

**Port Chester Middle School  
 Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District  
 Schoolwide Profile Comprehensive Plan  
 2019-20**

**Schoolwide Planning Team Members:**

<b>Team Member:</b>	<b>Position or Affiliation:</b>
Team Member:	Position or Affiliation:
Patrick Swift	Principal
Christine Zidik	Asst Principal
Christine Rascona	Asst Principal
Allison Silverman	Academic Learning Specialist
Chris Halstead	Academic Learning Specialist
Jeanette Sanderson	Academic Learning Specialist
Melissa Pennino	Academic Learning Specialist
Katherine Hohman	Academic Learning Specialist

**Goal Statement**

**Student Achievement Goals:**

**Goal 1:**

During the first month of school, teachers set goals for improving student progress based on the results of Student Learning Objectives and SRI And SMI assessments. After the second administration of the SRI and SMI there will be a midyear review of student progress and by analyzing the data the teachers will be able to modify teaching strategies based on students' needs as determined by a midyear gains analysis. Our goal is that 75% of students will make half a year's growth in half a year's time.

After the final SRI, SMI and the end of year student learning assessment, we will perform an end of year review of goal attainment for students to develop an action plan for students for their following year. Our end of year goal is for 75% of students to make a full year's growth in a full year's time on one or more of their benchmark assessments.

**School Operational Goals:**

Goal 1: The Port Chester Middle School will provide professional development to grade 6 ELA faculty that will develop a common language around writing instruction to ensure a consistent and coherent learning experience for all the students at

the Port Chester Middle School. Professional Development will occur during academic planning led by administration and department chairs and consultants, and will eventually be broadened to grades 7 and 8.

**1. Vision statement for reform:**

Port Chester Middle Schools Faculty and Staff seek to empower each student to meet their full potential by providing rigorous yet fair academic learning experiences, while building strong character in an environment that is relevant to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will give our students the skills needed to improve on standardized assessments and overall academic success.

## **Comprehensive Plan**

### **Our School’s Vision and Mission Statements:**

Port Chester Middle Schools Faculty and Staff seek to empower each student to meet their full potential via academic learning experiences in a rigorous yet fair atmosphere, while building strong character in an environment that is relevant to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**“SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT”**

### **Brief School Profile:**

PCMS is a school with a unique demographic population. We have 90 Faculty, and 1100 student. We offer a variety of programs ranging from extended day and Prep for Success to Drama and Athletics. Each faculty member views him/herself as an ELA teacher who continually embeds ELA skills into lessons. ELA is a priority, and students understand that literacy across the curricula is integral to being a successful learner. Students experience success in ELA because of the faculty’s overwhelming dedication to the Common Core Curriculum. Teachers devote themselves to identifying and delineating skills students need to become excellent readers and writers.

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### **Summary of Needs Assessment:**

It was determined through our needs assessment and data research that teachers throughout the school are using a variety of language and literacy philosophies and vocabulary that confuse students. In addition our NYS ELA, NYSESLAT and district benchmarking data prove that writing is a weak area for our students and needs a strong focus for development.

### **Our Chosen Focus Area:**

Curriculum and Instruction

Literacy: Writing

# 1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment

<b>**Profile Focus Area – Curriculum and Instruction</b> <b>Summary of problem: Literacy: Writing</b>	
<b>**Profile Focus Area – Curriculum and Instruction</b> <b>Summary of problem: Literacy: Common Language development in all content areas with a focus on specific needs in the content area.</b>	
<b>Problem/Need:</b> Teacher throughout the school are using a variety of language and literacy philosophies in writing instruction.	<b>Possible Actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a literacy Common Language in the area of writing. Begin in grade 6 and roll up in ELA through all MS grades, then branch into other content areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Problem/Need:</b> Teachers do not share a common literacy vocabulary across content areas.	<b>Possible Actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a literacy vocabulary that can be utilized through all the content areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Problem/Need:</b> Teachers need time to receive PD, digest it and implement it	<b>Possible Actions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Development teacher workshops will occur on PD days, after school and in the summer</li> </ul>

## Give a short description of where the school is now and where it wants to be when the vision is realized:

PCMS is a large community school with a small school feel that is divided into nine academies. Students perform well on school assessments as seen in our honor and high honor roll. We look forward to seeing improvement on our standardized test scores with our new focus on writing skills and instruction.

## Describe, using data, the student population, staff, and community demographics, as well as programs and school mission.

In affluent Westchester County, 15% of children attending school are classified “poverty eligible.” In comparison, almost 70% of Port Chester Middle School students are “poverty eligible.” This high concentration of poverty, together with ethnic and language changes continue to impact middle school operations. In 2000, when the Principal began as an administrator at PCMS, 37% of students were Hispanic surnamed. Currently, close to 80% are Hispanic surnamed. An

increasing percentage of students come to us with significant gaps in their native education. We are a diverse school committed to success for every student. Four percent of students are African-American, 2% are Asian, and 14% are Caucasian. We embrace our diverse population and their families into our school culture. This is the essence of our Mission Statement : Our Strength is Our Diversity!

Within this diverse population it can be seen that approximately 23% of the population are ENL and another 15% are students with disabilities.

The school currently has approximately 1063 students in grades six through eight. This changes annually as we will have new entrants in September from a variety of Central and South American countries.

*PCMS Mission Statement: "PCMS is committed to the individual needs of its diverse population. Our aim is to ensure that all students will achieve academically, develop socially and discover their unique gifts and talents."*

### **What data sources were used to determine focus area needs?**

ELA scores since the inception of the Common Core learning standards.

SRI Scores

Report Card Data

Read 180

Star Renaissance scores

### **Based on the data, what are our strengths and challenges? What priorities does the information suggest?**

The data suggest we have strong students that are able to achieve at high levels as depicted in our honor rolls. Through the strategic implementation of quality professional development and cohesive systems we plan to put in place in 2019-20, we look forward to seeing improvement on our standardized test scores. Our priority is leveling the playing field and closing the gap for newcomers and children with special needs. PCMS is beginning to utilize data to place students in intervention classes based on their specific needs.

Building on what began starting in 2015-16, we will continue to professionally develop our faculty to meet the needs of our students based on the Common Core curriculum in the area of literacy for all content areas.

## **2. Schoolwide Reform Strategies:**

The district hired the well-respected consultant firm, Gravity Goldberg, LLC, to lead our district in a full balanced literacy reform initiative that is taking place over three plus years. The consultants will be offering professional development and coaching to our teachers. We will work collaboratively to curriculum map and design lessons aligned to the Common Core, using Teachers' College Units of Study.

## **3. Instruction by Highly Qualified Professional Staff/Teachers:**

The Port Chester School District only employs certified teachers in the appropriate content area for which they are hired. All of our teachers are Highly-Qualified; there are no teachers teaching out of their certification area.

We consider all teachers to be literacy teachers within their content areas especially during the Common Core perspectives. To provide high-quality instruction, all teachers are trained in ongoing professional development throughout the year in a variety of strategies and literacy intervention techniques in order to ensure the incorporation of best practices into all class instruction. For the 2019-20 school year, all staff will receive professional development in a variety of literacy strategies and intervention techniques, including RtI tiered strategies, Strategies for ELLs, embedding literacy skills into content instruction, guided reading and writing instruction. Resources will include providing teachers appropriate materials for continued training and trainers will be hired as needed using Title I funding.

Target dates: 9.1.19-6.30.20

Person(s) responsible: Building Principal, HR, Directors

#### **4. High Quality and On-Going Professional Development:**

The district is committed to ongoing, high quality professional development for all our teachers, teaching assistants and administrators. These programs are offered in the form of speakers/presenters, workshops, conferences and discussion forums. The district professional development committee, served by teacher and administrator representatives from every building and at the district level, collects feedback from the staff in the form of an annual Needs Assessment, as well as surveys after each Early Release Day and Superintendent's Conference Day professional development session. These data help inform the decision-making for the subsequent professional development, which is designed based on teacher feedback, administrators' perceived needs for their staff as well as best practices in the content areas and technology advancement needs. Ongoing training in areas such as Strategies for our ELL population, and RtI for our struggling learners supports our teachers in reaching the needs for all students in the classroom. Opportunities to advance their technology skills allows teachers to remain on the cutting edge, with courses in Google Apps and SmartBoard training, as well as for software and web-based programs such as Castle Learning. For the 2019-20 school year, staff will receive professional development in a variety of literacy strategies and intervention techniques, including RtI tiered strategy PD, embedding literacy skills into content instruction, guided reading and writing instruction. Resources will include providing teachers appropriate materials for continued training, and trainers will be hired as needed using Title I funding.

Target dates: 9.1.19-6.30.20

Person(s) Responsible: Principals, Directors, Supervisors. Dept. Chairs

#### **5. Strategies to Attract Highly Qualified Teachers to High-Needs Schools:**

The district posts all open teaching positions on OLAS, the BOCES hosted website for certificated openings in education across NYS. For every open position, we receive hundreds of applications of prospective teachers new to teaching, as well and many who are already teaching and want to change districts to come to Port

Chester. Our diversity is attractive to many, and we seek to hire the best candidates from the vast pool, many of whom are bilingual in Spanish. We host student-teachers from a variety of colleges and universities, giving the teacher candidate an in-district experience that prompts many to apply for positions after their studies are over. In addition, many of our teachers began as Teaching Assistants, and gain experience in the Port Chester classroom prior to becoming a teacher themselves. Many of our teachers were Port Chester students as well.

We will continue this method since it is working well for the district, attracting a diverse and talented pool of educators.

Target dates: 9.1.19 - 6.30.20

Person(s) Responsible: Principals, HR

## **6. Strategies to Increase Parental Involvement:**

Teachers and Principals will provide workshops in academic, social/emotional learning and character education in the evening throughout the year. The ESEA waiver and what it means will be reviewed with parents. District newsletters and all parent communication is sent home in both English and Spanish to ensure our parents have the opportunity to stay abreast of all information regarding their child and school. For the 2019-20 school year we have increased our number of translators for this information in order to expedite the translation of these materials.

Target dates: 9.1.19-6.30.20

Person(s) Responsible: Building Principal, Directors, Supervisors

## **7. Pre-School Transition Strategies:**

To prepare for the transition to Kindergarten, the staff functions to ensure a seamless passage for the children and their families. Direct run and delegate agencies offer support, information, and referrals to families leaving the Pre-K program. Transition planning begins for each child and family at least three months prior to the child's moving to Kindergarten. Children entering Kindergarten participate in activities which may include children, staff, and parents visiting the elementary school. Parent meetings are held to discuss school readiness and expectations. Meetings are held both individually and in small groups, to assist parents with the Kindergarten registration process. Forums are held for families, with school staff as speakers. Referrals are made to the Committee on Special Education for children with disabilities, with parental permission. Staff members review and evaluate these activities annually to ensure the needs of parents and children are met. New ideas are added or modified as programs evolve. A kindergarten skills assessment is administered at the end of the school year. The contracted community based organization works to meet the goals and objectives of the Port Chester School District so there is a smooth transition between curriculums, providing the foundational skills necessary in pre-K for students to be successful in Kindergarten. Children are assessed three times a year (fall, winter and spring) in the following six research-based domains: social emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy and mathematics. These assessments provide information to help teachers determine if students are making the appropriate growth in pre-K needed in order to succeed in Kindergarten. Kindergarten Screening is held in the spring to help assess children's readiness for Kindergarten. We have adopted and trained our teachers in the newly released Dial-4 assessment for this purpose. The district has created a new entrant screening protocol for all to follow which includes the state requirement documents along with other important screening tools such as

HLQ, video, informal interview, NYSITELL as needed and the Woodcock-Munoz as needed. Ongoing trainings and improvements to the K screening process will occur in 2019-20.

Target dates 9.1.19-6.30.20

Person(s) Responsible: Administrator for Pre-K, Building Principal

## **8. Teacher Participation in Making Assessment Decisions:**

Teachers collaborate with administration to help determine assessment tools, calendar dates for assessments, report card changes and pilots. Instructional Support Staff were hired to help support and lead the teacher involvement in many areas, one of them being assessment decisions. K-8 uses a universal screening three times a year for benchmarking and data collection. Through the RtI process, teachers make on-going instructional decisions based on progress monitoring assessment data. Teachers meet after assessments are given to analyze and determine next steps. From teacher feedback, the district determines if specific assessment should continue or be changed. The challenge the district faces constantly is the limited high quality English/Spanish assessments and resources available for purchase. There was collaboration in creating a standard report card with specific grading guidelines as well as specific assessments used for certain scores, specifically for the reading assessment. At the middle and high school level, the district released a guide to standardize the report card grading system. The district is using a computer-based assessment for 3-5 students for diagnostic assessing and progress monitoring. The district will pilot software that includes benchmark assessments for our ELLs. Target dates 9.1.19-6.30.20

Persons responsible - Building principal, Directors, Supervisors

## **9. Timely and Additional Assistance to Students Having Difficulties Mastering Standards:**

The Port Chester School District continues to improve on the RtI model. At the elementary level, the district-wide RtI Elementary Committee was able to create an RtI flowchart, RtI forms on google drive for academic and behavior, an inventory of tiered intervention programs available and needed as well as desired training needed for the upcoming school year. With that being said, all staff has on-going training about the RtI process starting at the classroom level. For our ELL population, we continue to work on finding appropriate intervention materials, specifically for our Spanish speakers. In order to better serve our special education students, our staff will be receiving refreshers and additional training in available programs while collaborating on best practices. The key is collecting the data using targeted instruction outside of their core instruction. The district expanded their before and after school programming to help meet the individualized Tier II instruction for many students. At the middle school level, the RtI team accomplished creating targeted Tier II groups as well as having classroom teachers collaborate on progress monitoring specific students within their team. Teams on all levels continue to reflect on best practices and revise/adapt curriculum and formative assessments to align with the standards, yet meet the needs of the students. The staff adapted curriculum to include literacy work stations, schedule a separate time for RtI-guided reading time for 3-5, turn-key trainings about RtI, create small targeted after school groups, and purchase additional resources to support the standards and student improvement. The district researched bilingual resources for HLA support at the different tier levels and purchased materials to fill

in the gaps. One area we reviewed and found needs replenishing and revamping is literacy libraries for our students to access.

Target dates 9.1.19-6.30.20

Persons responsible - Building principal, Directors, Supervisors

## **9. Coordination and Integration of Federal, State and Local Programs and Resources:**

- a. School Parent Involvement Policy
- b. Planning to meet the needs of homeless students

A. The partial 1% set aside for parent programs will take place in the form of parent trainings in understanding Title I rights responsibilities, common core standards, the new assessments and program goals and outcomes and why the scores have dropped so far.

B. Homeless: Port Chester-Rye UFSD has conducted a random residency study to provide data to explain the continued increase in student population while other adjoining districts have populations which are diminishing. This fact is illustrated in the increase of homeless students over the past two years. It was established that the mobility rate of many families is higher than estimated; this is due to extreme poverty, increases in rents, limited housing stock and an influx of new residents. With the increasing population, the district will increase the set-aside funding from \$25,000 to \$35,000 dollars in order for our Homeless liaison to meet the needs of children. McKinney Vento grant funding this year will abide by all the elements included in the law and provide all the services to all identified students under the definitions and parameters outlined in the No Child Left Behind Law.

Target dates: 9.1.19-6.30.20

Person(s) Responsible: HR