**Conner Middle School Improvement Plan**

**About Conner Middle School**

Conner Middle School is located in Hebron, Kentucky, near the Greater Cincinnati International Airport. Our student body consists of nearly 950 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from both rural and suburban settings. Our free and reduced population is approximately 30%.

Conner Middle has a long history of high academic achievement and consistently finishes in the top 10 percent of all Kentucky middle schools on state testing and in the top five in NKY. Recently, we achieved assessment scores placing us at the 95%ile or above and achieved the status of School of Distinction and School of High Growth for which we are very proud. Additionally, we are in the top five for middle school for state assessment regionally and second highest for all middle and high schools in Boone County. This success is due to supportive parents and community, hard-working students, and a fantastic teaching staff (including 8 National Board Certified Teachers) who hold high expectations for our students. In 2013, 2014, and 2015, Conner Middle School was selected as a top ten school in Kentucky for students and staff based on our TELL survey results. We agree….Conner Middle School is an awesome place for students to learn and for teachers to work!

At Conner Middle School, we consider ourselves a progressive school with teachers and leadership, who strive to meet the needs of our next generation learners. We realize the future for our students will require them to have an educational foundation that is focused on problem solving, cooperation, mathematics, technology, science and engineering. With this in mind, we are constantly evolving our practices in the classroom, as well as providing opportunities to students outside of the regular school day. Beginning in January 2016, we began our full implementation of one-to-one technology with all of our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. All students in our building now have a Google Chromebook to utilize as part of their learning…anytime…anywhere.

During the 2016-17 school year, we implemented personalized learning. The online platform allows students to become the drivers of their education through goal setting, planning for learning, and determining when they are ready to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Furthermore, our students deepen their understanding of the content through authentic problem/passion/project based learning (PBL). The PBL projects are designed as a hands-on approach to learning where students begin with an overarching problem to solve and then research and collaborate to produce a solution to the problem. It is our goal to have the majority of the projects be “authentic”, meaning the product created/developed isn’t something that goes in the trash when it is finished. Some examples of our current authentic projects are: The Bee Project - maintaining the health of our beehive, harvesting, marketing, and designing labels for the honey produced; Sustainability Project - researching behaviors of our chickens, learning how to protect them from predators, designing a protective environment for the animals, monitoring their health and egg production, and learning about the best ways to feed and care for them; and the Human Impacts Project - researching ways humans negatively impact the environment around them, then design solutions to address the problem.

Student engagement is a priority at Conner Middle. We encourage and support our students to get involved in the MANY extracurricular activities including: Archery, Basketball, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Track & Cross Country, Ski Club, Science Club, Math Club, History Club, Colts Care, Pokemon-Yugioh Nintendo Club, Spanish Club, Yearbook, School Play, Speech and Drama, National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Pizza and Pages Book Club, etc. Our three newest extracurricular activities are Archery, Track and the Colts Care (leadership group focusing on helping others through random acts of kindness) with combined membership of over 400 students. Through our club and team offerings, students have ample opportunities to get involved, demonstrate leadership and make a positive difference in the world. Click here to view a list of current [extra curricular offerings](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UnwA2QSTaTF1ge0cJbfwduQ97WLJufRMy3cPbh06heY/edit?usp=sharing).

In addition to our strong academic and extracurricular programs, Conner Middle School has one of the best music programs in the state. We are the only middle school in Northern Kentucky to offer three different music programs to our students: choir, orchestra and symphonic band. Additionally, we offer advanced orchestra, jazz band and chamber choir for our many gifted musicians. Both our choir and band programs have led demonstration clinics at state music conferences for teachers across the state. Our band has been recognized at the national and international levels.

We are proud of our school and our rich tradition of success. We would like to thank our students, parents, and the community for your continued support. Go Colts!

**Mission**

We are a community service organization and apersonalized learning school**.** We value your child’s ability to think critically, learn, collaborate, create, persevere, and problem solve. We want to reach each child’s individual strengths so that, upon reaching adulthood, they are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and habits to realize their unique and full human potential, thereby enabling them to be contributing members of society.

**Goal 1: Improve literacy and numeracy instruction in our building. We will increase Proficient/Distinguished percentages to 75% in both reading and mathematics and 60% in writing.**

**Current STAR Reading Data:**

Spring:

Winter: 66%

Fall: 58%

**Current STAR Math Data:**

Spring:

Winter: 60%

Fall: 43%

**Strategies**

1. All staff will receive ongoing training for effective writing in the classroom.
   1. All SS teachers will utilize a minimum of four DBQ five paragraph essays embedded in their units/projects that have students reading primary and secondary sources, writing claims (assertions/thesis statements); using evidence from the sources to support the claim; working on the commentary/explaining of the evidence; and working on conclusions as part of the writing plan
   2. All science teachers will implement a minimum of two TCT tasks. The TCT tasks will be embedded in science units/projects with writing as a major component of demonstrating effective science skills and practices.
   3. All staff will be trained in providing effective feedback to move learners forward, specifically for Commentary.. Training will include:
      1. Writing effective prompts
      2. Analyzing and providing effective feedback
      3. Utilizing technology (i.e. Google Docs) to provide frequent, effective feedback
      4. Utilizing rubrics, student reflections, and feedback to grow students as writers
   4. Writing will be a part of daily instruction (note taking, summarizing, reflecting, etc.).
   5. Writing will be a major component of most projects.
   6. We will provide targeted intervention to move students forward as learners.
   7. Explanation of Evidence will be the major component of our 4DX model of school improvement.
2. W~~e~~ will utilize PLCs to analyze data for each student and teacher to provide appropriate supports for all.
3. We will utilize PLCs to ensure effective curriculum and assessment development (ensure alignment with KCAS, CCR, and 21st Century Skills), instructional planning, and strategies for intervention in the classroom.
4. Teachers will differentiate instruction to provide students support in reaching mastery (80%+) on each assessment.
5. Support all students (high achievers, average performers, and struggling students) by utilizing a Personalized Learning approach. Personalized Learning calls for a data-driven framework to set goals, assess progress, and ensure students receive the academic and developmental supports they need to succeed. Students are active participants in their education and drive their own success. Lessons are meaningful because content is applied to authentic, real-life situations. Students connect their daily decisions, actions and behaviors to their long-term goals.
6. We will develop authentic PBL (project/passion/problem based learning) projects to provide students the opportunity to apply their learning to real life contexts. All teachers will use the Cognitive Skills Rubric as the cornerstone of each project.
7. We will utilize tuning protocols to ensure that each project meets our minimum standards.
8. We will measure engagement levels of students weekly and utilize Kagan strategies to increase engagement levels in all classrooms.

**Goal 2: We will reduce Novice scores to less than 5% in all academic categories.**

**Current STAR Reading Data:**

Spring:

Winter: 16%

Fall: 19%

**Current STAR Math Data:**

Spring:

Winter: 11%

Fall: 18%

**Strategies:**

1. We will utilize STAR assessment data as a screener to identify students that are predicted to score Novice on KPREP. These students will be provided a daily intervention (personalized to individual needs) with their progress monitored throughout the year. Progress monitoring will occur monthly.
2. Students will set STAR growth goals and discuss progress after each assessment.
3. Personalized, mastery learning strategies will be utilized to allow effective differentiation and targeted instruction for students.
4. Students will receive mentoring support weekly.
5. LLI has been implemented for all special education students.
6. Intervention time for reading and mathematics has been embedded in our schedule to support more students.
7. Math Intervention is focusing on number sense for our GAP students.
8. An additional Math Intervention course has been added to our UA course offerings.
9. Resource ELA courses have removed content assessments so that 100% of the time is spent on literacy skill development.

**Goal 3: We will remove barriers to learning for students by being their Ally and support students through SEL. As a result, suspensions will be reduced by 90% and student failure will be reduced by 50%.**

1. All students will be assigned a mentor with whom they meet weekly.
2. On-going training for staff on SEL strategies in order to provide students with a safe, supportive culture.
3. We will implement an SEL curriculum for our Tier II students.

**Goal 4: We will work with parents so that they are informed decision makers in this school.**

1. We will engage parents in dialogue on how to improve our school.
   1. Survey parents several times a year.
   2. Invite parents to serve on leadership committees.
   3. Utilize social media to provide open communication to parents.
2. We will provide parents with opportunities to learn and understand the latest research in education and career prospects so they can make informed decisions with their children.