



WESTWOOD REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Points of Pride
August 2014 – Present

Curriculum

- Moved 300+ district curriculum from paper to a digital platform aligned with state standards and best practices
- Completely revised core programs:
 - Elementary: ELA, Science, Social Studies, Media Center, ESL, Health
 - Middle School: ELA, Science, Social Studies, ESL, WL
 - High School: Science, ESL, WL
- Purchased leveled libraries for all K-7 ELA classrooms
- Established a new dual-credit partnership with Bergen Community College for 11 courses.
- Brought high-quality, sustained professional development to the district (Orton, Reading & Writing Workshop, Kiker Learning)
- Initiated digital learning playlists in grades 6-12
- Revamped the G&T curriculum in grades K-3 by instituting Defined STEM.
- Revitalized the high school's elective offerings and changed electives to primarily semester courses
- Partnered with Rutgers University to implement the Physics First curriculum
- Moved the start of Spanish instruction from Grade 1 to Kindergarten; discontinued the practice of teaching a half year of French and a half year of Spanish in K-5.
- Partnered with an outside company to offer evening SAT/ACT prep classes in the high school
- Started an Elementary Literacy Coach position in the district and eventually evolved the position into a Curriculum Coordinator that provides job-embedded supports in all content areas.
- Conducted staff and parent/guardian surveys on curriculum programs
- Improved the Kindergarten registration process by allowing for online appointments and greater flexibility of appointment times
- Added the LEAD curriculum to grades 4, 6, and 7
- Launched the New Design Thinking elective at the High School
- Created common assessments for K-5 and instituted cross-school observations for elementary principals
- Revised the G&T teacher's schedule in order to maximize services
- Awarded a Child Assault Prevention grant two years in a row
- Implemented iReady in grades 1-5 for RTI purposes
- Trained approximately 60 grades 6-12 teachers on "Models of Excellence with Google EDU" in a sustained cohort approach
- Instituted the use of the LinkIt! Data warehouse
- Used Title I funds for a designated Guidance Counselor at the high school
- Increased opportunities and resources for non-college bound students
- Transitioned to standards-based report cards at the elementary level
- Improved our coverage of mental health topics in the Grade 9 Health curriculum.



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- NJSLA score increases from 2014-2019:
 - **All grades ELA:**
 - all students meeting/exceeding increased 10 percentage points
 - black students meeting/exceeding increased 14 percentage points
 - Hispanic students meeting/exceeding increased 14 percentage points
 - Male students meeting/exceeding increased by 12 percentage points
 - LEP students meeting/exceeding increased by 18 percentage points
 - special ed students meeting/exceeding increased by 10 percentage points
 - F/R lunch students meeting/exceeding increased by 9 percentage points
 - **All grades Math:**
 - Male students meeting/exceeding increased by 8 percentage points
 - Special ed students meeting/exceeding increased by 8 percentage points
 - **Elementary:**
 - ELA increased on average 14 percentage points (all students)
 - math increased on average 18 percentage points (all students)
 - ELA Black increased by 34 percentage points
 - ELA Hispanic increased by 12 percentage points
 - Math Black increased by 41 percentage points
 - Math Hispanic increased by 21 percentage points
 - ELA male increased by 18 percentage points
 - ELA special ed increased by 15 percentage points
 - ELA LEP increased 19 percentage points
 - Math LEP increased 27 percentage points
 - **Middle**
 - ELA black increased by 14 percentage points
 - ELA Hispanic increased by 24 percentage points
 - ELA male increased by 10 percentage points
 - **High:**
 - ELA Hispanic increased by 14 percentage points

Student Supports

- Doubled the special education staff at each elementary school in order to implement co-teaching and foster inclusion. Partnered with Montclair State University to provide ongoing job-embedded support for our teacher pairs
- Doubled the number of school counselors at the elementary schools in order to focus on student wellness and social-emotional well-being thus allowing a school-centered approach while also providing for increased coordination of efforts across 6 schools K-12.



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- Contracted with CarePlus to provide direct mental health and therapeutic services within the district
- Developed a comprehensive website to educate stakeholders on all things related to special education and program offerings.
- Implemented IEP Direct and provided CST with a great tool for maintaining compliance
- Started a transitions program (FITT) at the HS and built a state of the art classroom with it
- Implemented mental health supports and started TEAM program
- Rebranded names of all special programs (AIM, FITT, TEAM and Connect)
- Coordinate parent and student wellness series
- Streamlined a process and unified forms for 504 implementation
- Developed a handbook of strategies for I&RS teams to utilize
- Raised the caliber of our Connect (autism) program and accepted tuition-paying students from outside the district
- By spreading the inclusive philosophy throughout the district we were able to bring back and support some out of district student
- Developed the Therapeutic TEAM Day School and was selected by the NJ School Boards Association as one of four programs state-wide to receive the 2021 Innovations in Special Education Award for being a successful, creative effort that enables special needs students to achieve their potential
- Integrated the Readers and Writers Workshop model into K-5 ELA special ed. Curriculum
- Allowed students who are in specialized programs, have 1:1 aides, receive Pull-Out Resource Instruction, and have In-Class Resource to attend school daily during the pandemic

Technology

- Installed access points across all schools to provide 100% wireless network coverage
- Saved money and increased access to technology by moving towards PCs and Chromebooks instead of Apple devices in the elementary schools.
- Fully adopted Google Apps for Education (G Suite) as the cornerstone for infusing technology into learning in all schools and grades.
- Implemented a new VOIP phone system, leveraging data cables and infrastructure already in place.
- Implemented next-generation firewall, Gaggle, and GoGuardian to provide digital security as technology access has increased.
- Obsolescence cycles have been established for all hardware, including servers, switches, cameras, computers, and Chromebooks, improving budget management.
- Implemented paperless initiatives for primary communication and administrative functions including, but not limited to, payroll, administrative requests/approvals, newsletters, and more.



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- Implemented electronic forms, automating the approval process and providing data showing the distribution across the district, cost, and form status at any given time.
- Implemented a new website (Apptegy), focused on PR and mobile ease-of-use, saving the district about \$13,000 per year.
- Achieved a 1:1 ratio of Chromebooks to students, district-wide
- Implemented digital signage in lobbies, hallways, and cafeterias across the district.
- Initiated streaming of HS graduations over YouTube and expanded the practice during the pandemic
- A new asset management system (Asset Panda) has been implemented, providing the needed ability to track devices and the owners assigned to them, and allowing students to submit work orders for malfunctioning devices.
- Created an extensive database of software titles so schools can track what they are using, as well as what other schools are using. ClassLink has been deployed to provide analytics showing usage of all software titles being used in the district.
- Installed [Interactive TVs](#) in classrooms district-wide in places where projection capabilities did not exist or where replacements were needed.

Facilities

- Successfully passed the Westwood Regional Middle School Expansion Referendum. Project substantially completed in time to open for Grades 6-8 students in October 2020.
- Constructed a state-of-the-art maintenance garage to replace a dilapidated structure and incorporated athletics storage, public restrooms, and a concession stand to support the athletics complex through the use of capital funds.
- Continue to address the needs of aging school facilities. Which includes continuing our roof replacement schedule, and other building envelope projects like the recently completed projects at George and HS.
- Launched energy-efficient LED lighting upgrades throughout the district with rebates totaling over \$30,000
- Replaced seating in Campbell and Hurley auditoriums at the HS.
- Implemented a turf maintenance program for our grass fields that includes taking soil samples, sending them to Rutgers for analysis, then applying treatments accordingly. We also started using turf blankets on the HS sports fields over the winter to help promote growth.
- Replaced Washington School gym windows
- Replaced Washington basketball hoops, and upgraded to electric
- Replaced Washington gym bleachers, and upgraded to electric
- Replaced Berkeley gym bleachers, and upgraded to electric
- Replaced Berkeley outdoor basketball hoops
- Replaced Brookside outdoor basketball hoops



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- Installed emergency generator at the HS that powers the data center, and has the capability to add more circuits in the future.
- Constructed A field parking lot and regraded the fields, improved drainage, and installed sod at the Middle School funded by referendum bond proceeds
- Replaced 2 boilers at HS
- Playground replacement at Berkeley
- Replaced locksets districtwide with enhanced classroom lockdown feature and created a master key system with protocols for staff accountability. The old key system was compromised.
- Installed a backup A/C system for HS main data center.
- Initiated a sustainability project districtwide which resulted in all schools winning Bronze level awards through Sustainable Jersey for Schools program.
- Implemented influenza cleaning protocol and purchased electrostatic sprayers and biodegradable chemicals years before the pandemic thus fully preparing the district to protect our schools from the coronavirus.

Security

- Created a dedicated School Security Specialist position within the district whose primary focus is to review, refine, and establish practices to enhance safety and security in conjunction with school personnel and law enforcement. This individual is employed by the district.
- Established Board policy that permits the SSS to carry a firearm under specific requirements and with Board approval on an annual basis
- Continuously add and upgrade security cameras at all six schools to record high-quality video that is viewable by all members of the administration and includes a direct feed into each police department when needed and appropriate as outlined in the Livestreaming Memorandum of Understanding with law enforcement.
- Implemented an electronic visitor management system in all schools to include a log and check of all registrants against the National Sex Offender Registry database
- Installed card access readers on exterior doors to secure entry at all schools
- Designed, budgeted, and awarded bid for Security Vestibules to be constructed at every school by summer 2021
- Installed Knox Boxes for the police department in case of emergencies
- Expanded radio system with repeaters for improved communication in the district and with our first responders
- Bus camera upgrades allowing us to capture video of people driving by when the stop sign is out.



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Communications

- Reestablished digital presence through social media.
 - District Twitter: From March 2010 - August 2014, we had 120 followers. As of September 2021 we have 1370.
 - District Facebook: From June 2011- August 2014, we had 362 followers. As of September 2018 we have 1932.
- Initiated school-level social media presence on Twitter and Facebook to promote the good news and highlight the best practices in our schools.
- Revamped district website and increase its use as a central information portal
- Implemented weekly blasts at each school to keep families engaged through regular, timely, and meaningful messaging
- Disseminate monthly e-newsletter to staff and the school community to provide information and updates regarding Board meetings and district-wide news and information.
- Developed a district-wide communications plan to coordinate the purpose and means for sharing information throughout the district

Finance

- Developed funding plan for the Middle School that initially borrowed the full amount of the Project cost, and then applying both the (i) \$13,097,000 on deposit in the Capital Reserve Fund and (ii) awarded State Aid for the project to pay off to reduce the bond liability for the \$24 million project down to \$8,000,000 to be paid back by the taxpayers via long-term bonds.
- Developed and approved budgets within the State mandated limits that fully funded all programs, staffing, and initiatives as outlined in all of the achievements listed above.
- Initiated paperless systems for processing payroll and timesheets saving time and money.