This report provides an update on the District Development Plan, professional development, summer curriculum writing, textbook purchases, curriculum review and renewal, Summer Programs, support for new teachers and administrators and the Convocation program.

**District Development Planning**

The District Development Plan is reviewed annually based on the district’s progress toward achieving the Board of Education Goals. The development of the plan begins with a summary analysis of key findings. This analysis leads to the articulation of district areas of focus and strategic efforts. This guidance defines the parameters for schools and departments to flexibly identify critical action steps that will advance the district goals. Performance indicators provide the metrics by which we measure progress relative to the areas of focus. The plan is implemented and monitored throughout the year and portions of the plan are reported on to the Board of Education. A final analysis is conducted annually by examining our collective district results against the performance indicators. This assessment is then used to shape the next iteration of the development of the plan. A summary of the goals, focus areas and district strategic efforts are listed below.

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

**District Focus**

Using the Model of Continuous Improvement, we will strengthen standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment to help all students achieve and realize their potential.

**District Strategic Efforts:**

- Leverage our leadership structures to identify and advance coherent and strategic adaptive and technical changes in support of instructional improvements and increased student achievement

- Lead positive and productive curricular and instructional changes that foster deep learning of content and skills; instruction that is focused on learning targets that promote critical thinking & problem solving; that facilitate meaningful student discourse, communication & collaboration; and that connect various forms of representation while inspiring creativity & innovation

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Incorporate principles of universal design for learning, differentiation strategies, culturally relevant pedagogy, formative assessment practices, and intervention strategies into daily instruction.

Enable college and career readiness through a rich and diverse program of study; conduct ongoing and systemic reviews of PK-12 programming to assess the quality, equity, relevance, and vitality of program and course pathways, program structures, policies and procedures.

**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.**

**District Focus:**
Create an inclusionary environment and community that fosters intellectually, physically, and emotionally healthy learning and living.

**District Strategic Efforts:**
- Create cultures that emphasize high expectations for student conduct, responsible behavior, equity, and respect for others through comprehensive educational programming.
- Increase student access and opportunities for engagement, leadership, and achievement.
- Establish environments that support risk-taking and instructional routines that emphasize the importance of student voice in the classroom and the school.
- Develop and cultivate school-family-community partnerships; ensure clear, timely and responsive lines of communication with students and families.

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

**District Focus:**
Create the conditions that promote collaborative inquiry through shared and distributed leadership.

**District Strategic Efforts:**
- Create environments of collective inquiry that support a culture of distributed leadership, self-directed professional learning, and supervisory practices in service to teacher development.
- Build the capacity and cultural proficiency of teachers and staff to provide high quality instruction and support learners through coaching and mentoring.
- Support and retain a high quality professional staff through a variety of programs specific to a range of needs.
- Build the diversity of our teaching population to more closely match the diversity of our student population.
Elements of the District Development Plan will be reported to the Board of Education throughout the year as performance indicator data become available. With the change to the state accountability system, we have adjusted our performance indicators accordingly.

**Professional Development**

**Curriculum and Staff Improvement (CSI)**
Professional development in the spring focused on a range of topics to include an overview of the five-year implementation timeline for science and social studies curriculum based on new CT standards in these areas. In addition, elementary continued to provide focus on effective instructional practices in mathematics and writer’s workshop. Secondary schools continued a focus on embedded formative assessment practices, and the administrative team (Extended Leadership) continued its work on calibration within the teacher and administrator evaluation and development programs.

**Connecticut Council for Inter-Religious Understanding Workshop**
Ten teachers selected from five greater Hartford area high schools took part in a week-long summer workshop facilitated by Social Studies Department Supervisor, Jessica Blitzer. The school districts represented included East Hartford, Granby, Newington, Rocky Hill and West Hartford. Under the guidance of Dr. Diane Moore, Director of the Program in Religion and Secondary Education at the Harvard Divinity School, teachers endeavored to deepen the study of world religion in the Social Studies curriculum at the high school level. Jessica will represent West Hartford as one of a select panel of educators invited to participate in a national standards setting committee this fall.

**Extended Leadership**
The Extended Leadership team met for two days in August with a focus on leadership skill building and training on the Model of Continuous Improvement. Teamwork exercises built around the collaborative review of district and school student outcomes data served to drive conversations and shared responsibility for improvement efforts. The application of these skills at the building level will not only strengthen our leadership team but provide a model of our continuous improvement framework for teachers and grade-level teams.

This summer, we welcomed nine new members to our administrative team and welcomed back five members to new roles. We are excited by the talent and energy that these new additions bring to our Extended Leadership team. Our development plan provides for our ongoing development as a team and building capacity in our supervisory skills. All new administrators will participate in Collegial Calibration to support our ongoing work as a district in providing evidence-based feedback that supports teacher growth and development through specific actions connected to teaching performance.
Advanced Placement
Over the course of the 2015-2016 school year, nine secondary school teachers attended six separate workshops to support their professional learning relative to teaching within the Advanced Placement program. Participation included teachers from the Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies departments supporting the following advanced placement (AP) courses: Biology, Calculus, Computer Science Principles, US Government and Politics, and Psychology. Introductory and advanced programs supported both new and veteran AP teachers.

Science, Math, Engineering and Technology Programming
This summer, eight staff members from Smith STEM School received training in Inquiry Learning from the Connecticut Science Center as part of a 3-5 year professional development plan in inquiry-based teaching and learning that advances the implementation of STEM experiences throughout the school. This summer marks the fourth year of an ongoing partnership between WHPS and the Connecticut Science Center. This year, four new teachers and our principal underwent year 1 training, while three teachers completed sophomore training. Smith's STEM Specialist, Sharon Zajack, is a trainer for the Inquiry Learning Professional Development Series and facilitated several weeks of professional development through the Connecticut Science Center this summer.

Curriculum Review and Renewal
The Five-Year Plan for Curriculum Review and Renewal is a critically important function of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment overseen by the WHPS Curriculum Council (formally CPDC) and enacted by the PK-12 curriculum leadership. During the 2015-2016 school year, vertical teams in the disciplines of Social Studies, Music, Theater, and the Teacher Assistant Program presented during the course of the year. Feedback from the Curriculum Council provided direction for curriculum renewal and improvement and department development planning. During the 2016-2017 school year, the following areas are scheduled for review: English Language Arts, School Counseling, Visual Arts, Health Services as well as WAAVE/Achieve and Literacy Intervention programs.

Summer Curriculum Writing
Priority for summer curriculum writing supported three key areas of focus (i) efforts to support new courses at the secondary level, (ii) new curriculum based on changes to state and national standards; and (iii) continued review and refinement of our curriculum that support the CT Core Standards across a range of disciplines.

Elementary:
Teams of teachers worked to write and revise curriculum in the areas of mathematics, PreK/early childhood, civics, and geography. Revision teams made improvements to units within English language arts, writing, and keyboarding based on teacher feedback and instructional needs. Within mathematics, the K-5 curriculum revision team continued to refine units of study to enhance fluency progressions and problem solving tasks. The early childhood
vertical team reviewed core instructional resources for implementation planning. Writing curriculum work undertaken reflects refinement to unit progressions, pacing guides, and foundational skills following our first year of writers’ workshop implementation. A team of Library-Media Specialists and elementary teachers developed an implementation plan for a new keyboarding program at Grades 2-5.

PreK-5 social studies teams developed learning progressions for geography and civics to align expectations both within and across the elementary grades. The PreK-5 matrices and related curriculum resources align with CT Social Studies Framework, Early Learning & Development Standards, and CT K-3 Social, Emotional and Intellectual Habits. The civics matrix developed by our WHPS team articulates the foundation for civics/citizenship (Grades PreK-3) as well as study of local/state government (Grade 4) and federal government (Grade 5). As a foundation of civics/citizenship, PreK-3 students will 

\[i\] develop an understanding of self, social standards and rules, along with the rights and responsibilities of citizens and

\[ii\] determine ways we can address problems individually and collectively to improve our community.

Secondary

In English Language Arts, the grades 6-12 curriculum map was revised to articulate the priority standards found within CT Core Standards. The World Language Department wrote curriculum in support of the new middle school Chinese program (grade 6). In the area of social studies, middle school teachers focused on completion of the World Regional Studies curriculum and included the development of a global issues inquiry project for students in Grade 7. At the high school level, the Modern World History course was revised to better align with the Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks. Teachers also wrote curriculum and identified resources for the new Genocide Studies course at the high school.

School psychologists and social worker teams reviewed the suicide prevention program components as well as the protocols for Functional Behavior Analysis, Behavior Intervention Plans and threat/violence risk protocols.

QuEST

A team of elementary and middle school teachers reviewed and updated the Scope and Sequence documents for 4th and 5th grade Quest to reflect National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) and CT Core standards. The department’s focus on curriculum development further strengthens the vertical articulation across the district and will be shared with new and returning Quest teachers.

Teams also worked on Math Quest curriculum units for grades 4 and 5. The Scope and Sequence were revisited, revised and extended with a lens to explore integrated authenticity. Units were updated to reflect current CT Core standards and align with the West Hartford math curriculum.
Textbook Purchases

Textbook and related resource purchases in support of major curriculum efforts included the following:

**Elementary**
Purchases supported PreK instruction with a core curriculum resource program. Additional purchases supported social studies instruction for geography and map skills and Grade 5 English Language Arts-aligned curriculum. Professional resources were purchased to support K-5 mathematics and literacy instruction. New materials included *Number Talks* to support mathematical discourse strategies and *Mastering the Mechanics* to support grammar skills. ESOL continued to phase in materials adoption to support new curriculum for grades 4-5.

**Secondary**
Purchases supported major curriculum work in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. The English department purchased resources to support reading comprehension of challenging texts as well as materials to support vocabulary instruction. Mathematics purchased resources to support intervention programming and the high school Probability and Statistics course. Science acquired resources to support physics instruction as well as the new Anatomy and Physiology course. The social studies department purchased texts to support teaching US History in Grade 8 and the new high school course, Genocide Studies. World language purchased materials to support Chinese, Spanish, Latin and American Sign Language (new) classes.

Summer Programs

**Summer Connections – Charter Oak and Smith Elementary**
In its ninth year, 85 students in grades 1 through 5 from Charter Oak International Academy and Smith STEM School attended the Summer Connections Program, held this summer at Webster Hill Elementary School. There is no fee to participate in this four week extended school-year program, and transportation is provided to students who live further than one mile. Students received a free, daily, nutritious snack through a grant procured by Nutritional Services. Staffing this year included a literacy tutor to support Grade K-2 students as well as a team-teaching approach in Grade 5. The Summer Connections program focuses on strengthening core literacy and mathematics standards. Small group sizes, rich high-interest texts, and hands-on materials as well as consideration of student needs and interests each year enhance skill development and motivate learners. Parents/guardians, as well as each student’s classroom teacher for the 2016-2017 school year, receive a progress report detailing student progress during the Summer Connections Program.
Summer ESOL Program

The Summer ESOL Program, hosted 131 students in Grades 1 through 8. This summer, the program was housed at Aiken Elementary. The curriculum focuses on West Hartford ESOL objectives and integrates reading, writing, and mathematics instruction. Students are divided into small, grade-level classes based on their English language fluency (beginner, intermediate, advanced). The continued support for this program ensures that students maintain and enhance their literacy and mathematics skills during the summer months. There is no fee for participating, and transportation is provided to students who live further than one mile from the school. Students are provided a nutritious snack each day which is paid for through a grant procured by Nutrition Services. Parents/guardians, the 2016-2017 classroom teacher, and the building ESOL teacher receive a copy of their student’s progress report which details language arts and math progress as well as personal and social development during the program’s four weeks of instruction.

HANOC Race through the Summer: Respect, Academics, Computers, Environment

The Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC) is in its 18th year. Located 105 Hillcrest Avenue, HANOC is a collaborative effort of the Town of West Hartford, West Hartford Housing Authority, West Hartford Board of Education and other community agencies. HANOC helps families with limited economic means to become more financially independent and integrated into the schools and community by coordinating resources to meet their needs. The various programs offered at HANOC are free of charge, and provide families with the opportunity to enhance the quality of their lives through self-determination, responsibility, commitment and collaboration. The summer program runs for four weeks in July, Monday through Thursday, from 9:00-11:30.

The Summer Academic Program is offered to any child who is entering 1st through 8th grade and lives in the Hillcrest Area Neighborhood. It provides an opportunity for continued learning in an effort to maintain and enhance skills that were acquired throughout the school year. Breakfast and a nutritious mid-morning snack are provided each day. Under the oversight of a director, three certified teachers, and volunteers, curriculum-based activities, aligned with CT Core objectives challenge students to become better readers, writers, mathematicians and "explorers" of learning. Each year, a theme is incorporated into the learning activities. This year's theme was "Connecticut". Students learned and researched state symbols and why they were adopted as well as historical figures from CT and noteworthy organizations and companies. Students gave presentations of their reports and findings to their classrooms. In addition, they worked on creating their own map of the state and discussed the various counties. The program closes with a cultural trip. This year students attended the musical, “Into the Woods,” at the Newington Children's Theater Company (NCTC). NCTC provides a wonderful opportunity for our students to experience seeing other children from approximately 6 yrs. old up through high school performing. The hope is that the experience instills a love and appreciation for the arts and enables them to envision the arts as an avenue for expression and involvement. A mix of fun and learning is incorporated throughout the course of the program.
Project SPARK
This summer, West Hartford again partnered with the University of Connecticut to bring Project SPARK (Supporting and Promoting Advanced Readiness in Kids) to 49 Webster Hill School elementary students. Project SPARK an approach to increasing representation of diverse groups in gifted programs and supporting achievement among these students focuses on early identification and intervention among students in grades K-2, providing supports during the school year and the summer to promote student readiness for gifted program identification, and broadening teacher perceptions of giftedness among students from diverse backgrounds. Funded by a US Department of Education Jarvis grant, the three-week summer program was taught by five WHPS teachers and utilized Project M2, a research based mathematics curriculum developed by UCONN professors. Families thoroughly enjoyed a hands-on workshop during the program that allowed them to visit the classrooms and participate in many of the games and activities with their children.

Open Choice – Welcome to New Families
Roszena Haskins, Director for Continuing Education and Diversity Advancement and Kerry Jones, Director of Elementary Education, along with building administrators, district registrar, and Open Choice staff welcomed Open Choice families new to West Hartford to dinner and an information session on June 6 and August 16. Fourteen new Open Choice families of students in Grades K-2 and Grade 6 learned about the district and community and heard the perspective of a current Open Choice parent. Families met each other during a pizza dinner, and children engaged in activities with WHPS teachers. WHPS and CREC staff were available to answer questions. This second annual event, supported by funding through our district Open Choice grant, was well-received by families and students.

AP Boot Camp
Conard’s AP Boot Camp program celebrated its fifth year providing students with an orientation to advanced placement course work and the opportunity to collaborate with their peers while exploring content and study skills necessary to be successful. Approximately 125 students engaged in workshops led by 17 teachers and counselors with the majority of students being first-time enrollees in an AP class. The focus of workshops included team building activities, study sessions on time management, critical thinking, reading and writing skills, and preparations for individual AP courses.
New Teacher Orientation

The Office of Human Resources and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction partnered to support the induction of 47 new staff members this summer. Highlights of the program included a comprehensive introduction to the district philosophy, mission, and goals for curriculum and instruction, a presentation by Steven O’Brien, the 2016-17 WHPS Teacher of the Year, an introduction to Student Support Services, and overviews of the teacher evaluation process, professional development, gifted and talented services, and information technology. Staff were treated to a presentation by a select group of Charter Oak International Academy students and a luncheon featuring keynote addresses by West Hartford Mayor, Shari Cantor and greetings by Dave Pauluk, member of the Board of Education.

Convocation

Ms. Teresa Giolitto, principal of Smith STEM School, and student members of the Smith STEM School choir welcomed the district teachers who convened for this annual opening of the school year event. The talented students treated their audience to an exhilarating selection from the musical “Matilda” titled “When I Grow Up” as well as a brilliant rendition of the uplifting Spanish original, “Oye” by composer Jim Papoulis. Mr. Paul Vicinus, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, served as emcee, motivating those in attendance with humor and grace throughout introductions of guest speakers.

Dr. Mark Overmayer-Velazquez, Chair and current member of the West Hartford Board of Education, greeted the faculty and staff with a reflective message challenging teachers to be a change-agent for our students, enabling them to cross borders from hope and aspiration to design and accomplishment. Estelle Cohen, recent Smith STEM School graduate, captivated the audience with thoughtful insights on the experiences she’s had as an elementary school student in West Hartford. Estelle was, in a word, awesome. Mr. Steven O’Brien, the 2016-2017 Teacher of the Year shared his reflections as an intermediate grades elementary teacher and challenged his peers to be that special person in the life of a child. Superintendent Tom Moore provided an inspirational, motivating, and compelling address reinforcing his ongoing vision for the children of West Hartford, the “gift” we share and the power of a teacher to touch and change a life for the better. Through stirring allegory and personal stories, Tom provided a powerful message that refreshed his philosophy and expectations of each of us to seek out the brilliance in every child, to be our best for students every day, to not shrink from a challenge, and not fear failure. Every day presents a new opportunity, and every student deserves our support. Finally, he thanked all teachers in advance for everything they do to clear paths for every child in the WHPS community.