Stella Schola Middle School

School Improvement Plan

Annual Update: 2025-26

This school improvement plan meets the requirements of WAC 180-16-220 and WAC 180-105-020.[1]

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Description: Stella Schola ("Star School" in Latin) is a Choice middle school in Lake Washington School District. Stella Schola offers sixth, seventh, and eighth graders a comprehensive, consistent, and challenging learning environment with high academic and behavioral standards and solid teacher support. The school encourages parents and community members to assist students in developing skills to become independent and self-sufficient adults who will succeed and contribute responsibly in a global community. The rich, comprehensive learning environment is based on historical themes with an emphasis on mastery learning for all students. By integrating as many subjects as possible into year-long historical themes, students learn from the past to make better choices and decisions in the future. Students have the same teacher for most of the school day, which enhances opportunities for integration of subject matter, helps promote curricular continuity, and increases the students' sense of belonging during early adolescence. Teachers work collaboratively to provide a challenging, stimulating, and hands-on curriculum for students. In-depth studies of the core subjects are emphasized. Students participate in a student-to-student mentoring program. Stella Schola's unique schedule allows teachers to create a highly personalized environment for students. Students get individual academic assistance after school as necessary to ensure mastery of content. Students recognize the benefits of their hard work and focus on learning by experiencing personal and academic success.

Mission Statement: Stella Schola's mission is to provide an inclusive, comprehensive, challenging, and engaging learning environment with high academic standards and character development, through extraordinary school-family-community partnerships.

2025-26 PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

Priority	Priority Area	Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	Desired Outcome
1	**Literacy**	6th, 7th, & 8th	All students at or above standard in ELA by the end of 8th grade.
2	**Mathematics**	6th, 7th, and 8th	All students are successful in Algebra by the end of 8th grade.
3	**Social Emotional Learning**	6th, 7th, and 8th	Students will feel an even better sense of belonging at school.

[1] LWSD School Board Approval on <insert date>

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	Literacy – All students at or above standard in ELA by the end of 8th grade.
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	All students, all grades (6th, 7th, & 8th)
Focus Area	Reading comprehension and Figurative Language
Desired Outcome	All students will have an improved level of reading comprehension as measured by the annual SBA. All students will improve their knowledge of figurative language and usage of figurative language in their writing as measured by baseline assessments in the Fall of 2025 and summative assessments in Spring of 2026.
Current Data Supporting Focus Area	SBA results from Spring 2025 of current Stella Schola 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. This year's 8th graders had 97% meet or exceed standard (52% Level 4, 45% Level 3) on the Spring ELA SBA last year as 7th graders. This year's 7th graders had 90% meet or exceed standard (57% Level 4, 33% Level 3) on the Spring ELA SBA last year as 6th graders. This year's 6th graders had 89% meet or exceed standard (81% Level 4, 8% Level 3) when they took the SBA at their elementary schools in 5th grade.

Strategy to Address Priority

Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
Frequent mini-lessons with mentor texts to analyze and identify figurative language.	Formative and summative classroom assessments will show improvement in the identified areas.
Incorporation of figurative language into creative writing assignments to encourage students to revise to include specific types of figurative language.	Formative and summative classroom assessments will show student improvement in the identified areas.
Comprehension Q's and Fig. Lang. are both modeled through whole group instruction embedded into novel studies and explicit instruction, small group and independent work as well.	End of novel unit assessments and projects.

Strategy to Engage Students, Families, Parents and Community Members	Communication of student progress via parent-teacher conferences twice yearly; regularly scheduled ParentSquare classroom updates; emails to parents to communicate progress.

Timeline for Focus	School year 2025-2026
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Annual SBA assessment in Spring 2026 as well as classroom-based assessments with targeted feedback during the course of the year.

Priority #2

Priority Area	Mathematics – All students successful in Algebra by the end of 8th grade.
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	6th, 7th, and 8th Grade
Focus Area	Math Facts and Word Problems
Desired Outcome	All students will meet the Priority goal of success in Algebra (as measured by a C or better grade in Algebra) by end of 8th grade.
Current Data Supporting Focus Area	SBA results from Spring 2025. Students can demonstrate Algebra-readiness by successful grades in Math 6+ and Math 7+ and SBA scores of 3 or 4 on the 6th and 7th grade SBA (demonstrating at-grade-level performance). On last year's Math SBA, 79% of 6th graders were at or above standard (48% Level 4, 31% Level 3), 87% of 7th graders were at or above standard (77% Level 4, 10% Level 3), and 97% of 8th graders were at or above standard (66% Level 4, 31% Level 3).

Strategy to Address Priority

Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
Monthly math fact quizzes. Fitting in math fact review throughout lessons and activities.	Monthly quizzes.
Focusing on word problems in lessons based on the new skill.	Once or twice a month they are given an MRE (Mathematical Reasonings and Explanation) assignment where they focus on explaining the thinking behind how they got their answer rather than just giving the answer.
Math Olympics each Wednesday. Students start out with 2x3 math facts and work their way up.	Timed and untimed quizzes.
Word problems practiced daily in whole group and small group instruction, assessed on each unit	EOU Assessments

Strategy to Engage Students, Families, Parents and Community Members	Communication of student progress via parent-teacher conferences twice yearly; regularly scheduled ParentSquare classroom updates; emails to parents to communicate progress.
Timeline for Focus	School year 2025-2026
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Annual SBA assessment in Spring 2026 and course grades in 6+ Math, 7+ Math, and Algebra.

Priority #3

Priority Area	Social Emotional Learning
Focus Grade Level(s) and/or Student Group(s)	6th, 7th, and 8th Grade
Focus Area	Sense of Belonging here at Stella Schola.
Desired Outcome	Percentage of students reporting that they feel they belong here at Stella will increase by five percentage points as measured in the Spring 2026 Panorama Survey
Current Data Supporting Focus Area	Panorama Survey results from Spring 2025. In the Spring Panorama Survey, 64% of Stella Schola students gave positive responses in the category of Sense of Belonging with 15% negative responses, and 21% neutral responses.

Strategy to Address Priority

Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
Implementation of new program, Stella Sparks Sessions, to provide opportunities for new friendships to grow around affinity groups.	All students are actively participating in the Stella Sparks Sessions.

Strategy to Engage Students, Families, Parents and Community Members	Communication of student progress via parent-teacher conferences twice yearly; regularly scheduled ParentSquare classroom updates; emails to parents to communicate progress.
Timeline for Focus	School year 2025-2026
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Panorama Survey Spring 2026

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.