District: Winchendon
School: Murdock High School
Academic Year: 2019-2020

Date Finalized:

Section I: Executive Summary
The Executive Summary should summarize the essence of the turnaround plan in a way the average stakeholder would understand. (1-2 pages)

Through careful root cause analysis and collaboration with the ILT, District and Community stakeholders, and narrative reports from AIR as well as initial findings from our NEASC accreditation review, it was determined that Murdock High School (MHS) must deepen its focus on curriculum and instruction while simultaneously improving the mechanisms in place to offer robust wrap around services.

Paramount to this work is the creation and implementation of the Murdock “Freshmen Scholars Program”. Here, four core academic teachers as well as a Special Education teacher will house the incoming grade nine students in a central area, have built in time for Common Planning Time (CPT), develop cross-curricular lessons, determine baseline data, develop individual student goals, utilize guidance and student support resources and deepen relationships with parents and the community. This work will be supported by Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) which will enroll ten Murdock staff members in their Changemakers program that will provide staff with the skills they need to educate their students in
Growth Mindset strategies and will be furthered through deep career exploration and by the time the grade nine students reach junior year, a pathway into Early College.

In the same vein, we will also partner with Worcester State University and Virtual High School (VHS). These two partnerships will allow MHS to strengthen the rigor we are able to offer our students. Thus, with both increased college credit courses and Advanced Placement (AP) offerings through VHS our students will have transcripts that will allow them to compete more effectively with their peers and thus increase student enrollment in four year colleges.

Our teaching staff will be trained and given needed educational resources to allow them to fully align their curriculum to the current Massachusetts (MA) Standards in each discipline. This training has begun and will be fully fleshed out during Summer 2019. Teachers will collaborate with their departments to have unit plans for weeks one through ten ready to roll out by the beginning of the school year. Professional development time will be dedicated to this work throughout the school year to allow for truly rigorous, aligned and meaningful curriculum communicated to our students.

Furthermore, weekly CPT will be dedicated to a cycle of teaching and learning. Teachers will use the Winchendon district template to create lesson plans, then engage in lesson study with their peers, revise lessons appropriately, then after instruction, bring in student work for Looking at Student Work meetings, garner peer feedback and make needed changes and additions before moving forward with their curriculum. This work will be fully documented and supported by the Administration.

Moreover, teaching staff will be guided through the use of instructional white board protocols. Administration will guide teaching staff to develop meaningful student learning goals that will aid staff in crafting worthy, rigorous classroom objectives that are fully aligned to the standards and curriculum maps. Through the use of instructional walkthroughs and the evaluation process, administration will offer supports and further professional development to staff to ensure a significant increase in lessons that challenge students to think critically, ask challenging, open ended questions, engage in academic discourse and synthesize information.

Supporting this work will be our guidance staff who, through the use of Naviance, will develop complete student profiles. Students will be able to take advantage of the resources offered by the College Board earlier in their high school career, be supported through the PSAT and SAT process and be walked through the college admission process inclusive of financial aid. These supports and steps will also be communicated fully with parents with ample opportunities given to them to learn about the college process beginning when their student is enrolled in grade nine.

All of this work will be closely monitored by the ILT. This group of teachers and administrators will meet bi-weekly to review baseline, then mid-point data to identify challenges and strengths within the implementation of the turnaround plan and throughout the school building. ILT members will provide guidance to the teaching staff during monthly staff meetings and be available to provide models and exemplars of not only lesson plans, but also of live instruction through the Rounds process. This team will make recommendations for further improvement and identify upcoming challenges.

Section II: Stakeholder Engagement
Briefly describe the district and school’s process for receiving input from stakeholders throughout all stages of the turnaround process. (1-2 pages)

It was imperative to Murdock High School to receive input from stakeholders throughout all stages of the turnaround process.

We first utilized stakeholders in the collection of data needed to determine root cause analysis. The building administration worked hand in hand with district administration to craft protocol for walk throughs that were specifically focused on worthy, rigorous objectives and aligned curriculum. During this process, we called on the expertise of administrators throughout the district along with teaching staff and the central office Curriculum Director.

The results of these initial walk throughs became a spur for our reaching out to MWCC, WSU and VHS. We quickly realized that without these partnerships our graduation rate and 4-year college enrollment percentages would not increase. Our partners took a deep look at the data we provided (MCAS, SAT, 9th grade retention rates, graduation rates, 4-year college enrollment percentages, high needs percentages, special education population percentages) and determined that developing an early college program in house at MHS would produce the most immediate and most lasting impact on student success.

From here, we welcomed the American Institutes for Research (AIR) into MHS as part of their work with Murdock Middle School (MMS) which shares our building. Their report aligned to the walkthrough and DESE provided data we had already analyzed and allowed us to develop a fuller picture of our strengths and challenges.

Moreover, during this process, we also embarked on our 10-year NEASC Accreditation Site Visit. During this time, we not only shared the above data points along with student work and curricular materials with the visiting team but also elicited their expertise. Many of the professionals who were with us for five days had been members of schools which utilized many of the turnaround practices we were considering with strong results. Their feedback was then shared with the turnaround team and was incorporated into the report.

Central to this process was the formation of MHS’s ILT. Previous to the turnaround work, MHS had a single stipend position for a lead teacher who in addition to teaching four classes also was responsible for shaping and developing teacher instructional leadership. Once district administration committed itself to a model of distributed leadership in each of Winchendon’s schools, the building admiration opened the new ILT to any members of the staff who were interested in being a part of this transformative work.

The three members of the ILT represent a diversity in our staff, a wealth of experience and a desire to innovate. The ILT has met on multiple occasions, including a five hour Saturday retreat; first performing a root cause analysis of all data points listed above and then beginning to brainstorm research-based strategies for improved performance. Their continuous input via Google Classroom demonstrates the strong value they bring to the table.

During these meetings, a member of the Winchendon Select Board was also present. Her voice spoke to the history of the town and its desire to develop young people who will bring back the necessary skills as young adults to help the community thrive in the future. She was a crucial member of the root cause analysis as well as a contributor to the plan itself.
Section III: Envision the Future

Briefly describe the 3-5 year vision for the school as a result of the turnaround process. (1 page)

Murdock High School will actualize the promise of education. That is, we will commit ourselves to fulfill our collective responsibility to provide opportunity for personal, academic, and social success to each and every student who walks through our doors. We believe in this promise because it is the primary means by which we support all children to craft their dreams for the future and equip them with the tools that they need to achieve those dreams. Moreover, this type of high-quality, rigorous education serves as the anchor of our democracy and thus acts as a true moral imperative for each and every staff member who interacts with our students at MHS.

As such, we are shifting responsibility for positive student outcomes to ourselves. These increased positive student outcomes will be a result of careful planning, implementation, and dedicated reflection to our promise to the Winchendon community; all children at MHS are important. This effort begins with complete alignment to the Massachusetts State Standards in each and every discipline area – without this alignment, students’ access to the knowledge and skills they need to succeed will be unevenly distributed. We then will craft mechanisms to deliver this rigorous, standards aligned curriculum to our students. Our teachers will be fluent in the need for and the creation of worthy mastery objectives as the centerpiece of every lesson. We cannot expect our students to know where to go unless our teachers provide that map. And like the GPS in our cars, our teachers will remind our students when the next turn is two miles ahead, again at the one mile marker, once more at the half mile mark and enthusiastically when the turn is right in front of them.

The education students receive at Murdock High School will create the building blocks needed to produce graduates who are informed citizens capable of making critical decisions in their lives, as members of a civic society and as professionals in the workforce. We will understand that schooling is not the same as learning; while schooling refers to the time our young people sit in our chairs and at our desks, learning will be the outcomes that are crafted from this vision. The establishment of the Freshman Scholars Program will be the foundation for this success. Our grade nine students will be welcomed into our school community by caring practitioners that will develop a sense of agency in our students that will allow them to develop mastery of curriculum. The learning that occurs within this program will provide our students with the deep career exploration to allow them to hone in on their purpose; our students will know why they are here at Murdock High School.

As these students grow and develop, we will have robust pathways that will provide meaningful opportunities for students at all learning abilities and interests. We will have built a system of integrated student support that ensures that a child’s only responsibility upon entering our doors will be to learn. Our educators, administrators and guidance personnel will use all available resources to support a student’s social emotional health, ensure that they have clean clothing, adequate food and the knowledge that they and their families need in order to make strong, educated choices for their post-secondary lives.

Furthermore, we will keep our promise to our students and to the Winchendon community, by building these pathways with the help of strong University partnerships. Our students will be able to gain the credits they need through Early College partnerships with Mount Wachusett Community College and
Worcester State University to enter university not just with a strong credit base, but more importantly, with the skills they need to thrive after leaving our doors.

Marian Wright Edelman said, “You can’t be what you can’t see.” As we fulfil the promise of education at Murdock High School, each of our graduates will have a full vision of what they want to be carefully designed and developed through the dedication and expertise of our staff.

**Section IV: Analysis of Assets and Challenges**

Describe the key assets to build upon, and challenges that need to be addressed, that were identified as a result of a thorough root cause analysis. (2-3 pages)

Murdock Middle/High School was opened in the Fall of 1995. It housed grades six through twelve. In 2013 the school split and became two separate schools. The building currently accommodates 617 students in grades six through twelve and houses Murdock High School, Murdock Middle School, and the Murdock Academy for Success, an alternative high school. Murdock High School currently enrolls 287 students in grades 9-12.

Murdock High School has a total staff of 40.

This breaks down to:
- Administration: 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal
- Teachers: 25
- Library Media Center Specialist: 1
- Custodians: 4 (Shared with the middle school)
- Secretaries: 3
- Guidance Counselors: 2
- School Adjustment Counselor: 1
- Nurse: 1 (plus one full time Nurse Practitioner for the Murdock Health Center)
- Paraprofessionals: 1

The average daily attendance rate of staff is 89%. The average daily attendance rate for students for the 2017-2018 is 92.8% with 23.3% of students being chronically absent.

According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Accountability information, Murdock High School is classified as "requiring assistance or intervention". We fall in the 11th percentile of the accountability measures. Overall, we received 43% of possible points toward improvement targets based on 2018 MCAS, high school completion, and additional indicators.

Studying data from the graduating class of 2017 and 2018 indicates that student success or lack thereof during their freshman year is a strong measure of their success for their subsequent time at MHS. In each graduating class, approximately 10% of students failed one class their freshman year with another 20% failing two or more classes. These students were exponentially more likely to not graduate on time and ultimately, drop out of school.

Furthermore, data indicates that grade nine students are referred for discipline at a vastly higher rate than their peers. During the 2018-2019 school year (August-March) there were 26 referrals of grade 12
students, 72 referrals of grade 11 students, 74 referrals of grade 10 students and 297 referrals of grade nine students.

These measures seem to indicate correlation to Winchendon’s 70.7% 4-year graduation rate (286/300 districts in the Commonwealth).

In 2018, approximately 68% of Murdock graduates continued their education at a two or four year college, although only 20.7% enrolled in a 4-year college or university, the 7th lowest in the state, while the remaining 32% entered the military or went directly into the workforce. These data points speak to the fact that 55.6% of the 2018 MHS graduating class completed MASSCORE requirements (273/294 districts in the Commonwealth).

Of the class of 2019, 22 students were awarded the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship (27% of the graduating class). There are currently 34 students who have been elected to the Murdock High School Chapter of the National Honor Society. Despite these laudable numbers, not all of these highly qualified students enrolled in a four year college or university.

Approximately 22% of the students at Murdock High School have an Individual Educational Plan and 5% have a 504 accommodation plan. 40.9% of the MHS student body is designated as Economically Disadvantaged as measured by DESE.

In most departments, individual prep time has been scheduled concurrently, allowing teachers to collaborate on developing and implementing curriculum, lessons, and teaching strategies. Once during each six-day cycle, 40 minutes of this time is mandated as common planning time for this purpose. The Special Education staff that works with each department also attends the common planning sessions. Challenges in engaging all students and helping them to progress toward achieving the 21st Century Learning Expectations is a common focus of this time. This time, however, is unstructured and would benefit from the use of a rolling agenda as well as research-based resources for teaching and learning.

According to the most recent family and community survey, 83% of parents feel that the curriculum provides their children with opportunities to achieve the school's learning expectations. While 69% of the staff feel that the school's formal curriculum design ensures that all students practice and achieve all of the school's learning expectations, not all of the written curriculum documents align or contain references to the 21st Century Learning Expectations. Curriculum for the same course at varying levels contains all of the same learning expectations, but the speed, depth, and methods by which they are achieved is varied to meet the needs of the students by providing differing levels of difficulty and practice.

The Program of Studies and the Student Handbook outline the requirements needed for students to acquire the appropriate credits and criteria necessary for graduation. However, this handbook is out of date and contains contradictory information. Additionally, although each subject area assesses student achievement of the school-wide expectations using school-wide rubrics, these rubrics are not necessarily aligned to one another, state standards or provide clear explanations of point values to students.

Section V: Strategic Objectives & Initiatives Aligned to Turnaround Practices
Describe the key strategies the school will implement, the rationale for selecting those strategies, and the plan to support them. If a strategy falls under multiple turnaround practices, list the
strategy once, then reference it in subsequent practices. (Use as a general rule: 2-3 strategies, described in up to 3 pages per turnaround practice. Total page length for Section V is approximately 8-12 pages.)

**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.

1) We will develop a Freshman Scholar Program consisting of an ELA, Math, Science, History and Special Education support teachers which will be responsible for reducing grade nine failures and retention.

These teachers have already begun meeting and have completed a book study of *The Make or Break Year*. Through this book study, our team has identified that ninth grade GPA was more predictive than test scores of high school graduation, college enrollment and college retention. When looking at our own data, we quickly realized that our student body mirrors those in Chicago who were depicted within the text.

Moreover, this practice has been widely documented as an Evidence Based Practice. For example, in the study, “Impact of a Freshman Academy on Student Performance at a Comprehensive Public High School”, Jose Angel Hernandez concludes that, “Results showed that academy 9th grade students did statistically better in GPA and credits earned than the previous 9th grade class without an academy.” (https://eric.ed.gov/?q=GRADE+9+academy&id=ED541007). Within this process, researchers also advocate for early warning and intervention for at-risk students. In the study, “Identifying Early Warning Indicators in Three Ohio School Districts”, researchers conclude that, “…the most accurate early warning indicators of students being off track for graduating on time vary by school district and grade level. Overall, the most accurate indicators in both grades were based on coursework. (https://eric.ed.gov/?q=GRADE+9&ff1=eduGrade+9&ff2=dtySince_2015&pg=2&id=ED566958).

For example, from August 2018 to March 2019, 26 grade 12 students had discipline referrals, 72 grade 11 students, 76 grade 10 students and 297 grade nine students. Moreover, historically at Murdock High School, in the incoming class of 2014-2015, 10 students failed one class, with 20% of them not on track to graduate and 20% dropped out. In the same class, 17 students failed two or more classes; 82% of them were not on track to graduate and 41% of them dropped out (See chart below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed One Class</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students not on track to graduate</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students dropping out</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failed Two or More Classes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students not on track to graduate</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students dropping out</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus, we are fully redeveloping the way we support grade nine students at MHS. We have designated four content area teachers and one Special Education support teacher to be solely responsible for teaching freshman students. We have moved teacher rooms so that this new team will be in a single hallway together. This will allow for the Freshmen Scholars Program to develop a sense of community and belonging and additionally provide for flexibility in scheduling. The team has begun to outline behavioral, social-emotional and academic expectations for the program and will ensure that these expectations are consistent throughout each of their classes. Time will be provided for CPT among the teaching staff as well as school embedded parent meeting time. We will be utilizing our student support staff (School Resource Officer, Guidance department and School Adjustment Counselor) during these meetings as well.

The grade nine staff is committed to fostering a positive relationship with the parents and guardians of their students. As such, they have developed an initial brochure of program offerings, are in the process of putting together an open house, and will be providing families a quarterly newsletter of curriculum and social happenings.

An advisory program of mentorship will be worked into their schedules as will a dedicated after school tutoring program that will be mandatory for all grade nine students. This work will be supported through the Changemakers program based out of Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) which will provide Professional Development for the staff in growth mindset and other social emotional supports. MWCC is also committed to a guest speaker series and helping our teachers navigate a deep career interest survey for our students.

2) Historically, there has not been an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) at Murdock High School. Research, including that done by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, lauds the work of an effective ILT. “It is well documented that school administrators who enlist highly effective teachers and conduct business in a distributed leadership style has a better chance of reaching their goals. A broad spectrum of research shows that highly effective schools are those that have fostered and supported a community of distributed leadership, shared responsibility, and provide time for professional collaboration for the purpose of improving student achievement.” (Instructional Leadership Team Guide and Resources).

Thus, work has already begun to develop and implement an effective ILT. Staff were invited to apply to the team in late Spring 2019 and three teachers with a diverse range of experience and expertise were chosen to represent the staff on the team. They have already been trained by our SSoS representative and have worked on a root cause analysis and completed a review of Research-Based best practices during two retreat sessions.

In the 2019-2020 school year, their role will be expanded as they will meet bi-weekly to review student outcomes, instructional and school culture data and:

a. ID priority areas for professional development and collaboration
b. Plan and train for facilitation of PD and common planning time.
c. Monitor TA plan implementation, adjusting plans to respond to emerging issues.

In order to accomplish these goals, the ILT will be utilizing a rolling agenda with designated roles and will be responsible for keeping meeting minutes that will be public to the entire staff.

As teacher-leaders, the ILT will share developed best practices at Principal’s Meetings with staff monthly and monitor the progress of the implementation. Moreover, the ILT has identified a text they wish to engage in a book study: *(The Teacher Clarity Playbook)* first with themselves and then with the larger staff. Through this work, the ILT will provide a twice annual report on the progress of the Turnaround Action Plan and offer suggestions for revision.

3) Although Murdock High School does currently have school-day embedded CPT for all departments, these meetings vary in effectiveness as well as structure. As Mike Schmoker observes, “clarity precedes competence” (2004a, p. 85) and without a clear objective to these meetings, they have largely been ineffective in moving the needle in teaching and learning. Thus, systems will be put into place to ensure that these meetings are results focused and supported by research based best practices. As stated by Dufour and Dufour, the PLC system should be a

“Systematic processes engage each member of the organization in an ongoing cycle of:

- Gathering evidence of current levels of student learning
- Developing strategies and ideas to build on strengths and address weaknesses in that learning
- Implementing those strategies and ideas
- Analyzing the impact of the changes to discover what was effective and what was not
- Applying new knowledge in the next cycle of continuous improvement”

Consequently, Murdock High School aims to initiate and implement weekly CPT department meetings that are focused on a rolling agenda and a cycle of lesson study and looking at student work protocols. Initial aims of this work are:

- 100% of content departments will meet once a week.
- 100% of content departments will use agreed upon rolling agenda. This agenda will be available to the group as well as the administration before the day of the meeting. Minutes will be taken during the meeting that will be used to help organize subsequent meetings.
- Departments will engage in at least one lesson study and one Looking at Student Work (LASW) protocol monthly. These protocols will be supported by the Assistant Principal who will train staff on how to most effectively use the protocols. Findings from this work will be used to drive instruction and improve lesson planning, teaching and assessment.
- Each teacher will be responsible for sharing at four lessons and the summative assessment and subsequent student work yearly.
- Departments will develop standards-aligned summative assessments for each unit of study in each course they teach. They will submit their draft assessments to the administration for feedback at least 2 weeks before initiating the teaching of that unit, and the administration will make every effort to provide feedback at least one week before instruction begins.
- Departments will share their draft assessments with peers, to get feedback from peers before submitting to administration.
• Departments will present findings quarterly at Principal’s meetings to the staff. This feedback will allow the staff as a whole to garner a deeper understanding of the functions of each department and how they can best align their goals.

• Furthermore, the existing Student Support Team (SST) will meet weekly on Tuesdays and will be responsible for continued following up of concerns.

• Guidance will attend CPTs on a rotating schedule, attending each department’s meeting at least once monthly to foster better communication between the services they provide and the content area teachers.

**Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional practices for improving instruction**

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

1. Foundational to the success of any educational institution is a curriculum that is aligned both vertically but also horizontally and to state standards. Although we understand the importance of staff ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the lives of our student body, they must first be accountable to the DESE MA standards in each of the content areas. Drake and Burns argue in *Meeting Standards Through Integrated Curriculum* that in regards to curriculum, “Internal alignment occurs when the instructional strategies and classroom assessments reflect the language and intent of the standards. To achieve internal alignment, teachers must first know how to “unpack the standards,” or decode the performance requirements embedded in them. For example, a science standard may state, “Students will design and conduct experiments.” The classroom learning activities and assessments must engage students in the actual designing and conducting of experiments, not just in reading about them in the textbook and answering questions.”

At this time, the standards are haphazardly unpacked and there is a paucity of curricular materials that support this work. Thus, we are committed to adapting and implementing standards-aligned curriculum in grades 9-12 in Math, Science and ELA. These teachers will choose a standards-aligned curriculum to implement for 2019-2020 during the summer of 2019.

• Each Department will engage in a summer curriculum institute where they will unpack their selected curriculum and develop their first unit and subsequent lesson plans for weeks 1-10 by August 2019.

• By August 2019, administrators will have reviewed and provided feedback on these lesson plans.

• By September 2019, teachers will
  o Document strengths of the first weeks of curriculum materials, and ways the materials need to be adjusted for the coming year.
  o Review the next portion of their curriculum, and document lesson plans for weeks 11 - 20.

• By October 2019 teachers will
  o Document strengths of unit plan for weeks 11-20, and ways the materials need to be adjusted for the next unit of study.
  o Review the next portion of their curriculum, and document lesson plans for weeks 21-30.

• By December 2019 teachers will
11

- Document strengths of materials for weeks 21-30, and ways the materials need to be adjusted for the next unit of study.
- Review the next portion of their curriculum, and document lesson plans for weeks 31-40.

- During the second semester, teachers will continue to document strengths and challenges of these curricular materials and begin to make needed changes for the 2020-2021 school year.

2. Once standards are unpacked, aligned to quality materials and maps and developed into meaningful unit and lesson plans, staff must then determine the master learning objectives for their classroom. Jere Brophy in *Motivating Students to Learn* articulates the importance of setting meaningful objectives for learning, "The key to making your students' learning experiences worthwhile is to focus your planning on major instructional goals, phrased in terms of desired student outcomes—the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and dispositions that you want to develop in your students. Goals, not content coverage or learning processes, provide the rationale for curriculum and instruction." As such, we are providing professional development to support our expectation that teaching staff will design and implement lessons with clear, worthy mastery objectives; implement lessons aligned to the objectives that center on cognitively demanding tasks.

- Before school begins, administration will provide PD for all teachers on crafting of worthy mastery objectives, and on implementation of lessons aligned to worthy objectives.
- In fall walkthroughs:
  - Well-crafted, worthy, standards-aligned objectives will be posted in 65% of classrooms
  - Classroom instruction will be aligned to worthy objectives in 50% of classrooms
- In winter walkthroughs:
  - Well-crafted, worthy, standards-aligned objectives will be posted in 75% of classrooms
  - Classroom instruction will be aligned to worthy objectives in 65% of classrooms
- In spring walkthroughs:
  - Well-crafted, worthy, standards-aligned objectives will be posted in 85% of classrooms
  - Classroom instruction will be aligned to worthy objectives in 75% of classrooms
- Teachers will be required to document lesson plans in the District template and turn these plans in to Assistant Principal monthly for feedback. At November check, 80% of teachers will submit these plans on a timely basis.
- On four occasions between October and May, lessons will be revised in CPT using the Lesson Study protocol.
- In November check of rolling agendas, 80% of CPT groups will have one lesson study in a timely manner.
- In March check of rolling agendas, 80% of CPT groups will have completed all four lesson studies in a timely manner.

3. Unlike the ELA, Math and Science departments, the Social Studies department at Murdock High School has completed the task of unpacking the latest MA DESE standards and have aligned their course curriculum accordingly. However, in observation of classrooms, the level of rigor in these classrooms has been very low level. Students are often lectured at and given little opportunity for discussion and academic discourse. Thorough research has been completed in the benefits of
moving towards a system of Disciplinary Literacy in order to allow students to begin to read, think and write like young historians, “Because the insights and strategies of disciplinary literacy are drawn from the disciplines themselves, a focus on this information does not pose the same challenges to teachers whose self-actualization is tied to their identities as mathematics, science, English, or history educators. If anything, the insights drawn from disciplinary literacy help these teachers to better understand the practices of their respective disciplines” (Shanahan and Shanahan).

The Social Studies department will be trained in using Disciplinary Literacy (DL) to further rigor in unit and lesson plans. The source of this training will derive from Annenberg Learner which has crafted a full course in DL that is content and grade specific. These professional development materials include videos, questions and opportunities to flesh out the implications of this work.

- Social Studies Department will be introduced to the tenets of DL by June 2019.
- Social Studies Department will be trained in DL by August 2019.
- Social Studies Department will write unit and lesson plans for Weeks 1-10 with DL at its core by August 2019.
- As such, when lesson plans are turned in and reviewed by the Assistant Principal, evidence of DL should be evident daily and the department will craft a team Student Learning Goal that will allow them to further develop protocols for student success in DL.

4. In all classrooms, staff will commit to teaching lessons that are rigorous and adhere to high level Depth of Knowledge expectations. Students will be expected to utilize academic discourse on a daily basis and will be prompted to further their thinking and explorations of the standards.

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.

1. Based on survey data as well as the high retention and low 4-year graduation rate, it is clear that many of the students at Murdock High School lack a purpose for their education. The Changemakers School Districts (CMSD) work collectively with teaching staff, administration and the community to develop students and staff who consistently practice cognitive empathy, teamwork, new leadership and creative problem solving (CMSD Blueprint for Action). Moreover, Changemaking is an overarching philosophy or lens that a district, school, and its people adopt together. This program is not about doing more, but looking at how we can do things differently.

The approach that we will use with our partnership with Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) will be both concrete and abstract. MWCC is committed to providing progressive professional development for educators and regular team-based coaching. They have also committed to participate in school and district-level planning and problem-solving. The aim of
Changemakers is to be a stable and trustworthy source of encouragement and resources shared across many positively-focused educators in our region and the broader Changemaking world. Additionally, the concept of Changemaking is personal to the individual. One person may need the inner work and support systems to feel more joy or sense of meaning in teaching again. Another educator may be inspired to embed civic engagement and practical experiences into curriculum. Another may approach broken systems or practices with a new eye. Changemaking results in students feeling empowered and emboldened to have a voice. They feel more respected by their educators and therefore have improved behavior and attendance. They develop highly adaptable skills, and arguably most importantly, develop a growth mindset.

- We will train ten staff members in Changemakers and then have that cohort serve as teacher leaders to lead PD for the staff in growth mindset strategies. Trained staff will share their findings during a PD day with the faculty
- 100% of staff members will utilize growth mindset strategies with their classes by January 2020.
- Students will demonstrate greater perseverance as measured by a 25% reduction in failures in Q3 and Q4.

2. Like their content area counterparts, our Guidance department lacks a centralized curriculum and database of student post-high school plans, testing results and teacher recommendations. Research indicates that the most effective Guidance programs are outcomes based. “An analysis of the Public Agenda study of young adults reveals some disturbing patterns that warrant a closer look. These suggest that students who don't have access to good counseling are not making the most advantageous choices about postsecondary education and work. For example, compared with young people who say their counselors really made an effort to get to know them, those who say they felt like "a face in the crowd" when talking with their high school counselor are
  - Less likely to say they chose their college because they believed that it would help them get a good job on graduation (48 percent versus 64 percent).
  - Less likely to say that they chose their college on the basis of financial aid that was offered to them (32 percent versus 44 percent).
  - More likely to say that they would have gone to a different college if money were not an issue (46 percent versus 35 percent).
  - Less likely to say that they chose their college on the basis of its academic reputation (41 percent versus 51 percent).
  - Less likely to go to college directly after high school (39 percent versus 54 percent).” (Johnson, Rochkind and Ott).

Through the use of Naviance software, guidance will track student progress and assist students in college and career planning. The use of this program will allow us to begin filling in the gaps expressed above through student self discovery strengths explorer, college preparation that will match colleges to student interest, as well as test preparation, electronic transcripts and academic planning, our guidance department will have the tools that they need to succeed.

- 10% increase in grade 11 students taking the SAT by June 2020.
10% increase in grade 10 students taking PSAT by June 2020.
10% increase in students enrolled in 4-year college by June 2020.
100% of students grades 9-12 will have an active Naviance and collegeboard.com account by October 2019.

3. Murdock High School, as explained above, is a small, tight knit community. One of the intrinsic downsides of our size is the limited course offerings we are able to afford our students. In line with the current Massachusetts Early College Initiative, Murdock High School will begin a pathways program for students to begin early college. The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education describes the strength of Early College programs as, “Under the Early College Designation put forth by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) and Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE), approved designated early college programs in Massachusetts will align with the following design principles: Equitable Access, Academic Pathways that are well integrated and aligned with college and career, Robust Student Support in both academics and advising, Connections to Career through workplace and experiential learning experiences and High-Quality and Deep Partnerships between high schools and colleges.” (Massachusetts Department of Higher Education).

In order to answer this concern, we have entered into partnerships with Worcester State University (WSU), MWCC and Virtual High School (VHS) that will allow our students to take a diverse array of course offerings and afford them the opportunity to earn college credits during their high school career. This will be a slow roll out that is designed to target each and every student at Murdock High School. Our partnership with MWCC will begin with the above mentioned Changemakers program for grade nine students and follow them through grades 9-12, offering deep career exploration and in Grades 11 and 12 a pathways program that will provide Early College in a specific major and/or career based on the previous two years of academic performance and career choices. The Virtual High School program will allow us to offer more Advanced Placement courses for our students to enhance their transcripts. It will also provide a plethora of electives and specialized course offerings that we are unable to offer. Finally, the partnership with WSU will provide immediate, in house, early college for a cohort of 10-15 grade 11 and 12 students. Our immediate goals are to:

- Enroll up to 50 students in VHS and WSU courses by summer 2019
- Establish protocol and schedule that will allow for students to take courses during school hours and have adequate blocks for study and enrichment by August 2019.
- Increase enrollment in these courses by 10% for the 2020-2021 school year.

This practice of Dual Enrollment is also an Evidence Based Practice as indicated by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/1043](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Intervention/1043).

**Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate**
A safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and collaborative culture among teachers.
1. Although Murdock High School has a School Parent Council as established by MGL Chapter 71, Section 59C, the council is in need of reformatting and further enhancements. As articulated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the establishment of School Councils was designed as part of Education Reform because, “Teachers, parents, and community members can become more committed to improving the schools and more supportive of the public school system when they enjoy the opportunity to serve or be represented on a school council that has a role in shaping the policies and programs of the school. One Massachusetts school system, which instituted site-based decision making and school councils prior to the statewide mandate, includes the following preamble in its guidelines for councils: Values behind site-based decision making through councils: [the council] improves student outcomes by unifying, in responsible participation, those closest to the teaching-learning relationship; [the council] creates through the development of a shared vision and planning a school environment which unites all members of the school community in a sense of belonging, commitment and growth.” (MA DESE, School Councils).

Murdock High School is committed to the above values so that it may serve as an instrument for goal setting and school improvement planning. The School Parent Council (SPC) will continue to meet on a monthly basis and membership will be full. The group will utilize a rolling agenda that will be provided to the members in advance so that everyone can come to the table with an equal understanding of the goals of the council. Specifically, in addition to their help with the School Improvement Plan (SIP), the administration is looking for specific strategies that the SPC may advocate for in regards to helping alleviate chronic absenteeism and low overall student attendance at Murdock High School.

2. Currently at Murdock High School, students who are labeled as “at-risk” along with the entire Special Education population are placed in an Academic Support Center class for credit for either half or the entire school year. This practice is in line with national data as outlined in the 2018 Issue Brief: Academic Support Classes as published by the U.S. Department of Education, “The HSS focused on high schools and defined academic support classes as credit-bearing courses designed to help high school students succeed in their required academic courses by providing additional instructional time and subject-specific learning strategies for students who need the extra assistance. Academic support classes may also provide opportunities for students to work on homework and supplemental assignments to practice their academic skills. An academic support class is considered a companion course to a required academic course such as English/Language Arts I, Algebra I, and/or Geometry. Both courses are taken during the regular class schedule, and in some schools this coursework is known as a “double dose.” (Issue Brief: Academic Support Classes).

What is currently not in line with these practices are who is currently teaching the Academic Support Classes at Murdock High School and the curriculum used to support student academic progress. Currently, the ASC is used as more of a homework center supported by a paraprofessional and peer tutors, U.S. Department of Education brief points to a different model, “High schools with academic support classes most frequently used a support curriculum that was
aligned with the regular core course curriculum (57 percent), followed by the same curriculum as used in the regular core course (32 percent), no standard curriculum (5 percent), and a support curriculum that was not aligned with the regular core course (4 percent). There were significant differences in the curriculum used by school size and school locale. There were no significant differences by school poverty level or graduation rate. Moreover, our use of a paraprofessional to support these classes is in stark contrast to other schools nationwide. “The most common types of instructors for academic support classes were regular core course teachers who taught the student’s core course (63 percent), followed by regular core course teachers who did not teach the student’s core course (46 percent), special education teachers (42 percent), teachers who instructed only academic support classes (17 percent), and tutors (7 percent).”

Based on these findings, we are committed to reformatting Academic Support Center (ASC). Special Education students will stay with their advocate for a structured ASC program. Students who have been identified as at risk will be assigned a teacher-mentor who will facilitate their ASC period. These ASC courses will not only be support for homework and projects but also classrooms that reteach important material, executive functioning skills and provide social emotional supports.

- Special Education student failure rate will drop by 20%
- Special Education student retention rate will drop by 40%
- Freshman retention rate will drop by 40%
- Special Education graduation rate will rise by 5%

3. Murdock High School has a significant population of High Needs students living at or below the poverty line. Students come to school hungry, in transient housing and lacking basic school supplies and clothing. Based on the report Lightening the Load: A Look at Four Ways that Community Schools Can Support Effective Teaching, the development and implementation of wraparound services for students will impact student achievement, “Providing wraparound services at school helped reduce health-related issues that would otherwise cost students instructional time.

- Wraparound services help students and families stay in the community by meeting basic needs, and the resulting decrease in mobility benefits teachers by creating classroom stability.

- Offering family programs, such as English language learner classes, can encourage parents to communicate more with teachers and empower them to help their children with homework and support the work that teachers do in the classroom.

- Enlisting the help of community partners and service providers, such as onsite health professionals, can free teachers to concentrate on instruction with fewer worries about nonacademic student needs, which reduces their stress levels and burnout tendencies.” (Lightening the Load)

Currently, Murdock High School has basic mechanisms for these services: we have a full-service Health Center, there are some basic food items available for students upon request, teachers have contributed to a collection of formal dresses and suits and there is in-house laundry already hooked up. These programs, however, are not widely utilized or supported by the greater community. We
will develop programs that will result in wraparound services inclusive of in house laundry, clothing pantry and backpack food pantry. These efforts will be supported by our School Adjustment Counselor, our School Resource Officer, as well as the greater community.

As a result of these efforts:
- Overall attendance rate will increase by 2%
- Chronic absentee rate will drop by 10%

4. The chief purpose of the Student and Faculty handbooks are to establish guidelines that protect the rights of students as members of the Murdock High School community, and to outline responsibilities, obligations, and expectations for students necessary to ensure the success and stability of these policies. In short, the Student Handbook is the principal document that details and safeguards student rights. Research indicates that having a strong handbook is fundamental to student success. In Enhancing Student Achievement, the role of the student handbook is designated as, “The decisions that a school makes regarding established policies and practices affect students enormously. Teachers' instructional decisions influence students' feelings about (and success with) the curriculum, but the policies and practices in both classrooms and in the entire school provide the context for teacher-student interactions around instruction.” (Danielson).

The current version of the Murdock High School handbooks does not actualize the above ideals. It is written as a mashed up list of ideas compiled by a decade of administrations and offers no coherent messaging for student academic and behavioral expectations. Often, items in the handbooks are contradictory or simply outdated. Thus, we will develop a team to rewrite and modernize both the student and faculty handbooks. Particular attention will be given to the bullying policy (current policy is unclear and lacks specifics), incorporating a two-year foreign language requirement for graduation for all students beginning with the incoming 2019-2020 freshman class and developing a system for after school support for at-risk students. This work will be supported by a team of parents, faculty and administrators and will use model handbooks as provided by the MASS/MASC.

**Section VI: District Systems**

Districts describe changes in policies/autonomies, systems to support school-level turnaround plans, and a three-year financial plan for the school, including an analysis of resource inequities. (2-3 pages)

The Winchendon Public Schools is a small school district. Our outcomes and growth are concerning across the board. None of our analyses to date indicate resource inequities across the four schools (our high school class sizes are small, but the HS is small and in order to provide a full set of HS course offerings, the district has maintained a proportionally higher number of teachers there), or that resources are being allocated to one subgroup inequitably, relative to another. The white subgroup, in particular, is identified for low performance at all the schools - but most of Winchendon’s students are in this subgroup.

Rather, our financial foci in the turnaround work to date have been:
1. To gain a clear picture of WPS’ finances. The Superintendent was new to the district and early on discovered that records had not been well kept. She has spent much of the year rectifying these problems simply to gain a clear picture of the resources available. Given these challenges, we have simply not had the capacity to develop three-year financial plans.

2. Finding and re-allocating resources to support teaching and learning. The narrative below describes many of the ways this has been done. We have highlighted these resourcing moves, many of which are funded via our Federal grants. We are confident that the staff positions we have put into place can be maintained if the district maintains the current level of funding for programs and the state continues to provide TA grant assistance.

In the months since the Superintendent’s arrival and the subsequent hiring of the Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment, we have not prioritized an examination of policies and autonomies through the lens of the demands of turnaround. Frankly, other considerations have taken precedence and seemed more likely to leverage improved outcomes. They are described below.

The Winchendon Public Schools district administration has been reorganizing to focus strongly on the turnaround process. Key efforts to date include each of the following:

1. In January, the district created a Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment position to support the core functions of the schools on behalf of student learning. The new Director has been supporting school leaders to establish processes for the development of their turnaround plans, and to plan and execute a number of the strategies detailed in this Turnaround Plan, including:
   A. Co-planning with the Superintendent for weekly District Leadership Team (DLT) meetings focused on teaching, learning and educational programming to meet the needs of WPS students and families
   B. Via DLT, design and execution of the instructional and curricular alignment walkthroughs which provided valuable instructional data analyzed during the root cause analysis phase of Plan development, and which provide a source of baseline data for various measurable interim and annual goals
   C. To strengthen shared/distributive leadership, introduction of an Instructional Leadership Team structure to the three buildings (Memorial, Toy Town and High School) where it was not yet in place, including initial PD on the ILT model developed with support from Rob Putnam of SSOS.
   D. Design and implementation of PD across the district to illustrate a grounding set of “mastery learning” instructional practices that we need to see in all classrooms - i.e.:
      1. Effective communication of worthy, standards-aligned mastery objectives
      2. Clear introduction to the content: concepts and skills students will need to master the objectives
      3. Opportunity for students to struggle productively with this content via academic discourse, writing, and active learning
4. Purposeful checks for understanding, as a grounding for responsive adjustments to instruction
5. An opportunity for students to synthesize and anchor their learning
   In each building, through varied strategies detailed in the TA plans, teachers will continue to have opportunities to practice and solidify these practices

E. At the elementary level:
   1. **Design and implementation of the process by which district teachers will collaborate with math consultants and teachers from other districts to develop standards-aligned curriculum maps, unit pre- and post-assessments and guidance for implementation of a workshop model for math**
   2. **Coordination of the process to select a phonics program to supplement the Wonders ELA core program, and of planning for PD/coaching to roll that program out at the K level for 2019-2020**
   3. Emphasis on the criticality of creating a master schedule providing for common planning time (CPT) for grade-level teachers. For the first time, both elementary schools will have CPT in 2019-20.

F. At the high school level, with the support of DESE, identification of Open Educational Resource curricula to replace those high school course curricula that are not aligned to standards, and co-planning with high school leadership re: how to bring these OERs onboard and implement them effectively for the coming school year.

II. Over a number of years, building principals have struggled to focus on instructional leadership because they were the sole administrators in their buildings and had to focus much of their attention on safety and management concerns. A central office staff position in the budget office has been cut, and both those and other dollars have been re-allocated in order to fund a second administrative position in each building so that, next year, there will be an administrative team in each building with sufficient capacity to focus on more than management - i.e., instructional supervision, data-based RTI practices, professional development planning and execution, and fostering of teacher leadership

III. In order to foster distributive leadership and a data-driven approach, the district has negotiated an MoA with the Winchendon Teachers’ Association to create the stipended role of ILT member, and re-allocated resources to fund these teacher stipends at each building

IV. The district has reserved resources to:
   A. **Provide professional development for all staff on trauma-informed practice and social/emotional learning.**
   B. **Support the high school’s creation of a Freshman Academy, new dual enrollment partnerships with Mount Wachusett Community College and Worcester State, and the expansion for next year of Virtual High School offerings including AP offerings**
   C. **Strengthen the district’s summer academic enrichment program as an intervention for some of our most at-risk elementary school children**
V. In the coming year, district support for the turnaround work in the buildings will include each of the following additional undertakings:

A. A summer leadership retreat where we will provide professional development to the school leaders to support multiple aspects of their turnaround work:
   1. Planning for an inspiring, focused launch of the school year at each building
   2. Calendaring to ensure school leaders are prioritizing the time needed to do data-driven planning at CPTs (per Leverage Leadership 2.0), visit classrooms and conduct post-conferences, and plan for ILT meetings, and PD

B. Time reserved at DLT for calibration on classroom observations; conferencing approaches; evaluation-writing; and planning for data meetings and PD sessions

C. A strategic planning initiative, engaging all constituencies in the community, to arrive at a transformative vision for the future of education in Winchendon and a long-range plan to get there; this plan will incorporate and extend the thinking that has gone into the schools’ Turnaround Plans

D. We will conduct an evaluation of our special education programming to determine where there are opportunities to improve services to students and/or to make more effective use of limited resources.

Changes in Policy and Strategies to Consider under State Law

Districts are required to consider the following changes to policy and strategies for any school designated Underperforming, and are granted statutory flexibilities to enhance their efforts to address them. However all schools, even those without this designation, can benefit from considering these changes. Check all that apply and attach a copy of the revised collective bargaining agreement, Joint Resolution Committee decision, or Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement.

Curriculum and Instruction

☐ Expand, alter, or replace curriculum: The Superintendent may expand, alter or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses

☐ Expand use of time: The Superintendent may expand the school day or school year or both of the school

☐ Add Kindergarten or pre-Kindergarten: The Superintendent may, for an elementary school, add prekindergarten and full day kindergarten classes, if the school does not already have such classes

Financial and Asset Management
- **Reallocate school budget**: The Superintendent may reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school.

- **Reallocated district budget**: The Superintendent may provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district, if the school does not already receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district. (If the school receives funding at least equal to the average per pupil funding, with the approval of the School Committee, the Superintendent can direct additional funds to the school.)

**Human Resources**

- **Attract and retain leaders and teachers**: The Superintendent may provide funds, subject to appropriation and following consultation with applicable local unions, to increase the salary of any administrator, or teacher in the school, to attract or retain highly qualified administrators, or teachers or to reward administrators, or teachers who work in underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan.

- **Make staffing changes**: The Superintendent may, following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers and staff to reapply for their positions in the school, with full discretion vested in the superintendent regarding his consideration of and decisions on rehiring based on the reapplications.

- **Implement new systems**: The Superintendent may establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with a common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, professional development, teacher advancement, school culture and organizational structure.

- **Leadership development**: The Superintendent may establish a plan for professional development for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership.

**Professional Development and Collaboration**

- **Embedded professional development**: The Superintendent may include a provision of job embedded professional development for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback.

- **Expanded teacher planning time**: The Superintendent may provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction.

**Leadership and Governance**

- **Change Collective Bargaining and Policies**: The Superintendent may limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided, that the superintendent shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced.
☐ **Change District Policies:** The Superintendent may limit, suspend or change 1 or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school

**Additional Strategies**

☐ **Study best practices:** The Superintendent may develop a strategy to search for and study best practices in areas of demonstrated deficiency in the school

☐ **Address mobility and transiency:** The Superintendent may establish strategies to address mobility and transiency among the student population of the school

☐ **Additional strategies:** The Superintendent may include additional components based on the reasons why the school was designated as underperforming and the recommendations of the local stakeholder group

**Section VII: Goals, Benchmarks, and Progress Monitoring**

Describe the process the school and district will use to monitor the impact of the strategies as articulated in the benchmarks. (2-3 pages)

---

**School-based Progress Monitoring Process**

Murdock High School will be utilizing a number of data collection tools in order to monitor the impact of the strategies articulated in the benchmarks. These data collection tools will both monitor teacher and student progress and will be articulated to staff monthly during Principal’s meetings and analyzed during ILT meetings. This continuous process will allow us to make needed adjustments to practice and allow this turnaround plan to be an active, living document.

Specifically, in Turnaround Practice #1, strategy 1, we will be monitoring student data ranging from failure rates, attendance tracking, discipline referrals and student GPA. These data points will be monitored by the 9th grade teachers as well as guidance and administration. Interventions for students at risk for failure will be put into place if and when data indicates a need for increased support. Moreover, an academic support period will be utilized with teacher and peer tutors as well as a structured after school support system to further provide guidance to students who need assistance.

In regards to the implementation of ILT, a rolling agenda and meeting minutes will be captured for each meeting. This will allow members to be acutely aware of the tasks at hand and be able to capture progress of key initiatives. Furthermore, the ILT will be responsible for communicating priority areas of need as well as best practices to the staff during Principal and Department meetings.

Moreover, each department will be engaging in once a week CPT meetings that will also utilize a rolling agenda and meeting minutes to organize their time. Departments will engage in one lesson study and one LASW protocol monthly and then will be responsible for presenting findings quarterly at Principal’s meetings to the staff. Essential to this process is the embedded guidance support – as they will attend CPTs on a rotating schedule, attending each department’s meeting at least once monthly to foster better communication between the services they provide and the content area teachers.

With the curriculum that will be implemented by the Science, Math and ELA departments, we will be closely monitoring their impact on teaching and learning. The Assistant Principal will be reviewing lesson plans weekly and providing feedback to staff on areas for improvement. We will be asking the
staff utilizing the new curriculum to document the strengths of the first weeks of the materials, and ways the materials need to be adjusted for next year. As the school year progresses, they will be asked to review the next portion of their curriculum, and document lesson plans for weeks [11 - 20].

Further monitoring of the success of the curriculum will be done through the use of TeachPoint goals, walkthroughs and formal observations. The focus of these touchpoints will be on the teachers’ effective use of worthy and rigorous learning objectives. Professional development will be provided to staff and exemplars continuously used to guide staff in how learning objectives should be delivered to promote strong teaching and learning.

Layered on top of these monitoring practices will be the use of the Naviance software suite. This will provide the Guidance department as well as administration with data touch points regarding students’ plans for their post-secondary lives as well as their progress with PSAT and SAT demands. We will be able to better monitor the success of the new Virtual High School and dual enrollment programs and establish a baseline for student success in these areas and document any needs adjustment for the following school year.

Finally, we will be strengthening our SPC (School Parent Council) who will also be monitoring the success of this Turnaround Plan. The SPC will be given the above data points periodically throughout the year and will provide feedback on successes and challenges.

District Progress Monitoring Process
Principals in two of the four buildings are new to DESE’s turnaround planning approach. Three of the four leaders will be facilitating ILTs for the first time, which is why we are building in time at this summer’s retreat and throughout the year to support their ILT planning (see Section V).

The DESE template and in particular the requirement to progress monitor so many dimensions of the work and student outcomes are still new to three of the four principals and their teams. We anticipate that schools will consequently benefit from the following support model to implement their plans effectively.

The Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment will support the leaders in each building to work from their TA Plan documents to build chronological project management tools that enable them to see the due date for every plan deliverable, as well as the due dates for the back-mapped tasks that must be completed in order to successfully complete these deliverables. Each task will be tagged for the person/team responsible and the TA Plan strategy/strategies with which it is associated.

With this detailed plan as a reference point, every week or every two weeks (TBD at a District Leadership Team meeting this summer; may vary by school), the Superintendent or Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment will meet with each building leader and any members of their team they invite to participate, to monitor the building’s progress in implementing its TA Plan. Agendas for these meetings will be developed in reference to the detailed, chronological plan. At these meetings, leaders will:

● Check in on burning issues
● Review how work to move the TA Plan is progressing; review next steps from previous meetings to see if they have been completed
● Review what student data has recently been collected or is coming next, and the plans to collect, analyze and act on that data
● Consider data to assess the impact of the ongoing improvement efforts; when/if interim benchmarks are missed, we will analyze the causes, problem-solve and adjust plans including, where necessary, adjusting timelines
● Reflect on their own opportunities to grow as leaders, and the opportunities to grow the capacity of their teams

Additionally, during some of these visits, the Superintendent or Director will:
● walk classrooms with the school leader and de-brief what was observed
● visit common planning meetings where the school leader and ILT members are co-facilitating the work; sit in on faculty meetings where PD is being delivered; and share feedback on what was observed back to the leader.

Notes on all aspects of this work will be kept in a tracker document.

This weekly or bi-weekly check-in with reference to a detailed timeline of action steps will be a new process for the district and school leaders. So will the regular visits to classrooms, and regular visits to settings where the leader or members of his/her team are leading teams’ work, and the provision of feedback.

Agendas for DLT meetings are developed by the Superintendent and Director of Instruction, Curriculum and Assessment, in consultation with all members of the Team. At these meetings, this coming year, we will monitor schools’ performance relative to interim benchmarks and MAGs and, as needed, collectively problem-solve how to strengthen outcomes. The DLT will also be progress monitoring the execution of the 1-year District Improvement Plan designed to support successful implementation of all the schools’ turnaround plans. As noted above we will also introduce calibration on observations etc, as well as regular opportunities for school leaders to dry-run upcoming PD and data meetings in their buildings to get colleagues’ feedback.

Notes from DLT meetings are kept in a rolling agenda. The DLT structure has existed for some time, and various approaches to data monitoring and review have occurred there over time as well. The rolling agenda was instituted in January 2019; the calibration and dry-run protocols will be new in fall 2019.

**Use the tables below to articulate the goals and benchmarks.**

**Turnaround Practice #1: Leadership, shared responsibility & professional collaboration**
The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility for all students and professional collaboration.
### Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) for Student Achievement

We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group. See Appendix A.

### Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners

1. 100% of content departments will meet weekly using a rolling agenda and complete one Lesson Study and one Looking at Student Work protocol monthly.

2. ILT will meet twice a month using a rolling agenda and will share developed best practices to the faculty once a month at Principal’s meeting.

3. Guidance will attend at least one CPT meeting for each department monthly, utilizing the rolling agenda, in order to foster better communication between teaching staff and guidance and provide training and support for teachers to guide students through college resumes, college essays, and MASSCORE requirements.

### Interim Benchmarks for Students

1. Grade nine retention rate will be reduced by 60% in the 2019-2020 school year as compared to the 2018-2019 school year.

2. Grade nine Discipline referrals will be reduced by 60% in the 2019-2020 school year as compared to the 2018-2019 school year.

3. 75% of grade nine students will be invited to the May 2020 Scholars Dinner (3.0 GPA or higher)

### Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional practices for improving instruction

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

### Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) for Student Achievement

We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group. See Appendix A
**Other MAGs**
3 required by statute:
1. Student acquisition of twenty-first century skills
2. Development of college readiness

1. ELA, Math and Science teachers will choose a standards-aligned curriculum to implement for 2019-2020 school year by June 2019, be trained to unpack the standards and curriculum during the summer of 2019 and then design unit plans and lessons that are rigorous, standards-aligned and follow the chosen curriculum.

2. Social Studies Department will be introduced to the tenets of Disciplinary Literacy by June 2019, trained over the summer in its implementation and design units and lessons that push students to become young historians.

3. All staff will design and implement lessons with clear, worthy mastery objectives and implement lessons aligned to the objectives centered on cognitively demanding tasks.

**Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners**

1. Teachers will be required to document lesson plans in the District template and turn these plans in to Assistant Principal monthly for feedback. At November check, 90% of teachers will submit these plans on a timely basis.

2. Each Department will engage in a summer curriculum institute where they will unpack their selected curriculum and develop unit/lesson plans for weeks 1-10 by August 2019.

3. Each Department will continue this process of unpacking curriculum, submitting it for review and revising it throughout the school year.

**Interim Benchmarks for Students**

1. 10% more students will score higher on the third unit summative than did so on the second unit summative.

2. 20% more students will register for honors and Advanced Placement courses in the 2020-2021 school year as a result of increased rigor and alignment to the standards.

3. 10% more students will enroll in 4-year colleges for the 2020-2021 school year as a result of increase in rigor and alignment.

**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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAGs for Student Achievement</th>
<th>We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group. See Appendix A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners** | 1. Ten staff members will be fully trained in Changemakers. Trained staff will share their findings during a PD day with the faculty.  
2. 100% of staff members will utilize growth mindset strategies with their classes.  
3. Guidance will utilize Naviance for 100% of students and hold at least two training sessions for students, parents and teachers to ensure fidelity of use. |
| **Interim Benchmarks for Students** | 1. Students will demonstrate greater perseverance as measured by a 25% reduction in failures in Q3 and Q4.  
2. 10% increase in grade 11 students taking the SAT.  
3. 100% of students enrolled in Virtual High School (VHS) or dual enrollment courses will receive a passing grade. |

**Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate**
A safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and collaborative culture among teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAGs for Student Achievement</th>
<th>We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group. See Appendix A.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other MAGs</td>
<td>Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7 required by statute:</strong></td>
<td>1. School Parent Council (SPC) will be formed by August 2019. SPC will help author School Improvement Plan (SIP) and develop mechanisms to craft one new event to engage parents in school curriculum. SPC will propose and help implement strategies to increase attendance and lower chronic absentee rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Parent and family engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Building a culture of academic success among students</td>
<td>2. Beginning for the incoming 2019-2020 grade nine students, two years of the same World Language will be a requirement for graduation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Building a culture of student support and success among school faculty and staff</td>
<td>3. Students who have been identified as at-risk for failure and/or drop out will be assigned a teacher-mentor who also will facilitate their daily Academic Support Center (ASC) course. This teacher mentor will act as a liaison between the student and his or her teachers and parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student attendance, dismissal rates, and exclusion rates (a measure is needed for each of these three items)</td>
<td>4. Murdock High School will develop an in-school laundry program, clothing pantry and backpack food pantry for students in the 2019-2020 school year. Each of these measures will be targeted in order to provide greater wraparound services to students in order to decrease poor attendance as well as excessive dismissal and exclusion rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student safety and discipline</td>
<td>5. The Faculty and Student handbooks will be rewritten for the 2019-2020 school year. Paramount to this revision will be our push to clarify and strengthen the existing bullying policy for all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Student promotion and dropout rates</td>
<td>6. All students who are failing one or more courses will be required to stay after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays for academic support. Students will be monitored and tutored by teachers and peers weekly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Graduation rates (high schools only)</td>
<td>7. Students who are behind in credits will be required to utilize their Academic Support Center (ASC) class to do credit recovery on Edgenuity, thus catching them up and allowing them to graduate on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. School Parent Council (SPC) will meet at least 5 times in the 2019-2020 school year. The SPC will implement at least 2 new initiatives aimed at improving attendance.</td>
<td>2. 100% of assigned teacher-mentors will meet with the Student Support Team (SST) bi-weekly and suggest further supports for the students they are mentoring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. A team of teachers will meet and revise the Student and Faculty handbook this summer to modernize and rewrite policies and procedures. A new version will be finalized, approved by the school committee and ready for distribution by August 2019.

| Interim Benchmarks for Students | 1. Special Education student failure rate will drop by 25%.  
2. Overall attendance rate will increase to a daily average of 93%.  
3. Chronic absenteeism will drop by 10%. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
## Appendix A

### Achievement Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2018 ELA Achievement Baseline (10)</th>
<th>2019 ELA Achievement Target (10)</th>
<th>2018 Math Achievement Baseline (10)</th>
<th>2019 Math Achievement Target (10)</th>
<th>2018 Science Achievement Baseline (10)</th>
<th>2019 Science Achievement Target (10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>87.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Performing</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Needs</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econ. Disadvantaged</td>
<td>96.9</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>97.2</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HS Accountability Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>4-Yr Grad Rate Baseline (%)</th>
<th>4-Yr Grad Rate Target (%)</th>
<th>Extended Engagement Rate Baseline (%)</th>
<th>Extended Engagement Rate Target (%)</th>
<th>Annual Dropout Rate Baseline (%)</th>
<th>Annual Dropout Rate Target (%)</th>
<th>Advanced Coursework Completion Rate Baseline (%)</th>
<th>Advanced Coursework Completion Rate Target (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Needs</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econ. Disadvantaged</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>83.0</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chronic Absenteeism Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2018 Chronic Absenteeism Rate Baseline (9-12) (%)</th>
<th>2019 Chronic Absenteeism Rate Target (9-12) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Performing</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Needs</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econ. Disadvantaged</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>