



**EAST HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**SYNERGY ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL**

**IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**2008-2011**

# DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## 2008-2009

### DISTRICT DATA TEAM

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Debbie A. Kaprove  
Assistant Superintendent

Marcia Huddy  
Supervisor, Secondary Curriculum

Lesley Morgan-Thompson, Ph.D.  
Supervisor, Elementary Curriculum

Jody Lefkowitz  
Director, Pupil Personnel

Karen O'Connell  
President, EHEA

Christopher Wethje  
Director, Human Resources

Melissa Gavarrino  
Dept. Head, Science

Catherine Ciccomascolo  
Principal, Silver Lane School

Linda Iverson, Ph.D.  
Principal, Pitkin Elementary School

### ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Marion H. Martinez, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Debbie A. Kaprove  
Assistant Superintendent

Jody Lefkowitz  
Director, Pupil Personnel

Christopher Wethje  
Director, Human Resources

Al Costa  
Director, Facilities

Paul Mainuli  
Director, Business Services

Michael Moan  
Director, Security

Kelly Grant  
Supervisor, Special Education

Emil Kopcha  
Supervisor, Fine and Performing Arts

David Flanagan  
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Matthew Ryan  
Principal, EHHS

Art Arpin  
Principal, CIBA

John Karzar  
Principal, Synergy High School

Jeff Fournier  
Principal, EHMS

Helene Marchese  
Principal, Woodland School

Daniel Brodeur  
Principal, Goodwin Elementary School

Lisa Beauchamp  
Principal, Hockanum Elementary School

Greg Fox  
Principal, Langford Elementary School

Jenny Correa  
Principal, Mayberry Elementary School

Pietro Cerone  
Principal, Norris Elementary School

Michael Litke  
Principal, O'Brien Elementary School

Scott Nozik  
Principal, O'Connell Elementary School

Linda Iverson, Ph.D.  
Principal, Pitkin Elementary School

Catherine Ciccomascolo  
Principal, Silver Lane Elementary

Pauline Fusco, Ph.D.  
Principal, Sunset Ridge School

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Supervisor, Birth-to-Three Program

Beverly Blount Lawrence  
Assistant Principal, EHHS

Michelle Marion  
Assistant Principal, EHHS

David DeCarli  
Assistant Principal, EHHS

Nathan Quesnel  
Assistant Principal, EHHS

Amy Watson  
Assistant Principal, EHMS

Spencer Clapp  
Assistant Principal, EHMS

Edward Orszulak, Ph.D.  
Assistant Principal, EHMS

Rhea Klein, Ph.D.  
Dept. Head, Special Education

Frank Staples  
Dept. Head, Guidance

James Agnew  
Dept. Head, Social Studies

Allison Anderson  
Dept. Head, Mathematics

Melissa Gavarrino  
Dept. Head, Science

Monica Giglio  
Dept. head, English

Michelle Hacker  
Dept. Head, Career Technical Ed.

Nancy Testa, Ed.D.  
Dept. Chair, World Languages

Patricia Muggleston  
Literacy Coordinator, K-8

Karen Radding  
Mathematics Resource Teacher, K-6

Penny Brice  
School-Business Partnership

Patricia Perrone  
Coordinator, Adult Ed/Summer School

Mindy D'Andrea  
School Readiness Coordinator

## **CURRICULUM CABINET**

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Kelly Grant  
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Karen Radding  
Mathematics Resource Teacher, K-6

Debra Drew  
Early Literacy Coordinator

Marilyn Boccaccio  
District Literacy

Joanne LeBeau  
Literacy Coach

Barbara McKinney  
Literacy Coach

## **SYNERGY ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL**

### **BUILDING DATA TEAM**

John F. Karzar  
Principal

Laura Meehan  
Teacher

Carla Brooks  
Teacher

Jean Riley  
LIFE Analyst

Robin McKinley  
Teacher

Dave Bocchichio  
Teacher

JoAnn Sondheimer  
Social Work

Donna Salerno  
Teacher

Chris Denfeld  
Teacher

Beverly Moreau  
Nurse

Dave Morelli  
Teacher

Sean Harrington  
Teacher

T  
Sahar Noushin  
Guidance

Mark Schultz  
Teacher

# DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## Introduction

The East Hartford Public Schools District Improvement Plan represents the evolution of work begun five years ago. Although it has undergone several transformations as a result of extensive professional development, it continues to serve as the blueprint for action and a path to excellence.

The generally upward trajectories in student achievement confirm the application of researched-based strategies can make a difference in student achievement. This result has provided encouragement and motivation to staff.

Although pleased with the district's accomplishments and the progress we have made, sustained focus, reinforcement, and fidelity of implementation must continue to be a priority. Accomplishments, along with current work in progress, encompass many important areas of focus:

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

- Standards-based curricula in all core academic areas;
- A five-year review cycle for curricula ;
- Pacing guides aligned with State benchmarks, grades K-6, 7-12;
- Development of common formative assessments in progress at school levels;
- Identification of priority standards through Making Standards Work (MSW);
- Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA's) in development;
- Involvement of special education students in classroom and district assessments.

### **Teaching and Learning**

- CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS) and John Collins' professional development Gr. 6-12;
- Columbia Writing Workshop Institute and Connecticut Writing Project;
- Strong early intervention program in Grade 1;
- Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS), including for English Language Learners (ELL);
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for special education students with goals/objectives tied to curriculum standards;
- Implementation of new mathematics series, *Growing With Math*, K-5 and *MathThematics*, Grade 6 to support standards-based curriculum;
- Annual summer school programs, grades K-3, 7-12;
- Extended school year program for special education students;
- After-School programs, grades 3-12;
- Full implementation of inclusion; increased time with non-disabled peers;
- Increased numbers of Advanced Placement (AP) classes and student participation;
- District-wide, active participation in all Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) programs;
- Student Advisories supporting and encouraging student achievement at the high school;
- Participation in *Courageous Conversations* addressing student expectations, rigor, and biases.

### **Organizational Structure for Leadership and Communication**

- Building and grade level data teams operational at all schools;
- Implementation of Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), grades K-12;

- Early Intervention Process (EIP) in all buildings;
- Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) rollout guided by a district planning team;
- Increased number of advanced placement classes (AP);
- Support to encourage increased enrollment of students in AP and other rigorous courses;
- Implementation of a monitoring and tracking plan for district attendance through Central Registration Department;
- Coordination of discipline data utilizing SWIS (School-Wide Information System);
- Continued implementation of student information system, eSchool Plus, with ongoing professional development;
- Active participation of principals in the hiring process, curriculum committees, development of Board policies, chairing subcommittees such as Kindergarten Orientation, Homework, etc;
- Monthly Administrative Council (all administrators) meetings for professional development based on input from the group;
- Administrators on Curriculum Cabinet, Professional Development Committee, District Data Leadership Team, Early Intervention program Committee (EIP), District Equity Team, Courageous Conversations, Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Team, etc.;
- Bi-monthly Principals' Meetings with agendas developed via input from all participants;
- Bi-monthly Curriculum Cabinet Meetings with agendas developed via input from all participants – district/building administrators, teacher leaders, curriculum specialists.

### **Parent Involvement**

- Parent newsletters distributed from all schools;
- Translation of materials into Spanish;
- Financial support for Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI);
- Parent involvement in the development of School Improvement Plans;
- PTO/PTA programs at building levels;
- Fireside Chats initiated by the superintendent and assistant superintendent and hosted by parents in their homes.

The actions outlined in this plan were developed to address the needs of “ALL” students enrolled in East Hartford Public Schools with the primary objective of moving “ALL” students towards the achievement of excellence. To facilitate new learning and support during implementation, professional development is a priority. Teachers, by contract, meet twice during the week at data team and collaborative planning sessions; six shortened days were added to the district calendar, along with four full days reserved for building and/or district professional development needs. Site-based professional development programs, developed by principals, literacy coaches and department heads, focus on building needs which are identified at data team meetings. The District’s Professional Development Committee meets to identify district professional development needs and discuss targeted audiences. All professional development is aligned with the District’s Improvement Plan.

Discussions of progress will occur at all levels with Administrative Council meetings reserved for ongoing reflection of the District Improvement Plan. This plan sets forward ambitious work for staff and sets high expectations for “ALL” students; however, if East Hartford students are to compete successfully in a global society, we must raise the bar.

# DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## OVERVIEW

### **Priority Student Outcomes (Tier I):**

1. On the CMT in Reading, Mathematics and Writing, the average grade-level gain in the number of students at or above proficiency over the three-year period of the District Improvement Plan (2008-2011) will be at least 15 percentage points.
2. On the CAPT in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing, the grade-level gain at or above proficiency over the three-year period of the District improvement Plan will be at least 15 percentage points.
3. On the CMT and CAPT, achievement gaps within targeted subgroups (Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, Special Education and Free/Reduced Eligible) will be reduced by 30% over the three year period of the District Improvement Plan
4. The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in the District will decrease by at least 15 percent over the three-year period of the District Improvement Plan (2008-2011).
5. The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in targeted student subgroups (Black, Hispanic, and Special Education students) will decrease by at least 25 percent over the three-year period of the District improvement Plan (2008-2011).

### **High-Leverage Adult Work (Tier II):**

1. The district will ensure high quality curriculum and instruction at every grade level for all students.
2. The district will ensure a positive social and emotional climate for all students, staff and families in every school across the district.
3. The district will bring the work of the data teams to a high level of proficiency at all levels of the accountability system – instructional, building and district level teams

# SYNERGY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

## Narrative

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

- Standards-based curricula in all core academic areas;
- A five-year review cycle for curricula ;
- Development of common formative assessments in progress at school levels;
- Identification of priority standards through Making Standards Work (MSW);
- Curriculum-Based Assessments (CBA's) in development;
- Involvement of special education students in classroom and district assessments.

### **Teaching and Learning**

- CReating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS) and John Collins' professional development;
- Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS), including for English Language Learners (ELL);
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for special education students with goals/objectives tied to curriculum standards;
- Annual summer school programs for students who need credit recovery;
- Increased numbers of students participating in the College Partnership Program and receiving college credits;
- District-wide, active participation in all Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) programs;
- Student Advisories supporting and encouraging student achievement;
- Participation in *Courageous Conversations* addressing student expectations, rigor, and biases.

### **Organizational Structure for Leadership and Communication**

- Building and subject level data teams;
- Implementation of Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) and Early Intervention Process (EIP);
- Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) rollout guided by a district planning team;
- Increased partnership with colleges, vocational schools, trade schools, and area businesses;
- Support to encourage student enrollment in area colleges, vocational/trade schools, and other school-to-career opportunities;
- Implementation of a revised attendance policy;
- Coordination of discipline data utilizing eSchool Plus;
- Continued implementation of student information system, eSchool Plus, with ongoing professional development;
- Monthly curriculum meetings for departments to evaluate data collected from CBA's.

### **Parent Involvement**

- Quarterly Student Advising Meetings, PPT's, Attendance Review Board, 504 meetings;
- New Student Orientation, Open House, Financial Aid Night, Awards Night, PRIDE Nights, Senior Awards, Synergy/LIFE Graduation;
- FATE (Friends of Alternative Education) Meetings, monthly Pastries for Parents Meetings;
- Synergy Pageant and other cultural/recreational events;
- Newsletter, progress reports, report cards – quarterly

## SYNERGY OVERVIEW

### **Priority Student Outcomes (Tier I):**

1. On the CAPT in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing, the grade-level gain at or above proficiency over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan will be at least 15 percentage points.
2. CAPT achievement gaps within targeted subgroups (Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, Special Education and Free/Reduced Eligible) will be reduced by 30% over the three year period of the School Improvement Plan
3. The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended at Synergy Alternative High School will decrease by at least 15 percent over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).
4. The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in targeted student subgroups (Black, Hispanic, and Special Education students) will be proportionate to the school population over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).

### **High-Leverage Adult Work (Tier II):**

1. Synergy School will ensure high quality curriculum and instruction at every grade level for all students.
2. Synergy School will ensure a positive social and emotional climate for all students, staff and families in every school across the district.
3. Synergy School will bring the work of the data teams to a high level of proficiency.

**Action Plan to Implement Strategic Work for School Improvement:**  
**CURRICULUM and INSTRUCTION**

**Priority Student Outcomes (Tier I):** List the prioritized student goals that this action plan is designed to achieve.

- **On the CAPT in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, the grade-level gain at or above proficiency over the three-year period of the School improvement Plan will be at least 15 percentage points.**
- **CAPT achievement gaps within targeted subgroups (Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, Special Education and Free/Reduced Eligible) will be reduced by at least 30 percent over the three year period of the School Improvement Plan.**

**High-Leverage Adult Work (Tier II):** Identify the prioritized area of high-leverage adult work that this action plan is designed to address and provide a rationale for selection of this work.

*Strategic work:*

- **The school will ensure high quality curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on literacy for all students.**

*Rationale:*

- **Research from the Leadership and Learning Center supports the implementation of a standards-based curriculum that includes the identification of priority standards and appropriate, effective teaching strategies to improve student achievement.**

*Cambridge recommendations:*

- **Strengthen professional development in order to raise achievement in reading across all phases of schooling, with specific emphasis on diagnosing reading difficulties and expanding strategies to support individual students.**
- **Implement more rigorous evaluation strategies that focus specifically on measuring the impact of additional resources and interventions that are aimed at improving children's learning and/or mental and social well-being.**
- **Improve pedagogy so that teaching strategies are of a consistently high standard and appropriately differentiated to meet the needs of individual students.**
- **Review organizational structures to increase leadership capacity, particularly in elementary schools, so that accountability models are strengthened and curriculum improvement strategies have greater impact.**
- **Maximize the effectiveness of all professional development by focusing professional development on improving instructional practice; ensuring more consistent use across the curriculum of the agreed strategies and questioning; techniques for improving students' English and math skills.**

**Person(s) Responsible:** List by name and position the person(s) responsible for implementing this Action Plan.

John Karzar, Principal; David Flanagan, Supervisor, Health and Physical Education; Emil Kopcha Supervisor, Fine and Performing Arts; Rhea Klein, Ph.D. Dept. Head, Special Education; Frank Staples Dept. Head, Guidance; James Agnew, Dept. Head, Social Studies; Allison Anderson Dept. Head, Mathematics; Melissa Gavarrino Dept. Head, Science; Monica Giglio Dept. Head, English; Michelle Hacker, Dept. Head, Career Technical Ed.; Nancy Testa, Ed.D. Dept. Chair, World Languages

**Action Plan Strategies:** Describe in detail the strategies that will be employed to implement this action plan. Strategies must include a detailed description of the specific actions that will be taken, including timelines, projected costs, funding sources, and other relevant information, as appropriate.

- **Disseminate standards-based English/Language Arts (ELA) curriculum documents with prioritized standards and pacing guides.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Implement drafts of pacing guides.**
    - **Collect feedback and student achievement data.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Continue to implement/Revise pacing guides based on feedback from implementation in year one.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Monitor fidelity of curriculum/pacing guide implementation through SET.**
- **Integrate literacy in content areas at all levels**  
**Facilitate the integration of English Language Learner (ELL) Frameworks into all content area curriculum documents.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Support professional development plans on English Language Learner Frameworks by identifying key personnel for training.**
    - **Effective Teaching Strategies for English Language Learners (ETS for ELL) for identified key personnel.**
    - **Develop a plan of professional development for staff.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Implement professional development plan.**
    - **Facilitate the incorporation of Effective Teaching Strategies for English Language Learners in classroom instruction.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Monitor incorporation of ETS for ELLs in classroom instruction**
- **Utilize literacy standards and strategies in all content areas for Synergy Alternative High School.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Professional development for all staff, such as John Collins.**
    - **Continue implementation of Effective Teaching Strategies, and Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies (CRISS).**
    - **Plan and introduce Site Education Team (SET) classroom visit protocol.**
    - **Train all teaching staff in Site Education Team (SET) classroom visit protocol and utilize at least 50% in classroom walkthroughs.**
    - **Implement common reading/writing scoring rubrics through the use of Synergy Standards of Student Learning.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Embed the Collins Writing Program in all content areas and publish curriculum documents.**
    - **Apply common instructional strategies scoring rubrics developed incorporating the Collins Writing Program within content areas.**
    - **Implement Site Education Team classroom visits protocol through departments and utilize all teachers in classroom walkthroughs.**
    - **Identify goals and professional development through the use of Site Education Team.**
    - **Analyze and revise the use of Student Expectation Rubrics.**

- Year Three
  - Ensure alignment of revised curriculum and instructional practices as demonstrated by units, activities, collaborative lessons that incorporate literacy standards and strategies, through vertical meetings among grade levels and across grade levels.
  - Continue to analyze and revise the use of Student Expectation Rubrics.
- Ensure application of culturally responsive pedagogy and Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS), including ETS for English Language Learners (ELL).
  - Year One
    - Use Classroom Walkthrough (CWT) to assess consistency of implementation of Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS) throughout the building.
    - Continue professional development in Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS) as needed.
    - Include training in Effective Teaching Strategies for English Language Learners for key personnel at Synergy Alternative High School.
    - Participate in professional development in culturally relevant pedagogy for identified personnel at Synergy Alternative High School.
    - Develop plan to build capacity at Synergy.
  - Year Two
    - Monitor consistency of implementation of Effective Teaching Strategies, including Effective Teaching Strategies for English Language Learners.
    - Participate in professional development in culturally relevant pedagogy across disciplines.
  - Year Three
    - On-going support and monitoring of instructional strategies implementation.
- Implement a Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) model that addresses curriculum and instruction.
  - Year One
    - Develop a plan for use of Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) and ensuring high quality Tier I instruction.
    - Participate in professional development opportunities for key personnel.
    - Identify and organize universal applications of literacy strategies for all students.
    - Key personnel from PBS and EIP will participate in creating a shared vision/philosophy and a shared definition of Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI)/Response to Intervention (RTI)
    - Participate in professional development to schools on the updated Learning Disabled (LD) Guidelines.
    - Identify and organize integration of Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) with current Early Intervention Process (EIP) practices.
  - Year Two
    - Implement the plan for use of Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) and ensuring high quality Tier I instruction.
    - Continue to participate in professional development opportunities for key personnel, specifically Learning Disabled (LD) Guidelines
    - Utilize identified universal applications of literacy strategies for all students and Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) with current Early Intervention Process (EIP) practices.
    - Analyze the shared vision/philosophy and the shared definition of Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI)/Response to Intervention (RTI)

- **Year Three**
  - **Continue to implement and review the plan for use of Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) and ensuring high quality Tier I instruction.**
  - **Continue to participate in professional development opportunities for key personnel, specifically Learning Disabled (LD) Guidelines**
  - **Continue to utilize identified universal applications of literacy strategies for all students and Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) with current Early Intervention Process (EIP) practices.**
  - **Continue to analyze the shared vision/philosophy and the shared definition of Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI)/Response to Intervention (RTI)**
- **Facilitate the revision, publication and dissemination of standards-based curriculum documents for the LIFE Credit Recovery Program.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Explore the options of on-line curriculum for credit recovery.**
    - **Facilitate the revision, publication and dissemination of standards-based credit recovery curriculum.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Evaluate LIFE credit recovery program to ensure student success and achievement.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Evaluate LIFE credit recovery program to ensure student success and achievement.**

**Results Indicators: Process and Product:** Describe the data sources, assessment measures, and success criteria that will be used to monitor the degree to which the Action Plan strategies are 1) being implemented with fidelity as proposed, and 2) having a positive impact adult practices, and 3) achieving the specified Tier I goals for students.

- **Schools will gather Classroom Walkthrough/Site Education Team (SET) classroom data at least every 6 weeks to share with the District Data Team. CWT/SET process data will show that increasing percentages of classrooms in each school are implementing the revised curriculum, including the elements of Making Standards Work (MSW), Effective Teaching Strategies (ETS) and differentiation in lesson plans, in their instructional practices with the goal that all classrooms will demonstrate 100% implementation by the end of the three year period.**
- **Analysis of the results of selected department assessments will show over time an increase in achievement and a decrease in the achievement gap of students in identified subgroups using ESchool PLUS.**
- **Evaluations will demonstrate that professional development is of high quality and that additional professional development needs are identified and referred to the district professional development committee.**
- **Annual review of CAPT data will demonstrate continuous progress over time toward achievement of the tier I academic goals for overall performance and reduction of achievement gaps.**

## Action Plan to Implement Strategic Work for District Improvement: **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

**Priority Student Outcomes (Tier I):** List the prioritized student goals that this Action Plan is designed to achieve.

- **The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in the School will decrease by at least 15 percent over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).**
- **The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in targeted student subgroups (Black, Hispanic and Special Education students) will be proportionate to the school population over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).**

**High-Leverage Adult Work (Tier II):** Identify the prioritized area of high-leverage adult work that this action plan is designed to address and provide a rationale for selection of this work.

*Strategic Work:*

- **The school will ensure a positive social and emotional climate for all students, staff and families throughout the school year.**

*Rationale:*

- **Research from the Pacific Education Group (*Courageous Conversations*) indicates that students of color engage in learning more effectively within a positive environment that is culturally relevant and respectful of their needs.**
- **In her keynote address to all East Hartford Public School staff in August 2007, based on the research in her book, *From Rage to Hope*, Dr. Crystal Kuykendall emphasized the need to create a positive learning environment for Black and Hispanic students by knowing their culture, learning about their backgrounds and the understanding the effect institutional barriers and school related obstacles have on behavior and performance.**
- **Alfred Tatum, *Teaching Reading to Black Adolescent Males*, indicates that culturally relevant curricula engage students while decreasing acting out behaviors.**

*Cambridge Recommendations::*

- **Review organizational structures to increase leadership capacity, particularly in elementary schools, so that accountability models are strengthened and curriculum improvement strategies have greater impact.**
- **Implement more rigorous evaluation strategies that focus specifically on measuring the impact of additional resources and interventions that are aimed at improving children's learning and/or mental and social well-being.**
- **Greater attention should be paid to supporting students from minority groups in order to address the disproportionately high number of suspensions particularly among Black males.**

**Person(s) Responsible:** List, by name and position the person(s) responsible for implementing this Action Plan.

John Karzar, Principal; Jean Riley, LIFE Analyst; Robin McKinley, teacher; Donna Salerno, teacher; Sean Harrington, teacher; Carla Brooks, teacher; Chris Denfeld, teacher; Dave Bocchichio, teacher;

Laura Meehan, teacher; Dave Morelli, teacher; Mark Schultz, teacher; Angela Berry, Behavior Manager; Efrain Irrizary, Security Officer; Beverly Moreau, Nurse; Sahar Noushin, Guidance/Vocation Counselor; JoAnn Sondheimer, Social Worker; Joe Riley, tutor; Linda Alexander, tutor; Sharon Harris, tutor.

**Action Plan Strategies:** Describe in detail the strategies that will be employed to implement this action plan. Strategies must include a detailed description of the specific actions that will be taken, including timelines, projected costs, funding sources, and other relevant information, as appropriate.

- **Participate in professional development on improving school climate in all schools through Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) School Climate training.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Participate in professional development opportunities to key personnel, through the District Climate Survey.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Continue on-going professional development access and provide support to new and selected staff.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Continue on-going professional development access and provide support to new and selected staff.**
- **Increase engagement of families in support of positive student behavior.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Administer and analyze Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) climate survey for families, students and staff in all schools to establish baseline data.**
    - **Share initial information with all members of the entire school community.**
    - **Implement selected strategies to address focus areas and increase engagement of families.**
    - **Request translators as needed and disseminate information in alternate languages where possible.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Implement strategies for selected focus areas.**
    - **Administer and analyze District Climate Survey as identified in year one.**
    - **Continue to share survey information with entire school community.**
    - **Revise/adjust strategies and collect Positive Behavior Support data on focus areas.**
    - **Monitor integration of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and the use of more individualized programs within Synergy Alternative High School.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Modify year two strategies as indicated by analysis of survey data and PBS data.**
    - **Continue to collect data and disseminate results to entire school.**
    - **Assure consistency of implementation of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) using Scientific Research-Based Intervention/Response to Intervention (SRBI/RTI) model.**
- **Improve student behavior through further implementation and development of Positive Behavior Support Program.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Develop school protocol for implementation and data gathering of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) data, including interpretation of terms (Tiers 1, II and III).**

- Participate in professional development and technical assistance to support implementation, as needed.
    - Begin to utilize specific, disaggregated student data on behavior collected from eSchool Plus data base.
  - Year Two
    - Continue training and implementation refinement of Positive Behavior Support.
    - Continue to utilize specific, disaggregated student data on behavior collected from ESchool Plus data base.
  - Year Three
    - Continue training and implementation refinement of Positive Behavior Support.
    - Continue to utilize specific, disaggregated student data on behavior collected from ESchool Plus data base.
- Ensure consistency in application of disciplinary consequences.
  - Year One
    - Revise and implement student handbook to align with Board of Education policies.
    - Revise and implement disciplinary guidelines with updated progressive discipline.
    - Participate in training for identified personnel in the features of the discipline/attendance module of eSchool PLUS to create consistency in data recording.
  - Year Two
    - Analyze the discipline data for strengths/weaknesses and procedural modifications.
    - Ensure that eSchool Plus has reliable data through periodic validity checks and that the data demonstrate fidelity of implementation.
    - Update and continue to implement the district guidelines and student handbook.
    - Continue to train all staff in eSchool discipline/attendance as needed.
  - Year Three
    - Continue to analyze the discipline data for strengths/weaknesses and procedural modifications.
    - Continue to ensure that eSchool Plus has reliable data through periodic validity checks and that the data demonstrate fidelity of implementation of the plan/code of conduct.
    - Continue to update and implement the discipline guidelines and student handbook.
    - Continue to train identified personnel in eSchool discipline/attendance.
- Further development of the Synergy “5 A’s to Success” which follows the PBS model for positive role development and life skills curriculum.
  - Year One
    - Continue to develop and utilize curriculum for Connections – synergy Advisory
    - Utilize Amer-I-Can curriculum to train students in life skills.
    - Further development of Adventure Leaders and Ambassadors to Diversity to engage students in positive role development.
  - Year Two
    - Analyze the discipline and academic data for students participating in these programs to evaluate success.
    - Develop more community service and other positive roles for students through their participation in the 5 A’s to Success.
    - Utilize Amer-I-Can’s data to evaluate success of the program.

- **Year Three**
  - **Continue to analyze the discipline and academic data for evaluation of the programs in the 5 A's to Success.**
  - **Continue to develop more positive roles for students including other manners for students to take leadership roles within the school and community.**

**Results Indicators: Process and Product:** Describe the data sources, assessment measures, and success criteria that will be used to monitor the degree to which the Action Plan strategies are 1) being implemented with fidelity as proposed, and 2) having a positive impact on adult practices, and 3) achieving the specified Tier I goals for students.

- **Positive Behavior Support Site Evaluation Team (PBS SET) assessments will demonstrate a minimum level of 80% in consistent application of Positive Behavior Support practices at the school.**
- **Discipline data will show incremental reductions in the number of office disciplinary referrals from the baseline as established in year one leading to an overall reduction of 50% by the end of year three per class cohort.**
- **Suspension data will show incremental reductions of suspensions (In School Suspensions/Out of School Suspensions) averaging 8% per year as measured against the baseline of Year 2007- 08 toward the achievement of the Tier 1 goal.**
- **Survey data will show increasingly positive perceptions of selected focus areas on each school's climate surveys over the baseline of winter, 2009. (percentage increases to be determined after baselines are established in the first survey)**
- **Agenda and minutes from School Data Team and PBS will reflect the tier 1 actions of the SIP.**
- **Data from Amer-I-Can will demonstrate reduced disciplinary referrals and improvements in attendance and academic progress.**

Action Plan to Implement Strategic Work for District Improvement:  
**DATA TEAM**

**Priority Student Outcomes (Tier I):** List the prioritized student goals that this action plan is designed to achieve.

- On the CAPT in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, the grade-level gain at or above proficiency over the three-year period of School Improvement Plan will be at least 15 percentage points.
- CAPT achievement gaps within targeted subgroups (Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, Special Education and Free/Reduced Eligible) will be reduced by at least 30 percent over the three year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008 – 2011).
- The number of overall suspensions and the number of students suspended in the School will decrease by at least 15 percent over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).
- Student attendance will improve by at least 10% over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan (2008-2011).

**High-Leverage Adult Work (Tier II):** Identify the prioritized area of high-leverage adult work that this action plan is designed to address and provide a rationale for selection of this work.

*Strategic Work:*

- The school will bring the work of the data teams to a high level of proficiency at all levels of the accountability system – School and Department data teams.

*Rationale:*

- Research from the Center for Leadership and Learning supports the systematic use of data for improving student achievement. DuFours' research regarding Professional Learning Communities further supports the connection between the use of data and improved student achievement.
- Michael Schmoker's research explicated in *Results Now* suggests that timely use of assessment data to drive instruction leads to improved student achievement.

*Cambridge Recommendations for Synergy:*

- Distribute leadership more widely, based on increased trust and shared responsibility, so that principals have a greater role in decision-making and a level of professional autonomy that is commensurate with their school's performance.
- Strengthen communication between the district and schools so that principals and teachers have genuine opportunities to significantly shape professional development strategies and curriculum initiatives
- Review organizational structures to increase leadership capacity, particularly in elementary schools, so that accountability models are strengthened and curriculum improvement strategies have greater impact.
- Ensure that the School Improvement Plan and data-driven decision-making processes are more effective in promoting student achievement by clearly identifying targets for the achievement of all subgroups and individual students; the persons to take action and the tasks and associated timescales.
- Develop a coherent and consistent approach to curriculum and instructional leadership oversight, supervision and evaluation by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the school administrations team, department heads and district staff.

**Person(s) Responsible:** List, by name and position the person(s) responsible for implementing this Action Plan.

John Karzar, Principal; David Flanagan, Supervisor, Health and Physical Education; Emil Kopcha Supervisor, Fine and Performing Arts; Rhea Klein, Ph.D. Dept. Head, Special Education; Frank Staples Dept. Head, Guidance; James Agnew, Dept. Head, Social Studies; Allison Anderson Dept. Head, Mathematics; Melissa Gavarrino Dept. Head, English; Monica Giglio Dept. Head, Science; Michelle Hacker, Dept. Head, Career Technical Ed.; Nancy Testa, Ed.D. Dept. Chair, World Languages; Jean Riley, LIFE Analyst; Robin McKinley, teacher; Donna Salerno, teacher; Sean Harrington, teacher; Carla Brooks, teacher; Chris Denfeld, teacher; Dave Bocchichio, teacher; Laura Meehan, teacher; Dave Morelli, teacher; Mark Schultz, teacher; Angela Berry, Behavior Manager; Efrain Irrizary, Security Officer; Beverly Moreau, Nurse; Sahar Noushin, Guidance/Vocation Counselor; JoAnn Sondheimer, Social Worker; Joe Riley, tutor; Linda Alexander, tutor; Sharon Harris, tutor.

**Action Plan Strategies:** Describe in detail the strategies that will be employed to implement this action plan. Strategies must include a detailed description of the specific actions that will be taken, including timelines, projected costs, funding sources, and other relevant information, as appropriate.

- **Implement the expectations for the Department and School Data Teams.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Provide professional development for principal and teacher leaders on the Data Driven Decision Making process.**
    - **Identify content area/building data categories to be reviewed across the school – i.e. writing prompts, benchmarks, common assessments, curriculum based assessments, etc. and create a schedule for reporting to principal and staff.**
    - **Develop a monthly meeting schedule calendar for data teams, including Language Arts, PBS Team, and Social Science Team.**
    - **Utilize student expectations and Collins Writing in CBA**
    - **Communicate school progress of SIP goals on a regular basis.**
  - **Year Two**
    - **Implement district standardized data team minutes template.**
    - **Review/revise data team meeting calendar.**
    - **Continue reporting to communicate progress of SIP goals on a regular basis.**
  - **Year Three**
    - **Monitor implementation and refine processes as needed.**
    - **Continue to use standardized data team template.**
    - **Review/revise calendar**
- **Participate in professional development in the analysis and use of data to inform instruction and improve student achievement.**
  - **Year One**
    - **Implement eSchool Plus**
    - **Participate in professional development support to teachers and administrators in the following modules:**
      - **Grade Book and Attendance**
      - **Data analysis and reporting functions – Data Cubes**
    - **Participate in ctreports.com training for all key personnel.**
    - **Participate in Professional Development in areas of the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiatives that support data teams as follows:**
      - **Data Driven Decision Making**

- Making Standards Work
  - Effective Teaching Strategies
  - Common Formative Assessments
  - Continue use of training on eSchool Plus.
- Year Two
  - Continue to implement and participate in professional development in areas of CALI focus.
- Create a plan for the use of Synergy’s Standards of Student Learning in all content areas.
  - Year One
    - Identify priority and secondary student expectations for each department.
    - Align CBA to student expectations.
    - Analyze CBA’s to inform curriculum, instruction and assessment.
  - Year Two
    - Review/revise priority and secondary student expectations from each department.
    - Evaluate and modify implementation plan for student expectations.
    - Analyze CBA’s to inform curriculum, instruction and assessment
  - Year Three
    - Review/revise priority and secondary student expectations from each department.
    - Evaluate and modify implementation plan for student expectations.
    - Analyze CBA’s to inform curriculum, instruction and assessment

**Results Indicators: Process and Product:** Describe the data sources, assessment measures, and success criteria that will be used to monitor the degree to which the Action Plan strategies are 1) being implemented with fidelity as proposed, and 2) having a positive impact adult practices, and 3) achieving the specified Tier I goals for students.

- School Data Team minutes will demonstrate implementation of the SIP goals.
- The Department Data Team minutes will demonstrate implementation and analysis of student achievement as measured by CBA’s.
- Building principals will analyze and summarize data team proficiency in their buildings, and the District Data Team will review this information quarterly as per developed rubrics demonstrating 100% proficiency by the end of the three year period.
- Classroom Walkthrough (CWT) and Site Education Team (SET) data shared with the District Data Team will show that increasing percentages of classrooms in each school are implementing the revised curriculum, including the Effective Teaching Strategies and differentiation in lesson plans, in their instructional practices as a result of proficient data team implementation reaching 100% by the end of the three year period.

**Synergy Alternative High School  
School Improvement Plan: 2008-2011**

Data Chart for SMART-Goal Baselines (2008) and Targets (2011)

**Goals 1 & 2: On CAPT, the average grade-level gain in the number of students at or above proficiency over the three-year period of the School Improvement Plan will be at least 15 percentage points.**

<u>CAPT: Grade 10</u>	<u>2008 Performance</u>	<u>2011 Target</u>
Reading	28.6%	44%
Math	32.4%	48%
Writing	45.5%	61%

**Goal 3: On CAPT achievement gaps within targeted subgroups (Black, Hispanic, English Language Learners, Special Education and Free/Reduced Eligible) will be reduced by 30 percent over the three year period of the School Improvement Plan.**

**Goals 4 & 5: 15% overall reduction in suspension incidents and number of students suspended;  
Proportionate number of suspensions for White, Black, Hispanic and Special Education students**

	2008 Population	2008 Baseline Total Suspensions	2011 Target Total Suspensions
<b>All Students</b>	156		
# of Incidents		158	134
# of Students		75	63
<b>White Students</b>	42 (27%)		
# of Incidents		54	46
# of Students		24	20
<b>Black Students</b>	56 (36%)		
# of Incidents		72	62
# of Students		34	29
<b>Hispanic Students</b>	55 (35%)		
# of Incidents		32	27
# of Students		17	14
<b>Special Education Students</b>	28 (18%)		
# of Incidents		20	17
# of Students		9	11

**Connecticut State Department of Education**  
**Addendum to School and District Improvement Plans**  
**for Technical or Other Assistance Provided by the CSDE to Meet the**  
**Requirements of Sec. 1116 of NCLB**

**(This addendum must be attached to all school and district improvement plans)**

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) will support the school and district improvement process through the Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI). The initiative will serve as a professional development vehicle and will:

- focus on the district as the primary change agent;
- create a culture of professional learning communities in schools, districts, and the state;
- differentiate support based on individual district and school needs; and
- increase student achievement for all students.

The CSDE will provide technical assistance to districts and schools who have been identified as “in need of improvement”. This support will be provided by the CSDE in conjunction with:

- Regional Education Service Centers (RESCs);
- State Education Resource Center (SERC);
- Cambridge Education;
- Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS); and
- The Leadership and Learning Center.

The following types of support will be provided to district and school-level improvement teams, with priority given to Title I schools and districts identified as “in need of improvement”:

- telephone technical assistance;
- site visits;
- guidance in the development and implementation of improvement plans;
- professional development focused on accountability for student learning, data-driven decision-making, implementation of data teams, understanding standards, and aligning standards instruction and assessment; effective teaching strategies and common formative assessments;
- on-site job-embedded professional development follow-up and support; and
- coaching for principals and superintendents.

The CSDE and the School Improvement and Literacy Unit shall coordinate communication between all stakeholders while working to unify school and district improvement efforts in the state.

**Revised 8/07**