



Continuous Department Improvement Plan

Focus of Plan (check the appropriate box): LEA School or Charter	Name of LEA: St. Joseph School District Name of School or Charter:	Check if appropriate ☐ CSIP ☐ Building ☐ Department ☐ Program
Date:	08/10/2026	
Purpose: The purpose of the Academic Department Plan is to advance CSIP Priority 1: Effective Teaching and Learning by ensuring every student experiences high-quality, standards-aligned instruction every day. The Academic Department will focus on strengthening Tier 1 instruction, building educator capacity through professional learning and support, using high-quality curriculum, board-approved resources, and assessment practices, and leveraging data to inform instructional decisions and accelerate student growth. The Academic Department Plan establishes the districtwide direction, goals, strategic actions, measures of success, and accountability structures that guide this work. Building on this plan, individual buildings and sites will develop their own action plans that reflect their specific student needs, data, priorities, and instructional context while aligning to the district's overarching goals. Through intentional collaboration, continuous improvement, and a shared commitment to instructional excellence, the Academic Department will support educators and school leaders in creating rigorous, engaging, and responsive learning environments. The Academic Department Plan will provide a districtwide framework that guides the development of individual building and site plans, including elementary and secondary building goals and action steps. Together, these aligned plans will establish a coherent approach to increasing student achievement, accelerating student growth, reducing opportunity gaps, and ensuring equitable outcomes for every learner. Our work is grounded in the belief that effective teaching and learning is the foundation for empowering every learner, every day.		

One plan may meet the needs of a number of different programs. Please check all that apply.

MSIP

Department

Academic Service Team Plan

What staff/stakeholders have been involved in the needs assessment and development of this plan?

The needs assessment and development of the Academic Department Plan involved **district and building leaders, instructional coaches, department chairs, and members of the Academic Services Team**. These stakeholders engaged in collaborative planning and reflection on [June 16](#), [August 5th \(Performance Level Report\)](#), [August 10](#), & [State Data](#) to examine instructional priorities, student learning needs, data, and systems that support effective teaching and learning.

Stakeholder input informed the identification of priorities related to rigorous and common expectations for learning, data analysis and use, and Real World Learning opportunities. This collaborative process ensured that the plan reflects the needs of schools and classrooms and established shared ownership for implementation. The Academic Services Team will continue to engage these stakeholders through quarterly monitoring and adjustment of action steps to support continuous improvement and alignment with district goals.

What are the key issues identified from the needs assessment?	The needs assessment indicates continued growth in the district’s overall Annual Performance Report (APR), increasing from 63.2% in 2023 to 67.5% in 2024 and 74.4% in 2025. While this progress reflects improvement, the district recognizes that additional growth is needed to strengthen student outcomes and continue moving all areas toward <i>On-Track</i> status. The district’s APR designation data demonstrates significant progress over the past three years: ● 2023 APR: 5 Below Average, 3 Average, 8 Approaching, 3 On-Track, and 1 Target ● 2024 APR: 4 Emerging, 9 Approaching, 5 On-Track, and 2 Target ● 2025 APR: 0 Emerging, 9 Approaching, 10 On-Track, and 1 Target Progress: As we continue this work with the Academic Services Team, our goal is to reach 80% APR when the 2026 APR report is released in November 2026. Once the updated APR report and state expectations are released, we will review the results and adjust our goal accordingly. Our data conversations with district and building leaders, educators, support staff, and the community will center on status, specifically, where students are performing in relation to grade-level standards and the indicators that contribute to APR performance. This goal will serve as an initial benchmark for our work; once an updated APR goal is established by the state, the district will adjust its goal accordingly to align with the revised expectations and measures.
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The Goals and the Plan				
Goal #1: The Saint Joseph School District will ensure all content areas achieve an “On-Track” designation as measured by APR/MSIP, through data-driven conversations focused on student performance relative to grade-level standards.				
Leadership	Collaborative Climate and Culture	Effective Teaching and Learning	Data-Based Decision Making	Alignment of Standards and Curriculum
SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) Goal #1				

By the end of the 2026–2027 school year, the district will increase the percentage of students performing at the Proficient and Advanced levels to 50% in English Language Arts, Math, and Science, and 55% in Social Studies. Progress will be monitored quarterly through grade-level assessments and data conversations with district and building leaders, educators, support staff, and the community to ensure targeted interventions and supports are in place.

Rationale (name of the existing conditions/data points to support the selection of the objective/goal):

Our current reality indicates that student performance in key content areas continues to reflect opportunities for growth. **English Language Arts is at 44.7%, Math at 44.5%, Science at 42%, and Social Studies at 49.4%** of students performing at the Proficient and Advanced levels. These data points highlight the continued need for targeted efforts to strengthen instruction, support student learning, and close achievement gaps. **Setting content-specific goals of 50% in English Language Arts, Math, and Science, and 55% in Social Studies** provides clear, measurable targets that are both ambitious and attainable. By monitoring progress quarterly and engaging in data-driven conversations with leaders, educators, support staff, and the community, the district can implement strategic interventions, allocate resources effectively, and ensure that all students continue to move toward grade-level expectations.

Evidence-Based Strategies for Improvement

- Explicit, standards-aligned instruction
- Frequent formative assessments and feedback
- Differentiated and targeted interventions
- Collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- High-impact instructional practices
- Data-driven decision-making
- Family and community engagement

Budget/Funding Source(s): District Budget/Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment/Professional Learning Funds/Academic Service Funds/Building Budgets

Action Steps	Start Date	Person Responsible	Resources/Budget	Completed/Date
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Conduct quarterly reviews of student performance data at the classroom, building, and district levels and facilitate data-driven conversations with district and building leaders, educators, support staff, and community members to guide instructional adjustments.	August 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team	No Cost	● ~~August 5~~ ● ~~September 24~~ ● October 22 ● November 23 ● January 21 ● February 18 ● March 18 ● April 21 ● May 19
The District will implement DIBELS 8 as the state-approved reading assessment as required by SB 681 and use assessment data to systematically identify students' literacy strengths and needs, monitor progress, and inform timely instructional decisions.	August 2026	Principals, Instructional Coaches & Teachers	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	May 2027
Expand the use of MasteryConnect assessments to 2nd grade to establish consistent, data-driven progress monitoring and provide timely instructional insights to teachers and leaders.	October 2026	Instructional Coaches & Building & District Leaders	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	May 2027

Sustain MasteryConnect in Grades 3–11: Continue the use of MasteryConnect on-grade-level assessments in grades 3 through high school to ensure consistent measurement of student learning, monitor progress toward grade-level standards, and provide meaningful data to guide instructional planning and intervention.	October 2026	Instructional Coaches & Building & District Leaders	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	May 2027
Increase student agency by ensuring students regularly know, understand, and reflect on their assessment scores, identify their individual learning strengths and areas for growth, and use that information to set goals and monitor their progress toward mastery.	October 2026	Instructional Coaches & Building & District Leaders	No Cost	May 2027
Maintain and utilize the integrated data dashboard to include foundational reading assessment data, Predictive Assessment results, and other key district assessment data. The dashboard will provide accessible data at the district and building levels, disaggregated by student groups, to support instructional decision-making,	Fall 2026	Communications Academic Service Team	No Cost	Spring 2027

monitor student progress, identify areas of need, and provide stakeholders with clear, contextual information about student achievement and growth.				
Implement and monitor multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) using Analytics and Insights in PowerSchool to provide targeted interventions and enrichment opportunities	Fall 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team Asst Supt of Academics	No Cost	May 2027
Conduct district site visits, observations, teacher survey data, and principal feedback to identify areas for instructional improvement, and share student outcomes during professional learning sessions to engage in solution-focused discussions	Fall 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team Asst Supt of Academics	No Cost	May 2027

The Goals and the Plan

Goal #2: The Saint Joseph School District will ensure strong Tier 1 instruction in all content areas, implementing evidence-based instructional practices to provide all students with high-quality, standards-aligned learning experiences and support their success.

Leadership

**Collaborative
Climate and
Culture**

**Effective Teaching and
Learning**

**Data-Based Decision
Making**

**Alignment of Standards
and Curriculum**

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely) Goal #2

By the end of the 2025–2026 school year, Saint Joseph School District classrooms will implement Tier 1 instruction using evidence-based practices. This will ensure all students have access to high-quality, standards-aligned learning experiences. Student mastery of grade-level standards will be monitored quarterly, and instructional adjustments will be made based on data from classroom observations, assessments, and teacher feedback.

Rationale (name of the existing conditions/data points to support the selection of the objective/goal)

Strong Tier 1 instruction is critical to student success, particularly in tested grade levels and content areas: English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Current district data show variability in Tier 1 implementation, contributing to gaps in student proficiency across these tested content areas (See [State Data](#)). By consistently implementing evidence-based instructional practices, the district can strengthen foundational instruction, support diverse learner needs, and increase student mastery of grade-level standards. Monitoring student progress quarterly through assessments, classroom observations, and teacher feedback provides actionable data to guide instructional adjustments and ensure all students have access to high-quality, standards-aligned learning experiences.

Evidence-Based Strategies for Improvement

- Explicit, standards-aligned instruction
- High-quality Instructional Materials/Resources
- Frequent formative assessments and feedback
- Differentiated and targeted interventions
- Collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- High-impact instructional practices
- Data-driven decision-making
- Family and community engagement

Budget/Funding Source(s): District Budget/Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment/Professional Learning Funds/Academic Service Funds/Building Budgets

Action Steps	Start Date	Person Responsible	Resources/Budget	Completed/Date
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Implement high-quality instructional materials in 5th Grade Science to establish a consistent, standards-aligned foundation for science instruction and strengthen student learning outcomes.	Summer 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Budget	May 2027
Pilot high-quality instructional materials in K–4 Science to evaluate effectiveness, usability, alignment to Missouri Learning Standards, and impact on student learning before determining districtwide implementation	Summer 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional	May 2027
Establish and implement a screening process to ensure students demonstrate the identified competencies required for enrollment in Biology during their freshman year.	August 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	No Cost	Ongoing
Utilize instructional coaching resources to provide targeted, districtwide support for 5th- and 8th-grade mathematics.	August 2026	Instructional Coaches	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional	Ongoing
Pilot and implement high-quality instructional materials in Government to strengthen the quality, rigor, and consistency of Social Studies instruction and ensure	August 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Budget	Ongoing

alignment to state standards.				
Strengthen consistency in Secondary ELA instruction by establishing common expectations for essential standards, instructional practices, curriculum pacing, assessment, and use of high-quality instructional materials across secondary schools.	August 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Budget	Ongoing
Audit and strengthen Tier 1 implementation fidelity of the <i>Benchmark Advance</i> ELA core curriculum across Grades 3–6, ensuring that daily classroom tasks preserve the program's intended cognitive rigor and structural/pacing progression	August 2026	Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Professional Learning	Ongoing
Implement a common districtwide Grade 4 writing prompt focus paired with teacher calibration routines to transition Tier 1 instruction beyond basic conventions toward establishing a clear controlling idea, developing organizational structure with transitions, and integrating source-based evidence and	August 2026	Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	No Cost	Ongoing

elaboration.				
Facilitate targeted, districtwide professional learning focused on explicit instruction for the comprehension skill of inferring, directly bridging the systemic performance drop between routine recall and higher-cognitive-demand tasks like inferring and Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR).	August 2026	Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	No Cost	Ongoing
Implement the 2026–2027 Professional Learning Plan by providing aligned, job-embedded professional learning that strengthens instructional practices, supports teacher and leader development, and directly connects professional learning to district priorities, student outcomes, and the Portrait of an Educator. (Learning Materials)	Summer 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional	On going
Leverage district instructional coaches to support teachers in implementing Tier 1 instruction with fidelity, providing modeling, coaching,	Summer 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Budget	June 2027

and feedback to strengthen classroom practices.		Team		
Utilize academic lab classroom teachers and identify additional model classrooms to showcase and share strong Tier 1 instructional practices, providing teachers with examples of effective evidence-based strategies in action.	Fall 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment/ Professional Learning Funds/ Academic Budgets	May 2027
Conduct district site visits, classroom observations, teacher surveys, and principal feedback to identify areas for instructional improvement, and share student outcomes, high-quality instructional materials, and effective practices during professional learning sessions	Fall 2026	Department Chairs, Instructional Coaches, Building Leaders, and Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/ Professional Learning Funds/ Academic Budgets	May 2027
Ensure building leaders complete 100% of teacher evaluations within the designated evaluation timelines to monitor instructional effectiveness and support professional growth.	Fall 2026	Building Leaders and Academic Service Team	District Budget/Data Management	March 2027

Provide a coherent preschool-to-kindergarten readiness system that aligns learning expectations, readiness indicators, family engagement, assessment, and transition practices to ensure students enter kindergarten prepared for success.	August 2026	Principals, Instructional Coaches & Teachers	ELC Budgets	May 2027
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The Goals and the Plan				
Goal #3: By the end of the 2026–2027 school year, the Saint Joseph School District will increase the percentage of graduating seniors earning both a high school diploma and a Market-Value Asset (MVA) from a baseline of 39% for the Class of 2026 to at least 50% for the Class of 2027.				
Leadership	Collaborative Climate and Culture	Effective Teaching and Learning	Data-Based Decision Making	Alignment of Standards and Curriculum
Increase the percentage of students graduating with both a high school diploma and an MVA to 100% for the Classes of 2028–2029, ensuring every graduate leaves high school with a recognized postsecondary credential, college credit, career credential, or other qualifying Market-Value Asset.				
Rationale (name of the existing conditions/data points to support the selection of the objective/goal)				

Preparing students for success beyond high school requires more than academic proficiency; it requires exposure to real-world learning experiences that develop career readiness, critical thinking, and applied skills. Current data indicates that students benefit from opportunities such as internships, client connected projects, entrepreneurial experiences, industry-recognized credentials, and college credit. Implementing comprehensive college and career pathways ensures that instruction is standards-aligned, relevant, and transferable, connecting learning to authentic contexts. Research shows that students who engage in structured, experiential learning are more motivated, develop stronger employability skills, and are better prepared for postsecondary success. By focusing on tested pathways and monitoring participation and outcomes, the district can ensure all students are prepared for graduation, college, and careers.

Evidence-Based Strategies for Improvement

- Work-Based Learning: Internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing to build career readiness.
- Project-Based & Client-Connected Learning: Authentic projects to develop problem-solving and collaboration skills.
- Entrepreneurial Opportunities: Student-led ventures to foster creativity and applied skills.
- Industry-Recognized Credentials (IRCs): Credentials that enhance employability and postsecondary success.
- College Credit/Dual Enrollment: Early exposure to college coursework to support postsecondary readiness.
- Standards-Aligned Curriculum: Instruction and assessments aligned to career pathways and academic standards.
- Data-Driven Career Planning: Individualized guidance using student interests and performance data.
- Industry & Community Partnerships: Mentorship and authentic learning experiences to increase engagement.

Budget/Funding Source(s): District Budget/Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment/Professional Learning Funds/Academic Service Funds/Building Budgets/Grants

Action Steps	Start Date	Person Responsible	Resources/Budget	Completed/Date
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Continue collaboration with the Success Ready Network and expand learning to building leaders and educators, ensuring that college and career pathway strategies and real-world learning practices are implemented consistently across all high schools.	Summer 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Funds/ Academic Budgets	On going
Provide professional learning and coaching through the Master Teacher Cadre (MTC) and Success-Ready Network, with participating teachers Barbara Spencer, Bailey Neidel, and Jill Blazer. MTC Year 1 Foundations is designed for practicing classroom teachers who are interested in furthering their classroom practices in personalized, competency-based learning.	June 2026	Participating Teachers Cori Elms, Instructional Coach Academic Service Team	Northwest RPDC Grants Compensation Awarded to Teacher	May 2028
Leverage the leadership of five Saint Joseph School District educators, Stephanie Haenni, Johanna Lehmann, Tammie Hardy, Jacob Phillips, and Lucy Mize, who will serve in key leadership roles in the Kauffman Foundation's Real World Learning Market Value Asset (MVA) Academy during the 2026–2027 school year.	July 2026	Participating Teachers Instructional Coaches Academic Service Team	Not Cost Compensation Awarded to Teacher	April 2027

Identify staff to support students preparing for participation and /or participating in career internships and externships with a process that tracks the number of students in engaging in Real World Learning	Fall 2026	High School Principals Department Chairs Academic Service Team Data Management	No Cost - Function in PowerSchool	On going
Implement revised PreK grade cards that incorporate the Portrait of a Graduate (POG) dispositions and align with the K–2 standards-based grade card. Provide families with this POG document to support a shared understanding of student development and include each student’s attendance percentage in reporting to parents.	Fall 2026	Academic Service Team Principals at Lake and Mark Twain Instructional Coaches Early Learning Teachers	No Cost	On Going
Develop and implement a districtwide Real World Learning Proposal System that provides teachers with a structured process to submit proposals for client-connected projects and entrepreneurial experiences.	June 2026	Cori Elms, Instructional Coach Building Principals Participating Teacher Academic Service Team	No Cost	On going

Provide students with opportunities to engage in client-connected projects, entrepreneurial experiences, and other authentic Real World Learning experiences in partnership with the Kauffman Foundation and other community organizations. Experiences include Student Voice opportunities through the Kauffman Foundation, client-connected projects, entrepreneurial experiences, and internships.	Fall 2026	Students Participating Teachers Community Partners Northwest RPDC Secondary Principals Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team	Building Budgets Academic Budgets Kauffman Foundation Community Partners Northwest RPDC	On going
Continue to enhance career identity development across PreK–12 by integrating career exploration and the Portrait of a Graduate competencies into curriculum and school experiences, and pilot select initiatives to evaluate impact and inform the expansion of career pathways and real-world learning opportunities.	Fall 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team	Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment/Professional Learning Funds/ Academic Budgets	On going

Revise the high school course catalog to organize courses into clearly defined pathways of study, aligning offerings with student career interests, college readiness, and real-world learning opportunities	Fall 2026	Academic Service Team	District Budget/Data Management	On going
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Research and study the implementation of a tiered graduation diploma system that recognizes student achievement of Market-Value Assets (MVAs) and provides multiple pathways for students to demonstrate college and career readiness. Findings and recommendations will be presented to the Academic Committee for review, discussion, and consideration.	Fall 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team Academic Service Committee	No Cost	December 2026
Continue to expand Hillyard Technical Center programs, increase class sizes and program capacity, and increase the number of Saint Joseph School District students participating in these programs.	Fall 2026	Advisory Communities Hillyard Directors Counselors at Hillyard & High School Cori Elms, Instructional Coach Academic Service Team	District Budget CTE Funding Building/Academic Budget	On going

Establish a districtwide system to ensure all eligible 11th- and 12th-grade students have equitable access to dual-credit opportunities by reducing financial barriers. The district will develop and leverage community partnerships to provide funding for dual-credit tuition and assessment costs, ensuring that financial circumstances do not prevent students from earning college credit and a Market Value Asset. (Draft)	Fall 2026	Academic Service Team	Saint Joseph School District Foundation	May 2027
Rethink and redesign Prek-12 schedules to provide flexibility and maximize opportunities for college and career pathways, real-world learning experiences, and individualized student support	Fall 2026	Department/ PLC Leaders Chairs Instructional Coaches Building Leaders Academic Service Team	District Budget	On going