Woodland Academy

2014-2015

Innovation Plan Renewal Process

Focus:

- Differentiated Instruction
- Language Development
- Early Childhood Development / Full Day Pre-School

Innovation Autonomies and Flexibilities:

- Curriculum
- Professional Development
- Schedule and Calendar
- Staffing
- Budget
- District Policies

Original Term: 3 Years (2011 through 2014)

Renewal Process:

1. School administrators and faculty met with Governance Board to discuss whether the innovation plan at the school required revision and to solicit recommendations for the proposed changes.

2. Proposed changes required notification to the local union but did not require collective voting process of approval by the teachers at the school as outlined in the statute.

3. Voting Status: N/A

4. Proposed changes to the original plan were submitted to the Superintendent. Principals met with the Superintendent on July 21, 2014 to review proposed changes.

5. School administration is seeking Innovation Status for an additional 3 years (2014 – 2017)

Mission

Woodland Academy, in partnership with Clark University and other Main South neighborhood partners will focus unswervingly on empowering students with the strategies and skills necessary for college readiness, character development and community responsibility.

Vision

Our vision is that our students will be empowered with the strategies and skills needed for them to develop into contributing, 21st century citizens who demonstrate community responsibility, and who work together respectfully, with a positive attitude in order to maximize their learning. Students and teachers of Woodland Academy will engage in focused, Common Core teaching and learning with the goal of increasing student achievement. This effort is supported by a professional learning community, which fosters collaborative learning among and between teacher teams. Our school wide focus is to ensure students are able to read grade level texts with joy, understanding and engagement across all areas of the curriculum. A systematic approach to time on learning driven by research based instruction will enable students who require additional supports and interventions to achieve success. We are committed to providing all students and families with a challenging educational experience in order to maximize individual learning and growth and promote the development of critical thinking skills. Teaching and learning will be characterized by engagement, awareness, curiosity and academic risk taking. Families will see Woodland Academy as a "one stop shop" where their social, emotional, academic and health needs will be met with understanding, compassion and proactive support.

A. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact of Improvement	Timeline
Woodland Academy will begin to support the educational needs of the community through an early identification program. In conjunction with the Main South Promise Neighborhood, an Early intervention program will identify at risk toddlers in the main south neighborhoods. With a seamless referral process to the Worcester Public Schools, this will ensure a home to school connection, seeking appropriate supports from specialized school staff when appropriate.	Collaboration between Woodland administrators and the Department of Special Education have taken place to establish that screening of Main South preschool and Woodland kindergarten students will be scheduled to take place on-site, at Woodland Academy by March of each year.	Early identification of students with developmental, communicative, motor and social emotional needs will enable us to plan and prepare appropriately for their enrolment.	Immediate
Our preschool program presently is half days, servicing students throughout the city.	Establish and maintained a full day preschool program for 4 year old, neighborhood students	Woodland Academy's four year olds have be provided with a full day of social and academic curriculum in order to provide them with early readiness skills	
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment: The original plan makes frequent reference to the MEPA and MELA-O assessments. These have been replaced by DESE.	Needs based analysis for our ELL population will now use data from ACCESS testing. Curriculum planning will include WIDA standards.	Alignment with state assessments and standards.	Immediate
We need to realign our math curriculum with the Common Core Standards.	Teachers have collaborated in curriculum mapping teams both district-wide and building based. Each grade level has created units of study to meet the expectations of the Common Core math standards. We have also implemented Envision Math as a supplementary resource.	Vertically and horizontal articulation of curriculum will ensure consistency of instruction and learning across and between grades	On-going
Our Innovation Plan calls for adjustments and refinements in order to more carefully	We used funds from the Innovation Planning budget to pilot multiple assessment systems.	These adjustments and refinements allow teachers to	On-going

diagnose and prescribe appropriate core instruction and interventions. We will use the spring trimester and funds from the Innovation Planning budget to pilot multiple assessment systems.	We have retained MAP reading & math in Grades 2-6, follow the WPS fall & winter and calendar We have implemented the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System adding the writing assessment in Year 3 and the vocabulary assessment in Year 4	more carefully diagnose and prescribe appropriate core instruction and interventions.	
Each teacher will have a repertoire of assessments including: tools to assess emergent literacy such as: • Concepts About Print • Assessment of phonemic awareness • Implementation and analysis of running records • Quarterly school-wide reading comprehension assessments (open response)	A collaborative team including kindergarten teachers, the teacher of the deaf and the Speech Language Pathologist worked together to realign the order in which letter sounds are taught. They also introduced Rhythmic Phonetics, adding a kinesthetic element to student learning.	Students now learn to recognize letter sounds in the same order that they learn to produce them. This alignment has significantly impacted end-of-year outcomes for our early and emergent readers.	On-going
Our innovation school will focus intently on a core set of literacy development practices which, in combination and cumulatively from one grade to the next, and coupled with individual student assessment, will help each child to develop more fully as a capable reader, writer and thinker.	**Guided Reading:** Our professional development has focused heavily on refining this practice. Teachers have had the opportunity to see lessons modeled at each developmental level. **Writing:** With the additional funding from the supplementary grant, we have moved from using Being a Writer to establishing an authentic Writer's Workshop model in all grades. This was made possible by our work with the Teaching and Learning Alliance. **Listening and Speaking:** We are implementing the language and vocabulary program: Discussion4Learning in grades K-3 Piloted the implementation of state ELA model units in one second grade class. This pilot will be expanded into other grades.	Student achievement in literacy is showing expedited growth. Students use strategies in reading writing speaking and listening across all content areas.	
Intervention: Teachers provide additional direct instruction to target the specific needs of	Teachers created action plans identifying students who had not mastered core concepts. They implemented a targeted plan over a six-	Students will be provided additional support to meet the benchmark standards.	On-going

the student when the traditional core instruction is insufficient or showing deficits in student learning.	week cycle to address the deficits thus providing "core plus more". In addition, we have, over the last two summers, partnered with the Main South CDC to provide 100 e-readers for summer use	The use of e-readers has a measureable impact on our students' achievement. Those who participated, retained or improved their BAS scores from June to September	

B. Schedule and Calendar

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact for Improvement	Timeline
The Monday afternoon meetings will be replaced with an opportunity for a Professional Development session of 3.8 hours on the first Wednesday afternoon of the month for a total of 10 months.	No proposed changes	This change maximizes the effectiveness of our professional development and collaborative planning time. The meetings are focused on instruction and student learning.	On-going

C. Staffing

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact for Improvement	Timeline
Woodland Academy has its own hiring process independent of the collective bargaining agreement that includes interviews with faculty as well as demonstration lessons.	No proposed changes	Autonomy of hiring has allowed us to establish a committed team of educators from Worcester and beyond who share the vision and mission of our Innovation Plan	On-going
Original document states that new hires will: "Have completed or be in the process of completing Category 1, 2, 3, & 4 trainings in English Language Learning".	The state has since replaced the Category trainings with new regulations, which include a requirement that all incumbent core academic teachers of ELLs earn a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement by July 1, 2016	Students will benefit from the implementation of specialized instructional practices. Compliance with state regulations	Immediate
Woodland Academy, with the support of our Main South Neighborhood partners, will establish a structure student support system. Exploring the possibility of hiring a School Support Coordinator similar to the Boston City Connects Program.	Although the Main South Promise Neighborhood group was never developed, the WPS recognized the importance for this role and provided an opportunity to hire a Wrap Around Coordinator. Family Support team has been established to identify families in need and provide supports	Students and families benefit from the support provided. WAC and staff proactively assess the needs of students and develop a support plan, while connecting students and families with appropriate supports Develop partnerships with neighborhood and outside agencies/partners to ensure and maintain services Track and measure effectiveness of support	On-going

D. Professional Development

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact for Improvement	Timeline
Focus of PD to date has been on: • Unit planning • Implementation of new math resource • Phonemic Awareness • Guided Reading • Writer's Workshop	Starting in August, 2014 we will work in partnership with Bertha Elena Rojas, the ESL department and Worcester State University. 36 hours of our PD time from August to January will be devoted to the theory and application of language development	Woodland Academy will become a center of excellence for the instruction of English Language Learners. The goal is for all core teachers to be dually licensed.	Immediate

E. District Policies and Procedures

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact for Improvement	Timeline
We sought the autonomy to retain or suspend elements of the current Worcester Public Schools assessment cycle. We will evaluate diagnostic assessments to use as alternatives to district mandated tests.	We discontinued the use of the DIBELs assessment as it was demonstrably inappropriate for our population of level 1 and 2 ELLS. Our implementation of the BAS is different from the rest of the district. We assess *all* students regardless of grade or reading level. We adjusted the timeline: We assess students in grades 1-6 in September, December and April. We assess students in Kindergarten in January and May.	The BAS is a diagnostic assessment. It is not designed to be an end-of-year summative assessment. The results give teachers information to support instructional decision making. Changing the dates allows our teachers to use the data more effectively. In addition, we see reading development as a process that is ongoing for all students, including those who are on or above grade level, hence the need to assess all students, not just those who are struggling. Woodland students show measureable and expedited growth in reading at all levels.	On-going

Report Card: Woodland Academy and its faculty will explore an alternative report card tool. The current WPS report card is not standards based and not aligned with Woodland Academy's best practices.	WPS has since initiated a plan to replace the current report card with a standards-based report card. Woodland's principal and teachers from each grade are active participants in this initiative.	Improved communication of student achievement aligned to MA and Common Core Standards	Ongoing
Governance Board: The indirect responsibilities of the Site Council will transition into a more direct, vested Governance Board as a means of including all community stakeholders in the personal development and academic achievement of all Woodland Academy students.	Continue to meet with Governance Board on a quarterly basis in order to review and inform all stakeholders of the academic and overall development of our school.	Open communication, transparency and continued support from Woodland Academy stakeholders.	On-going
Direct oversight of special permission enrollment: The principal will partake in direct discussion with potential students and family members.	Continue to oversee special permission. The principal will continue to have autonomy over special permission and rescinding decisions.	This direct oversight secures a commitment from families and students in terms of expectations for learning and parental involvement.	

F. Budget

Original Innovation Plan – March 2011	Updates/Proposed Improvements May 2014	Impact for Improvement	Timeline
The school will be provided the equivalent level of resources that are allocated to all district elementary schools based on the overall district budget and based a weighted lump-sum per pupil formula that recognizes the differentiated needs for students, particularly special education and English language learners. All federal entitlement grants will be provided in a similar manner. The school will then determine the best allocation of those resources to support student achievement.	No proposed changes	Awaiting implementation	On-going

Governance Board 2014-2015

Name	Position
Patricia Padilla	Principal
Lynnette Diaz	Assistant Principal
Margaret Welch	Instructional Coach
Arline Rosario	Parent Representative
Tom Delprete	Clark University
Steve Teasdale	Worcester CDC
Hilda Ramirez	School Committee / LEI
Cindy Bourgelas	Primary Teacher Representative
Dr. Ricardo Dobles	Intermediate Teacher Representative
Karen Allen	Special Education Teacher Representative
Suzanna Resendes	EAW Teacher Representative