

Kirkland Middle School

School Improvement Plan

Annual Update: 2023-24

This school improvement plan meets the requirements of WAC 180-16-220 and WAC 180-105-020.¹

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Description: Kirkland Middle School (KiMS) is located in the NorKirk neighborhood of Kirkland just blocks from downtown, near beautiful Lake Washington. We serve approximately 670 students, most of whom attended one of our three elementary schools: Peter Kirk, Lakeview, and Mark Twain. We have 70 staff members, all of whom are dedicated to our students and their success.

Kirkland Middle School supports a typical general education model as well as two additional programs: the Transition Center and the Intervention Center.

At Kirkland Middle School (KiMS), our staff is focused on the success of our students academically, socially, and emotionally. We have high expectations for our students and provide high levels of support. We have an established history of academic excellence which continues to be a focus. High-quality teaching is a priority. We also have a significant focus on social-emotional and character learning which helps our students grow as individuals and members of our community.

The following elements of our school community support students and their social-emotional and character growth:

The Panther Way: Our school values are kindness, respect, and responsibility. These values are collectively referred to as the Panther Way. We explicitly teach students how these values look in various settings in the school. Students earn “Panther Cash” when showing these values.

The House System: All students and staff in our school are members of 1 of our 7 houses. Each House is composed of members from each grade level. House-based activities occur at least once each month. Students also work together in their House to earn House Points, including but not limited to winning competitions at assemblies, participating in Spirit Weeks, and earning Panther Cash each month.

Panther Partners: Our Panther Partners are leaders within our school. They act as mentors to our 6th graders, support after school and during school events, and help teachers lead Panther Time.

Panther Time: Panther Time is our version of Homeroom. Panther Time focuses on developing students’ social-emotional skills and growth as individuals as well as creating a community among class members. Each Panther Time belongs to a House, so students in each Panther Time are working toward the same monthly and yearly goals. Our 6th grade Panther Time classes have at least two Panther Partners, who support our 6th graders in their first year of middle school.

Vision Statement: 100% of students will meet or exceed Washington state academic standards and social emotional middle school level benchmarks.

¹ LWSD School Board Approval on <insert date>

Mission Statement: *A caring community of dynamic, lifelong learners*

2023-24 PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

Priority	Priority Area	Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	Desired Outcome
1	English Language Arts/Literacy	Class of 2029 (Grade 7)	<p>**This is a 3-year goal.**</p> <p>By the end of May of 2025, 92% of 8th grade students will earn a score of at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA).</p> <p><i>Benchmark Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of May of 2024, 88% of 7th grade students will earn a score of at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA). • By the end of May of 2023, 85% of 6th grade students will earn a score of at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA). [See results below.]
2	Mathematics	Multilingual Learners	By the end of May of 2024, 50% of students identified as Multilingual Learners (ML) will earn a score of Level 2 or above on the Math Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA).
3	Social Emotional	All students	By June 2024, our favorable response rate for each question in the Sense of Belonging category will increase by at least 5%

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our target is that all students and student groups are improving, with all gaps closing, each year. The following priorities have been set to guide us in achieving this.

Priority #1	
Priority Area	English Language Arts/Literacy
Focus Area	The focus of the English and Social Studies teams is on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Reading: Literature and Informational Text – Standard 1: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	Grade 7 cohort (Class of 2029) **This is a 3-year goal. We are in year 2 of this goal.**
Desired Outcome	<p>By the end of May of 2025, 92% of 8th grade students will earn a score at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA).</p> <p><i>Benchmark Goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of May of 2024, 88% of 7th grade students will earn a score at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA). • By the end of May of 2023, 85% of 6th grade students will earn a score at or above standard on the Literacy Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA). [See results below.]
Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	MTSS
Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	<p>Our English and Social Studies teams used Spring 2022 SBA scores and data provided by a baseline assessment to develop our literacy goal.</p> <p>Spring 2022 SBA data showed that 26% of sixth graders did not meet standard. A Fall/Quarter 1 pre-assessment focused specifically on text-evidence showed that 25% were not at standard on this particular skill. This 5-question assessment was made up of 4 multiple choice questions and one short, written response. Within the assessment, students were tasked with working with a variety of texts and asked to identify the best evidence to support a claim. They also eliminated irrelevant evidence and selected evidence from within a passage to support a common inference.</p> <p>The results are summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of our 6th grade students scored at standard (score of 4 or 5) • 25% of our 6th grade students scored below standard (score of 3 or below) <p>All of this supported our decision to make text evidence our area of focus and to follow and track this group of sixth graders progress for the next</p>

three years (Fall 2022 – Spring 2025). This focus area is also identified in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Reading: Literature and Informational Text – Standard 1: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Strategy to Address Priority	Action		Measure of Fidelity of Implementation	
	Explicit classroom instruction and practice opportunities		As we focus on this standard over the next three years, students will receive direct instruction and practice opportunities on the following skills: identifying appropriate and relevant evidence to support a claim; using text evidence to justify inferences made; incorporating cited and paraphrased evidence into their own writing. Each of these skills will allow students to double check their own thinking, learning, and understanding. In addition, it will add validity to their responses and strength to their writing.	
	Quarterly Formative Assessments / Spring Summative Assessment		Students will be given a quarterly assessment, that mirrors the baseline assessment, to monitor their progress and growth. A classroom project/essay, in either language arts or social studies, will act as a spring summative assessment. This will provide a level 4/challenge opportunity for students who can demonstrate their ability to exceed the standard.	
	Academic Prep (AP) Time		Academic Prep occurs for 30 minutes a day, three days a week. During this time, teachers provide support, including targeted supports, or enrichments to students. In addition, teachers require students in need of additional support as evidenced by current learning to attend these sessions.	
	Participation in Grade Level Team Meetings		All members of our English and Social Studies teams participate in monthly grade level team meetings. The focus of these meetings is on how we, as a grade level team, can best support students who are struggling to meet standard in a consistent fashion. Teachers share successful interventions and strategies, enabling other teachers to utilize them to support students in their classrooms.	
	Department Collaboration		Members of the English and Social Studies teams collaborate with one another. Part of this collaboration involves discussing strategies aimed at supporting students in general as they progress through English and Social Studies. This collaboration also involves sharing information about strategies that have	

	supported specific student's learning in the past.
Student Staffings	For students who continue to struggle despite the implementation of interventions, the school's counselors schedule staffing meetings with all teachers, the student, and the student's family. The goal is to create a partnership between the school, the student, and the family to support the student academically, socially, and emotionally. Specific actions are discussed and implemented as a result of these meetings.
Participation in Professional Learning Sessions – Building Level and District	Our teachers regularly participate in professional learning sessions that focus generally on best practice instructional strategies as well as professional learning specific to English and Social Studies. This year, the building is focusing on access points for <i>all</i> students throughout each lesson in order to strengthen their engagement in learning.
Understanding Student Experience & Adjusting to Student Needs	This year, we are engaged in practices focused on learning how students experience the school day, specifically looking at the day as whole rather than each individual class. We will also be seeking parent and student feedback to inform our understanding. We will use our learning to adjust our practice(s) as a building.
Equitable Practices	We continue to learn and implement equitable practices in classrooms and as a school. We have added two new equity teams to our school this year: the Equity Review Council (ERC) and the Grading for Equity (GFE) team. The ERC examines different aspects of our building through the lens of equity and makes recommendations that promote equity throughout the school. The GFE team is learning about equitable grading practices through a book study on the book, "Grading for Equity". Following our building decision-making model, this team will make equitable grading recommendations to staff.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2022 - Spring, 2025
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	<p>Results to Date During year 1 of our goal, 76.6% of our students in the Class of 2029 met standard on the Literacy assessment. <i>We did not meet our goal of 85%.</i></p> <p>Ongoing Progress Monitoring We will continue to monitor student progress toward our goal in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly formative assessments • Student response on daily work, projects, and assessments

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|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing Course Grade Analysis• School-wide progress monitoring |
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Priority #2

Priority Area	Mathematics
Focus Area	Grade Level Standards Met
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	Students who are identified as Multilingual Learners (ML) in all grade levels
Desired Outcome	By the end of May of 2024, 50% of students identified as Multilingual Learners (ML) will earn a score of Level 2 or above on the Math Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA).

Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	MTSS
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Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	On the 2023 SBA, 29.2% of our students identified as Multilingual Learners (ML) met standard on the Mathematics SBA as compared to 73% of students who are not identified as ML who are meeting standard.
	More specifically, our students' performance on the Mathematics SBA by level follows. Levels 3 and 4 are at and above standard.

SBA Level	Multilingual Learners	Non-Multilingual Learners
1	62.5%	7.9%
2	8.3%	16.5%
3	8.3%	26.8%
4	20.8%	46.2%

Strategy to Address Priority	Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
	High-quality mathematics instruction	<p>Our mathematics teachers will deliver high-quality mathematics instruction using the math practices identified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish math goals to focus learning, • Implement tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving, • Use and connect mathematic representations, • Facilitate meaningful math discourse, • Pose purposeful questions, • Build procedural fluency from conceptual understanding, • Support productive struggle in learning mathematics, and • Elicit and use evidence of student thinking.
	Academic Prep (AP) Time	Academic Prep (AP) meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and selected Fridays. During this time, teachers offer additional support for students needing reteaching, reinforcing, and/or additional practice times. Students have the opportunity to sign up for specific AP sessions, and teachers will require students needing support as evidenced by current learning. to attend their AP session(s).

Professional Learning – Building Level & District	All members of our Math Department participate in professional learning designed at the building level and district level in order to grow their practice. This year, the building is focusing on strategies that support Multilingual Learners. Specifically, staff are participating in Professional Learning around the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), an evidenced based model that makes grade-level content comprehensible for Multilingual Learners.
Safety Net Intervention & Supports	This year, we implemented a new safety net intervention model which allows a greater number of students to be served by an interventionist throughout the year. Our math interventionists provide support to 7 th and 8 th grade math classes throughout the day, pulling small groups of students for additional instruction and supports during class and during AP Time.
Math 6+ and 7+ Curriculum and Equitable Grading Practices	All 6 th and 7 th grade students with the exception of students taking Algebra I are taking Math 6+ and Math 7+ respectively. Math 6+ encompasses all content in Math 6 as well as selected concepts and skills in Math 7 and Math 7+ includes the remaining Math 7 concepts and skills as well as Math 8 concepts and skills. These classes and their curriculum better prepare students to take Algebra in Grades 7 or 8 and are more tightly aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) than our prior offerings of Math 6 and Math 7. In addition, our math team is dedicated to equitable grading practices, specifically those that focus on grading for learning such as test retakes to move students toward mastery of learning and the acceptance of late assignments.
Understanding Student Experience & Adjusting to Student Needs	We are continuing to engage in practices focused on learning how students experience the school day, specifically looking at the day as whole rather than each individual class. We will use our learning to adjust our practice(s) as a building.
Equitable Practices	We continue to learn and implement equitable practices in classrooms and as a school. The Grading for Equity (GFE) team is leading change in the school around equitable grading practices based on the text, “Grading for Equity”. As part of the work, a grade floor (lower possible grade) of 50% was adopted during the last school year (2022 – 2023). Following our building decision-making model, this team will continue to make equitable grading recommendations to staff.
Progress Monitoring – ALEKS Knowledge Checks	Teachers will monitor student progress at least three times per year using ALEKS Knowledge Checks which is part of the math curriculum. The ALEKS Knowledge Checks measure each students’ mastery of skills within their grade level.

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Content Team Collaboration</td> <td>Members of each of our content teams – Math 6, Math 7, Math 8, and Algebra – collaborate regularly to design intentional learning experiences for students that move them toward reaching and exceeding standard.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student Success Staffings</td> <td>For students who continue to struggle despite the implementation of interventions, the school’s counselors schedule student success staffing meetings with all teachers, the student, and the student’s family. The goal is to create a partnership between the school, the student, and the family to support the student academically, socially, and emotionally. Specific actions are discussed and implemented as a result of these meetings.</td> </tr> </table>	Content Team Collaboration	Members of each of our content teams – Math 6, Math 7, Math 8, and Algebra – collaborate regularly to design intentional learning experiences for students that move them toward reaching and exceeding standard.	Student Success Staffings	For students who continue to struggle despite the implementation of interventions, the school’s counselors schedule student success staffing meetings with all teachers, the student, and the student’s family. The goal is to create a partnership between the school, the student, and the family to support the student academically, socially, and emotionally. Specific actions are discussed and implemented as a result of these meetings.
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Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2023 - Spring, 2024				
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	<p>Student progress toward the goals above are monitored in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALEKS Knowledge Checks – at least 3 times/year • FastBridge Mathematics Screener – 3 times/year • Student demonstration of learning on homework, projects, and assessments • Ongoing Course Grade Analysis • Focus Group Feedback 				

Priority #3

Priority Area	Social and Emotional																			
Focus Area	Sense of Belonging and Connectedness																			
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	All students at KiMS																			
Desired Outcome	<p>By June 2024, our favorable response rate for each question in the Sense of Belonging category will increase by at least 5% (as shown below).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sense of Belonging Questions</th> <th>Favorable Response Rate Goal</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>How well do people at your school understand you as a person?</td> <td>51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How much respect do students in your school show you?</td> <td>56%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How much do you matter to others at this school?</td> <td>47%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?</td> <td>67%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Sense of Belonging Questions	Favorable Response Rate Goal	How well do people at your school understand you as a person?	51%	How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?	40%	How much respect do students in your school show you?	56%	How much do you matter to others at this school?	47%	Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?	67%						
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Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	<p>This year, we are focused on sense of belonging and connectedness for our students. Sense of belonging, as measured by the Spring 2023 Panorama Survey, offered the greatest opportunity of growth. 489 students took the survey in May 2023. The results follow:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Question</th> <th>Favorable Response Rate</th> <th>Neutral Response Rate</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>How well do people at your school understand you as a person?</td> <td>46%</td> <td>34%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?</td> <td>33%</td> <td>36%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How much respect do students in your school show you?</td> <td>51%</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How much do you matter to others at this school?</td> <td>42%</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?</td> <td>62%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Question	Favorable Response Rate	Neutral Response Rate	How well do people at your school understand you as a person?	46%	34%	How connected do you feel to the adults at your school?	33%	36%	How much respect do students in your school show you?	51%	35%	How much do you matter to others at this school?	42%	38%	Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?	62%	25%
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing PT lessons throughout the school year
	Develop and implement engaging lessons that support student social-emotional growth and focus on connection, community, and sense of belonging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lessons are connected to the monthly Social Emotional Learning (SEL) themes. ✓ Lessons allow for student voice and are relevant to their lives ✓ PT lessons throughout the year focus on community through activities (i.e. Gobble Off, Reindeer Games, March Madness, House competitions, Spirit Week activities, etc...)
	Provide training and support for Panther Partners – student leaders – who support the delivery of lessons and act as mentors for our 6 th grade Panther Time classes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Each Grade 6 PT class is assigned at least 2 Panther Partners ✓ Panther Partners are training at least once a month on upcoming PT lessons. ✓ At least monthly check-ins with Panther Partners to ensure they have a role in delivering the lessons and mentoring 6th grade students
	Assess Panther Time at least 2 times per year, seeking feedback from both staff and students. Use the data to make adjustments/improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff and students complete a short survey about PT. ✓ Student focus groups are held to obtain qualitative feedback about PT. ✓ PT committee reviews survey data and recommends adjustments/improvements to PT.
	The Panther Way Actions:	
	Provide a copy of The Panther Way to each student, making it accessible to students every day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PT teachers distribute planners, which contain The Panther Way matrix, to each student in their Panther Time class. ✓ Students use their planners daily in classes as observed by classroom teachers, our dean, and our administrators.
	Teach The Panther Way expectations to students at the beginning of the year, at the beginning of Semester 2, and as needed throughout the year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify specific dates to teach and review The Panther Way with PT classes throughout the year. ✓ The Panther Time Planning Team will develop and share presentations to teach The

		Panther Way during Panther Time.
Acknowledge students who show The Panther Way behaviors through recognition and rewards for individual students, for specific Panther Time classes, and for Houses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Weekly Panther Cash counts by House will be communicated in PT and posted on our House Panther Cash Board. ✓ Weekly drawings from each House's Panther Cash to recognize The Panther Way. ✓ Monthly and/or Quarterly recognition for students who live the specific values of The Panther Way: Kind, Respectful, Responsible ✓ House Points updates shared at least once a month with Panther Time Classes. Part of the Houe Points calculation is the amount of Panther Cash earned. 	
Provide frequent and specific feedback – both positive and constructive – to students on their use of The Panther Way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff share specific feedback aligned to The Panther Way matrix when students earn Panther Cash. ✓ Staff refer to the posters around the school with location specific expectations as needed (classroom, hallway, etc.) ✓ Staff share constructive feedback aligned to The Panther Way when redirecting students. 	
Provide appropriate support and intervention for students and staff who need additional assistance or guidance to meet The Panther Way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Our dean and administration will refer to The Panther Way when engaging in discipline conversations with students. ✓ Our counselors will refer to The Panther Way when working with students as appropriate. 	
House System Actions:		
Teach students about their Houses and provide each Panther Time choice and voice related to their House.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify specific dates to teach students about their House as well as the other six Houses. ✓ Provide opportunities for student voice and choice related to their House functions during House meetings. 	
Design and implement a variety of House activities that connect students in each House across grade level, promote teamwork,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ House activities require students to work with a variety of members in their House for specific purposes. 	

	community, collaboration, learning, and fun.	
	Develop and implement a system of House recognition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Panther Way awards will be given during House meetings. ✓ House recognition will occur for school wide activities such as the Orange Fundraiser.
	Provide opportunities for students and staff to develop and demonstrate leadership skills within their Houses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Staff House leaders are identified and take on a leadership role for their House. ✓ Students in every House have the opportunity to apply for a House Spirit Leader position. Students are selected and act as leaders within their House at House meetings and assemblies.
	Solicit and incorporate feedback from students and staff on the effectiveness and impact of the House System and make adjustments as needed to improve the House System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Feedback is solicited from both students and staff in the form of surveys and/or focus groups using a keep, adjust, or throw away model. Suggested changes are reviewed and changes may be implemented.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2023 - Spring, 2024	
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surveys and focus groups ▪ Panther Time Planning Group Meetings ▪ Panther Cash data ▪ House meeting feedback from House Leaders ▪ Panther Partner feedback 	

STATE ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that all schools meet at least a 95% participation rate for state assessments for all students as well as each subgroup. Schools that fall below this threshold in any group must include goals and actions the school will take to ensure 95% of students participate.

Strategies the school is using to meet participation requirements include:

- Common language on the importance of state testing is used by all schools in the district.
- Staff receive training on the administration of state assessments, including the use of supports and accommodations to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate learning.
- Make-up testing is provided for students that miss the school’s date.
- Test completion lists are monitored by both school testing coordinators and district personnel.
- The district is using the recommended refusal procedures and form developed by the Washington Educational Research Association.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

As a district of doers, learners, and believers, our “why” drives us. We do this all-important work because we want all of our students to have equitable and quality experiences in the Lake Washington School District in order to ensure that they get to choose their futures instead of their circumstances choosing them.

Research has consistently shown that family and community engagement is key to increasing the academic success and positive connections that students have at school, especially students from groups that are demographically under-represented or those historically marginalized. Therefore, it is imperative that we consistently plan and implement strategies to engage our families and school communities in authentic and culturally appropriate approaches.

To ensure that families have the support that they need to assist their children, OSPI requires that school districts have a family engagement policy in place that applies to all families.² The specific strategy our school is using to involve and inform the community of the School Improvement Plan is as follows:

Strategy to Engage Students, Families, Parents and Community Members in the development of the SIP	Action	Timeline
	Parent volunteers review SIP and offer feedback	December 2023
Strategy to Inform Students, Families, Parents and Community Members of the SIP	Action	Timeline
	SIP will be shared with families attending Ask Me Anything (AMA) with Cassaro	January/February 2024
	SIP shared with families at the PTSA Meeting	February 2024

² LWSD’s policy is found at: <https://www.lwsd.org/about-us/policy-and-regulations/community-relations-4000/community-education-program-4265>