

Hamilton Southeastern Schools

Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High School

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Strategic and Continuous School Improvement and Achievement Plan 2025-2026

Mission

We empower every student to grow as a learner and leader—building the knowledge, skills, and confidence to shape their future.

Overview

Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High School houses grades 5-8 with a student population of 1300. HIJH has the third largest enrollment in the district.

Administrative Team	Teacher Leaders	Community Members
Janie Ulmer Jeff Iagulli Tyler Roberts Lois Valesek Elise Maller Ben Belt Suzanne Olson Cory Worzala Chad Guest	Lindsey Bradshaw Jen Hill Eric Brown Liz Clark Laura Bowman Jennie Williard Jacquelyn Cappello	Amanda Abebe Rachel Dyckman Kim Russo

Overview of the School Improvement Goals for Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High Schools

School Improvement Goal #1: English Language Arts Achievement

Identified Need:

Based on the 2024–2025 ILEARN data, English Language Arts proficiency in grades 5–8 is below expected targets. Data indicates specific areas of need in reading comprehension, writing organization, and the use of text-based evidence. Providing intentional and specific academic supports for our Tier Two students and feedback will be critical to accelerating student growth.

Goal Statement:

By the end of the 2025–2026 school year, Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate & Junior High students will demonstrate measurable improvement in English Language Arts achievement. ILEARN proficiency rates will increase by at least 3% to the 2024–2025 school year, with a focus on growth among ALL students and closing achievement gaps for identified subgroups.

ILEARN ELA	5th	6th	7th	8th
21-22	60%	68%	62%	60%
22-23	60%	70%	63%	60%
23-24	65%	65%	65%	66%
24-25	66%	72%	62%	75%

Research-Based Strategies:

1. Grades 5-8

- Student Centered Approaches** - Teachers will implement NIET/Student-Centered Approaches with an emphasis on identifying success criteria and providing timely, actionable feedback to improve student writing and reading comprehension for all students.
- Data-Driven Instruction** – Teachers will regularly analyze formative and summative assessment data [ILEARN Checkpoint data, NWEA (grade 5/6), common formative assessments (grades 7/8)] to identify gaps and adjust Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports.
- Professional Development** – Teachers will engage in NIET cluster cycles focused on feedback strategies, differentiation, and increasing student ownership of learning.

2. Grades 5/6

- Student Learning Time:** The SLT time will provide MTSS support through research interventions to identified students to promote skill development in areas of need identified through analyzing NWEA and ILEARN Checkpoint Data.
- MTSS Support:** The 5th and 6th teachers collect data using NWEA, Aimsweb, and Dibels, and the ILEARN Checkpoints to create a data picture of student achievement. Each month, each teacher team presents their students of academic concern to the MTSS team and academic interventions are discussed. Progress monitoring occurs and monthly updates are documented to ensure that all students are receiving the supports needed.

3. Grade 7/8

- MTSS Intervention Period** – The MTSS period is a block of time during the school day this is dedicated to supporting the needs of our Tier 2 students. Tier 2 supports are provided by licensed Math and English teachers. With each ILearn Checkpoint, student needs are re-evaluated.
- RTI Period** – This Tier 3 intervention provides targeted support in ELA for general education students who need extra help with reading and writing skills. Instruction focuses on strengthening comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and writing strategies.
- Flex Period** - The FLEX period is a daily time for students to get extra help and support from their classroom teachers. Students can review math lessons, complete assignments, or prepare for math assessments.

Monitoring:

- NWEA (Grades 5/6)
- Classroom observations focused on feedback and student engagement in ELA tasks
- Student work samples demonstrating growth in text-based writing and comprehension
- ILEARN Checkpoint Data
- Student Work Samples
- Quarterly Data Reviews

School Improvement Goal #2: Mathematics Achievement for Special Education & English Language Learners

Identified Need:

ILEARN data indicates that our Special Education and English as New Language students are performing below grade-level in mathematics, particularly in problem solving, application of math concepts, and mathematical reasoning. Targeted support and instructional strategies are needed to close achievement gaps.

Goal Statement #2:

By the end of the 2025–2026 school year, Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate & Junior High will improve mathematics performance for special education and English language learner students. ILEARN math proficiency rates for these subgroups will increase by at least 3% compared to 2024–2025.

ILEARN Math	EXL	ENL
21-22	22%	14%
22-23	18%	13%
23-24	21%	16%
24-25	25%	28%

Research-Based Strategies:

1. Grades 5-8

- a. **Student Centered Approaches** -Teachers will implement NIET/Student-Centered Approaches with an emphasis on timely, actionable feedback to improve student writing and reading comprehension for all students. *(NIET new learnings will have a specific strategy for EXL/ENL students)*
- b. **Differentiated Instruction in the General Education Classroom** – Teachers will implement differentiated strategies that provide multiple entry points for solving problems, with emphasis on visual models, manipulatives, and language supports.
- c. **Academic Vocabulary Development** – Math teachers will explicitly teach and reinforce key math vocabulary to support comprehension for ELL and special education students.
- d. **Small-Group and Resource Time** – Identified students will receive additional instruction in foundational skills and practice with grade-level content.
- e. **Collaborative Planning** – General education, special education, and ENL teachers will co-plan lessons to align accommodations, differentiate, and support with core instruction for co-taught courses.
- f. **Data-Driven Monitoring** – Frequent use of formative assessments and progress monitoring (e.g., NWEA, common assessments) will guide adjustments to instruction and interventions.
- g. **MTSS/SLT** - During the daily MTSS/SLT period, students receive personalized skill support that is guided by ILEARN Checkpoint data to address their specific learning needs. Exceptional Learners and English Language Learners

Monitoring:

- Quarterly data reviews (grades)
- Walkthroughs and observations to monitor use of differentiation and vocabulary supports
- Progress monitoring logs and intervention documentation

- Student Work Samples
- Analysis of ILEARN Checkpoint Data, common formative assessments, and NWEA data for growth and proficiency

School Improvement Goal #3: Student Attendance

Identified Need:

Analysis of attendance data shows that too many students are missing ten or more days of school each year, which negatively impacts learning outcomes. Improving attendance requires stronger family communication, targeted supports, and a deeper understanding of the causes behind chronic absenteeism.

Goal Statement:

By the end of the 2025–2026 school year, Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate & Junior High will improve overall student attendance by reducing the percentage of students who miss ten or more days of school by at least 2% compared to the 2024–2025 school year.

Attendance	Students absent 10+ days
21-22	15%
22-23	20%
23-24	17%
24-25	17%

Research-Based Strategies:

1. **Family Communication** – Increase proactive communication with families about attendance expectations, patterns, and resources, including personal outreach for students at risk.
2. **The “Why”** – Collect and review data to better understand why students are absent (health, transportation, social-emotional needs, etc.) and connect families to appropriate supports.

3. **Student & Family Supports** – Provide interventions such as counseling, mentorship, or check-ins for students with frequent absences, and intentionally partner with families to remove barriers to attendance.
4. **Progress Monitoring** – Track attendance daily, identify at-risk students early, and engage families before absences become chronic. Compare with previous year’s data for early identification. (Identify those that were chronic absentees in the 24-25 school year and partner with those families early).

Monitoring:

- Monthly review of attendance data, with disaggregation by grade level and subgroup.
- Documentation of family communication and support services provided.
- End-of-year comparison of attendance data to determine reduction in chronic absenteeism.

Curriculum

The curriculum used in HSE Schools is determined based on the Indiana Academic Standards. HSE strives to use a curriculum that provides students with the needed lessons and rigor to prepare them not only for upcoming grades and courses but also equip them for the path they choose following graduation.

Information about the curriculum can be found at hseschools.org.

Current assessments used:

- DIBELS
- ILEARN and ILEARN Checkpoints
- NWEA
- WIDA
- Aims Web
- PLC Common Formative Assessments

HSE uses a tiered approach to academics called Multi-Tiered System of Supports to ensure all students achieve their highest potential. This structure provides the necessary instruction and support for all students to achieve their academic goals. HSE Schools staff utilizes a variety of data to identify and assist students needing additional instruction and/or supports. This data includes course grades, NWEA assessments, attendance, and standardized scores such as IREAD-3 and ILEARN.

If a student is having academic difficulties, school personnel work to help them improve. As supplemental supports becomes more intense, results are used to make decisions about the need for further evidenced-based instruction and possible educational evaluation for special education services. HSE places an emphasis on early identification through universal screenings, supplemental supports and self-advocacy supports for student learning.

If a student is determined to be eligible for special education services, and individual education plan is developed to support their unique needs considering their disability.

English as a New Language collaborative teachers and instructional assistants work with language learners that qualify for the ENL program and receive an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is based on the language level of the student and indicates the accommodations necessary.

NIET for Professional Development

At HIJH, the **National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET)** framework is the foundation of our ongoing professional growth. Rather than treating professional development as a one-time event, we use NIET to create a **continuous cycle of learning, practice, and feedback**.

1. Cluster Meetings

- a. Each week, staff engage in cluster meetings led by instructional coaches and administrators.
- b. These meetings are focused on research-based instructional strategies that directly support our school improvement goals.
- c. Teachers collaboratively analyze student work, review assessment data, and plan lessons that integrate the strategies being studied.

2. Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)

- a. Our ILT sets the direction for professional learning.
- b. The ILT identifies the need based on student achievement data.
- c. This leadership structure ensures alignment across grade levels and content areas while also tailoring supports.

3. Observation and Feedback Cycles

- a. Administrators and instructional coaches use the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric to provide consistent, targeted feedback.
- b. Teachers receive actionable next steps that connect directly back to the cluster learning.

4. Teacher Leadership and Collaboration

- a. NIET empowers teacher leaders to model strategies and support colleagues in developing their practice.
- b. This fosters a culture of collaboration where professional development happens daily, in classrooms and conversations, not just during workshops.

5. Impact on Student Learning

- a. The ultimate goal of using NIET is to ensure that professional growth translates into improved student outcomes.
- b. By keeping the focus on high-quality instruction, timely feedback, and aligned support systems, we are better positioned to close gaps, raise achievement, and create consistency across all classrooms.

Meeting the Academic Needs of All Students

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Parent Participation

Each school encourages, supports, and promotes parental involvement through formal and informal opportunities. Each school has an established Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that engages interested parents in intentional opportunities to assist the school. Additionally, each school staff provides opportunities for parents or guardians to support the school. Weekly newsletters are sent to families which include volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, district updates, and overall school wide topics.

Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment for All Students and Teachers

Hamilton Southeastern Schools provides a safe and disciplined learning environment for all students and teachers. Each school's handbook is provided annually to parents, available on the district's website, and clearly defines the guidelines and expectations for students and families. HSE Schools uses positive behavior supports, and an accountability support based community to promote and maintain a safe and positive learning environment. Schools regularly collect and analyze students' behavior and attendance data and surveys about the school environment. School safety training is provided at a district level for all staff including School Resource Officers. Students are encouraged to report any school safety or mental health concern through the anonymous reporting system "HSE Report It." School Safety is a mindset that we build into the school climate emphasizing the "See Something, Say Something, Do Something" mindset.

We are committed to providing a secure and nurturing environment for all students, staff, and visitors through the following safety measures: Physical Security, Emergency Response, Staff Training, Safety Communication, Mental Health Support, Collaboration with Authorities, Infrastructure Review, and Technology Implementation.

We believe that by implementing these measures and continuously evaluating our safety protocols, we can create a secure environment that fosters learning and growth for everyone at Hamilton Southeastern Schools.

Technology Initiatives

The Director of Educational Technologies works closely with the Teaching and Learning team to vet any proposals for new technology initiatives. During such time, proposals will be examined to determine if there is something already purchased in the district that provides similar outcomes. If no current technology exists, a decision will need to be made as to whether any initiative will be funded into perpetuity and is compatible with our systems.

Career Awareness and Career Development

HSE Schools is committed to ensuring students develop the knowledge, skills, and attributes our community has deemed essential for life-long learning and success in our **Journey of a**

Student (Portrait of a Graduate). Throughout their PK-12 learning, students will be taught and assessed the following:

Knowledge	Skills	Attributes
Self-Aware Engaged Academically Prepared Globally Conscious	Collaborative Responsible Effective Communicator Analytical	Resilient Creative Empathetic Honorable

Student survey data and evidence will show student growth and attainment of these elements. Each school will use this data to inform instruction of the Journey of a Student.

To provide students with opportunities to learn and show growth in the Journey of a Student elements above, HSE Schools is committed to providing guaranteed work-based learning and career exploration experiences across grades PK-12. Every single HSE student will have guaranteed, meaningful career coursework and experiences that lead to **employment, enrollment, and enlistment** after graduation. This work has evolved to be included in a 3-year district action plan known as Innovate 2028.

Implementation Plan

The work of a staff committee comprised of teachers, counselors, and administrators in the 2024-2025 school year established the following guaranteed career exploration experiences by grade level, each aligned with the IDOE Career Coaching Framework. This work was supported by the IDOE Career Coaching Grant. The staff committee will work throughout the 2025-2026 school year to design these experiences with lesson plans and support resources to ensure they are implemented with fidelity throughout the district.

Grades 7-8

First Semester Tasks	Second Semester Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English, Business, Math, and Wellness Departments host guest career speakers Network Videos during Flex 8th Grade Naviance Activities and Scholar Track Sign-Up Service-Learning Project with local and global connections (Grade 8) - October 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science, Music, Social Studies, and Art Departments host guest career speakers Network Videos during Flex Identify Pathways of Interest Activity through Naviance- (Grades 7 & 8) September Service-Learning Project with local and global connections (Grade 7)- February

Grades 5-6

First Semester Tasks	Second Semester Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Student Testimonials about Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Student Testimonials about Networks Choose a Career Activity (Grade 5)- January Career Interest Inventory (Grade 6)- February Post-Secondary Pathways Lesson (Grade 5)- March Career Fair/ Day with Follow Up Activity (Grades 5 & 6)- March
<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maker Playground Community Based Learning Experience (5th Grade) 6th Grade Community Based Learning Experience in Development 	

Cultural Competency

Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High will continue to build sustainable systems and practices to improve the cultural competencies of our stakeholders. While there are complex and varied interpretations of cultural competency, we define it as "*the ability of individuals and systems to work or respond effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served*" (Williams, 2001) for the purpose of enhancing the learning process and academic achievement for all students. HSE is committed to understanding the unique experiences and perspectives of students and how those experiences shape instruction and students' ability to learn and grow.

A few highlights that are unique to our building:

- Our students have access to multicultural clubs.
- Each teacher is provided with a name pronunciation list to assist the teacher and substitute with a guide to pronounce student names correctly.
- Intentionally expanding the opportunities for diverse candidates in the interview recruiting process.
- Two ENL teachers are available for student and teacher support.

Hamilton Southeastern Intermediate and Junior High has a tailored and personalized approach to teaching and learning which directly impacts academic growth and achievement in each of our main demographic groups. These demographic groups include Exceptional Learners, Race/Ethnicity, Socio-Economic Groups, and English Language Learners.