

District Improvement Committee

Monday, April 7, 2014 6:30 PM

District Improvement Committee, L.P. Wilson Community Center, Board Room, 601 Matianuck Avenue, Windsor, CT 06095

1. **Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence**
2. **Audience to Visitors--The committee welcomes public participation and asks that speakers please limit their comments to 3 minutes.**
3. **Update on Committee's Charge**
4. **Update on District Improvement Committee's Spreadsheet**
5. **Update on Possible Windsor Early Childhood Needs Assessment**
6. **Five Target Goals**
7. **Miscellaneous**
8. **Audience to Visitors--The committee welcomes public participation and asks that speakers please limit their comments to 3 minutes.**
9. **Adjournment**

District Improvement Committee

Updated April 7, 2014

Background:

The Board of Education established the District Improvement Committee as a standing committee for the 2013-2015 term charged to work collaboratively with the district administration for moving the district forward in the areas of student achievement, community engagement and school and family connections.

Charge:

The District Improvement Committee, established November 2013, will work collaboratively with the Superintendent and staff, to positively stimulate Windsor Public Schools in the area of:

- *Student achievement*
- *Community engagement*
- *School and family connections*

The committee will use all relevant and current district reports and data, which collectively with District personnel, can provide insight into the needed changes to advance the committee's goals. Through the committee chair, in collaboration with administration, regular reports to the Board will be made as to the work-in-progress toward improvement goals.

The District Improvement Committee will provide an oral report (update), to the full Board of Education, at the May regular meeting. At this time the committee will highlight its work to date, identify the committees' priorities and ascertain next steps. A recommended plan (outline) for district improvement, as related to the committee charge, is due to the full Board of Education by December 2014.

WINDSOR BOARD OF EDUCATION
DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

2013-2014

Leonard Lockhart, Chairperson
Michaela Fissel
Melissa Rizzo Holmes
Cristina Santos, Ex Officio

District Improvement Committee

Acronym Glossary

CCSS - Common Core State Standards
IEP - Individualized Education Program
DCF - Department of Children and Families
FOI - Freedom of Information
IEP - Individualized Education Program
PTO - Parent Teacher Organization
PBIS - Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
SAT - Scholastic Aptitude Test, The SAT Reasoning Test
SSP - Student Success Plan

Stop Light Approach

The stop light approach is used for this document to show the current status of the suggestion for this committee. An item showing green indicates that the committee has completed it's work. Yellow indicates the committee is currently working the the suggestion. Red indicates the committee has not begun to work on the suggestion.

It is important to note that green may indicate that the committee has referred the suggestion to administration for follow-up. It may not necessarily mean that the suggestion has been implemented.

*Systemic: Student, Families, Educators, Building Staff, Building Administration, District, Community Partnerships

Legend: = No Action Taken = In Process = Complete

District Improvement Committee

Category	Level	Suggestion	Additional Thoughts	Existing Strategy/Program AND/OR Action Taken	Status
1 Programming	Systemic*	Bridge programs between levels and across schools, 12/9/13	Leadership - programs i.e. Kids n Critters, Robotics. Organization for school improvement	We do some but need to do more. 1/25/14	
2 Enrichment	Students Building Community	Organize and sustain student mentorship, 12/9/13		Mentorship position is under Alliance grant focusing on high school and middle school now. Person hired in November. On-going Elementary program has new training sessions. 1/25/14	
3 Enrichment	Educators Building Community	Community fieldtrip initiatives, 12/9/13		We can provide list of fieldtrips we have as part of the curriculum. 1/25/14	
4 Enrichment	Building Community	Cultural performances in schools, 12/9/13		Publicize more what does occur. Look to bring in additional. District plan. 1/25/14	
5 Data	Building District	Maintain the same school climate tool across years to track outcomes and measure trends, 12/9/13		Current plan is to implement school climate survey every other year. 1/25/14	
6 Data	Building District	Evaluate what is working, 12/9/13	(climate survey responses)	Committee may want to review results of survey. 1/25/14	

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Special 7 Education	Building District Community	Strengthen school to career pathways in special education programs, 12/9/13	especially at high school level; availability of resources	Underway with change in teacher leadership of program. 1/25/14	
Prof. 8 Development	Building District	Increase individualized Prof. Development choices for faculty and support staff, including paraprofessionals, 12/9/13		Function of new teacher evaluation system. Still needs to be expanded on. Professional development committee is charged with that task. 1/25/14	
Instructional 9 Methods	Building District	Hands on instructional programming that reflect alternative learning styles, 12/9/13		Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and new Windsor Curriculum being written helps address this area. 1/25/14	
Engagement 10 Communication	Systemic	Continue forums to share thoughts (III), 12/9/13, 1/25/14		Improvement Committee will continue forums. 1/25/14	
Budgetary Enrichment Special 11 Education	Student Family Building	Increase resources for children with individualized learning needs, 12/9/13		Proposed budget provides for additional special education teachers. Small class sizes allow for differentiation. 1/25/14	
12 Communication	Family Educators Building District	Develop novel strategies for strengthening parent base within schools, 12/9/13	Automated System, with response option to collect feedback Social Media	Part of the district improvement plan. Activity being planned for June for administrators, funded through grant. 1/25/14	
13 Curriculum	Family Building District	Higher standards in schools, 12/9/13	Begin with elementary and continue across developmental spectrum. Community wants higher level of standards - challenge students	CCSS and new curriculum making that shift. Raising expectations. 1/25/14	

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14 Policy	Systemic	Uniforms (IIII), 12/9/13, 1/25/14, 2/3/14	Begin with elementary and gradually phase in Supporting reasoning included less competition based on socio-economic differences; increase safe-healthy learning environment; cost-effective for parents; promoting individuality based on academic and performance based standards. Committee passed motion to recommend to full Board of Education a survey in the district to gauge support for uniforms. 1/25/14	Committee agenda item at January 21, 2014 meeting, 1/25/14. Committee agreed to delay uniform survey to Fall 2014, 2/3/14.	
15 Enrichment	Building District Community	Integrate team building and leadership programs, 12/9/13	To strengthen student achievement	Capturing kids hearts/teen leadership. Potential to expand dependent on funding and time.	
16 Policy Curriculum	Systemic	School system should encourage home based standards and morals, 12/9/13	Specifically in the area of Language Arts, books being read contain profanity, sexuality, and violence	Board policy has process to address concerns.	
17 Policy Curriculum	Systemic	Alternative curriculum based on religious beliefs through differentiated material (II), 12/9/13		Board policy has process to address concerns. 1/25/14	

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Policy 18 Conduct	Systemic	Review disciplinary procedures for delinquent behavior, 12/9/13	Referenced a currently understood policy - 3X teacher will make a request for behavioral change; followed by the principal making 3 requests and the school psychologist before the student is removed from the classroom. Impact to whole class is questioned.	Needs to be a review by administration. 1/25/14	
19 Curriculum	Systemic	Increase technology for computer based testing, 12/9/13	Can be utilized as a monitoring system, and can assist the teacher to identify specific areas of need	Need is being address through grant, proposed budget. Still more needs. 1/25/14	
Budgetary 20 Families	Parent Building District	Strengthen parental involvement, 12/9/13	We need to put \$ into innovative programming, specifically that engage the non-participatory parents. Parent Contract	Part of the district improvement plan. Activity being planned for June for administrators, funded through grant. 1/25/14	
21 Families	Students Parents Building District	Strategies that encourage parents to promote expectations that promote academic achievement that can reinforced across contexts, including home, school, etc., 12/9/13	1) Curriculum nights to explicitly instruct parents on how they can reinforce expectations at all levels; not sole use of website postings	See # 12 answer. Increase marketing of current nights. Taping of events to share in the future. 1/25/14	
Special Education 22 Curriculum	Parent District	Individuals Educational Plans for "typical" students, and special education students as well, 12/9/13	Follows the students across grades	Student Success Plan (SSP) for students. 1/25/14	
Policy 23 Communication	Parent Building District	21st Century communication, 12/9/13	1) Website 2) E-mails 3) Robo calls/texts 4) Notification system (Opt-in)	Communications firm hired. Will survey parents and create focus groups. 1/25/14	

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Budgetary Programming 24 Curriculum	Building District	Elementary Spanish language program, 12/9/13, 1/25/14	Times Magazine (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-benefits-of-bilingualism.html?_r=0)	Needs full commitment from Board. Recommend full implementation not grade by grade which is what was happening. 1/25/14	
25 Curriculum	Building District	Vertical alignment of curriculum, 12/9/13	with regard to foreign language	Provide concern to curriculum office. 1/25/14	
Policy 26 Communication	Systemic	Strengthen communication across schools and with parents, 12/9/13	1) Expectations should be consistent between classrooms, across grade levels, and schools; diversity training	New progress reports should begin to address concern. Committee to review issue of diversity training. 1/25/14	
Communication Engagement 27 Families	Systemic	Strengthen the value of education, and redirect perspective from obligation to privilege, 12/9/13		Parental engagement discussion. 1/25/14	
Families 28 Policy	Students Parents Building District	Social contract between parents, teacher, administration, and student, 12/9/13, 3/11/14	Initiate contract and implement period reviews to monitor progress - similar to professional evaluations. 3/11/14	Would need to review further. 1/25/14	
Policy Prof. 29 Development	Systemic	Refresh diversity training (II), 12/9/13, 3/11/14	Make it for everyone	Investigating available programs. Schedule time to come forward to committee. 1/25/14	
Policy 30 Budgetary	District	Redirect funding from across levels to make interventions within the early elementary school levels more accessible to a greater number of students who require tier 2-3 interventions, 12/9/13		We have done some of this. Need to consider requirements of Individualized Education Programs (IEP), when students enter district, etc. 1/25/14	

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Policy Instructional Methods 31 Curriculum	Systemic	Raise expectations for our children, 12/9/13		Curriculum, staff training. 1/25/14	
Curriculum Instructional Methods 32	Building District	Shift from rote memorization to strategies that promote critical thinking and creativity, 12/9/13	Problem solving skills; challenge students	CCSS and new curriculum making that shift. 1/25/14	
Enrichment Curriculum Engagement 33	Systemic	Increase opportunities for civic engagement, 12/9/13		Should review what is happening now at WHS. 1/25/14	
Policy Communication 34	Building District Community	Develop alternative outreach strategies, 12/9/13		Communications firm hired. Survey parents? Focus groups? 1/25/14	
Policy Performance Conduct 35	Athletics Building District	Review athletic eligibility criteria, 12/9/13	Specifically in the areas of behavioral conduct and academic standards. The Grade Point Average (GPA) criteria of 71 (C-) with no more than 1 F was referenced.	We understand that our academic eligibility policy 6145.2 is more stringent than most in CT. 1/25/14. Code changed to In Process. More data to be delivered from WHS Athletic Director and presented to BOE in May, 2/3/14.	
Policy Scheduling 36	Counselors Building District	Greater degree of flexibility with school personnel availability (II), 12/9/13	Middle school and high school counselors should be available 1 night per week from 7-9PM	Contractual issue. Should be available to meet with parents. 1/25/14	
Prof. Development Communication 37	Parent Building District	Consider the family context in which the child exists without making assumptions about the effort the parent puts into their child's education, 12/9/13	Challenge Program - promote, inform and explain program to public; what is participation process	We have done professional development on this in the past. Need to review needs and availability/funding for continuing. 1/25/14	

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38 Prof. Development Communication	Systemic	Identify and/or develop strategies for connecting with children to understand their needs, 12/9/13	Educators talk to students to determine causes for behavior	We have done professional development on this in the past. Need to review needs and availability/funding for continuing. 1/25/14	
39 Prof. Development Instructional Methods Curriculum	Systemic	Prioritize the achievement gap (II), 12/9/13		District improvement efforts should lead to increased achievement of all students. 1/25/14	
40 Diversity	District	Increase the diversity within teaching faculty to more accurately reflect the demographic variability of the student body. 12/9/13, 3/11/14		Currently a goal for Human Resources and principals. Efforts such as recruitment/retention continue. 1/25/14	
41 Policy Prof. Development	Systemic	Increase access. 12/9/13			
42 Prof. Development Conduct	Parent Building District Community	Target behavioral problems, 12/9/13		Working on concern. Continue with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Need to keep addressing this concern. 1/25/14	
43 Data	District	Review best practices to develop strategies, 12/9/13		District Data Team work. Presentation of work to BOE to be scheduled. 1/25/14	

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44 Data	Building District	Identify and define subgroups, set goals, and track, 12/9/13. Provide more detailed information to community for better understanding, 3/11/14		District Data Team work. Presentation of work to BOE to be scheduled. 1/25/14	
45 Early Childhood	Systemic	Invest in early childhood (III), 12/9/13	1) Develop educational programs to support children's learning at the earliest ages since primary socialization occurs by the age of 5 2) PreK 3) Early Childhood Center, could utilize the Wolcott building for early childhood programming, Birth - 3, etc.	Long-term discussion. 1/25/14	
46 Data	Building District	Capture data in Kindergarten and continue to track progress, 12/9/13		Planning a presentation for Technology Committee on progress tracking for students. Milepost has been in place since 2012. 1/25/14	
47 Engagement	Systemic	Community members are interested in becoming actively involved in the process, 12/9/13	1) Administration and Board of Education can offer opportunities for community members to get involved 2) Need to develop a clear focus on how WPS system can utilize community strengths/assets 3) Community members can offer services and supports within and outside the school	Increase mentoring program, parent volunteers, etc.... Engagement of Chamber of Commerce, major corporations in town. 1/25/14	

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48 Families	Parent Building	Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) meetings should be held on Saturday mornings and not during the school day, 12/9/13		Typically held on a week night. Typically scheduled by Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) in consultation with school. 1/25/14	
49 Budgetary	Systemic	Finance committee should include greater number of stakeholders from across schools, 12/9/13		Board committee does allow for public comment at each meeting. 1/25/14	
50 Budgetary	Systemic	Budget should be built from zero and not assume the same expenses from the previous budget cycle, 12/9/13		Board Finance Committee should discuss budget creation for the 2016/17 budget. 1/25/14	
51 Policy	Parent Building District	BOE Leadership and administration should develop shared goals to increase the likelihood of shared responsibility for meeting district goals, 12/9/13		Communicate that this is hapening. 1/25/14	
52 Prof. Development Families	Parent Building District Community	Prof. Development for parents, 12/9/13	1) Utilize libraries and school buildings 2) Stagger times and days 3) Expert speakers/panels	Part of the district improvement plan. Activity being planned for June for administrators, funded through grant. 1/25/14	
53 Curriculum	Systemic	Develop non-traditional course offerings, 12/9/13, 3/11/14	Evening/Saturday/online courses	We do have 20 seats in virtual high school at WHS. 1/25/14	
54 Families	Parent	Hold parents accountable, 12/9/13		Parent involvement will assist in this area. 1/25/14	
55 Programming	Systemic	Review the Alternative Program offered at LP Wilson, 12/9/13	1) Is programming meeting the standards of equal opportunity for educational and academic services?	We continue to review, compare with other districts and discuss alternatives. Work continues in this area. We have grown program over past 5 years. 1/25/14	

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56 Policy	Support Staff Building District	Paraprofessionals in every classroom, 12/9/13		Cost for Finance Committee to consider. 1/25/14	
57 Policy	Rainbow Bus Building District	Implement assigned seating on buses, 12/9/13		We do have assigned seating at the elementary level on a situational basis. 1/25/14	
58 Policy Performance	Parent Building District	Early Intervention (II), 12/9/13	Immediate intervention for students who are identified in September for potential for delayed progress in a subject area. Do not wait until December.	Should not be occurring. Have shared concern with administrators. 1/25/14	
59 Policy	Building District	Review policies on identifying and reporting child abuse, 12/9/13	http://www.ct.gov/dcf/cwp/view.asp?a=2565&q=317652 See 2013 - Windsor. 477 reported allegations of child abuse to Department of Children & Families (DCF), 16% (n=74) substantiated. Called DCF, we currently have 40 foster care homes in Windsor, but not all children are in WPS system.	Will review with staff. We review on an annual basis. 1/25/14	
60 Enrichment Engagement	Systemic	Bridge resources within the community for increased opportunity to strengthen our school system, 12/9/13	Who follows up with children at risk after school, weekends, checks on absences, etc.	Will review with staff. 1/25/14	

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61 Policy Communication	Building District	Develop a response system that reflects the feedback of community members, teachers, students, etc., 12/9/13		This document would be posted on website. 1/25/14	
62 Policy Instructional Methods Conduct Performance	Building District	Increase incentives for high school students, 12/9/13	i.e., VIP Program at Sage Park	Review funds set aside for PBIS. High School is in earlier stage of PBIS than Sage Park. 1/25/14	
63 Communication	Systemic	Community members should be updated on the progress of the District Improvement Committee, 12/9/13, 2/3/14	1) At the beginning of the meeting, an update should be given on progress 2) Website 3) Inform parents about steps to close achievement gap	Committee is working on it, 1/25/14. Meetings arranged to speak with faculty. Engagements will be sought to speak at civic groups, 2/3/14.	
64 Communication	Systemic	Set up tables at community events seeking input from citizens. 1/25/14		Committee or Board may wish to consider this approach. 2/3/14	
65 Curriculum Instruction	Building	Concern expressed regarding levels of high school courses and possible renaming of levels. 1/25/14		Suggestion should be forwarded to Curriculum Committee. 2/3/14	
66 Curriculum Instructional Methods	Building	Saturday Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation classes in Windsor - private providers and/or through school. 1/25/14	Suggested to move discussion of Saturday SAT classes to Curriculum Committee. 1/25/14	Completed. 2/3/14	

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Enrichment 67 Engagement	Building Community Parents	Enlarge Clover St. playground to include more equipment to encourage physical activity to reduce obesity problem. 1/27/14		On-going efforts. Kick ball field has been designed and will be implemented. Rock wall added to gym. Drainage issue addressed to Town. 2/3/14.	
Enrichment 68 Engagement	Building Community Parents	Deliver anti-bullying message from committee; restate policy and remind parents. Create district-wide anti-bullying awareness day to inform students, staff, parents, and community, 3/11/14		Policy communicated to all. Need to consider other suggestions. 4/4/14	
Curriculum 69 Instruction	Building District	Expand multicultural curricula, reflective of student population, 3/11/14		Ongoing; review with RFQ for services. 4/4/14	
Curriculum Instructional 70 Methods	Parent Building District	Provide explanations detailing how we are raising expectations, 3/11/14		Year End report?, 4/4/14	
Diversity Communication 71 Communication	District	Equal Opportunity Commission, 3/11/14			
Enrichment Engagement 72 Communication	Building Community Parents	Supply parents with an understanding of leveling and tracking, 3/11/14		High school provides detailed chart. Reviewed by Curriculum Committee 12/12/13. Shared with parents. 4/4/14	
73 Communication	Systemic	Explain process for coding suggestions green contained on spreadsheet, 3/11/14		Discuss at 4/7/14 meeting. 4/4/14	

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74 Policy	District	Teachers need to be evaluated with a formal system, 3/11/14		Teachers are evaluated via a formal Board and State approved system. 4/4/14	
Curriculum Instructional 75 Methods	Parent Building District	Raise standards beyond Common Core State Standards, 3/11/14		New curriculum meets CCSS and provides additional teacher supports and materials. Need to continue curriculum work. 4/4/14	
Communication 76 Data	Building District	Explain author of WPS District Report, Comprehensive School Climate Inventory, 3/11/14		Darlene Faster is contact person. Comprehensive School Climate Inventory team authored report. Communicated via response to requestor. 4/14/14.	

4/7/2014

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