

Regional School District 17
Burr District Elementary School
Continuous Improvement Plan
2021-2022



Brienne Whidden
October 5, 2021

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

Vision of the Graduate



A graduate of the RSD17 School District is a compassionate critical thinker, who collaborates to solve problems, and is prepared to contribute to improving our world.

Vision of the Graduate - Skills

Contributes Productively includes the ability to:

- Take control of one's learning by planning and organizing oneself to complete tasks
- Demonstrate independence and initiative in doing one's best work
- Collaborate positively on a team project or shared endeavor
- Seek leadership or take a supportive role within a group in a manner that works best for oneself, others, and the outcome
- Think creatively and flexibly to design and develop innovative solutions, strategies, and outcomes

Thinks Critically includes the ability to:

- Inquire and formulate questions to gather information and expand upon ideas
- Research and distill information from reliable resources representative of multiple perspectives
- Evaluate information for credibility, bias, and point of view
- Analyze and interpret information and data to generate solutions to problems
- Reflect upon the accuracy or viability of solutions or conclusions

Communicates Effectively includes the ability to:

- Organize thoughts to articulate and justify one's position or perspective with clarity
- Construct, refine, and present arguments supported by evidence
- Actively listen to understand and interpret the ideas and reasoning of others
- Use a variety of verbal, written, or visual methods appropriate for the message and audience

Vision of the Graduate - Dispositions

Maintains a Growth Mindset involves believing in oneself, having an open-mind, and demonstrating perseverance and resilience. Examples of demonstrating a Growth Mindset include:

- Apply sustained effort to understand concepts, acquire skills, and achieve to one's greatest potential
- Reflect upon feedback or mistakes as opportunities to adapt and improve upon learning
- Show determination to accomplish one's goals
- Explore ideas to expand thinking
- Encourage a growth mindset in others

Demonstrates Respect, Empathy and Kindness involves caring for and showing compassion for oneself and others. Examples include:

- Seek to understand one another's experiences, circumstances, and perspectives
- Embrace diversity and recognize the value of all persons by promoting equity and inclusivity
- Maintain self-respect and advocate for oneself and others
- Be kind and act to enhance the climate of our schools and community

Displays Character, Courage, and Integrity involves having confidence in oneself to make sound decisions. Examples include:

- Do the right thing, even when no one is looking
- Take the initiative to provide or seek help for oneself or others
- Stand up for oneself or others when faced with unkind, disrespectful, or discriminatory behavior
- Actively engage in discourse that addresses difficult topics or situations to improve conditions for all

Burr District Elementary School

Burr District Elementary School is a kindergarten through grade 3 school in Higganum Connecticut. Our school motto, *"Burr Cougar Cubs are "PAWS"itive everyday!"* emphasizes our focus on *Personal best, Acting responsibly, Working and playing safely, and always Showing respect*. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where each child can learn and develop to his/her fullest potential. We believe in fostering agency in students, allowing them to be able to think critically, make choices, problem solve, persevere through challenges, take risks with their learning and gain independence. Our staff is highly collaborative and fully embedded in continuous professional growth.

Our strategic priorities for the next 3-5 years are:

Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Learning:

- Continue to develop and build upon best practices across our core curricular areas of reading, writing, math, phonics, science, and social studies
- Continue to develop our data review systems to effectively and efficiently analyze data in order to monitor and enhance the individual growth of each student in the core curricular areas.

School Community:

- Explicitly teach, develop, and foster the social and emotional development of students
- Develop a strong internal culture that embraces the diversity of our staff, students, and families
- Implement, reflect upon, and revise our school-wide PBIS model to promote a positive and supportive school culture and climate
- Enhance our efforts to effectively address topics of multiculturalism and diverse perspectives to foster greater knowledge, empathy, acceptance, tolerance and mutual respect

2021-2022 School Year: The COVID-19 pandemic caused our school to unexpectedly close for the final three months of the 2019-2020 school year. The 2020-2021 school year continued to present challenges as we transitioned from hybrid, to in-person instruction while continuing to teach our fully remote learners. Our students and staff did a remarkable job of transitioning to virtual instruction and managing both in-person and virtual instruction simultaneously, but we fully recognize that our students may not be where we would typically expect them to be, academically, socially, or emotionally. Many of the goals and action steps within our continuous improvement plan address this and can be categorized into three themes.

1. Identifying where each student is currently functioning and providing the instruction, resources, and support needed to allow them to meet end of year expectations
2. Providing a sense of normalcy, community, and belonging to support the social and emotional wellness of all students
3. Reviewing and enhancing our efforts to effectively address topics of multiculturalism and diverse perspective to foster greater understanding, empathy, acceptance, and mutual respect

**As part of the Burr family, I will do my Personal best, Act responsibly, Work and play safely, and always Show respect.
Burr Cougar Cubs are “PAWS”itive everyday!**

Goal 1: Reading

All students in grades K-3 will read efficiently and effectively across genres for a variety of purposes as measured by meeting growth targets and grade level expectations.

Rationale

Data from the previous 3 years indicates that, by the end of third grade, 76% of students are meeting grade level expectations in reading.

Reading % at Goal			
Year	2018	2019	2021
Internal Measures	72%	84%	82%
SBAC	81%	63%	71%

**Data from spring of 2020 is not available.*

Actions

INSTRUCTION

Teachers will:

- Reallocate time in the literacy block to prioritize phonics instruction, vocabulary instruction, and high frequency word instruction
- Implement revised reading units of study in K and 1
- Implement a multisensory approach to reading instruction to align with the science of reading
- Provide explicit small group instruction, based on data analysis, utilizing resources and instructional methods to remediate deficit foundational reading skills
- Develop students' comprehension and vocabulary through shared thinking and discourse about texts read aloud in a variety of genres
- Incorporate writing about reading throughout the curriculum
- Integrate diverse literature into classrooms through read alouds through mentor texts aligned to units of study and book clubs
- Intentionally develop cross-curricular connections to social studies standards aligned to social justice and perspective taking
- Utilize 1:1 devices and online learning platforms to provide instruction, individualization, and tools for all students

Intervention and special education teachers will:

- Analyze classroom data to determine specific skill weaknesses
- Implement a multisensory approach to reading instruction to align with the science of reading
- Monitor progress and adjust instruction as needed

PLANNING AND COLLABORATION

K-3 teachers will participate in building-based workshops led by literacy coach and intervention team on the 5 pillars of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension)

Teachers will be supported by the literacy coach and administration through Common Planning Meetings as well as in-class collaborative coaching

Principal, coaches and interventionists will meet with teachers, at a minimum, in fall, winter and spring to discuss each child's data and develop plans for each student's growth

All K-2 teachers will participate in professional development for the continued implementation of Heggerty Phonemic Awareness

Measures/Monitoring

Measures: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Dibels), Smarter Balanced English Language Arts (Grade 3), Reading Units of Study (RUOS), iReady Reading Diagnostic (Grades 2 and 3), CORE phonics survey

Monitoring:

- Monitoring notes from small group and individual conferences
- Classroom assessments, including progress monitoring
- Teachers and coaches will meet regularly to discuss instructional methods, student progress, and professional learning needs.
- Administrators will conduct collaborative walk-throughs focused on "look-fors" in reading instruction.
- Administrators will meet no less frequently than every 8 weeks with coaches and interventionists to analyze student data and respond to student learning needs.

Goal 2: Writing

All students in grades K-3 will communicate effectively in writing across genres for a variety of purposes as measured by RSD 17 writing rubrics as reflected in report card standards.

Rationale

Data from the previous 3 years indicates that, by the end of third grade, 77% of students are meeting grade level expectations in writing across genres.

Year	Narrative Writing	Informational Writing	Opinion Writing
2018	86%	72%	65%
2019	85%	83%	78%
2021	42% (Fall administration)	77%	71%

**Data from spring of 2020 is not available. Narrative writing was not assessed in the spring of 2021.*

Actions

INSTRUCTION

Teachers will:

- Monitor each writer's progress relative to grade level writing progressions, revised RSD 17 writing rubrics, report card rubrics, and anchor sets
- Analyze student work to form flexible instructional groups and help students set goals for improving their writing
- Help students reflect on the writing process and monitor their progress through the use of checklists throughout each unit
- Provide explicit small group instruction to help students meet those goals across genres
- Provide explicit instruction in handwriting (print in K and 1 and cursive in grade 3)
- Integrate reading and writing instruction to highlight the connection of spelling skills and reading skills
- Provide direct instruction in grammar and conventions through the use of *Patterns of Power* and iReady Reading
- Work with Literacy Coaches to align writing expectations across grade levels
- Offer opportunities for student voice and choice in topic and genre

Special education teachers will:

- Analyze student work samples to determine specific skill weaknesses
- Teach targeted supplemental writing support based on student's specific goals

PLANNING AND COLLABORATION

K-3 teachers will participate in building-based workshops led by our Literacy Coaches on: collaborative scoring of writing using RSD17 rubrics, working together to identify anchor texts, forming and implementing small groups based on students' needs

Teachers will be supported by the Literacy Coach and Administration through Common Planning Meetings as well as in-class collaborative coaching

Principal, coaches and interventionists will meet with teachers, at a minimum, in fall, winter and spring to discuss each child's data and develop plans for each student's growth

Measures/Monitoring

Measures: Third trimester report card standards by genre; Smarter Balanced English Language Arts results (Grades 3); *FUNdations* Assessments and/or DSA results; Writing Workshop Unit and On-Demand Writing Assessments scored according to the RSD 17 Rubrics

Monitoring:

- Monitoring notes from small group and individual conferences
- Writer's Notebooks
- Teachers and coaches will meet regularly to discuss instructional methods, student progress, and professional learning needs.
- Administrators will conduct collaborative walk-throughs focused on "look-fors" in writing instruction.
- Administrators will meet no less frequently than every 8 weeks with coaches and interventionists to analyze student data and respond to student learning needs.

Goal 3: Mathematics

All students in grades K-3 will demonstrate mastery of grade level mathematical knowledge and skills as measured by meeting growth targets and grade level expectations.

Rationale

Smarter Balanced Assessment data from the past three years, indicates that 76% of third graders are meeting grade level expectations.

SBAC Math			
Year	2018	2019	2021
% at goal	82%	75%	70%

**Data from spring of 2020 is not available.*

Actions

INSTRUCTION

Teachers will:

- Implement Ready classroom math as a primary resource for tier 1 instruction
- Analyze student data, work samples, and mathematical behaviors to identify strengths and gaps and utilize the tools in the Ready Classroom Toolbox to differentiate for small groups
- Strengthen students' conceptual understanding of mathematics through classroom discourse and math talks
- Utilize iReady personalized learning system to differentiate learning for select students
- Engage students in problem solving and effective communication of mathematical reasoning
- Engage students in "productive struggle" with appropriate scaffolds for support
- Implement sequential fact fluency instruction
- Provide explicit instruction through whole-class and small-group structures as well as individual conferences to move every student toward meeting standards
- Utilize 1:1 devices to provide instruction, individualization, and tools for all students

Intervention and special education teachers will:

- Analyze classroom data to determine specific skill weaknesses
- Support teachers in tier 1 instruction as well as utilize informal skills groups within the classroom setting
- Teach targeted supplemental math support to close the achievement gap
- Use iReady resources and personalized learning systems to support individual student growth

PLANNING AND COLLABORATION

Teachers will be supported by the Math Coach and Administration through Common Planning Meetings as well as in-class collaborative coaching

During Common Planning Meetings, Math Coach will work with grade level teachers and administration to implement a math workshop model that effectively uses instructional time while emphasizing differentiation, discourse, and problem solving

iReady professional learning for teachers in grades K-3 on the use of iReady data reports and analysis and planning instruction

iReady professional development for teachers in grade K-3 on the implementation of the Ready curriculum and all necessary components

Principal, coaches and interventionists will meet with teachers, at a minimum, in fall, winter and spring to discuss each child's data and develop plans for each student's growth

Measures/Monitoring

Measures: District Major Work of the Grade Benchmark Assessments; District Fact Fluency Assessments (grades 1-3); Smarter Balanced Math results (grade 3), iReady universal screening (K-3)

Monitoring:

- Classroom work
- Fact fluency running records
- Quizzes and unit assessments
- Report Card Standards for Mathematical Thinking
- Administrators and coaches will use RSD 17's math instruction "look-fors" to observe and provide feedback to teachers
- Teachers and coaches will meet regularly to discuss instructional methods, student progress, and professional learning needs
- Administration will meet at least every 8 weeks with coaches and interventionists to analyze student data and respond to student needs
- Administration, coaches, and teachers will analyze the internal benchmark assessments and adjust instruction/intervention as needed

Goal 4: Community

Burr Elementary will develop a strong internal culture and positive school climate that embraces diversity, exposes students to different cultures and perspectives, promotes a climate of acceptance, and fosters the social/emotional development of students.

Rationale

2021 Parent Survey data indicates that 92% of parents feel that Burr is a caring and nurturing place.
2021 Parent Survey data indicates that 83% of parents feel that students treat each other with respect.

Actions

Work with the School Improvement Team to refine implementation of positive behavior interventions and supports
Implement PBIS in order to ensure clear and consistent expectations for all students
Create regular team building opportunities for faculty and staff
Provide opportunities for teachers and teams to collaborate and work collegially
Hold monthly Town Meetings to bring the full school community together virtually and promote core values
Continue implementation of social/emotional learning curriculum (Second Step) and design opportunities to embed the learning throughout the school day
Engage students in discourse around diverse literature to foster a climate of acceptance and understanding

Select staff members sharing/leading professional development as part of the role on the district diversity committee

School Leadership team to define/refine school vision to establish a common set of goals and expectations

Measures/Monitoring

Measures: Parent Survey, Internal School Climate Survey

Monitoring:

- School Improvement Team outcomes
- Reduction in office referrals/bullying investigations
- Number of classes meeting goal at monthly Town Meeting
- Minutes from school improvement team monthly meetings
- Evidence of staff and students referencing PBIS posters throughout the building
- Anecdotal record of diverse literature incorporated into classroom instruction
- Number of Cultural Arts events that support diversity
- Staff members engaged in the work of the Diversity Committee