

Highland Middle School

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN



2019-2020

Susan Thomas, Principal



The mission of the Bellevue School District is to serve each and every student academically, socially and emotionally through a rigorous and relevant education that is innovative and individualized. As a learning community that values one another's humanity, we provide courageous support for an equitable and exceptional education for all students.

To affirm and inspire each and every student to learn and thrive as creators of their future world.

Highland Middle School

2019-2020 School Improvement Plan

At Highland Middle School we are committed to serving and educating the whole child by promoting a strong sense of belonging to the school community, holding high expectations for student learning, and developing them as independent learners and thinkers.

Our work in serving every student, every day in every classroom is grounded in an idea of continuous improvement. Working with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, we use nine characteristics of successful schools to guide our work.

THE NINE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS

- 1 · Developing a clear and shared focus · 2 · Maintaining high standards and expectations for all students
- 3 · Using effective school leadership · 4 · Engaging in high levels of collaboration and communication · 5
- Providing curriculum, instruction and assessments aligned with state standards · 6 · Ensuring frequent monitoring of learning and teaching · 7 · Delivering focused professional development · 8 · Maintaining a supportive learning environment · 9 · Promoting high levels of family and community involvement

Included in this school improvement plan are details to share the current focus at Highland Middle School, as well as outline our strengths and opportunities for the year ahead. In addition to promoting continuous improvement of student achievement of the state learning goals, we recognize that nonacademic student learning and growth are key elements of student well-being and success. This plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment of our school and programs, and included active participation and input from building staff, students, families, parents and community members.

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“Culturally responsive teaching is about helping culturally and linguistically diverse students who have been marginalized in schools build their skill and capacity to do rigorous work. The focus isn’t on motivation, but on improving their brain power and information processing skills.

-Zaretta Hammond in Education Week Teacher

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Instructional Program Overview

Highland Middle School (HMS) serves a diverse community of approximately 500 students. The teachers and staff at Highland have the foundational belief that all students can be successful without exception or excuse. Over the years, HMS has been recognized on a regular basis with *Washington Achievement Awards* for continuous improvement of its academic proficiency scores and as a *Site of Distinction* by the Center for Educational Effectiveness in 2014. Highland prides itself on creating an inclusive community where all students are celebrated and valued. HMS is a racially and linguistically diverse school with a population that is 34% Hispanic, 32% White, 17% Asian, 8% Multi-Ethnic and 8% Black. In addition, 53% of students speak a first language other than English.

In the fall of 2017, Highland embarked on the journey of becoming a dual language school. Highland is now the Bellevue School District site for the middle school Spanish Dual Language program. The goal is for students to be biliterate and bilingual, achieve at grade-level academic standards, and be cross-culturally competent. Moving forward, Highland will have a cohort of students who spend 40% of their day learning in Spanish and 60% in English. The Highland staff and community believe that it is important not simply to have a dual language program, but to be a dual language school where both languages are valued and equally utilized. The school is working to reflect a power equalization between the two languages to promote a racially and linguistically equitable environment.

As a community, Highland staff and families believe that all students should have high-quality instruction and be exposed to rigorous content each and every day. HMS implements Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) school-wide. The AVID program uses reading and writing strategies to ensure that all students are able to access high level content. In addition, the AVID program supports all students in learning effective inquiry and collaborative practices to promote active engagement. Highland was selected as an AVID School-wide Site of Distinction for the past three years. This represents the highest level of AVID implementation, demonstrating excellence in instructional practice and the promotion of college readiness school-wide. This elite group of candidate schools represents less than 10% of all AVID middle and high schools worldwide. In addition, Highland is a one-to-one middle school in the Bellevue School District, meaning all students are assigned a laptop computer that they use at school and at home. The fact that students have consistent access to technology supports the instructional efforts of the Highland staff and affords the Highland staff a unique opportunity to participate in schoolwide technology focused professional development.

Highland's students and staff strive to create an inclusive environment for students with unique learning needs. Highland offers co-taught courses at all three grade levels composed of both students receiving special education and English Language Learner (ELL) services and students in general education. Two teachers, one with a special education credential, teach them. This creates a less restrictive environment for students receiving special education services and promotes the learning of all students. Seventy-five percent of Highland students who receive resource room special education services are in one or more co-taught classes.

Highland is also the home to the district's middle school program for students who have low-incidence disabilities, known as the PACIFIC program. Students in the PACIFIC program are embraced by the school community and many of Highland's students serve as tutors in this program. They work side-by-side with the teachers to support and provide a caring environment for these students. Students in the PACIFIC program participate fully in Highland's educational program.

The Highland staff supports students by providing both individual and systemic supports that include multidisciplinary block classes, flexible grouping in math classes, and targeted reading support classes. Highland provides instructional training for the teachers and staff to support students in reaching high achievement standards.

Highland utilizes a system of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). Highland staff readily teach students to be Respectful, Responsible, Ready, and to build Relationships. These values are consistently reinforced using student and staff recognition programs. Finally, Highland supports its students through community partnerships. HMS has an ongoing partnership with Jubilee Reach, which provides a free after-school program for Highland students called Club Jubilee. Approximately 40% of Highland students are consistently involved in Club Jubilee. This program provides all students with the opportunity to interact with their peers, build their character, and participate in organized sports. Students are encouraged to attend before and after school tutorial for extra support as well as Club Jubilee.

Highland's commitment to creating an inclusive school community that develops all students as learners and supports them to reach their highest potential has resulted in a culture analogous to a family where kindness, compassion and support are evident daily.



School Overview

Highland Middle School is a Spanish Dual Language and PACIFIC program school serving approximately 500 students. Our foundational belief is that all students can be successful without exception or excuse. We strive to affirm and inspire each and every student to learn and thrive as creators of their future world.

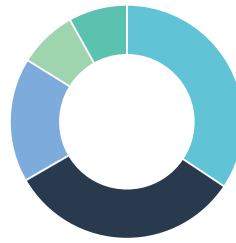
Programs Offered

Pacific (special education), Spanish Dual Language

School & Student Characteristics ¹

	SCHOOL	DISTRICT ²
Enrollment	450	683
National Board Certified Teachers	26%	28%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals	50%	17%
Receiving Special Education Services	16%	8%
English Language Learners	22%	8%
First Language Other Than English	53%	35%
Mobility Rate ³	12%	7%

Racial Diversity



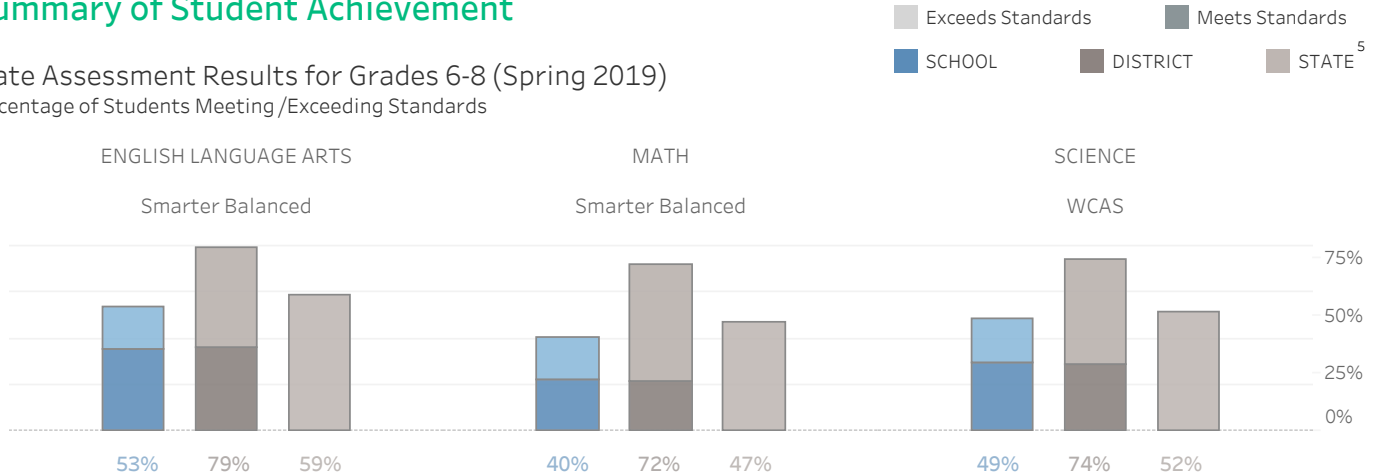
- 17% Asian
- 8% Black
- 34% Hispanic
- 8% Two or more races
- 32% White
- N/A Native American
- N/A Pacific Islander

Attendance & Discipline

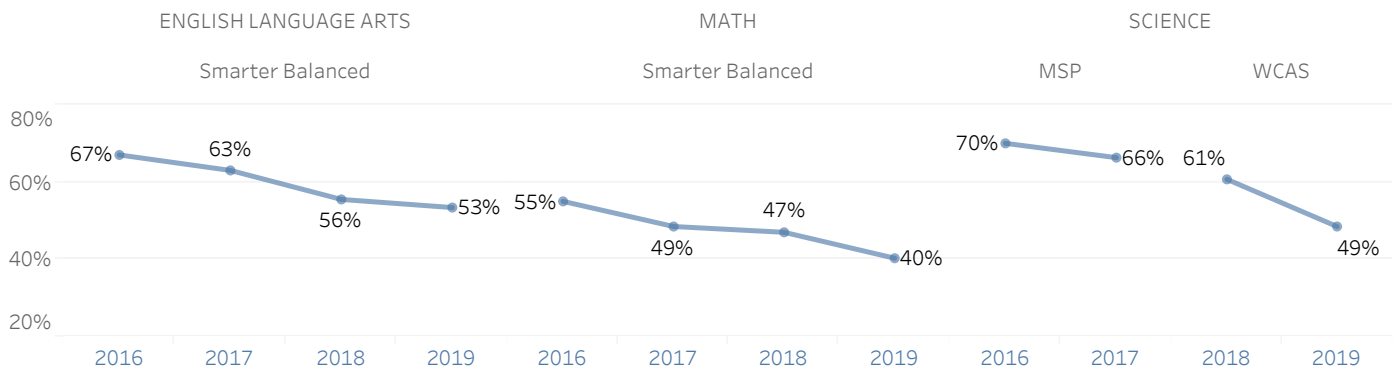
	SCHOOL	DISTRICT
Average Attendance Rate	95%	96%
Students with < 10 Absences Per Year	62%	63%
Students with 18+ Absences Per Year	16%	17%
Suspension Rate ⁴	8.2%	3.4%

Summary of Student Achievement

State Assessment Results for Grades 6-8 (Spring 2019)
 Percentage of Students Meeting/Exceeding Standards



State Assessment Results for Grades 6-8 in the Last Four Years
 Percentage of Students Meeting Standards



Glossary

National Board Certified Teachers

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards offers a voluntary certification process for teachers to show that they have met the organization's standards for effective teaching. Teachers who apply go through a lengthy and rigorous screening process to obtain certification.

Science Assessments - WCAS/MSP

WCAS stands for Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science, first administered in Spring 2018 to students state-wide in grades 5, 8 and 11. The WCAS replaces the WA State MSP science assessment. The WCAS is aligned to Next Generation Science Standards, which emphasize engineering and technology. The standards were adopted by the state in 2013. For more information see www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/default.aspx.

Smarter Balanced

Starting in 2014-15, Washington State adopted the Smarter Balanced exams to assess student learning in English language arts and math in grades 3-8 and 10-11. These computer-based exams are aligned to the state's Common Core learning standards. For more information see www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/default.aspx.

Special Education Services

Neighborhood schools provide a continuum of special education services. We provide specialty centers as well:

* **Cascade** program for students who benefit from behavioral supports due to emotional stressors.

* **Evergreen** program to serve young adults (ages 18-21) with disabilities.

* **Olympic** program to support students on the autism spectrum.

* **Pacific** program for students with significant developmental and intellectual disabilities.

* **PALS** (Preschool Age Learning) preschool to provide early intervention services for children with special needs (ages 3-5), together with typically developing peers.

End Notes

- 1 School and Student Characteristics**
Data are from October 1, 2018 unless otherwise specified.
- 2 District Average**
The district averages displayed here are the averages for district middle schools.
- 3 Mobility Rate**
The percent of students who entered or withdrew from the school between October 1 and June 15, based on October 1 enrollment.
- 4 Suspension Rate**
The percent of students who received at least one in-school or out-of-school suspension or were expelled over the course of the school year.
- 5 State Assessment Results**
State pass rate percentages combine "Meets Standard" and "Exceeds Standard."

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) GOALS:

- At least 59% of Highland’s Class of 2026 (current 6th graders) will meet Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) state standards in English Language Arts, while meeting Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) goals for all subgroups. The 2019 proficiency rate was 55%.
- Highland will decrease the gap between our highest and lowest achieving racial subgroups in English Language Arts (grades 6-8) by accelerating the growth for lowest-scoring groups while maintaining or increasing proficiency levels of the highest scoring groups. We will decrease the gap from 40% in 2019 to 35% in 2020.

English Language Arts: SBA Proficiency Rates and Goals: Current Grade 6 Cohort

Group	2018	2019		2020
	Actual Grade 4	Target Grade 5	Actual Grade 5	Target Grade 6
All Students	49%	54%	55%	59%
Asian	81%	82%	84%	85%
Black	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	24%	31%	35%	42%
Two or More Races	*	*	60%	64%
White	64%	67%	65%	68%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals	27%	34%	39%	45%
Students with Disabilities	25%	32%	43%	49%
English Language Learners	7%	16%	19%	28%

English Language Arts: SBA Proficiency Rates and Goals: Grades 6-8

Group	2018	2019		2020
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
All Students	56%	60%	53%	58%
Asian	69%	71%	66%	69%
Black	34%	40%	34%	41%
Hispanic	39%	45%	32%	39%
Two or More Races	49%	54%	60%	64%
White	69%	71%	72%	74%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals	36%	42%	34%	41%
Students with Disabilities	26%	33%	43%	49%
English Language Learners	2%	12%	17%	26%

Note: Yellow highlights indicate that the 2019 Target was met

Strengths in this goal area:

- **Inclusive Practices:** Highland has approximately 45 students who receive special education resource services. We have three certificated special education teachers who regularly collaborate with other instructional staff to help develop and facilitate accommodations, modifications and push-in support; increasing access to grade-level standards and common curriculum. Co-taught classes are available in all three levels of Language Arts and Social Studies, as well as IMT 1 and IMT 2 math courses.
- **Block Scheduling:** Highland 6th and 7th grade students are scheduled in humanities blocks where they have the same teacher for Language Arts and Social Studies in back-to-back periods. This structure provides students with consistency and continuity with an emphasis

on literacy across content areas and the development of strong relationships with teaching staff.

- **Achievement Network Partnership:** Highland has partnered with the Achievement Network (ANet) to deepen the understanding of standards-aligned instruction for Language Arts and Math teachers. The ANet formative assessment resources are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and provide teachers with student learning data that is actionable in the design of instruction and instructional interventions for students in need of additional support. The ANet partnership will also develop and implement targeted professional development for Math and Language Arts teachers in the use of data analysis protocols and the instructional shifts demanded by the standards.

Key Performance Indicators for the 2019-2020 School Year include:

- STAR Assessments (BOY, MOY, EOY)
- ANet Interim Assessments
- 2020 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment

Strategies: To support student growth and achievement for those performing below grade level, our school community will meet the academic and non-academic needs in the following ways:

- Establish a shared vision and collaboration commitment within the building that focuses on standards-based, data-driven instruction with Language Arts (LA)/Social Studies (SS) teachers through cycles of continuous improvement.
- Meet at least quarterly with all Highland LA/SS teachers to analyze interim assessment data.
- Meet regularly as a team to analyze student data and determine appropriate differentiation and support for students.
- Collaborate with LA/SS teachers to research and develop interventions to support the specific academic needs of our students needing intervention.
- Develop content-specific (SS/LA) PLCs focused on student learning and formative assessment data.
- Students will use technology to communicate, access information, solve problems, share knowledge, and enhance learning. Students will apply technology to real-world learning experiences and learn digital citizenship skills and appropriate use of technology in their lives.

MATH GOALS:

- At least 45% of Highland's Class of 2026 (current 6th graders) will meet SBA state standards in Math, while meeting Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF) goals for all subgroups. The 2019 proficiency rate was 39%.
- Highland will decrease the gap between our highest and lowest achieving racial subgroups in Math (grades 6-8) by accelerating the growth for lowest-scoring groups while maintaining or increasing proficiency levels of the highest scoring groups. We will decrease the gap from 48% in 2019 to 42% in 2020.

Math: SBA Proficiency Rates and Goals: Current Grade 6 Cohort				
Group	2018	2019		2020
	Actual Grade 4	Target Grade 5	Actual Grade 5	Target Grade 6
All Students	41%	46%	39%	45%
Asian	59%	62%	72%	74%
Black	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	22%	30%	16%	25%
Two or More Races	*	*	55%	59%
White	52%	56%	47%	52%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals	25%	32%	21%	30%
Students with Disabilities	17%	25%	39%	45%
English Language Learners	5%	14%	15%	24%

Math: SBA Proficiency Rates and Goals: Grades 6-8				
Group	2018	2019		2020
	Actual	Target	Actual	Target
All Students	47%	52%	40%	46%
Asian	65%	68%	61%	65%
Black	25%	32%	30%	38%
Hispanic	23%	30%	13%	23%
Two or More Races	49%	54%	50%	55%
White	61%	64%	58%	62%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals	24%	31%	20%	29%
Students with Disabilities	22%	30%	30%	38%
English Language Learners	8%	17%	13%	23%

Note: Yellow highlights indicate that the 2019 Target was met

Strengths in these goal areas:

- Inclusive Practices:** Highland has approximately 45 students who receive special education resource services. We have three certificated special education teachers who regularly collaborate with other instructional staff to help develop and facilitate accommodations, modifications and push-in support; increasing access to grade-level standards and common curriculum. Co-Taught classes are available in all three levels of Language Arts, Social Studies, as well as IMT 1 and IMT 2 math courses.
- Achievement Network Partnership.** Highland has partnered with the Achievement Network (ANet) to deepen the understanding of standards-aligned instruction for Language Arts and Math teachers. The ANet formative assessment resources are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and provide teachers with student learning data that is actionable in the design of instruction and instructional interventions for students in need of additional support. The ANet partnership will also develop and implement targeted professional development for Math and Language Arts teachers in the use of data analysis protocols and the instructional shifts demanded by the standards. Last school year, the technical assistance was focused on Algebra 1 team with the following results:
 - The commitment to building strong positive relationships with students which has improved student's outlook and feelings about math instruction.
 - Highland's teachers have focused on developing growth mindset in their students and having them find value in making mistakes. This is exemplified through their use of

standards-based grading and providing students with the ability to re-take assessments.

- **Math Intervention Specialist:** Highland has a Math Interventionist who is working in conjunction with our ANet partnership to support teachers in standards-based planning, instruction and assessment. The Math Interventionist also provides support with data analysis, differentiation and instructional interventions for students at each level (IMT1, IMT2, and Algebra 1) of math.
- **AVID Peer Study Groups (PSGs) in Math:** Highland has seven pre-AVID/AVID courses during which students participate in PSGs. Students will identify specific questions from math, collaborate to develop and deepen their understanding through Socratic inquiry, and apply their new learning in order to enhance classroom performance. The process is initially facilitated by our Math Interventionist.

Key Performance Indicators for the 2019-20 School Year include:

- STAR Assessments (BOY, MOY, EOY)
- District Math Interim Assessments
- ANet Assessments
- 2020 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment

Strategies: To support student growth and achievement for those performing below grade level, our school community will meet the academic and non-academic needs in the following ways:

- Establish a shared vision and collaboration commitment within the building that focuses on standards-based, data-driven instruction with math teachers through cycles of continuous improvement
- Meet at least quarterly with all Highland math teachers to analyze District benchmark assessment data.
- Meet regularly as a team to analyze student data and determine appropriate interventions for students.
- Collaborate with all math teachers to research and create interventions to support the specific learning needs of our students.
- Develop content-specific (Math) PLCs for each grade level focused on student learning and data.
- Students will use technology to communicate, access information, solve problems, share knowledge, and enhance learning. Students will apply technology to real-world learning experiences and learn digital citizenship skills and appropriate use of technology in their lives.

Student Well-Being

STUDENT WELL-BEING GOAL:

- Highland will increase student sense of belonging favorable responses on the Panorama Survey from 49% in fall 2018 to 53% in fall of 2019.

Year	Term	School Level	School	Question	Topic	Original Topic	Percent Favorable
2018	Fall	Grades 6-8	Highland	Topic Total: Overall School Climate	Overall School Climate	Sense of Belonging	49

Strengths in the goal area:

- Strong and robust student services department which includes two school counselors, a graduation success coach, a family involvement liaison, PBIS Interventionist, and Assistant Principal who focus on meeting the social emotional needs of students.
- Effectively implemented restorative practices to address student conflict and behavior.
- 90+% implementation rate for school-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at the Tier 1 level using the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET).
- School-Based Health Center with behavioral health, dental, and medical services available to our students at no cost. With the support of the health center and a full-time school nurse, we are able to offer a continuum of care to all our students.
- Student Services Team meets weekly to address students' academic and non-academic needs and ensure we are providing appropriate interventions.

Key Performance Indicators for the 2019-20 School Year include:

- Panorama Student Survey
- PBIS School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) and Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)
- Weekly data checks targeting Early Warning Indicators, specifically for 8th grade students
- Student Focus Groups/Survey
- Student Feedback from SEL Lessons

Strategies: To support student growth and achievement for those performing below grade level, our school community will meet the academic and non-academic needs in the following ways:

- Bi-monthly Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Team meetings to continue the implementation of school-wide PBIS with a focus on universal interventions.
- Daily student re-teaching opportunities to communicate and support student learning around the positive behaviors that are expected at school.
- Weekly meeting of Student Services Team that identifies students not currently being served through special education or other interventions that may need additional support. The team consists of both student support personnel, and administrators.
- The addition of staff members to supervise the campus and support students, increasing a sense of safety for students and staff.
- Refinement of school-wide recognition system to celebrate students' progress and achievements, both academic and behavioral.

Family & Community Engagement

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GOAL:

At least 20% of families of each subgroup will participate in the family satisfaction survey administered by June 30th, 2020.

Strengths in the goal area:

- Strong culture in belief of shared responsibility of families, educators and community members and valuing and respecting the diversity of perspectives, knowledge and abilities that all of our stakeholders.

Key Performance Indicators for 2019-2020 include:

- 2020 Family Satisfaction Survey

Strategies:

- Expand opportunities for parents, local organizations, and members of the community to learn and support our work together by encouraging and supporting ongoing engagement in school activities.
- Strengthen relationships with parents and families through deeper understanding of their perspectives and needs by engaging in regular communication and participation in decision making to improve teaching and learning.
- Focus community partnerships on high-leverage, high-impact strategies.
- Improve two-way communication with families and community partners by using multiple communication channels appropriate for cultural and language differences that exist in the community.
- Match resources and services in the community *with identified student needs*.
- Implement equitable and culturally responsive family engagement practices, such as creating positive relationships with students' families to develop partnerships in new ways aligned with academic goals.
- Provide more communication opportunities for families in their native language through the use of District language access resources and multi-lingual Highland staff and students.

APPENDIX A: Coordination and Integration of Funds

As a recipient of federal funds through Title I, Part A we are required to show how our school coordinates and integrates funding used at the school. The table below provides information on how various sources of funding are used and describes the purposes of each specific program.

Program	Amount Available	How the intents & purposes of the Program will be met:
Basic Education	\$3,408,340	To provide all students with instruction aligned to grade level, specific state standards including differentiation and enrichment services as needed. Basic education funds are combined to support the activities listed above. Examples include: classroom teachers, textbooks, supplemental materials, supplies, equipment, technology, staff development and substitutes.
Title I, Part A	\$286,840	To provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable and high quality well-rounded education and to close educational achievement gaps. These funds are used to:
Learning Assistance Program (LAP)	\$24,000	To coordinate the use of Learning Assistance Program revenue as long as it can be shown services are provided only to students who have not met annual measurable objectives or are at-risk of not meeting state/local graduation requirements. Our LAP funds are used to provide a reading specialist who supports students reading below proficiency through direct interventions, as well as by providing coaching and support for the classroom teacher to differentiate instructional practices.
Total	\$3,719,180	