Approved by School Council on 4/26/24
Approved by Superintendent on 4/29/24

Gateway Regional School District

2023-2026
Chester Elementary School Improvement Plan

School Improvement Plan Executive Summary

Chester Elementary School is a small, rural school located on Middlefield Road in Chester, Massachusetts. Our school serves the towns of Chester, Blandford, and Middlefield, which are residential, rural, and recreational communities situated in the Berkshire foothills of Western Massachusetts. Our school is nestled between a historic railway and the West Branch of the Westfield River. The Westfield River was Massachusetts' first river to receive National Wild and Scenic River designation. Our school is directly next-door to Gobble Mountain and located less than a mile from the Keystone Arches trailhead; two of the stunning keystone arches were recently designated as National Historic Landmarks.

Chester Elementary School is a part of The Gateway Regional School District and is a Title 1 School; our student population consists of 40% of students of low income, 29% of students with disabilities, and 56% of students with high needs. At Chester Elementary School, there is a strong focus on strength based, personalized instruction and exploratory based learning experiences for all students in kindergarten through grade five. Our students receive relevant and quality instruction in the areas of Reading, Math, History, Character Development, Citizenship, Positive Behavior, Social Skills, Bullying Prevention, Science, Technology, Engineering, Financial Literacy, Music, Art, Library, physical education, and Health. We've created strong community partnerships and capitalized on the abundant amount of natural resources, rich culture, and proud history that surrounds our school in order to implement and elevate an agricultural learning pathway that has quickly become an integral part of our school's identity. Students engage in hydroponic gardening, farm to lunch table grow cycles, microgreen planting projects, composting, container gardening, farming partnerships, tree tapping, boiling sap/making & bottling of maple syrup, river study, ecology exploration, walking field trips, and learning centered in our area's history and geology, which is provided by local experts and/or community organizations.

Chester Elementary School's Mission Statement: At Chester Elementary School, we believe a meaningful education has the power to shape lives, inspire new ways of thinking, and forge the way forward to a better, brighter future. We are committed to

building community partnerships that serve as catalysts to rich, relevant learning experiences and to empowering our students to push new boundaries of innovation and productivity within a culture of belonging, joy, and high expectations for what students learn and who they become.

Student Enrollment (as of 2/24/24) at Chester Elementary School:

Preschool: 33

Kindergarten: 16

Grade 1: 17

Grade 2: 14

Grade 3: 9

Grade 4: 16

Grade 5: 17

Total Students: 122

Enrollment has increased an average of 15 students since the 2021/2022 school year!

2023-2024 District Priorities:

Cultural Priority: All staff in the Gateway Regional School District will intentionally build positive, caring relationships and uphold clear, equitable systems and policies so students are respected, feel safe to learn, take risks, and make progress towards their goals every day.

Instructional Priority: Gateway educators deliver excellent, culturally responsive learning experiences grounded in our high quality instructional materials and review data to make adjustments to their practice so that students make their thinking and reasoning public while engaged in rigorous, grade-appropriate tasks.

2023-2026 School Priority:

Enrichment Priority: Increase students' access to personalized and future-ready learning experiences centered in innovation, agriculture, student empowerment, and community partnerships.

School Council Members

Name	Role	Signature
Vanna Maffuccio	**Principal**	Vanna Maffuccio
Laura Fountain-Cincotta	**Parent**	Laura Fountain-Cincotta
Justin King	**Parent**	Justin King
Nicholas Swendsen	**Parent**	Nicholas Swendsen
Heather Cabral	**Interventionist**	Heather Cabral
Jenna Kakimoto	**Special Education Teacher**	Jenna Kakimoto

Maddy Scott	**Counselor**	*Maddy Scott*

Instructional Priority: Gateway teachers deliver high quality, culturally responsive learning experiences grounded in our HQIMs and review data to make adjustments to their practice so that students make their thinking and reasoning public while engaged in rigorous, grade-appropriate tasks.

Strategy	Lead	Completion Date	Evidence of Success
Develop an instructional schedule to ensure equitable access to grade level instruction in ELA, Math, and Specialist instruction for all students.	Principal	By the opening of school each year	Published schedule
Develop a late day meeting schedule to support elementary staff collaborating around the implementation of high quality instructional material in ELA.	Elementary Principals, Teacher Leaders	By the opening of school each year	Published schedule
Develop and maintain an effective system of tiered supports and interventions (MTSS) and establish and facilitate monthly MTSS meetings focused on responding to student data in math, reading, behavior, and/or social emotional learning.	Principal, Interventionists, School Counselor	Ongoing	MTSS meeting notes with data informed decision making steps outlined and tied to Core instruction and/or tiered supports in math, reading, behavior, social emotional skills, or attendance. Action Plans are student specific and tied to specific data sources.
Select and implement professional development opportunities to support literacy for all by implementation of english language arts curricula: Wit and Wisdom (4-5) & Amplify CKLA (K-3)	Curriculum Director, Principals	Ongoing	PD schedule & focus areas/topics, LAN PDSA on Writing, LAN Fishbone setting priority, LAN Driver Diagram, Wit & Wisdom Training, TNTP Visit Schedule, TNTP Agendas, PDSA Cycle Template, Driver Diagram, Fishbone Diagram,

			Cross Collab PD
Pilot the Just Right Reader Program, which provides students with a total of 30 personalized, science of reading decodable books in order to accelerate reading achievement and strengthen students' home-school connection. Every student who is selected to participate will receive 3 packs/rounds of 10 decodable books, which are aligned to their specific phonics skill level. Work to allocate or secure funding to purchase additional readers for select students to receive to support and reinforce phonics skills during summer break in order to prevent summer slide.	Special Education Teacher, Reading Specialist, Principal	Ongoing	Foundational Reading Skills Benchmark and Dibels Data for participating students, documentation of purchase orders and communication with representative from Just Right Readers
Engage in high quality instructional tutoring models focused on delivering tailored and targeted mathematics and early literacy instruction to accelerate student learning. High dosage tutoring builds prerequisite and foundational skills to set students up for success with the current grade's core content. Both math and early literacy tutoring is provided free of cost/charge to districts and schools, through the Massachusetts Department of Education.	Principal, Catapult Learning, Imagine Learning, MA DOE, tutoring instructors	October 2023-June 2024 (Pursue opportunity if available for the 24/25 SY & 25/26 SY)	Imagine Learning Assessments and Reports, Foundational Reading Skills data for participating students, Catapult training, communication, resources, student work
Engage in Massachusetts Literacy Institute in order to increase understanding of equity informed and evidence based literacy instruction K-5 and Improve structures, processes, and procedures to support implementation of evidence based literacy instruction.	Literacy Leadership Team	December 2023-June 2024	MTSS reading implementation checklist, Institute's presentation slides and resources, and Literacy Action Plans.

Uphold and respond to a comprehensive progress monitoring model in ELA for students receiving tiered intervention, specialized services and for students performing below the 40%ile on i-Ready, based on national norms.	Reading Interventionist. Principal	October 2023-May 2026	Progress monitoring data, MTSS notes and action plans
Cultural Priority: All staff in the Gateway Regional School District will intentionally build positive, caring relationships and uphold clear, equitable systems and policies so students and staff are respected, feel safe to learn, take risks, and make progress towards their goals every day.			
Strategy	**Lead**	**Completion Date**	**Evidence of Success**
Create a set of morning routines that support a strong start for K-5 students, every morning, in every K-5 classroom.	Principal, K-5 Classroom Teachers	Training provided in September with ongoing implementation and support	Presentations, Pre and post self assessment checklists
Create, communicate, and uphold a tiered attendance plan for students and families in grades 1-5	Principal, School Counselor, School Nurse, Secretary	Plan established by September with ongoing implementation	Tiered attendance plan, communication log, communication documents, attendance data
Implement *Steps to Respect* and Bullying Curriculum as a tier 1 instructional practice in all K-5 classrooms	School Counselor, Principal, teachers	Ongoing	Schedule, Student Survey data, MTSS meeting notes and action plans
Implement tier 2 and 3 social emotional learning support for all	School	November	Schedule, focused social skills groups,

students in grades K-5 based on SWIS, attendance, and teacher feedback during MTSS SEL meetings	Counselor, Principal, K-5 Teachers	2023-June 2026	Check-in-check-out, 1:1 scheduled support from counselor, 1:1 school based therapy sessions, individualized incentive plans and goals
Partner with law enforcement and fire chief to practice safety protocols/drills and to establish emergency response tactics and actions plans.	Principal, Law enforcement officers, fire chief, safety team, central office staff	September 2023-June 2026	Completion of Reunification Staffing Workbook, infrastructure visualization training with dept of homeland security, reunification safety training, Completion of Safe Schools Plan, Safety Training-Drills and Protocols for intruder or other possible threats, Completion of 2-3 Lockdown drills and 2-3 Fire Drills per year.
Implement Character Counts Education school-wide K-5	Principal, PBIS team, classroom teachers	Ongoing	Schedule, Student Awards, Presentations, Newsletters, resources, Ultimate Citizen Award Ceremony
Schedule, communicate, and coordinate playground purchase, handover meetings, and installation of play structure for students in grades 1-5.	Principal, PTO, Pro Playgrounds	September 2023- June 2024	Successful install of the playground before the end of the school year, ribbon cutting community event at end of school year
Uphold Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) as a school-wide systems approach in order to establish a positive student culture and individualized behavior supports necessary to create a safe and effective learning environment for all students.	Principal, PBIS team	September 2023- June 2024	PBIS documents and action plans, Fun ticket Friday spreadsheet, Schoolwide area specific expectations, goals based on and measured using SWIS data
Advocate to have school based health center therapy services to ensure equitable access for students at Chester Elementary school.	Principal, SBHC, School Counselor	September 2023- June 2026	Therapy service schedule and consistent two way communication with the provider is established and upheld-documentation of communication and student services.

Enrichment Priority: Increase students' access to personalized and future-ready learning experiences centered in innovation, agriculture, student empowerment and community partnerships.			
Strategy	**Lead**	**Completion Date**	**Evidence of Success**
Partner with Girls on the Run of Western New England to bring the program to Chester Elementary School.	School Counselor, Girls on the Run Volunteer Coaches, Principal	September 2023-June 2026	Curriculum, Newspaper Articles, Events, Communication, 5K Race at Western New England University
Partner with Equitable Advisors to engage students in grades 3 & 4 in a Financial Literacy Skills program.	Equitable Advisors, Principal	December 2023-based on program availability	Students' completion of book documenting their financial literacy skill practice and application, newspaper article, newsletter
Facilitate Hydroponics to Lunch Table Project.	STEAM teacher, principal, Cafeteria Staff	November 2023-June 2026	School Lunch menu, photographs, newspaper article, communication
Launch and support a Girls Who Code Club in grades 3-5	STEAM teacher, Principal	November 2023- June 2026	Registration, resources, newsletters
Organize and Plan for Local Artist Residency funded through Cultural Council FY24 STARS Residency Grant	Local Artist, Principal	September 2023-June 2024	Grant paperwork, schedule, newsletters, finale event
Empower our student advisory council to organize a school-wide food	Principal,	September	Certificate documenting the 224 pounds of food

drive, student led clubs, and use their voices to advocate for our student body, school, and community.	School Counselor, Superintendent	2023-January 2026	donated to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, News articles, recording of speech, photos, field trip to testify at the Massachusetts State House in order to advocate for bill to fully fund rural school aid, passion projects and speeches
Frame, facilitate, fund, and form partnerships that capitalize on meaningful, enriching agricultural learning experiences for students.	Principal. Community members, STEAM teacher, Central Office	September 2023-June 2026	Documentation of project based learning and education/enrichment executed: Maple Syrup Project, Hatch program, Adopt a cow program, local geologist partnership- lesson presentation and walking field trip, composting, microgreens planting project with local farmer, container gardening, river study