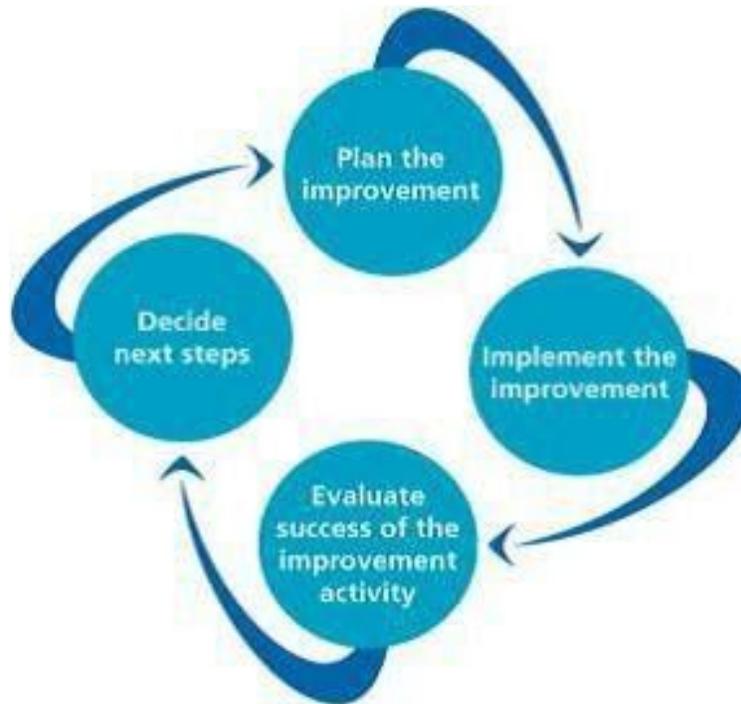


**Regional School District 17**  
***Haddam Killingworth High School***  
**Continuous Improvement Plan**  
**2020-21**



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## **Introduction**

Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs) are developed to represent a strategic process to specify program and instructional performance goals and priorities in terms of student and community outcomes. These goals are informed by an analysis of student performance and community feedback on important indicators by teachers, administrators, and community members.

Each Principal and the Director of Student Services develops an annual Continuous Improvement Plan, in conjunction with and supported by the Superintendent. The development process involves the principal (or director) engaging with his or her faculty and community stakeholders to review and interpret results (June) and then to refine drafts of the proposed annual plan for input and articulation of action steps (late August-September). Plans are presented publicly at a Board of Education meeting (second Board meeting in October) and are posted on each school's website. The corresponding annual Student Achievement Report and State Testing Report are shared with the Board for the mid-October meeting. This cycle repeats annually and is the major vehicle through which we express our shared purpose and our efforts to enable all students to reach high levels of achievement in thriving school-communities.

Student success depends upon effective teaching and instructional leadership. Regional School District 17's vision for professional learning is that each educator engages in continuous learning every day to increase professional effectiveness, resulting in positive outcomes for each and every student. For our students to graduate prepared for college and careers, educators must engage in strategically planned continuous professional learning focused upon student growth, development, and outcomes.

## **District Mission**

The Mission of Regional School District 17 is to engage our students in an educational community that challenges students with high standards and builds their capacity to succeed and their aspiration to improve themselves and their society.

## **Overarching District Goals Aligned with Mission**

- Increase student aspiration to higher levels of learning and courses
- Increase student access to higher levels of learning opportunities
- Increase student engagement in their academic achievement
- Increase student commitment to their school and community
- Increase community engagement in the schools and academic programs

## HKHS Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations

We believe that every member of our community has value. We believe in the power of intellectual curiosity, global responsibility, and personal integrity. We believe in developing the knowledge and skills essential to healthy and productive lives.

### HKHS Learning Expectations:

In a variety of contexts for a variety of purposes, students will:

1. Demonstrate personal responsibility, character, cultural understanding, and ethical behavior;
2. Communicate clearly and effectively in order to express ideas and connect with others;
3. Investigate, evaluate, and apply information;
4. Work both independently and collaboratively toward a specific outcome;
5. Demonstrate creative, innovative, and reflective thinking.

### HKHS Strategic Priorities

Haddam Killingworth High School has been deeply engaged in the Continuous Improvement model for the last six years. Beginning with the school-wide data review in August of each year, the Leadership Team crafts our collective improvement plan to incorporate ongoing learning for both students and educators, which has consistently yielded better learning outcomes for students. Overarching themes include **college and career readiness, improved student performance in literacy and numeracy, and school culture and community**. Specifically, our focus in recent years has been on helping our students to be strong candidates for post-graduate studies, understanding that the global competition for admission to colleges and universities is higher than for previous generations. As a rigorous academic program is at the heart of students' preparedness for their personal paths, our team engages in a full data team model to continuously review student learning outcomes, adjust our curriculum and instruction, and monitor both internal and external measures of our students' mastery of essential literacy and numeracy skills and content. Across our program, we seek to personalize learning for our students in a healthy and supportive school culture.

We are very proud of our achievements at HKHS. As a recent recipient of the National Blue Ribbon Award (2018), we believe we have a very strong program to offer to the young people of Haddam and Killingworth. We continue to enhance our program as we respond to the needs and interests of our students. Over the last two years, we have launched a blended learning initiative model for several courses and aligned our course of studies to the new Connecticut graduation requirements. Beginning with the Class of 2023, all seniors are required to create and present a portfolio of their best work, which demonstrates mastery across our five Learning Expectations. Other additions include a new Health course focused on wellness and balance for freshmen as well as a Beginning Spanish Conversation course which provides an opportunity for all learners to earn the credit of World Language required. This year, we added *Modern Novel* to the selection of English electives, responsive to the interests of young adult readers and we will develop a new Black and Latino History course aligned to our local priority to enhance our curriculum with increased opportunities for multicultural education initiative as well as to meet the state requirement to have this elective offered beginning in 2021-22.

In August of 2019, we identified **five strategic priorities** which will drive our work over the coming years including:

- Ensuring that appropriate academic and social-emotional support is in place for all students;
- Implementing the new graduation requirements including the new health class, a world language course for students not accessing our traditional options, and the digital portfolio;

- Collaborating with the facilities department to support needed updates and improvements to the physical plant that support delivery of high quality curriculum, programs, and services;
- Working in conjunction with RSD17 stakeholders to develop the Vision of the Graduate;
- Rounding out the post-graduate level opportunities for students to include off-campus learning experiences such as internships.

As we begin 2020-2021, we reflect on the most unusual last six months and adapt our approach to best educate our students after a lengthy school closure in the spring. This will include an emphasis on employing a **transformational mode of learning that builds and relies on student agency of their learning through technology tools and platforms**. Our approach will include a significant focus on **tracking and responding to students' academic and emotional wellness**. In addition, we will continue to **build and maintain a positive school culture** which reflects our core belief and value that every member of our community has value.

## Goal 1: All students will graduate from HKHS college and career ready.

### Background

One of our primary focal points has always been, and continues to be, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their post-secondary aspirations. For several years, we have relied heavily on two metrics to demonstrate our progress and success relative to this goal: the percentage of students in each graduating class who have had a post-secondary experience before graduation; and the percentage of students getting accepted to the most competitive colleges they aspire to attend. [Click here to view the Class of 2020 Graduate Report](#). Prior to Covid, HKHS had been working on developing greater student agency and ownership of their own learning. The blended learning initiative was one of the most visible efforts toward that end. With the pandemic came an increased awareness among a broader population of stakeholders that student investment in their own learning is, of course, key to their ultimate success. The more agency and ownership a student has over his/her learning, the more naturally engaged in it s/he will be with greater learning outcomes the reward.

Although HKHS has adopted the Core Values and Beliefs and Learning Expectations, the district does not yet have a formal Vision of the Graduate. This work is underway. Once complete, the VOG will support and guide our work across all areas, including fostering a positive school culture.

Beginning with the Class of 2023 (current sophomores), all students must meet new state graduation requirements (i.e. including a senior mastery experience, an additional health course, and a minimum of 1 credit of World Language.) As a result, we enhanced our program in 2019-20 to include an additional Health 1 and a Senior Portfolio experience; our implementation year was, of course, interrupted by the COVID school closure. This year, we are implementing a Beginning Spanish conversation course to meet the needs of the 10% of students who did not traditionally complete a World Language credit. Hence, it will be important that we attend to each of these three new programs and ensure that they are each of high quality, aligned with our Learning Expectations, and that our students are successful in them.

Lastly, the restrictions relative to social distancing due to Covid have made the already challenging college search and application process even more difficult. We are acutely aware of our seniors for whom time will not stand still; we will need to ensure that they “stick the landing” in meeting their post-secondary goals.

### Actions

Our faculty will promote student agency and ownership over their learning to improve student preparedness for college and career by:

- counseling students to enroll in at least one “challenge” course their senior year.
- promoting innovation and self-directed learning by helping guide students to manage the new online learning platforms.
  - using a variety of different technology tools
  - introduction to and refinement of executive functioning skills, self advocacy, and digital learning
- developing the vision of the graduate in conjunction with RSD17

- monitoring student success in the new graduation requirement courses (i.e. Health 1, Digital Portfolio, and Beginning Spanish Conversation) and adjust curriculum and instruction, as necessary

We will adjust our approach to post-secondary planning for our seniors in light of the pandemic impact by:

- scaffolding senior meetings and post-secondary planning sessions with counselors to ensure that all seniors meet their post secondary goals
- continuing our senior-to-junior mentoring with respect to the college application process
- facilitating virtual visits from college representatives, financial aid experts, etc.
- implementing and analyzing student feedback from our post-grad survey
- reviewing our current class rank policy and proposing a change in policy, as appropriate to support HKHS students in the college application process

## Measures/Monitoring

Measures:

- Percent of students in the Class of 2022 who are enrolled in at least one “challenge” course for the 2021-2022 school year by June 2021
- Student mastery data (e.g. grades, benchmark assessments) from Health 1, Digital Portfolio and Beginning Spanish Conversation
- Percent of juniors and seniors who arrange virtual meetings with college representatives.
- Responses from the Post Graduate Survey
- Survey data from teachers of new tech tools implemented this year

Monitoring:

- Advisory Lessons and completion of digital tasks
  - Number of students that completed the scanning activity, *Polite Email* activity
  - Senior- to - Junior mentoring panel
- Classroom observations will include evidence of innovation and self-directed learning among students.
- We will have a written RSD17 Vision of the Graduate
- Post-secondary planning notes by counselors
- Written curriculum and lesson notes targeting executive functioning skills (i.e. Health 1, Advisory, etc.)
- A revised class rank policy may be proposed to align with best practice in school counseling and to best support our students in the college admissions process
- Reschedule the School-Day SAT to provide an opportunity for seniors to complete this assessment

## **Goal 2: Students will continue to show consistent growth and academic progress through monitoring of academic performance and appropriate interventions when necessary.**

### **Background**

Over the last several years, HKHS has focused on both internal benchmark and external standardized assessments to measure student performance in core academic areas including reading, writing, math and science. We have relied heavily on the data-team model, returning to it again and again as our map to growth in any area. While we have enjoyed a fairly consistent pattern of success, the pandemic caused a significant disruption in our traditional data gathering at the end of the 2019-20 academic year. In addition, the extended school closure last spring as well as uncertainty in the current academic year leave us concerned about student growth. Our team will need to assess where students are at the beginning of the year with respect to academic benchmarks and then set growth targets such that, by employing the very best instructional strategies and supports, our students will end the year at the appropriate mastery levels.

Curriculum, instruction, intervention and assessment are all critical components of our data team model. Given the needs presented by Covid as well as a priority area of growth identified in our NEASC Collaborative Conference report last year, our attention will be focused on ensuring that all of our courses (including the new ones) have a rigorous written curriculum in a common template for all courses (i.e. including essential elements such as standards, instructional strategies and assessments.) In addition, the Commission feedback indicated that we needed to expand the use of digital tools to support student learning and improve our technology infrastructure. A “silver lining” of the pandemic has included our district going 1:1 and, by necessity, mastering the G-Suite for education platform last spring.

### **Actions**

All departments will enhance their data-team practices as a best practice approach to improving student learning outcomes by:

- migrating to a standard curriculum template to ensure effective learning outcomes and methodologies associated with rigorous coursework.
- regularly analyzing assessment data to inform instruction;
- reviewing common benchmark assessments to ensure accurate measurement of student outcomes/growth.
- meeting as a department to analyze student performance and calibrate course standards/expectations.
- collaborating to adhere to best practice instructional strategies adaptive to full-in, hybrid, or full remote learning;
- using school-wide rubrics to assess student mastery of HK learning expectations;

The faculty and administration will expand and strengthen student interventions by:

- Reviewing all available supports with the SRBI team and determining whether additional supports are needed for our students;
- Following clear referral and review procedures;
- Monitoring student tier movement and success especially while in the hybrid model;

- Expanding our identification process to include student and parent survey data, and ongoing review of high needs students by administration, counselors and academic departments;
- Carefully monitoring and supporting the growth of current 10th graders in mathematics through strategic programming such as smaller class sizes in fundamental courses and increased math skills support.

We will use technology to enhance student performance by:

- Incorporating a variety of technology instructional platforms;
- Providing more time for teachers to meet with students virtually for academic needs;
- Enabling teachers to meet remotely with students while not in-person on campus.

## Measures/Monitoring

Measures:

- Internal benchmark data as evidence of student growth;
- Established list of cornerstone assessments and data;
- SRBI data, including number of students moved into and out of SRBI tiered supports along with the impact on their academic performance;
- Student and teacher surveys;
- Digital portfolio submissions;
- Data from mentored study students as to the efficacy of this mode of student support.

Monitoring:

- All curriculum will be written using the common template;
- Classroom observations will indicate that all teachers are implementing the school-wide rubrics to assess student mastery of Learning Expectations;
- Data reports will be collected and reviewed from each department to ensure that student growth is on target with year-end goals;
- Department heads will work with their colleagues to monitor and to review common benchmark assessments and data to ensure accurate measurement of student performance.
- Department notes and observations will indicate evidence of best instructional practices;
- Technology infrastructure will effectively support teaching and learning.
- Designated time in Advisory for Office Hours and for teachers to provide one-on-one support to students
- Professional development time/schedule with best instructional strategies for in person, hybrid, and full-remote students

### **Goal 3: HKHS will foster a school culture and climate that nurtures and elicits personal responsibility, character, cultural understanding, and ethical behavior.**

#### **Background**

Student and staff health and wellness is our primary concern this year, with a focus on two critical aspects of school climate and culture. The first aspect is protecting the physical safety and mental health of all members of our school community during a global pandemic. The second aspect involves building and maintaining a healthy school culture despite and amid local and national issues around diversity, inclusion and acceptance.

#### **Actions**

We will implement strategies to monitor and support student and staff wellness including:

- providing time and activities for relationship building between students/staff and students/students (including opportunities for our fully remote students);
- providing classroom resources and technology to support peer to peer interactions (e.g. Google meet, breakout rooms, microphones for class participation, etc.);
- Surveying our students and parents about the academic and emotional wellness of students;
- Providing full-in instruction to students in need during the hybrid;
- Providing regular guidance check-ins and/or school counseling support for students who are struggling;
- Allowing group 1/group 2 switches, as appropriate and possible to support student engagement and comfort;
- continuing our co-curricular programs to foster student engagement and relationship building as well as acceptance of differences among the student body;
- dedicating Professional Development time to the mental health and wellness of our faculty and staff;
- Focusing on social-emotional wellness through the Student Learning Outcome goals of several teachers
- Improving the physical plant to support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services and to ensure access to all areas of the building by all members of the school community

We will continue to build and support a positive school culture, especially as it pertains to issues of acceptance, diversity, gender and lifestyles by:

- Including several members of our faculty and administration in the RSD17 Diversity Committee with action outcomes created and implemented;
- Creating a new state required course: African-American and black and Puerto Rican and Latino studies;
- Developing advisory curriculum and lessons to weave multiculturalism, diversity, and acceptance into our school culture;
- Working with the A-Team to monitor school culture and explore/implement new strategies to strengthen culture;
- We will improve the school site and plant to support the delivery of curriculum, programs, and services and to ensure access to all areas of the building by all stakeholders through full ADA compliance.

## Measures/Monitoring

### Measures:

- Surveys of students and parents
- Feedback from teachers individually and through Leadership Team
- STAT and counseling data regarding students at risk
- Attendance data for in person and fully remote students
- Advisory lesson data (work artifacts, jamboards, other)

### Monitoring:

- Administration will collect evidence of balanced lifestyle initiatives and support (e.g. advisory lessons, administrative/department meeting notes, professional development, etc.)
- Club participation attendance and club records
- Discipline referrals and attendance data
- Provide continuing professional development surrounding new technology
- Feedback from the A-Team
- Review curriculum for new course and bring to curriculum counsel to include in program of studies
- The physical plant will be ADA compliant and support all aspects of the established curriculum
- Diversity committee rosters and agendas