

**Port Chester High School**  
**Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District**  
**Schoolwide Program Comprehensive Plan - Title I**  
**2019-20**

**Schoolwide Planning Team Members:**

<b><u>Team Member:</u></b>	<b><u>Position or Affiliation:</u></b>
Mitchell Combs	High School Principal
Fortunato DiRenno	High School Assistant Principal
Luke Sotherden	High School Assistant Principal
Juan Sanchez	High School Assistant Principal
Diantha Barone	District English Supervisor 6-12
Michael Ritacco	District Math/Science Supervisor 6-12
Jamie Levidis	District Assistant Director of Special Education
Vanessa Clay-Williams	High School Guidance Department Chair
Alex Lepas	High School Math Department Chair
Maria Recchia	High School Science Department Chair
Karin Milette	High School English as a New Language Department Chair
Caryn Rodman	High School World Language Department Chair
Jacqueline Bisignano	High School Physical Education Department Chair
Joseph Gilson	High School Social Studies Department Chair
April Dessereau	High School Art and Music Liaison
Ayse Ruvolo	High School Special Education Department Co-Chair
Chris Kazim	High School Special Education Department Co-Chair
Peggy Conway	High School Social Studies Teacher and PCTA Building Rep
Renee Aubry	High School Science Teacher and PCTA Building Rep
Craig Holcomb	High School Health Teacher and PCTA Building Rep
Gareth Gibbs	High School Physical Education Teacher and PCTA Building Rep
Jeannine Tempesta	High School PTSA Co-President and Parent
Elaine Makowski	High School PTSA Co-President and Parent

## Goal Statements

**Student Achievement Goal: Improved Student Performance on Regents Examinations**

**Goal 1:** By June 2020, the performance on Regents Examinations in Algebra 1, English, Global History, U.S. History, and Living Environment among members of the subgroups of Students With Disabilities, English Language Learners, and Economically Disadvantaged students will improve as a result of plans, programs, and services offered by the High School so that little or no gap exists between these subgroups and General Education students, Non-ELLs, and Not Economically Disadvantaged students.

**School Operational Goal: The Delivery of Targeted Professional Development to Teachers**

**Goal 1:** Teachers will be provided with quality professional coaching, feedback and training in the areas of co-teaching, differentiated instruction, literacy skills, inquiry-based learning, higher-order thinking skills, the use of data from formative assessments to inform teaching practices, and other best practices aimed at improving student achievement.

# Comprehensive Plan

## **Our School's Vision Statement:**

Challenges faced by students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and economically disadvantaged students will not be barriers to student learning and higher academic achievement. We will put into place plans, programs, and services to address the challenges faced by these students and will, in turn, improve their well-being and academic performance.

## **Brief School Profile:**

Port Chester High School is located on a 23 acre campus on the border between the villages of Port Chester and Rye Brook in Westchester County, New York. The school has provided quality education to the students of Port Chester and neighboring portions of Rye Brook since 1932.

Port Chester is a wonderfully diverse suburban community on Long Island Sound, approximately 27 miles from Manhattan. The village of two square miles and 29,000 residents is a former manufacturing center that is home to a commercial rebirth centered on a multimillion dollar development and expansion of its downtown and harbor areas.

Port Chester High School shares the district's mission of Success For Every Student. Our school mission is to cultivate a student-centered learning environment that nurtures well-rounded, inquisitive, lifelong learners whose values include respect for self and others. Our school is the flagship of the district, an institution that students and staff are proud to call home.

Port Chester High School is a four-year, comprehensive high school accredited by the New York State Board of Regents and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Students may select a program of studies that includes honors and college preparatory courses, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses, fine art studies, special education, ENL/bilingual programs, and vocational education through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

Our students share diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds and represent over 28 nations. Some have lived in the district for generations, while many others have only recently immigrated to the United States. About one-third of our students are current or former English Language Learners, and our cultural diversity enriches the school community and educational environment.

Approximately 1,530 students are enrolled—79 percent are Hispanic, 15 percent are white (non-Hispanic), just under 5 percent are black, and just over 1 percent are from other backgrounds. A culturally diverse student body is one of our greatest strengths, and together we look to build on the school's legacy and rich traditions.

The professional staff at Port Chester High School includes 99 teachers, 7 counselors, 8 teaching assistants, 2 aides, a psychologist, a librarian, a social worker, 2 school nurses, 9 office staff, 24 other support staff, and 4 administrators. The faculty is committed to providing a supportive learning environment and to the development of each student's potential.

Students are supported by professionals who value the importance of academic achievement and are dedicated to ensuring that students receive the highest quality education possible. Everyone here feels part of a team whose mission is to help students do their best by creating a positive atmosphere that permits students to learn and teachers to teach.

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

Despite measurable improvements, such as increases in the last decade in student participation and performance in advanced classes (Honors, AP, IB, college-level courses), overall student performance in comparison to comparable schools (White Plains, New Rochelle, Ossining, Tarrytown), diminished or eliminated gaps between ethnic groups, increased graduation rate, increased percentage of graduates earning Regents diplomas, development and implementation of an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, etc. we still wish to improve the performance of students with disabilities, English language learners, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students across all disciplines.

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

Curriculum and Instruction - Literacy

We will provide targeted professional development of superior quality to assist teachers in embedding into daily instruction literacy skills, inquiry-based learning, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as strengthening co-teaching relationships and differentiated instructional practices.

## **1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

### **Vision statement for reform:**

Challenges faced by students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and economically disadvantaged students will not be barriers to student learning and higher academic achievement. We will put into place plans, programs, and services to address the challenges faced by these students and will, in turn, improve their well-being and academic performance.

<b>**Profile Focus Area – Curriculum and Instruction</b>	
<b>Summary of problem:</b> Despite measurable improvements, such as increases in the last decade in student participation and performance in advanced classes (Honors, AP, IB, college-level courses), overall student performance in comparison to comparable schools (White Plains, New Rochelle, Ossining, Tarrytown), diminished or eliminated gaps between ethnic groups, increased graduation rate, increased percentage of graduates earning Regents diplomas, development and implementation of an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, etc. we still wish to improve the performance of students with disabilities, English language learners, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students across all disciplines.	
<b>Problem/Need:</b> We have not emphasized enough the detailed analysis by teachers of student performance, especially by subgroup, and the connection between what is taught and how it is taught and the resulting student performance.	<b>Possible Actions:</b> Greater efforts must be made to make teachers aware of the gap between the performance of general education students and students with disabilities, English language learners, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students on State assessments

	so that teachers can develop strategies specific to their discipline to narrow the gaps and eventually eliminate them.
<b>Problem/Need:</b> We have not targeted enough professional development of superior quality to assist teachers in embedding into daily instruction literacy skills, inquiry-based learning, and higher-order thinking skills as well as other professional development aimed at improving performance for targeted subgroups.	<b>Possible Actions:</b> Teachers need to be provided with additional professional coaching, feedback and training in the areas of differentiated instruction, literacy skills, inquiry-based learning, higher-order thinking skills, and other best practices for improving performance of our targeted subgroups.
<b>Problem/Need:</b> We have not targeted enough professional development of superior quality on strengthening co-teaching relationships and differentiated instructional practices, given that our students with disabilities and English language learners study in classroom environments where two or more professionals are to be working closely together.	<b>Possible Actions:</b> Teachers need to be provided with additional professional coaching, feedback, and training in the area of co-teaching and to use data from formative assessments to inform their teaching practices with a specific focus on students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

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

Measurable improvements have been made in recent years:

- 40% of the student body is enrolled in and pass one or more advanced classes such as Honors, AP, IB, college-level courses;
- The student failure rate has been cut in half over the last decade;
- Our overall student performance exceeds that of students in comparable schools (White Plains, New Rochelle, Ossining, Tarrytown) in many categories;
- We have increased our four-year graduation rate consistently at or above 80%;
- We have diminished or eliminated gaps between ethnic groups;
- We have increased the percentage of graduates earning Regents diplomas to well over 90%; and
- We have implemented an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program.

However, we still wish to improve the Regents Examination performance, and resulting variables such as graduation rate, of students with disabilities, English language learners, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students across all disciplines so that no gaps exist between these subgroups and general education students, non-ELLs, and economically advantaged students.

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

Port Chester High School is located on a 23 acre campus on the border between the villages of Port Chester and Rye Brook in Westchester County, New York. The school has provided quality education to the students of Port Chester and neighboring portions of Rye Brook since 1932.

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whose values include respect for self and others. Our school is the flagship of the district, an institution that students and staff are proud to call home.

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Students are supported by professionals who value the importance of academic achievement and are dedicated to ensuring that students receive the highest quality education possible. Everyone here feels part of a team whose mission is to help students do their best by creating a positive atmosphere that permits students to learn and teachers to teach.

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

Annual Regents Examination performance data in core disciplines as well as student performance in subjects across all disciplines.

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

Our strengths include the diverse opportunities for students to challenge themselves according to their abilities, be it in an elective of interest, Regents-level classroom, Advanced Placement course, or International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Furthermore, we provide excellent guidance and school counseling services to meet the social and emotional needs of our students. Gaps for students from different socioeconomic backgrounds are minimal or non-existent in several areas.

One of our challenges is making sure that the academic needs of all of our students are met when those needs are outside the norm (e.g. differentiating with fidelity curriculum, instruction, and assessment for students with disabilities and English language learners).

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

Teachers will be provided with additional professional coaching, feedback and training in the areas of co-teaching, differentiated instruction, literacy skills, inquiry-based learning, and higher-order thinking skills. In addition, the district will provide additional professional coaching, feedback, and training to use data from formative assessments to inform their teaching practices with a focus on students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and economically disadvantaged students.

## **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 current school year, all staff will receive professional development in a variety of literacy strategies and intervention techniques, including RtI tiered strategies, SIOP/SDAIE model for ELLs, embedding literacy skills into content instruction, guided reading and literacy stations. 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, Directors, Supervisors

## **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 professional development opportunity 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 academic discourse 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 and Flocabulary. For the current school year, staff will receive professional development in a variety of literacy strategies and intervention techniques, including RtI tiered strategy PD, academic discourse model for ELLs, embedding literacy skills into content instruction, guided reading and literacy stations. 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, Directors, Supervisors, Department 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 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 begin 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: HR, Building Principal

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

School counselors and administrators will provide workshops in academic, social/emotional learning and character education in the evening throughout the year. Each presentation is tailored to parents of different grade levels so that the content can be as targeted as possible. 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 current 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, School Counselors

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

(Not specifically applicable to the high school.)

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 Principals

## **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. 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. For the current school year, the district will use 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. The Kindergarten students will be introduced to using Chromebooks and SuccessMaker, this will provide computer-based data to help inform, instruct, and provide

additional practice in the area of literacy. The K-5 staff is researching and will implement an additional writing program pilot to better instruct and assess individual's writing skills.

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. For the current school year, the staff will adapt 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 is researching bilingual resources for HLA support at the different tier levels and will purchase materials to fill in the gaps. One area we reviewed and found needs replenishing and revamping is literacy libraries for our students to access.

At the high school level, great efforts are made to place students in courses that are appropriate for them. Some classes have lab periods attached to them in order to provide students necessary time and support to be able to meet the standards (e.g. Algebra 1-Plus) while in other cases courses are specifically designed to build the foundations students will need to be successful in the next level (e.g. Environmental Science prepares students for Regents Living Environment, Algebra 1 Foundations or Algebra 1-Part 1 prepare students for the Regents Algebra curriculum, etc.). Through thoughtful scheduling, students are given the support they need to be successful.

Target dates: 9.1.19-6.30.20

Persons responsible - Building principal, Directors, Supervisors, School Counselors

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

School Parent Involvement Policy

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: Grants Office