

## Mission

Our mission is to prepare students to contribute to the competitive and changing world in which we live.



## District Vision

Our vision is to be the benchmark of educational excellence.



2014-2015

# Progress Report

on the Westerville City School District  
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

# A Note From the Superintendent and Board



Dear Westerville School District Community,

In the fall of 2013, the Westerville Board of Education directed the school district administration to engage the community in the development of a new Strategic Plan. Residents, employees and students of the Westerville City School District helped shape the future of education in our schools during the development of this plan, which is themed, "Creating the 21st Century Student." This Progress Report serves as a means for sharing with the school district community the progress being made that aligns with our Strategic Plan.

Prior to this latest initiative, the last organized effort to craft a strategic plan with a structured process to gather community input was during the development of Vision 2010. The content of Vision 2010 was adapted to reflect additional community input gathered through subsequent outreach efforts, and the results were incorporated into the Board of Education's five identified goals.

We achieved some incredible things as a result of the previous strategic plan. Though its nice to receive high marks on reporting tools such as the State Report Card, we believe the real measures of success is not only our students' performance in the classroom but the extent to which we have prepared them to be successful in the future. This report reflects what we believe to be the attributes of a 21st Century Student.

Why is it important for our schools to develop 21st Century Students? Because the world around us continues to change rapidly. The United States is expected to create 47 million jobs in the decade ending in 2018. One-third of those jobs will require a bachelor's degree or higher while another third will require an associate's degree or post-secondary occupational credential.

According to a recent Harvard study, the percentage of Americans who actually earn bachelor's degrees by age 27 is still quite small—only 30 percent. Meanwhile, 42 percent of the nation's 27-year olds have no more than a high school degree. Only 56 percent of individuals who attend four-year colleges or universities graduate within six years.

Simply put, we must graduate students who are able to pursue their post-secondary education plans and ultimately compete for these jobs.

It's clear that the people who comprise our community, whether they live or work here, are proud of and passionate about their schools. The Strategic Plan we've developed is community-driven, and it is helping us channel that passion into a productive energy that moves our district forward.

Approximately 180 stakeholders representing all facets of our community participated in the development process.

From this process we've identified six dimensions that will guide our work:

Dimension 1: Every Student Achieves Academic Success

Dimension 2: Learning and Working Environments are Safe, Nurturing and Efficient

Dimension 3: Student learning is driven by recruiting, developing, and retaining highly effective and skilled staff members

Dimension 4: Community, Parents, Students, and Staff are Engaged as Partners

Dimension 5: Financial Resources are Aligned to Support Student Success

Dimension 6: Resources are Provided to Support Student Development and Well-Being

As you'll see in this progress report, we've already made some tremendous strides in implementing the types of things our community wants and expects for the education of its youth. We look forward to continuing this journey with your continued guidance.



*Westerville City Schools Board of Education*

Front row: Dr. Nancy Nestor-Baker, Rick Vilardo, Tracy Davidson

Back row: Richard Bird, Dr. Carol French, Dr. John Kellogg (Superintendent) and Bart Griffith (Treasurer)



Wilder Elementary students work with their Chromebooks

*“The difference in student engagement is obvious with the infusion of Chromebooks in the classrooms... As I circulated the classroom and listened to the student-teacher exchange in the small group, I observed understanding of the concepts unfolding. Good stuff!!! “*

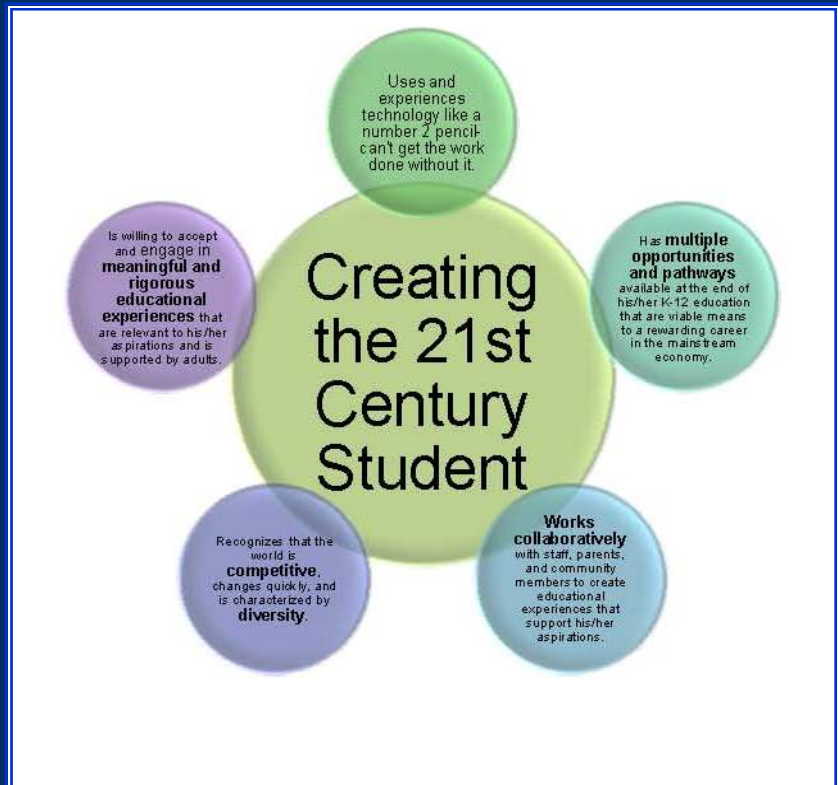
*-Victoria Hazlett, Principal  
Wilder Elementary School*



Students at Heritage Middle School work with the laser cutter

*“I am very excited about this class...it is unique, it is hands-on, real-world, interactive, solving problems, and thoughtful...from a teaching standpoint it is the first time in seven years that the kids are taking the lead in the classroom and driving the curriculum without me prompting them.”*

*-Lee Smith,  
Heritage Middle School  
Science Teacher-Advanced Manufacturing  
Pathways*



Central Students examine a crime scene in their Principles of Biomedical Science class

*“Students are eager to come to class...it is the most rewarding for a teacher to see kids excited...waiting at the door...wanting to know what's next.”*

*-Autumn McCormick  
Westerville Central High School*



Strategic Plan participant posts her thoughts on the process

**Strategic Plan Participants Share Their Feedback**

“I was very pleased with the specific focus - many strategic planning processes are very broad so input is more of a surface nature and there is not the ability to dig deeper into an issue.”

“Energetic interaction of stakeholders.”

“Having the opportunity to be a part of the process.”

“Reviewing district statistics breakdowns (demographics) in the face of the student population and staff. Thankful that the district has presented this type of forum for all members of the community.”

“I really enjoyed having a diverse group of people with so many different backgrounds/ways they are connected to WCS.”

**Strategic Planning Process**

Over 180 community members were engaged in the Strategic Planning process and examined six dimensions of the organization.



**Balanced Scorecard**

The Strategic Plan then translated into a Balanced Scorecard Framework which includes four tiers.



Community, staff, and students participate in the Strategic Plan

# Turning Community Expectations Into Action

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### Every Student Achieves Academic Success

- Incorporating technology into classroom instruction as part of the district's Learning and Teaching Roadmap.
- Moving towards a goal of 1 device for every 2 students in three years with over 2000 devices added to classrooms in 2014-2015.
- Building capacity towards more students being college and career ready using the Pathways Model for curriculum development. Including adding course work in health careers, business logistics, and advanced manufacturing in middle and high school.
- Westerville City Schools was part of two Straight A Grants. The 1st Straight A Grant (\$14.4 million) is in partnership with Columbus State and 15 other school district. This grant is for the Pathways to Prosperity Network, a collaboration that will give students an opportunity to earn college credit and get workplace experience.
- The second grant, EdCite (\$8.4 million dollars) is a partnership with The Ohio State University and 5 other districts to incorporate digital curriculum into classroom instruction.

- As a means of expanding elementary options the district directed resources to support maintaining Elementary School Magnet programs.
- The Board approved plans to pilot All Day Kindergarten as an option for the 2015-2016 school year.
- In 2013 we proposed to the Board using Central College Magnet School for shared service opportunities. In 2014 the Board approved a 3 year lease agreement with the Child Develop-



*Head Start Classroom-Central College*

ment Council of Franklin County allowing the use of the main level of Central College for their Head-Start Program (a program offering preschool to economically disadvantaged families). The program currently serves 68 students for half-day preschool, and 20 students for all-day preschool.



*District teachers pose in front of the mobile Fab Lab*



## Straight A Grant

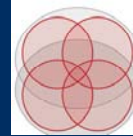
The Westerville City School District (WCSD) was the recipient of approximately \$1.4 million for its participation in the **Innovation Generation** initiative, which is affiliated with the national Pathways to Prosperity Network and supported by the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Jobs for the Future. The program received a total of \$14.4 million in funding during the State of Ohio's first Straight A Grant cycle.

The Innovation Generation initiative establishes career pathways into vital industry sectors in the central Ohio area. School districts, higher education institutions and business will work together to help students prepare for some of central Ohio's fastest-growing jobs.

Those pathways include:

- Health Career
- Business/Logistics
- Advanced manufacturing

# Turning Community Expectations Into Action



**KIRWAN INSTITUTE**  
for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

## INTERNAL PROCESSES

Student learning is driven by recruiting, selecting, developing and retaining effective and skilled staff members.

- The district's framework for professional development consists of focusing on what we teach (curriculum), how we teach (instruction), and assessment (measuring student learning).
- The HR department incorporates research-based interview screening tools that measure candidates' values, attitudes and preferences related to teaching and interacting with students as part of a comprehensive selection process.
- Recruitment efforts include strategies directed at attracting minority candidates for teaching and other positions across the district.
- Staff is recognized with A+ awards for embracing the values of the school district and going above and beyond each day.

Learning and Working Environments are Safe, Nurturing and Efficient.

- The Board of Education made changes to the Permanent Improvement levy allocations in order to provide additional resources to the new Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- The Board moved forward with a renovation and expansion project at Pointview Elementary.
- The addition of door buzzer systems as part of safety efforts. This project was supported with state grant dollars.



New door buzzer system at Heritage MS

- Technology infrastructure upgrades were incorporated as part of the Teaching and Learning Roadmap. Some of those upgrades included:
  - Added more bandwidth to the internet.
  - Firewall/Application Layer 7 network analyzer
  - Purchased a new internet filter called iBoss.
  - Purchased a mobile device manager (Aruba ClearPass) to help handle "bring your own device".

Resources are Provided to Support Student Development and Well-Being

- The Board acted to reduce fees for school supplies and materials.
- Agency partnerships with Head Start, Boys and Girls Club, and W.A.R.M and Share-Bac-Pac.
- Examination and implementation of Bruce Perry's work in Neurosequential Model for Education (NME). Over 100 staff have taken part in professional development opportunities resulting in:
  - Intentional relationship building with the students.
  - Integration of brain-compatible strategies that involve movement and rhythm.
  - Recognition of how staff's actions and mood are reflected in the student and how to use co-regulation strategies to help calm students.

- Partnership with OSU and Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity to examine explicit bias. Training for district personnel/administrators will consist of:

- An introduction to the science of implicit bias.
- Implicit bias literature in the education domain.
- School discipline and implicit bias.
- Debiasing strategies.



**"Students feel cared for and comfortable in the environment, which increases respect for one another as well as higher work output."**

**Intervention Teacher K-5**



# Turning Community Expectations Into Action

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### Community, Parents, Students and Staff are Engaged as Partners in Education

Stakeholder engagement is an integral part of what makes the Westerville School District so special.

### Community Partnerships

- Westerville Noon Rotary and Sunrise Rotary continue to support quality education through several initiatives, including:

- The 'I Can' Program, provides Character Education on a weekly basis during the school year.
- Pick the Parade Theme contest, in which students submit proposed themes for Rotary's annual July 4th parade. The winning student receives \$100 and a place of honor in the parade, while elementary classrooms with 100% participation are entered in a drawing for a pizza party.
- The Dictionary Project, which provides all third graders with a personal copy of "A Student's Dictionary," so that they may become good writers, active readers and creative thinkers.
- Students of the Month program, which recognizes outstanding students who have distinguished themselves by serving their school and exemplify the ideal of "Service Above Self."
- Service to Youth awards, which recognize exceptional school employees who have made a special contribution to youth, served as a positive role model for young people, and have demonstrated service above and beyond the call of duty in performing their job responsibilities.

- Westerville Education Challenge was originally formed to underwrite Challenge Day initiatives at all three Westerville high schools. It has evolved to provide competitive grants that fund creative projects and directly enhance educational opportunities for students in the Westerville City Schools.
- The Westerville Education Foundation (WEF) on September 30, 2014, launched its latest endeavor to support quality education in Westerville City Schools. Officially known as the "GAP Initiative," the WEF's latest project puts the power of online fundraising and crowdsourcing directly into the hands of classroom teachers and other licensed educators. The WEF annually provides upwards of \$10,000 in the form of teacher grants to support innovative programs and practices across the district.
- The Knights of Columbus partnered with and donated to our Special Education Department so that students identified as being at risk of dropping out could attend the Camp Mary Orton Wilderness Bond Program.
- Volunteers from Westerville Partners for Education (WPE) and Kiwanis of Westerville are bringing the Book Bonanza! program to the district's Early Learning Center (ELC) and other schools throughout the year. At the ELC, teachers chose a book from the Book Bonanza! collection for each student who had celebrated a birthday over the summer months, and enough books were provided to ensure that all preschoolers would receive a book to commemorate their birthdays this year.
- For more than 50 years the Westerville Kiwanis Club has honored the top senior scholars from Westerville high schools through its annual Academic Varsity Awards Banquet.
- The Bette Marschall Memorial Education Fund continues to provide innovation grants to Westerville teachers, students, administrators and non-teaching staff. The Marschall family began the fund in memory of Bette Marschall, a respected elementary school teacher and principal in the Westerville City School District from the early 1970s through 1990.
- Parent Council and the Westerville ESL Department sponsored an interactive workshop for Westerville City Schools community members designed to help families build positive relationships between our diverse cultures. The district's ESL Department continues its efforts to build strong partnerships among schools, families, students, businesses, organizations and agencies.

- According to the Westerville Parent Council's most recent Volunteer Support Report, parent volunteers provided time equivalent to 66.94 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees with a value of more than \$1.3 million dollars in potential payroll. Volunteer organizations connected to the schools also took in \$467,820 for projects to pay for a variety of projects including special school events, field trip transportation, entry costs for special academic contests, athletic and band uniforms and other needs. And, they gave out \$47,750 in scholarships to graduating seniors in Westerville high schools.
- District officials continue to strengthen their work with numerous community organizations such as Caring & Sharing, the Westerville Area Resource Ministry, Share-Bac-a-Pac and the Westerville Christian Church's "Friday Fare" Program to ensure that students who come from economically disadvantaged families or are experiencing other hardships have access to adequate clothing, school supplies and meals throughout the year.
- The Westerville City School District is fortunate to have a strong partnership with the various law enforcement and safety services agencies that serve the broader community. 1) They provide exceptional guidance to school officials when safety and security matters arise. 2) They regularly participate on the district safety committee. 3) Observe safety drills to identify areas for improvement, and ensure that school safety plans reflect the best thinking of safety officials based upon after-action reviews of national incidents.



*A First grade student enjoys talking with DARE Officer Ray Boock.*

# Turning Community Expectations Into Action

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### Community, Parents, Students and Staff are Engaged as Partners in Education

- Every school in the district continues to hold family fairs, multicultural nights and other family engagement events to encourage and strengthen parental involvement each child's education.

#### Community Engagement

- District officials made the enrollment process easier for families with the launch of an online registration option. The rollout, which began in February 2014 with the registration of incoming kindergarten students, has expanded to include all student enrollments.
- The district has enhanced its emergency notification system so families receive timely information about school delays, cancellations or other emergency scenarios that may impact typical operations during the school day. The system is also used for informational purposes to provide families with weekly news about the district, as well as access to the Virtual Backpack of community announcements.
- The district has extended its use of social media to include the posting of Board of Education meetings and various presentations on YouTube. This measure enhances the district's ongoing use of Facebook and Twitter to share information and remain transparent to its constituents.
- District officials continue to assist Otterbein University's WOCC with the production of "School's Out," a television show that features exceptional students and student achievements in Westerville City Schools. The show can be watched online at Otterbein.tv, under the "School's Out" tab. It also can be viewed on Time Warner cable in Westerville on channel 96-7. U-verse subscribers can watch it on channel 99 by surfing through the menu.
- Westerville Schools hosted a free Invention Convention Community Assembly, featuring the dynamic duo of "Captain Gadget" and "Dr. Claire," to teach attendees how anyone can become an inventor, solve everyday problems, and learn how to get involved in the Invention Convention.
- District officials reestablished the "A+ Awards" to honor outstanding school employees whose actions demonstrate support of the district's Mission Statement; a willingness to go above and beyond normal expectations in support of students; and conduct that is consistent with one or more of the district's values of respect, inclusiveness, community, communication, collaboration, innovation, nurturing, trust and accountability.



November 2015 A+ Award Winners

Front row, left to right: Patrick Quinn, Jeffrey McMillan, and Sean Gorsuch. Back row: Shelli Speakman, Candi Hall, Amy Hinz and Leslie Baumann.



Olamide Bola, left, and Ema Rennie, right, were interviewed by "School's Out" host Dr. Jeffrey Demas on November 12 at the WOCC studio on the campus of Otterbein University

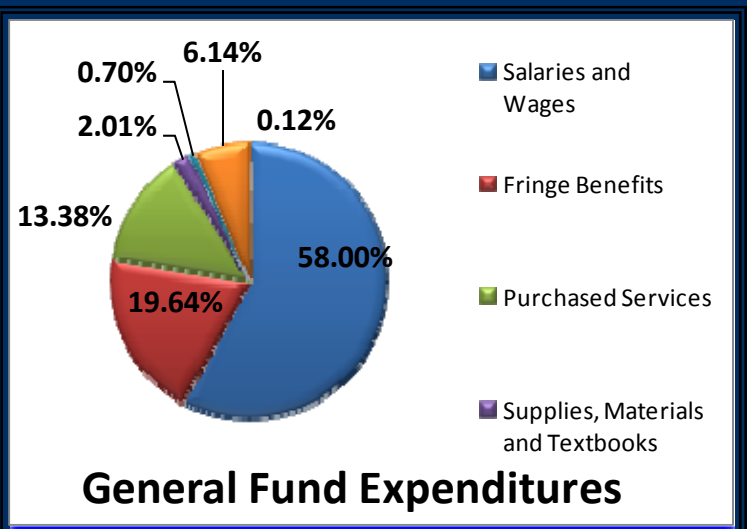
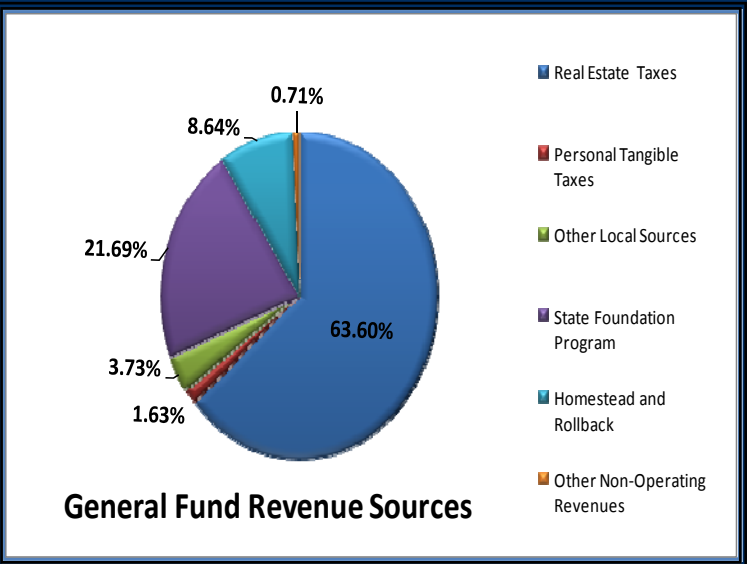
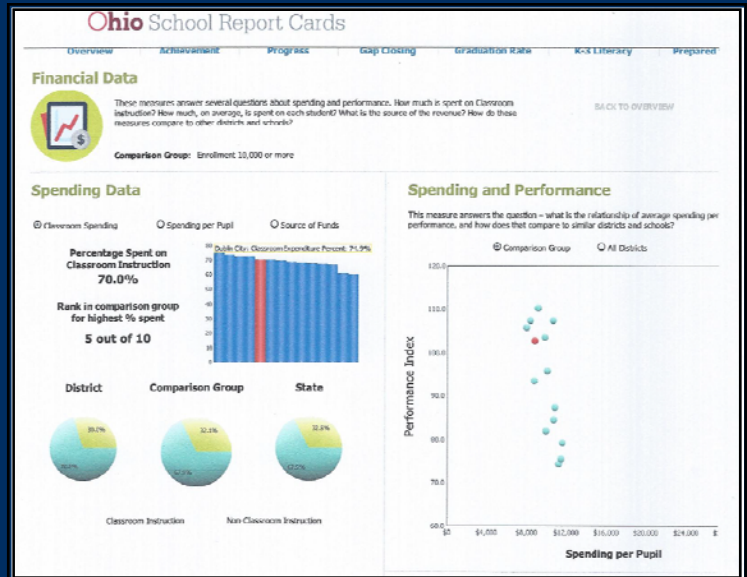


# Turning Community Expectations Into Action

## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

### Financial Resources are Maximized to Support Educational Success

- According to data from ODE, 70 cents of every dollar the district spends goes to the classroom.
- The current five-year forecast projects revenues exceeding expenditures through FY17 with a cash balance of \$19 million in reserve that represents 45 days “cash on hand”.
- Changes to permanent improvement levy allocations to provide support for capital needs.
- Board increases per pupil allocation for buildings. This was the first increase in 10 years.
- Improved financial conditions.
  - Better than expected revenue
  - Efficiency of operations
- The district was awarded the Auditors Award with Distinction and the Government Finance Association’s Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.



District receives an Award with Distinction for financial reporting from State Auditor, David Yost.