

# West Orange Public Schools



## Strategic Plan Progress

Presented by: Dr. Scott Cascone and Ms. Eveny de Mendez  
June 26, 2021

**West Orange Board of Education**

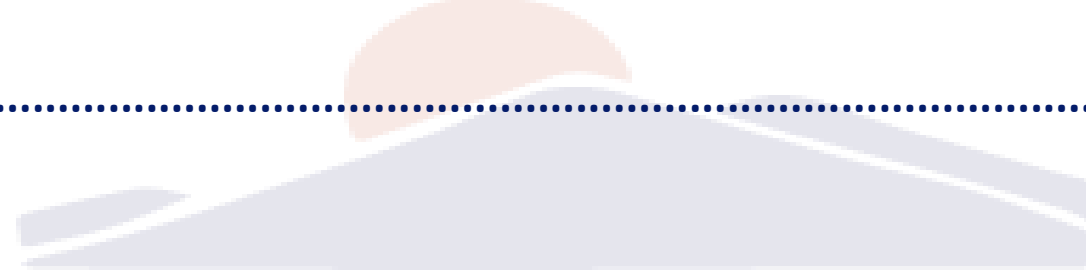
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**West Orange Central Office Administration**

**Dr. Scott Cascone.....Superintendent of Schools**

**Eveny de Mendez.....Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction**

**Tonya Flowers.....Business Administrator and Board Secretary**



# Presentation Objectives

*"If you can't  
measure it, you  
can't improve it"*

*P. Drucker*

- To provide historical context on the creation of the current strategic plan
- To discuss how the pandemic conditions resulted in pivots and adjustments to the plan and to elaborate on these initiatives
- To elaborate on next steps both in the short and long term

# 2017-21 Strategic Plan: Background



- Plan development was facilitated by New Jersey School Boards Association in collaboration with the district.
- The plan was informed by comprehensive feedback from all stakeholders including community members.
- Progress on objectives were provided to the board and community in prior years.
- This year's update on strategic plan goals will reflect adjusted objectives that were relevant to the current status of the district and objectives that were most relevant to a pandemic year and school closures.

# 5-Year Strategic Plan

## Goal Statements

### **GOAL 1: 21<sup>ST</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility**

- Create 21st Century learning spaces that ensure safety and security in an innovative environment that supports independent, collaborative and experiential learning for students in PreK - 12.

### **GOAL 2: Readiness for Future Success**

- Increase student achievement to ensure that all students are challenged and engaged in quality instructional programs that prepares them for competitive college and career opportunities and future success.

### **GOAL 3: Holistic Health and Wellness**

- Promote the wellness of students in PreK – 12 by recognizing the correlation between their daily experiences and their mental and physical health.

### **GOAL 4: Parent, School and Community Engagement**

- Maximize transparent communication by providing meaningful feedback and input opportunities toward continuous improvement efforts in order to strengthen family, school and community partnerships.

A graphic featuring a stylized sun or moon in shades of orange and red, partially obscured by a grey, mountain-like silhouette. The word "Progress" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font across the center of the graphic.

# Progress

## GOAL 1

21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and  
Program Accessibility

# GOAL

## 1

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

**Create 21st Century learning spaces that ensure safety and security in an innovative environment that supports independent, collaborative and experiential learning for students in PreK - 12.**

### Objectives

1. Develop a Safe Return Plan that addresses the safe return to schools, to include HVAC repairs, mechanical unit installations and steam automation.
2. Update facilities to support current and future technological needs in PreK - 12 and ensure access for every student.
3. Research grant and partnership opportunities that could provide funding to district-wide projects.

# Goal 1, Objective 1

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

Develop a Safe Return Plan that addresses the safe return to schools, to include HVAC repairs, mechanical unit installations and steam automation.

### Objective 1 Progress

- A Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan for the 2021-2022 school year was developed in accordance with the State required template and incorporates the federally required components as outlined in the ARP Statute and federal regulations.
- As part of the ARP ESSER Grant, the West Orange public Schools is being awarded a total of \$6,882,885 to use over a two year period for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools.
- The district developed a process for seeking and including public comment on the plan for the intended use of grant funding, to include:
  - Parent / Teacher Letters
  - Google Form / Survey
  - Input from District and School Leadership
- On June 21, 2021, the **Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan for the 2021-2022** school year was presented to the board along with a summary of the feedback received.
- On June 24, 2021, a final version of the plan, reflective of public comment, was posted on the district's website.



# Goal 1, Objective 1, cont...

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

Develop a Safe Return Plan that addresses the safe return to schools, to include HVAC repairs, mechanical unit installations and steam automation.

## Objective 1 Progress

HVAC repairs and number of units - Installation of approximately 50 mechanical systems for the purpose of providing fresh, filtered and tempered air where none exist. Automation of approximately 293 steam systems for accurate automation of damper and thermal controls for fresh air intake and balanced, controlled tempered air.

Major Area	Description / Purpose	Funding Amount
<b>spending priorities for the use of ESSER III funds to ensure the Safe Reopening of Schools in 2021-2022</b>		
HVAC / Mechanical Unit Installations	Installation of Mechanical Systems in spaces currently not possessing them and thus not being occupied.	Approximately \$1,888,590
Steam Automation	Automation of Steam univent systems to enable the damper systems to function automatically rather than manually.	Approximately \$1,000,000

# Goal 1, Objective 2

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

## Objective 2 Progress

Update facilities to support current and future technological needs in PreK - 12 and ensure access for every student.

2020-2021

- New Cisco Firepower 4112 firewall was installed in January 2021 to support increase in bandwidth and enhance network security
- Bandwidth upgraded from 3 to 10 gig to support one-one program and increased demand for network services
- 1:1 Student Chromebook Program
  - WOHS (Purchased 2019)
  - Middle Schools (Purchased 2020)
  - Elementary (Purchased 2020, 2021 -- ESSER FUNDS)
- Faculty-- Shift to mobile devices
  - All faculty have been issued a district laptop,
- All buildings continue to have broad wireless access coverage. Wi-Fi upgrades to new standards are pending: 4 buildings complete, remaining buildings to be completed by December 2021.
- All instructional rooms are equipped with Smart interactive whiteboards
- Lightspeed web/content filter appliance has been replaced with Relay cloud based web filter and Classroom Management Tools
- District Operating under the Google WorkSpace for Education Plus edition that includes enhanced security and learning/productivity tools

# Goal 1, Objective 2

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

## Objective 2 Progress

Update facilities to support current and future technological needs in PreK - 12 and ensure access for every student.

2021-2022 (Summer)

- ESSER II Funds: Purchased 300 Faculty Laptops to support increase in demand for faculty and replace obsolete inventory
- ESSER II Funds: Purchased and preparing new chromebooks that will replace obsolete inventory in the elementary schools
- Security
  - Major Upgrade to district Genetec Security System
  - Major Security Project in all schools to support Alyssa's Law and Visitor Management System

# Goal 1, Objective 3

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

## Objective 3 Progress

Research grant and partnership opportunities that could provide funding to district-wide projects.

	2020-2021 Award	2019-2020 Award
<b>FEDERAL GRANTS</b>		
ESEA GRANT:		
Title 1	935,050 *	932,907
Title 1-SIA	11,300	
Title 2	194,924 *	184,930
Title 3 Immigrant	14,517 *	0
Title 3	44,513 *	48,044
Title 4	68,880 *	58,204
IDEA-Basic	1,768,569	1,566,269
IDEA-Preschool	68,789	68,701
PERKINS	60,566	58,273
PRE-APPRENTICESHIP	100,000	
CARES-ESSER 1	929,735	
CFR-RELIEF	516,709	
CARES-ESSER 2	3,064,702	
CARES-ESSER 2-LEARNING ACCELERATION	196,677	
CARES-ESSER 2-MENTAL HEALTH	45,000	
COPS SECURITY GRANT		299,490
SECURITY GRANT	375,295	
	8,395,226	3,216,818
Awarded amounts include Public and N/P		
* Carryover amounts are not included		

<b>STATE AID</b>		
N/P TEXTBOOKS AID	87,482	75,428
N/P NURSING AID	146,370	139,195
CHAPTER 192/193:		
COMP ED	7,839	12,736
ESL	888	3,309
SUPPLEMENTAL SPEECH	50,188	89,043
EXAM & CLASSIFICATION	168,877	183,546
HANDI-CORRECTIVE SPEECH	20,051	20,051
N/P DIGITAL DIVIDE	62,293	
N/P TECHNOLOGY AID		51,516
N/P SECURITY AID	251,125	215,250
	795,113	790,074

<b>PRIVATE DONATIONS/GRANTS</b>		
IACE GRANT (ITALIAN)	13,500	25,000
CONFUCIUS GRANT	10,000	10,452
TAKE VAPE AWAY		6,000
SUSTAINABLE JERSEY FOR SCHOOLS	12,000	2,000
PLAY UNIFIED GRANT		3,500
MAKERSPACE GRANT	1,500	
BRAIN INJURY	750	750
ROTARY-RAINBOW DONATION	1,500	1,500
AUTISM PROGRAM DONATION	2,500	
TARGET AWARDS	700	700
	42,450	49,902



Progress

GOAL 2

Readiness for Future Success

# Goal 2

## Readiness for Future Success

### OBJECTIVES

**Increase student achievement to ensure that all students are challenged and engaged in quality instructional programs that prepares them for competitive college and career opportunities and future success.**

1. Increase district performance to the top 25th percentile by incrementally improving achievement over the next 5 years.
2. Develop an aligned instructional system that includes a comprehensive curriculum, assessment and professional development structure that supports district goals and impacts student performance.
3. Develop an assessment framework that includes the development and implementation of quality benchmark assessments and frequent and consistent progress monitoring that will inform instruction, the implementation of intervention strategies, and close gaps in student performance.
4. Develop an instructional focus for students to read at or above grade level by including appropriate and rigorous tasks, interventions, and small group instructional models.

# Goal 2

## Objectives 1-3

# Readiness for Future Success

### PROGRESS

1. Increase district performance to the top 25th percentile by incrementally improving achievement over the next 5 years.
2. Develop an aligned instructional system that includes a comprehensive curriculum, assessment and professional development structure that supports district goals and impacts student performance.
3. Develop an assessment framework that includes the development and implementation of quality benchmark assessments and frequent and consistent progress monitoring that will inform instruction, the implementation of intervention strategies, and close gaps in student performance.

On May 10th, the district presented an update on student performance in grades K-12 in ELA, Math and Science: [Assessing Student Learning](#).

The presentation included:

- Student performance on district formative and summative assessments, benchmark assessments, and grade distribution.
- Assessment practices, standards analysis and general findings
- Curriculum compacting outcomes and critical practices in hybrid learning
- Vertical articulation outcomes
- Strategies to address student learning loss and acceleration objectives
- Extended year and summer opportunities designed to address student learning
- Initiatives, next steps and instructional strategies for the 2021-2022 school year.

# Goal 2, Objective 4

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

Develop an instructional focus for students to read at or above grade level by including appropriate and rigorous tasks, interventions, and small group instructional models.

## Objective 4 Progress

### 2018-2019

- K-5 teachers received professional development on the Balance Literacy Approach by a consultant.
- K-3 curriculum received a major rewrite.

### 2019-2020

- K-5 teachers received professional development in small grade level cohorts in regards to balanced literacy and workshop model components by a consultant.
- Teachers received district level professional development in the following areas:
  - K-5 Developmental Stages of Writing
  - K-2 Shared Reading
  - 3-5 Book Clubs
- Began to explore K-12 grammar resources (with teachers)
- 4-5 Curriculum received a major rewrite.
- K-3 Curriculum and assessments were revised based observations and teacher feedback.



# Goal 2, Objective 4

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

Develop an instructional focus for students to read at or above grade level by including appropriate and rigorous tasks, interventions, and small group instructional models.

## Objective 4 Progress Continued...

### 2020-2021

- Compacted curriculum all K-5 ELA units (collaboratively with teachers)
- Shifted to the Raz Kids Reading assessment to continue to assess student reading levels remotely (fall/winter)
- Fountas & Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment (EOY)
- Kindergarten Literacy Assessment
  - met with each team to conduct fall/winter data analysis and discuss Tier I, Tier II plans
- Use of iReady for Tier II and Tier III students
- Provided electronic texts and platforms for student access to texts virtually
- ELA Curriculum Text Audit
- Diverse and inclusive curriculum instructional materials added
- Various virtual professional development sessions were afforded to teachers to keep the initiatives moving forward in a virtual/hybrid setting.
- K-6 Vertical Articulation Data Analysis

# Goal 2, Objective 4

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Facilities and Program Accessibility

Develop an instructional focus for students to read at or above grade level by including appropriate and rigorous tasks, interventions, and small group instructional models.

## Objective 4 Progress Continued...

### 2021-2022

- District professional development in the area of teacher/student conferences (Carl Anderson)
- incorporation of Word Study in grades 3-5
- Continuation of grammar exploration
- Continuation of evaluating instructional materials
- Continuation of building diverse and inclusive classroom libraries
- Continue to build and strengthen the balanced literacy approach and readers/writers workshop framework
  - focus areas of student conferences
    - strategy groups
    - student conferences

# Goal 2

## Objective 5

# Readiness for Future Success, continued...

Continue expansion of K-12 STEM curriculum that combines problem solving with project based learning and develops students' critical thinking, communication, assessment, and inquiry skills that make connections to real world applications.

### PROGRESS

- The Discovering STEM (6th grade), Investigating with STEM (7th grade), and Designing with STEM (8th grade) courses are fully established at the middle schools with board approved curricula in place.
  - This middle school STEM program continues to develop project based learning activities that have real world connections.
  - Having an established middle school STEM program has resulted in more interest and increased enrollment at the high school level.
- Schools K-8 continue to integrate STEM activities outside the classroom as well such as invention conventions and shark tank competitions.
- The Technology and Engineering Department has expanded its course offerings to include a Home Maintenance, Improvement, and Repair course and a Honors Architectural and Engineering Design 3 course.



**GOAL 3**  
**Holistic Health and Wellness**

# Goal 3

## Holistic Health and Wellness

### OBJECTIVES

**Promote the wellness of students in PreK - 12 by recognizing the correlation between their daily experiences and their mental and physical health.**

1. Create experiences across the curriculum and in the classroom that encourage and motivate health and wellness.
2. Provide multiple opportunities for students in PreK – 12 to engage in physical activities in order to improve their wellbeing, reduce stress, and positively impact their academic performance.
3. Provide healthy food choices, eliminate processed snacks, and increase the offerings of whole fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

# Goal 3, Objective 1

## Holistic Health and Wellness

### OBJECTIVE 1

#### 2019-2021

Create experiences across the curriculum and in the classroom that encourage and motivate health and wellness.

- During asynchronous learning in grades K-5, daily fitness break activities were created and led by the elementary physical education teachers in their homerooms.
- The pandemic forced our K-12 students to exercise within the confines of their own homes through the use of teacher-led exercises and videos. Many families exercised together to reduce stress and to stay in shape.

# Goal 3, Objective 2

## Holistic Health and Wellness

### OBJECTIVE 1

2019-21

Provide multiple opportunities for students in PreK – 12 to engage in physical activities in order to improve their wellbeing, reduce stress, and positively impact their academic performance. |

- Yoga and other forms of exercise have been taught in elementary physical education since the pandemic started last year. This was done both asynchronously and synchronously by the elementary PE teachers using teacher demonstrations and YouTube videos.
- Our grade 6-12 health and PE teachers continued to meet this challenge by having classes consist of daily student SEL check-ins during attendance, use of motivational videos, and stress-reducing techniques that are both physical and mental in nature.

# Goal 3

## Objective 3

# Holistic Health and Wellness

## Objective 3 Progress

Provide healthy food choices, eliminate processed snacks, and increase the offerings of whole fruits, vegetables and whole grains. |

### Meal Distributions:

- Distributed 646,502 meals from September 2020 through May 2021.
- For students attending in person were made on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- For virtual students and anyone 18yrs old or younger, were facilitated on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 11am-2pm at each elementary school.
- Distributions also included meals for weekends and holidays.



# Goal 3

## Objective 3

# Holistic Health and Wellness

## Objective 3 Progress

Provide healthy food choices, eliminate processed snacks, and increase the offerings of whole fruits, vegetables and whole grains. |

Throughout Hybrid Learning:

- Grab & Go meals were packaged to include fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Food was prepared from scratch to be packaged in ovenable containers, then frozen to be reheated at home.
- Every meals comes with a fruit and vegetable.
- The district did not serve snacks during the 20-21 school year.

# Goal 3 SEL

## Holistic Health and Wellness

### Progress

#### Social Emotional Learning

- Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

- Provided PD to staff specific to SEL (including, but not limited to the five competencies, as well as the process and structure of integrating / targeting SEL competencies).
- Provided staff with SEL resources for integrating SEL in the class/curriculum (bank of ideas/monthly calendar)
- Created SEL resource for the community to access (District website)
- Reviewed current programs and resources available within the district in order to make recommendations
- Identify strategies for integrating SEL in daily practices across the curriculum.
- Developed a SEL Summer Program for students in grades K- 11.
- Assessing and make recommendations to provide educational opportunities and resources during to 2021-2022 school year specific to SEL, Trauma and Mental Health.



# Progress

## GOAL 4

Parent, School and Community  
Engagement

# Goal 4

## Parent, School and Community Engagement

### OBJECTIVES

**Maximize transparent communication by providing meaningful feedback and input opportunities toward continuous improvement efforts in order to strengthen family, school and community partnerships.**

1. Expand the work of the Public Relations Committee to include a diverse and multilingual representation of the school community.
2. Expand the outreach / recruitment program for alumni and working parents / guardians to expose students to various career paths and options.
3. Continue to highlight student achievements and school events through a multitude of media outlets.

# Goal 4

## Parent, School and Community Engagement

**Maximize transparent communication by providing meaningful feedback and input opportunities toward continuous improvement efforts in order to strengthen family, school and community partnerships.**

### Actions

- BOE Town Halls
- Multiple Parent Surveys
- Weekly Updates
- Extensive Social Media Presence
- Retooled District Website
- Establishment of District and School-Based Parent Advisory Committees
- Monthly attendance and collaboration with Council of PTA Presidents
- BOE attendance at PTA meetings

## Distict Goals

- To conduct a comprehensive status review of the district's Five Year Strategic Action Plan (2017-21). Action steps will be evaluated for completion and appropriateness. Revisions and/or additions to be made as deemed necessary and appropriate. Mid-year and year-end reports will be presented to the Board of Education and to the community.
- To undergo and successfully complete the NJDOE New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) audit.
- To utilize the allotted budget for Grant Writing Services for the prospecting, writing, and ostensibly the awarding of grants as additional revenue stream for the district.

## Distict Goals

- To engage in auditing our school culture and curriculum for equity, diversity, and inclusion in order to provide an equitable school community which respects and values diversity by partnering with an outside organization which addresses racial equity through an inclusion lens and provide a needs assessment to create cultural sustainability within our district.
- To establish district level and school based parent advisory groups which will meet monthly for the purpose of information sharing and feedback gathering to help inform planning and decision-making.
- To analyze data regarding the schools where there is a significant disproportionality in regard to diversity between the percentages of students compared to the percentages of staff. To implement a recruitment action plan, monitor the number of diverse candidates hired for the 2020-2021 school year and compare on an annual basis with the goal of closing disparities.

# Plan to Create a New Strategic Plan



WEST ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

DISTRICT  
GOALS  
TOWN HALL  
06.16.21

## District Goals 2020-2021

- To conduct a comprehensive status review of the district's Five Year Strategic Action Plan (2017-21). Action steps will be evaluated for completion and appropriateness. Revisions and/or additions to be made as deemed necessary and appropriate. Mid-year and year-end reports will be presented to the Board of Education and to the community.

## Board Goals 2020-2021

- The Board of Education will assess the district's progress toward the goals of the 5-year strategic plan, and, including opportunities for input from the public, will review the plan's current relevancy and its implications on student achievement, policy, budget, community relations, and other areas of Board responsibility so as to enable the administration to develop action plans for implementation which align with the Boards review.



# Plan to Create a New Strategic Plan



- Creation of a 1 year plan for 2021-22, based upon district and board goals.
  - Board workshop, Goal Setting, August 16  
Public BOE Meeting
  - District and Board Goals to be approved  
September 2021
- Engage in a renewed process of Strategic Planning for the development of revised 5 year plan.