

STUDENT OPPORTUNITY ACT PLAN

Westfield Public Schools

Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.

- English learners and former English learners
- Students with disabilities
- Low income/economically disadvantaged students
- High Needs students (defined as any student who is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an English learner/former English learner)
- African American/Black students
- Asian students
- Hispanic or Latinx students
- White students

The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.

The Westfield Public Schools Strategy for Continuous Improvement (2018-2021) articulates our vision to provide rigorous, inclusive educational experiences that promote academic, emotional, and social growth to become lifelong learners, and to empower students with knowledge and skills for future success in college and career. It is the commitment of Westfield Public Schools that all students in every subgroup are provided the skills, resources and academic opportunities to achieve success from prekindergarten through, and after graduation. We recognize, based on district data, that we need to increase support to students in specific student groups.

An analysis of our 2019 MCAS data shows that overall; in every grade and subject area (other than grade 8 ELA) the district is performing below the state in the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations.

Relative to subgroups; in grades 3-8, students with disabilities, African American/Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latino and White students are performing below the state in the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations. In grade 10, students with disabilities, EL and Former EL, Economically Disadvantaged, High Needs, Asian, Hispanic/Latino and White students are performing below the state in the percentage of students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations.

In the Fall of 2019, Westfield Public Schools invested in a data-driven, decision-support tool that provides administrators, teachers and instructional support staff the ability to view longitudinal MCAS and local benchmark performance, current grades, attendance and discipline data. Additionally, we configured the tool to store the DESE Early Warning Indicators and all data are able to be associated with the EWIS Model risk levels for each student. This foundation provides staff the ability to identify students at risk in each school and classroom.

Westfield Public Schools is committed to providing academic leadership, oversight, resources and training for instructional staff, and outreach, collaboration and support to our families and community with the common goal of narrowing the gaps in both achievement and opportunity for our students from prekindergarten through, and after graduation. We remain committed to sharing this work with all stakeholders involved: students, staff, families, and community members.

Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

Focus Area 1: Expanded access to full-day, high-quality pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds, including potential collaboration with other local providers (D, F, and G)

Expand access to full day high quality pre-Kindergarten for 4-year-olds: In coordination with our MSBA process to build a new elementary school, we are conducting a review of our current preschool program. Our Early Childhood Center is in an aging facility, and the self-contained nature of the program adds an additional transition for our students. One of the considerations would be to consider the feasibility of relocating some preschool classrooms into neighborhood elementary schools. We may be able to expand the Pre-K program for 4-year-olds from the current half day program to a full day program. By having Pre-K programs at the elementary sites, it would eliminate a transition for these students and in theory increase the number of students attending preschool in the district. Full day Pre-K will lead to increased student achievement and social/emotional success for our students with disabilities, English learners, and low-income students.

	FY21 budget item	Amount: enter number, do not use the \$ character	Foundation Category
1	Transportation	600,000	Operations and Maintenance
2	Additional Staff	600,000	Classroom & Specialist Teachers

Focus Area 2: Early College programs focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education (I)

Early College Program focused on students that are underrepresented in higher education:

We have achieved Early College Designation from DESE with Westfield State University as our partner in the Westfield Promise program. Currently, stretch courses in English are available to juniors on both high school campuses, and a stretch course in Political Science / American Government is available at Westfield High School. As seniors, students in the program may take up to 12 college credits on the Westfield State University campus in their senior year. This year, we added an additional cohort of students taking two stretch courses at Westfield High School, and next year, we will add an additional stretch course at the Westfield Technical Academy in Psychology. Westfield is adding additional after-hours courses open to juniors and seniors at both high schools in areas such as geographical information systems and psychology to fulfill all college requirements. Westfield will actively recruit and target students in the subgroup areas who are first generation members to attend college.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	Early College Counselor	90,000	Guidance and Psychological
2	College and Career Center	78,000	Other
3	Transportation	30,000	Operations and Maintenance

Focus Area 3: Dropout prevention and recovery programs (I)

Dropout prevention and recovery programs: In 2018, Westfield opened a satellite campus to Westfield High School called the Westfield Alternative Learning Center (WALC) to provide a smaller learning environment for at-risk students for students in grades 10-12. The program embeds opportunities for credit recovery and individualized student counseling. Westfield is exploring options to expand the program in order to meet the needs of more of our students, beginning in grade 9. The district provides adult mentors from local businesses and the community at grades 5-12 in order to work with at-risk students in all three domains: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. The mentors at the high school level provide support for academics, social-emotional issues, and function as graduation coaches.

	FY21 budget item	Amount (enter number, do not use the \$ character)	Foundation Category
1	Administrator Salary	116,016	Administration
2	Teaching Staff	352,042	Classroom & Specialist Teachers
3	Utilities	15,000	Operations and Maintenance
4	Paraprofessionals	38,818	Other Teaching Services

Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.

- Student Achievement: English language arts (ELA) achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
- Student Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
- Student Achievement: Science achievement as measured by average scaled scores (or CPI, depending on grade level) on MCAS
- Student Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
- Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
- High School Completion: Four-year cohort graduation rate
- High School Completion: Annual dropout rate
- Post-secondary Success: Enrolled in college during the first year after high school
- Custom District Metric 1: iReady Diagnostic Assessment
- Custom District Metric 2: DIBELS
- Custom District Metric 3: SWIS/PBIS

Commitment 4: Engaging All Families

District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students' needs.

Westfield is committed to fostering the academic, social/emotional growth of our students. We believe engaging all families and community organizations are crucial to student engagement and success. One way is to form partnerships with

parents and guardians is to establish opportunities for parents/guardians to have a voice in their child's education and advise the district and schools on matters. We have the following opportunities that foster parent engagement and communication.

- Superintendent Parent Advisory Council
- SEPAC: Special Education Parent Advisory Council
- ELPAC: English Learner Parent Advisory Council
- Title I Family Nights
- Title I Parent/Guardian Annual Meetings
- Title I Parent/Guardian Surveys
- School-Messenger Notification System
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Home Visits for students in Kindergarten

Westfield will increase our efforts to engage and recruit families with students from identified subgroups for participation in these events. We plan to expand our home visits to not only include all Pre-K and Kindergarten students, but to also include new students (Pre-K to Grade 12) in the high needs subgroup as identified at the point of registration.

Certifications

Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.

District Timeline:

January 9 – Brainstorm needs of students that are "high" needs in our district with the entire WPS Administrative Team. Ongoing – Create public awareness of the SOA and its requirements (see attached Westfield News article). This article has also been posted to our district FB page.

January 27-February 7 – Central Office Administrative Team develops draft plan from administrator brainstorming for funding use.

February 11 – Plan finalized by central office administrators and building principals.

February 12 – March 1 – Principals share plan with PTO's, School Councils, and staff for feedback.

February 25 – Superintendent presents to the Parent Advisory Board for feedback.

March 2 – SOA plan presented to the School Committee for feedback. Recommend an agenda item to allow for public comment as well.

March 16 – School Committee votes to approve SOA plan. April 1 – WPS Plan submitted to DESE for approval.

Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district's Student Opportunity Act Plan.

Date of Approval: 03/16/2020