



District Update

Student Achievement and Progress toward Goals

November 11, 2021



Vision

The Watchung Borough School District is committed to inspiring learners to explore, inquire, and collaborate on their joyful journey toward discovery, independent thinking, and creative problem solving. Our culture of acceptance and inclusion provides the foundation for learning and social and emotional growth. Through reflection and ethical decision-making, we continue to learn and grow, embrace differences, and prepare for an increasingly complex, ever-changing world.



District Update

Overview of Presentation

- Update on Student Achievement
 - i-Ready diagnostic results (Spring and Fall 2021)
 - DLM and Access results (Spring 2021)
- Update on Progress toward District Goals
- Next Steps for Advancing toward District Goals



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2021 Reading

Students Assessed/Total: 589/590

Overall Placement



- At Risk for Tier 3
6%
- Tier 2
35%
- Tier 1
58%

Grade	Overall Grade-Level Placement	Students Assessed/Total
Grade K	<div><div>81%</div><div>19%</div></div>	58/58
Grade 1	<div><div>71%</div><div>27%</div><div>1%</div></div>	70/70
Grade 2	<div><div>66%</div><div>34%</div></div>	67/67
Grade 3	<div><div>64%</div><div>28%</div><div>8%</div></div>	64/65
Grade 4	<div><div>42%</div><div>52%</div><div>6%</div></div>	62/62
Grade 5	<div><div>41%</div><div>49%</div><div>10%</div></div>	68/68
Grade 6	<div><div>59%</div><div>33%</div><div>9%</div></div>	58/58
Grade 7	<div><div>53%</div><div>33%</div><div>14%</div></div>	64/64
Grade 8	<div><div>51%</div><div>41%</div><div>8%</div></div>	78/78



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2021 Mathematics

Students Assessed/Total: 589/590

Overall Placement



- At Risk for Tier 3
6%
- Tier 2
45%
- Tier 1
49%

Grade	Overall Grade-Level Placement			Students Assessed/Total
Grade K	78%	22%		58/58
Grade 1	51%	43%	6%	70/70
Grade 2	54%	46%		67/67
Grade 3	47%	50%	3%	64/65
Grade 4	44%	52%	5%	62/62
Grade 5	43%	47%	10%	68/68
Grade 6	48%	43%	9%	58/58
Grade 7	39%	53%	8%	64/64
Grade 8	38%	49%	13%	78/78



i-Ready Diagnostic, Fall 2021 Reading

Students Assessed/Total: **583/589**

Overall Placement



- At Risk for Tier 3
5%
- Tier 2
9%
- Tier 1
86%

Grade	Overall Grade-Level Placement	Students Assessed/Total
Grade K	100%	55/55
Grade 1	94% 6%	65/65
Grade 2	86% 14%	76/78
Grade 3	82% 15% 3%	68/69
Grade 4	89% 3% 8%	66/68
Grade 5	80% 12% 8%	66/67
Grade 6	81% 10% 9%	67/67
Grade 7	79% 11% 11%	57/57
Grade 8	86% 3% 11%	63/63



i-Ready Diagnostic, Fall 2021 Mathematics

Students Assessed/Total: 586/595

Overall Placement



● At Risk for Tier 3
5%

● Tier 2
10%

● Tier 1
84%

Grade	Overall Grade-Level Placement		Students Assessed/Total
Grade K	100%		55/55
Grade 1	89% 11%		65/65
Grade 2	87% 10% 3%		77/78
Grade 3	78% 21% 1%		68/69
Grade 4	82% 12% 6%		67/68
Grade 5	85% 1% 13%		67/67
Grade 6	85% 7% 7%		67/67
Grade 7	75% 14% 11%		57/60
Grade 8	79% 13% 8%		63/66



i-Ready Diagnostic Data

Important Notes:

- Student performance is measured against expectations created by historical i-Ready data.
- Spring results in presentation are measured against end-of-year expectations.
- Fall results in presentation are measured against beginning-of-year expectations.
- Midyear data in February will look different because student performance will be measured against progress toward end-of-year expectations.

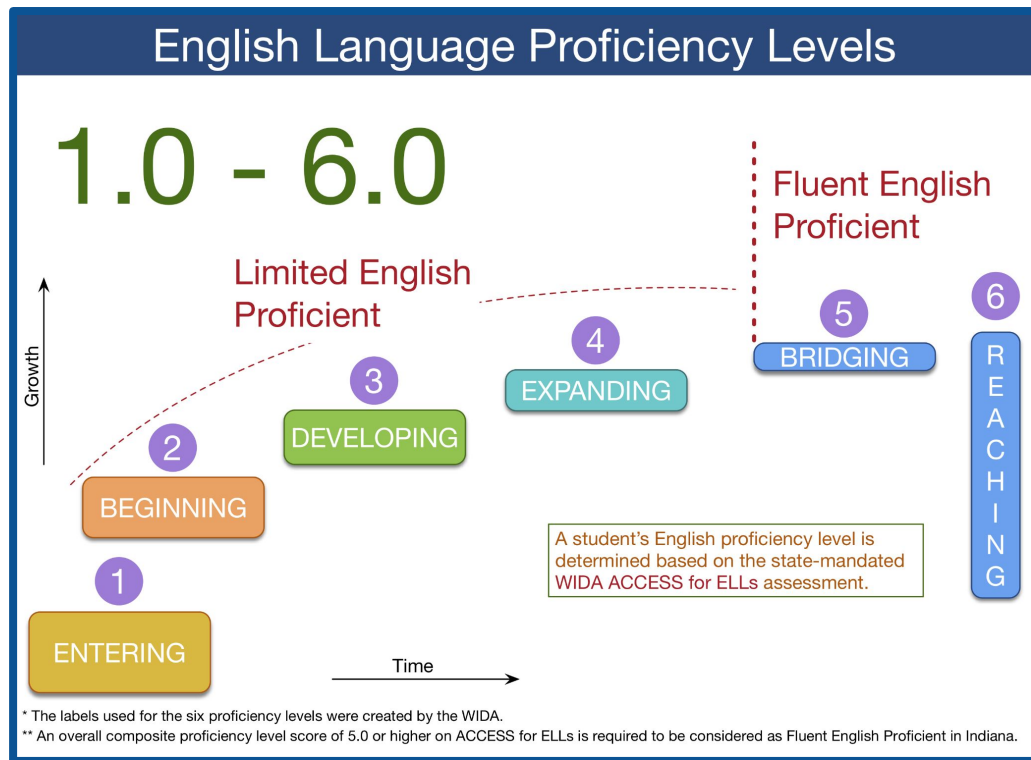


ACCESS and DLM

Standardized assessments (ACCESS and DLM) administered Spring 2021

- ACCESS for English Language Learners (ELLs)
 - Measures English Language Proficiency in four areas:
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Listening
 - Speaking
 - Students must earn an overall score of a 4.5 on the 6-point proficiency levels to be exited from English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction and services.





Dynamic Learning Maps

- Measures student proficiency in English language arts, mathematics and science.
- Assessment is for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who do not take the NJSLA because they are being instructed on the Essential Elements, grade-specific expectations about what students with significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do, rather than the NJSLs.



ACCESS and DLM

- DLM (Dynamic Learning Maps)
 - Results of the DLM are discussed at the student's annual review meeting, and the IEP team considers the information when writing learning goals and objectives and determining an individualized educational program.
 - Results can be used during discrete trial teaching, which involves breaking up larger tasks or goals into subskills or smaller components and teaching them individually and repeatedly to encourage skill acquisition.



District Goals, 2021-22

- Support innovative instruction, design thinking, and problem solving across the curriculum with a focus on enhanced STEAM-related opportunities and scheduling options.
- Enhance student wellness and social-emotional learning with a focus on a growth mindset.
- Ensure a culturally vibrant, inclusive school community that values diversity, equity, and empathy.
- Maintain focus on financial needs of the district with an emphasis on the potential referendum and strategies for increasing reserves.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving

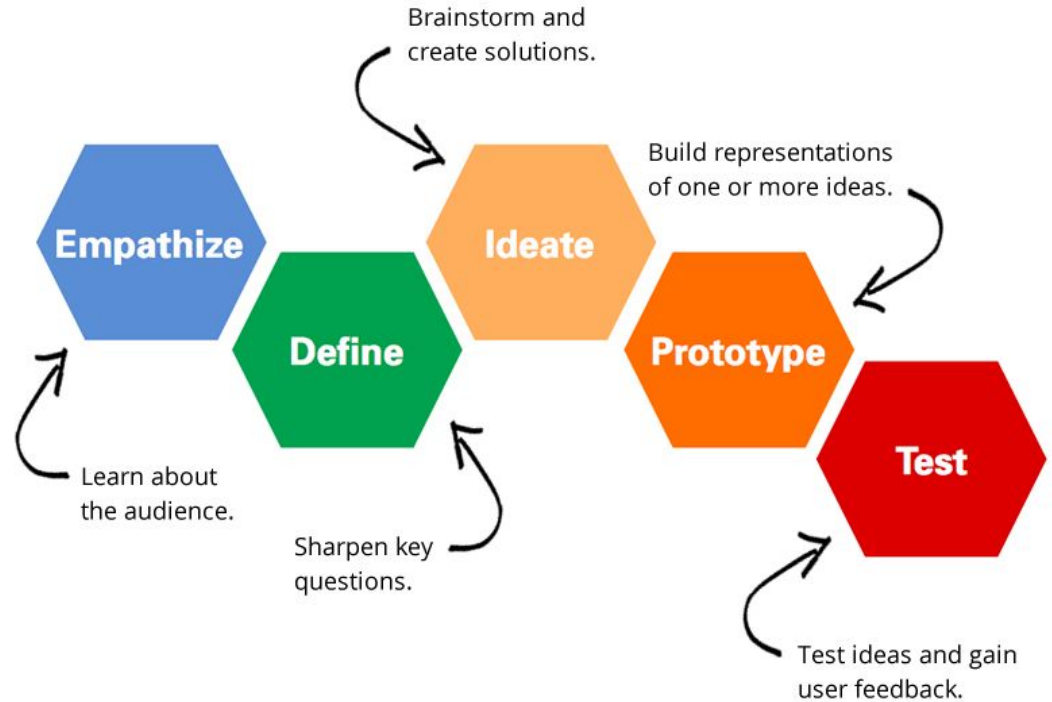
How are we advancing instruction toward design thinking and problem solving?

- Teaching and learning process
- Classroom
- After-school clubs
- Field trips
- Professional learning

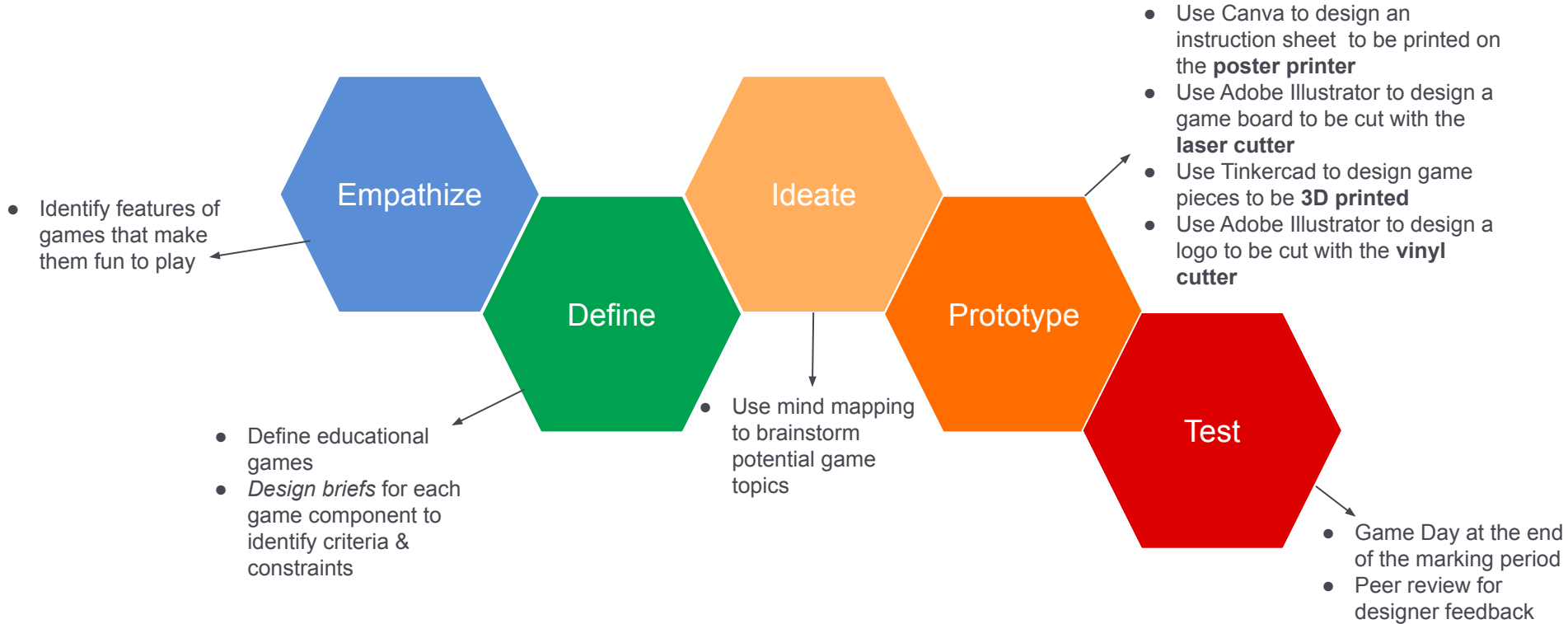


Design Thinking and Problem Solving

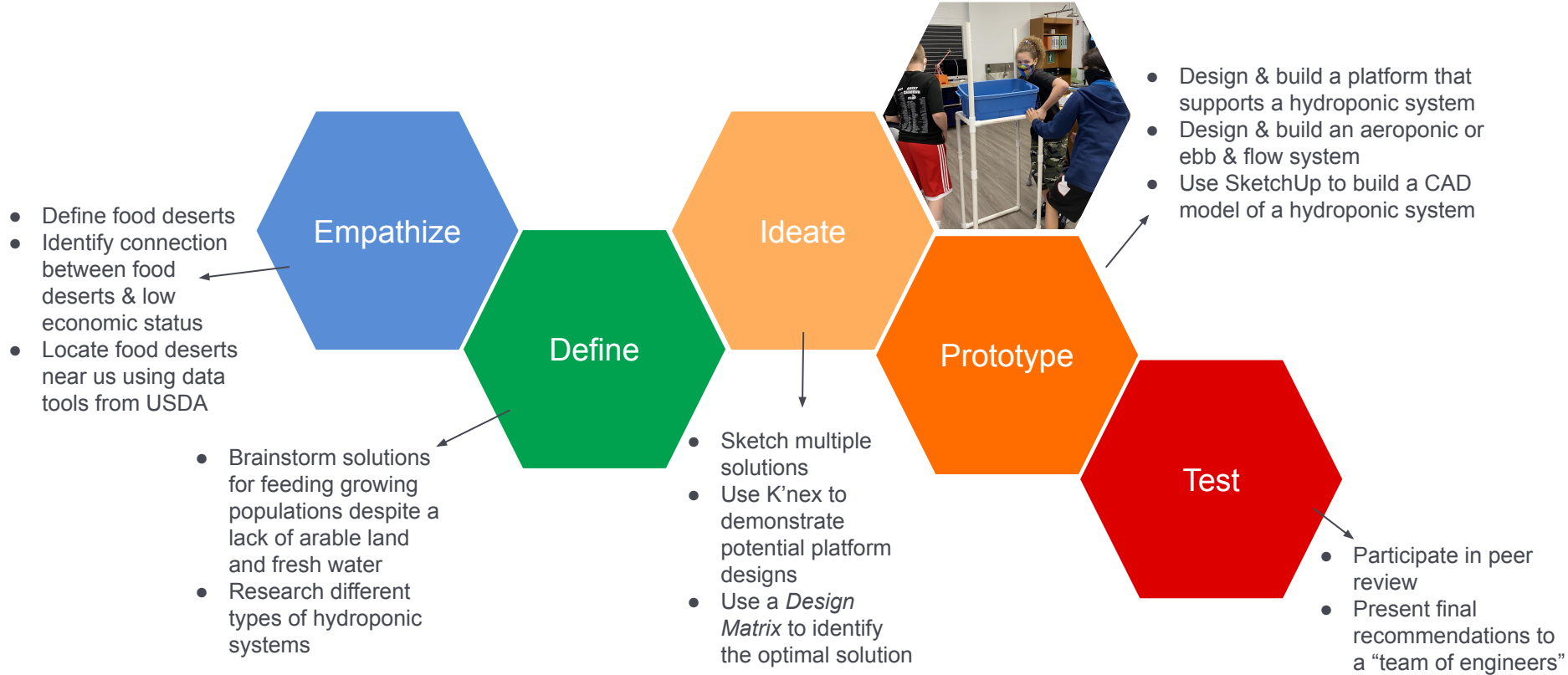
Typical problem solving uses your own opinions and experiences to create a solution. **Design thinking** is a human-centered approach.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving in Game Design Lab (Grade 5)



Design Thinking and Problem Solving in Hydroponic Development (Grade 7)



Design Thinking and Problem Solving with Coding & Robotics Club (grades 5-8)

- Little Bits: electronic building blocks to learn about circuitry & electronics
- Makey Makey: invention kit that allows for everyday objects to be turned into an input or simple circuits for your computer.
- Code.org: AI for Oceans learning about how machines learn and the importance of data, how we can use machine learning for creating a better world.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving with the Valley View Staff

- October PD: 2-hour workshop
 - Design challenge (design a wallet)
 - Compare design thinking to familiar processes.
 - Discussed how to implement design thinking into our classrooms.
- Partnership with IBM



Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades 5-8)

Potential Field Trips

- The Battery Conservancy (Battery Park, NY)
 - Food Systems and Climate Change
- Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum Complex

Planning is underway for the spring.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades K-2)

STREAM

Challenges are introduced with stories that are read at the beginning of class:

- Reinforces general education classroom lessons with characters, setting, plot, problems, and solutions.
- Introduces design thinking where students can identify with the character's problems while they are completing the challenges.

Examples:

- *The Day the Crayons Quit* - Build a crayon box (shapes)
- *Pete the Cat and the 5 Little Pumpkins* - Build a Fence
- *Gingerbread Man* - Build a bridge to cross the river
- *Turkey Trouble* - Build a Thanksgiving table to hold family food choices
- *Iggie Peck Architect* - Build a tower
- *Rosie Revere, Engineer*



Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades K-2)

STEM Challenges with Science Units

- Buoyancy and why different objects float or sink
 - Create a flotation device for a doll in a “pool.”
 - Create a boat that holds the most weight in coins.
- Forces and Motion/Chain Reactions Kits

Holiday/Important People STEM Challenges

- I am Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - Build a podium for Dr. King’s “I have a Dream” speech.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades 3-4)

Science Topics

Energy

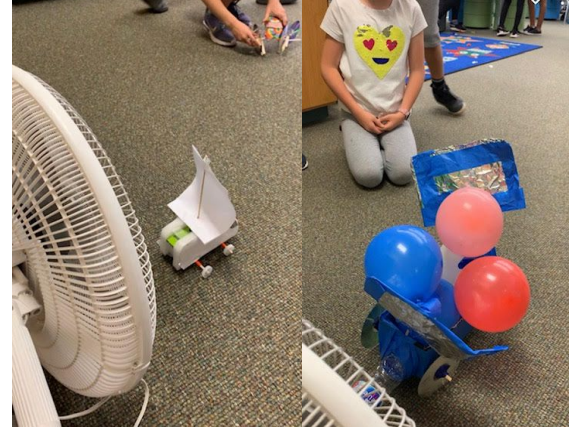
- Wind-Powered Car

Weather

- Hurricane House
- Winter Roof to survive “snowstorm”

Space Travel

- Mission to Mars/Mission X
 - Spaceship that two “astronauts” (marshmallows) can land safely in on Mars



Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades 3-4)

Story Book Challenges (STREAM)

- Balloons Over Broadway - Macy's Day Parade Floats
- Virtually Explore 3D Macy's warehouse and studio where they use CAD to design and make the floats
- Designing floats that appeal to children for current cultural events



Pikachu float right
after Pokemon Go
came out

Design Thinking and Problem Solving (Grades 3/4)

Websites and Apps

Virtual Breakout Rooms with Breakout EDU - Problem Solving

- Virtual escape rooms where students use clues to open locks and break out of rooms.
- Start off with a short story where there is a problem.
- Aligned with what students are learning in their general education classrooms.

Inventioneers App

- Solve problems for characters by creating inventions

G Suite Activities

- Designing on Google Draw to complete design challenges



Coding (Grades K-4)

Apps/Websites

K: Coding Safari/Tynker Jr/Daisy the Dinosaur/Box Island

1: Kodable/CodeSpark/Box Island

2: Code.org/CodeSpark/Kodable/Scratch Jr/Blockly

3: Code.org/Kodable/Scratch Jr/Blockly

4: Code.org/Scratch/Creating and programming Google Doodles/Blockly

Robots

Dash & Dot and Spheros

- Mazes/Coding Challenges

Kano Kits

- Assemble a computer as a class to learn about the different parts and complete coding activities on the computer.



Design Thinking and Problem Solving with Coding & Robotics Club (Grades 2-3)

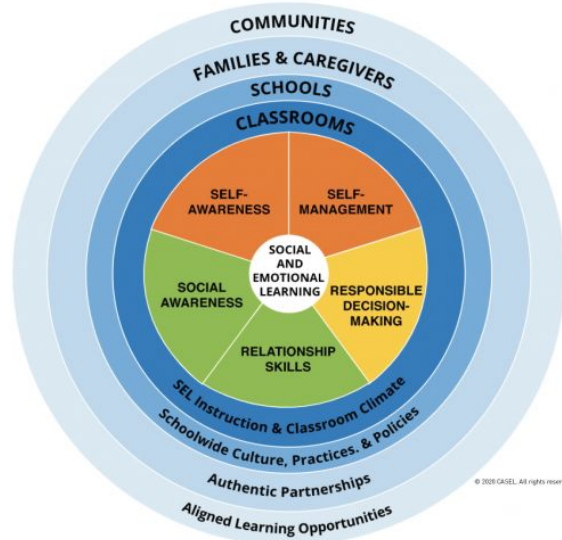
Activities that reinforce lessons taught in class

- Coding
- Robotics with Dash and Dot
- Green screen with DoInk app
- Virtual Design Challenges
- G Suite Activities



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

How are we enhancing student wellness and social-emotional learning and developing a growth mindset in our learners?



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Valley View Students

- Second Step: Community Rebuilding Unit (all classes at the start of the school year).
- Second Step lessons across content areas. October (social studies) included: starting middle school, goal setting, conflicts and perspectives, understanding bullying.
- Spirit Activities where students earn points by grade level. Fall activities include spirit days, kindness graffiti activity, random-compliment day, morning mindfulness activity.



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Valley View Staff

- Mindful Monday Activities
- Taking Care of You (professional development)
- Health & Wellness Club
- Monthly SEL calendars: Optimistic October
- Monthly themed breakfasts - Sunshine Club
- Resources to assist students (Suicide Prevention resources)



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Bayberry

- Dedicated SEL period - 40 min each week
 - Second Step lessons integrated/reinforced throughout the week
- Morning Announcements - Reinforce Second Step
- All School Meetings - Reinforce Second Step
- Guidance lessons based on needs of students/classes
- New AI's Pals SEL curriculum (PK) and staff training



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

How are we ensuring a culturally vibrant, inclusive school community?



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Valley View

- GLSEN Professional Development
 - Creating Safe Spaces
 - Inclusive Curriculum Training
- Review of literature selections in media center and classrooms (new texts being ordered)
- Hispanic Heritage Celebrations
 - Door Decorating Contest, Music and Art appreciation
- Restorative Discipline Training
- Social-issue assignments infused into multiple subjects



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Bayberry

- GLSEN Professional Development
 - Ready, Set, Respect: A Guide for Elementary Educators
- DEI texts
- Hispanic Heritage lessons across throughout grade levels
- Celebration of diverse cultures and groups throughout the school year
 - Morning announcements, guest readers, integrated lessons, special days to share culture



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Recruiting, Hiring, and Training

- Job fairs (CJ PRIDE)
- Broader advertising
- Internships for college and university students
- Watchung IDEA
- NJASA Leadership Diversity Committee (Superintendent)
- NJASA PD-Seminar Committee (Superintendent)
- Increased staff diversity: 42% of new hires since July 1, 2021.
- Raised percentage of diverse staff to 18.03% from 13.21% since September 2020.



Financial Needs

How are we meeting the financial needs of the district with an emphasis on the referendum and strategies for increasing reserves?



Financial Needs

Emphasis on the referendum (visit [Referendum 2021 webpage](#) for more information)

- Engaging in extensive planning and preparation for December 14 vote
- Securing state aid in amount of \$4,885,617

Strategies for increasing reserves

- Developing and updating long-range facilities plan
- Adopting cost-savings strategies to build reserves

Budget process

- Carefully analyzing financial needs
- Implementing strategies to increase efficiency
- Planning for future



Next Steps

Learning Acceleration

- Math and Language Arts Workshop classes added to Valley View
 - Taught by content/grade level teachers
 - Students work on current assignments
- Districtwide Pursuit of Excellence After-School Program
 - Added to the Fall/Winter season
 - Students work on areas identified as gaps or needing reinforcement



Next Steps

Social-Emotional Learning

- Continued Second Step Lessons taught by each content area teacher
- Continued professional learning for staff (Nextmark Training)
- Staff SEL Buddies
- Continued celebration of diverse groups as School Spirit Events and embedded within our curriculum



Next Steps

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Continued celebration of diverse groups as school spirit events and embedded within our curriculum
- Student assemblies and author visits
- Continued review of supplemental resources and curricular units
- Continued professional learning opportunities



Next Steps

Financial Needs

- Continue community education on referendum
 - Ongoing work with architects and financial professionals
 - Collaboration with board committees
 - Presentations at board meetings and community events
 - Walkthroughs and open house
- Continue focus on increasing efficiency and building reserves
- Develop long-term purchasing plan to maintain and upgrade technology and facilities
- Engage in budget process for FY23



Next Steps

Progress reports at future board meetings

- February
- June

