

# Watertown Public Schools

## Cunniff School Improvement Plan 2006 - 2009

<p><b>TLC Goal: Curriculum</b>  <i>Define and implement a consistent and coherent PreK-12, standards-based curriculum that teaches essential skills and key concepts as well as creative and critical thinking for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.</i></p> <p>Goal 1: Work with all professional staff in the areas of English Language Arts and in mathematics to improve MCAS scores in grades 3-5.</p>				
Supporting Objectives	Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)	Responsibility	Measures & Milestones	Status/Timeline
Provide teachers with professional development that supports the analysis of currently collected performance data.	Use professional development day to explore spring 2006, 2007 test data	Principal Staff	Identification of areas of strengths, needs improvement and weaknesses	November 2006 and November 2007
Utilize technology to analyze data	Install, run and explore data using Test Wiz and MAP that will show areas of relative weakness at each grade level	Principal	New understanding of this computer program and how it can help analyze data	Began October 2006  MAP being initiated for K-3 reading in fall 08
Provide data to staff on individual student achievement from 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	Examine test results of individual students as they move from 3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> and from 3 <sup>rd</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> . Determine gains achieved and areas that need to be improved	Entire teaching staff	Individualization of skills for all students	Annually fall of 06 and 07
Interpret data to better enhance individualized instruction	Examine, analyze and use test data to inform instruction for all teaching staff	Entire teaching staff	Reallocate time in the day to support areas of relative weakness  Hour a day allocated to reading, math and writing	Ongoing: Monthly grade level team meeting began once the MCAS scores and data were released
Utilize test data to identify trends	Explore three year averages in ELA (reading, writing, language and literacy) and math for grades 3-5	Entire teaching staff	Identification of three year trends for the Cunniff School in grades 3-5	Began in Fall 2006 and ongoing through spring 2008
Have grade level teams analyze test data to determine areas of curriculum that need to be targeted	Use the professional development days in November to work in grade level teams as well as in upper and lower elementary levels (K-2, 3-5) to determine areas of the curriculum that need to be enriched and modified to ensure all content standards	All teaching staff	Teachers and student support services staff communicate and work together to interpret important data which will help tailor and drive their curriculum delivery	Began in November 2006; Reinforced in late January 2007. Began second cycle in November 2007

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	are being taught			
Have grade level teams determine that the appropriate math content is being provided to students	Examine the math assessments and math pacing guide by grade levels and make necessary modifications and changes to ensure that the appropriate content is being taught	Assistant Superintendent  Math teachers Math Task Force	Second year of implementation of the math pacing guide which means there will be more time to be more critical of specific assessments and create stronger tools  Provide teachers with time (early in the school year) to map out Think Math chapters so that the timeline meets MCAS administration needs. In this manner, students will be adequately prepared to take the test	Began in Fall 2006 and ongoing into winter 2007 and early spring  Math Task Force is working hard on this to ensure that the appropriate pacing is delivered to our students  Fall 2008
Determine more effective test taking strategies	Continue exploring ways to embed effective test taking strategies in the classroom (as described in Chapter 27 of Fountas and Pinnel)	All teaching staff Assistant Superintendent	Reading teachers and all classroom teachers will embed these practices into their everyday instruction	Late January 2007 (ELA) and continuing through late April (math and science)
Create after school "Math League" to encourage students to explore math on a deeper level	Write and implement grant that would fund Continental Math League	School Council, PTO	Students will have the opportunities to explore math with their peers and with a teacher as the "facilitator"	Wrote grant in winter 08. Waiting for funding.

**TLC Goal: Instruction**

*Improve achievement of all students by engaging teachers as instructional leaders, and deepen student understanding with new strategies and tools for teaching and learning.*

Goal 2: To strengthen the differentiated Instruction in the classrooms and on the grade level teams.

<b>Supporting Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Measures &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Status/Timeline</b>
Meet student needs at their specific entry points	Teaching staff will meet regularly with support staff and grade level colleagues to address specific student needs	Grade level teams	Identify areas of strength, weakness using benchmark testing, outcome checklists, pretests and previous academic years results	Began fall of 2007 Explored specific students in CST/GET meetings
Construct alternative materials and assessment measures	Teams will construct alternative materials and assessment measures for students in need	Teaching staff	Check to see if alternative materials meet student needs e.g. performance on each  Contact parents to explain the concept of "extended work" and regularly check-in about progress	Student support services team used Think Math and our own math assessments to determine student levels
Better identify and meet the needs of exceptional and talented learners	Teams will extend concepts and challenges to meet the needs of exceptional learners by providing projects and extensions that modify and expand concept mastery	Teaching staff	Identify areas of student improvement using benchmark testing and outcome checklists	Grade level teams met to discuss students in the advanced categories
Utilize student groupings in math and reading that are based on student's current performance and levels with the entire grade rather than in one classroom	Flexible grouping will allow students to move in and out of groups within the grade level based upon performance, interests and needs	Grade Level Teams, principal	Chart student progress to monitor changes over time  Grade level teachers become more efficient in their delivery of services due to "grouping"	First flexible grouping began in the fall of 2007 and are on going in math and reading at the primary grades, Pre-K, K, 1 and 2

**TLC Goal: Educational Technology**

*Promote and effectively use technology to improve instruction and professional productivity.*

**Goal 3: Explore Technology Innovative Education (TIE) for all staff to possibly include podcasts, probes, scientific exploration and engineering.**

Supporting Objectives	Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)	Responsibility	Measures & Milestones	Status/Timeline
Work with all staff in all disciplines to explore robotics & podcasts in the Cunniff School curriculums	Provide school staff with information and training needed to provide students with a robotics & podcasts experience as part of the curriculums	Teaching staff, principal, PTO volunteers	Learn about how podcasts can do help in student learning Understand how to create podcasts Plan what the students needs in order to create podcast (microphone, headphones) Upload to iTunes Share podcast on teacher's webpage	First podcasts were completed in fall of 2007.  Robotics assembly to upper grades students in February 2008  Professional Development offerings in Podcasting, Probes and Blogging at January 08 PD
Explore after school programming that supports for First LEGO League and Junior LEGO League	Write grants to various banks for funding of these after school programs	Teaching staff, principal, students, Assistant Superintendent	Students will be provided, through a lottery system, to participate in these after school programs	Wrote grants to Watertown Savings Bank, Cambridge Savings Bank and Belmont Savings Bank. \$500 grant awarded thus far. \$4,000 sought to fund both programs.
Staff will search for, utilize & share educational websites to provide students with online lessons & resources in order to maximize educational opportunities on the web	Encourage the use and offer samples of educational websites to provide students with online lessons and resources in order to maximize educational opportunities on the web  Library/media/technology staff to publish newsletter of technological resources	Teaching staff, library, media, technology staff	Identify core curriculum Expand current Math Hotlist to include other educational areas Test sites for student usability  Instructional technology classes scheduled for grades 2-5	Discovery Streaming shared at faculty meeting in April 2008  Classes in grades 2-5 had a co-taught class for an hour per week with the Instructional Technology Specialist

To incorporate technology into everyday learning & instruction so that students can learn through the most modern methods	<p>Students use internet to complete webquests</p> <p>Ensure that iTunes store is accessible on all laptop computers and eMacs in library Students to use Microsoft applications such as Word, PowerPoint &amp; excel for projects</p> <p>Use MAC applications such as Garage Band and iMovie for reading fluency and oral speaking</p>	Teaching staff, library, media, technology staff	<p>Teachers consult 3x/yr for 30 minutes each with building instructional technology/media specialist.</p> <p>Instruct students how to sequentially complete Webquest</p> <p>Instruct how to use Word, PowerPoint &amp; Excel</p> <p>Download and use Podcasts in classrooms from iTunes Store</p>	<p>Access to itunes store completed</p> <p>Ceiling mounted LCD in library completed with built in mono speakers – December 2007</p> <p>Redesign of library/media space completed summer '07</p> <p>Teachers in grades K-5 use Garage Band as well as special education and reading teachers</p>
Introduce the use of science probes in fifth grade science classes	Write grant for the purchase of Vernier science probes to help integrate technology and data analysis into the science curriculum	Fifth grade teachers, principal, Instructional Technology Specialist	Determine which probes can be integrated into current units of study	Grants of over \$4,000 received in summer 2007. Materials purchased and used beginning in fall of 2007
Launch a district wide Science Task Force to examine ways to incorporate engineering into the science curriculum in the upper elementary grades	<p>Enlist teachers from the three elementary schools to examine our current science units</p> <p>Seek middle school science teachers to work along side the elementary teachers</p>	Science Task Force, Assistant Superintendent, Principal	<p>Identify overlaps in units being taught</p> <p>Consider assigning units to particular grade levels</p>	Science Task Force begun in January 2008 Visit to the Museum of Science with upper grade teachers on May 6, 2008 to explore Professional Resource library
Examine ways that the science pacing guide can better include engineering and such things as robotics	Explore how the grade level teams can become more efficient in their teaching of the topics that incorporate engineering	Science Task Force	Implement Boston's Museum of Science Engineering in Elementary curriculum into grades 4 & 5	Summer and Fall 2008 (Initial scope began in summer 2007)
To bring the most current technology into the classroom that will allow students to see the first hand process of the life cycle	Purchase a current chicken/egg incubator to follow the development of the egg to the chick	Third grade team Principals	Identification of the most model which facilitates the incubation of eggs to chickens	Funding secured and incubator purchased in spring 08

**TLC Goal: School and Community Partnerships**

*Improve and expand partnerships between elementary and secondary levels, and with community resources.*

**Goal 5: To strengthen the professional partnership between the Cunniff School staff, parents and greater community.**

Supporting Objectives	Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)	Responsibility	Measures & Milestones	Status/Timeline
Enhance school-home communication	Host Principal/Parent Coffees during the school year to address various issues and concerns	Principal, School Council	Principal will evaluate feedback from coffees and communicate information in newsletter	Back to School Coffee in 9/2006 and MCAS Coffee in 11/06  MCAS coffee 11/07
Enhance the school's web page to improve school-home communication	Explore ways to expand links on the school's web page which can help communicate what is happening in our classrooms and at our school  Teachers generate their own web page  Principal develops blog	Web Master, Principal, secretary, teachers, IT specialist	Frequent communication with staff to ensure that school events are included on the web page  Work with PTO representative to include a PTO link	Overhauled and updated in fall 2006; includes photos and new links  New splash page and cover – Winter 08  <b>ALL classroom</b> teachers on line with their own web page as well as various specialists.  Principal blog became operational - Winter 08
Expand and enhance our after school programs, create mentoring programs and provide financial assistance when needed	Explore school-business partnerships in the Watertown community that may be able help expand our after school programs, create some mentoring programs, and/or provide financial assistance	Principal, PTO chairs, After-school program directors	Meetings are held to gauge potential interest by local businesses  Met with Linda Miller from the Miller-Tracy Foundation 3/08	School Council topic in 12/2006; letter written to parents seeking contacts in winter of 2007; one contact made so far (5/07)
Create additional ways to offer after school programming for students in academic disciplines	Write grants that provide financial assistance for the funding of math, science, technology and writing programs	School Council PTO	Opportunities exist for interested students to participate in after school academic programming (for free or minimal charge).	Cunniff Kids News (on-line only newspaper) launched November 07  Partial grant accepted in March 08 (\$500)

Provide information to parents on additional support services	Inform parents of the various local agencies that are in Watertown that parents may call upon for support and help	Principal, Social Worker	Information is updated and communicated to parents via web page and newsletter	Fall workshops through Watertown Education Foundation by Guidance Department
Clarify expectations for the school newsletter	Work with the new Cunniff Connection editor to publicize newsletter deadlines for publication	Principal	Parents, staff and community members are aware of when they need to have to submit information	New format and bi-weekly schedule initiated in September 2006  Electronic version sent to "enrolled" parents and guardians.
Facilitate school-home communication via an event calendar	Develop a monthly calendar of events to be sent home at the start of each month	Principal, Secretary, Teachers	Parents are better informed in advance of school events	Began in October 2006; published on line too  PTO created new calendar link in fall 07  Hard copies sent home during busy times of the year (May/June)
Clarify Cunniff School policy for students and parents	Create and distribute an updated Cunniff School handbook to parents, students, and staff	Principal, Assistant Superintendent	Students and parents are better informed about Cunniff School policy	Existing handbook updated; overhaul done in summer 07 and again in spring 08  All families received copy

Enhance school-home communication via email	Create email distribution list, so parents and guardians may receive bi-weekly newsletter directly to their preferred email address	Principal and Secretary	Parents and guardians will have quicker and more reliable ways of receiving important school news	Completed September 2006; new members regularly added  Initiated email service as part of the Connect Ed messaging system in Fall 07 – almost 2/3's of families receive both oral AND email message
Provide better communication for families that speak other languages	Translate more of our communication tools into various languages	ELL Director, ELL Teacher, Principal	Parents of English Language Learners will be better informed with information about their children and about the school	Parent letter in 12/07 articulating our ELL focus and work at the school as well as a call for translators

**TLC Goal: Professional Development**

*Provide effective and focused professional development that ensures time and structure to implement departmental goals.*

**Goal 5: To strengthen the professional development of the Cunniff School staff by offering quality staff development at multiple entry points.**

<b>Supporting Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Measures &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Status/Timeline</b>
Provide a framework for teachers to develop an independent professional development plan	Host workshop for teachers to learn more about Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDiPs) and Professional Development Points (PDPs) Introduce "My Learning Plan" so all teachers can manage their own PDPs	Professional Development Council (PDC), teachers and principal	Teachers will be active participants in the development of their IPDiPs.  Teachers will keep an on-line record of their earned PDPs	Presented at Back to School PD Day in September 2007  Had teachers enter their personal goals for the year on MLP (September 2007)
Provide teachers with professional resources and opportunities through various on-line courses, workshops, collaborations, in house seminars, etc.	Develop a professional library for the staff with subscriptions to professional magazines/journals. Possibly have teachers "share" materials they currently subscribe to  Provide a menu of opportunities that teachers can select from to earn their recertification points over a five-year period  Develop a relationship with Boston's Museum of Science and continue encouraging teachers to utilize the resources from Primary Source	Principal, teachers and PDC.	Provide a staff recommendation sheet for publications.  Provide a monthly forum at staff meeting for teachers to share/recommend information from magazines/journals	Presented RAZ Kids to entire staff – Winter 08  January 08 PD offered a menu of choices for staff to choose from  Visited MoS in May 2008 Field trip with staff to Primary Source – Late fall 2008  Teachers will recognize the resources within the greater Boston area.
Work with Harcourt Brace to provide professional development days for the implementation of Think Math	Provide a forum for teachers of all grade levels to meet with Think Math representatives  Provide teachers with opportunities to share strategies they've implemented with Think Math	Math Task Force	Continue to utilize evaluation sheets for teachers to complete in order to provide feedback for Think Math lessons.  Provide teachers with time during grade level team meetings to discuss Think Math curriculum	September 2007 had 4 hours of PD for all teachers  January 08 offered Harcourt for the more "novice" teachers and other choices were

				given to those that felt comfortable with Think Math Used Grade level team meetings to review the work in Think Math (Ongoing FY '08)
Effectively utilize the PD days throughout the school year including bi-weekly team meetings, Wednesday's Professional Afternoons and yearly PD days and early releases	Share (at a team meeting or faculty meeting) one way that teaching has been enhanced by a professional development opportunity  Hold a professional library hour where teachers bring in one title (with an educational theme) to place on the table. Teachers use the hour to browse through each other's favorite titles <u>without</u> discussion	PDC members, Principal, Task Force Leaders	Teachers will work collectively with their internal grade level teams as well as with their grade level colleagues at the other two schools	January 09

**TLC Goals: Instruction and School and Community Partnerships**

*Improve achievement of all students by engaging teachers as instructional leaders, and deepen student understanding with new strategies and tools for teaching and learning.*

*Improve and expand partnerships between elementary and secondary levels, and with community resources.*

**Goal 6: To strengthen parent understanding of the School Evaluation/IEP process, 504 and Student Success Plans and initial evaluations. This will include facilitating understanding of the components of the IEP (timelines, process, testing, how it is written and the service delivery grid).**

<b>Supporting Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies/Actions (Resources/Funding)</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Measures &amp; Milestones</b>	<b>Status/Timeline</b>
Provide school staff with information needed to provide students with the appropriate special education services	School staff will meet with Team Chair and liaisons during the first 10 days of school to review IEPs, 504 plans, student service plans, and disseminate IEP goals and objectives and IEP at a Glance	Team Chair Special education teachers School psychologist Principal	All teachers will have met with their grade specific special education teacher	Began in September 07 and reviewed annually
Communicate effectively with parents regarding special education services	Special education liaisons will contact parents/guardians during the first four weeks of school and inform them of tentative meeting dates and schedule for the year	Student Support Services liaisons School Psychologist	Parents will have been communicated with regarding their child's specific plan. Monitoring document for parent contact	Done annually in September
Provide forums to communicate broader special education goals to parents	A fall parent Coffee will be held for all parents with a focus for parents that have students on an IEP or 504 plan. Discussion will center around this goal and solicit parent thoughts regarding the process	Team Chair, Principal  All teachers and related service providers	Parent participation and feedback.	Winter 2006  SEPAC met with Cunniff families in winter of 08
Determine ways to encourage more parental participation	Work with Watertown's SEPAC to encourage more participation from our parent body in that organization	Principal, Team Chair and School Psychologist	Greater Cunniff representation at monthly meetings	Academic school year Monthly announcements have been included in the Cunniff Connection
Provide opportunities for inter-disciplinary coordination and communication	Hold two Student Support Services "Summits" to bring together all the professionals for clarifying recent mandates and special education initiatives	Director of Student Support Services, Principal, Team Chair, Barbara Gortych	Team meetings run efficiently and effectively as all professionals have the pertinent information	First one completed in November 2006 Second one held on January 29, 2007 Bi-monthly meeting with student support services team
Determine if current IEPs are in compliance with the IEP service grid	Review IEPs to ensure that the current service delivery of services is in alignment	Special Education Teachers	IEPs are being implemented according to their service delivery grid	Ongoing throughout the year contingent upon when an IEP comes

	with the IEP service grid			“due”
Facilitate proper communication to parents regarding actions taken on their child’s educational plan	Work with the various district wide psychologists to ensure that proper communication takes place before testing begins on a child AND prior to the team meeting to review the test results	Director of Student Support Services, Principal, Team Chair, Barbara Gortych	Team meetings run efficiently and effectively as all professionals have the pertinent information	Spoken with Barbara Gortych and ongoing with each new evaluation
Hire a half or full time school based psychologist	Explore the possibilities of funding a school based psychologist (half or full time)	Principal, Director of Business Services, Director of Special Education	Decision package will show consideration of this idea	Hired full time psychologist that began in September 2007.
Explain GLOs and Summary Reports and their relation to IEP goals to parents	Review the Grade Level Outcomes and Summary Reports with parents of students on IEPs to facilitate understanding that IEP goals often represent entry points to the continuum of Grade Level Outcomes Skills and that student achievement may not always be consistent with the grade placement	Student Support Services teachers and classroom teachers	Parents will work with their child’s team to determine what academic gain and progress is realistic for their child	Conversations took place with administrators in late summer/fall of 2006; Examination of how to legally incorporate into new reporting system  This is still a work in progress
Provide staff with information on IDEA 04	Establish a meeting with Cat Lyons, the district’s special education lawyer, so she may review IDEA 04 with all staff	Team Chair	All staff will become more aware of the required special education laws	Barbara Gordtch presented to faculty in April 2007  Principal spent two faculty meetings in the fall of 07 to review law, guidelines, process, etc.
Determine specific guidelines for testing	Create clearer guidelines for when testing should take place and whether an IEP/504/School Service Plan is required or necessary	OT, Team Chair, Student Support Teachers, School Psychologist	Provide support to students that need access to the curriculum with equal and consistent distribution	Second summit for student support teacher – January 2007  CST reinvented into GET (spring 08) Data review in summer of 08 (Principal and school psychologist)