



Committed to Excellence

2020-2021 District Goals

Midyear Update - January 21, 2021

SAFETY

S1 *Increase the safety of students, staff, and community members physically, emotionally and electronically by layering additional best practices into our current system*

S1.1 **Evaluate the work completed around emotional intelligence and social emotional learning and identify key priorities and next steps**

Improving the social-emotional development of all Trumbull Public School stakeholders to contribute to the academic and career success of students by increasing the emotional intelligence of our students.

At the heart of positive psychology, is often how efficacious psychological interventions occur. Concepts such as virtues, mindfulness, and strengths are all benefits of positive psychology. Fully developing a network immersed in positive psychology has the potential to improve connectedness, life purpose, well-being, and vocational calling.

The district has developed and trained on numerous SEL initiatives previously (e.g. Zones of Regulation, Responsive Classroom, RULER, etc.). Within each of these initiatives is an aspect of positive psychology. Thus, as a district initiative to further SEL, structuring the tenets of positive psychology will allow the district to utilize previous training, but further the district's understanding and skills that can be utilized throughout an individual's lifetime.

The district is developing a shared districtwide vision statement to articulate the importance of social, emotional and intellectual habits and emphasizing the importance of all three of these sets of habits (social, emotional, and intellectual) in achieving the districts overall vision, mission and theory of action. This will align with the Vision of the Graduate as it is developed.

Key leaders have been identified and are taking responsibility for the development of their knowledge in social, emotional and intellectual habits theory, research and practice, and provide guidance and support for the development of habits in schools. We are using components of Orange Frog, which is a research based positive psychology approach utilized in districts across the country.

Curricular resources (e.g. curriculum guides, units of study) will be reviewed for their alignment to support social, emotional and intellectual habits in the academic learning environment.

Professional learning experiences are being investigated and designed to create an adult community throughout the district that can effectively model social, emotional, and intellectual competencies. This is inclusive of working with the district's PTA. Notably, the SEL will be interwoven with other committees and initiatives such as Social Climate, Social Justice, Vision of the Graduate, RULER, Responsive Classroom, Works of Gratitude, PBIS, etc.

S1.2 Analyze and evaluate the security envelope (the entire campus) at all school buildings using the expertise of our School Resource Officers and District Safety Coordinator

Security team led by Scott Sikora and the three school resource officers evaluated the buildings at each school. They identified opportunities to layer on additional safety measures and improve routines. These ideas are being discussed during and in between the three district safety meetings that occur throughout the year. These ideas include additional cameras at each school, improved signage, and installing the driver's license kiosks at each school.

S1.3 Identify key budget priorities

A priority was to increase intra-building communication through the use of upgraded and additional portable radios. These are in the process of being purchased through the use of CoronaVirus Relief funds. School Guardian Kiosks were purchased during the 2019-2020 school year. These are decent sized machines that currently sit at the main entrance of most buildings. They each need power and access to the Internet before they can become functional. Mr. Sikora, Head of Security, has worked with building principals and security personnel to identify security and safety items that would benefit

each school. These items will be prioritized and completed using grants and the operational budget.

S1.4 Identify if any needed procedural changes exist

Emergency drills have continued during COVID. Fire drills and Lockdowns are occurring but in a way to reduce population density. Additional considerations are being discussed but will not be included here given the confidential nature of the information.

S2 *Continue the process of reopening the Trumbull Public Schools in a thoughtful and methodical way to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and community*

S2.1 Ensure high quality remote and hybrid learning are in place and identify the specific expectations for staff, students, and parents

Principals and teachers work closely to ensure that high quality instruction is delivered to all students on a daily basis whether the students are engaged in remote learning or learning in the classroom.

The district developed and disseminated expectations for teaching & learning in the hybrid phase to all administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents/guardians to assure coherent implementation of teaching & learning across the district.

Training for staff and parents (see T1.1 below) was provided on a range of topics.

At 1/12 BOE meeting a new calendar was approved providing additional time for teachers to develop high-quality instruction for our hybrid learning model

Our schools continually track and monitor attendance data to ensure that students are engaged in learning whether it be in-person or remotely. Each month we track our average daily attendance at each level as we recognize the importance of student attendance and engagement in the learning process. In fact, our Average Daily Attendance (ADA) on average is 2% higher than past years.

See Below:

School	Average Daily Attendance 2020-2021 Rate To Date	Average Daily Attendance Typical year
BH	98.47	95.76
DF	98.93	96.56
FT	97.5	95.97
JR	98.54	96.3
MB	95.83	95.81
TA	98.88	96.71
HC	95.18	95.54
MAD	95.43	95.39
THS	95.6	94.84
<p>*Note: All schools have shown an increase or maintained the average daily attendance rate this school year as compared to a typical school year. This is a good indicator that students are engaged in the educational process whether they are participating in-person or at home on any given day.</p>		

S2.2 Ensure protocols and procedures in Reopening Plan are being followed

A Reopening Advisory Team was formed in October to serve in an advisory and support role in the reopening process. This team is made up of school leaders, school staff, members of the town’s nursing department, our Emergency Management Director and our Director of Public Health. In addition, the Superintendent participates weekly on the joint State Department of Public Health and State Department of Education phone calls. These weekly calls provide up-to-date information regarding COVID-19. All suggested mitigation strategies have been employed in each building. In addition, our Reopening Team worked to implement daily cleaning protocols for classrooms and bathrooms with daily checklists. Furthermore, student desk shields were purchased for every PK-5 student and teacher shields were purchased for every elementary classroom teacher. Reserve PPE are held at central office and sent to building principals upon request. In late October, our Reopening Plan was reformatted into a [web-based plan](#) that allows for easy access to protocols and procedures. In early January we created a [COVID dashboard](#) which was placed on our reopening webpage to provide up-to-date information on positive cases and quarantined students and staff and each building.

S2.3 Use clear process and procedures for contact tracing and quarantining in conjunction with the Trumbull Nursing Department and Trumbull Department of Public Health

Our building principals manage a significant portion of the [contact tracing process](#) with support from the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Nursing. Bus seats are now labelled to support the contact tracing process at our elementary schools. This process was developed in collaboration with the Trumbull Health Department and the Director of Nursing.

S2.4 Consistent and clear communication with family and staff on changes and/or updates to the Reopening Plan

Multiple strategies are being used to communicate with family and staff. We use our [Reopening Website](#) to communicate our current status for Reopening and a place to house previous communications. In addition, the Superintendent meets weekly with the PTA council and provides them with an update on the Reopening status. Each Board of Education meeting includes an agenda item called “Superintendent’s Update on Reopening.” Principals include information about Reopening in their weekly emails and the Superintendent communicates with families often to communicate decisions. In December and January, “Town Hall” meetings were provided to paraprofessionals and each teacher level (elementary, middle, and high school) to provide an update and to answer questions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

T1 Engage in an implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment during 2020-2021 that demonstrates best practices for synchronous as well as asynchronous teaching and learning

T1.1 Participate in professional learning related to grade-appropriate digital tools, and implement those digital tools in proficiently teaching students both synchronously and asynchronously based on curricular goals and objectives

Three additional professional days were added to the district calendar prior to the start of the school. Over the five total professional development days, all teachers participated in level-specific professional development focused on teaching & learning in the hybrid phase, including digital tools for teaching & learning across all classrooms. During three professional days, all paraprofessionals participated in level-specific professional development focused on the technology needed by them to support teaching & learning in the hybrid phase.

The district developed and disseminated expectations for teaching & learning in the hybrid phase to all administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents/guardians to assure coherent implementation of teaching & learning across the district.

During the monthly Tuesday afternoon meetings focused on teaching & learning, all teachers participated in level-specific professional development focused on digital tools for teaching & learning in the hybrid phase.

Six early release days for students were added to the district calendar in late September through mid November. On these days, all teachers participated in level-specific professional development focused on digital tools for teaching & learning, and then worked with their colleagues to plan upcoming lessons and units integrating what was learned.

For the November professional day, the district, in concert with the PDEC, distributed updated guidelines for Foundational Proficiency as well as Intermediate Proficiency in the TPS goals for integrating technology into teaching & learning for the 2020-21 school year. All teachers assessed their individual professional needs, then engaged in a series of self-paced and/or instructor-facilitated learning to develop their learning over the course of the day. The day ended with teachers sharing their learning with their colleagues in administrator-facilitated small groups.

Funds were reallocated to support the additional purchase of digital tools to enhance teaching & learning in the hybrid phase (e.g., Seesaw, Pear Deck).

In concert with the PDEC, the district adopted adjustments to the teacher and the administrator professional development and evaluation plans for 2020-21, focusing, in part, on teaching & learning in the hybrid phase. The adjustments were adopted by the Board of Education on October 13, 2020, and models for implementation were developed and disseminated by the PDEC.

Eight early release days were added to the district calendar to provide teachers with the needed time to develop high quality synchronous and asynchronous learning for their students in the classroom and at home. These early release Wednesdays run from January 20, 2021 through March 10, 2021. A summary of the days activities will be provided during these days.

The purpose of all professional learning opportunities this year has been to work with teachers on developing best practices for teaching in a blended learning environment focused on instructional strategies that best support student learning and engagement. For example, using video tools (FlipGrid, Screencastify) to support turn-and-talk, think-pair-share, and conferring all instructional strategies used as part of the Readers and Writers Workshop model. In addition, a variety of the professional learning sessions

have been focused on using tools to support both student collaboration both in large and small groups. Teachers worked this year on developing collaborative white boards using Google's Jam Board where students could demonstrate their learning to their peers as well as to their teacher in a virtual space. These learner-centered instructional practices have been used for several years in Trumbull as part of our curriculum. This year our goal was to improve upon these sound instructional practices by developing ways to implement them in a digital environment.

The Technology Integration Specialist group has offered over 30 virtual workshop sessions to support teachers, parents, students and staff during the first half of the 2020-2021 school year. The professional development is organized not to just teach how to use the tool, but how to use it in the context of Trumbull's curriculum. In addition to virtual workshops our Digital Learning department works daily with teachers embedding technology into the classroom and supporting the implementation in each and every school. Below is a list of sessions that have been offered to date.

Teachers

- Best Practices for Live Learning
- Best Practice for the Blended Learning Classroom
- Developing Meaningful Asynchronous Activities to Support Blended Learning
- Google Classroom Basics
- Introduction to See Saw for PK-2 Teachers
- Google Classroom Beyond the Basics Tips & Tricks
- Digital Resources to Support Small Group Instruction
- Isomg Digital Literacy Tools in the K-2 Classroom
- Supporting Differentiated Instruction & Assessment in the Blended Learning Classroom
- See Saw Beyond the Basics for PK-2 Teachers
- Using PearDeck to Support Student Engagement and Learning
- Using Recorded Video to Support Instruction
- Digital Tools to Support Secondary Math Instruction

Parents

- Google Classroom for Parents
- Introduction to See Saw for PK-2 Parents
- Using Infinite Campus Parent Portal
- How to Support Your Child During Remote Learning
- Using Naviance in the College Application Process
- Digital Tools to Support Students with Special Needs

Staff

- Website Compliance: Best Practices for Website Design and Content Creation

- Google Classroom for Paraprofessionals
- Converting Your PDF Forms into Fillable Forms

T1.2 Using grade-appropriate digital tools, develop and proficiently implement formative and summative assessments of students learning both synchronously and asynchronously

The district distributed a modified K-5 Assured Assessment Calendar for Trimester 1 of 2020-21 based on the key summative assessments of learning in literacy, mathematics, and science; all assessments took advantage of the current digital tools for teaching and learning. Curriculum leaders and building principals monitored teacher implementation of the assessments, and reports of individual students' assessment progress in all three areas were distributed to parents/guardians with Trimester 1 report cards.

At the K-5 level, teachers approved to work from home participated, in part, in assessing students learning remotely, allowing those students to be assessed reliably and thoroughly.

At the secondary level, building principals and department chairs worked with teachers to develop and implement revised assessments of and for learning consistent with the digital tools being implemented in the hybrid phase. Building principals and department chairs monitored teacher implementation of the assessments.

A preliminary look at our Trimester 1 benchmark assessment data in comparison to last year demonstrates that students are performing at a similar level to last year's cohorts in both literacy and math in grades K-5. This is aggregate data and therefore can mask mastery deficits of individual students. Benchmark data is being used to help identify students who are not making the needed progress to reach mastery by the end of the school year.

BUDGET

B1 Analyze budget and budget process to ensure accuracy, timeliness and transparency

B1.1 When received, review the findings of the external Town Council budget audit (operational review) and implement the recommendations

The Business Office met with the auditor prior to the report being issued. The "Operational Review" was received by the Superintendent and School Business

Administrator on 1/4/21. At the 1/12/2021 Board of Education meeting, the Business Administrator provided a four page analysis of the Operational Review. The findings are being placed in a table format to prioritize and schedule these items for resolution.

B1.2 Analyze Special Revenue funds (205 accounts) and:

- provide updates and make potential recommendations to the BOE

The 205 accounts have been presented to the Finance Committee and the entire Board. To date, the Business Administrator has focused on the InterDistrict and Elementary Strings / Band accounts which are the accounts with the greatest deficit. At several meetings, the Business Administrator has made recommendations to increase charges for both programs to return them to breakeven status. The BOF will receive updates.

- Take actions to correct, if necessary

Any corrective action requires a Board vote.

- Link to operating budget and other District related accounts to provide an overall financial picture of District operations

This is done by the Business Administrator when he presents the monthly financial review.

B1.3 Provide transparent updates to BOE monthly on m/o/m and y/o/y projections.

The Business Administrator has provided these reports and has added graphs which illustrate the cumulative percentage of budget spent year-to-date as well as comparative data from the two prior years.

B1.4 Provide monthly prediction of year-end balances and discuss mitigation strategies if deficits are predicted.

Projections will begin with the December month actuals. Several months of activity are required to determine “run rates” for specific budget items.

B1.5 Review control processes for purchasing and payroll and implement changes as necessary.

These processes are being reviewed for changes consistent with the recent operational audit.

B1.6 Analyze grants

- Ensure grants are spent in a timely manner

- **Retain back-up documentation if required by specific grant**
- **Work with District grant manager(s) to reallocate funds when necessary**

The Business Office recently met with the Director of Pupil Personnel Services to reallocate funds in the IDEA grant.

B1.7 Review utilities expenses with Facilities Manager to understand improvements made / to be made

The Business Administrator has developed a series of graphs comparing year-to-year expenditures (by month) to assist in projecting these expenses.

B1.8 Analyze Special Education costs to understand major drivers and opportunities

- **Work with Special Education to jointly compile the submissions to the State for Excess Cost Reimbursement (ECR)**

The Business Administrator meets weekly with the Director of Pupil Personnel Services to discuss items of mutual concern. We will both address the recommendations in the operational review.

B2 Develop 2021-2022 budget in conjunction with District leaders that is fiscally responsible, equitable, and includes all high priority needs

B2.1 Identify the impacts of the budget cuts made to the 2020-2021 budget on major outcomes of TPS (e.g. teaching and learning, maintenance, safety, etc.)

The district will need to continue to review the impact that the recent budget cuts have had on all areas. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to force schools into an irregular schedule that will have its own impact on students. The 2021-2022 budget proposal identifies the most significant needs to move forward as a school district.

In the area of teaching and learning, a total of 2 literacy and 3 math specialists were cut from the budget. These positions provide direct support to learners and to develop the capacity of teachers. These cuts and the impact of COVID-19 will likely impact overall student achievement this year. As the year progresses, our “assured assessments” will provide us with additional information on our student progress. Additional support

provided through stipended positions were also reduced, requiring building principals to add work to their already full plates. The highest priority identified for this category is to restore some of the lost specialists' positions in the upcoming budget.

The budget cuts also eliminated the Director of Human Resources position. With a staff of over 1,000 individuals this is a needed position. The recent Operational Review (received January 4, 2021) identified an HR Director as an important part of improving the Trumbull Public Schools operations.

The maintenance of our buildings has not seen significant impacts. Given that the density in our buildings has been far less given COVID-19, there is less overall wear and tear. Our maintenance and custodial department have worked tirelessly to ensure that the buildings are safe and clean.

The safety of our buildings has not been impacted by the budget cuts at this time.

B2.2 Develop transparent budget development process

The budget was developed using Google Sheets for initial input. This sheet included separate tabs for each department's and school's data input. All departments and principals had visibility to each other's budget. Also, in addition to meeting with department heads and principals individually to discuss their budgets, the entire group met several times to review the budget. The Superintendent's Recommended Budget was given to the BOE in late November and placed on the district's webpage in early December. Two public workshops were held in December to review the budget.

B2.3 Develop fiscally responsible budget that identifies highest priority needs for 2021-2022

The budget took the inputs received above and also input for additional personnel, material, and equipment. The entire group discussed these items and decided a priority for each. The budget as presented in the Google Sheet was a rollover and adjustment to the prior year's budget. Then those "add back" priority items (line-by-line) were listed below the "rollover" budget. Also, operating budget support to eliminate annual deficits in the lunch account (210) and Special Revenue Funds (205), specifically InterDistrict and Elementary Strings / Band.

B2.4 Expand functionality of the Munis platform

This will be addressed shortly, incorporating the operational audit's recommendations.

B2.5 Take the lead on researching any lawsuits, complaints, disputes, etc. against the District

The Business Administrator settled the dispute with Bridgeport for prior years' charges with no payment to Bridgeport. Also, the Business Administrator worked with the Board

of Education attorney on the recently executed contracts between the Board and the Custodial / Maintenance Employees' bargaining unit and the School Lunch Program Employees' bargaining unit.

COMMUNICATION

C1 *Develop and implement a cohesive communication plan to ensure that predictable, high-quality communications are provided by the Trumbull Public Schools to parents, staff, and the community at large*

C1.1 Weekly Communication (School Year) from each building principal to all parents to ensure that timely information is provided and two-way communication is increased

Principals have provided consistent communication with families. The weekly communications that all principals are now providing allow for a consistent communication process across the district. The principals are doing an excellent job with this work.

C1.2 Monthly Communication (School Year) from the Superintendent of Schools providing overall district information and overall progress towards goals

Updates to all staff and parents have been completed at least monthly so far. These updates have been well received by parents thanking us for our transparent communication. "Town Hall" meetings for staff were recently added to our communication process. These town halls allow the Superintendent to provide updates to staff in-person (virtually) and answer staff questions.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

SJ1 *Develop Trumbull Public Schools Coalition for Social Justice Committee with the charge of advising and advocating for social justice, equity, and intersectionality*

SJ1.1 Create Social Justice Steering Committee

As a start, the Social Justice Steering Committee will be comprised of the Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Pupil Services, and the High School Principal. This committee will likely be adjusted as we begin work with our facilitator.

SJ1.2 Identify external social justice expert(s) to facilitate the work

On November 13, 2020 the Director of Pupil Services and I met with the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to enlist their support for our work. SERC provided a draft proposal for our review. With the exit of Dr. Jonathan Budd in December, we decided to hold off on making any decisions until Dr. Budd's replacement began work. Dr. Iwanicki began her work on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

SJ1.3 Identify broad range of committee members from school community

This work is forthcoming.

SJ1.4 Identify meeting dates for 2021

This work is forthcoming.

SJ1.5 Expert facilitator to provide training to coalition members

This work is forthcoming.

SJ1.6 Identify subcommittees and possible outcomes

This work is forthcoming.