

OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (S.I.P.'s)
2007-2008

SCHOOL: Washington Middle School

INTRODUCTION

Washington Middle School is located in the southeast portion of the city of Olympia in a quiet, forested residential area. Our newly constructed 95,000 square foot structure is a state-of-the-art “green building” with natural daylighting in the classrooms, rainwater harvesting to flush toilets, and sustainable and environmentally friendly materials used throughout. We continually send the message to our students and community about the value of our environment and are proud that our building supports this message as well. We occupied the new building in July 2006.

Our population is approximately 740 students in grades 6, 7 and 8 and 60 staff members including teachers, paraeducators, secretaries and administrators. Our building scores on WASL testing are consistently above the state and district averages and continue to improve.

For the 2007-2008 school year, our daily program consists of grade level teams that include math, science, and block teachers collaborating toward a consistent approach for their groups of students. Sixth grade students take 6 weeks of Social Issues, 6 weeks of health, and 24 weeks of Physical Education in a rotation. All 7th and 8th grade students rotate through a quarter each of PE, health and home arts and tech arts. Finally, one elective class of chorus, band, orchestra, or an exploratory non-music rotation of hands-on activity classes rounds out the average student’s day.

Students are challenged to their greatest ability through differentiated instruction in every class and a wide range of math options through the geometry level. Enrichment activities for students are provided within the general education curriculum.

Students requiring assistance to meet the grade level expectations are given multiple opportunities to obtain academic support. Special education programs are designed to meet the individual needs of the learners. All of our special education students have a wide spectrum of supporting options available to promote their success. Other opportunities for support could include learning lab, before and after school tutoring, and/or remedial instruction.

Our school values the use of technology and how it can enhance the educational process. We operate a technology rich curriculum with subject areas integrating the use of technology as appropriate. We focus on using technology as a tool to improve learning and live daily by the philosophy of students and adults working closely together in a mutually respectful relationship around the use of technology. In the sixth grade, all students gain proficiency in productivity, communications, and research computer applications that address the ISTE National Education Technology Standards (NETS) for Students. An emphasis is also placed on learning the social and ethical issues surrounding technology use. This teaching takes place primarily in the SciTech and Social Issues classes. In the seventh and eighth grades, technology is integrated into content areas.

Students as technology assistants throughout the day add to the effectiveness of our daily use in the classroom and other areas of the building. Widespread use of technology and multimedia in the majority of our classes exceeds the basic curricular and technology goals of the Olympia School District and the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

Our building goals focus on improving academic skills such as reading, writing, math and science skills, as well as lifetime fitness and wellness for staff and students, promoting a safe and healthy environment, collaboration among our staff, families and community, and technology implementation.

GOAL 1: READING - The 2007 WASL reading results show 87.7% met the standard. Our goal for 2008 performance in reading is to have at least 92% and we expect to reach the goal of 96% in 2009.

Action Plans

- ◆ Identify struggling readers needing to be placed in research-validated programs for intervention to improve reading skills.
- ◆ Specifically address the areas of comprehension and critical thinking related to literary text, and analysis and interpretation of informational text
- ◆ Utilize research-based technology programs for intensive intervention of critical reading skills of decoding, vocabulary, and fluency.
- ◆ Implement a program by providing additional instruction for struggling readers within the school day, after school, before school, or during summer.
- ◆ Implement a program that addresses study skills and test taking strategies for students within the block program, math and science classes.
- ◆ Continue to identify significant current research relating to diverse learners and modify teaching strategies to further enhance their reading skills.
- ◆ Train staff to more effectively teach the vocabulary in their content area and within the GLE of their grade levels using a variety of techniques.
- ◆ Train staff to more effectively provide differentiated instruction in their content area.

GOAL 2: WRITING - The 2007 WASL writing results show 86.1% met the standard. Our goal for 2008 performance in writing is to have at least 90% and we expect to reach the goal of 95% in 2009.

Action Plans

- ◆ Teachers review content standards considered essential for all students in writing and item specifications for Writing GLEs.
- ◆ Teach students to evaluate writing using a 4-point rubric consistent with WASL expectations and implement throughout the 6-8 grades in all classes.
- ◆ Raise teachers' awareness of technology skills taught in Sci/Tech/Social Issues.
- ◆ Teach brain research pertaining to strategies that are effective with students of diverse learning styles.

- ◆ Build Inspiration software into programs as an option for kids' writing across the curriculum.
- ◆ Continue to build consistent writing expectations and formats for all grade levels communicating a uniform process to the students.
- ◆ Join with other middle schools or high school to provide more training in writing for staff.

GOAL 3: MATH - The 2007 WASL math results show 80% met the standard. Our goal for 2008 performance in math is to have at least 85% and we expect to reach the goal of 90% in 2009.

Action Plans

- ◆ Identify students in need of intervention through test and performance data.
- ◆ Offer extended learning opportunities through before or after school tutoring, extra class within the day, or summer programs for selected students for specific instruction and practice in math.
- ◆ Facilitate participation in OSD summer school or WMS Summer Learning Academy for selected students.
- ◆ Utilize research-based technology programs, like Compass Math, to teach or reinforce basic operations and mathematical procedures and concepts.
- ◆ Implement CMP2 for grade 6 and those students having completed CMP2 the previous year.
- ◆ Provide training for teachers on constructivist strategies and CMP2.

GOAL 4: SCIENCE - The 2007 WASL science results show 68.1% met the standard. Our goal for 2008 performance in science is to have at least 78% and we expect to reach the goal of 85% in 2009.

Action Plans

- ◆ Teachers align all lessons to specifications for Grade 8 Science WASL by sequencing and organizing essential content and focusing curriculum materials on GLEs.
- ◆ Determine consistent vocabulary and term usage within science classes to expose students to needed vocabulary for a better understanding of the science terms used on the WASL.
- ◆ Meet with district science instructors to further align materials and lessons.
- ◆ Focus on more preparation in the areas of Systems and Applications.
- ◆ Meet with OSPI representatives in science to become more familiar with the scoring of the 8th grade science WASL to better prepare the students for the testing experience.
- ◆ Participate in the OSD science curriculum alignment and materials adoption for the 2007-2008 school year.

WORK TO BE DONE IN AREAS IMPORTANT TO OUR SCHOOL

COLLABORATION / PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING - Increase school collaboration activities with district and building staff, families, students, and community partners to further enhance the teaching and learning at WMS.

- ◆ Adapt to earlier conferences (October 12-18) by changing the format from academic reporting to goal setting and information sharing.
- ◆ Ensure parent communication through phone calls, list serve e-mail, web page, mailers, the Olympian and other forms of notice for inviting families to parent nights, special programs, conferences, etc. Address the needs of our diverse community by including more communication in various languages.
- ◆ Design a quarterly parent education evening for the purpose of informing parents of important issues involving their middle schoolers.
- ◆ Continue progress reports twice quarterly, but strive for uniformity with all staff and add the option of emailing progress reports to parents
- ◆ Promote school-wide usage of the agenda planners, especially with those teaching in core areas where homework is typically assigned.
- ◆ Facilitate grade level teaming, including team planning, conferencing, and collaboration.
- ◆ Provide a combination homework/activities club option for students after school to further build basic skills in reading and math.
- ◆ Provide parent information evenings about CMP2, as well as ways parents can use the Internet to stay informed and communicate with the school more effectively.

WELLNESS - Promote school-wide wellness by improving PE/Health knowledge and skills.

- ◆ Students will set goals for their own fitness and healthy activities.
- ◆ Teach students to record fitness information using fitnessgram technology to help them track their progress in PE or their progress toward fitness goals.
- ◆ Using health classes, students will continue to learn basic nutrition information to help them eat healthier.
- ◆ Students will keep portfolios to help document their progress toward fitness and health goals.
- ◆ Encourage families to participate in wellness goals. (Offer opportunities for physical activities at the school outside of school hours. Post healthy eating habits and recipes on the WMS website for families to try and enjoy. Publish tips for stress relief and relaxation for families to try together. Offer monthly parent education classes to help parents and their children cope with conflict and emotional issues.
- ◆ Encourage staff to participate in wellness goal setting and provide various avenues to facilitate their wellness. (Evening/morning recreation, stress relief techniques, wellness information, etc)

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL: Provide an inclusive, safe, and healthy environment at school and at all school related events.

- ◆ Continue to emphasize with a school-wide campaign from the Student Government, counseling, and administrative staff, on the issues around harassment and bullying on a monthly to quarterly basis.
- ◆ All 6th graders will receive training on assertiveness and self-advocacy in Social Issues as well as a continued message on harassment and bullying.
- ◆ Provide a variety of ways all students and families can feel welcome and included in the school and its daily activities. (Welcoming group for new students, evening technology classes, bulletin boards and displays around the building)
- ◆ Continue to strive for ways to celebrate and recognize diversity in all areas, including ethnicity, learning styles and strengths, disabilities, religions, and sexual orientation.
- ◆ Utilize community resources to improve communication with non-English speaking families through contract services with a liaison.
- ◆ Start a recognition program to identify students from all intelligences and recognize them publicly monthly.
- ◆ Continue staff and student diversity training and activities. (Offer presentations each quarter to all of the student body. Generate plans to include multi-cultural displays, language and activities. Publish important documents, newsletter, etc. in Spanish and possibly other languages.)
- ◆ Continue specific brain functioning training for staff.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLEMENTATION:

- ◆ Explore and identify applications, adaptive software, and technology equipment for improving information literacy, research design, presentation and communication skills for remedial students.
- ◆ Continue communication class that has clearer goals and objectives to disseminate valuable information via Channel 2 News, the WMS website, and a student newsletter.
- ◆ Continue to use new technologies in our building and provide inservice on their use to staff. (Smart boards, Wireless laptop application in the classroom, audio enhancement, document cameras, projectors, etc.)
- ◆ Further enhance and train staff on the usefulness of the WMS website for our community.
- ◆ Continue to learn the basic operation of the OSPI SLP tool.
- ◆ Promote personal safety on the Internet.
- ◆ Explore the use of web-based home tutorials that align with CMP2.
- ◆ Explore and identify software options for practice and drill on basic skills, as well as enrichment opportunities.

