



Worcester Public Schools 2022-2023 School Growth Plan

Superintendent: Dr. Rachel Monárrez
Coordinator: Dr. Michael O'Neil

Delivering on High Expectations and Outstanding Results for All Students

The Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

This Plan to Improve Student Outcomes defines the school's mission, vision, and key strategies for the school year. This plan is aligned to the Worcester Public School Coherence Framework and is organized around the four core practices of Leadership Practices, Positive Climate and Culture, Specific Student Supports, and Intentional Instruction.



The Alternative School North Star

A school's North Star is the school's mission and vision to equip all students with the skills, competencies, and mindsets needed to be successful. It is grounded in data, stakeholder engagement, and vision for graduates of the school.

The Alternative School staff welcome students grades 7 through 12, through age 21, with a special education designation of sub-separate, who have identified attendance and behavioral issues, who have credit deficiency, who are teen parents, who have a background of trauma, substance abuse and may be homeless or unaccompanied minors. Students have been unsuccessful in traditional school settings and out of district placements. Many are involved in the court system or/and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The Alternative School systems are in place to create a tight, responsive network of support (e.g., policies, procedures, human capital, expectations, and resources) that facilitate success for students who have failed in other settings. Different students will need varying levels of support, but all will need some level of support. This layered system of support provides a framework from which positive relationships are built to embolden individuals with hope, self-advocacy, agency, capacity, and mitigation as they work to attain a high school diploma, college and career readiness and an active role in the greater community.

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

School growth planning is an essential part of continuous school improvement. Setting expectations and strategically working to advance the school's North Star vision is what can lead to change for the better. This Plan to Improve Student Outcomes lays out the school's intentions for the strategies it will use, actions they will take and the anticipated outcomes. The school's instructional leadership team leads the work.

| School Instructional Leadership Team Members | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|------|----------|
| Name | Position | Name | Position |
| Dr. Michael O'Neil | Coordinator Alternative School | | |
| Mr. Christopher Pappas | Vocational Teacher | | |
| Mr. James Graham | Vocational Teacher | | |
| Mr. Cornelius Shea | SPED Teacher | | |
| Mr. Daniel Burke | SPED Teacher | | |
| Mr. Francis Incutto | IA Teacher | | |
| Mr. Francis Weeks | IA -Teacher | | |
| Ms. Shelly Hamm-Moylan | ESL Teacher | | |

| School Instructional Leadership Team Meeting Schedule | | | |
|---|-------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Month | Dates | Month | Dates |
| September | 12 | February | 6 |
| October | 3 | March | 6 |
| November | 7 | April | 3 |
| December | 5 | May | 1 |
| January | 9 | June | 5 |
| | | <i>Summer Planning Session</i> | |

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

The school priority goal is the focus that drives the improvement work during the school year. It is based on a review of data from the prior school. The following pages contain plans for each core practice that when implemented, should lead to improvements associated with the priority goal.

School Priority Goal(s) for School Year 2022-2023

For the 2022-2023, the Alternative program will focus on sustaining and further developing a safe and productive educational environment. Students enter throughout the school year at varied points in their education. 26 of the currently 29 enrolled students were referred from out of district placements (e.g., collaborative educational programs, incarceration, or residential day schools) because of safety concerns. 12 students are currently classified as homeless. All students have Individualized Educational Plans and are under credited.

Key Data and Rationale for Priority Goal(s)

Students enter the program throughout the school year with Individual Educational Plans and identified social, emotional and behavioral needs. All are under credited. Afterschool, school vacation and extended summer programming allow and support opportunities for students to prepare for the state test and earn the credits necessary to receive a diploma. We continue using this structure and the original clinical account intended for staff collaboration because of funding and McKinney Vento support for homeless students.

- In 2021-2022, 29 of 29 seniors graduated from the program with a high school diploma.
- Data points are difficult to secure with the current system. Students enter and exit the school throughout the year. Student records typically cover multiple systems (districts, private placements, DYS, jail), suspensions follow students into the program and test scores are reported back to the home school.

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration.

Our Vision for Leadership Practices

The Alternative School systems are in place to create a tight, responsive network of support (e.g., policies, procedures, human capital, expectations, and resources) that facilitate success for students who have failed in other settings. Different students will need varying levels of support, but all will need some level of support. This layered system of support provides a framework from which positive relationships are built to embolden individuals with hope, self-advocacy, agency, capacity, and mitigation as they work to attain a high school diploma, college and career readiness and an active role in the greater community

- The staff are organized into four teams that include academic, vocational and SEL services. Academic, vocational and SEL knowledge and skills will improve in alignment with the students Individual Educational Plans developed through the team process.
- Administrators and teachers, through staff teams, are actively monitoring and assessing the implementation of IEPs, impact of key improvement strategies (SEL and Academic), use of resources, classroom instructional practices, and non-academic supports on student achievement.
- Staff meet monthly to monitor safety and assess school community needs to sustain a respectful school community as a model and support for student success in the larger community.
- Staff actively work with community agencies on individual student cases to coordinate support, monitor progress and coordinate interventions as needed.

Aspiration for 2022-2023 School Year

To enhance existing team meetings, each group will document their key discussion point with a team specific data point and related, mutually agreed on improvement action step monthly.

Strategies for Leadership Practices

1. Sustain and further develop a culture of shared commitment and support
2. Develop high-functioning school based teams
3. Enhance teacher PL meetings

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

Measures of Success and Desired Outcomes

- Team action steps (See 2.) are successful across the team classrooms and individual students.
- Current students have improved student attendance, logged contact to caregiver and student and attainment of IEP goals on quarterly progress reports..
- A review of staff agenda topics and related action steps indicate improved, responsive focus.

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

POSITIVE CLIMATE AND CULTURE

The school has established a climate and culture that provides a safe, orderly and respectful environment for students and a collegial, collaborative, and professional culture among teachers that supports the school's focus on increasing student achievement.

Our Vision for a Positive Climate and Culture

Our school's climate and culture fully supports the cognitive, social & interpersonal, and emotional development of all students with the goal of each student gaining the capacity and competencies necessary to engage their full self in the learning environment.

Aspiration for 2022-2023 School Year

We will focus this year on sustaining and further developing a safe and productive educational environment that underpins a strong school culture.

Strategies for Positive Climate and Culture

- Foster a culture of value for one another and belonging
- Expand student voice and decision making
- Attendance team that identifies root causes
- Enhanced parent/caregiver communication

Measures of Success and Desired Outcomes

- Increased student sense of belonging and connection with an adult in the building (C & C Survey)
- Reduced absenteeism
- Reduced disciplinary actions (suspensions, referrals)
- Increased number of parents and families engaging with the school through events, programs, and meetings

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

STUDENT SPECIFIC SUPPORTS

The school provides student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs.

Our Vision for Student Specific Supports

Worcester Alternative Program has a coordinated system for monitoring student progress on reaching their Individual Educational Plan goals. All students receive the supports they need to succeed and be on track to receive a high school diploma.

Aspiration for 2022-2023 School Year

We will focus this year on our system for monitoring student progress.

Strategies for Student Specific Supports

1. Increase SEL understanding and practices
2. Offer high quality academic tutoring

Measures of Success and Desired Outcomes

- Daily Attendance
- Suspension Rates
- Afterschool, school vacation and extended summer attendance

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

INTENTIONAL INSTRUCTION

The school employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

Our Vision for Intentional Instruction

Teachers will plan according to the varied goals in students' Individualized Educational Plans which requires individual and small group targeted instruction that is responsive to student's individual progress on specific goals, both social and academic. Teachers address academic, vocational, and work experience, monitoring student progress in relation to their IEP goals and state standards.

Aspiration for 2022-2023 School Year

Teachers will design and implement engaging learning experiences that reflect the variability in student learning

Strategies for Intentional Instruction

- Use student academic goal setting to increase student engagement
- Use learning intentions and success criteria to frame lessons
- Intentionally use assessments to drive instruction

Measures of Success and Desired Outcomes

- Interim and quarterly Individual Educational Plan progress reports
- Student responses on walk throughs
- Student assessments in line with students IEPs with teacher comments/grades

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

Notification

As part of the planning process, Worcester Public Schools considers the coordination and integration of federal, state and local services and programs. In addition:

- Elementary schools should also reference the transition plans for assisting preschool children in transitioning to the school-wide program plans; and
- Secondary schools should also reference transition plans for assisting grade 7 and 9 students in transitioning to the new school.

Coordination and Integration of Funds

All Worcester Public Schools must integrate services and programs with the aim of upgrading the entire educational program of the whole school and to help all students reach proficient and advanced levels of achievement. Integration of services will include the following areas of focus:

Equity of Access: Ensuring all students have access to high quality instruction and materials and resources. For example: through Title I, II and III, Focused Instructional Coaches; through Title I, II and Title III supplemental activities including After School and Out-of-School Time activities. Title IV A, technology, supplemental activities and payment of AP fees; SRG, support of additional time for teachers including activities that address equity of access; IDEA activities that support individualized learning, and through Perkins funding, access to materials and credentials for college and career readiness.

Engagement: Engagement with families and the various sectors of our community in developing opportunities for all students; Support through Title I of our Parent Information Center and community engagement; Title II, coordination of professional development activities involving engagement; Title III, supplemental parental engagement activities; IDEA, contracted services for health and through Perkins funding, career exploration activities.

Safe and Healthy Students: Create supportive, safe, and orderly learning environments marked by respectful interactions, acceptance, inclusiveness, and responsibilities to one another. Title I, personnel including Wraparound coordinators; Homeless Liaison; Title II coordination of all professional development including PD on SEL; Title III, professional development on co-teaching; Title IV, safety training, safety planning and school safety supplies; IDEA; professional development and through Perkins, professional development on safety training.

High quality teaching and learning: To support excellent instruction that improves student skills to prepare them for global citizenship; through Title I, II and III, coaches; Title II, support of professional development activities; Title IV, professional development on technology; IDEA professional development and through Perkins, professional development for teachers.

College and Career Readiness: In support of current standards, activities that help students become college and career ready: Through Title I and Title III, supplemental academic support for struggling students. Title II, coordination of professional development for all college and career readiness activities; Title IV, support of technology and accompanying professional development to increase teacher proficiency and payment for AP fees; IDEA, funding for instructional assistants and Perkins, funding for college and career readiness contractual service provider at our vocational-technical high school.

Alternative School Plan to Improve Student Outcomes

Worcester Public School Transition Plan for Assisting Preschool Children (Elementary only)

Worcester Public Schools (WPS) support a transition plan for assisting preschool children to school-wide Title I programs, which is based upon best practices promulgated by the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE) and the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL). Smooth transitions from preschool to kindergarten depend on connections made between participants in the process, such as those between schools and families, and between preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers and classrooms, especially connections made prior to kindergarten entry. The WPS transition plan incorporates NCPFCE models to implement best practices.

Child-School activities foster the familiarity of children with the classroom setting and those people within it. Preschool teachers and children visit a kindergarten classroom, children practice kindergarten rituals, and a spring orientation is held for preschool children. These activities are designed to increase comfort, decrease anxiety, and build teacher-child relationships.

Family-School activities foster family collaboration and involvement with the school transition process through school visits, open houses, and meetings with principals and kindergarten teachers. WPS has prepared and disseminates literacy resource materials for in-home learning activities.

School-School activities foster inter-school collaboration among preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers to align programs and classroom practices.

Community: The WPS collaborates with an extensive network of interagency and community service organizations which support child-specific programs and enables WPS to get accurate information into the community, including the kindergarten registration process. WPS transition activities effectively introduce preschool children into school-wide Title I programs.