

Pennsylvania District  
Comprehensive Local Literacy Plan (CLLP)

**Westmont Hilltop School District**

**827 Diamond Blvd.**

**Johnstown, PA 15905**

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# Acknowledgements

The Westmont Hilltop School District in collaboration with their Early Childhood Partners, Amy Dabbs and Marcia Schilli, Beginnings Inc.; Michele DiGuardi- Professional Family Care Services, Inc.; Jennifer Anderson- IU08, utilized the *Keystones to Opportunity* funding to develop their Comprehensive Local Literacy Plan (CLLP). Throughout the 2012-2013 school year, the literacy team met monthly to develop the plan and to attend literacy module training sessions. To reach out to children in the birth to age 5 statutory area, the literacy team planned a *Family Literacy Night*. The evening's goal was two-fold: to make families aware of local pre-schools and early intervention/head start programs and to promote early literacy. During the planning of *Family Literacy Night*, Brad Fish, a Scholastic Inc. representative in the Family and Community Engagement division guided the grant project leader and the literacy liaison in the selection of appropriate books being provided to families during *Family Literacy Night*. Local businesses also provided materials to include in the tote bags given to families attending the literacy event. The Westmont Hilltop School District contacted the Cambria County Library developing a partnership to further promote literacy. As a result of this partnership, the Westmont Hilltop Recreation Commission will host a monthly community story time. In addition, the Cambria County Public Library participated in *Family Literacy Night* to encourage community involvement in library activities.

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# Section I: Literacy Plan Team

## Membership:

- Nicole Kuzmiak- Literacy Project director, Middle School Principal, parent
- Steve McGee-Director of Education
- Wendy Kessler- literacy liaison, parent
- Amy Dabbs- Beginnings, Inc.
- Marcia Schilli- Beginnings, Inc.
- Michele DiGuardi- Professional Family Care Services, Inc.
- Jennifer Anderson- IU08
- Edward Benning- K-4 Principal, parent
- Beth Shoff- K-4 teacher
- Joselle Skelley- K-4 teacher
- Melissa Kalwanaski- 5-8 teacher
- Lindsey Manzuk- 5-8 teacher
- Barbara Miltenberger- 5-8 teacher
- William Aurandt- 9-12 teacher
- Debra Taczanowsky- 9-12 teacher
- Amy Brown-Director of Curriculum
- Tom Mitchell-High School Principal
- Sue Knarr-IU08
- Lauren Lazzari-Beginnings, Inc./parent

## Timeline:

### KtO Team Meetings:

September 14, 2012

October 19, 2012

November 30, 2012

January 4, 2013

February 1, 2013

March 1, 2013

April 5, 2013

June 7, 2013

\*administrative meeting to finalize plan, teacher attendance is optional

Feb. 7, 2017 (revision meeting)

## Section II: Mission and Vision Statements

### **WHSD Mission:**

*The mission of the Westmont Hilltop School District, in partnership with our community, is to prepare each student to be an informed, ethical, responsible adult in a changing and competitive global society through high expectations and a challenging educational program offering knowledge and skills within a safe, nurturing environment.*

- *Graphic representations become more important – Students must synthesize information from graphs, charts, tables, illustrations, and equations, with written text to grasp the full meaning of content-area texts.*
- *Conceptual challenge increases – Students must synthesize from one task to another and from one set of concepts to another, and build logical relationships across multiple aspects of a given conceptual domain with the information they glean from texts.*

*The overarching goal is stated clearly in the final Reading Anchor Standard: “Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently” (CCSS, 2010, p. 10).*

*Reading at the middle and high school level is characterized by increasing text complexity and focus on informational text.*

*Interacting with text through close reading, analysis, and interpretation is essential.*

*A deep reading of text should engage the reader in interacting with the text to discern not only the craft of the writer but the connectivity to other texts and the ability to cite evidence to support a conclusion.*

**WHSD Vision:** All children in the Westmont Hilltop School District from birth through Grade 12 will become well-educated citizens with a command of literacy which will prepare them for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and will enable them to achieve their personal and professional goals.

**(Comprehensive Plan Meeting will begin in the spring of 2017 to revise the CLP Mission changes will be made to Literacy Plan at committee’s recommendation.)**

**Comprehensive Literacy Plan Mission:** The Westmont Hilltop Comprehensive Literacy Plan (WHCLP) will provide guidance to all those invested (e.g., parents, caregivers, early childhood partners, educators, community members, etc.) in developing an integrated, aligned, and comprehensive set of literacy experiences for district children. The plan will identify and describe:

- (1) essential evidence-based concepts about the content of literacy for children from birth through Grade 12;
- (2) processes by which all those invested in children’s learning can facilitate the acquisition of literacy in a coherent and consistent manner; and
- (3) important content, processes, and resources that will enable all those invested to plan, develop, and evaluate instructional programs which will support equitable and high quality literacy instruction for all children.

***WHSD Comprehensive Literacy Plan Vision:*** A strong culture of learning is nurtured and sustained by trust, cooperation, collegiality and open and honest communication among the entire community. All students are given diverse support within arts, academics and athletics to develop their education and form their individual intelligences to maximize their learning opportunities and capabilities. Each of us should realize that we are personally responsible for our actions and choices. Our best tool in influencing others is by setting the best example.

A review of the WHSD and the District's Comprehensive Literacy Mission and Vision Plans illustrates the district's importance of developing a comprehensive, coherent, and well-articulated literacy plan that will provide the direction for successful literacy instruction in the 21<sup>st</sup> century schools. Both of the district's mission and the KtO mission goals are to create 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy environment where children can acquire the reading, writing, speaking, listening and language skills they need to succeed academically. Through the KtO grant, the WHSD will provide much needed materials, equipment, personnel and technology to deliver a variety of rich reading resources to our children birth to grade 12.

## Section III: Guiding Principles

*1. Literacy is a foundation for all learning and serves as a “keystone” for opportunity and success. The Standards for literacy must promote high level learning for all students to ensure that they are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Because literacy is an important skill in itself and serves as a tool for learning, it is essential at all levels (Birth-grade 12). Moreover, to enhance literacy learning of students, there must be shared responsibility of educators, parents, and caretakers, and the broader community.*

### **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

Literacy is the primary focus of the Westmont Hilltop School District and its early childhood partners, as can be seen by the number and quality of early childhood centers in our district. Literacy learning is important from birth through grade 12. In this district, literacy is a foundation for all else that comes after. In order to help create and shore up this foundation, Westmont Hilltop incorporates data driven instruction, technologically-integrated classrooms, and high-quality professional development that creates better teachers, and thus learners better equipped to handle the demands of a 21<sup>st</sup> century society.

*2. Student learning, motivation, and access to educational opportunities are increased when linguistic, cultural, and personal experiences are valued, understood, represented in the curriculum and classroom practice, and used to help students make connections between what they know and what they are learning. Multiple perspectives and experiences provide opportunities for students to learn about their own as well as the culture of others.*

### **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

The Westmont Hilltop School District and its early childhood partners understand the need for an educational environment which is open and welcoming to all. The district and its partners provide a variety of opportunities for students and community members to enhance cultural and personal experiences with texts that connect students own lives and understandings within all content areas. The students learn the importance of collaboration, being a good listener, building on the ideas of others, articulating ideas clearly, and supporting those ideas with facts. Students also learn to use writing as a tool to help them think about and refine word choice, sentence structure, and pragmatics. The districts variety of technology also enhances these opportunities.

*3. There must be high expectations for all learners and a belief that all are capable of gaining literacy skills that enable them to be successful as adults. Instruction must address the full range of learners, must be differentiated to meet each child's needs, and requires a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education.*

**Reviewed 2/7/17:**

In recent years, the cultural and socio-economic makeup of the Westmont Hilltop School District has evolved to become more diverse. The Westmont Hilltop School District recognizes that students come to school with a variety of language and literacy skills, learning styles, needs, and background experiences. This concept, which drives the district's presentation of the literacy curriculum, coupled with the value of creating high expectations, enables students to reach their potential and become successful, literate adults. The district and its partners strive to create a community where all can thrive, regardless of ability or background. The Literacy Plan has provided a platform for the discussion of ways to provide more opportunities for all to succeed. The KTO grant has given the district the opportunity to reach out to homes in the district to welcome them, and to provide materials to help ensure that literacy has a place in the home and that all students and future students, regardless of ability or background, have access to high-quality literacy materials and instruction. This ideal carries through within the school itself, as all teachers in the Westmont Hilltop School District differentiate in the classroom in order to reach the full range of learners. The school also has a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education.

*4. Evidence based decision making must be at the heart of all instructional decisions related to literacy development.*

**Reviewed 2/7/17:**

Westmont Hilltop School District and its early childhood partners utilize effective assessment systems that are congruent with and based on the Early Learning standards, research-based curriculum, and best practices. By utilizing formative, benchmark, diagnostic and summative tools, the district is able to identify students' needs and core instruction. Each building utilizes Professional Learning community time to review the assessment data and monitor literacy growth. Developing transitions between grades as well as buildings, the district is working toward the goal of a cohesive comprehensive literacy plan that will provide needed intervention and enrichment opportunities.

*5. Educators must be prepared to teach effectively in the schools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and be provided with continuing professional development support that enables them to be lifelong learners.*

The Westmont Hilltop School District believes that a key to student learning is effective instruction. Newly hired teachers are required to participate in a PDE approved mentoring program. Educators at WHSD value and actively engage in high quality professional development. This professional growth includes collaboration via grade level and vertical team meetings to assist with ongoing curriculum development. Differentiated supervision supports growth of individual educators. Professional development includes ongoing development of a repertoire of instructional best practices that are reflective and based on the systematic analysis of data from various assessments including standardized, formative, summative, benchmark, and diagnostic. Educational leadership facilitates empowered decision-making from the entire educational team. To ensure the implementation of the professional development, Westmont Hilltop School District utilizes professional learning communities. The literacy environment and the effectiveness of the professional development are measured by the walk-through observations, and the teacher and administrator effectiveness model, PA ETEP. Ultimately, the Westmont Hilltop school district is committed to fostering a culture of lifelong learning among its professional staff.

# Section IV: Needs Assessment Review

## Standards and Curriculum

### Points of Consideration

- *Does our curriculum align with the states standards?*
- *Does our curriculum articulate what students need to know and be able to do at each grade level?*
- *Does our curriculum show evidence of horizontal and vertical articulation of skill sets?*
- *Does our curriculum address the needs of all students?*

### \* **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

#### Notes:

- In the birth to 5 category, a child enrolled in a state- regulated Keystone Stars-licensed program, such as Nurse Family Partnership, Early Head Start, or IU08 will follow a curriculum that is aligned with state standards.
- Within the school, all students have access to a rigorous curriculum aligned to State Standards.
- Reading, Writing, Speaking, and listening standards are integrated throughout the day in all curricular areas.
- The district implements a research-based core literacy curriculum, which addresses the needs of all students, regardless of background or ability.
- The curriculum enables students to express tests state mandated skills through the demonstration of oral presentations, written expressions, and multiple choice exams that are all state aligned/developed.

#### Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:

- The district will revise the curriculum in order to completely align with the PA Common Core standards upon implementation.
- The district will utilize the literacy plan as a foundation for curriculum development.
- The curriculum will show vertical and horizontal articulation of skill sets.
- Professional development meeting with Early Childhood partners and providers. Provided copy of Early Childhood standards, early childhood curriculum and materials that aligned with the district's current curriculum. Kindergarten teachers modeled literacy strategies and provided on-going support.
- Curriculum mapping is in progress in grades K-6. Curriculum mapping is in the beginning phases for grades 7-8 and mapping templates are being developed for grades 9-12.

## Conclusion

The district's curriculum provides a common framework which enables all students to gain the necessary skills of a "literate person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century." The curriculum's strengths lie in addressing all students, giving all students access to a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum, and providing students with exemplary writing samples, assessment rubrics, real-world writing tasks, writing in response to reading and oral and written feedback. Teachers in all subject areas integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening systematically throughout the day. To further advance the students' literacy progress the district needs to implement a common framework and rubrics to instruct and assess writing ensuring a consistent

approach across subject areas and grade levels. The district also needs to find ways to dedicate more time to professional development school and district wide toward reading and writing, differentiating reading and writing curriculum to meet the needs of all students, and aligning the reading and writing curriculum vertically and horizontally across grade levels using specific rubrics to identify the needs of students.

There is also a need to continue developing real-world approaches to learning in preparing our students for their post-high school years.

Standards & Curriculum	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.	In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Family Engagement and Family Literacy, Supporting Learners with Special Needs	Literacy team meetings, SAS Website, IU08 professional development.
K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Reading apprenticeship, Building Blocks of Literacy, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Family Engagement and Family Literacy, Supporting Learners with Special Needs	Professional development opportunities for new and veteran staff in association with cost when adhering to state and federal mandates, SAS Website, IU08 professional development 5/6 teachers participating in modules
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Literacy Design Collaboration Supporting Learners with Special Needs	Technology, in-services on Keystone tests, graduation expectations, SAS Website, IU08 professional development PLN and Apple training Teachers participating modules

**\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment**

## Assessment

### Points of Consideration

- *Do we have a viable assessment plan listing measures, schedules, procedures, and targeted students at every grade level in every school?*
- *Do teachers and administrators have easy access to the data?*
- *Do teachers and administrators understand what each test is intended to measure?*
- *Do teachers and administrators know how to interpret the data for classroom instruction?*
- *Do we have regularly scheduled data meetings?*
- *Do we use data as a means of determining possible professional development needs?*

### \* **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

Notes:

- Birth to 5 comprehensive speech screening and Ages/Stage administered to identify delays offered to families attending local preschools.
- DIAL 4 screening to all students registered for Kindergarten administered in May.
- Data is collected on children enrolled in state-regulated programs, but the school district does not have access to this information
- Selected measures, including, but not limited to: DIBELS Next, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, PSSA, Terra Nova, DORA, PSAT 8,10, and Keystones, provide information on the essential elements of literacy instruction appropriate for each grade level and are explicitly linked to district and state literacy goals
- Screening and diagnostic measures are administered early in the year to identify students who may need additional instructional support. Move-in students are assessed within five days of their arrival and placed into instructional groups
- Guidelines of data collection are established for qualifying children who receive Title I or Instructional Support services

Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:

- In order to be responsive to students' instructional needs, adequate time and ongoing district support is needed to review data and adjust instruction based upon that data
- While the district has developed the capacity to gather data, we lack the capacity to interpret and use the data in the most effective way. The need exists for a data specialist/expert and competent in-district trainers. Additionally, ongoing training and support for staff who teach or supervise literacy programs is necessary in the following areas: assessments used by the district, data analysis, data interpretation and data utilization
- Need for bench mark assessments to be used strategically and consistently.

Conclusion:

The Westmont Hilltop School District realized a need for better coordination of the collection and sharing of assessment data. Due to this, the district created the position of Director of Curriculum and Instruction, who will help to facilitate better coordination of data. The district will also better coordinate data from local early childhood providers.

Assessment	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.	In progress		Decision-Making Using Data for Literacy, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology, Building Blocks for Literacy, Family Engagement and Family Literacy	Literacy team meetings, IU08 trainings
K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Decision-Making Using Data for Literacy, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology, Building Blocks for Literacy, Family Engagement and Family Literacy	DIBELS training; allotted time for administration and data analysis of DIBELS results. The need exists for a data specialist/expert and competent in-district trainers, ongoing training and support for staff who teach or supervise literacy programs is necessary in the following areas: assessments used by the district, data analysis, data interpretation and data utilization, standardized patterns for assessments among classrooms and throughout the school district level district-wide, ongoing district support is needed to review data and adjust instruction based upon that data  Data information in-services about assessment tests and scoring, professional development time to evaluate assessment scores.
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Literacy Design Collaboration, Decision-Making Using Data for Literacy, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology, Building Blocks for Literacy	Technology time for teachers and students, test in-services, CDT professional opportunities, computer for students, teacher participating in modules, PLN, apple training

\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment

## **Instruction**

### **Points of Consideration**

- *Is small group instruction a regular part of literacy time?*
- *Is there an intervention system in place?*
- *Do we have adequate blocks of literacy time?*
- *Is literacy connected to content specific areas?*
- *Do teachers and administrators know what constitutes effective literacy instruction?*
- *Do we use evidence-based instructional approaches or programs?*
- *Are we using data to assist with instructional planning?*
- *Are we addressing instructional needs across all the language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening?*

### **\* Reviewed 2/7/17:**

Notes:

- **Adoption of new ELA curriculum in K-6.**
- Whether in a home-based, center-based, or school-based setting, individual and small group instruction is part of each day.
- Young children in Keystone Stars programs, Early Head Start and Head Start are screened regularly to catch developmental delays early.
- Data is used in developing the 504 Plans, Behavior Support Plans, IFSP, IEP, and GIEP.
- School administrators regularly conduct instructional walk-throughs to ensure that effective instruction is being provided to all students and programs are being implemented with fidelity.
- Necessary funding and personnel are secured to support small group teacher-directed literacy instruction for a portion of daily literacy instruction for K-3 students.
- Evidence-based instructional materials and practices are adopted for core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs that align to the state/common core standards and with each other.
- The support teachers and grade level teachers analyze data and assessments in order to flexibly place students into differentiated intervention and enrichment programs.
- Literacy is connected to each content area and has been a focus of the PLN instruction.

### **Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:**

- While the model exists, some areas such as phonics, receptive and expressive language, and writing need to continue to be developed.
- The need for a curriculum director/instructional coach exists to ensure that teachers across the district are incorporating features of effective delivery of literacy instruction.

Conclusion

Overall, the Westmont Hilltop School District has a strong literacy program, with small group and individual instruction being a key component. This is evident throughout the three schools in the district. However, the school district hopes to strengthen the transitions between grade levels and buildings.

There is also a strong hope to further integrate technology into the classroom on a 1-1 basis, and for there to be expanded literacy across the curriculum.

Instruction	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
<p><b>Birth-5yrs.</b></p> <p><b>K-6<sup>th</sup> grade</b></p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>		<p>Using Data for Literacy Decision-Making, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology, Decision-Making Using Data for Literacy, Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology, Building Blocks for Literacy, Reading Apprenticeship</p>	<p>IU08 trainings, SAS website</p> <p>Areas such as phonics, receptive and expressive language, and writing, small group instruction needs to be further developed to meet the needs of diverse learners, interventions need to target specific assessment information, differentiation within necessary groups, dedicated time needs to exist for teachers and administrators to reflect and discuss new and current practices</p>
<p><b>9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade</b></p>	<p>In progress</p>		<p>Universal Design for Learning and Digital Technology</p>	<p>SAS, IU08 conferences and workshops Extra time to incorporate ideas /instructional time in PLN, Apple training Participation in Eduplanet module training</p>

**\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment**

# Professional Learning and Practice

## Points of Consideration

- *Are professional learning activities aligned in a cohesive plan to meet the needs of students, teachers, and administrators?*
- *Is professional development based on what we know about effective PD?*
- *Are initiatives understood and supported by administration?*
- *Do administrators attend and participate in professional development opportunities?*
- *Are initiatives sustained across years?*
- *Is professional development taken back into the classroom?*
- *Are our teachers and administrators knowledgeable about current research for best practice?*
- *Are our teachers given dedicated times to reflect and discuss new learning new learning and classroom practice with their colleagues?*
- *Are there attempts to build teacher leadership in the school through collaboration and the development of communities of practice?*

\* **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

## **Notes:**

- Meet with Early Childhood partners and providers.
- Apple and PLN sustained.
- Integration of instructional coaching.
- Elementary instructional coaching.
- ILV participation by leadership team members.
- Professional development under PA Keys is a comprehensive, statewide career development system for those serving children and families in early childhood programs including: child care, Early Head Start, Head Start and Early Intervention.
- Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) and Professional Development Record (PDR) work together to assist in identifying and tracking professional development.
- Professional learning reflects programs that focus on goals, are ongoing, engaging and interactive by all staff and administration, collaborative, and job-embedded throughout the day
- Professional development from content into classroom instruction through peer and administration coaching, instructional supervision, continuous teacher collaboration, and associated strategies
- Paraprofessionals receive guidance and materials for the comprehensive literacy plan when regular teachers receive the professional development
- In the high school, Professional Learning Communities are utilized to give teacher's voice in their practice and decision making power.

Priority Areas for Needed

- Because of the success of the Professional Learning Communities initiative, it has been expanded to all buildings within the district.
- The relationship with ECE partners needs to be expanded to increase understanding and cooperation between pre-school and kindergarten staff.
- The district’s professional development needs to focus on transition, technology, and writing.

**Conclusions:**

Professional development in the Westmont Hilltop School District is goal-oriented, ongoing, interactive, and job-embedded. While many professional development initiatives in the district are sustained across the school year and are aligned to leverage resources, not all of these are specific to the literacy program and reflect the characteristics of effective professional development specific to language and literacy development. Teachers also need to be provided with more time to collaborate, study, observe others, visit model demonstration sites, and make plans to improve instruction that include further developing writing across the curriculum and employing technology. The District Needs Assessment clearly shows a deficit in the area of collaboration and communication with the ECE partners. Moving forward, the district will continue to work with these ECE partners to foster better collaboration and communication.

Professional Learning and Practice	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.	In progress		All Modules	Continue compliance with statewide professional development system
K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In place		All Modules	utilize professional development time through late starts and early dismissals to sustain reading focus over time, prior to the start of the year, teachers new to the building receive an orientation that includes more detail on literacy plan and curriculum models preparing the school’s model, materials, and assessments, teaching staff observes others and visit model demonstration sites in planning for improved instruction professional development for paraprofessionals continues to develop for specific comprehension and vocabulary strategies
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In place		All Modules	CPE courses, IU08 professional development, PDE webinars More time for teacher/administrator collaboration

**\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment**

## Literacy, Leadership, Goals, and Sustainability

### Points of Consideration

- *Do school leaders seek out ways to support literacy improvement efforts?*
- *Is there a coordination of literacy goals, assessment, instruction, and professional development?*
- *Do we give way to “fads” in literacy instruction?*
- *Is there a dedicated person assigned to “literacy?”*
- *Do we use our local Intermediate Unit and regional PaTTAN consultants to provide professional learning to build internal capacity?*
- *Is our principal’s primary responsibility to be an instructional leader?*
- *Do we inform our parents and community in improving literacy achievements?*

### \* **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

#### **Notes:**

- ECE Literacy Liason hired through the KtO Literacy Grant.
- IU08 and PaTTAN provide professional development opportunities through the nine KtO Content Modules.
- Leadership and vision at the district level supports literacy goals and outcome-based improvement practices
- Policies, personnel, budget, training, and other operational resources to improve outcomes at the district and school levels
- The administration matches skills based on data evidence to address the literacy needs of students and staff throughout the district.
- The superintendent communicates all goals, initiatives, and vision with all stakeholders on a regular basis
- Home-school partnership opportunities occur frequently through parent-teacher meetings, open house nights, requests for meetings between classroom teachers and parents, and continuous communication with the administration
- The administration meets for regular leadership meetings to ensure alignment of hiring practices, leadership development, general funding resources, and support lines to optimize and achieve district comprehensive planning goals

#### Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:

- Celebratory literacy programs and/or events to showcase staff efforts to make a difference in student achievement.
- The district needs to continue the process of developing a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable Birth-Grade 12 District Literacy Plan that is recorded, disseminated, implemented, and referenced.
- Data needs to be continually evaluated to determine the root causes of success.

Conclusions:

Areas of strength include staff and school leadership communication with stakeholders and dedication to improvement efforts with literacy programs. Our district utilizes our Intermediate Unit resources and trainings to promote literacy measures. Our staff and administration seek to engage external stakeholders in the literacy program process through daily interaction from the school and community outreach and parent engagement opportunities.

The areas that we continue to develop and/or need to implement include forming a literacy team that has a specific point of contact, coordination of all age-appropriate literacy goals, assessment, instruction, and professional development through a literacy team, and fully utilizing our PaTTAN resources on a regular basis.

Within this category, our potential for collective staff leadership, continuous goals, and literacy measures build on the current district stages for a sustainable literacy program. We will continue to grow despite necessary modifications to maximize a comprehensive and long-term sustainable program.

Literacy, Leadership, Goals, and Sustainability	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.  K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress  In progress		All modules  All Modules	As detailed in summary above  Emphasize literacy goals, and professional development within these goals, at the school level and district level, principal receives guidance with literacy opportunities following meetings and then need time to share with staff, meetings that have agendas and are then archived, embedded and continuous capacity within our infrastructure to support effective literacy practices, using PaTTAN consultation and professional development opportunities within the district, writing of annual literacy plans from school-based sources toward goals for the district, celebratory literacy programs and/or events regarding staff efforts to make a difference in student performance
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		All Modules	More Keystone instruction, Core Standards in-services (time to work with standards and curriculum) Community involvement opportunities

\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment

## Transitions

### Points of Consideration

- *Do we have timely, well-kept records documenting retentions, graduation rates, and other measures that influence student success in school?*
- *Do we have tools to monitor and improve the transition process?*
- *Do we provide any professional development to help staff ensure successful transitions for students?*
- *Do our teachers have a dedicated time to meet with teachers of adjacent grades to discuss students? (all levels including preK/kindergarten, elementary/middle, and middle/high)*

\* **Reviewed 2/7/17:**

### **Notes:**

- To help early childhood staff ensure successful transitions for children and families, annual training on transition is a mandatory topic for all providers of early childhood services.
- The LICC takes an active role in the transition process. Each spring the LICC hosts an information sharing dinner/workshop event about transition issues for parents of children entering Kindergarten.
- Students and parents are invited to a pre-kindergarten screening to determine the needs of incoming kindergarten students and their families. Kindergarten and support teachers are available to assist during the screening. The guidance counselor meets with parents to determine kindergarten/school readiness and discuss any needs. Parents leave the screening with a packet of materials.
- Students entering the high school attend several events to assist with transition.
- The district retains documentation on student retention and graduation rates.
- **Transition Day (Move-Up Day) for current 6h graders into new building.**
- **High School counselors meet throughout the school year with 6<sup>th</sup> graders.**
- **Current 6<sup>th</sup> grade participates in a transitional schedule.**
- The school has a transition plan for students into the district.

### Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:

- The district needs to create a transition committee of multiple stakeholders who are best able to meet the needs of the initiative.
- The district needs to develop a transition plan, Birth-Grade 12 that includes a timeline, goals, and responsibilities for implementation.
- The need exists for an evaluation process that includes questions and measurements that will assess the effectiveness of evaluating effective classroom environments and a tool to monitor and improve the transition process.
- Financial support does not exist to support the transition process.
- A variety of staff development needs to be provided to help staff ensure successful transitions for students.

Conclusion:

As the Literacy Team began the needs assessment phase of the KtO Grant, it became very obvious that Transition was going to be a top priority. Even though the district provides opportunities for students entering Kindergarten, fifth grade, and ninth grade, no real written “Transition Plan” exists. To address this area of concern, the district listed a district-wide Transition Plan (Birth to grade 12) as its SMART Goal for the grant and is currently in the process of writing this plan. Ultimately, the district wants to expand the plan to include not only the major student transitions, but also the transition from out-side ECE centers to kindergarten, as well as between grade levels throughout the district. In addition to the completion and implementation of the Transition Plan, appropriate professional development needs to be offered to district staff, as well as staff at all ECE centers which serve as feeders to the district in order to help facilitate successful students transitions.

Transition	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.  K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress  In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum  Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Family Engagement and Literacy	IU08 trainings  Time for Professional learning and collaboration. Emphasize literacy goals, and professional development within these goals, at the school level and district level, principal receives guidance with literacy opportunities following meetings and then needs time to share with staff, meetings that have agendas and are then archived, embedded and continuous capacity within our infrastructure to support effective literacy practices, using PaTTAN consultation and professional development opportunities within the district, writing of annual literacy plans from school-based sources toward goals for the district, celebratory literacy programs and/or events regarding staff efforts to make a difference in student performance
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum	More vertical meeting time with other schools, availability of laptops

\* Revised 2/7/17:  
Building Realignment

## **Partnerships**

### **Points of Consideration**

- *Is our district well represented in community activities and committees to expand awareness of the need for a comprehensive literacy program for children birth – grade 12?*
- *Do we participate in community awareness activities to inform and encourage public support for literacy education – children birth to grade 12?*
- *Do we **really** treat parents and community members and organizations (libraries, businesses) as partners in our literacy efforts?*
- *What is the public perception of our school?*

**\* Reviewed 2/7/17:**

### **Notes:**

- Our teachers have periodically met with early childcare providers to discuss developmental benchmarks that are helpful to incoming kindergartners. The preschool classes visit the kindergarten classrooms and other areas of the elementary school building to ease the transition to school.
- The district creates advisory committees as needed to evaluate literacy programs and services. Ex: Comprehensive Plan.
- The district has developed partnerships with IU08, Children's Behavioral Health, MHMR, Footsteps, Penn Highlands Community College, UPJ, and the Johnstown Career and Technology Center.
- Cultural Awareness Programming
- Formation of Committees for professional development and comprehensive Planning

### **Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:**

- The district needs to engage more community partners in planning, implementing, evaluating the comprehensive and integrated literacy services. This should include non-educational community partners that support families including libraries, health services, social services, businesses and industry.
- The district needs to continue to sponsor community awareness activities to inform the public of the need for literacy education for children birth to grade 12.
- The LEA needs to formally establish partnerships across the disciplines to ensure that reading and writing are taught within the contexts of specific curricula.

### **Priority Areas for Needed Improvement:**

- The district needs to engage ECE partners in planning, implementing, and evaluating the comprehensive and integrated literacy curriculum.
- More district emphasis needs to be placed on building relationship with many early learning providers, including daycares, preschools, in-home care providers, and early intervention organizations.
- The district needs to develop a more defined working relationship with its ECE partners.

Conclusion:

The Westmont Hilltop School District recognizes the importance of building strong partnerships within the community to support the literacy growth of all its students. By completing the Local Literacy Needs Assessment, the district realized that effective partnerships were lacking between the birth to 5 age-range stakeholders in the community and district. The KtO ECE partners have become essential contributors to the new literacy plan. In addition, since the district hired its own early literacy liaison, more families, child care centers, preschools, and caregivers will be known to the district, enabling consistent literacy guidance, instruction, and experiences to be available to a larger percentage of the district’s children. The opportunities afforded through this grant are helping the district to expand parent and community partnerships.

Partnership	In Place	Not in Place	KtO Content Area Modules that would assist	Other Professional Development Resources that would assist
Birth-5yrs.	In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum, Family Engagement	School district representation/participation on community collaboration initiatives
K-6 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Successful Transition Along the Literacy Continuum  Family Engagement	Formally establish partnerships with the LEA across the disciplines to ensure that reading and writing are taught within the contexts of specific curricula, however, our classes are self-contained and incorporate reading and writing across the curriculum
7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade	In progress		Family Engagement	Continued Literacy Night for different grade level Time for community interaction, ECE partners meeting time

\* Revised 2/7/17:  
**Building Realignment**

## Section V: Setting and Prioritizing Goals

Title of Section	Goal	Rationale
<p><b>-Instruction</b></p> <p><b>-Professional Learning and Practice</b></p> <p><b>-Literacy Leadership, Goals and Sustainability</b></p>	<p>By providing Professional Learning Community time, the District will give all stakeholders (Birth-Grade 12) an active voice in the literacy process.</p>	<p>Expanding professional development opportunities is vital to the implementation of a meaningful literacy environment that gives all stakeholders an active voice in the literacy process to allow a sustainable plan that will accommodate all students for all of their education within our district.</p>
<p><b>Standards and Curriculum</b></p>	<p>As the PA Common Core Standards are approved, the District will systematically incorporate them into instructional practices across grade levels and content areas K -12.</p>	<p>Since the PA Common Core Standards will define what students should know and be able to do as a result of instruction, then it is imperative that this goal is a district priority.</p>
<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><b>Transition</b></p>	<p>The District will develop a Comprehensive Literacy Assessment Plan (Birth to Grade 12) to include purposes, measures to be used, schedules, procedures, and targeted students.</p>	<p>Assessment offers tools and resources to support the process of analyzing, evaluating and documenting student learning in order to improve professional practice and increase student achievement. With this in mind, a comprehensive assessment plan will identify needs at each building, communicate these needs to staff, and then coordinate actions that would benefit all WHSD students.</p>

**Goal Statement:** By providing Professional Learning Community time, the District will give all stakeholders (Birth-Grade 12) an active voice in the literacy process.

	<b>Action Step 1</b>	<b>Action Step 2</b>	<b>Action Step 3</b>
<b>Action Step</b>	The District teachers and staff will rewrite planned course work to align with Common Core.	Based on revised planned course work, training needs will be prioritized according to statutory areas, presenters/trainings will be researched, and training will be provided for all stakeholders.	The District will implement the training sessions developed in Action Step 2.
<b>Time Line</b>	September 2013 – May 2014	September 2014 - May 2015	September 2015 - 2016
<b>Lead Person/s</b>	Building Principals Administration Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator	Building Principals Administration Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator	Building Principals Administration Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator
<b>Resources Needed</b>	1. meeting time 2. meeting space 3. web resources 4. input from staff	1. meeting time 2. meeting space 3. web resources 4. input from staff 5. IU 08 5. PATTAN	1. funding 2. presenters 3. meeting time/space 4. web resources 5. presentation space 6. IU 08 7. PATTAN
<b>Specifics of Implementation</b>	1. Identify the stakeholders. 2. Research components of Common Core 3. Review current in place course work 4. Revise/rewrite planned course work 5. Examine/Analyze scope and sequence of coursework to ensure there are no areas of overlap or gaps in the curricula.	1. Examine/analyze survey planned course work. 2. Research possible training opportunities as well as presenters. 3. Based on this research (#2) , schedule presenters	1. Remind stakeholders of upcoming trainings. 2. Schedule participants into training sessions. 3. Prepare designated area for training. 4. Follow training with a participant evaluation.
<b>Measure of Success</b>	Success will be based on the completion and dissemination of the planned course.	Success will be based on the development of the training sessions to meet the stakeholders' needs.	Success will be measured by the participants' feedback on session evaluations.
<b>Review Date</b>	no later than May 30, 2014	no later than May 29, 2015	no later than May 27, 2016

**Goal Statement:** As the PA Common Core Standards are approved, the District will systematically incorporate them into instructional practices across grade levels and content areas K -12.

	<b>Action Step 1</b>	<b>Action Step 2</b>	<b>Action Step 3</b>
<b>Action Step</b>	The District will implement approved curriculum standards through the adoption of released state curriculum or a revision of current District curriculum.	The District will provide professional development to increase knowledge of new standards.	The District will implement formative and diagnostic assessments to monitor and insure implementation.
<b>Time Line</b>	within one year of state-approved curriculum/standards	within one year of state approval	within one year of state approval
<b>Lead Person/s</b>	District Administrative Team	Building/District Administrative Team	Building/District Administrative Team
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On Hand Schools (district funded \$17,000)</li> <li>2. SAS Portal</li> <li>3. Writing initiatives for fiction/non fiction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IU 8</li> <li>2. PaTTAN</li> <li>3. Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CDT's</li> <li>2. Study Island</li> <li>3. GRADE</li> <li>4. Curriculum-based assessment</li> <li>5. DIBELS Next</li> </ol>
<b>Specifics of Implementation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adoption of state curriculum</li> <li>2. Revision and rewriting of present curricula to align with Common Core.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Professional Development – Curriculum Building,</li> <li>2. Access and use of SAS</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through District assessment and curriculum.</li> <li>2. Using a RtII approach, the district will pilot a tiered intervention .</li> </ol>
<b>Measure of Success</b>	Curriculum utilization is identified in lesson planning and observed through walkthroughs and observation (PDE Teacher Effectiveness Model)	Teacher feedback  Curriculum utilization is identified in lesson planning and observed through walkthroughs and observation	District Assessment Plan  Improved student performance in summative assessment.
<b>Review Date</b>	June 1, 2014	June 1, 2014	June 1, 2014

**Goal Statement:** The District will develop a Comprehensive Literacy Assessment Plan (Birth to Grade 12) to include purposes, measures to be used, schedules, procedures, and targeted students.

	<b>Action Step 1</b>	<b>Action Step 2</b>	<b>Action Step 3</b>
<b>Action Step</b>	The district will develop a comprehensive plan/calendar.	The district will disseminate a comprehensive plan/calendar.	The district will revise and update a comprehensive plan/calendar.
<b>Time Line</b>	September 2013-May2014	September 2013-May2014	June 2014
<b>Lead Person/s</b>	Roger Cowder-Data Liaison Matt Thomas- Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator	Roger Cowder-Data Liaison Matt Thomas- Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator	Roger Cowder-Data Liaison Matt Thomas- Director of Professional Development/Assessment Coordinator
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hands On Schools</li> <li>2. Finals site (website)</li> <li>3. Input form admin team</li> <li>4. Research for local assessment hyperlinks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hands On Schools</li> <li>2. Finals site (website)</li> <li>3. Input form admin team</li> <li>4. Research for local assessment hyperlinks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hands On Schools</li> <li>2. Finals site (website)</li> <li>3. Input form admin team</li> <li>4. Research for local assessment hyperlinks</li> </ol>
<b>Specifics of Implementation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather test timelines/criteria</li> <li>2. Research testing preparation needs</li> <li>3. Plan data meeting; Collaborative Academic Support Team (CAST)</li> <li>4. Create calendar/plan</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Calendar on district website</li> <li>2. Paper copies available to community</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the assessment calendar and its accuracy</li> <li>2. Update assessment needs and changes.</li> </ol>
<b>Measure of Success</b>	Completion and accuracy of the comprehensive assessment calendar.	Survey to insure increased stakeholder awareness of assessment calendar.	Report of comprehensive assessment calendar accuracy and records of planned assessment.
<b>Review Date</b>	June 1, 2014	June 1, 2014	June 1, 2014

# Section VI: Dissemination of Plan Section

Revised 8/16

The Westmont Hilltop Local Comprehensive Literacy Plan will be shared with all stakeholders as follows:

- The Westmont Hilltop Local Comprehensive Literacy Plan will be posted on the district's website.
- The Westmont Hilltop Local Comprehensive Literacy Plan will be available for review at the following locations:
  - Westmont Hilltop Administration Office
  - Westmont Hilltop High School Office
  - Westmont Hilltop Middle school Office
  - Westmont Hilltop Elementary School Office
  - Professional Family Services Office
  - Beginnings Office

At the district's Jan. 21, 2013 professional development day, progress was formally shared with all staff in each of the three buildings. The school board was updated on Feb. 11, 2013. The community had an opportunity to be informed about the literacy plan throughout the planning process, at board discussion meetings, and at board meetings.

At the Family Literacy Night on March 12, 2013, the community was provided highlights of the literacy plan as well as being able to see the literacy plan in action.

At the June board meeting Nicole Kuzmiak, KtO program director provided an overview of the literacy plan for the Board and the public.

At the start of the 2013-14 school year, all staff members will be made aware of the WHSD Comprehensive Literacy Plan via email and in-service presentations/discussions.

Principals will share the plan with building level faculty and staff during Professional Learning Community times and use the plan to further enhance literacy programing.

## **Section VII: Assessing and Reporting Progress**

Revise 8/16

The Westmont Hilltop Literacy Team will meet at least three times a year to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and its implementation. The literacy team will base its assessment of the WHSD Comprehensive Literacy Plan on the following criteria: the progress of each Action Plan, the assessment data measured by ITERS, ECERS, GRADE, DIBELS, PSSA, Keystone Exams, CDT, and Hands On Schools, and data input opportunities from Professional Learning Community meetings, parent involvement, and student surveys. . Staff will work on grade level mapping and curricular realignment throughout the 2013-14 school year. A fully aligned Common Core/Keystone-based curriculum is the ultimate goal.