



State of the Schools Report

February 26, 2014

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Superintendent

Mission

To inspire and prepare all students to realize their potential and enhance our global community.

High Expectations
For All Learners

Rigorous &
Relevant
Curriculum

Realize
Student
Potential

Dynamic
Teaching

Realize Student Potential

- Intellectually, physically, & emotionally healthy
- Globally competitive
- Engaged, responsible, informed citizens
- Persistence & effort
- College & career ready

Rigorous & Relevant Curriculum

- Comprehensive – academic, arts, personal wellness
- Inquiry-based
- 21st century skills
 - Problem solving
 - Communication
 - Critical thinking
 - Adaptability

High Expectations For All Learners

- Cultivate interests, strengths, & abilities
- Apply varied styles & approaches
- Understand preferred strategies
- Meet individual needs

Dynamic Teaching

- Student centered
- Skillful
- Data-driven
- Engaging
- Reflective & Collaborative
- Personalized

Our Core Values

- Set high standards
- Provide a safe environment
- Promote collaboration
- Embrace diversity
- Encourage intellectual risk taking
- Integrate technology effectively
- Demand integrity
- Support partnerships between home & school
- Foster personal wellness
- Inspire creativity & innovation
- Make all decisions in the best interests of students

District Goals

Goal One: Advance achievement for all students and reduce disparity between and among groups.

Goal Two: Nurture the intellectual, physical and emotional well-being of students and create a safe and respectful learning community where all students are held to high expectations.

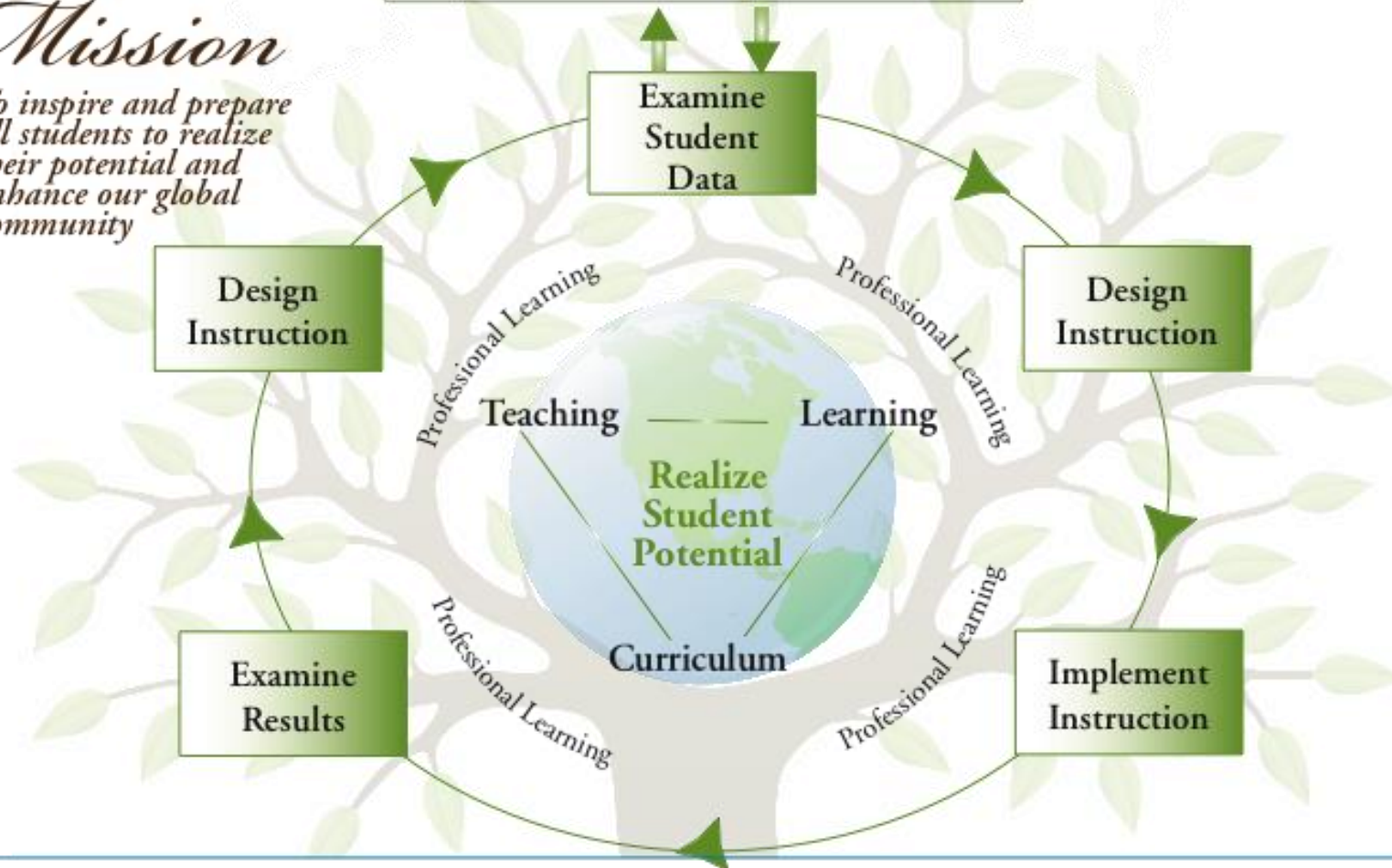
Goal Three: Attract, retain and develop high quality staff by providing professional development, resources and appropriate learning environments.

Model of Continuous Improvement

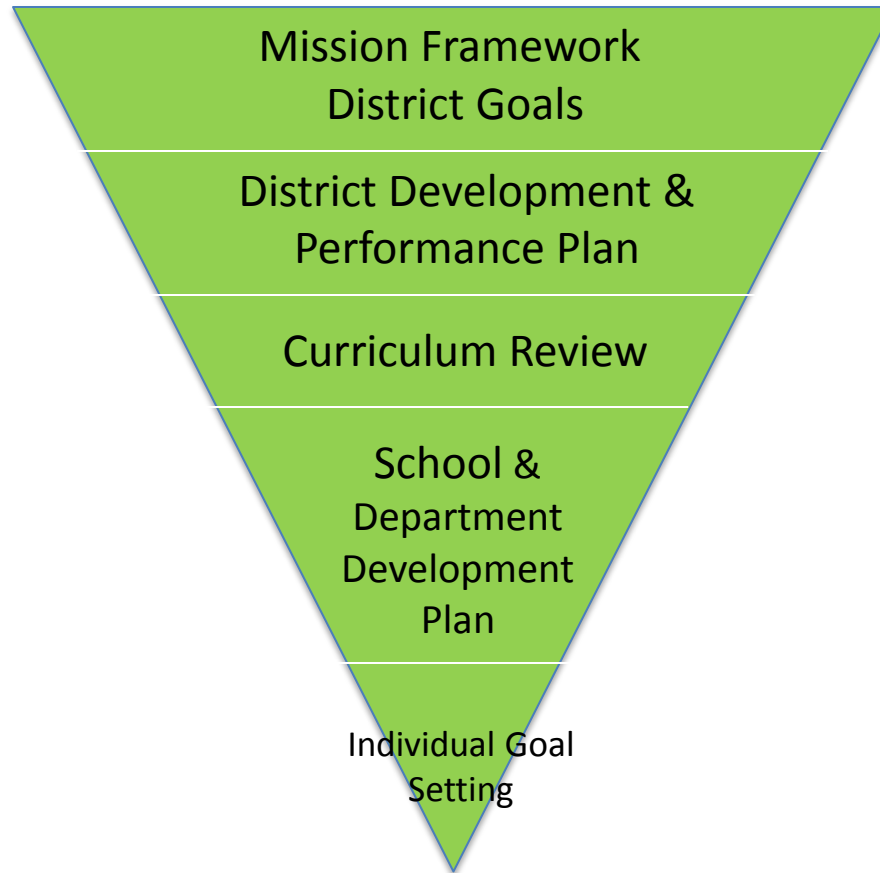


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State of the Schools 2014

Time of unprecedented change due to NCLB waiver

- ✓ New Standards
- ✓ New Curriculum
- ✓ Enhanced Instructional Strategies
- ✓ State tests – field testing
- ✓ Data collection and reporting –
metrics we've used in the past are
no longer valid



Time of unprecedented change

Due to NCLB waiver

- ✓ New system for evaluating teachers and administrators
 - ✓ Data management system for evaluation documents



State of the Schools 2014

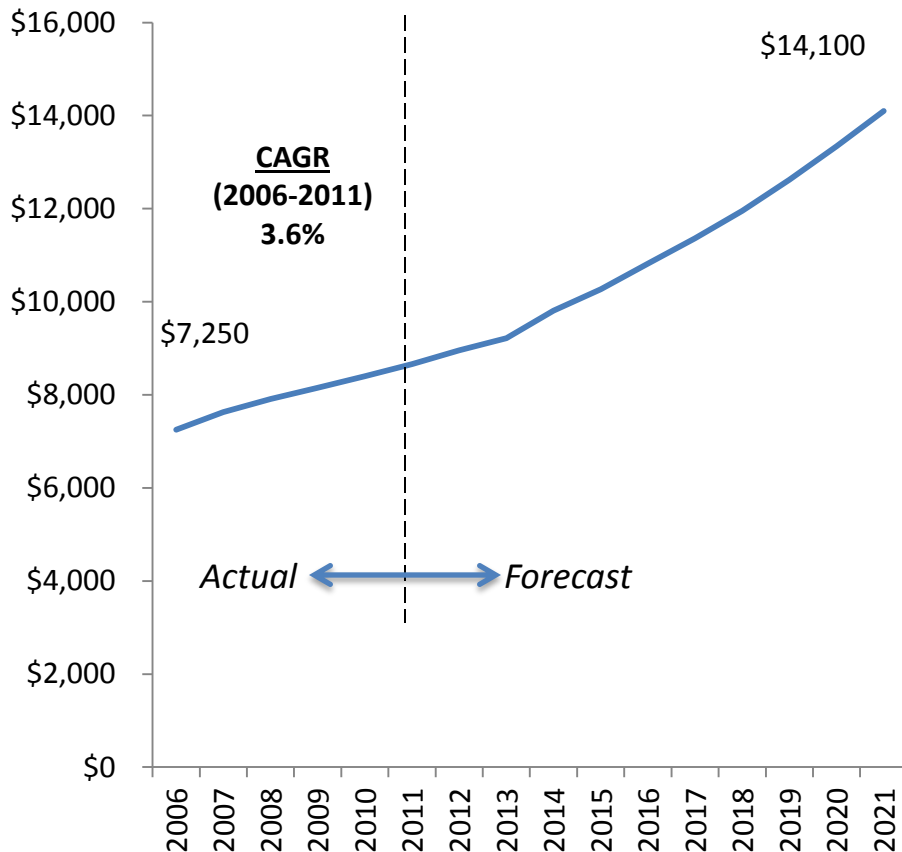
Impact of 12.14.12 – Newtown

- ✓ New Security Measures
- ✓ Increased attention to Mental Health Needs
- ✓ Increased costs - \$1M in CIP

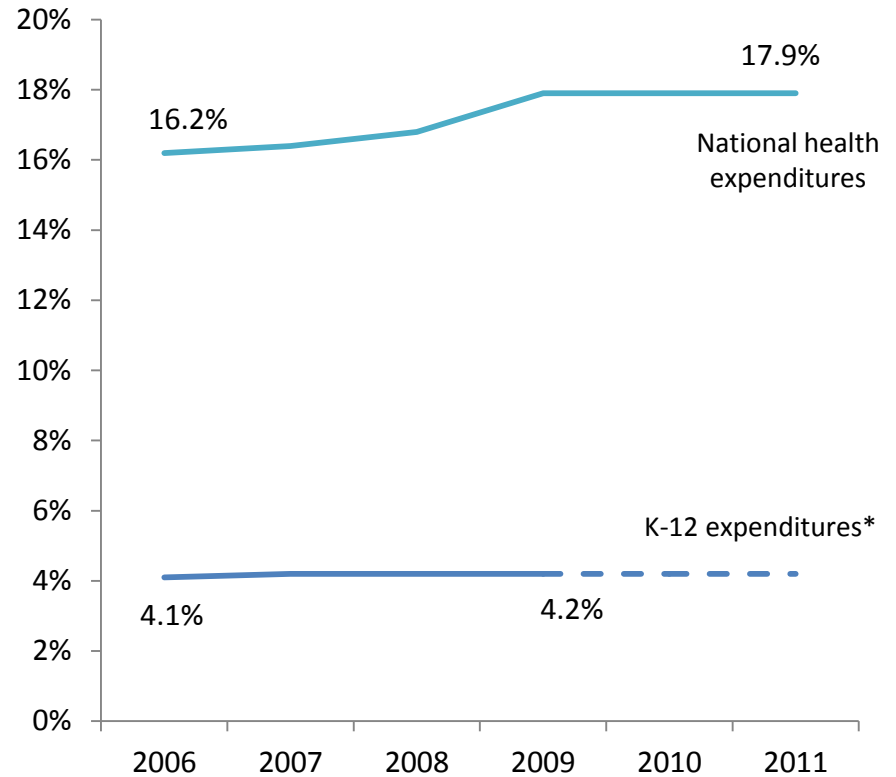


Healthcare expenditures are forecast to consume an ever-increasing part of our economy.

National Health Expenditures Per Capita, in Dollars



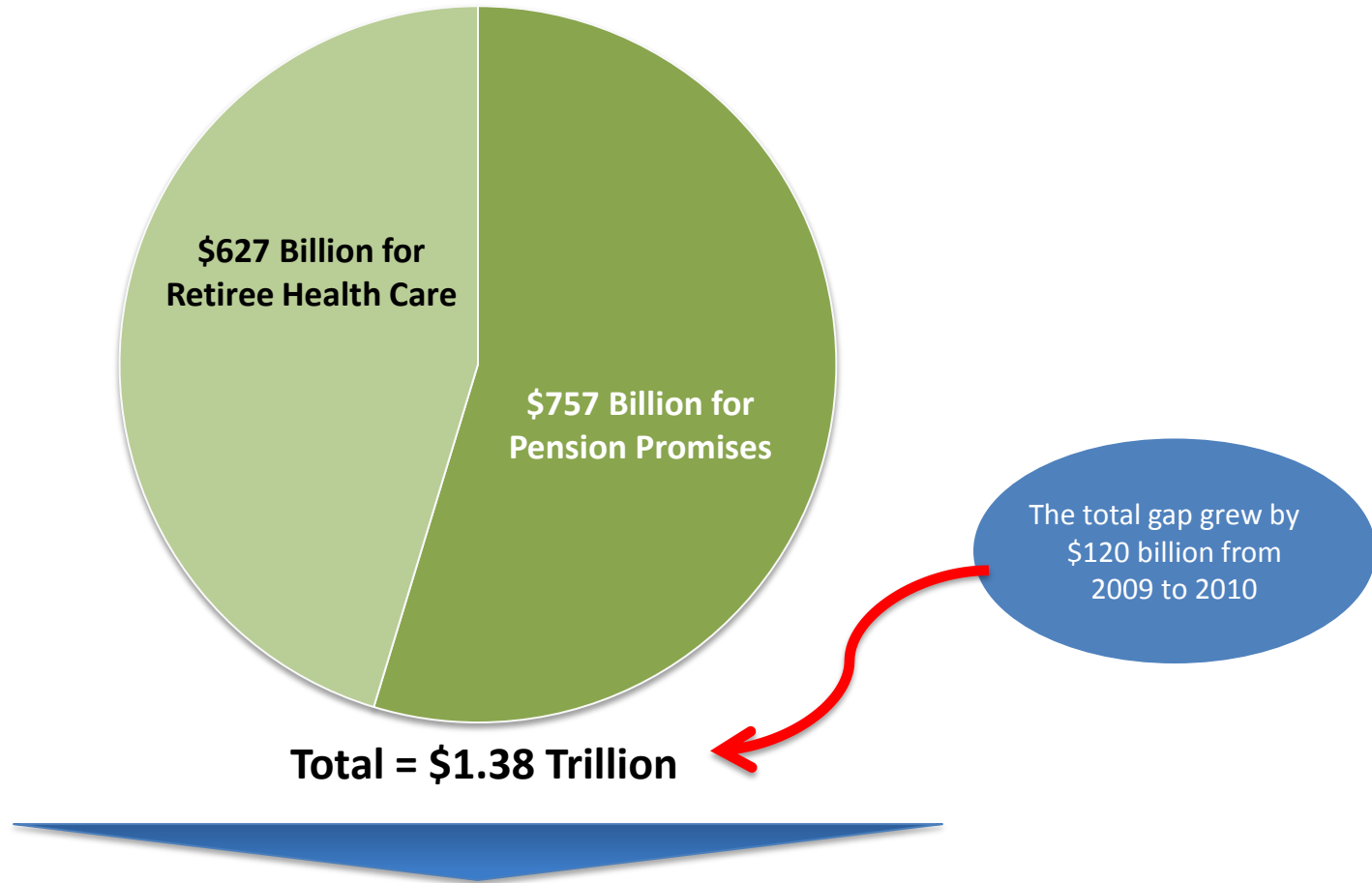
Historical National Health and K-12 Expenditures as a Percent of Gross Domestic Product



Note: Years 2010, 2011 not yet available for K-12 expenditures, estimated by DMC
 Source: Center for Medicare and Medicaid; National Health Expenditure Projections 2011-2021, NCES

State and local governments are struggling with unfunded retiree obligations, which may ultimately be paid through operating dollars.

State Unfunded Gap for Retirement Benefits, 2010

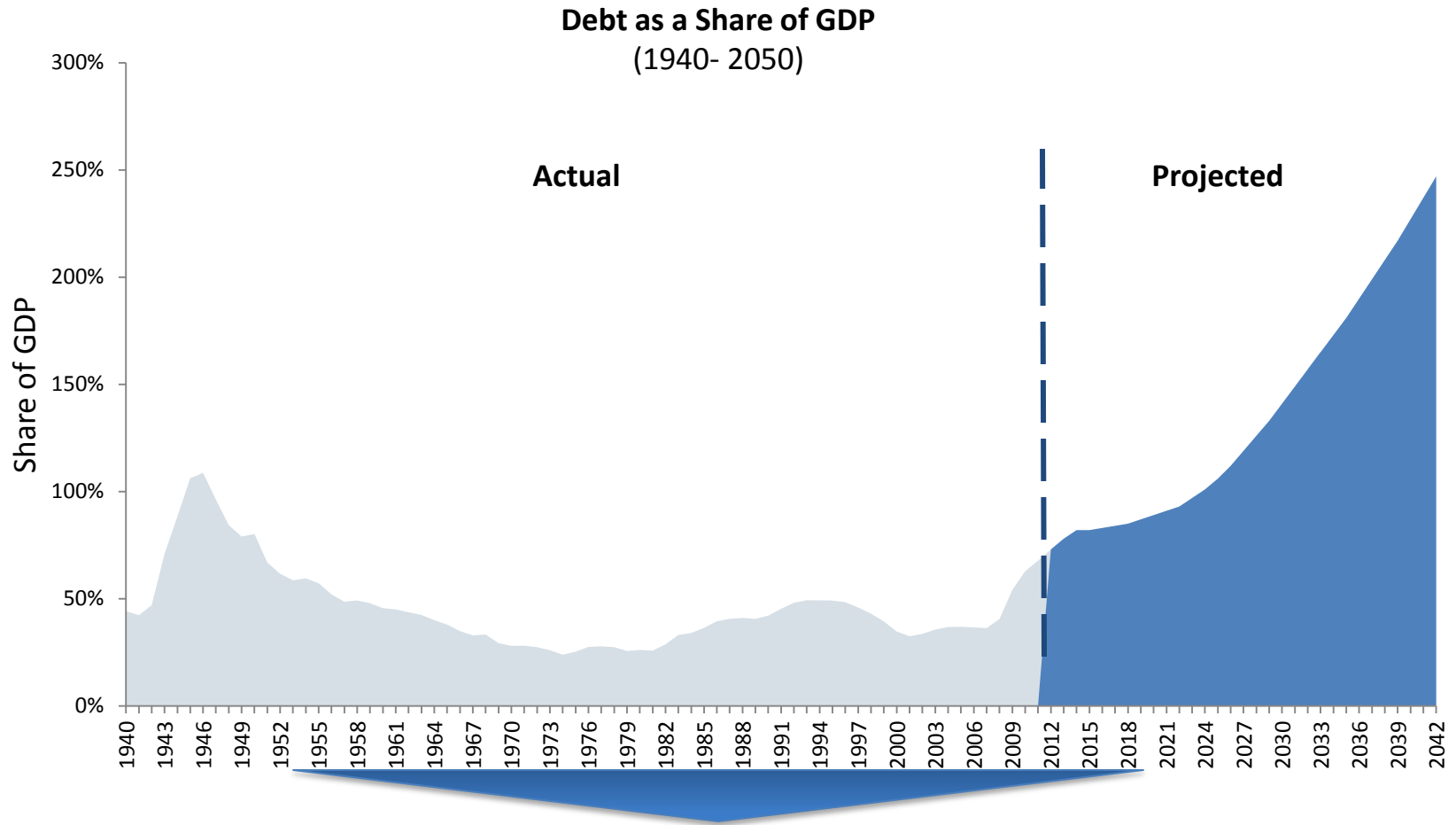


Pension and retiree health obligations are likely to place increasing financial strain on districts for the foreseeable future.

Note: 2010 is the most recent year with data available for all 50 states

Source: Pew Center on the States, 2012, State Budget Crisis Task Force

Overall, rising federal debt means that the federal government will have fewer resources available to allocate to K-12 education.



Dramatic growth in debt as a percent of GDP has broad repercussions for the government's ability to fund other obligations due to increased debt service.

In the coming years, districts will not enjoy the same level of financial support from federal, state, and local sources.

Source of District Funds

Federal



State



Local



Major Competition for Funds

1. Rising **healthcare** costs
2. Rising **pension** costs
3. Rising **federal debt**
4. Decreasing **tax receipts**

Implication

Each major funding source faces similar pressures, with voters unlikely to support tax increases.

What have we done to reduce the town's long term liability?

- Moved from defined benefit to defined contribution for non-certified staff (certified staff are in the state pension system)
- Increased employee contribution to medical costs
- Eliminated sick leave payout upon retirement for recently hired teachers



How are we doing?

- Both high schools in the top 10 in the state in US News and World Report rankings
- Highest AP participation and Advanced ranking by College Board/Innovation School District
- Our schools are safe/we have a plan for making them more secure/our families and staff are not alone



How are we doing?

Award winning schools and educators

- Bugbee - National Blue Ribbon School
- National Social Studies Teacher of the Year
- Two Connecticut Teachers of the Year in 5 years
- Connecticut's finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)
- Connecticut Elementary School Social Studies Teacher of the Year
- Connecticut School Psychologist of the Year



District Development & Performance Plan



- **Elements of Plan tied to District Goals**
- **District Strategic Actions**
 - ✓ Using the Model of Continuous Improvement, we will strengthen standards, curriculum, instruction & assessment
 - ✓ Create an environment & community that fosters intellectually, physically & emotionally healthy learning and living
 - ✓ Create the conditions that promote collaborative inquiry through shared and distributed leadership
- **Efforts**
- **Performance Indicators**

Considerations for the Future

- **Reduce the Opportunity Gap**

- ✓ Expand PK to all elementary schools – **Earlier is Better**

- **Facilities**

- ✓ Continue upgrades of windows, doors, HVAC systems and masonry
- ✓ Prepare a plan for interior painting of all buildings
- ✓ Upgrade high school science labs
- ✓ Upgrade auditoriums



Considerations for the Future

- **Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment**
 - ✓ Continue to refine and enhance new curriculum units based on standards
 - ✓ Develop instructional coaches from our teaching ranks to support varied learning strategies and best practices in classrooms
 - ✓ Be explicit regarding academic mindset
 - ✓ Apply K-3 social, emotional, and intellectual habits to curriculum, link to 21st century skills



Considerations for the Future

- **Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment**

- ✓ Develop more options for Capstone Projects and ensure all students complete one prior to graduation
- ✓ Implement competency-based credits (after state guidelines are available)
- ✓ Plan for 2020 change in high school graduation requirements (after state guidelines are available)
- ✓ Aim for transfer of agency – “The future is about learning, its not about schooling.” We need to reduce the boundaries, shift the roll of adults towards students. R.Elmore



Considerations for the Future

- **Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment**

- ✓ Create tighter alignment of curriculum with Smarter Balanced Assessments and use interim assessment bank
- ✓ Determine benchmarks for schools based on 2015-16 Smarter Balanced Assessments
- ✓ Keep an eye on measuring what is valued instead of valuing only what can be easily measured.
- ✓ Maintain a growth mindset



Considerations for the Future

- **Teacher & Administrator Evaluation**

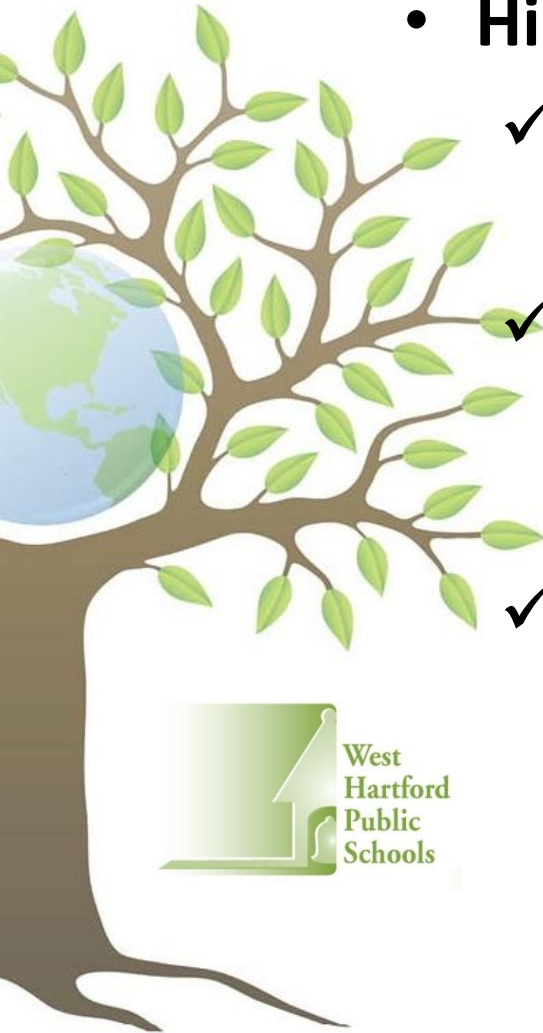
- ✓ The current model is over engineered
- ✓ The current model relies too heavily on data with no empirical evidence that this approach will improve learning
- ✓ Standardized testing should not be high stakes
- ✓ Support moving away from teacher/administrator ratings
- ✓ Continue to develop expertise relative to what excellent teaching looks like
- ✓ Continue to diligently implement the non-tenure review process



Considerations for the Future

- **Hiring & Development**

- ✓ Continue to develop leaders through the Leadership Academy
- ✓ Continue to strive to hire the highest quality teachers that reflect the diversity of our student body
- ✓ Ensure that the WHPS attract the best and brightest by providing leadership pathways, professional learning opportunities, support and regionally competitive salaries



District Development & Performance Plan

- **Healthy schools and communities**

- ✓ Adhere to principles of equity and excellence
- ✓ Expand community partnerships and support
 - ✓ **Growing Great Schools**
 - ✓ **Hello West Hartford**
 - ✓ **Foundation for WHPS**
 - ✓ **Parent Leadership Training Institute**
 - ✓ **Great by 8**
 - ✓ **The Bridge**
- ✓ Support walking and biking to/from school
- ✓ Maintain strong connection with Town government



What resources are needed?

- We are ranked 109th in per pupil spending in the state
- ECS is \$38 million below what it should be
- Excess cost is \$1 million below what it should be
- Next budget looks to maintain the key programs that have contributed to our success to date
- Healthcare and pension costs are rising



