

Sustainable Improvement Plan: 2021-22 SY

Burncoat Middle School Sustainable Improvement Plan – 2021-22 School Year Executive Summary

Recap of the 2020-21 School Year

The 2020-2021 school year was very unpredictable and challenging for all stakeholders. The transition from full remote learning, to hybrid instruction, to concurrent in-person and remote learning was a monumental barrier for educators, community partners, students, and families. Our original plans for professional development focused on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Culturally Responsive Teaching were amended to make way for the more immediate need for practical training in technology tools and pedagogy. We utilized a combination of district developed PD and school based, educator led, professional learning to meet the needs of all staff independent of digital skills. This work took place from the start of the school year through late January when student asynchronous learning was minimized, eliminating time during the school day for staff to participate in professional learning.

In order to align this new reality and learning with our goals from our 2019/2020 improvement plan our Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) created a walkthrough schedule so that every teacher's virtual classroom was visited at least bi-weekly by varying members. The walkthroughs served as a monitoring vehicle for adjusting school wide implementation practices as well as a way to improve and target feedback. The ILT identified areas of the district walkthrough rubric that were receiving lower scores to prioritize and re-calibrated expectations for teaching in a remote, then hybrid model. Student engagement arose as a focus of our work, based on walkthrough data and in response to both attendance and grading data which indicated a significant number of students were not engaging in classes.

Collaboration during cluster and department PLCs accelerated teacher learning and allowed successful practices to be shared and further developed. This was in part due to the 70-minute blocks of time for scheduling. Grade level co-planning increased over this past year utilizing the department PLC structures and will continue to be an area of focused improvement moving into the 2021-22 school year.

Our Vision for Burncoat Middle School

We envision a school where open and consistent communication occurs at all levels. Means of communication will be formalized using platforms such as Google Classroom, Weekly Bulletins, Shared Calendar, Digital Handbook and other consistent methods so that communication from administration to teachers, teachers to teachers and from teachers to students is frequent, consistent, and clear. We also envision a school where teachers and administrators communicate consistently with families and community members as partners.

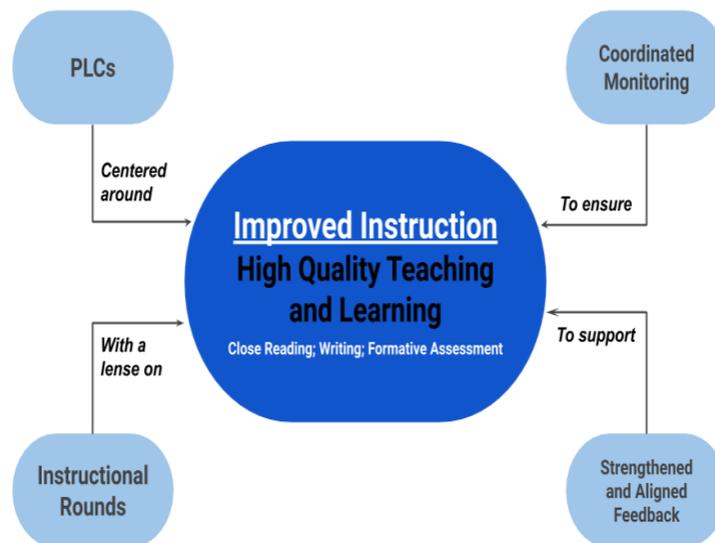
We envision a school where educators have a shared idea of what high quality teaching and learning looks like and how to implement best practices. Our instructional focus will continue to be on close reading (using Notice & Note Strategies) and writing across the curriculum, using the Self Regulated Strategy Development program (SRSD). We will **implement a renewed focus on formative assessment** as they relate to these areas, improve our use of **professional learning community (PLCs) structures and protocols**, and consistently use the new district observation tool and a structured peer observation schedule (Instructional Rounds) **to enhance our feedback cycle** so it is clear, frequent, collaborative, and effective. We will offer more choice and voice in our cluster PLCs so that **educators can select areas of focus for their data cycles and own their work and student data** in a more authentic way.

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We envision a culture of feedback and growth through the use of informal and formal feedback. Evaluators will continue to provide written feedback on lesson plans weekly. Department heads, administrators and focused instructional coaches will continue to follow a schedule of ‘walkthrough’ observations. A quicker turnaround on targeted feedback will enable teachers to enhance lessons and adjust instruction to address student needs more promptly. Department Heads, Coaches, and District Liaisons will be able to create focused and specific Professional Development around the needs of Burncoat Middle Educators.

We envision our teaching to be culturally responsive and inclusive. Our continued use of the Inclusion Model and increased focus on Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) and Social Emotional Learning practices will help support and encourage all learners to engage in authentic learning opportunities - particularly our students in special education and English Learners. Introducing principles of Using Universal Design for Learning in classrooms will help to support all students in becoming expert learners and will increase positive student culture, as well as increase the depth of knowledge in learning tasks.

The graphic shared here captures and summarizes the turnaround efforts at BMS and how they relate to one another. At the center lies our overall goal of improved instruction. The standard for core instruction is based on the Worcester Public Schools’ High Quality Teaching and Learning Framework. Under that Framework lies the three areas of our instructional focus: Close Reading, Writing, and Formative Assessment. To directly address and improve our instructional focus are the **four turnaround levers** (e.g., PLCs, Instructional Rounds, Coordinated Monitoring, and Feedback) that we are implementing in order to improve instruction. On the right side we have leadership strategies to support and ensure our improvement efforts are taking place. On the left side we have collaborative structures intended to observe, analyze, discuss, and plan different instructional strategies in the classroom at the teacher level.



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Turnaround Practice #1: Leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration

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

Our Strategic Objective is to continue to strengthen our school wide collaborative leadership structure with practices in place for ongoing evaluation and shared responsibility for improving student achievement. Administrators, Department Heads, ILT and Focused Instructional Coaches are actively and continually monitoring, supporting and assessing the implementation of improved standards-based curriculum, instructional strategies, use of resources and student achievement in all content areas.

Key Areas for Improvement

- 1.1: Strengthen the structured Professional Learning Communities
 - 1.2: Strengthen and effectively align feedback on curriculum and best practices
 - 1.3: Continue to monitor the strength of curriculum and instruction in all classrooms
 - 1.4: Improve the effective use of Instructional Rounds
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Strategies and Actions (specific and timebound)

1.1 Structured Professional Learning Communities

- Define a formal purpose and explicit goals for department and cluster PLCs and SST meetings.
- Expand usage of the "here's what, so what, now what" protocol to guide PLC data analysis and decision making.
- Embed cycles of professional learning into cluster PLCs.
- Continue usage of Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) with shift in focus toward reaching students in high-need subgroups.

1.2 Strengthening and Aligning feedback on Curriculum and Best Practices

- Continue to conduct regular classroom walkthrough observations.
- Continue to use walkthrough data to monitor and improve instruction.
- Strengthen and improve written feedback to teachers.

1.3 Coordinated Monitoring of Curriculum and Instruction

- Establish a calendar of formative data collection and analysis in each core department.
- Collaboratively backwards-design instructional units, establishing a common set of objectives.
- Embed protocols into each data cycle for reflecting upon and measuring impact of data-driven instructional shifts.

1.4 Instructional Rounds

- Formalize a cycle for instructional rounds in which cluster teachers observe one another's implementation of strategies explored during PLC professional learning.
 - Establish student-centered "look-fors" to inform the instructional rounds process.
 - Establish safe norms and protocols for cluster teachers to measure impact, provide feedback, reflect upon, and adjust practice.
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Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional practices for improving instruction

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

Our Strategic Objective is to continue to improve the quality of our standards-based lessons and classroom instruction (e.g., use of formative assessments), conduct administrator and peer-on-peer observations around specific instructional foci and provide constructive, teacher-specific feedback as well as targeted support and professional development (through PLCs and coaching) so that our core instruction will improve, leading to improved student achievement.

Key Areas for Improvement

- 2.1: Continue job embedded professional learning on school wide close reading strategies (Notice and Note) and schoolwide writing (SRSD).
 - 2.2: To improve how teachers and teacher teams use common assessments, specifically in ELA and Math.
 - 2.3: Continue job embedded professional learning on teachers' use of formative assessments with a focus on blended learning.
 - 2.4: Implement targeted practices to accelerate learning of English language learners.
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Strategies and Actions (specific and timebound)

2.1 Continue job embedded professional learning on school wide close reading strategies (Notice and Note) and schoolwide writing (SRSD).

- Renewed focus on close reading strategies through Notice and Note as well as ELA reading routines in StudySync.
- Formalize usage of "do-what-how" charts for unpacking comprehension of math problems during SRSD and monthly check-in assessments.
- Establish a system for instructing and assessing literacy of models and data displays as a basis for science SRSD.

2.2 Expand usage of periodic common assessments across core departments.

- Implement common mid-unit checkpoint assessments in all math classes.
- Fully implement use of Studysync benchmark as common formative assessment.
- Introduce periodic common content-based assessments in ELA and social studies classes.
- Implement monthly common assessments focused on literacy of models and data displays across all science classes.

2.3 Continue job embedded professional learning on teachers' use of formative assessments with a focus on blended learning.

- Continue professional learning on usage of interactive platforms for embedding formative assessment (Pear Deck, Nearpod).
- Include protocols for reflection and measure of instructional impact into department data cycles.
- Formalize a calendar of professional learning into cluster PLCs so that teachers may explore more deeply student-centered teaching strategies and their impact on learning (blended learning, SEI strategies, etc).

2.4 Implement targeted practices to accelerate learning of English language learners.

- Develop teaching clusters that align teachers with SEI expertise with high need students.
 - Improve two way communication by establishing a point person within the cluster for each ELL.
 - Align teacher schedules so that ESL teachers may periodically attend cluster PLC.
 - Formalize protocols for departments to regularly share tier II and tier III vocabulary with ESL teachers in advance so that students receive greater vocabulary support in content classes.
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Turnaround Practice #3: Student-specific supports and instruction to all students

The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs.

Our Strategic Objective is to improve our system (structures, practices, and use of resources) for providing targeted instructional interventions and supports to all students, including the ongoing monitoring of the impact of tiered interventions and the ability to adapt and modify the school's structures and resources (e.g., time, staff, schedules) to provide interventions to students throughout the year.

Key Areas for Improvement

- 3a: Provide Targeted Intervention
- 3b: Utilize a district EL Coach
- 3c: Provided Tiered Intervention Classes in Reading and Numeracy
- 3d: Provide after school (or remote) targeted EL intervention (Tutoring)

Strategies and Actions (specific and timebound)

3.1 Providing Targeted Intervention

- Students will be scheduled into targeted groups (based on need and teachers' areas of expertise) at the beginning of the school year.
- Identify from ACCESS data language domains of greatest need and collaboratively plan activities to accelerate growth in those domains.
- Formalize a process for monitoring SWD growth on math common formative assessments and structures for accelerating learning relative to IEP goals.

3.2 Formal District EL coach support

- Develop a formal schedule for the district ELL coach to attend cluster PLCs.

3.3 Tiered Intervention Classes in Reading & Numeracy

- Develop and implement diagnostic assessments at BOY to identify student levels in reading and numeracy.
- Teams will explore ways to adjust students' schedules during the school year so there is better alignment between teachers' areas of expertise and students' needs.
- Explore means for embedding targeted numeracy acceleration into existing study skills classes.

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Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate

A safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and collaborative culture among teachers.

Our Strategic Objective is to cultivate a school community that is welcoming, positive, safe, and respectful of all members - students, families, faculty, staff, and administration. We want all members to productively focus on the progress of all students; to be included in the process, to support others and to receive support in return. All invested in promoting student success will be appreciated and celebrated for their contributions and the progress made.

Key Areas for Improvement

- 4a. Continue to maintain a safe and orderly environment, enrichment, and out-of-school activities
- 4b. Continue to improve school climate
- 4c. Improve communication tools and processes

Strategies and Actions (specific and timebound)

4.1 Maintain a safe and orderly environment, enrichment, and out of school activities

- Continue implementation of the schoolwide PBIS framework.
- Continue to use and improve the BMS electronic Staff Handbook that explicitly defines building procedures, staff duties and expectations.

4.2 Continue to improve school climate

- Continue to offer opportunities for faculty, staff and administration to bond, collaborate on school events, lead professional learning, voice concerns and share possible solutions with the goal of developing strong teamwork, dedication, and enthusiasm for the entire Burncoat community.
- Continue to provide professional learning with “in house” staff such as our Google certified trainers (iTeachers), along with content area specialists (i.e. Department Heads).
- Utilize collaborative problem solving strategies to resolve problems of student behavior and motivation among teaching staff, administration, students and parents.
- Utilize Start With Hello program to increase student and staff empathy and inclusiveness.

4.3 Improve Communication Tools and Processes

- Formalize a unified expectation for utilizing homeroom periods to communicate essential information to students and to assist with executive function.
 - Analyze school culture and climate data with *the community* in a more intentional and consistent manner
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Benchmarks

Benchmarks should be specific, measurable, and timebound (e.g., date or by month). The first column lists the benchmark and the second column lists the measure, data collection tool, and/or relevant information. When possible, please link the benchmark with a specific strategy (e.g., by noting the number of the strategy...1.1 or 2.2). Benchmarks should be brief and may be cross-strategy; you are encouraged to identify a small set of benchmarks that demonstrate progress and address multiple strategies.

Benchmarks

| Benchmark | Measurement/Comments |
|---|---|
| All classrooms will be visited by an instructional leader on a consistent basis. | Consistency and equity of classroom visits will be monitored by the ILT on a monthly basis through review of lessons and walkthrough tool. |
| PLC quality and effectiveness will improve. | All PLCs will use the PLC Rubric tool to self-assess and track the content of PLC meetings; Rubric will be 100% used from BOY 2021 Measure of Effectiveness: Agenda meeting notes and PLC rubric data. |
| Common Assessments will be used with fidelity among teachers and with students. | All teachers using SRSD will track assignments 3x/year. All students will show steady growth within the scale used to score SRSD. Remediation or review will be seen in lesson plans. |
| Improved co-planning during meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are actively engaged in co-planning on a consistent basis, resulting in shared common assessments and improved alignment of grade-alike courses. Improved co-planning and instruction in Inclusion Courses. | Department level PLC will focus on collaborative Unit/Lesson Planning (Planning from standards ->assessments->units/lessons) Effectiveness will be measured using the PLC rubric as well as classroom walkthrough data and Lesson Plan feedback. |
| Students in need of intervention in Reading and Math will show increased growth. <i>[Growth targets will be determined based on individual students' needs.]</i> | Students will be scheduled more strategically in intervention classes. Reading classes - Lexia Numeracy classes- Ascend math program STAR data will be used in both reading and math to track student achievement and growth. |
| Professional Community Building | Sharing of lessons, visiting each other's classes (Instructional Rounds), volunteering at extra curricular activities for students as well. |
| Improved Communication | Google Classroom, Weekly Bulletins, Shared Calendar, Electronic Handbook and other consistent methods will be used. |

Academic Targets

Burncoat Middle School will use the academic and non-academic targets and lowest performing student group information set by DESE in the fall of 2021 as primary improvement goals for the up-coming school year.