



Northstar Middle School

School Improvement Plan

Annual Update: 2020-21

This school improvement plan meets the requirements of WAC 180-16-220 and WAC 180-105-020.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Description: Northstar Middle School began in 1981 as one of Lake Washington's first choice schools. Northstar has four full-time teachers and a student body of 90, with 30 students per grade level.

At Northstar, we believe students learn best in a small, caring community where individual talents can be recognized and nurtured, academic growth encouraged, and social development fostered.

Located on the Emerson Campus in the Houghton neighborhood of Kirkland, Northstar emphasizes academic excellence, personal responsibility, and creativity. Experienced teachers work as a team to lead multiage, theme-based classes. We foster the unique aspects of each student and appreciate individual differences. Students are encouraged to connect to people in their community through service learning.

At Northstar, we believe a growth mindset is a critical component of student development. Parents participate by working cooperatively with teachers to sustain a cohesive learning community, provide enriching experiences and promote a love of learning. Students develop the positive perceptions of self, school and life that are the foundation for continued success. It is a great place to work and learn.

While Northstar Middle School continues its tradition of academic strength, we do not have state exam scores (WCAS & SBA) from the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 school closure in the spring.

Our small size provides both an opportunity and a challenge. Due to our small cohorts of students, assessment data can be easily skewed by single student scores. On the other hand, our small environment allows teachers to get to know each student personally and work as a collaborative team to support individual student needs.

Mission Statement: *Each student will leave Northstar on-track to graduate prepared to lead a rewarding, responsible life as a contributing member of our community and greater society.*

Demographics:¹

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Student Enrollment (count)		90	90	90	90
Racial Diversity (%)	American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Asian	43.3	37.8	41.1	44.4
	Black/African American	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.0
	Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	4.4	3.3	3.3	4.4
	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
	Two or more races	4.4	3.3	5.6	7.8
	White	46.7	53.3	48.9	43.3
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals (%)		1.1	2.2	2.2	1.1
Students Receiving Special Education Services (%)		5.6	5.6	6.7	4.4
English Language Learners (%)		0.0	2.2	2.2	1.1
Students with a First Language Other Than English (%)		26.7	22.5	26.7	33.0

¹Enrollment and racial diversity based on annual October 1 headcount. Students included in program count (FRL, SpEd, EL) if enrolled on October 1 and receiving services at any time during that school year.

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA:
LITERACY**

ELA: By Grade Level, Smarter Balanced Assessment

Grade	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
6 th Grade	90	90	97	n/a
7 th Grade	93	90	>97	n/a
8 th Grade	>97	97	93	n/a

ELA: By Group/Program, Smarter Balanced Assessment²

Group/Program	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	94	>97	94	n/a
Black/African American	-	-	-	n/a
Hispanic/Latino	-	-	-	n/a
Two or more races	-	-	-	n/a
White	96	89	98	n/a
English Learner	-	-	-	n/a
Low Income	-	-	-	n/a
Special Education	-	-	-	n/a

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA:
MATH**

MATH: By Grade Level, Smarter Balanced Assessment

Grade	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
6 th Grade	93	97	97	n/a
7 th Grade	90	90	97	n/a
8 th Grade	97	97	89	n/a

MATH: By Group/Program, Smarter Balanced Assessment³

Group/Program	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	>97	>97	97	n/a
Black/African American	-	-	-	n/a
Hispanic/Latino	-	-	-	n/a
Two or more races	-	-	-	n/a
White	89	91	93	n/a
English Learner	-	-	-	n/a
Low Income	-	-	-	n/a
Special Education	-	-	-	n/a

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA:
SCIENCE**

SCIENCE: By Grade Level, WCAS³

Grade	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
8 th Grade	n/a	86	89	n/a

SCIENCE: By Group/Program, WCAS

Group/Program	Percent at or above standard			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	n/a	-	92	n/a
Black/African American	n/a	-	-	n/a
Hispanic/Latino	n/a	-	-	n/a
Two or more races	n/a	-	-	n/a
White	n/a	82	92	n/a
English Learner	n/a	-	-	n/a
Low Income	n/a	-	-	n/a
Special Education	n/a	-	-	n/a

↘ = Cohort Track
n/a = not available

² Grades 6-8 combined. Student/Program groups with less than 10 students marked as “-” and data not displayed due to privacy reasons. “American Indian/Alaskan Native” and “Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander” not included in report due to fewer than 10 students in all categories.

³ WCAS = Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science. Given only to 8th grade at the middle school level. Assessment first given in 2017-18.

ATTENDANCE DATA

ATTENDANCE: By Grade

Grade	Percent avoiding chronic absenteeism			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
6 th Grade	93	96	97	n/a
7 th Grade	90	100	94	n/a
8 th Grade	100	96	86	n/a

ATTENDANCE: By Group/Program⁴

Group/Program	Percent avoiding chronic absenteeism			
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Asian	97	97	97	n/a
Black/African American	-	-	-	n/a
Hispanic/Latino	-	-	-	n/a
Two or more races	-	-	-	n/a
White	91	98	87	n/a
English Learner	-	-	-	n/a
Low Income	-	-	-	n/a
Special Education	-	-	-	n/a

WASHINGTON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (WSIF) DATA

MOST RECENT WSIF 3-YEAR SUMMARY⁵

	All Students	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Two or more races	White	English Language Learners	Low income	Students with disabilities
ELA Proficiency Rate (%)	96	96	-	-	-	97	-	-	-
Math Proficiency Rate (%)	95	-	-	-	-	94	-	-	-
ELA Median Student Growth Percentile ⁶	65	73	-	-	-	60	-	-	-
Math Median Student Growth Percentile	62	62	-	-	-	61.5	-	-	-
EL Progress Rate (%)	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Regular Attendance Rate (%)	96	96	-	-	-	94	-	-	-

= Cohort Track
 n/a = not available

⁴ Grades 6-8 combined. Student/Program groups with less than 10 students marked as “-” and data not displayed due to privacy reasons.

⁵ Washington School Improvement Framework measures compile data across three years (2017-2019) and include both the general education assessment (Smarter Balanced assessments) and the alternative assessment for student with severe cognitive disabilities (WA-AIM). OSPI suppression rules apply to some data marked as “-” and not displayed due to privacy reasons.

⁶ Median Student Growth Percentile is calculated by ordering individual student growth percentiles from lowest to highest and identifying the middle score. Washington State defines an SGP of 1-33 as low, 34-66 as typical, and 67-99 as high.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Our target is that all students and student groups are improving, with all gaps closing, each year. The following priorities have been set to guide us in achieving this.

Priority #1		
Priority Area	Mathematics	
Focus Area	Overall SBA performance	
Focus Grade Level(s)	8 th Grade	
Desired Outcome	Move 75% of students who scored level 3 on 6 th grade SBA (last time this cohort tested) to level 4.	
Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support - Academics (MTSS-A)	
Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	26.67% of current 8 th graders scored level 3 on their 6 th grade SBA (last time they tested). Historical trends indicate scores rarely change between 6 th and 8 th grade, so we'd like to focus on moving students from meeting standard to exceeding standard.	
Strategy to Address Priority	Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
	Targeted assistance class (before school) for 8 th grade students previously scoring level 3.	Enrollment and attendance.
	Frequent opportunities for students to engage in SBA-like practice during Algebra 1 & Geometry classes (these are the only 8 th grade math classes offered at Northstar).	The Algebra & Geometry teachers are on a PGE team together and will have frequent norming, planning, and evaluation sessions.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2020 - Spring, 2021	
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Classroom based assessments, SBA practice, and spring SBA scores.	

Priority #2

Priority Area	English Language Arts/Literacy	
Focus Area	Overall SBA performance	
Focus Grade Level(s)	8 th Grade	
Desired Outcome	Move 75% of students who scored level 3 on the 6 th grade SBA to level 4.	
Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support - Academics (MTSS-A)	
Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	33.4% of current 8 th graders scored level 3 on their 6 th grade SBA (last time they tested). Historical trends indicate scores rarely change between 6 th and 7 th grade, so we'd like to focus on moving students from meeting standard to exceeding standard.	
Strategy to Address Priority	Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
	Targeted assistance class (before school) for 7 th grade students previously scoring level 3.	Enrollment and attendance.
	Frequent opportunities for students to engage in SBA-like practice during ELA, social studies, and Support Group classes.	All four of Northstar's teachers teach a Support Group class and will have frequent norming, planning, and evaluation sessions.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2020 - Spring, 2021	
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Classroom based assessments, SBA practice, and spring SBA scores.	

Priority #3

Priority Area	Social and Emotional	
Focus Area	Anxiety and Stress Reduction	
Focus Grade Level(s)	Whole-school (grades 6-8)	
Desired Outcome	Students will report and exhibit more healthy coping strategies.	
Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support - Behavioral, Social and Emotional Support (MTSS-B)	
Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	School climate survey (students), parent survey, counselor identification, and teacher observations all indicate that stress and anxiety are major social/emotional concerns for Northstar students. While overall Northstar students are high achievers and often meet/exceed standard on academic measures, many experience anxiety and unhealthy levels of stress.	
Strategy to Address Priority	Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
	All school mindfulness training and practice.	Embedded in Support Group classes with rotating instructor.
	All school basic neuroscience curriculum base on the film <i>Inside Out</i> .	Whole school unit of study.
	Continue use of <i>Character Strong</i> curriculum focusing on wellness lessons.	Embedded in Support Group with all students receiving same lessons.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2020 - Spring, 2021	
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Survey data, common classroom assessments, counselor reports.	

Priority #4

Priority Area	High Levels of Collaboration and Communication	
Focus Area	SEL supports and instruction for students	
Focus Grade Level(s)	Whole-school (grades 6-8)	
Desired Outcome	As a result of staff collaboration and focus on social emotional learning, students will experience a decrease in anxiety and unhealthy stress.	
Alignment with District Strategic Initiatives	Multi-Tiered Systems of Support - Behavioral, Social and Emotional Support (MTSS-B)	
Data and Rationale Supporting Focus Area	School climate survey (students), parent survey, counselor identification, and teacher observations all indicate that stress and anxiety are major social/emotional concerns for Northstar students. While overall Northstar students are high achievers and often meet/exceed standard on academic measures, many experience anxiety and unhealthy levels of stress.	
Strategy to Address Priority	Action	Measure of Fidelity of Implementation
	All school mindfulness training and practice.	Embedded in Support Group classes with rotating instructor.
	All school basic neuroscience curriculum base on the film <i>Inside Out</i> .	Whole school unit of study.
	Continue <i>Character Strong</i> curriculum focusing on wellness lessons.	Embedded in Support Group with all students receiving same lessons.
Timeline for Focus	Fall, 2020 - Spring, 2021	
Method(s) to Monitor Progress	Survey data, common classroom assessments, counselor reports.	

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION PLAN

The Washington Basic Education Act requires schools to “integrate technology literacy and fluency” in their curriculum. The updated K-12 Educational Technology Learning Standards emphasize the ways technology can be used to amplify and transform learning and teaching.

The Technology Integration Facilitator Program (TIF) and Building Instructional Technology Plan (BIT) provide the structure and funding to support this requirement.

The goals of the TIF program are to support teachers in effectively:

1. Integrating the use of core instructional technologies within teaching and learning.
2. Utilizing digital tools to enhance the learning process for all students in all classrooms.
3. Understanding and applying the Educational Technology Learning Standards across content areas.
4. Embedding digital citizenship and media literacy within instruction.

Building administrators work with their Technology Integration Facilitator (TIF) to identify needs based on the TIF program goals and develop the BIT Plan to meet those needs. Beginning and end of year survey data informs the personalization of individual school plans.

Based on Spring data, strategic implementations and OSPI requirements, the BIT Plan will focus on the following:

- Digital Citizenship
- Integrating core instructional technologies
- Utilizing digital tools to enhance learning
- Applying Ed Tech Learning Standards
- Embedding digital citizenship & media literacy
- Teaching digital learning in both traditional and remote learning settings

STATE ASSESSMENT PARTICIPATION

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that all schools meet at least a 95% participation rate for state assessments for all students as well as each subgroup. Schools that fall below this threshold in any group must include goals and actions the school will take to ensure 95% of students participate. The latest participation rate that has been published by OSPI for the school was for state testing in spring 2019. During that year, the participation rate was met.

Strategies the school is using to meet participation requirements include:

- Common language on the importance of state testing is used by all schools in the district.
- Staff receive training on the administration of state assessments, including the use of supports and accommodations to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate learning.
- Make-up testing is provided for students that miss the school’s date.
- Test completion lists are monitored by both school testing coordinators and district personnel.
- The district is using the recommended refusal procedures and form developed by the Washington Educational Research Association.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

As a district of doers, learners, and believers, our “why” drives us. We do this all-important work because we want all of our students to have equitable and quality experiences in the Lake Washington School District in order to ensure that they get to choose their futures instead of their circumstances choosing them.

Research has consistently shown that family and community engagement is key to increasing the academic success and positive connections that students have at school, especially students from groups that are demographically under-represented or those historically marginalized. Therefore, it is imperative that we consistently plan and implement strategies to engage our families and school communities in authentic and culturally appropriate approaches.

To ensure that families have the support that they need to assist their children, OSPI requires that school districts have a family engagement policy in place that applies to all families.⁷ The specific strategy our school is using to involve and inform the community of the School Improvement Plan is as follows:

Strategy to Engage Students, Families, Parents and Community Members in the development of the SIP	Action	Timeline
	Direct communication during Northstar Advisory Committee Meetings (NAC).	September & October 2020
	Direct communication during spring conferences (SIP progress review & preplanning for 2020-21).	June 2021
	Annual survey.	February 2021 (estimated)
Strategy to Inform Students, Families, Parents and Community Members of the SIP	Action	Timeline
	SIP posted on website.	January 2021
	Updates at monthly NAC meetings.	Monthly
	Direct communication during spring conferences.	June 2021

⁷ LWSD’s policy is found at: <https://www.lwsd.org/about-us/policy-and-regulations/community-relations-4000/community-education-program-4265>