attitude, and students will learn that persistence and hard work pay off.

Student-Centered Instruction

All students can think. The thinking curriculum at University Park Campus School will support all individuals in developing academically. In honors classes designed to challenge and to support all learners, teachers will constantly question and develop engaging lessons that empower all students to think and act as mathematicians, historians, researchers, scientists, etc. A variety of instructional approaches, resources, materials, and assessments will be used. The students themselves, through a hands-on, minds-on, collaborative approach, will uncover new knowledge and understandings, thus, truly learning and taking ownership of their own ideas. They then become confident thinkers and problem solvers.

This process begins when seventh graders enter UPCS prior to the school year for the two-week Summer Academy. During those weeks, students meet their teachers, teachers assess needs of students, students learn the routines and procedures expected in their classes, classmates begin to collaborate with one another, and students learn that original thinking is not only respected but required. Students who enter the building as seventh graders, unwilling to pick up a pencil on day one of our Summer Academy, afraid to make a mistake or to show how little they have learned in prior classes, show substantial growth in confidence and ability by the time they enter their next summer bridge program at the transition between middle and high school.

Instruction at UPCS is articulated in the "High Quality Teaching and Learning" document created and adopted by the faculty at UPCS. The values of deep content knowledge, student-centered learning, and measurable outcomes are showcased and described. The critical role teacher thoughts and actions play in upholding the positive learning culture of UPCS is a major reason for seeking autonomy in staffing and is also demonstrated in this document.

To support the student-centered teaching and learning and to ensure that all students are accessing an honors curriculum, we will utilize the UPCS Common Instructional Framework. The common instructional framework, based on the idea that students need to be constantly interacting with rigorous material, consists of six instructional strategies (see below).

Common Instructional Framework

University Park Campus School (UPCS) implements a common instructional framework consisting of six instructional strategies. These strategies create classrooms that allow for powerful learning and powerful teaching and form the basis of a coherent college-preparatory curriculum. They give all students of all skill levels access to the complex information needed to meet state and college-ready standards. These instructional strategies succeed because they engage all students in learning and require them to take an active role in their education.

Collaborative Group Work: Collaborative group work involves bringing students together in small groups for the common purpose of engaging in learning. Effective group work is well planned and strategic. Students are grouped intentionally with each student held accountable for contributing to the group work. Activities are designed so that students with diverse skill levels are supported as well as challenged by their peers. Collaborative group work uses questioning, scaffolding and classroom talk and centers literacy groups.

Writing to Learn: Writing to learn is a strategy through which students can develop their ideas, their critical thinking abilities and their writing skills. Writing to learn enables students to experiment every day with written language and increase their fluency and mastery of written conventions. Writing to learn can also be used as formative assessment and as a way to scaffold mid- and high-stakes writing assignments and tests.

Questioning: Questioning challenges students and teachers to use good questions as a way to open conversations and further intellectual inquiry. Effective questioning (by the teacher and by students) deepens classroom conversations and the level of discourse students apply to their work. Teachers use this strategy to create opportunities for students to investigate and analyze their thinking as well as the thinking of their peers and the authors that they read.

Scaffolding: Scaffolding helps students to connect prior knowledge and experience with new information. Teachers use this strategy to connect students with previous learning in a content area as well as with previous learning in an earlier grade. Scaffolding also helps facilitate thinking about a text by asking students to draw on their subjective experience and prior learning to make connections to new materials and ideas.

Classroom Talk: Classroom talk creates the space for students to articulate their thinking and strengthen their voice. Classroom talk takes place in pairs, in collaborative group work and as a whole class. As students become accustomed to talking in class, the teacher serves as a facilitator to engage students in higher levels of discourse. Classroom talk opens the space for questioning, effective scaffolding and successful collaborative group work and literacy groups.

Literacy Groups: Literacy groups provide students with a collaborative structure for understanding a variety of texts and engaging in a higher level of discourse. Group roles traditionally drive literacy groups by giving each student a role to play and a defined purpose within the group. The specific roles or discussion guidelines may vary for different content areas, lengths of texts, or student level of sophistication using this strategy.

The pervasiveness of these strategies helps acculturate new students quickly to UPCS's emphasis on original thinking and enables students to construct their own knowledge, communicate and build upon one another's ideas, and truly own the concepts and skills taught. The cohesiveness of instruction through the use of these strategies also promotes Literacy Across the Curriculum. Students read, write, communicate, and think in all disciplines.

Upon walking through the classrooms and halls at UPCS, you might see students writing "Dear Confundido" letters in Spanish class to explain how to conjugate a new verb tense (writing to learn), in groups problem solving vocabulary and content-rich puzzles in math class (collaborative group work), engaging in a Socratic seminar in English class to discuss the growth of a literary figure (classroom talk), analyzing historical pictures and primary source documents to understand events of the past (scaffolding), actively engaging in a scientific literature group to read and understand a collegiate article about the adaptation of a particular species (literacy groups), or questioning the validity of their peers' literary criticisms in English class (questioning). In addition to students questioning one another, you would also see teachers inviting all students to engage in rigorous material with questions like, "What do you notice?" All kids can notice something, so all kids have an entry point. You would see teachers asking questions like, "Why do you think that?", "Where is your evidence?", "Why does that procedure make sense?" to ensure students are thinking deeply about the material.

The six strategies will be used across all subjects and within each grade level so that students are talking, thinking, and doing within each class. To aid in the application of these strategies, the Stages of Implementation document was created by a group of UPCS teachers. New staff members are expected to embrace these approaches and will be supported in efforts to implement the strategies through mentorship, the rounds process, and professional development workshops.

Individualized Instruction

To ensure that all students proceed to the next stage in their own development, a substantial amount of the instruction at UPCS will be individualized. The instructional framework itself, allows for students to work and improve at their own levels. Further differentiation will allow for those who are struggling to spend more time reinforcing core concepts, while others can proceed to more challenging problems. There are a variety of ways that this differentiation will be accomplished within the classroom, including task differentiation, extension problems, test

corrections, peer editing, written feedback, teacher-student conferences, dialogue journals, and mini-lessons for small groups. Computerized STAR testing data, in addition to classroom-based assessment, will provide help in determining groupings for differentiated activities in English and Math classes.

A wide number of practices will provide both remediation and enrichment for individual students at UPCS. For special education students, Individual Education Plans (IEP's) will be developed by specially convened teams and then communicated by our special educator directly to the teachers. Whenever possible, IEP services will be provided in a, "push-in" model.   As needed, students on IEP's will be pulled from a class other than the 4 core subjects of Math, English, Science, and Social Studies to receive additional instruction and study support for one period each day. At our weekly Wednesday meeting and at other times throughout the week, teachers in core academic areas will work closely with our special education teacher to plan accommodations and interventions for individual students. For students who may need services but have not been previously identified, teachers will initiate the Student Support Process.

English language learners, through sheltered English immersion, will be supported by the multi-modal student-centered approach to instruction, the school's commitment to Literacy Across the Curriculum, individualization within every classroom, as well as ELL classes that run parallel to language courses. The ELL teacher may also provide in-class support when possible.

For those who still struggle with the material or the work habits needed to understand it, our after-school program will provide valuable resources. This program will include both voluntary and compulsory attendance. Resources will include teachers and tutors ranging from upper class high school students to students from two local colleges: Clark University and The Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. To aid in shoring up both literacy and numeracy skills, mandatory classes for middle school students will be held as needed.

For students who fail to achieve a score of proficient on the sophomore administration of one or more sections of the MCAS, regular tutoring sessions with an individual teacher will be scheduled.

Not only will teachers work assiduously to ensure struggling students succeed, but also to challenge gifted and talented students. Students will know that their work in the classroom is never done; there is always something to learn. Therefore, teachers will be overly prepared with extensions that require an intense level of thinking and content. These extensions may take on a variety of different formats but will be constructed or chosen with the individual students in mind.

Opportunities for gifted and talented students outside of the classroom include participation on math team, which competes against other regional schools in rigorous competitions, and participation in the drama club, which presents quality productions of literary plays. Once students reach the eleventh and twelfth grades, they have the opportunity not only to take advanced placement courses in several subjects, but also to take college courses free of charge at Clark University or through the dual enrollment program at Quinsigammond Community College and Worcester State University.

Class Size and Courses Offered

To allow for the extent of individualization needed to accomplish our mission, class size must be limited. The maximum number of incoming seventh graders at UPCS will not exceed 45. Given that there are 2 classes of students per grade level, class size for seventh through tenth graders will not surpass 23. When it makes sense for instructional purposes, (i.e., aligning to the college experience, allowing choice of elective), upperclassmen may be in a class of more than 23 students. Teachers will have student loads averaging ninety students.

Students do not have choice in terms of course selection until 11th and 12th grades. This is partly due to our small size, but more importantly, this reflects deliberate scheduling choices to maintain a focus on core academics and college readiness. With the exception of Wednesday scheduling and gym class, middle school students and 10th graders will simply take the five core subjects (Math, Science, Social Studies, ELA and Numeracy) and a fifth class of Literacy/Computer Science Design at the middle school level or Spanish at the high school level. Ninth graders will take the four core subjects, Spanish, and Art. The schedule shows the course choices that will be available to 11th and 12th graders, but all students will be required to take

college requirements as well as senior seminar which aids in the college application and decision process. In addition, students will take a college course before graduating UPCS.

Teachers as Curriculum Experts

To motivate, encourage, and teach rigorous material to every student in our diverse classrooms, filling in substantial learning gaps along the way, creative approaches and individualization are compulsory.   Teachers need to be able to design curricular to fit the abundant needs within our inclusion model. Writers of curriculum packages do not know our students like we do, and many programs do not promote the level of student engagement and thinking bolstered by our Common Instructional Framework. Teachers need, and according to past success on MCAS, arguably even deserve, the flexibility to select and utilize a variety of sources, and determine pacing and sequencing. Our strengths and weaknesses differ from that of other district schools, and to further improve upon the successes we have accomplished, we need the ability to make curricular decisions free from district-wide mandates. To continue to improve in carrying out our mission to prepare all students for college success, autonomy in curriculum is vital.

University Park Campus School will rely on their teachers as the curriculum experts. The curriculum at University Park Campus School will be clearly illustrated in our teacher-generated curriculum maps. These maps, equipped with timing, content, essential learning questions and concepts, assessments, instructional practices, as well as linkages to the school-wide, state and department standards and expectations. Curriculum maps will continue to rely on a variety of sources and allow for individualization. Analysis of MCAS, SAT, STAR, college alumni, and classroom data will continue to inform curricular decisions. The curriculum maps will undergo self-evaluation often and peer review at least yearly to ensure alignment to the Common Core Standards as well as vertical and horizontal alignment.

The instruction at UPCS does and will continue to adhere to the Common Core ELA Anchor Standards and the Mathematics Practice Standards. The ELA Common Core Anchor Standards emphasize reading, writing, speaking and listening, and standards for language. Reading for understanding, writing to learn, and communicating to be understood are fully integrated into a

student's experience at UPCS. Given curricular and instructional autonomy, we will continue to help students make wide gains in these college-ready skills.

The Mathematics Common Core Practice Standards will continue to be actualized as students make sense of problems and persevere in solving them, reason abstractly, construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others, appropriately use models and tools, attend to precision, and look for patterns in all math classes, but also within the other disciplines. With autonomy over curriculum and instruction, we will continue to ensure that students analyze, synthesize, construct, and communicate their own knowledge and opinions based upon research, experimentation, and collaboration.

In addition, UPCS will focus our efforts on increasing students' performances in Mathematics, which is a current need. Numeracy will be offered in the middle school, and after-school programming will be vital in addressing the gaps incoming seventh graders exhibit.

To ensure vertical alignment, looping will continue at the middle school level. Looping also occurs to some degree in the high school as a necessity due to our small size. The practice of looping, as well as full day workshops, Wednesday morning meetings, and informal discussions will be utilized to ensure vertical alignment. The curriculum will be horizontally aligned, as there is one teacher per discipline per grade, and teachers of the same students will collaborate to make interdisciplinary connections when appropriate.

Students are trained to be inventive thinkers and problem solvers across disciplines as they explore mathematical phenomena, different points of views, scientific data, primary sources, and various literary pieces and consequently come up with and justify their own ideas and/or solutions. Students communicate in a learning culture that values and supports collaborative learning and classroom talk. Students often have formal as well as informal presentations during which they practice public speaking. Students not only become culturally and globally aware citizens through curriculum, but also by participating in internships and community service. Students know how to be a valuable team member, because they are expected to work in teams on a regular basis. Through unwavering support and persistence from the teacher, a curriculum and instructional methods that celebrate what one can do instead of focusing solely on what one

does not know, and collaborating with their peers, students eventually realize that they can succeed academically, and do not shy away from a challenge.

Changes have been made to better align junior and senior year to the college experience. To ensure that students are prepared for the rigors of a college education and equipped to handle the fact that not all college classes are interactive and supportive like those at UPCS, upper-level courses have become more analogous to college courses being syllabus-driven, lecture-style, and requiring large amounts of individual reading. Through data analysis, reflection, and collaboration on the part of UPCS teachers, the need for these changes was confronted, analyzed, and addressed. These efforts have proven successful as evidenced by our recent alumni data. Luckily, we were able to make these changes as a school. Autonomy over curriculum, instruction, and assessment would allow us to continue to make the necessary changes to ensure we are carrying out our mission.

School Community Supports Instruction

The work of teachers will often mirror that of the students at UPCS in the way that they examine, reflect, analyze, synthesize, problem solve, communicate and collaborate. The staff will challenge themselves and work together to do what is best for kids. The faculty community, empowered by the principal's commitment to shared leadership, supports teachers in truly making a difference for each student.

The culture at UPCS is created not just by staff, but also by students. This will continue to happen informally with students offering each other help and constructive criticism on a daily basis, but we also will have in place some formal mentoring structures to help reinforce this dynamic. The first of these is the school-wide advisory groups, which will consist of students from different grades who meet on a weekly basis. At these meetings, students will discuss social and academic goals, along with common obstacles to attaining these goals. All students will share strategies for overcoming these obstacles, and older students older students will provide valuable perspective on how younger students can best prepare themselves for the challenges they will face as they progress in their high school education. University Park will also use the Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) model to help students address lagging skills and problem

behaviors. This method will allow for thoughtful communication, collaboration and planning between students and faculty members.

In addition to advisory groups, the new seventh grade students will be placed in small mentor groups with upper classmen who are members of the National Honor Society. Tenth and eleventh grade students will be placed in small mentor groups with students from Clark University. This student-to-student mentoring will play a large role in providing our students with one-on-one help adjusting to high school life, understanding concepts, and acquiring strong study habits.

The Pivotal Role of Formative Assessments

In all classes, we will assess students in an ongoing fashion to determine the degree to which students are learning, understanding, and successfully applying material. These formative assessments will include writing to learn assignments, quizzes, notebook checks, poster displays, oral presentations by individuals and small groups, and improvisational performances. These assessments will comprise a fundamental part of our teaching practice because they require students to process material, while also allowing students and teachers to gain rapid, often instantaneous, feedback on student learning. Teachers then use this critical feedback in deciding how best to proceed: extending, abbreviating, or reshaping lessons as needed.

Varied and Rigorous Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments at UPCS will continue to include a variety of individual class assessments such as high stakes writing assignments, unit tests, formal lab reports, and, where appropriate, final exams. The design, administration, and use of these assessments will be the sole province of the classroom teacher, who is uniquely qualified to determine the most useful and authentic of these assessments for his or her students at any given time.

The results of high stakes writing assignments, unit tests, and formal lab reports will be communicated clearly to students, usually accompanied by individual written feedback from the teacher. In most cases, students will be able to address disappointing results by substantially revising a paper or lab report, or by completing written test corrections. While there will be

consequences for student grades from each of these benchmarks, our philosophy is that during the academic year it is never too late for students to engage and to learn material.

To assess progress in reading and math skills, school-wide STAR scores will be generated at least two times a year for students in grades 7-9. Teachers will use these scores to help identify particular areas where students could use additional supports. Students will also have access to these scores and the reports which will help them reflect on areas of strength and areas for growth. Teachers can use score reports to design class lessons or individual activities to address specific needs identified by STAR scores.

To help assess the needs of students who are in the early stages of learning English, UPCS will continue to administer the ACCESS test in accordance with state law. These assessments will be administered to all students who have previously been identified as English Language Learners.

Eleventh grade students at UPCS will continue to participate in a very personalized assessment known as a Planning Educational Path (PEP) meeting. The goal of this assessment is to help students understand their overall academic progress and articulate what is required of them to pass on to the next stage of their academic development. At these meetings, an individual student will sit down with several of his or her teachers and the guidance counselor to discuss that student's past educational accomplishments, along with his or her goals for future post-secondary study. After the student identifies his or her goal, the teachers and guidance counselor will share their insights about what is needed to achieve that goal. Together, the members of the PEP will draft a practical plan for the remainder of the student's time at UPCS.

All students at UPCS will be expected to meet high standards in academic, social, and civic areas. The entire faculty of UPCS participated in identifying these standards through a series of small and large group meetings that focused upon what it takes to develop lifelong learners who are prepared to succeed in college and to contribute productively to their community and to society as a whole. These meetings resulted in a school-wide rubric that will be communicated to the students throughout the school year by classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators. Teachers integrate these school-wide rubrics into their classrooms on a daily basis on wide range of assignments and assessments.

An Integrative Approach to Standardized Testing

Students at UPCS have demonstrated remarkable success on MCAS, and we will continue to search for new ways to further improve MCAS and other standardized test scores. To this end, teachers will use data from all standardized testing to inform their curriculum choices, and additional tutoring and test-training sessions will be conducted as needed. However, at UPCS traditional test preparation will not take the place of core curriculum or our six instructional strategies. We believe that the best preparation for these tests is not the remedial pullout model used by many schools. To the contrary, we believe that there is no better test preparation than the rigorous, literacy-rich curriculum developed by our teachers and the proposed focus on numeracy. Our curriculum teaches students to think, to be comfortable tackling new material, and to be persistent in the face of difficulty. It is these traits that have enabled our students to outperform their peers, and we will continue to emphasize them.

All MCAS, AP, PSAT, and SAT scores will be communicated both through the mail from the governing institutions, and in personal conferences with our guidance and teaching staff. These personal meetings will help ensure that students interpret these scores correctly and, when appropriate, create action plans to improve skills and then retake exams.

Because proficient scores on the MCAS are required for graduation, we take particular care in communicating these scores and addressing areas of weakness. In addition to conferencing with students, English and math teachers in the eighth and ninth grades examine their students' scores to make certain that the curriculum they teach substantially addresses areas of weakness. At the start of the eleventh grade, those students who have not yet scored proficient carefully review with teachers, areas in which they need to improve and may participate in MCAS tutoring sessions after school.

Self-Assessment & College-Readiness

UPCS is dedicated to helping every student become prepared for success in college. To that end, a key focus at our school will be to help each student use assessments to develop a keen awareness of him or herself as a learner. In the early grades, 7-9, teachers will take a leading role helping students understand what they have learned, what they need to learn, and how to go about that learning. Teachers will design class and homework activities that require students to

assess and reflect upon their own learning. Teachers will explain and model revision, note-taking, and study skills. When appropriate, teachers will make use of small-group tutoring or additional practice and extension activities targeted at the needs of individual students.

In the upper grades, 10-12, this approach will be transitioned to a model that depends more on students' own motivation and decision-making. Teachers will continue to structure activities and writing assignments that help students develop awareness of their learning, but, increasingly, students will be directed to address individual needs--on their own, in study groups, and in tutoring sessions that they themselves request from teachers. Work in these upper grades will be assigned in larger chunks, with some senior courses becoming entirely syllabus-driven in the manner of a college class. This transition to college-ready learning skills will culminate with students taking at least one college class before graduation.

We recognize that this transition will continue to be a challenge for our students. Therefore, as students make this transition, there will be a variety of formal and informal assessments or interventions to prevent students from becoming overwhelmed. These checkpoints will not be provided on a daily or weekly basis--as in ninth and tenth grades--but on a monthly or quarterly basis. They will include teacher conferences with individual students, large group discussion in classes, small-group discussion in advisory groups, and, for the 11th grade students, PEP's.

During the period between these checkpoints, students may experience a certain amount of controlled failure. However, it is our conviction that it is better for our students to experience this failure at UPCS--where we can help them learn from setbacks and guide them toward recovery-than at college, where these setbacks can become overwhelming and threaten continued college attendance.

Gateway Assessments

The process of developing well-rounded, self-aware learners will culminate with our Gateway Assessments. At the end of eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades, students will engage in a lengthy and careful self-study to assess their own progress in attaining the goals identified on our school-wide rubric in academic, social, and civil areas. These students will present this information in a formal manner to their peers, faculty members, parents, and representatives of the greater

community. Movement on to the next grade will be dependent upon successful completion of Gateway Presentations.

As students are preparing to pass from middle school to high school, the Middle School Gateway Presentation will focus on students demonstrating how they are developing into budding mathematicians, scientists, historians, writers, philosophers, and community members. Throughout the year, students will maintain and periodically review portfolios in each of their academic subjects. Then, during the final two months of school, students will begin examining this work more closely, reflecting upon what it shows about themselves as readers, writers, and thinkers, and drawing from evidence of their progress toward the school-wide expectations. The next step will be to prepare a multimedia presentation that identifies this growth and showcases supporting evidence, with reflection upon that student's past, present, and future. Teachers will offer significant help to students in structuring and preparing and practicing this presentation, and advisories will serve a valuable sounding boards and support structures. All of this work will culminate with each eighth grader standing up in front of the middle school faculty and student body to deliver a Gateway Performance that will demonstrate how they are prepared to continue his or her education in high school. The performance will then be assessed by two teachers who will determine, if necessary, whether any students need to improve their presentations and perform once again before graduating middle school.

Midway through their high school careers, at the end of tenth grade, students will prepare a gateway that continues this self-examination and reflection. As with middle school, students will examine portfolios from different disciplines and reflect upon what they show about students' academic, social, and civic accomplishments. This time, however, students will have a keener focus on their preparation for college, and they will be asked to find evidence that they have progressed further along toward reaching all the school-wide expectations. The format for the Sophomore Gateway, also known as the, "Sophomore Synthesis," will be that of an academic spree day or fair to which faculty, students, parents, and members of the greater community will be invited to examine student exhibits. Students will select one of the indicators for each school-wide expectation and present convincing evidence that the student has made significant progress toward reaching this expectation. Each exhibit will consist of a formal 4-6 page paper, a poster, a one-page reflection, and the students oral presentation to visitors. Judges, who will include

representatives from the faculty, the student body, and the larger community, will circulate with rubrics, listening to students explain their posters and asking thoughtful questions.

As twelfth grade students prepare to graduate and continue on to college or some other meaningful post-secondary education, the Final Gateway Presentations will once again involve reflection and gathering evidence from portfolios. Like the Middle School Gateways, the format will be a multimedia presentation, but this time the focus will be firmly on college-readiness, and the format and assessment will be more formal and rigorous. Judges will consist of four-person panels that include a professional, a community member, a parent, and a faculty member. They will judge presentations using a simple rubric that represents the school-wide academic, civic, and social expectations. Presentations will run simultaneously if adjacent rooms, with each room being facilitated by a teacher who is not a member of the panel of judges.

Conversion School Status of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment at UPCS

Certain elements described above, including our Numeracy Initiative, use of the School-wide Rubric, Gateway Performances, and teacher choice of all curriculum resources, are proposed as new innovations that are part of our conversion to an Innovation School. A second group of elements, including advisory groups, the restructuring of the upper grade levels to ease the college transition, and curriculum mapping are fairly recent additions that we look to further develop and refine as part of our conversion. A final group of elements, including our belief in every student, the all-honors curriculum, heterogeneous grouping, our student-centered approach to instruction, recognition of teachers as curriculum experts, diversity of assessment strategies, and our integrative approach to standardized testing, have been in place since the inception of the school, but will be codified and reinforced by this document as we convert to an Innovation School. To further improve upon our successes at University Park Campus School, we need to ensure that the teachers and staff who know our students best are the ones making decisions that impact curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

B. Budget:

University Park Campus School's proposed budget places a high degree of emphasis on teaching positions. Currently, UPCS has 18 full time positions. The proposed budget includes positions not normal funded in the Worcester Public Schools, including an Alumni Support Coordinator

who will be responsible to support and track alumni in college to ensure their success there. Under this budget teachers' salaries will be tied to the current salary structure in the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Worcester Public Schools. Further, expenditures for fuel, utilities, custodial services, nutritional services and itinerant staff will remain the same as previous iterations of the UPCS /WPS budget.

In order to prepare students for college, career and civic readiness students must be exposed to a rigorous and robust curriculum taught by highly qualified and dedicated teachers. Students in the middle school will receive a challenging program in preparation for a college-ready high school curriculum. To do this the middle school curriculum must both bolster areas of basic skill weakness and prepare students for the thinking necessary for an all-honors high school curriculum. Therefore, the middle school team will consist of five full time teachers, one for each of the four major subject areas and a fifth teacher in numeracy.

The high school staffing also supports the school's mission towards college readiness. All students will be taught in longer blocks (either 1 hour or 1.5 hours) where there will be an emphasis on reading, writing, and thinking. Key cognitive strategies are used throughout all subject areas and all students will take the full, core coursework necessary to achieve the Worcester Public Schools graduation requirements, the Massachusetts Common Core, and the necessary Coursework for Massachusetts Pubic, State Colleges and Universities. The school has placed less importance on itinerant courses including art, music, health, and computer technology courses to place a greater focus on the core subject areas for college readiness. In addition, we have not offered extensive electives to high school or middle school students to provide greater emphasis on core subjects. It is critical that University Park is able to practice autonomy over staffing assignments.   The needs of the school are constantly changing and the staff of UPCS must always reflect the best possible team to address areas of weakness.

The school will continue to access funds and procure goods and services through the district, and the school will continue to use the approved vendors for such services during the tenure of the Innovation School. In addition, central administration and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer will continue to act as fiscal agent and comptroller for the schools' budgeted money.

All monies allocated to the school will be dispensed for the purposes of ensuring high quality teaching and learning and resulting high levels of student achievement. A review of our budget demonstrates that the bulk of money is targeted for teachers and their work with students to ensure higher student achievement. Additionally, years ago we moved our School Adjustment Counselor from .6 to full time. This position has allowed us to better serve the "whole child." Finally, our use of the Alumni Support Coordinator underscores our innovative approach to seeing college readiness and success extending far beyond the confines of secondary education. All students will be placed on the trajectory of college matriculation, will be supported through the application and financial aid process, and will be followed through college to better ensure ultimate success in college. Our Alumni Support Coordinator will collect data on our students' successes and challenges and use this data to inform instruction and programming at the school.

We also have line items in the budget for our transition academies and after school programs. In our budget, three important transition academies will be funded during the summer. The 7th grade Summer Academy ensures a positive and powerful transition to our school's norms and culture. It also allows our teachers to become familiar with each one of our new seventh graders. The 9th grade Summer Academy provides an introduction to the rigorous, high school curriculum faced by freshmen at UPCS, and the 12th grade Summer Academy provides rising seniors with the opportunity to create college essays and applications and to prepare for a more independent and self-directed year. These academies essentially extend the school year by three weeks for nearly half of the student population at UPCS at minimal expense as teachers are paid their contractual rate.

The after-school homework session also provide a way to extend the school day. In addition, there will be custodial coverage and rooms available for the plethora of after school activities including sports and clubs. Further, since time in learning art and music have been reduced during the regular school day, a robust after school program provides the opportunity for the study of these courses.

C. Schedule and Calendar

There are no major changes to the proposed schedule for University Park Campus School (UPCS) in comparison to the current schedule. Yet, the faculty and the staff requests the right to change the schedule in the future if it will serve the needs of the student population more successfully. The new schedule changes would have to be voted on by the faculty and staff with a 2/3 majority in order for the new schedule to be implemented; providing the new schedule abides by local, state, and federal laws. As such the school will adhere to the Worcester Public School's (WPS) yearly calendar regarding student school days and professional development days. The school will continue to follow the WPS's decisions regarding snow days, delays and early dismissals.

The school day at UPCS is from 7:45am to 2:23pm where students will participate in homeroom from 7:45am to 8:00am. This will not change unless the faculty and staff deem a change is in order as discussed in the previous paragraph. Since the schedule abides by guidelines set forth by WPS and a school's daily schedule is already established by individual schools this is not an area that goes outside the current guidelines of the WPS.

The only difference is the time allotted for students to participate in internships. Juniors and seniors will be required to participate in an internship on Wednesday mornings. This is created to give students an opportunity to work with the community and create ways of pursuing their interests for future endeavors. An additional allotment of time is designated for an advisory which occurs once a week at the end of the day on Wednesdays. Each faculty member will receive a group of students ranging from 7th to 12th grade and this time will be used so the students can develop ties to a small group of individuals in the school for guidance and to have a group of people they can come to if a problem arises.

Professional development will occur during the first two hours of the day on Wednesdays and after school as needed and agreed upon by the staff. The faculty will also participate in professional development on the scheduled two days the WPS has already incorporated into the schedule. This professional development is in lieu of the mandatory monthly staff and department meetings used by other Worcester Public Schools.

D. Staffing Policies and Procedures:

Every staff member realizes the complex challenges, which require time, grit and determination to find success while teaching in an urban setting. What sets our staff apart is that we do not let students give up. Sometimes that requires unique solutions to unique challenges. Our current staff understands this.

Teachers will be certified in specific subject areas. However, what sets our responsibilities apart is that teachers are leaders in that they are involved in the every day decision-making processes that occur at the school. We are all involved in the following:

- o Curriculum development
- o Extracurricular activities
- o Leadership programs such as WPS workshop PD days, NEASC process
- o 100 % highly qualified staff ensures that quality instruction is key to teaching all students.
- o Wednesday schedule allows for staff to meet, to discuss and to develop individual plans for all students, including ELL and Special Ed and participate in PLCs.
- o Student teachers from Clark University's Master's program allows daily free time for staff to develop individual plans for students
- o Staff chooses to be here and understands the necessary professional attitude it requires to make time for the needs of students.

In addition to each teacher taking on a leadership role, the middle school numeracy initiative, a separate class for grades seven and eight, is unique to the school in that it bolsters the students' skills from their entry level into Summer Academy. Furthermore, Summer Academy is a two-week program to gauge the in-coming seventh grade students' skills, while introducing them to the culture of the school. Middle school teachers staff this program. Moreover, the staff discovered a need to introduce rising freshmen with their own summer program to inculcate them into the rigor of a high school honors curriculum. Thus, staff created the Ninth Grade Academy to fulfill that need. Finally, the Alumni Coordinator is another position unique to the

school. In addition to assisting current seniors with the admission's process, this position also facilitates the transition from high to college freshman year, and tracks UPCS alumni to gauge how to better serve them and our current students.

The school's working conditions are excellent. In our weekly meetings collaboration, collegiality and a collective desire to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century abound. We treat each other with respect. With that individual expectation we all require the best from ourselves. We will adhere to all collective bargaining agreements that are set by the EAW, but we will vote as a staff to address individual circumstances that may require a need to step outside of those boundaries.

The hiring process is the gateway to determining how well we make decisions. We are not a staff of Steppeford teachers. We encourage independent thinking from our students as well as ourselves. We will evaluate new teachers with this in mind. In addition, we use our Wednesday meeting time to discuss a broad range of issues: in full-staff meetings; in middle and high school groups; and in junior PEPS. Because all staff is involved in discussion of these issues, the working conditions are optimal for the support of the success of this school. What drives our success in not the succumbing to the latest educational fad, but our facility to collaborate and address challenges and discover through that process solutions that make sense for our students.

Based upon staffing needs the school will recruit teachers from inside and outside the system. Instead of relying on current seniority standards set by the collective bargaining agreement. Of course, experience is an important factor to determine effective teaching, but not the only factor. We will consider the following for each prospective candidate:

- Highly qualified teacher status as described by the DESE.
- We would require that the teacher sit before a panel of students, parents and teachers and answer questions that secure knowledge of the candidate's educational philosophy to analyze if that candidate's teaching philosophy fits with the essential mission of the school.
- We would require that each candidate interview with the principal.

- We would require that each candidate teach a demonstration lesson to a group of students with faculty and administrators observing, with a post-observation discussion providing feedback on the value of the lesson.
- A faculty panel will recommend a candidate to the principal. The principal will either accept the recommendation or veto it.
- To dismiss staff, we will follow the due process as written in the collective bargaining agreement.

As stated above, the staff will vote on any circumstance that requires time spent above and beyond the stipulations in the collective bargaining agreement. We will hire new staff based on the needs of our school.

Since this school is a partial conversion model, current staff members understand the rigor, determination, and grit it requires to teach with success at this school. Based upon development of curriculum maps, and analyzing those maps for consistency, vertical alignment and overlaps; based upon the internal rounds model that we use to share best practices; based upon the weekly notes from our principal and based upon the weekly meetings staff fully understands the requirements we are seeking to maintain an innovation school. We will recruit new staff members on an individual basis and we will disseminate the full scope of our requirements with recruitment letters and by word of mouth.

E. Professional Development

Professional development at University Park is apparent in many different forms. The administration allows and encourages the staff at University Park to pursue opportunities for professional development as often as possible, and all teachers are highly supported by the administration when he/she discovers a professional development opportunity. Administration and staff work to cover for colleagues when they are out of the building at a professional development session, and all staff feel comfortable approaching the administration when the chance to strengthen their teaching repertoire.

Teachers at University Park pursue professional development opportunities offered by a wide-variety of sources. District-wide professional development workshops are frequented by UPCS teachers. In recent years, the majority of the staff at University Park Campus School taken courses at Clark University. Also, within the district, faculty members attend and participate in city-wide curriculum teams.

The faculty also engages in internal on-site professional development with a degree of frequency. Over the course of the past two years, the teachers at University Park have been given the chance to collaboratively work on writing curriculum maps which align curriculum vertically and across all grade spans and subjects. This collaboration has proved to be incredibly important, as teaching assignments at UPCS tend to shift from one year to the next. The staff has done its best to ensure that all students are engaged in a challenging and rigorous curriculum, and much credit is given to the professional development time after school and during the school day that was dedicated to this task.

One of the cornerstones of University Park Campus School's professional development plan involves a weekly, two-hour common planning time, held during the school day. During this time, the entire faculty is able to discuss student concerns, as well as work collaboratively to develop curriculum and continue to work and revise curriculum maps, Gateway performances, and well as brainstorm possible solutions to any issues that may be going on in the school.

University Park Campus School teachers additionally host "rounds" for each other due to our partnership with Clark University. Frequent visits from other school leaders and teachers world-wide allow UPCS teachers the chance to participate in the rounds process, modeled after the medical rounds model. Teachers that are observed reflect upon their practice during this process and seek feedback in order to improve themselves professionally. Some UPCS teachers have traveled to visit other districts across the country and have functioned as professional developers themselves. Our close connection to Clark University also allows the UPCS faculty opportunities for professional development, with a significant portion of the staff serving as mentor teachers for graduate students seeking their MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) degree at the University. University Park Campus School teachers also attend and lead workshop at Clark University in partnership with the Education Department.

While the professional development program functions well at University Park, it is not without limits and challenges that could significantly improve with a degree of additional funding and autonomy. With additional funding, the school would be able to consider a wider range of professional development opportunities, particularly those that involve technology.

Additional resources would also alleviate the difficulty that at some points arises when staff members are interested in attending professional development opportunities off-site. Faculty and staff often cover for one another when colleagues are at a professional development workshop. The effects of this could be alleviated with additional funding and support, and it would also allow UPCS faculty members the ability to share some best practices with colleagues both within and outside of the district.

F. District Policies and Procedures:

University Park Campus School, as an Innovation School, will be governed by the same policies and procedures as the rest of the Worcester Public Schools with the following additions:

1. For matters related to significant shifts in the school's mission, vision, instructional strategies, budget or curriculum, the school leadership will be distributed to the teachers who will have a voice in deciding these matters. In addition, the school leadership will also consult the parent council for input in these areas.
2. The school will have an Advisory Council, made up of 9 members. There will be four members from Clark University and five at-large members. This advisory board will provide needed advice and guidance for the school and assist with fundraising and other functions.
3. The school's governance structure rests control of major instructional and curricular decisions in the hands of the most important players in the school, the principal and the teachers. This would differ from most district schools where decision making authority rests almost entirely with the school leadership and administration only. In our model, teachers will have a significant voice when key decisions need to be made.
4. Our school's use of this governance structure ensures that students and their needs are at the center of all decision-making processes. UPCS as an Innovation School will need the autonomy to make necessary changes in its curriculum, instruction and assessment based

upon the very unique and special needs of any given population it serves. This "do what makes sense" mentality gives teachers the flexibility and autonomy to ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed.

5. Other areas of requested flexibility:

    a. Enrollment Process: UPCS will continue to use the same enrollment process it has used since its inception. Only students who live within the defined district will be allowed to apply. Further, in order to enter the lottery for admission, students must provide proof of residence on one of the defined streets. Each 7th grade class will consist of forty-four students. All siblings of current students will be automatically accepted, the remaining number of students will be chosen by public lottery. Students who are drawn in the lottery after forty-four will be placed on a numerical waiting list in the order they were chosen in the lottery. The school will maintain the waiting list, and add to it as necessary, until that class graduation. Any openings at the school during any other academic year will be filled by way of the waiting list.

    b. Principal Selection and Evaluation: UPCS wishes to conduct a thorough search and employment process for the opening of the position of principal. Candidates for principal will be required to submit to a series of interview panels with sufficient involvement from teachers, parents, and students. While the actual appointment of the principal is made by the Superintendent, the recommendations made by these panels will carry significant weight in this decision and the school community should be paramount in making such a critical decision for the school. The principal will be evaluated in the same way other principals are evaluated by the district system.

    c. Teachers will be evaluated using the same instrument used by the other schools in the district with one addition. Teachers at UPCS will also be given feedback on their teaching using the school generated definition of High Quality Teaching and Learning. Teachers will be supported at UPCS and will be encouraged to participate in an open-practice, highly reflective culture of collaboration. Teachers will be observed regularly and given constructive and pointed feedback on teaching and learning in their classrooms. Teachers will be asked to open their

classrooms for observations by their colleagues through the rounds process in the spirit of cooperative and collaborative learning.

d. UPCS will use the same promotion and graduation requirements as the Worcester Public Schools with two exceptions:

   i. Each student must complete at least one genuine, service learning or internship experience.

   ii. UPCS will require students in grades 8, 10, and 12 to complete gateway performances to prove readiness for matriculation to the next level of schooling. The senior gateway will be used to prove readiness for graduation and preparedness for postsecondary life. Each of these gateways have well-defined components with rubrics and guidelines.

Plan for an Innovation School:

Worcester Technical High School's

STEM Early Career and College

Initiative

2023

Executive Summary

The faculty of Worcester Technical High School (WTHS) have set forth to reauthorize their Innovation School Plan that was established in 2011. The purpose of this reauthorization is to build upon successful practices implemented under their 2011 innovation plan, identify challenges and subsequent opportunities for innovation and work collaboratively to craft a plan that creates a vision and roadmap for the school in the future that will successfully launch their students into the global workplace.

Continuous advances in the areas of science and technology have caused the number of STEM related jobs to grow at faster rates than many other occupations. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021) estimates a 10% growth in the number of jobs in STEM fields between 2019 and 2029. Due to our society's growing needs for qualified professionals in fields such as healthcare, computer science, manufacturing, construction, engineering, and biotechnology the staff feel that their 2011 STEM Early Career and College Innovation plan is still very relevant and plan to continue to build upon and broaden this initiative.

While developing their students abilities in STEM and career and college readiness over the past twelve years led to remarkable improvements in students' overall performance an analysis of the overall 2022 survey data of business partners, technical and academic faculty, students and parents indicated that WTHS students have the technical competencies they need to be successful, but they need significant growth and development in "soft skills" and their understanding of the workplace. This includes the building of skills such as teamwork, collaboration, negotiation, critical thinking, initiative, risk-taking, creativity, adaptability, leadership, cognitive flexibility and problem-solving. Soft skills are also referred to as durable skills for they are skills that are needed throughout one's lifetime.

This feedback from stakeholders aligns with current research in the field, Singh Dubey et al. (2021) actually state that the "development of soft skills is more important than the development of technical skills when it comes to performing globally" (p. 2632). Due to businesses becoming more globalized there is a shift in competitiveness as more outsourcing of labor has occurred (Dubey et al.,2022). Students need to develop technical and durable skills in order to achieve an advantage (Succi & Canovi 2019). Pelosse (2022) parallels durable skills with the roots or trunk of a tree whereas the technical skills are the leaves and branches of a tree that come and go with the seasons. Additionally, the analysis revealed that teachers feel the technical shops need to be viewed as labs and simulated work places that integrate seamlessly with academics.

This analysis led the faculty to develop a plan to broaden their original innovation STEM Early Career and College Plan by intentionally developing a variety of competencies with their students that employers repeatedly stated are necessary to be successful in the workplace. The faculty set forth to restructure the learning environment to allow students early and intentional opportunities to build durable skills competencies through the teaching of durable skills across the curriculum in both academic and technical classes and deepen work-based engagement by strengthening the connection between employers and students throughout the four years. The faculty's end goal is to restructure WTHS in a

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manner that will produce graduates who will have the technical knowledge regarding a specific field complemented with the lifelong skills including to be able to think critically, communicate, and collaborate with others and be resilient so that each student can be successful in the global workplace.

The faculty identified three key learning models that would support the implementation of their plan. The first includes restructuring into an academy model. Remodeling the school into an academy model would include subdividing the school into smaller clusters to create smaller schools within the larger school structure. This smaller learning community allows students (particularly on the academic side) to be known by faculty. This structure can afford for several options including: program selection changing where students select an academy overall before choosing a specific shop, creates more leadership opportunities for students, opportunities to restructure student schedules where some academic and technical courses are academy-based, potential to create courses that teach core skills/competencies for multiple shops, and opportunities to structure cross-functional projects where various shops can combine expertise toward a common goal.

Project Based Learning (PBL) the second learning model is a teaching method that would be implemented by both academic and technical teachers that will support student learning by actively engaging them in real-world and personally meaningful projects to deepen their learning and support in the development of a variety of skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and leadership skills.

The third key learning model the faculty identified as work/profession-based learning is where the faculty will work collaboratively with their business partners to design a rigorous four year preparation plan that moves students through career awareness, preparation and experience. This plan will include integrating employers across all four years, preparing students for internships, providing a variety of authentic experiential learning opportunities where students are able to apply their technical skills, character qualities, and essential skills competencies in professional situations that will prepare them for success after high school regardless of their career path or type of work in the future.

Curriculum, instruction & assessment and staffing autonomies will continue to be maintained to support student performance and achievement. Additionally, with this reauthorization the professional development autonomy, which currently includes additional professional development time for staff will be increased and the scheduling and calendar autonomy will be added to support the development and implementation of both the academy and project-based learning models.

In conclusion, the staff at Worcester Technical High School feel the reauthorization of their innovation plan provides them the unique opportunity to collaborate with their business partners and each other to restructure the school into a robust learning environment. This redesign will afford students the opportunity to actively engage in meaningful learning experiences to master both technical and durable skills competencies which will prepare them to meet success in the global workplace.

Background Information

Stakeholder Involvement

A critical component of this project is ensuring that all stakeholders are included and that we are addressing potential challenges and opportunities throughout the project. Toward this end the project was facilitated by two consultants who engaged a variety of stakeholder groups with defined roles. These included the Project Steering Committee whose key role was to coordinate all meetings and manage the project scope and timeline; the Innovation Plan Committee whose role was to liaise with individual groups through task forces and/or regular communication and propose key areas of focus for innovation plan; Department Heads/Instructional Leadership Team who provided Initial brainstorming and reviewed progress to provide feedback and input; Faculty who participated in focus groups and shared ideas; and Subject Area Experts who provided targeted information and insight on key models. The Innovation Planning Process Website (which housed all innovation process planning documents, forms, survey, etc) was designed to keep all stakeholders updated on the planning process and to solicit their ongoing suggestions and ideas.

Planning Process

The process was structured around four primary phases: Phase I: Analysis and Brainstorming, Phase II: Benchmark and Discovery, Phase III: Working Sessions Phase, and Phase IV: Gain Approval and Plan Finalization. During the Analysis and Brainstorming phase, a review of the school's current programming strengths and challenges took place and stakeholders began to brainstorm new ideas for innovation. In the Benchmarking and Discovery Phase the team reviewed leading models and identified best practices to benchmark. During the Working Sessions the team worked together to determine the highest potential initiatives and critical elements for success and the final phase focused on formalizing the innovation plan and ensuring that materials were ready for a vote of the School Committee and submission to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

WTHS Transition

The 2022-2023 school year has been a year of transition for the school. The newly appointed principal led staff through a collaborative process to identify three key needed areas of focus for the school. The three needs staff identified were: 1. Train students to be professionals, 2. Understanding our students and providing needed supports, and 3. Building operational capacity. These needs focused the school during the school year and specific progress was made as described below:

Training students to be professionals

WTHS administration, faculty, staff, students and families worked collaboratively to promote a school culture that fosters the development of employability among students by:

- o   Focused on Strand 4 across the board and not just in technical class. Weekly grades in all classes for professionalism

- o   Academy Meetings - Promoting employee of the month award for students that exhibit durable skills and highlighting other skills we are focusing on.

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o   Incorporated student voice - academy leadership teams

Understanding our students and providing needed supports

Increased use of data to identify where students are falling short and providing the supports needed such as:

- o   Before and after school extra help
- o   Targeted MCAS supports
- o   Built upon the team mentality - Quarterly data review and team meetings with all teachers regardless of student success in individual classes
- o   PD on DCAP and supports for multi-lingual learners
- o   Continued to increase family communication

Building Operational Capacity

Operational improvements include:

- o   Created shared tools for consistency among faculty and administration including calendars and shared documents
- o   Developed weekly emails with links
- o   Opened the Instructional Leadership Team meetings to all and publicly sharing the agenda
- o   Used Remind and ConnectEd to improve communication with families
- o   Had parent conferences for academic teachers at Know Your School Night
- o   Implemented final exam schedule
- o   Innovation Planning site for continued suggested changes

The brainstorming of these high-priority initiatives and the work carried out by staff this year to begin to address gaps was the catalyst for the reauthorization discussion.

Data Collection and Analysis

The innovation plan builds on the opportunities that were identified in the planning meetings in June of 2022, the experiences over the past year, and the passion to continue to grow, improve, and learn. Specifically, this plan has been informed by input and feedback from teachers, parents, students and employers.

Stakeholder Meetings and Surveys

The chart below summarizes the methods that were used to collect data beginning in Fall, 2022 and continuing through spring 2023. Surveys and focus group questions can be found in Appendix A. These surveys, focus groups, and workshops addressed the high level questions of what are the current strengths of WTHS and where are there opportunities to close gaps, strengthen areas, or take advantage of new opportunities.

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Stakeholder Group	Method of Data Collection
Faculty and Administration	Participation in Instructional Leadership Team meetings Staff meetings Workshops Teacher and administrator online survey
Parents	Online survey
Students	Focus Groups
Employers	Online survey Working groups
District Administration	Update Meetings Innovation Plan Working Group

This data collection informed the SWOT framework that summarizes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the institution.

Strengths	Weaknesses

● Open door policy with instructors and relationships with staff
● Co-op
● Opportunities/relationship with different partners
● Paid co-ops
● Connecting student shop strength to academic areas
● Every student has at least one adult that knows them well
● Real-world view
● Heritage and reputation
● Shops where students are able to pick and align themselves with their interests
● Strong staff collaboration and expertise
● Facility
● Student encouragement (morning and afternoon extra help)
● Relationship with QCC
	● Schedule is limiting
	● Transportation to attend before and after school events and co-ops
	● Lack of common planning time
	● Non-technical skills and competencies: listening skills, persistence, reliance/willingness to fail, self-motivation, self-advocacy, responsibility, curiosity, independence, ability to sit with their feelings, employability skills, problem solving, critical thinking, accepting responsibility, social skills, working with different personalities
	● Facilities/resources
	   ○ Need an expanded set of resources: e.g., Chromebook charging stations
	   ○ Space constraints
	   ○ Access to new technologies
	   ○ Discipline or classroom management,

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• Bringing student strengths from shops into academic classrooms • Continued focus on modeling professionalism and maturity, leveraging the faculty and upper classmen • Multitude of extracurricular opportunities to enhance student relationships and connections • Alumni relations with businesses and the community • Use of technology and email communications • Growth mindset • Passionate, well-balanced, and curious students	routines around professionalism ○ Access to phones/chromebooks when in class ○ Inconsistent rule enforcement ○ Lack of tardy policy/follow through with tardies ○ Accurate attendance • Budget is limiting • Interruptions from class - pull out health screenings, ESL, Testing, etc • Connecting academics to shops • Shop and school communication to parents • Accountability through the lottery/application process • Numeracy • More supports for students in sub-separate settings • Lack of school spirit • Special education support in shop settings • Faculty capacity; • Lack of virtual learning
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Broaden coop network • Cross-shop electives and experiences (students learning about other shops) • Additional support staff (IAs) in classrooms • Etiquette Class • Scheduling opportunities-Extended day/block schedule/rotating schedule; Have specific grade levels on each week; later start times; half days for finals week; flexible scheduling to support instructional needs • More deliberate integration/alignment and connections between shops and academics • French penpals • Durable skills • Exposure to community service, international travel; integrate into shop objectives	• Academic gap created by Covid • Teacher/staff/admin burnout • Students not wanting to be here but parents wanting them here • Lack of autonomy in budget - ability to allocate money to fully fund student competitiveness • DESE regulations/expansion/expectations of Chapter 74 programs in comprehensive schools vs. regional or school districts • Expanding CTE options at other schools • State framework mandated certifications for students to receive their certificate of occupational proficiency

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• Leveraging expert knowledge of teachers in specific trade areas • Broader networking (e.g., At WTHS - creating opportunities for students and staff; Leveraging Worcester location; Alumni connections Existing and broader range of recruiters coming to the shops) • Ensuring students have technology and communications skills • Navigating the bus system • Deeper partnership with Christopher House • Share cultural identities and diversity through capstone and other opportunities • Parents as subs • Keep related theory in academic week • Specific programs: Driver's ed, Civics class, etiquette class • Deeper higher education partnerships • Showcase student knowledge more directly • Balance classes so the college/inclusion classes are smaller than honors • Trades to teach in elementary	

Key takeaways from this data collection include:

- Students struggle less with technical skills and more with durable skills
- The schedule hinders student supports and common planning time availability
- Project-based learning does not happen consistently across academic courses
- Deeper integration of academic and shop teachers will lead to stronger student outcomes
- Faculty see benefit in deeper connections with employers
- Current technical structure creates repetition of common themes taught in multiple shops
- Employers are eager to explore additional ways to support WTHS (44% responded that there is an opportunity to engage more deeply when asked "How would you characterize your engagement with WTHS students?"

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Benchmarking
In addition to the data collection with key stakeholder groups, this plan is also informed by looking closely at other programs and models. By looking outside the Worcester School District, WTHS sought to identify best practices, learn about innovation nationally, and gather new ideas for implementation.

To do this, the team began by identifying schools or networks with innovative models in career and technical education and identified a handful of programs to interview and/or visit. A list of programs can be found in Appendix B.

The team selected schools/organizations to study in greater depth through telephone interviews and visits. Tacoma Public Schools, Minuteman, and Danbury Public Schools provided critical perspective and insight as WTHS explored models and options. Specifically, a group of administrators and faculty were able to travel to Tacoma Public Schools for a learning walk that involved in-depth visits to three sister schools that are divided into career pathways - The Science and Math Institute (SAMI), Industrial Design Engineering & Art (IDEA), and School of the Arts (SOTA). These innovation schools have a unique approach to integrating education, collaboration with partners, and school spirit and provided new ideas around:

- The use of space for education
- Mentorship model
- Role of project-based learning
- Internship practice and preparation
- Recruitment and admissionsOpportunities to think creatively around partnering with businesses

As faculty reflected in a debrief presentation this visit both reinforced the amazing work that is being done at WTHS and the opportunity to push the approach even deeper to serve students. "Seeing the way teaching & learning is done in our technical schools, and the integration of our academic instruction proves to me every day just how true that statement is. This is the only way subjects are taught in the schools we visited.The effects of what this type of learning is shown to have on our students through our combined technical and academic performance validates the fantastic job we do every day,
yet supports the discussion in how we can further embrace and implement this model. It truly works!"

Additionally, there are three organizations that were helpful in sharing insight across programs and will be potential partners in the next phase of implementation. These include PBLWorks which supports individual teachers, schools and districts in strengthening project based learning, CAPS Network which is a group of high school programs recognized for the way they are bringing business, community, and public education together, and the National Career Academy Coalition which provides support and resources for existing and emerging career academies.

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Innovation Design

Problem Statement

We hear time and time again that our students have the shop competency they need to be successful, but the place for true growth is in "soft skills" and understanding the work-place. This includes building durable skills such as collaborating with teammates and critical thinking as well as viewing the shops as labs and simulated work places that integrate seamlessly with academics. While we aim to teach these skills across the curriculum, this plan creates a deliberate path forward to enhance the durable skills and ensure that every student is prepared for the next step.

Working Thesis

WTHS seeks to build upon and broaden its original STEM Innovation Early Career and College High School Plan through intentionally developing a variety of competencies with their students that employers have repeatedly stated are necessary to be successful in the workplace. To ensure every student is prepared for their next steps upon graduation, we aim to restructure the learning environment at WTHS in such a deliberate manner that allows students early and intentional opportunities to:

- Build durable skills competencies - teaching these "durable" skills across the curriculum in both academic and technical classes
- Deepen work-based engagement - by deepening the connection between employers and students throughout the four years

Our end goal of this restructuring is to graduate our students with the technical knowledge regarding a specific field complemented with the lifelong skills including to be able to think critically, communicate, and collaborate with others and be resilient so that each student can be successful in the global workplace.

Three Proposed Learning Models

Through this process the faculty identified three key learning models that serve as the foundation of the innovation plan for the next five years.

Develop a more defined academy model that is inclusive of academic teachers as well as shops

Rationale

WTHS shops are organized into academies but opportunity exists to extend this model into academic teachers to create smaller learning communities and increases opportunities for collaborative programming and project-based learning that connects the shop and academic experiences.

Outcomes
- Making it easier for teacher teams to work together around groups of students rather than individual

students and provide student supports

- Allows greater emphasis on ELL and special education supports in early years
- May create opportunity for common planning time to drive further collaboration between shops and academics
- Allow us to align our academic content with more specific technical skills
- Allow us to teach academy specific content that relates to shared skills needed in the shops of that academy
- Shifts the focus on deepening employer engagement as students move towards graduation

Incorporate more deliberate project-based learning across the curriculum to capitalize on what we know already works

Rationale

We know that project-based learning is an impactful and effective way to engage students. Hand-on learning is a key component of the WTHS program, and opportunity exists to ensure that teachers across the school are trained and using this methodology regardless of subject.

Outcomes

- Increases motivation during the academic weeks
- Allows interested teachers to attend professional development aimed at introducing project-based learning in the curriculum and share their experience with others
- Creates opportunities for projects that are integrated between academics and shops
- Sets the stage to explore innovative scheduling for adopting project-based learning mini-term
- Increases opportunities for students to practice and develop durable/professional skills

Deepen employer engagement

Rationale

Employers are incredible partners. Deepening engagement with employers benefits students by providing career awareness and exploration opportunities and also allows the school to expand its learning environment and increase capacity. Our employers indicate that there is opportunity to expect even more of our partnerships

Outcomes

- Increases feedback students receive from employers to accelerate student growth
- Increases school capacity by incorporating employers as teachers, mentors, presenters
- Builds opportunity for students to have multiple employment experiences to accelerate professional growth
- Better prepare students with a pre-coop training
- Lean on General Advisory Board Leadership recently established to improve our connection to local

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employer needs

- Increases employer engagement through recently establish position in partnership with the Worcester Chamber of Commerce
- Capitalize on current technologies and innovations in the workforce through equipment training, artificial intelligence, and other technologies revolutionizing our workforce (Example in the construction fields)

Implementation Enablers

Autonomies

To support the successful implementation of this plan, the staff will maintain the existing autonomies of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment and Staffing, expand the Professional Development autonomy and add the Schedule and Calendar autonomy.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

As outlined in the Innovation plan, WTHS will continue to maintain this existing autonomy which will allow for the creation of various career development/employability courses and the contextualization of the curriculum. This may be done throughout the duration of the Innovation Plan and will be done with working groups involving teachers, coaches, and administrators. This will be done with input and development from all parties and in support of the following goals:

- Aligning academic teachers and coursework to academies and shops within those academies
- Increasing employer engagement at all grades levels
- Preparing/teaching courses that have common threads across the academy
- Further preparing students for employability with common goals across the academy

Staffing

WTHS would like to expand upon this existing autonomy to include paraprofessionals with the following language to guide the process. WTHS staffing vacancies (Paraprofessional, Teachers: Unit A, Administrators: Unit B) will not be part of the bid process. Instead, the positions will be posted externally with notification of those vacancies communicated through Human Resources to WPS employees. An interview team will be comprised of the principal or designee and at least one teacher. This team will consider all internal applicants and interview all internal certified applicants (not requiring more than 5 such interviews). This team may also consider any external applicants. Once a hire is made, their position will remain at WTHS and will not be open to the bid process. This will allow the WTHS hiring team to ensure new hires fit with the culture and mission of WTHS in a timeline that suits the individual circumstance of the new hire.

By not participating in the bid process, we can accelerate our hiring needs while still considering all qualified WPS candidates. This will increase our pool of candidates seeking employment; the earlier we can post, the less likely qualified candidates have committed to another district.

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Professional Development

The staff will expand upon the current Professional Development autonomy to allow for up to 9 half-day PD offerings. This increased PD time is critical to help broaden the knowledge base and collaboration time (common planning) of staff in the academy, professional learning around project-based learning, and profession-based learning models. This will not impact the total contractual number of days.

We need time for new teams of academy teachers to get together and plan for projects, themes across their curricula, and student supports. As we implement projects that extend to shop and academic teachers, we will need PD on developing those projects and time for planning. The current 5 half days will be planned in a similar fashion and the additional (up to) 4 half days will specifically support the Innovation Plan and common planning.

Schedule and Calendar

As outlined in the Innovation plan, the staff will add the Schedule and Calendar Autonomy. Specifically structured learning time will be increased daily by 4 minutes to allow for up to 9 student early release days in order to implement professional development blocks for staff. Contractual start/end times will not be adjusted with this autonomy. The 4 minutes would mean that students would start school in class at 7:16am and end at 1:43pm. This will not impact the classroom arrival/departure times for staff and will not alter the contractual number of days. Contractual start time will remain at 7:10 for staff to be in their classrooms/shops and ready for instruction. Contractual end time will be 13 minutes after the final bell for students (1:56) except on the days where teacher contractual extra help is to be provided, along with other contractual meeting days/obligations.

Based on the suggestion of the innovation planning team, this additional time in first period will allow for integration of common skills for students to start their workday. This will also allow for a longer first period to accommodate these common skills and announcements and still have the amount of learning time needed for a full period. This will also bring us back to the required 990 instructional hours for time on learning that we fall short of after incorporating the additional half days.

Additionally, Worcester Technical High School students currently benefit from regular weekly instruction from their technical trades. Any future schedule change consideration will preserve technical curriculum time to stay connected to the curriculum on a daily basis, unless it can be shown that a schedule change would otherwise benefit the student in their technical education. Any schedule change consideration may be done throughout the duration of the Innovation Plan and will be done with working groups involving teachers, coaches, and administrators. A schedule change will only be implemented with input and development from all parties, and only if it has no negative impact on the current number of technical/academic instructors (unless otherwise dictated by the district budget).

Timetable for Development and Establishment

The faculty have strategically planned that the outlined changes to the existing program be implemented over several years to ensure comprehensive and collaborative planning, small group implementation

through piloting to inform practice, and extensive staff professional development. Implementation planning teams with a planning leader for each team will be established for the Academy model, Project-based learning, and Work/Profession based learning to help guide the facilitation and implementation of these key structures. Department heads will work collaboratively with administration to realign 9th and 10th grade schedules to weigh more heavily on academics. The faculty will engage organizations such as National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC), PBLWorks, and CAPS Network for targeted support with both planning and implementation.

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Action Plan for Reauthorization

Proposed Changes	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Develop a more defined academy model that is inclusive of academic teachers as well as shops	● Establish Implementation Team and Team Lead ● Engage in planning process with NCAC ● Restructure school schedule to align with academy model ● Determine teacher assignments to align with Academy Model ● Shift academic focus to be more heavily weighted in Freshman and Sophomore years	● Pilot academy model schedule	● Fully Implement Academy model with changes from year 2 reflection	● Assess and evaluate progress
Incorporate more deliberate project-based learning across the curriculum to capitalize on what we know already works	● Establish Implementation Team and Team Lead ● Engage with PBL Works and launch application process ● Begin PD	● Engage in planning process with PBL Works ● Develop Implementation Timeline ● Develop PD Calendar full school & Pilot Group ● Identify Pilot Group ● Continue PD	● Pilot PBL in high priority academic classrooms	● Full School Roll out PBL across academic programs according to plan
Strengthening work/profession-based learning	● Establish Implementation Team and Team Lead ● Solicit Business Partners ● Develop Implementation Timeline ● Develop curriculum for Career Prep class	● Introduce Career Prep class ● Develop curriculum for expanded work-based learning	● Enhance mentoring opportunities with employers ● Strengthen related	● Assess and evaluate progress

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	● Revision 4-year progression of career readiness ● Develop robust 8th grade program		programming	
Implement monthly Professional Development Opportunities	● Increase the structured learning time by 4 minutes daily at the beginning of the school day to allow for one day monthly for student early release to implement professional development blocks for staff. ● Provide comprehensive professional development in Academy model, Project-based learning, Profession-based learning	● Continue to provide professional development and deepen teacher practice in Academy model, Project-based learning, Profession-based learning	● Continue to provide professional development and deepen teacher practice in Academy model, Project-based learning, Profession-based learning	● Assess and evaluate progress

Common Planning Time	● Establish Implementation Team and Team Lead
	● Explore various common planning time models ie.
	  ○ Academy a day (coverage model)
	  ○ Have CP coincide with mentorship time and PBL planning (similar to Tacoma)
	  ○ Week on/Week off - one week academic and shop separate, one week together
	● Develop a structures for what takes place during common planning time ie.
	  ○ Instructional coaches and/or another designee will facilitate Common Planning Time. The following are a few examples of
		● Implement Common planning time within the pilot academy
		● Continue to develop a common planning time structure that can be implemented across each academy
			● Implement Common planning time across all academies	● Assess and evaluate progress

	what generally could take place during common planning time: ○ Examining educator work and practice ○ Looking at student work ○ Examining learner data ○ Examining Education Research ○ Developing curriculum: Teachers may collaboratively work on lesson plans, assignments, projects, and new classes			

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Outcome Measurement

Through this Innovation Plan, WTHS will continue to improve student outcomes. These outcomes will help ensure that we are serving the Worcester Public Schools Vision of a Learner. (Appendix 4) At the end of five years:

- All faculty aligned within academies to facilitate common planning, interdisciplinary projects, and shared coursework

- Have stronger student supports

- Ensure *every* student experiences project-based learning opportunities in both academic and shop courses

- Have implemented opportunities to learn and improve durable skills needed to succeed in the world of work

- Evaluation and reflection on the durable skills outlined by our employer partners and by the Vision of a Learner

Conclusion

This reauthorization of the innovation plan is designed to strengthen our investment in STEM and college and career readiness and ensure that our program and engagement with business partners is forward looking. This plan will ensure that our students are prepared both technically and with the durable skills to excel in college or career,

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Time on learning
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1uDi2nQpjg3si1KoMLcA2e1bKftshy9j53Li-q_PGJq4/edit

Appendix A - Data Collection Instruments

Parent/Guardian Survey Questions

This year our school is undergoing a Reauthorization of our Innovation Plan. This process involves taking successful practices from our previous innovation plan and evaluating challenges and subsequent opportunities for innovation that will help our school continue to lead the way for vocational/technical education.

A key component in this process involves gathering input from our stakeholders. Your feedback as parents/guardians is vital in the development of strategies and structures that situate us to support our students explore and create successful life paths. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey.

Worcester Technical High School's mission is to train students to make meaningful contributions in both the classroom and the workforce. Considering this mission…

- What are the top 3 ways that WTHS helps your child be successful either now or in the future? (e.g.,work experiences, coursework, relationships with staff/peers)

- What could WTHS change to increase student success? (e.g., new courses or programs, scheduling changes, different support)

- If there was anything that would prevent you from recommending WTHS to other parents, what would it be?

- What could WTHS provide/add or strengthen to help your child improve in areas they want to develop?

- Below are some of the most in demand skills/competencies needed in the workplace in the 21st century. Please check which 3 skills you feel should be more explicitly built into the WTHS education pathway.

  - Character: Enthusiasm, accountability, trustworthy, reliability and ethical conduct
  - Collaboration: Teamwork, interpersonal communication and cooperation
  - Communication: Verbal & written communication, negotiation, public speaking
  - Creativity: New ideas, imagination, and visionary
  - Critical Thinking: Prioritization, analytical thinking, investigation, and problem-solving
  - Fortitude: Persistence, self-discipline, self-confident and assertiveness
  - Growth Mindset: Goal-oriented, results-focused, self-sufficiency, resourcefulness
  - Leadership: Influencing skills, advocacy, decision-making and mentorship
  - Metacognition: Adaptability, multitasking, diplomacy, and time management, and organizational skills
  - Mindfulness: Humility, active listening, patience, empathy, and compassion

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- Please rate the following ideas based on the extent to which you feel they would make an improvement to WTHS

VI - Very Interested   I - Interested   NI - Not Interested

   ○ Increased integration between shops (e.g., shared courses)
   ○ More opportunities for virtual internships that do not require traveling to work sites
   ○ Opportunities for travel abroad
   ○ Expanded number of shop options
   ○ Deeper engagement with business partners (e.g., mentorships, business partners integrated into teaching)
   ○ Increased emphasis on durable skills - skills that are considered long-lasting and transferable across job descriptions and careers such as communication, creativity, character, leadership)
   ○ Expanded school hours
   ○ Staggered school hours
   ○ Other: _____
- Which of the following opportunities with industry/business are most beneficial for your child's success? Pick up to 3.

   ○ Unpaid Co-op/internships
   ○ Paid Co-op/internships
   ○ University visits
   ○ Industry speakers in class
   ○ Industry mentors
   ○ Site visits to companies

- What additional opportunities/experiences with industries/business partners do you want WTHS to provide for your child?

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Business Partner Survey Questions

This year our school is undergoing a Reauthorization of our Innovation Plan. This process involves taking successful practices from our previous innovation plan and evaluating challenges and subsequent opportunities for innovation that will help our school continue to lead the way for vocational/technical education.

A key component in this process involves gathering input from stakeholders. Your feedback as business partners is vital in the development of strategies and structures that situate us to support our students explore and create successful life paths. Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey.

First Name

Last Name

Company Name

Job Role

Worcester Technical High School's mission is to train students to make meaningful contributions in both the classroom and the workforce. Considering this mission…

1. What strengths are you aware of that the school has that you would like to see expanded upon?
2. What gaps do you currently see with individuals in the workplace that we could possibly minimize or eliminate in the future if we integrated this learning into our students' educational pathways?
3. Below are some of the most in demand skills/competencies needed in the workplace in the 21st century, please put checks by the top ones we should incorporate into our educational pathways.
    a. **Leadership:** Influencing skills, advocacy, decision-making and mentorship
    b. **Character:** Enthusiasm, accountability, trustworthy, reliability and ethical conduct
    c. **Collaboration**: Teamwork, interpersonal communication and cooperation
    d. **Communication:** Verbal & written communication, negotiation, public speaking
    e. **Creativity:** New ideas, imagination, and visionary
    f. **Critical Thinking:** Prioritization, analytical thinking, investigation, and problem-solving

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g. **Metacognition:** Adaptability, multitasking, diplomacy, and time management, and organizational skills

h. **Mindfulness:** Humility, active listening, patience, empathy, and compassion

i. **Growth Mindset**: Goal-oriented, results-focused, self-sufficiency, resourcefulness

j. **Fortitude:** Persistence, self-discipline, self-confident and assertiveness

4. What ideas/suggestions do you have that WTHS can explore to strengthen our students' skills and abilities? (Please provide details).

5. Do you have other partners that are doing a great job - what are they doing that we might want to emulate?

6. How might you want to engage more deeply with WTHS? How else do you envision partnering with WTHS in the future? (e.g., being part of the shop more regularly?)

Student Focus Group Questions

This year our school is in the process of what is called a Reauthorization of our Innovation Plan. A major component of this process involves working with our school community (administrators, teachers, students, families, and business partners) to improve student learning and student performance by examining the school's practices and evaluating what is working well at the school and how it can be taken to the next level, what isn't working as good it could be and how it can be improved, and what new practices might be brought to the school. As part of this work, we are meeting with a variety of different student focus groups to gain their input. Thank you for meeting with us today and sharing your feedback.

Number and Demographic of Students in Focus Group _____

Target Composition

- Goal is to reach ~100 students through focus groups, student leader groups, etc.
- 10 - 12 kids per focus group
- At least one focus group per grade
- Balance of technical areas

Strengths

1. What do you like most about the programming, structure, and/or classes at WTHS?
2. How do you feel it is helping you or will help you be successful?

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3. What can we do to make it even better?

Opportunities

4. What has been the most impactful experience you have had with a business partner/employer?
5. What opportunities/experiences with industries/business partners do you want WTHS to provide for you?
6. Where would you like these opportunities/experiences to take place? School/Job site, Worcester Area/other areas of US/Abroad?
7. What year in school should these opportunities start?

Gaps

8. What programs or classes do you wish that WTHS could add or strengthen to help you to improve with your weak areas?
9. When would you like these offered?

Wishes

10. Is there anything that you wished you could do at your school that you can't do now?
11. Is there anything that you wished your school offered that it doesn't?
12. In 10 to 15 years what do you wish your career to be and what area of the country/world do you want to work?

Faculty Workshop Questions

- What strengths does WTHS offer that we should amplify/expand?
- What opportunities exist to bring something unique to the community?
- What do we wish students could do but can't today? What do students need that they are unable to access?
- What gaps prevent WTHS from achieving its mission?
- Are there any schools/organizations that you have heard of that are implementing great practices that we should learn more about?

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Appendix B: Benchmarked Organizations

Organization	Website/ description	What aspects of this program/school would be interesting for WTHS?	Outreach
CAPS Network	https://yourcapsnetwork.org/		Met with CAPS Network representatives locally
Blue Valley CAPS	https://bvcaps.yourcapsnetwork.org/	Community partnerships; offsite classes; student driven project learning	Captured in interview
NuVu School	https://cambridge.nuvustudio.com/	Self-led discovery; use of partners and coaches to fill academic; Durable skills	Secondary research
Intrinsic School	https://intrinsicschools.org/	Multiple Campus; flexible Learning Environment; Strong Identity & Community (Student Compact)	Secondary research
MC2 School	https://www.mc2school.org/news-and-events/#		Secondary research
The MET	https://www.themethighschool.org/	Internships, individual learning plans, and advisory systems; paid partnerships with business	Call with VP of Academics
Sparks Schools	https://sparkschools.co.za/high-school-model/	scholars spend 30% in Online and Study and 70% face to face in Skills or Inquiry; balancing online and face-to-face	Secondary research
Greater Lowell	https://www.gltech.org/domain/50	- Apply in 10th grade rolling admission for open spot; Job board where employers can post (get's approval) - Career Plan as part of shop objectives and must have an updated one for co-op eligibility	Secondary research
Minuteman	Minuteman	- College track program - Professional Ad on YouTube and video tour as well - Fit multiple language offers into their program of studies chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcaj pcglclefindmkaj/https://resources.finalsi	Contacted through Patty's relationship

		te.net/images/v1634665633/minuteman org/xxpsem9afifoayueihle/EBPresIntegra tionofAcademicandVocationalEducationS ept2017.pdf	
Blackstone Valley	https://www.valleytech.k 12.ma.us/Page/812	career education class, alumni spotlight, community job board; Longer school year	
Olympic HS	https://www.cmsk12.org /olympicHS	700 Business Partnerships, Career Academies, Project based experiential learning; school scheduling, industry partnerships, durable skills	Call with business liaison
Tacoma Schools SOTA, SAMI, IDEA	https://www.applytoidea .com/	Interest based learning, yr. long explore w/in selected academy (students apply to academy); Specific pathways and core curriculum; Similar to WTHS, alternate schedule/activity periods on Wednesdays, interdisciplinary miniterms	Visiting in person
Monty Tech	https://www.montytech. net/	Afterschool transportation; HYDROPONICS Programs	Ongoing relationship
Davinci Schools	https://institute.davincisc hools.org/		Not pursued
High Tech High	file:///C:/Users/abiga/Do wnloads/HTH-School-Pro file-2021-2022updated.p df		Consider curated visit days
P-Tech	https://www.ptech.org/		Secondary research
Dearborn Academy	https://www.bpe.org/de arborn-stem-academy/		Secondary research
Madison Park		Pair vocational/academic teacher	Secondary research
Danbury High School	https://dhs.danbury.k12. ct.us/ https://docs.google.com/ presentation/d/1B9zUfSC dd0MwvAMGR8Yqrs-lbw cSfH5a246bOPydRBI/mo bilepresent?slide=id.p8	Career Academies https://docs.google.com/presentation/d /1B9zUfSCdd0MwvAMGR8Yqrs-lbwcSfH 5a246bOPydRBI/edit?usp=sharing	Telephone call

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			https://www.nashvillehub.org/study-visits
Nashville hub	https://www.nashvillehub.org/study-visits	Academy Model	https://www.nashvillehub.org/study-visits October, 2023
Deeper Learning '23	https://deeper-learning.org/dl23/		Secondary research
HTH Virtual	https://hthgse.edu/events/virtual-tour-feb-2023/		Secondary research
Shawsheen Valley	shawsheentech.org	Schedule	
Diman Regional Vocational	https://www.dimanregional.org	Schedule	
Tri-county Regional Vocational Technical School	tri-cointy.us	Schedule	
Keefe Regional Technical School	www.keefetech.org	Schedule	