



District Improvement Plan

2017 - 2018

Our District Improvement Plan consists of six global, overarching goals. Its purpose is to provide guidance to the improvement plans and efforts in each of our schools and programs. The order in which the six goals are arranged is not intended to indicate priority. Rather, the first three goals reflect our ABCs of school improvement (Attendance, Behavior, and Coursework/Academic Achievement); the fourth goal (Reading) is a critical foundation for the third goal (Academic Achievement); and the fifth and sixth goals (Early Learning and Graduation) represent the alpha and omega of our work, the beginning and the ultimate result.

Goal One: Attendance

- 1.a** At every grade level in every school, **Average Daily Attendance** will be **95% or higher** every month of the 2017-2018 school year.
- 1.b** Across the district, the percentage of **Chronically Absent** students (defined by the state as missing 10% or more of class time) will be **15% or less** during the 2017-2018 school year.

Attendance matters! We know students who miss more school than their peers, no matter what the reason, generally perform at lower levels on assessments and other school measures, a result that holds true at every age and in every demographic group. Disparities in school attendance rates starting as early as preschool and kindergarten contribute to achievement gaps and high school dropout rates. Therefore, we have made tackling absenteeism a high priority, focusing not only on average daily attendance (the percentage of students who show up at school each day), but also on chronic absence, because average figures do not reveal whether absences are spread evenly or concentrated with a few students. Using data wisely and employing a variety of strategies, we are committed to promoting good school attendance for every individual student.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Develop and implement school-based attendance intervention programs at each building.	Executive Team and building principals	September 2017 through May 2018	Determined at the building level	Building budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ School-specific attendance intervention programs are developed, implemented, regularly monitored, and adjusted as necessary. ➤ Attendance improves.
Track monthly attendance patterns and rates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide each school with Average Daily Attendance reports by grade level twice monthly. (Modify reports as requested by principals.) ✓ Provide each school with Chronic Absenteeism reports by student and grade level twice monthly. (Modify reports as requested by principals.) 	District Data Team (overseen by the Teaching & Learning Department)	September 2017 through June 2018	Technology Resources	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bi-monthly reports are generated by the district and shared with schools. ➤ Monthly attendance reports are shared with the Executive Team. ➤ Agendas from building meetings show attendance data being shared and utilized. ➤ Visible evidence of attendance data is posted in each building for continual staff review.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
<p>Launch a community-wide attendance awareness program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Send attendance-related communication messages/tools to buildings on a regular basis. ✓ Utilize the attendance toolkit developed by students in the WWU Service Learning Program. 	District Communications Team (overseen by the Communications Department)	Monthly, on the 25 th of each month	Technology Resources	District budget as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Communications Team develops an attendance marketing plan. ➤ Monthly attendance-related Items are sent to schools from the district. ➤ Attendance information is included in school, department, and district newsletters (and these items are tracked and archived by the Executive Team). ➤ Attendance materials from the WWU students' toolkit are sent to principals and utilized by them.

Goal Two: Behavior

- 2.a** In every school, the total number of students assigned **Exclusionary Discipline** will **decrease by 50% or more** when compared to the number who were excluded during the 2016-2017 school year.
- 2.b** Across the district, the **Exclusionary Discipline Gap** (i.e. the disparity in the number of exclusions applied to various subgroups of students) will **shrink by 50% or more** of the gap that occurred during the 2016-2017 school year.

Exclusionary discipline describes any type of school disciplinary action that removes a student from his or her usual educational setting, like suspension and expulsion. While we acknowledge that sometimes students must be excluded to ensure safety and an orderly learning environment, we also know that exclusionary discipline alone (1) does not promote more appropriate behavior and (2) increases dropout rates and risk for involvement in the justice system. Therefore, we are committed to implementing more effective strategies for increasing appropriate behavior by supporting all students in growing their social, emotional and personal skills. We are also committed to achieving 100% equity in our application of disciplinary actions across all subgroups of students (not, for instance, being harder on boys than girls or treating children from one ethnic group differently than those from another). The 50% reduction in the gap that we have pledged to achieve in the coming year is a significant step toward our ultimate goal of 100% equity.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
<p>Provide behavior management professional development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Facilitate understanding of RCWs, WACs, and district policies related to discipline. ✓ Use professional development opportunities to align discipline procedures PreK-12. <p>Develop a district discipline philosophy.</p>	Student Services Team; District Teaching & Learning Team	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time; professional development time; trainers	Title IIA funds; District Teaching & Learning budget; building budgets as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training dates are established; trainings are held and attended as evidenced by agendas and sign-in sheets. ➤ Disciplinary practices become more consistent across the district as evidenced by discipline reports. ➤ Exclusionary discipline decreases. ➤ The exclusionary discipline gap between various subgroups of students decreases.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Track exclusionary discipline. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide each school with behavior reports by grade level once per month. (Modify reports as requested by principals.) 	District Data Team (overseen by the Teaching & Learning Department)	September 2017 through June 2018	Technology Resources	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly reports are generated by the district and shared with schools. ➤ Monthly attendance reports are shared with the Executive Team.
Continue to implement PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) at each school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintain a district PBIS Team that meets at least quarterly. ✓ Use the district PBIS Team to (1) monitor the implementation of PBIS at each school; (2) provide professional development as needed; and (3) provide other supports as needed. 	Executive Team	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time	District Teaching & Learning budget; building budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The district PBIS team meets as evidenced by agendas and minutes. ➤ Active PBIS teams operate in each building as evidenced by meeting agendas and minutes. ➤ PBIS implementation moves to the next highest level in each school as evidenced by another round of self-assessments against PBIS standards.
Review, revise, and align district and building discipline philosophy, protocols, and practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Schedule regular meetings with assistant principals and others directly responsible for student discipline. ✓ Create clear and accepted building/district philosophy and protocols to support learning through discipline procedures. ✓ Align discipline procedures PreK-12. ✓ Develop systems for providing excluded students with continuous educational opportunities. 	Student Services Team; District Teaching & Learning Team; building administration	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time	District and building Title funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fewer students are excluded from their regular learning environment. ➤ Excluded students are provided more educational opportunities.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
<p>Engage district support specialists/ personnel in doing this work.</p> <p>✓ Include the following personnel: (1) Drug & Alcohol counselors; (2) Ferndale Community Coalition partners; (3) school counselors; (4) psychologists; and (5) members of the Native Support Team</p>	Student Service Team	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time for staff; time and support from community partners	District and building budgets	<p>➤ District support specialists and personnel from community partner agencies are afforded more opportunities for contact with students and staff, as evidenced by (1) ongoing tracking of contacts; and (2) end-of year-report on work with excluded students.</p>

Goal Three: Classwork/Academic Achievement

In every school, by the end of the 2017-2018 school year, **70% or more** of all students will achieve **Academic Proficiency** for his or her grade level as defined by a variety of pre-determined measures (state assessments, local assessments, standards-based assessments, individual classroom assessments, and course grades).

Although we know success takes many forms, we also recognize that our young people's future will be determined to some extent by how well they achieve on traditional school measures such as state tests and course grades. To proceed confidently toward the ultimate goal of graduating from high school adequately prepared for college and/or a career, each student must meet the academic standards for each grade along the way. Currently, our students' achievement varies significantly from subject to subject, grade to grade, and school to school. While our aim will always be to help every child achieve proficiency in every core subject during every year of his or academic journey, for the upcoming year we are committed to (1) higher levels of learning for each student and (2) at least 70% of all students reaching grade level standards in every area.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Implement an Early Warning System at each school. Ensure each school's Early Warning System includes, at a minimum, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attendance. ✓ Grades. ✓ Results of assessments, as available. ✓ A menu of interventions to be implemented when indicators suggest a student is at risk. 	District Teaching & Learning Team; building principals; building Teaching & Learning Teams	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time; professional development time; technology support	Building budgets; Title funds; District Teaching & Learning budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Professional development on the Early Warning system is scheduled, implemented, and attended by staff at all grade levels, as evidenced by agendas and sign-in sheets. ➤ State analytics show a reduction in 9th grade failures in Math, English/Language Arts, and Science among all subgroups of students. ➤ Assessment scores increase at all grade levels.
Provide targeted professional development on intervention strategies for Math, English/Language, and Science.	District Teaching & Learning Department; building Teaching & Learning Teams	October 2017 through May 2018	Professional development time; intervention resources/materials	Building and district Title funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Buildings create specific intervention plans to address needs identified in their School Improvement Plans.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
<p>Implement Transition Teams to provide supports to students as they move from one level of school to the next.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Facilitate early fall meetings of 5/6 and 8/9 district-wide Transition Teams to develop specific support plans to assist at-risk and/or at-need students in making transitions. ✓ Establish school-based Transition Teams to monitor implementation of transition plans throughout the year. ✓ Develop grade-level transition protocols. 	District Teaching & Learning Team; building administrators; school counselors; other appropriate staff	September 2017 through June 2018	Time for monthly Transition Team meetings; time at faculty meetings	Teaching & Learning Department budget; building budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transition Teams are established and team meetings are held regularly as evidenced by rosters of team members, meeting agendas, and minutes. ➤ Transition protocols are written.
<p>Focus on deepening elementary teachers' understanding and ability to teach elementary math standards. In other words, continue the K-5 Elementary Math Standards Project through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Targeted professional development. ✓ Classroom visits with feedback by an outside consultant. 	District Teaching & Learning Team; building administrators; building Teaching & Learning Teams	September 2017 through June 2018	Time of elementary teaching staff and principals; outside consultant; technology support	LAP, Title, and Teaching & Learning Department budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff provide positive feedback about math-related professional development activities. ➤ Changes are observed in teachers' instructional practices related to math. ➤ Student assessment scores in math increase at every grade levels K-5.

Goal Four: Reading

The number of elementary students **reading at or above grade level** will be **at least 70%** by the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Conversely, the number of elementary students requiring **Remedial Reading Intervention** will **decrease by at least 10%** during the 2017-2018 school year.

Reading is a critical part of academic success. We know that students who are not reading at or above grade level by the third grade are less likely to achieve academic proficiency throughout their school careers and more likely to drop out. Because it plays such an important role in the overall learning process, we have elevated reading to make it a separate goal in our Improvement Plan. Currently we provide remedial support to students who read below grade level with the goal of catching them up and getting them back with their peers. In other words, we want our remediation classes to be places students visit to get concentrated extra help for a period of time, not places they live during their whole school careers. Therefore, we are committed to measuring the effectiveness of our reading remediation programs by counting the number of students who successfully exit them reading at grade level. We see this as an ongoing process, reducing our remediation numbers by 10% in 2017-2018 and 10% more each year for at least the following two years.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Implement grade-level entry and exit standards to determine which kindergarten through 4th grade students receive LAP reading intervention services.	District Elementary Reading Team	September 2017 through June 2018	Coordination from District Teaching & Learning Department	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grade-level entry and exit standards are established and shared with staff. ➤ Data related to the standards are collected and recorded using Skyward Student Information System. ➤ Rosters of students receiving LAP reading intervention services are aligned with entry and exit standards.
Regularly monitor students' reading progress against benchmarks and report data quarterly to the District Reading Team and other appropriate staff.	District Elementary Reading Team; elementary principals	September 2017 through June 2018	Coordination from District Teaching & Learning Department	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reading achievement data are reported and analyzed in October, February, April, and June.
Focus on improving reading instruction in all classrooms with particular emphasis on formative assessment and differentiation.	Principals; Teaching & Learning Department	September 2017 through June 2018	Professional development time	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reading instruction improves as evidenced by principal evaluations.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Audit existing reading curriculum to determine alignment with Common Core Standards. ✓ Supplement existing curriculum as possible. ✓ Make recommendations about upgrading existing curriculum.	Principals; Teaching & Learning Department; elementary teachers	September 2017 through June 2018	Meeting time	District Teaching & Learning budget	➤ A report on the current state of elementary reading materials is prepared and presented to the Executive Team, including any recommendations for new curriculum adoption(s).
Implement an intensive training program for all para-educators who support reading improvement.	Teaching & Learning Department	September 2017 through June 2018	Professional development time; training resources	District Teaching & Learning budget	➤ Training sessions are scheduled, implemented, and attended by para-educators as evidenced by agendas and sign-in sheets. ➤ Training expectations are communicated to all reading para-educators. ➤ A system of leveled badges or certificates is developed to recognize and track reading para-educators' successful completion of trainings.
Continue the process of adopting and implementing the <i>Leveled Literacy Intervention</i> curriculum.	Teaching & Learning Department	September 2017 through June 2018	\$25,000 over a two-year period	LAP and/or Title I budget(s)	➤ Curriculum materials are purchased. ➤ Professional development is scheduled and conducted, as evidenced by agendas and sign-in sheets. ➤ Program is monitored for integrity of implementation

Goal Five: Early Learning

The percentage of incoming **Kindergarten** students meeting all six **Readiness Indicators** on the state's early learning assessment will **increase to at least 36%** by fall of 2018.

Because we know that the first few years of a child's life are extremely important and that a strong start lays the foundation for success throughout a student's educational journey, we pay attention to our incoming kindergarteners' readiness for school using a state assessment called WaKIDS. We are committed to working with preschool students, their families, and their caregivers to ensure all our littlest learners are well-prepared to start school. By fall of 2018, our specific goal is to achieve a 25% increase over fall of 2016 in the number of incoming kindergartners who meet six of six WaKIDS indicators. Such an increase will mean 36% of all kindergartners meet all readiness standards. This is the first step in a multiple-year journey to achieving 100% well-prepared kindergarteners.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Implement a "Registration Lite" practice at all early learning events in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create a database of future FSD students. ✓ Begin to build strong, positive relationships with families before students come to kindergarten. ✓ Identify children who can benefit from intervention services at an earlier age. 	Director for Early Learning	September 2017 through June 2018	Planning time; meeting time; technology resources	None	➤ Quarterly reports on the "Registration Lite" process and the resulting database are communicated to various stakeholders.
Increase the early learning staff to offer additional sessions of <i>Play and Learn</i> at multiple locations.	District Teaching & Learning Department	September 2017 through June 2018	\$10,500 per year for three AmeriCorps Early Learning AmeriCorps members	District budget: General Fund	➤ One more <i>Play and Learn</i> session per week is added each semester.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Develop and implement a regular series of “Young Family Nights.”	Director for Early Learning	Quarterly during the 2017-2018 school year	\$3000 per year	District budget: General Fund	➤ “Young Family Nights” are scheduled, advertised, implemented, attended, and evaluated for lessons learned as evidenced by agendas, sign-in sheets, and after-action reports.
Develop closer partnerships with Opportunity Council and Lummi Head Start.	Executive Director for Teaching & Learning	Beginning January 2017; ongoing	Meeting time	None	➤ Meetings are scheduled and held with Opportunity Council and Lummi early learning staff at least twice per year, as evidenced by meeting agendas and minutes. ➤ Head Start and Lummi families are reflected in the Skyward “Registration Lite” database.
Develop and implement an ongoing series of formal trainings for North County pre-school providers.	Executive Director for Teaching & Learning	Beginning December 2017; ongoing	\$3,000 per year	District budget: General Fund	➤ Trainings for pre-school providers are scheduled, implemented, attended, and evaluated for lessons learned as evidenced by agendas, sign-in sheets, and after-action reports.

Goal Six: Graduation

The percentage of students in the Class of 2018 who achieve **on-time Graduation** will be **at least 80%**, as calculated by the state's four-year high school graduation rate formula.

Graduation is the ultimate measure of success for our entire school system. We know that a high school diploma is the gateway to many opportunities and generally leads to higher wages and a better way of life. We also know graduation is a process that begins with pre-school readiness, continues through elementary and middle school, and culminates in high school. We are committed to supporting 100% of our students in successfully achieving a high school diploma or its equivalent at the end of their K-12 educational journey. Our specific goal for 2017-2018 is for at least 80% of all Ferndale students who started high school as freshmen in the fall of 2014 to earn their diplomas by the fall of 2018.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Provide more alternative education and graduation options for students who are not thriving in traditional programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase enrollment in BTC's IMPACT! Program, as appropriate. ✓ Increase enrollment in the SOAR program, as appropriate. ✓ Use end of semester interventions to recover missed coursework and failing grades that will impact graduation. 	Executive Team; district administrators; district counselors; SOAR staff; BTC	September 2017 through June 2018	Commitment and attention from district staff at all levels	District Teaching & Learning Department budget; Title I budget; building budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More students are enrolled in BTC's IMPACT! Program and more of those enrolled earn GEDs. ➤ More students are enrolled and making positive progress in the SOAR program. ➤ Fewer classes are failed at each grading period. ➤ More students meet all requirement to graduate from high school.
Deliver professional development to staff on intervention strategies.	District Teaching & Learning Team; District Data Team; building administrators	October 2017 through May 2018	Professional development time; intervention resources	District and building Title budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Academic needs reports are generated. ➤ Individual schools create written intervention plans as part of their School Improvement Plans. ➤ Appropriate training is provided.

Strategies to Achieve Goal	Lead Person(s) Involved	Start/End (Timeline)	Resources Needed	Funding Source	Success Criteria Defined (Data Collected)
Promote community-wide support for graduating from high school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue Graduation Walks at elementary and middle schools. ✓ Pursue and promote the guaranteed college acceptance program for graduates. ✓ Apply for a Trio Grant with Whatcom Community College. ✓ Launch a Kinder-to-College savings program. 	Executive Team; district administrators; district counselors	September 2017 through June 2018	Time for monthly meetings; time at building-level faculty meetings	District and building budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monthly meetings are held as evidenced by agendas, sign-in sheets, and minutes. ➤ Graduation promotion events are scheduled and implemented. ➤ High school students develop post high school plans. ➤ The Kinder-to-College Team is established and an action plan for launching the program is created.