

Westminster Schools  
Westminster Town School District

Schoolwide Action Plan

Approved June 2009  
Revised December 2009  
Approved January 2010

# Westminster Schools Schoolwide Action Plan for 2009-11

## *Mission Statement*

*adopted February 6, 2003*

**Westminster Schools teach all children to become competent, caring citizens in a changing world through a challenging curriculum and supportive environment.**

## *Belief Statements*

The following statements lead to clarity of vision and mark our path on the way to being successful in our mission: connecting our practice with our vision of teaching/learning in Westminster. Therefore, we believe in the following:

- ***Keeping*** student learning at the heart of all we do.
- ***Supporting*** the efforts of all members of our community to be life-long learners.
- ***Treating*** each other with thoughtfulness and respect.
- ***Developing*** deep understandings, making connections, seeking knowledge of content, and practicing necessary skills will enable students to be self-directed in life.
- ***Holding*** high academic expectations for every one of our students.
- ***Considering*** the needs of individual students and their learning styles *as* essential when designing educational experiences.
- ***Providing*** a safe learning environment to support the personal, intellectual, emotional and social development of all children and adults.
- ***Promoting*** social and emotional health to develop resilient, self-directed learners who can participate fully in their community.
- ***Connecting*** learning to the local community and life experiences.
- ***Celebrating*** the diversity of the global community.
- ***Cultivating*** democratic practices and global citizenship.

January 2010

Draft 2/11/2010

**Introduction:**

The Westminster Schools are on a path of continuous renewal and improvement as framed by the updated Five Year Plan (2009). The work of educating children is in a constant state of motion. Our role as a school is to provide children academic instruction, emotional support and social guidance that will ensure their development into caring adults. It is the process of assessing our teaching and student learning that guides the work of this committee.

We spent a great deal of the year looking at assessments, reviewing the Schoolwide Action Plan for the 2007-09 years, discussing the needs of the school, gathering parent and community feedback, and working to put those needs into a plan that is reasonable and that can be accomplished. We made the decision to continue with a three-year school-wide action plan to focus on academic progress while still attending social needs.

We continue discussion concerning the services provided to all learners, especially to the decision making process around least restrictive environment, and the importance of heterogeneously grouped classrooms. The discussion moved the professional staff toward an investigation of instruction that would meet the needs of all children. One part of the work was to restructure the school support. During the 2009-10 school year, our structure will reflect the final recommendations as we implement grade level teams that will support all learners. Each team will have classroom teachers, a support teacher with special education and Consolidated Federal Grant Reading and Mathematics responsibilities, and paraprofessionals. We have also split the job of our local support teacher into two positions – Mathematics Coach and Assessment Coordinator. Then using ARRA funding we will hire a Reading Coach. Both these professionals will support effective instructional practices in all classrooms.

We are also entering into a long-range plan of implementing a Response to Intervention model in order to assist classroom teachers in early detection and intervention of children's learning. We expect 90% of all children to be reading at grade level by the end of 2011 – we have two years to improve reading performance across the school. This is a very aggressive goal – but one that we can achieve through the implementation of progress monitoring and early intervention. We will continue working to develop and maintain a positive school climate that is welcoming and inviting for all stakeholders. The implementation of Responsive Classroom strategies schoolwide has changed the school – reducing classroom interruptions, decreasing office referrals, and helping students to develop self-monitoring skills. The consistency in teacher language, expectations and responsiveness to student needs has led to this change. We are making strides in developing community connections and early education opportunities for our children. The partnerships result in stronger programming for our three and four year olds and our transition process for entering students has made for a smoother start to school with a higher percentage of students demonstrating school readiness. This Action Plan is responding to our parent survey, our assessment results, and the needs identified by our teaching staff. We strongly believe that with the “plan” in place we will be successful in our work.

## Westminster Schoolwide Action Plan Focus Areas, Goals, Targets and Needs

### **Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.**

1. **Goal One:** 90% of children will read at grade level by the end of 2011-12 school year as measured by the DRA2.
  - a. **Target:** A comprehensive core reading curriculum will be used school wide by June 2011.
  - b. **Need:** Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, DRA2, and other classroom based assessments) leading us to question how we teach reading and if we are meeting the academic needs of all our students.
2. **Goal Two:** 90% of our fifth grade students will meet or exceed the state average in writing as measured by the NECAP in the fall of each year.
  - a. **Target:** Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing through a collection of pieces scored with a rubric as part of a local assessment.
  - b. **Need:** Currently, student writing does not meet the expectations for proficient writers. The average writing scores of our school has consistently been well below the state average on state assessments. Our students have not used writing effectively to describe their critical thinking in content areas (constructed response), when response to literature, or in writing to a prompt.
3. **Goal Three:** 90% of students will demonstrate computational fluency by the end of fourth grade.
  - a. **Target:** A local math curriculum will be used school wide by June (**September**) 2010.
  - b. **Need:** Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, local computational and problem solving assessments) leading us to question mathematics instruction.
4. **Goal Four:** Expand access to high quality early education to ensure children's readiness for school.
  - a. **Target:** 80% of Westminster's three and four years olds will attend ten hours (or more) a week of high quality preschool.
  - b. **Need:** Many Westminster children currently access pre-school programs that do not meet the quality standards under Act 62.

### **Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate**

1. **Goal 1:** Build and sustain a safe, positive, healthy school climate where all children, family, staff, and community members are welcomed and supported.
  - a. **Target:** Children and adults will interact in respectful ways.
  - b. **Need:** Disruptions to classroom learning, opportunities for student leadership and personalized instruction, consistent implementation of the Responsive Classroom practices, and playground safety impact the learning of all children.
2. **Goal 2:** Support students in developing self-control, positive respectful peer interactions.

- a. **Target:** Self-control and awareness of others is essential for a more vibrant and successful learning community.
  - b. **Need:** Students become self-directed and autonomous learners, as well as, school and community leaders.
3. **Goal 3:** A professional learning community with a shared vision, where collaborative teams are valued and there is an explicit commitment to academic achievement for all learners.
- a. **Target:** Support for teachers in using data from a variety of assessments and the examination of student work to drive instruction.
  - b. **Need:** Assessment tools and analysis of learning will allow teachers to address needs of all learners. Academic achievement is often secondary to other developmental needs.
4. **Goal 4:** Develop a plan for and establish school-wide healthy life choices.
- a. **Target:** Support Chef Manager, students, and teachers in providing healthy choice opportunities
  - b. **Need:** Add value to the school meal program, continue offering community physical enjoyment.

**Focus Area 3: Integration of school, families and community in the support of the children of Westminster.**

- 1. **Goal 1:** Collaborative partnering relationships will be established to improve teaching and learning.
  - a. **Target:** Parents will know about school activities and be involved in planning/implementation of educational activities.
  - b. **Need: Improved home/school communication and participation of families.**
- 2. **Goal 2:** The Staff will work with community to expand use of school facility.
  - a. **Target:** Community will access and utilize the school facility for various activities.
  - b. **Need:** Westminster Schools has just expanded the facility and communicating availability is a priority.

**Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.**

<b>Goal One:</b> 90% of children will read at grade level by the end of 2011-12 school year as measured by the DRA2.	<b>Target:</b> A comprehensive core reading curriculum will be used school wide by June 2011.
<b>Need:</b> Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, DRA2, and other classroom based assessments) leading us to question how we teach reading and if we are meeting the academic needs of all our students.	

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Select a school wide core reading curriculum for Kindergarten through Grade Six.	Principal and Faculty	Core Reading Curriculum being used throughout school.	Selected -July 1, 2009 Training – August 2009-10 Curriculum in place 2011
2. Reading consultant will provide professional learning to facilitate implementation of core curriculum instruction.	Principal and Faculty Committee	Consultant hired and schedule developed.	August 1, 2009
3. Reading coach will be hired to provide teachers of reading with support.	Principal, Faculty, School Board	Position filled.	September 1, 2009
4. Screening assessment will be used for all students by the end of September and again by early February. Students will be identified who are not demonstrating on grade level performance.	Reading Coach, Assessment Coordinator, Classroom Teachers, RtI team.	Assessment schedule for all grades.	September 1, 2009
5. Assessment results will be used to differentiated instruction for all students	Classroom Teachers	Plans and instructional practices, parent satisfaction survey	June 2010 June 2011 June 2012

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
6. Plans will be developed for all students (at all grade levels) who do not perform at grade level (during screening assessments) and will receive supplemental reading instruction.	Educational Support Team, RtI team	Plans in place. Schedule for interventionists across school.	October 15, 2009 on - going
7. Communication with parents regarding reading instruction and student performance will occur regularly.	Faculty	Parent communication – conferences, written reports, curriculum night schedules, and newsletters.	March 2010 September 2010 March 2011
8. Progress monitoring tools will be selected, implemented and used to follow growth of students who perform below grade level on screening assessments.	Faculty, RtI team	Student progress as measured by monitoring tools. Improved student performance. Parent communication.	June 2010
9. Student reading performance will be monitored regularly.	Classroom Teachers	Student progress will be monitored using Aimsweb.	June 2010
10. Team of teachers will attend Response to Intervention (RtI) development workshops.	Principal and Assessment coordinator	Certificates of attendance	June 2010
11. Westminster Schools will use Lexia Reading to supplement reading instruction for all students not demonstrating grade level proficiency in phonemic awareness, phonics skills, and decoding.	Reading Coach, EST and RtI team.	Students usage of program	October 2009

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
12. Reading instruction will include informational texts, technology and instruction in content areas.	Teachers	Technology tasks, and authentic writing.	June 2010 June 2011 June 2012
13. Westminster Schools will employ reading teachers funded by Consolidated Federal Grants to supplement instruction for all students.	Principal, Assistant Superintendent,	Teacher on staff	September 2009 September 2010 September 2011
14. Teachers will attend Four Block training at Wake Forest University with Pat Cunningham and Dorothy Hall.	Principal, Reading Coach, and Classroom Teachers	Certificates of attendance	January 2010
15. Teachers will visit schools where Four Blocks has been implemented.	Principal, Reading Coach	Plans and agendas from visits Teachers sharing out at staff meetings	January 2010
16. Westminster Schools will work with a Four Blocks Reading Consultants – Dorothy Hall and Amanda Amean.	Principal, Reading Coach	Contracts, agendas, and schedule of visits	June 2010 June 2011

**Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.**

Goal Two: 90% of our fifth grade students will meet or exceed the state average in writing as measured by the NECAP in the fall of each year.	Target: Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing through a collection of pieces scored with a rubric as part of a local assessment.
Need: Currently, student writing does not meet the expectations for proficient writers. The average writing scores of our school has consistently been well below the state average on state assessments. Our students have not used writing effectively to describe their critical thinking in content areas (constructed response), when response to literature, or in writing to a prompt.	

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Writing consultant Cyrene Wells will work with teachers to evaluate our use of writing workshop.	Principal, Leadership Team	Contract, agenda and invoice	2009 – 2011
2. Teachers will pursue professional learning in the area of writing, including: study of writing craft, viewing professional DVDs, and record keeping and management.	Reading Consultant, Principal, Coach	Certificates of attendance, list of teachers attending, and content of experience.	August 2009- June 2011
3. Teachers will observe in each other's classrooms to provide feedback on writing workshop components.	Teachers	Schedule	August 2009 – June 2011
4. Teachers will meet to share student writing in Critical Friends Groups and Professional Learning Communities.	Coaches	Schedule of CFG/PLC meetings.	August 2009 – June 2009
5. Writing calibration sessions will be scheduled to support consistency in scoring and providing feedback to students.	Assessment Coordinator	Schedule of training	November 1 <sup>st</sup> of each school year.

Activity	Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeline
6. Student writing progress will be monitored through teacher scoring of required writing portfolios pieces and/or students writing to a prompt.	Assessment Coordinator, Faculty teams	Writing Portfolio required pieces per grade level - Two to three times a year depending upon grade level.	Portfolio Collection June of each year.
7. Differentiated instruction will be based on formative assessments for all students	Classroom Teachers	Plans and instructional practices, parent satisfaction survey Teaching the Qualities of Writing (TQW).	June 2010 June 2011 June 2012
8. Writing calibration sessions will be scheduled to support consistency in scoring and providing feedback to students.	Assessment Coordinator	Schedule of training	November 1 <sup>st</sup> of each school year.
9. Parent communication about writing will occur throughout the year – with examples of student work and opportunities for parents to read student writing.	Classroom Teachers	Schedule of events/sharing of portfolios Parent Satisfaction Survey	March of each school year.
10. Writing instruction will include content area writing, using technology and other resources.	Teachers	Portfolio writing pieces, technology tasks, and authentic writing.	June 2010 June 2011 June 2012

**Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.**

<b>Goal Three:</b> 90% of students will demonstrate computational fluency by the end of fourth grade.	<b>Target:</b> A local math curriculum will be used school wide by June ( <b>September</b> ) 2010.
<b>Need:</b> Currently, student performance is inconsistent on a variety of assessments (NECAP, local computational and problem solving assessments) leading us to question mathematics instruction.	

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Teachers will attend Math Lab with Mahesh Sharma to develop analytical and diagnostic skills related to mathematics instruction.	Principal	Schedule, attendance certificates	July 2010
2. Consultant Mahesh Sharma will work with teachers to develop pedagogy, curricular connections, and interventions for students.	Principal, Assessment coordinator, Leadership Team	Contract, schedule, agendas	June 2011
3. Math Curriculum will be in place with connections to GEs, local assessments, and instruction.	WNESU Math Curriculum Committee	Curriculum adopted by WNESU board	September 1, 2009 <b>January 15, 2010</b>
4. Math Curriculum implemented in all classrooms across grades – K-6	Math Curriculum Committee, Principal, Leadership	Teacher Plans	January 2010 <b>September 2010</b>
5. Computational Fluency Screening will be used in all classrooms, Grades 1-6 in September and February.	Principal, Teachers, Assessment coordinator	Assessment schedule and records.	October 2009 March 2010 <b>June 2010</b>
6. Problem solving pieces will be collected and scored at each grade level in Fall and Winter.	Assessment Coordinator, Classroom teachers, CFG mathematics teachers	Two scored pieces at each grade level.	January 2010 January 2011 January 2012

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
7. Assessment results will be used to differentiate instruction for all students in learning mathematics.	Classroom Teachers	Plans and instructional practices, parent satisfaction survey	June 2010 June 2011 June 2012
8. Student math performance will be monitored regularly.	Principal, Assessment Coordinator, RtI team, classroom teachers	Aimsweb Assessment results	January 2010 January 2011 January 2012
9. Students not scoring at grade level on local assessment will have plans to personalize learning.	Assessment Coordinator, Mathematics Coach, EST, Teachers	Plans in place.	November 2009 March 2010 Continuing
10. Westminster Schools will employ mathematics teachers funded by Consolidated Federal Grants to supplement instruction for all students.	Principal, Assistant Superintendent	Teachers on staff	September 1, 2009 September 1, 2010 September 1, 2011

**Focus Area 1: Student academic performance will improve in reading, writing and mathematics.**

<b>Goal Four:</b> Expand access to high quality early education to ensure children’s readiness for school.	<b>Target:</b> 80% of Westminster’s three and four years olds will attend ten hours (or more) a week of high quality preschool.
<b>Need:</b> Many Westminster children currently access pre-school programs that do not meet the quality standards under Act 62.	

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Westminster Schools will employ an Early Education Coordinator	Principal	Person in place	July 2009 July 2010 July 2011
2. Develop and expand current partnerships with high-quality preschool programs.	Early Education Outreach Coordinator	Contracts with early education providers	School year 2009-10 School year 2010-11
3. Assist early education partners in meeting quality standards as defined by VT Act 62.	Early Education Outreach Coordinator, Principal and Assistant Superintendent	Participating providers will access licensed teacher consultant, acquire 4 or more STARS from State of VT and demonstrated compliance w. VELs	July 2009 June 2011
4. Demonstrate developmental progress of participating children per age appropriate assessments.	Early education partners and outreach coordinator	Creative Curriculum Assessment or Work Sampling results	2010 2011 2012
5. Assist WNESU in expanding SU Early Education Center to new Westminster location	Early Education Outreach Coordinator, Principal, Assistant Superintendent and WENSU Early Education Center Staff	Expansion of WNESU Early Education Center in Westminster location	2010
6. Measure impact of high quality preschool on students academic progress	Early Education Coordinator, Principal, Kindergarten Teachers	Data base tracking students assessments and preschool placements/experiences	2010 2011 2012

**Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate**

<b>Goal 1:</b> Build and sustain a safe, positive, healthy school climate where all children, family, staff, and community members are welcomed and supported.		<b>Target:</b> Children and adults will interact in respectful ways.	
<b>Need:</b> Disruptions to classroom learning, opportunities for student leadership and personalized instruction, consistent implementation of the Responsive Classroom practices, and playground safety impact the learning of all children.			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Westminster Schools' staff will attend workshops and institutes in using Responsive Classroom strategies.	Principal and Leadership Team	Attendance certificates	July 2009-June 2012
2. Westminster Schools will work with a Responsive Classroom consultant to support implementation of school wide Responsive Classroom practices.	Principal and Leadership Team	Attendance certificates	July 2009 - 2012
3. Staff will read books, view DVDs, and visit each other's classrooms to improve effective practices.	Principal and Consultant	Classroom Visitation Records	September 2009 to June 2012
4. Teachers will use Academic Choice instructional strategies (Responsive Classroom) to enhance learning experiences.	Principal and Consultant	RC II attendance certificates, Instructional Plans, team meeting notes	June 2011 June 2012

**Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate**

<b>Goal 2:</b> Support students in developing self-control, positive respectful peer interactions.		<b>Target:</b> Self-control and awareness of others is essential for a more vibrant and successful learning community.	
<b>Need:</b> Students become self-directed and autonomous learners, as well as, school and community leaders.			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Staff, parents, and students will train for and implement Social Inclusion techniques introduced by consultant Kim Jon Payne.	School Counselor, Principal, Other Staff	Attendance certificates	July 2009 - 2012
2. Establish a Social Inclusion Team to support the work identified to reduce bullying and harassing.	School Counselor	Team meeting notes and plans for implementation	September 2009
3. Continue to support and work with families to assist academic and social-emotional growth of all children through our After School Program K-6	Principal and After School Coordinator	Student attendance and program schedule	July 2009- 2012
4. Staff will continue to read books and other articles on developing Respectful Schools and ownership of learning.	Principal and School Leadership Team	Books read available in the community room and school library	July 2009- June 2012

**Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate**

<p><b>Goal 3:</b> A professional learning community with a shared vision, where collaborative teams are valued and there is an explicit commitment to academic achievement for all learners.</p>		<p><b>Target:</b> Support for teachers in using data from a variety of assessments and the examination of student work to drive instruction.</p>	
<p><b>Need:</b> Assessment tools and analysis of learning will allow teachers to address needs of all learners. Academic achievement is often secondary to other developmental needs.</p>			
Activity	Person Responsible	Evidence	Timeline
<p>1. Work with consultant to further develop and support Critical Friends Groups and Professional Learning Communities that study teaching practices and student work in a variety of academic areas.</p>	<p>Principal and Staff Leadership</p>	<p>Schedule of meeting times</p>	<p>June 2009 - 2012</p>
<p>2. Provide Diversity Training for all staff to develop understanding of diverse student needs, awareness of harassment and bullying, to make a safe and supportive school for the entire spectrum of student and staff demographics.</p>	<p>Principal and Assistant Superintendent</p>	<p>Procedures available in handbook, and attendance of trainings, work with Kim John Payne</p>	<p>June 2009-2012</p>

**Focus Area 2: Improve School Climate**

<b>Goal 4:</b> Develop a plan for and establish school-wide healthy life choices.		<b>Target:</b> Support Chef Manager, students, and teachers in providing healthy choice opportunities	
<b>Need:</b> Add value to the school meal program, continue offering community physical enjoyment.			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Utilize current research on the types of foods that lead to growing healthy bodies to increase the nutritional quality of the foods offered.	Principal and Chef Manager	School Menu	June 2010 – 2012
2. Increase breakfast and lunch healthy options: through attractive presentation, increased variety, opportunities to try new items, role modeling on staff, use of garden and local produce.	Principal and Chef Manager	Documentation of strategies used	June 2010-2012
3. Provide opportunities for physical activity for children, parents, staff, and community.	Nurse, PE, Afterschool Coordinator and Wellness committee	Documentation of activities	June-2010-2012

**Focus Area 3: Integration of school, families and community in the support of the children of Westminster.**

<b>Goal 1:</b> Collaborative partnering relationships will be established to improve teaching and learning.		<b>Target:</b> Parents will know about school activities and be involved in planning/implementation of educational activities.	
<b>Need: Improved home/school communication and participation of families.</b>			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Westminster Schools will work with PIRC VT to improve collaboration with parents and community members.	PIRC Committee	Memorandum of agreement	2009-2010
2. Establish school wide PTO to discuss issues of school policy, climate, parent educational meetings	PIRC Committee	Schedule of meetings and agendas	2009-10 2010-11
3. Hire a Community Liaison to support parents and plan community events	Principal	On staff	Fall 2009 2010 2011
4. Create Parent/ Community Resource room within school.	Principal and Community Liaison	Furnished room with resources	2009-2010
5. Expand home/school communication strategies including list serves, PowerSchool, Connect ED, Web site, Westminster Gazette.	Administration and IT	Log of Connect Ed calls, email records	2009-2012
6. Annual Parent Satisfaction survey, results will used to improve collaborative partnerships.	Action plan committee	Parent survey results	2009-2012
7. Develop school wide expectations and strategies regarding home/school communication.	Principal and Staff	Teacher Communication Record	2009-10 School Year 2010-11

**Focus Area 3: Integration of school, families and community in the support of the children of Westminster.**

<b>Goal 2:</b> The Staff will work with community to expand use of school facility		<b>Target:</b> Community will access and utilize the school facility for various activities.	
<b>Need:</b> Westminster Schools has just expanded the facility and communicating availability is a priority.			
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Continue before and after school programming	After School Coordinator, Principal	Existence of programming	2010-2012
2. Make facility/gym available for adult activities and functions	Maintenance Director	Record of open gym registrations and uses	2010-2012
3. Community service providers will provide services in parent/community resource room	Community Liaison	Resource room log and record of service providers' hours.	2010-12
5. Seek and recruit volunteers and community support for various programs.	Principal and Parent Group Leaders	Lists of activities and potential volunteers is created.	2010-12