

**Coventry Public Schools**  
**Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School Goals**  
**2021-2022**  
**End of Year Goal Report**  
**Dena DeJulius, Principal**

**1. Identify, define, and measure the critical skills and attributes that are required for success and align systems to continuously improve student performance and achievement.**

**Literacy SMART Goal**

- *Increase the percentage of Grade 6-8 students who demonstrate at or above goal scores on the ELA/Literacy Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) by 10 percentage points as measured by the fall IAB assessment data to the spring IAB assessment data.*

Teachers administered literary pre-Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) in September in the areas of literary, informational, and research. Teachers also completed a student work protocol for each assessment to determine next steps with their instruction and identify individual student needs. The plans for future instruction were grounded in John Hattie and Robert Marzano’s research based effective instructional strategies. All ELA teachers focused on providing students with multiple instructional strategies and graphic organizers in order to complete open-ended responses, and students were given a variety of opportunities to practice, self-reflect, and improve their written responses. All ELA teachers also put a strong focus on not only having students cite evidence to support their thinking, but citing the best evidence to appeal to the reader. Teachers created different structures and charts to model the flow between ideas, citation of evidence, and the explanation of the evidence. In addition, each grade level took on their own instructional focus. Grade 6 ELA teachers had a focus on the writing of summaries. Grade 7 ELA teachers’ instructional focus was on developing vocabulary strategies such as using context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words. Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers worked on the close reading of questions. Students demonstrated huge growth from fall to spring on their literacy IAB performance as evidenced by Data Table 1. Instructional strategies clearly assisted students with growth across grade level literacy standards.

**Data Table 1**

<b>CNH ELA Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) Data 2021-2022</b>			
<b>Average of ALL ELA IAB's (literary, informational, research)</b>			
<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Percent of Students At or Above Goal Fall 2021</b>	<b>Percent of Students At or Above Goal Spring 2022</b>	<b>Growth Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 (Percentage Points)</b>
6	33.8	70.9	+37.1
7	31.8	71.8	+40

8	40.5	76.8	+36.3
<b>6-8 Average</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>+37.8</b>

Data Table 2 shows a comparison between students' 2021 ELA SBAC scores and their 2021-2022 performance on the ELA IABs. As a school, we use this IAB data to predict the performance of how students will perform on the SBAC summative assessment in the spring. When looking at the values in the last column, this shows that our use of the IAB assessments is a strong predictor/determiner of our students' performance on the SBAC summative assessment.

**Data Table 2**

**English Language Arts Passing Rate Comparison Between 2021 SBAC and 2021-2022 IABs**

	<b>Percent of Students Scoring At or Above on 2021 Cohort ELA SBAC</b>	<b>Av Percent of Students Scoring At or Above on 2021-2022 ELA IABs</b>	<b>Percentage Increase/Decrease</b>
Grade 6	68%	70.9%	+2.9
Grade 7	72.7%	71.8%	-0.9
Grade 8	77.3%	76.8%	-0.5

**Math SMART Goal**

- *Increase the percentage of Grade 6-8 students who demonstrate at or above goal scores on the Math Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) by 10 percentage points as measured by the fall IAB math assessment data to the spring IAB assessment data.*

Teachers administered math pre-IABs in September in the areas of Number Systems and Ratios & Proportions in Grade 6 and Grade 7. In Grade 8 teachers administered pre-IABs in September in the areas Analyze & Solve Linear Equations, and Functions. Teachers completed a Looking at Student Work protocol for each assessment to determine next steps. Grade 6 teachers have been instructing students on the areas of positive rational numbers, ratios, and percent. Instruction in the area of negative rational numbers was also a focus. Grade 7 teachers have instructed students on all rational numbers, ratios, proportions, and percent. Grade 8 taught all the necessary skills and content for analyzing and solving linear equations in their rational number unit. All grade levels have been using SBAC question stems in their classwork, homework, and assessments to get them familiar with the types of questions they will be asked on the math IABs

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and SBAC. Data Table 3 shows a tremendous amount of growth between the fall and spring math IABs. One reason for the low performance in the Fall is due to the fact students had not been exposed to the content of the pre IABs. These pre assessments allow teachers to determine areas for focus for units and lessons as well as determine areas for differentiated instruction based on individual student scores. The small percentage of students who did perform well on the pre IAB had been in the accelerated math class the previous year for their grade level and/or had completed grade level curriculum units via ALEKS online supplemental learning program.

**Data Table 3**

<b>CNH Math Interim Assessment Blocks (IAB) Data 2021-2022</b>			
Grade Level	Percent of Students At or Above Goal Fall 2021	Percent of Students At or Above Goal Spring 2022	<b>Growth Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 (Percentage Pts)</b>
6	5.4	57.3	<b>+51.9</b>
7	4.2	66.5	<b>+62.3</b>
8	8.5	63.7	<b>+55.2</b>
<b>6-8 Average</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>+56.5</b>

Data Table 4 shows a comparison between students' 2021 Math SBAC scores and their 2021-2022 performance on the math IABs. As a school, we use the IAB data to predict the performance of how students will perform on the SBAC summative assessment in the spring. When looking at the values in the last column, this again demonstrates that our use of the IAB assessments is a good predictor/determiner of our students' performance on the SBAC summative assessment.

**Data Table 4**

**Math Passing Rate Comparison Between 2021 SBAC and 2021-2022 IABs**

	Percent of Students Scoring At or Above on 2021 Math SBAC	Percent of Students Scoring At or Above on 2021-2022 Math IABs	Percentage Increase/Decrease
Grade 6	59%	57.3%	-1.7
Grade 7	55.9%	66.5%	+10.6

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Grade 8	65.2%	63.7%	-1.5
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**Whole School Learning Indicator Goal**

- *85% or higher of all students will score a 3 or higher on our Portrait of the Graduate rubrics as measured by PowerSchool data.*

In the fall of 2021, CNH staff reviewed our Portrait of a Graduate (PoG) standards based rubrics, and identified specific rubrics to be utilized and tracked for each department. This year we added the Critical Thinker rubric as part of our standards-based building-wide rubric initiative. This is in addition to our Effective Communicator and Engaged Collaborator rubrics that have been in place for the past two years. Each department once again identified and reviewed common lessons and assessments, and recorded student performance on the rubric in PowerSchool each semester this school year. Department meeting time allowed for time to review and revise lessons, and assessments used to track student performance on the rubrics. Each semester, a school wide report is generated identifying whole school and individual student performance. Our mid-year data report on our three rubrics showed that 92 percent of students scored a 3 or higher on the Effective Communicator rubric, 89 percent of students scored a 3 or better on the Engaged Collaborator rubric, and 100 percent of students scored a 3 or higher on the Critical Thinker rubric. At the mid year point we exceeded our goal with having on average 93.6 percent of our students scoring a 3 or higher on our PoG rubrics. The final report will be available at the end of Quarter 4 and will be shared with the Superintendent.

**Parent Goal**

- *Teachers will keep a log of all parent communication, which includes phone calls, emails and PowerSchool data/comments. PowerSchool will be updated on a weekly basis. Teachers will communicate with the parents/guardians of all their students at least once each quarter (or trimester where applicable). 85% or higher of our CNH parent community will agree or strongly agree that their child’s teachers have provided ongoing communication as measured by our spring 2022 parent/guardian survey data.*

Teachers communicate with parents throughout the year through a variety of means including our PowerSchool Parent Portal, which houses all grades and attendance. Departments send out quarterly newsletters, and classroom teachers use email communication regularly to update parents on student progress and classroom events. Many teachers have their own individual ways of communicating with their parents/guardians about positive things their children have been doing. For example, in Family Consumer Science “caught doing good” certificates are sent home, in physical education there is a Golden Sneaker Award presented monthly along with “Caught in the Act” citations for students who are performing well and demonstrating great cooperation skills. As a school we have positive postcards that are handwritten by classroom teachers, and then read out loud to student recipients by the Assistant Principal. This year 522 positive postcards were mailed home to parents/guardians. Students can also receive ACT leaves for demonstrating

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positive behaviors that support our school ACT goals: Students **Are** safe. Students **Cooperate**. Students **Take** responsibility. All ACT leaves are hung up on our school ACT tree for all to see.

This year nearly half of our parents took our CNH parent survey during the month of April. 159 of our 356 (44.6 percent) CNH families took our Spring 2022 survey (57 in Grade 6, 46 in Grade 7 and 56 in Grade 8). 86.9 percent of our parent community either agree/strongly agree or felt neutral regarding teachers having provided ongoing communication this school year through three or more avenues of communication. Parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their child's teachers have provided ongoing communication was 13 percent. Overall, parents shared through survey comments that they are pleased with the communication from the teachers and administration. Many parents thanked the staff for all of their work during the pandemic. In light of some of the parents' feedback we will adjust future survey questions to offer more specific questions to help us better disaggregate the data based on all of our modes of communication. We will continue to refine our communication practices, and continue to reach out to our parent community regularly. We are proud of all of the communication strategies we have put into place. Teachers will continue to communicate with parents in multiple ways including: emails, newsletters, phone calls, parent/teacher conferences, student-led conferences, school-wide weekly elasts, positive postcards, PowerSchool grades and comments, and more.

PowerSchool grades and assignments are updated a minimum of two times per week for all four day per week classes, and one day per week for related arts classes that meet two times per week. The parent feedback through the survey is helpful as we plan for next year. Teacher leaders in regard to parent communication, as evidenced through summative teacher evaluations, will be sharing strategies and modeling exemplary practices with their colleagues throughout next school year. We plan to share short *How To Videos* with parents in the future on best ways to utilize PowerSchool (i.e. how to access teacher comments in PowerSchool), etc.

- *Review Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) data and Next Generation Science Standard (NGSS) data, which includes disaggregating subgroup performance to inform and address any necessary curriculum revisions, priority standard implementation, and pacing that are needed to increase student achievement.*

During September coaching sessions, science teachers worked with the K-12 STEM coach to review results of the 2021 Grade 8 NGSS assessment as well as priority standards. Each grade level reviewed areas of strength, identified priority areas to focus on, and discussed unit coherence and pacing concerns. During November professional development, the science department compiled summaries of the NGSS unit bundles. This tool was used to audit standards that were repeated in multiple units, weak or missing, and/or not presented in an effective sequence. Phenomena were also critiqued with the intent to improve relevance, engagement and coherence for students.

In the spring the Grade 6-8 department collaborated to address identified needs. Teachers worked with the K-12 STEM coach during content plan and data meetings to select key points for using new formative assessments through the Inner Orbit computerized platform. Relevant NGSS IABs were selected for test format familiarity. The team also began revising, piloting and developing

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summative curriculum embedded performance tasks for Engineering, Investigation, and Modeling (Table 5). Grade 6 and Grade 8 both piloted two of three (eventual) planned performances tasks. Information was collected on “unfinished learning” from the 19-20 and 20-21 school years and a NGSS refresh plan for the 2022 state assessment was outlined. Key features include an assured hands-on investigation, a complete engineering design cycle, adjusting pacing to allow for the Waves unit before the state assessment and a targeted review of prioritized content. Teachers modeled test-taking tips and strategies using the NGSS Grade 8 practice test.

Teachers conducted looking at student work protocols with the STEM coach using the Inner Orbit formative assessments and/or the piloted performance tasks to make instructional decisions to support student learning. The Inner Orbit formative assessments and embedded performance tasks are beginning to create a baseline for longitudinal comparisons to monitor the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional changes.

**Table 5**

<b>Task Type</b>	<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7*</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
Investigation	Feel the Beat (21-22 pilot complete)	Hand Warmer Reactions (planned for 22-23)	Wrecking Ball (21-22 pilot complete)
Engineering	Penguin Shelter (21-22 pilot complete)	Earthquake Proof Structures** (refine for 22-23)	Amusement Park Ride (21-22 pilot complete)
Explanatory Model	Water Drop Journey (tentative) (planned for 22-23)	Ecospheres (planned for 22-23)	Mars Colony Design (tentative) (planned for 22-23)
<p><i>*Grade 7 implementation postponed pending new hires and unit phenomena revisions TBD</i>  <i>**Grade 4 Science also has an Earthquake Proof Structure task. Grade 7 will need a new task.</i></p>			

- *Continue collaborating with Goodwin University on the continued development of our STEM Curriculum in Grades 6 and 7 aligned to the State Department of Education (SDE) Computer Science Framework.*

In the fall, CNH STEM and Technology Education teachers met with the Goodwin University STEM coach to review and align the State Department of Education’s Computer Science Framework, identifying gaps which were shared with STEM teachers. In November, after consulting with the Coventry High School Technology Education staff, the STEM coach and CNH Technology Education teacher drafted a unit plan for Grade 6 Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Automation and Robotics, incorporating a few of the missing standards. The team was also able to draft unit plans for the Grade 6 and Grade 7 STEM curricula to create alignment both vertically and across the grade level related arts courses.

During fall professional development with the Goodwin University coach, STEM teachers  
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brainstormed curriculum ideas and discussed professional development needs. An overall course outline and pacing calendar were created along with a more detailed draft of a Grade 6 Robotics Arm unit aligned to selected computer science and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) engineering standards. STEM teachers were able to set up the Robotic Arms in the CNH MakerSpace room, learn how to use them, and more fully develop the unit for Grade 6. Ideas were brainstormed for a Grade 7 unit using different challenges and skills. Matt DaDona, Goodwin University coach, co-taught with our STEM teacher for the Robotic Arms unit. Mr. DaDona assisted with planning for 2022-2023 as well as evaluating the future uses of our laser printer. The laser printer will be utilized potentially for wood cutting the faces of the speakers from Grade 6 STEM class, and for the capstone project for Grade 7. The capstone project is going to involve printing signs or other needed items for teachers in the district based on a Google Form to collect this information. This way students can be involved in the community and provide a service that will be seen daily.

Below are the Grade 6 and Grade 7 STEM topics covered this year based on collaborative work with the Goodwin University coach and CHS staff. Rationale for units/lessons was focused on how we can build content from one grade to another.

**Grade 6 STEM Topics for 21-22 include:**

- 3D Printing with Tinkercad
- Hour of Code
- Code.org
- Scratch: Building a Story through Scratch to establish a basis for coding for robotic arms
- Snap Circuits: Prepares for assembling the 3D printed speakers
- 3D printed speakers
- Robotic Arms basics
- Soldering for speaker building

**Grade 7 STEM Topics for 21-22 include:**

- TinkerCad Design Unit Baker
- Solar Ovens (or other engineering challenges)
- Stop Action Video
- Spheros
- Drones
- Robotic Arms Tasks

- *Introduce the Portrait of the Graduate (PoG) Critical Thinking rubric and corresponding indicators that are aligned with our Coventry PoG competencies to staff.*

Teachers across departments incorporated either the EdLeader Collaboration, Communication, or Critical Thinking rubrics within their classes this year. Some classes focused on specific rubric performance indicators that were aligned with their specific lesson plans and units.

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For example, the ELA department currently uses the Collaboration rubric twice a year. At the October 12, 2021 professional development day, the Critical Thinking rubric was introduced to teachers. A cover sheet highlighting the performance indicators was made and used by teachers across the content areas. While ELA is still using the Collaboration rubric for input into Powerschool, they are looking for units which might lend themselves to the Critical Thinking rubric as well.

Science used the Collaboration rubric twice this year. Each grade has identified two extended collaborative tasks to assess and input into PowerSchool. As the new embedded 3D NGSS performance tasks are developed and piloted science will examine relevant components of the new Critical Thinking rubric and the future Authentic Innovator rubrics. Grade 6 Technology Education will continue the use of the Collaboration rubric. Grade 8 Technology Education uses elements of the Communication rubric.

Critical Thinking rubric content introduced in the fall aided in the development of a schoolwide Critical Thinking rubric. The world language department elected to utilize the new Critical Thinking rubric this year in Grade 8. Our district curriculum specialists provided presentations to the CNH staff on the Critical Thinking rubric, and ways of incorporating the performance indicators into the classroom. These presentations were given during faculty meeting time in January and March.

- *Strengthen student goal setting in literacy and mathematics, and continue to expand the use of digital portfolios in all grade levels to support our work connected to Student Led Conferences.*

All students in ELA classes, reading support classes, and math classes set student goals. In ELA students set goals related to their *brief writes* (short focused written responses). Goals were revisited throughout the year. Reading students set goals after the administration of the fall reading assessments. Students revisited their goals after the January and May reading assessments. All students set their math goals either in advisory class or math class. Assignments were uploaded into digital portfolios. The social studies department had students select the project they wanted to share in their portfolio. Student-led conferences were held on March 17, 2022. It was the first time parents and students had been in the school in over two years! Energy levels were high, and parents, students and staff alike enjoyed this evening where students took the lead sharing about their learning and progress. CNH staff held 190 student-led conferences (47 percent) across grades six through eight with parents/guardians in attendance.

- *Continue to offer opportunities for high performing students, which includes our current Future Problem Solvers (FPS) curriculum as well as other instructional models.*

We have continued to offer modified opportunities through our Challenge & Enrichment Program (CEP) this year due to the pandemic, and mitigating factors we had in place back in the fall

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when school began. The CNH Morning Show has been recording their shows in order to showcase a video of special messages in the classrooms once per week. The directors also meet to make daily morning announcements on the days there is no video recording.

Veterans Day was run by a small committee of students through CEP. They coordinated activities that the whole school could participate in during their advisory classes. Podcasting is a new offering this year that allows students a chance to have a voice. Students prepared segments that include sports & the brain, how to care for a pet, global issues, how to handle social media drama, and a mystery story.

Our Future Problem Solvers Program continues to be a class in which students participate in critical thinking and looking at real world problems through many lenses. We have found success in providing this rigor as the writing portion of these students' ELA curriculum. Students qualified for the state competition as they became more familiar with the future effects of insects and their impact on the world. Future Problem Solving Program of Connecticut (FPSP of CT) hosted their State Competition Award Ceremony on Saturday, March 26, 2022. FPSP of CT teaches students how to think, not what to think. Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School (CNH) teams of Future Problem Solvers who qualified for states studied the topic "Mining" for several months in preparation for the state conference. We had several students place at the state competition and currently have 9 students (across grades 6-11) that are preparing for the international competition that will take place at UMASS, Amherst from June 9-12. Students are becoming familiar with the immediate and future effects of Antibiotic Resistance and its impact on our community health.

Other CEP offerings include:

- Video Editing (Adobe Premiere - Grade 8 candid video, Grade 8 baby video, Grade 6 Go-Pro video)
  - Digital Drawing (Adobe Illustrator)
  - Yearbook (pictures, file management, book layout)
  - Newspaper (managed by Marybeth)
  - Publicity (display case)
  - 3D Printing
  - Challenge of the Week (manage a logic problem classroom with prizes)
  - Stock Market Game (three teams this year)
  - Math Acceleration
  - New Science Olympiad Team (competed at State Tournament in March and medaled in several areas)
- *Continue to implement and evaluate intervention programming to provide a continuum of reading and math support services to better address students' ongoing needs. 80% of students in reading intervention will increase at least two levels as measured by the BAS reading assessment from fall to spring. 80% of students in math intervention will increase their mastered topics by 50% as measured on the ALEKS Knowledge Check during their time receiving Tier 2 math support.*

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In reading intervention, student assessments occur three times a year. Interim assessments also occur once per quarter. Students track their progress using their goal setting forms. Any student earning a 1 or 2 on their 2021-2022 SBAC Literacy assessment were evaluated to determine if intervention is needed. (Programs used - Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI), Lexia, Just Words). Current programming is evaluated regularly throughout the year during literacy council meetings. 36 students were enrolled in the CNH reading intervention program throughout the 2021 -2022 school year. Enrolled students received both LLI and Lexia instruction each quarter. In order to assess students' progress, each child was given the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) in September, January and May. It was anticipated that at least 80 percent of students in reading intervention will increase by at least two levels as measured on this assessment. When comparing the Benchmark data from September with the most recent BAS assessment scores, data shows 92 percent (33/36 students) of students have met this goal of moving up at least two reading levels. Two levels is equivalent to one year's growth.

In math intervention, ALEKS (Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces) Knowledge Checks occur after every completed objective or when deemed necessary by the teacher. *"ALEKS helps students master course topics through a continuous cycle of mastery, knowledge retention, and positive feedback. Each student begins a new course with a unique set of knowledge and prerequisite gaps to fill. By determining the student's baseline of knowledge, ALEKS creates an individual and dynamic path to success where students learn and then master topics."* Students' progress is shown by the number of topics they have mastered and retained. When comparing students' Initial Knowledge Check with their current mastered topics 100 percent of students have increased their mastered topics by 50 percent and 92 percent of students have increased their mastered topics by 100 percent.

## **2. Maintain and promote a positive and respectful learning community.**

- *Continue with year two of providing diversity and equity opportunities for students.*

Students in Grade 6 and students in Grade 7 each participated in three different virtual diversity and equity discussions led by Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson. This was the second year these discussions took place and this was the second year for these two cohort grade levels. Mr. Paul Vivian and Rev. Dr. Audley Donaldson are respected local diversity training consultants who have been offering workshops on diversity to school districts in Connecticut for over 25 years. Vivian was the director of Meriden Children First. He's white and lives in Southington. Donaldson is an Episcopal priest at St. Stephen & St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Brooklyn where he lives. Donaldson, who is black, migrated to the United States from Jamaica in 1984 after accepting a scholarship from Yale School of Medicine and Yale Divinity School. Their presentations address differences with race, stereotypes, family composition, bullying and bystanders. They use humor, empathy, and authenticity to tackle sensitive topics including discrimination related to age, gender, abilities/disabilities, and race. Vivian and Donaldson use their friendship to show students that people with different backgrounds can get along.

Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 participated in several cultural celebrations including  
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celebrating and learning about the Latino heritage and culture, and exploration of the Chinese New Year. During Black History month all students participated in a live virtual interactive field trip. Students were virtually guided to visit Dr. Woodson's Shaw neighborhood in Washington D.C. and learned how the Black history movement ties into our Civil Rights movement. Carter G. Woodson, an African American writer, publisher, and historian established Negro History Week in 1926, the predecessor to the month we now celebrate. He purchased the three-story brick building in Shaw for \$8,000 in 1922, and lived and worked there until his death in 1950.

As the ELA department continues to attend the professional development opportunities presented by the district around equity and diversity, as well as learn more about Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop's work around "mirrors and doors," we continue to reflect on the text choices we provide students within each unit and text set. We continue to revise our curricular scope and sequence to meet the needs of our students, including diversifying our text sets with more novel choices, nonfiction texts, videos, and other forms of literature to support our essential questions. One of the recent changes includes the incorporation of Alan Gratz's book, *Refugee*, into the sixth grade historical fiction unit. Not only do we want different races' voices represented in our literature, but we continue to reflect on the other forms of diversity. This can be seen in our Grade 8 challenges and awareness unit that focuses on mental health concerns.

The Grade 7 ELA team teaches an African American historical fiction unit featuring *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. This is complemented by a variety of media including videos, informational text, and primary sources that introduces students to the African American experience. Students learn about the social injustices faced by African Americans including slavery, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights movement. Seventh graders attended a presentation about Burkina Faso, a country in West Africa, to complement their reading of *A Long Walk to Water*. A native engineer of Burkina Faso visited CNH and talked about his home country, touching upon topics students study such as education and water access. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period.

Grade 8 ELA teaches a unit on autism and a unit on World War II. In the unit on autism students read both fiction and nonfiction texts about the challenges that people who have autism face. They learn how people such as Temple Grandin, can overcome these challenges and accomplish great things. Students select from a variety of novels and articles to help them learn how to better understand and accept differences. As a result of their reading, students realize that no matter what someone's disability is, we are all capable of greatness. Throughout the World War II unit students learn about the injustices Jewish people faced during the 1940's. They also discuss the Japanese Internment Camps which were established right here in America.

World language classes in Grade 7 and Grade 8 (students choose from French, Spanish or Chinese) provide students with daily lessons in their respective language covering topics such as food, customs/cultures, research, art, language, history, music, etc. The addition of the Mandarin Chinese program at Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School has been in place for the past six years. Mandarin Chinese is an exploratory class for all Grade 6 students.

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- *Continue to provide professional learning on the acquisition of Social and Emotional Learning practices and trauma informed practices, and building positive relationships with students to help build a stronger middle school culture of respect, understanding, and kindness.*

Professional development focused on social and emotional learning (SEL) practices was shared at faculty meetings throughout the school year with CNH support staff leading the way. SEL strategies were further discussed at weekly grade level meetings. The Character Strong middle level curriculum we use was implemented during monthly Advisory classes. Character Strong focuses on engagement, belonging, and student well-being. Faculty engaged in monthly book discussions on the district book read, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*. Lead teachers provided insight and examples of how strategies can be implemented in the classroom from each chapter at faculty meetings. This year we piloted our first student celebration home visit. Staff selected a student who has overcome one or more obstacles and has demonstrated perseverance and growth; the student's teachers and administrators paid a surprise visit to the student at their house after school with cookies, balloons and words of praise!

CNH offered an afterschool book club that focused on dealing with stress and anxiety in middle school. Students received copies of the book, *Anxiety Relief for Teens, by Regine Galanti, PhD*. The book focuses on mindfulness techniques to help teenagers better navigate life challenges by focusing on their thoughts, behaviors, and physical reactions. This book provides students with different coping strategies and practices to implement to take control of the daily stresses and anxieties they may experience. The goal of this book club was to provide students with a toolbox of reliable strategies they can use in their daily experiences to help reduce anxiety and stress. During meeting times, students reviewed each chapter of the book and discussed the main ideas, strategies, and activities described.

- *Collaborate with the District Attendance Committee to identify strategies to reduce chronic student absenteeism and establish consistent procedures aligned with State recommendations.*

Support staff attended the district attendance committee meeting in the fall, and attended the monthly Communities of Practice meetings focused on attendance and engagement. CNH support staff (school social worker, school psychologist, school counselors) followed procedures established by the district and aligned with State recommendations, including addressing concerns via letters, meetings, home visits, and referrals to appropriate outside agencies.

- *Utilize the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) universal screener to develop and implement additional tiered interventions to address students' social and emotional competencies (SEC) and learning needs.*

ELA staff received training on October 12 and November 2 on the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) universal screener. ELA teachers then completed the screener for all  
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students in their classes with the help of special education teachers. If a student was flagged as “at-risk,” the teacher then completed the full DESSA questionnaire. Members of the CNH Clinical Team/Support Staff (school social worker, school psychologist, school counselors) reviewed and analyzed the data generated from the DESSA screener. The data was utilized to develop tiered strategies to assist with our multi-tiered level of support for the varying needs of our students. Our school based team, made up of our school psychologist, school social worker and school counselors, reviewed the data to identify whole school areas of need as well as targeted needs for students who were identified as at-risk (the “need for instruction” range).

DESSA data was used to identify Tier 1 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons that were implemented during advisory classes; lessons were primarily taken from our Character Strong curriculum. As a school, the DESSA data informed us to focus on Goal Directed Behavior and Personal Responsibility for all students during advisory class time. Data for students who were identified as at-risk after completion of the full questionnaire was reviewed. The majority of identified students (82 percent) were already receiving SEL support through their Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan or through our LEASA Program. There were 22 students flagged through the initial DESSA screener; 18 of those students were already receiving support through 504 Plans or an IEP. DESSA data was used to focus lessons during counseling sessions for students who have 504 Plans or IEPs. May Data will be reviewed once all questionnaires are completed – this will inform initial SEL Tier 1 for the fall of 2022. May data will also help us determine the effectiveness of interventions for students who were identified in October of 2021.

All 22 students identified as at-risk (5 percent of our school population) on the full DESSA questionnaire were matched up with teacher mentors. We have 20 volunteer teacher mentors who meet with their mentees once a week for about 20 minutes. Meeting dates and notes are logged on a data tracking form. For year one, the idea was for mentors to get to know their students and foster positive student/adult relationships in the building. All parents were contacted and all but 1 parent gave permission for their child to participate. The plan is to survey staff and students in June regarding their experience.

- *Provide ongoing support to staff regarding newly developed restorative practices/positive behavioral interventions and support (PBIS) discipline plan referred to as ACT (CNH students Are safe; Cooperate; Take Responsibility). 80% or higher of all students will be recognized by the end of the school year for following ACT as measured by the ACT recognition data.*

To date, 91 percent of our student population has earned a total of 364 leaves for acting safe, cooperating, and taking responsibility. Student behavior and expectations have been reinforced through periodic Morning Show announcements using Screencastify, and narrated by the Assistant Principal to encourage appropriate behavior. In addition, teachers recognize students through writing positive postcards to them. The Assistant Principal reads each postcard out loud to each student congratulating them for their positive behaviors. To date, staff have written 522 postcards.

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These simple yet effective practices promote positive behavior of students and support ongoing parent communication initiatives. All postcards are mailed home to the student's families.

- *Continue to integrate literacy-based experiences into our school culture as well as other specific theme based programs targeting students' interests in order to create a community of lifelong readers.*

The CNH library runs several monthly activities to generate interest in library visits and reading. This year we added February Book Reviews and March 4-leaf Friends where students wrote notes to friends and library staff "hid" them in books. Both activities created a community with 20 or more students participating above and beyond regular library visits. We continued with book character pumpkin decorating in October and will add new activities each year!

In March CNH students and staff celebrated Read Across America with mystery readers throughout the day. A variety of staff members read short excerpts from stories, songs, recipes, poems, etc. Students then tried to guess which of their teachers were behind the readings. The activity created some healthy competition and lots of buzz about reading.

Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School welcomed middle grade author, Leslie Connor, to visit students and participate in activities for Literacy Night Before Dark on Tuesday, April 5, 2022. Earlier in the day, thirteen students were selected to participate in a writing workshop facilitated by Ms. Connor. These students showed a sincere interest in writing with aspirations of being published writers in the future. After school, 43 students stayed to listen to the author share her story and answer questions about books, reading recommendations, and becoming a writer. In addition, students participated in fun literacy based activities. Students explored the library in a scavenger hunt, raced library carts around the cafeteria, and played trivia games. All students earned free books and T-shirts for their participation and to commemorate the event. Snacks, raffle prizes, and camaraderie were the final touches on this fun, engaging afternoon of literacy!

Throughout the year the library and ELA teachers promote the state chosen Nutmeg nominees by reading and creating projects based on each student's choice. In April, the whole school is invited to vote. *Snapdragon*, a graphic novel by Kat Leyh, was the clear winner for our school, but there were many ties for 2nd place demonstrating the varied interests of our students. 11 students read 10 or more Nutmeg Nominees including 2 students who read 20 or more (Aerie Rowett - 28 and Lilly O'Neil - 20). The top Nutmeg readers for each grade will be invited to an ice cream party in June. Nutmeg Voting & Celebration

Each quarter the library recognizes the Top 10 Library Patrons The student names are posted in the library, and a bit of competition ensues! Each quarter the names and rankings change, but in every case the top ten library patrons check out between 11 and 40 books! Every month book reviews are included in the school newspaper: Nathan Hale News.

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Grade 6 students will attend an author talk in June with Jeanne Zulick Ferrulo, one of next year's Nutmeg Nominees. In addition, during their short story unit, Grade 6 students had the opportunity to view a series of virtual plays filmed by the Chamber Theater Company. Seventh grade teachers worked with the library and created lessons that connected the curriculum with picture books.

The library shares a book trailer for each grade each month to encourage students to find a book that piques their interests. Many ELA teachers bring students to the library monthly to watch the trailer and look for books. Also, one sixth grade teacher works with the library to share 1st Chapter Friday. Mrs. Murdoch visits many Fridays to read aloud an exciting first chapter to get students interested in a book or genre. Because the library is organized by genre, students are easily able to locate books that appeal most to them. Three CNH students have been trained to circulate books and maintain the library through their Independent Study program.

### **3. Recruit, retain and develop high quality staff at every level.**

- *Provide cultural competence training for teachers to support their efforts in recognizing unconscious bias, understanding the role of culture in education, and using students' cultures as a basis for learning.*

A core group of teachers attended professional development titled: *Systemic Racism in Education and How to Address It* with educational consultant Linda Darcy. Linda Darcy has been working with teachers in the district on this initiative for the past two years. Specific professional development time throughout the year was spent on analyzing and practicing methods supported in Zaretta Hammon's book, "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain."

CNH staff also participated in several trainings related to culturally relevant teaching practices, and looked at their curriculum through the lens of equity. Staff is in the process of reviewing their curricula, and revising lessons and units with the purpose of including culturally relevant information, practices, resources, and texts. Our ELA Department is looking to revise more units to include more culturally responsive texts. Some of this work has already taken place. This work will continue into next year.

- *Broaden CNH school leadership by utilizing Team Leaders and Coventry Leadership Academy participants to share and present department level data, curriculum updates, and provide professional development to staff throughout the year. Encourage these teacher leaders to also participate in other leadership opportunities at CNH.*

CNH Team Leaders and Coventry Leadership Academy participants each shared information and strategies from one chapter of Zaretta Hammond's *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* book during faculty meeting time throughout the school year. Presentations were interactive in

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nature, and feedback from staff is to continue this shared presentation process next school year. In addition, Team Leaders led their departments through the October 12th professional development (developing the Critical Thinking rubric, and reading and discussing parent engagement articles) Clinical Team members provided several presentations to staff on DESSA data and SEL interventions that are part of our multi-tiered continuum of supports for our students.

- *Continue to recognize, honor, and celebrate middle school staff through the “Most Valuable Patriot” program and other school based recognitions who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and excellence in teaching and learning.*

CNH recognized several staff members this year for their excellence in teaching and learning practices. Teachers were recognized for being a Most Valuable Patriot (MVP), Rookie of the Year and one teacher was nominated for the Teacher of the Year program. Mid-year it was decided that after careful review, the MVP program would be suspended for the remainder of this school year. Since Coventry will be participating in the Connecticut State Department of Education Teacher of the Year program, we will focus our energy on this prestigious award and recognition.

- *Maintain partnerships with ECSU, UCONN, and other local universities and colleges through supporting student teacher assignments, practicums, and internships.*

This year CNH supported 11 interns/student teachers from UCONN, ECSU and Grand Canyon University. Intern assignments were in the following departments: LEASA Program (Learning Everyday Alternatives for Success and Achievement), ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies and World Language. We were fortunate to have our interns/student teachers in person this year. We are already looking to next school year where we will have two UCONN placements: one working in our World Language department and one working with our LEASA program. We will also have one University of Bridgeport placement working in our Band program. There will also be a few clinical students observing throughout the school year.

CNH is also in the planning stages of developing a mentorship program with UCONN students as part of our tiered behavioral intervention support for students. Virtual meetings have occurred between CNH, UCONN faculty and the UCONN Student Coordinator. Four UCONN students attended CNH after school to support students with math work during the month of April. The UCONN student coordinator is working on starting support next school year in the fall. The plan is to have UCONN students mentor CNH students after school, starting in October. This mentor program will complement the teacher mentor program we put in place this year, and allow for additional students to have mentors who they can work with after school.