

District Update

Progress toward Goals

June 6, 2023

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 Goals, 2022-23

- Develop academic-enrichment opportunities for students through personalized learning, inquiry, and collaborative problem solving.
- Enhance and diversify strategies for communicating with the community with a focus on the website and social media.
- Strengthen social-emotional wellness of students and staff and continue promoting a culturally vibrant, inclusive school community.
- Prepare for and lead the district through the QSAC monitoring process.



Academic Initiatives

How are we developing strategies for personalized learning, inquiry, and collaborative problem solving?

Teaching and learning process

- Classroom
- Enrichment programs
- Clubs and activities
- Field trips
- Professional learning



Academic Initiatives

Classroom (Culture of Inquiry and Collaboration)

- Engage in authentic, deeper learning (LATI)
- Use *i-Ready* data to inform instruction and personalize learning for individual students and classes
- Use individual state testing data to support students
- Emphasize a growth mindset
- Build student agency and pride in student work
- Self-monitoring and collective responsibility
- Reinforce productive collaboration
- Use evidence-based teaching



Academic Initiatives

Enrichment Programs

- SOAR program/opportunities
- Coding opportunities in STEAM coding classes
- School-wide contests and opportunities (Spelling Bee, Science Fair Night, STEAM Family Night, writing contests, Visiting Author, Battle of the Books, etc.)
- Extension and enrichment activities/resources in the classroom
- FLEX period with student choice
- Bayberry lunchtime enrichment groups



Academic Initiatives

After-School Clubs and Activities

- Community Outreach
- Student Council
- Photography Club
- Peer Leaders
- Basketball
- Track and Field
- Softball/Baseball
- Intramurals
- Honor Band
- Select Choir
- Art Club
- Theater
- Math Club
- Algebra Club
- Adventure Club
- Coloring Confidence Program
- Coding & Robotics
- Chess Club
- STEAM Club
- Environmental Club
- TREP\$ Club
- World Culture Club
- Yearbook Club



Academic Initiatives

Field Trips

- The Historic Village at Allaire (8th Grade - US History)
- Rutgers Science Explorer Bus (6 - 8th Grades - STEAM & Science)
- Somerset Patriots (6th Grade - Mathematics)
- 9/11 Museum & Memorial (8th Grade - Social Studies)
- Intrepid Air & Space Museum (8th Grade - Science & Social Studies)
- Battery Conservancy (7th Grade - Science & STEAM)
- Liberty Science Center Virtual Trip (5th Grade - Science & STEAM)
- Sea Life Aquarium (5th Science)
- Turtle Back Zoo & Crayola Experience (K STEAM)
- Doyles Farm (1st Science/Social Studies)
- Morris Museum (2nd Science)
- Environmental Education Center (3rd Science)
- Sandy Hook - Marsh & Ocean Environments (4th Science)



Academic Initiatives

Professional learning

- Innovative Designs for Education (IDE) consultants
 - Whole school training on best practices in executive functioning and student achievement
 - Personalized coaching for teachers
 - Online access to MyQPortal library of instructional resources
 - Self-paced online learning experiences (PLE) focused on individualized learning
- Response to Intervention training
 - Implementing effective RTI process and high impact interventions
 - Developing targeted goals based on assessment data and frequent monitoring
 - Crisis Prevention Institute Training: non-violent crisis intervention techniques



Academic Initiatives

Professional Learning

- Danielson Framework for Teaching 2022
 - Online and in-person training for teachers and administrators
- NextMark Training
 - Recognizing and addressing student mental health in the classroom
- Marco Polo Training (PK)
 - Personalized videos and family engagement
- Data analysis to inform instruction
- ParaEducator training for paraprofessionals
- Sustainability & Climate Change Training
 - The Cloud Institute
 - Rutgers University Center for Mathematics, Science & Computer Education



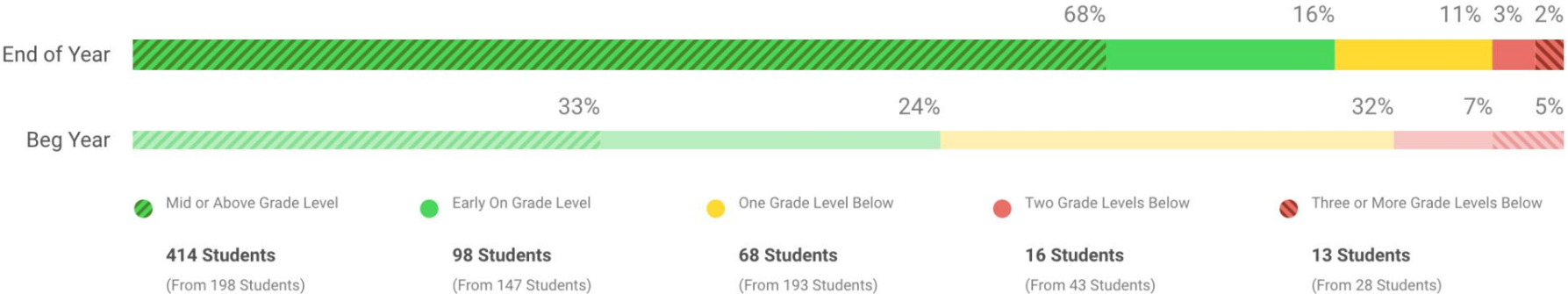
Academic Initiatives

Academic Strategies aligned with Personalized Learning Approach

- PLC Team Meeting - data analysis, goal setting
 - Job-embedded professional development
- FLEX
 - Intervention and enrichment period
- Math and Language Arts Workshop classes
 - Taught by content/grade level teachers
 - Enhanced data analysis to identify students strengths and weaknesses
- Districtwide Pursuit of Excellence After-School Program
 - Enhanced summer program
 - Students work on areas identified as gaps or needing reinforcement
 - Additional resources that connect to *i-Ready*



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Reading, Grades K-4


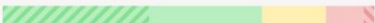

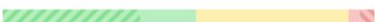


i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Reading, Grades K-2

| Grade | | Overall Grade-Level Placement | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Grade K | End of Year | | 81% | 10% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 17% | 26% | 57% | 0% | 0% |
| Grade 1 | End of Year | | 78% | 15% | 7% | 0% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 31% | 17% | 53% | 0% | 0% |
| Grade 2 | End of Year | | 66% | 12% | 15% | 7% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 23% | 19% | 38% | 20% | 0% |

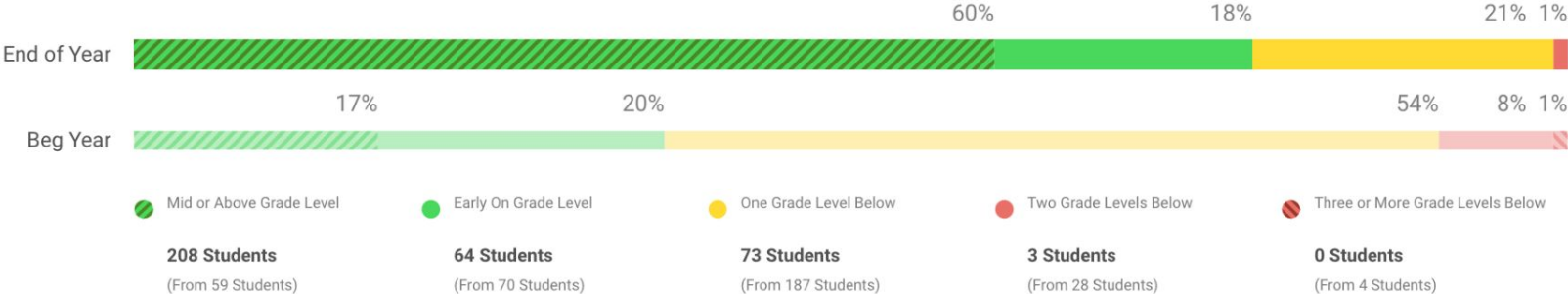


i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Reading, Grades 3-4

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Grade 3 | End of Year |  | 68% | 20% | 7% | 3% | 1% |
| | Beg Year |  | 39% | 30% | 17% | 10% | 3% |
| Grade 4 | End of Year |  | 60% | 15% | 24% | 0% | 1% |
| | Beg Year |  | 37% | 15% | 41% | 3% | 4% |



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Math, Grades K-4




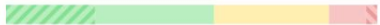


i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Math, Grades K-2

| Grade | | Overall Grade-Level Placement | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Grade K | End of Year | | 82% | 8% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 23% | 16% | 61% | 0% | 0% |
| Grade 1 | End of Year | | 60% | 18% | 22% | 0% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 18% | 15% | 62% | 5% | 0% |
| Grade 2 | End of Year | | 45% | 26% | 28% | 1% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 9% | 16% | 57% | 18% | 0% |

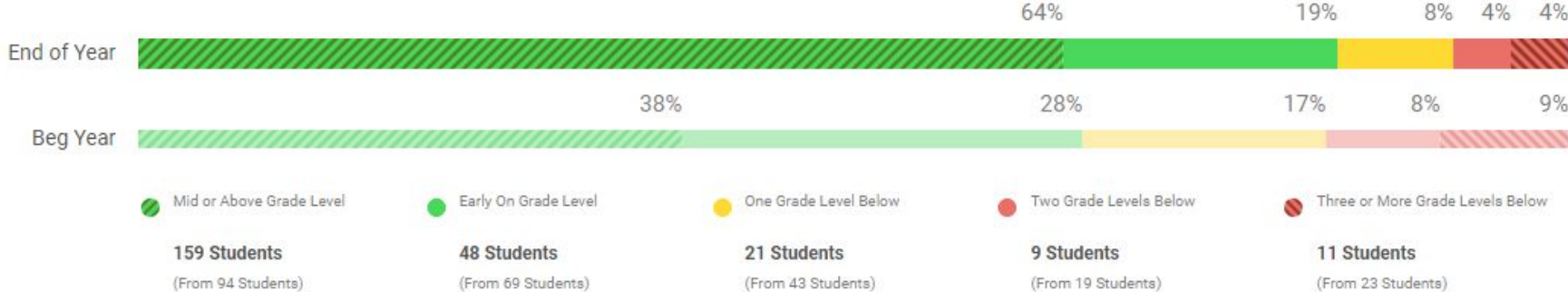


i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Math, Grades 3-4

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Grade 3 | End of Year |  | 53% | 23% | 23% | 2% | 0% |
| | Beg Year |  | 9% | 21% | 59% | 8% | 3% |
| Grade 4 | End of Year |  | 58% | 18% | 23% | 1% | 0% |
| | Beg Year |  | 24% | 32% | 31% | 10% | 3% |



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Reading, Grades 5-8

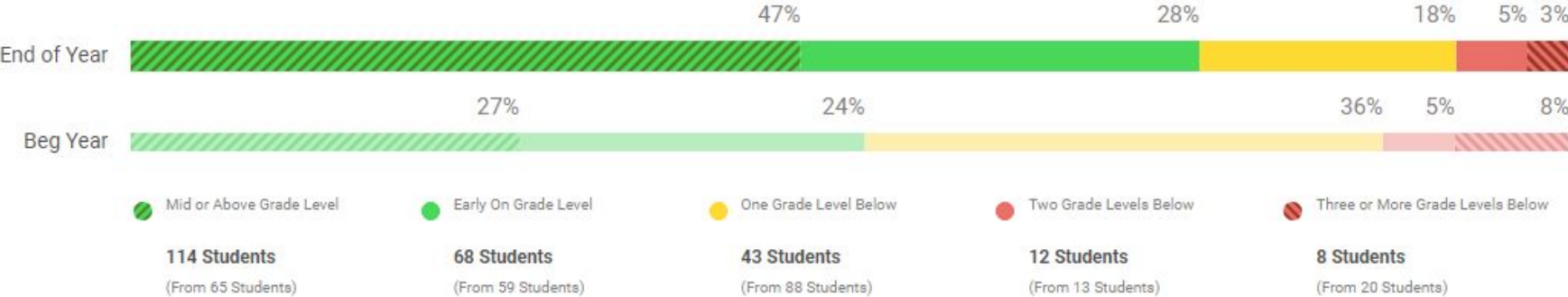


i-Ready Diagnostic, Winter 2023 Reading, Grades 5-8


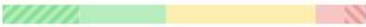
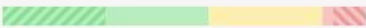


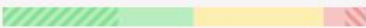
| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Grade 5 | End of Year | | 56% | 27% | 13% | 5% | 0% |
| | Beg Year | | 27% | 33% | 22% | 16% | 2% |
| Grade 6 | End of Year | | 70% | 14% | 3% | 6% | 6% |
| | Beg Year | | 41% | 27% | 13% | 8% | 13% |
| Grade 7 | End of Year | | 57% | 24% | 12% | 3% | 4% |
| | Beg Year | | 34% | 30% | 18% | 4% | 13% |
| Grade 8 | End of Year | | 76% | 11% | 6% | 0% | 7% |
| | Beg Year | | 52% | 20% | 17% | 2% | 9% |



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Math, Grades 5-8



i-Ready Diagnostic, Spring 2023 Math, Grades 5-8

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|--|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| Grade 5 | End of Year |  | 60% | 13% | 21% | 6% | 0% |
| | Beg Year |  | 21% | 24% | 41% | 8% | 6% |
| Grade 6 | End of Year |  | 45% | 33% | 16% | 3% | 3% |
| | Beg Year |  | 28% | 28% | 31% | 3% | 9% |
| Grade 7 | End of Year |  | 38% | 34% | 17% | 5% | 6% |
| | Beg Year |  | 26% | 23% | 35% | 5% | 11% |
| Grade 8 | End of Year |  | 42% | 32% | 17% | 6% | 4% |
| | Beg Year |  | 32% | 21% | 36% | 6% | 6% |



Student Highlights

- David Loia won a gold award for his watercolor painting of St. Basil's Cathedral in the American Institute of Architects Holiday contest.
- Girls' Basketball made it to the finals
- Softball and Baseball Teams made it to the semi-finals
- Emily Hauck qualified for the Junior Solar Sprint Finals held on May 22 at New Providence Middle School
- VV Select Choir performed the National Anthem at Texier House during the Borough's Memorial Day celebration.
- 7th and 8th Grade Choral and Band Students will perform at Great Adventure where they will be adjudicated by professors from Rowan University.
- Noa Santoro and Khushi Yadav received this year's Band Director Award from Mrs. Morrison.
- BB Glee Club performed at Somerset Patriots Game and April board meeting
- Kindergarten, 2nd & 4th grade plays
- 3rd & 4th grade concerts



Communication Strategies

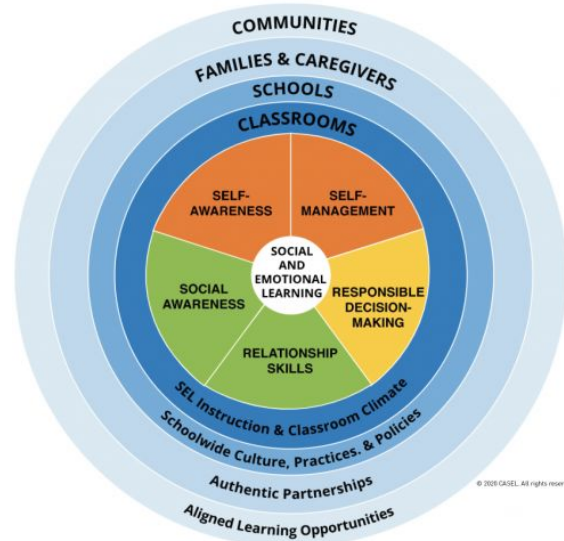
How are we enhancing and diversifying strategies for communicating with our community?

- New website launched in November
- Twitter accounts for district, special services department, and each school
- Weekly district newsletter with community events
- Regular communication from schools through email
- In-person information sessions and meetings



Wellness in a Culturally Vibrant Community

How are we strengthening social-emotional wellness of students and staff and continuing to promote a culturally vibrant, inclusive school community?



Wellness

Valley View Students

- Classrooms
 - Fostering a Culture of Inquiry and Collaboration
 - Self-monitoring, goal setting, and reflection
 - Flexible classroom seating
- Mountaineer Mondays
 - Small groups with one teacher for their VV career
 - Community building
 - Second Step lessons
 - Cultural recognition and celebration lessons/activities
- 5th Grade
 - Guidance lessons
 - Digital citizenship lessons



Wellness

Valley View Staff

- Mindful Monday Activities
- Taking Care of You (professional development)
- Health and Wellness Club
- Monthly SEL calendars
- Monthly themed breakfasts - Sunshine Club
- Resources/training to assist students (suicide prevention resources)
- De-Escalation Strategies



Wellness

Bayberry Students

- Weekly Second Step lessons with reinforcement throughout the week
- Building Classroom Community - Responsive Classroom
- Building School Community
 - All-school meetings, school-wide events
 - Spirit events
 - Morning announcements
- Guidance lessons based on needs of students/classes
- Musical Theater embedded in curriculum
- Lunch groups to build social skills and friendships



Wellness

Bayberry Staff

- Responsive Classroom training
 - Morning meeting, building connections, combining social skills with brain-smart engagement techniques and positive behavioral supports
- Health and Wellness Committee
 - Staff wellness events - Yoga for teachers, Painting Party
- Monthly breakfast hosted by staff for staff
- Zen Room



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Valley View

- Monthly recognition (Hispanic Heritage, Women's History, Black History, etc)
- Restorative Discipline training
- Social-issue assignments infused into multiple subjects
- Celebration and recognition of contributions, past and present from diverse groups
- Student assemblies and author visits
- Continued review of supplemental resources and curricular units



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Bayberry

- School Culture and Climate Committee
 - Plan events and share resources with staff
- Celebration of diverse cultures and groups throughout the school year
 - Morning announcements, guest readers, integrated lessons
 - Parents and students share holiday traditions with class
- PTO Cultural Arts Assemblies
- Inclusive clubs, extracurricular activities and enrichment opportunities
- Culturally diverse resources
- Training for paraprofessionals



Culturally Vibrant, Inclusive School Community

Recruiting, Hiring, and Training

- CJ PRIDE job fair
- Broad advertising
- Network
- Internships for college students
- Watchung IDEA
- NJASA Leadership Diversity Committee (Superintendent)
- NJASA PD-Seminar Committee (Superintendent)
- Current percentage of diverse staff: 21% (September 2020: 13%; June 2022: 17%)
- Increased staff diversity: 45% of new hires from July 1, 2022



New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC)

How are we preparing for and leading the district through the QSAC monitoring process?

State monitors districts on a three-year cycle.

Five areas of accountability

- Instruction and Program
- Fiscal Management
- Governance
- Operations
- Personnel



New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC)

Steps taken since last report:

- Site visit by county occurred on February 14, 2023
- Board adopted curricular document clarifications
- Followed up with county education office
- County office is in process of finalizing its report and sending it to Trenton
- NJ DOE issues final scoring report to district
- Final report expected this summer
- District will remain in highly performing category



Previous Initiatives

For comprehensive information on our district's previous initiatives, please feel free review our prior District Updates on Goals Presentations on our [District Goals](#) webpage:

[6-9-22](#)

[11-3-22](#)

[3-14-23](#)



Proposed Goals for 2023-24

Raise academic performance by deepening student understanding through inquiry-based strategies, critical and creative problem solving, personalized learning, and collaboration.

Strengthen social-emotional wellness of students and staff.

Promote a culturally vibrant, inclusive school community.

Monitor referendum construction projects and plan for completion of projects in 2024-25 school year.

