

## Connersville High School PL 221 School Improvement Plan, 2010-13

### **School Profile**

Connersville Senior High School (CHS), located at 1100 Spartan Drive in Connersville, Indiana, is a countywide consolidated high school that serves all public secondary school students in the Fayette County School Corporation (FCSC). The corporation includes a career center, an alternative school, one middle school, and eight elementary schools. Most schools are located within the city limits; four of the elementary schools are in corners of the county.

Many CHS students reside in rural areas and rely on school bus transportation that encompasses 215 miles. Fifty percent of high school students ride the bus. CHS is accredited by the Indiana Department of Education and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The Indiana Department of Education school profile describes Connersville High School as a "small town" school. Students in grades 11 and 12 have access to a nearby career center for 16 different half-day programs. Approximately 17% of the students participate in programs at the Whitewater Technical Career Center (WTCC), well above the state average. An alternative H.S. program available to CHS students located on the CHS campus is CPL (Center for Performance Learning). The Fayette County School Corporation also employs a teacher who provides instruction for high school residents at the Whitewater Valley Care Pavilion.

Connersville is the site of branches of two state universities, Indiana University East and Ivy Tech State College, which provide area residents with the opportunity to further their education beyond high school. Articulation agreements with these schools enable CHS students to earn high school and college credits concurrently. Advanced College Project classes through IU are offered in English, though several faculty members have committed to training this summer to extend those offerings. Our Early College High School program in general studies with Ivy Tech and IU East at Richmond has 15% of eligible juniors and seniors involved. Finance Academy and Project Lead the Way courses are dual-credit opportunities with Ivy Tech. Advanced agriculture courses may earn credit through Purdue University. Additional courses for dual credit in technical areas are offered at WTCC.

#### **Mission Statement**

The CHS mission is to expect academic excellence as we prepare students to contribute to a rapidly changing workforce and global society.

#### **Schedule**

Since 2005-06, Connersville High School has used a traditional 7-period day of 50-minute classes that includes one activity period of 30 minutes during period 3 that includes meetings of Student Government, clubs/organizations, study groups, and class councils, as well as offering time for making up work and quizzes. A sample schedule is shown below:

<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>Clubs/Organizations meeting</b>	<b>THURS.</b>	<b>Clubs/Organizations meeting</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>Government meets each Monday.</b>		
<b>Jan. 8</b>	Class councils	<b>Jan. 10</b>	Student Council
<b>Jan. 15</b>	Key, Leo, Octagon clubs, Nature, FCA	<b>Jan. 17</b>	French, Japanese, Spanish, Jr. Red Cross, Athletic Co.
<b>Jan. 22</b>	BPA, FCA, FCCLA, FFA, Art, Theatre	<b>Jan. 24</b>	Student Council
<b>Jan. 29</b>	Class councils	<b>Jan. 31</b>	NHS, After-school clubs meet

A community-wide news broadcast done by CHS student newscasters, *CHS Today*, begins this resource period daily.

### **Curriculum**

#### **Description of Curriculum**

Each teacher has received Fayette County School Curriculum Guides which are kept in the classroom to use in planning instruction. Corporation curriculum committees and task forces meet annually to review and revise curriculum and to select materials that are aligned. A FCSC curriculum guide is aligned with the Indiana State Standards and includes standards, indicators of performance and assessment techniques and samples. Curriculum maps for language arts and math are used by elementary teachers and are available to every teacher K-6 to help guide their instruction for each grading period. Secondary teachers utilize maps, unit planners and pacing guides to facilitate instruction and assessment. New pacing guides for the high school courses were completed in 2008 and curriculum maps in English and math in 2009. Complete copies of the FCSC curriculum are located at the superintendent's, Resource Center, and principals' offices.

### **Faculty**

The faculty at Connersville High School is a blend of experienced and new teachers, a highly qualified staff of 53 faculty members with masters' degrees and above and 26 faculty members with bachelors' degrees. A new teacher is paired with a veteran faculty member who serves as a mentor. All new teachers attend a year of FCSC Teacher Academy, as well as district meetings for the Beginning Teacher Intern Program. The faculty understands continuous improvement is both a goal and a result. CHS teachers lead inservice sessions held twice a year, as well as after-school sessions on technology.

### **Description of the FCSC School Improvement Process**

Each school utilizes a locally developed model for continuous school improvement. The improvement plan from each school is designed to directly support the mission and goals of Fayette County School Corporation. The locally developed model involves utilizing a school improvement team to gather internal and external data, gain input and support from staff, analyze data to identify trends, strengths and areas in need of improvement, identify goals and strategies to address areas in need of improvement, develop an action plan to ensure implementation of the goals and strategies, and an annual process to measure progress, and to

review and revise action plans. CHS utilizes the AdvancEd Accreditation model, along with PL 221 requirements.

Connersville High School offers 136 courses that allow students freedom in designing an academic program to meet their individual needs. Fayette County School Corporation requires 46 credits as its minimum diploma requirement for graduation. In the spring, each student receives a CHS Career Planner which outlines six career pathways - Agriculture /Natural Resources & Environmental, Arts/Media & Communication, Business Technology/Management & Marketing, Health Services, Industrial & Engineering Technology, and Social & Consumer Services and the course suggestions students should take for those pathways. The planner also has an interest survey to assist students unsure of which pathway to choose. The career planner shows the dual-credit opportunities available to students with Early College High School. Each of the CHS departments evaluates and updates its curriculum on a rotating basis by mapping the curriculum and aligning with Indiana State standards. Each department has produced pacing guides matched to course standards. These guides show standards, performance indicators and benchmark assessments.

### **School Improvement**

The faculty at Connersville High School is involved with school improvement. Our faculty school improvement steering committee, CLASS (CHS Leadership Achieving Student Success) is composed of a representative from each strategy team and all department chairs, and is chaired by media specialist, Kim Giesting. The committee meets each month, examines school data, discusses "what is working and what is not," and then takes action to improve student learning. Currently one major goal is the focus of school improvement efforts: **Improve graduation rate to 80% and then 3% yearly** thereafter. Seven strategy teams, each targeting a specific strategy to this main goal, as identified in the work of *Compact for Student Success* community meetings in 2006 and 2009, meet every other month to plan and implement action for 1) Technology; 2) Community service; 3) Data analysis; 4) "Real world" opportunities; 5) Safe and orderly environment; 6) Early college/dual-credit coursework; 7) Cultural competency. The teams yearly assess their work, set new goals, and do action plans for the next year - see below:

#### **CHS Strategy Teams' Purpose/Goals, 2010-11**

<p><b>Technology</b>    <i>Increase student engagement by integration of technology into curriculum.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. P.D. improves use of <i>Moodle, Criterion</i> and research tools</li> <li>2. In planning a curriculum unit, the teacher considers how to strengthen a lesson by employing technology as a tool</li> <li>3. Extend video podcasting as a performance assessment into ELA</li> </ol>
<p><b>Community service</b> <i>Offer students the opportunity to learn about/ serve community.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate community-wide clean-up day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact civic organizations, businesses, press, mayor, county council, county commissioners</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Ask each club/organization to do community/school service activity</li> </ol>

<b>Data</b> <i>Coordinate distribution and improve understanding of data with school personnel</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Divide categories of data to the different members of the team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team members choose category that they want to work with</li> <li>• Collect data and put it into a coherent format to share</li> <li>• Team members analyze data for faculty meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Strategies to address RTI intervention at Tier 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data confirms areas for reteaching and intervention</li> <li>• Pretest and post-tests show a year's growth</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>"Real World" Opportunities</b> <i>Connect students to 21<sup>st</sup> century careers.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve Career Day as per student and staff evaluations of it.</li> <li>2. Promote <i>Finance Academy, Project Lead the Way and ECHS.</i></li> <li>3. Expand students participating in BOSS Program</li> <li>4. Involve more students in WorkKeys assessment/ certification.</li> </ol>
<b>Safe &amp; Orderly</b> <i>Create and maintain a healthy, disciplined environment conducive to learning.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Add new cameras (6-7)</li> <li>2. Revise drills (instructions)</li> <li>3. Set up more visible supervision before and between class periods.</li> <li>4. Target courtyard for supervision improvement.</li> <li>5. Work with Attendance Committee to improve CHS policy.</li> </ol>
<b>Early College/ Dual credit</b> <i>Offer opportunity of college coursework for all students.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate new courses for dual credit using 6 career paths.</li> <li>2. Keep statistics on enrollment, testing, credits earned, etc.</li> <li>3. Support teacher college coursework to be able to teach in ECHS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide PD/ summer support for ECHS teachers.</li> <li>• Provide teacher externships.</li> <li>• Stabilize criteria for enrollment of students on campus.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Cultural competency</b> <i>Cultivate appreciation of diversity.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exchange Student Involvement - Welcome activity</li> <li>2. Spotlights on Diversity: <i>CHS Today/Posters/Clubs</i></li> <li>3. <i>Coordinates Club Fair</i></li> <li>4. International Day (foods, customs, crafts, costumes, etc.)</li> </ol>

Our School Improvement Committee (CLASS) meets with parents, students and staff twice a year during PTO to get stakeholder input to assess progress and update the plan. Professional development includes the core principles of best practice as identified by PL 221 (see pp. 18-22).

Various surveys show faculty, student and community perceptions of the CHS culture. Included are -- 1. Student surveys: HSSSE 2006 (High School Survey of Student Engagement; Student Survey on SSR (Nov. 2007), SWPBS Student Survey, 2009; 2. Parent surveys: Parent Open House Surveys (Oct. 2006 - 2010); All stakeholders: NCA standards surveys of seven standards (Jan. 2008) and the Technology Surveys (Feb. /April, 2008, 2009).

### Community Profile

Connersville High School is in the city of Connersville (25,000+ population), the county seat of Fayette County, located in east central Indiana, served by the Fayette County School Corporation. Three non-public elementary schools, St. Gabriel, Community Christian, and Victory

Academy are also located in the county. Area residents have the opportunity may attend a branch of Ivy Tech Community College.

The community's economy has traditionally been linked to agriculture and manufacturing; however, recent economic events have led to factory closures and other businesses relocating. Such conditions leave the community in a depressed economic state. Data from the 2000 United States Census defines several population characteristics. According to the census, 97.2% of the 25,588 people in Fayette County are white. The population decreased by 1.6% over the past decade. In Fayette County, 26.4% of residents over the age of 25 have not earned high school diplomas. The percent of local residents holding bachelors' degrees or higher is 7.8%. Among households with children, 9.3% are below poverty level and 26.3% of the county's households are headed by a single parent.

### **Parent Involvement**

The 2003-2004 school year saw the introduction of a high school Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). It meets once a month on the first Monday and works to improve and increase communication between faculty, students and parents. One of its major successes has been to set up college visitations for juniors and seniors.

CHS has one parent conference night each semester. During parent conference nights, parents fill out a questionnaire about CHS. An analysis of these questionnaires over the last four years shows some areas that need to be noted. They note concern about 1) Teachers using methods that match students' learning styles, 2) Students receiving extra help when they have difficulty learning material. They show the most concern about 1) Funding priorities, 2) Paying for classroom materials, and 3) Parent involvement as an important part of every task group. Additional weaknesses pointed out by parents included low community expectations of young people and low student expectations of themselves. Strengths of CHS noted by them are 1) Varied teaching methods, 2) Varied assessment methods and 3) Challenging courses offered. Our parents are also invited to a semi-annual meeting on school improvement that offers current CHS goals/actions/ outcomes and asks for parent input.

## **Student Profile**

### **Ethnicity**

Connersville High School has 1198 students enrolled for the 2010-11 school year. The student population is 97% Caucasian, 2% African American, 1% multi-racial.

### **Graduation Rate**

The CHS graduation rate in 2008-09 is 75.8%. Our requirements for graduation are above the state requirement with 46 credits needed, while the state diploma is 40. The most-often reason given in exit interviews for a student dropping out of CHS at age 18 is "lack of credits to graduate with my class."

### **Attendance Rate**

In most years, CHS has an attendance rate above the state average. For 2008-09, the rate is 97.1%. In studying attendance policy, a faculty committee recommended changes in 2007, drafting a new policy for 2008-09. Absenteeism is a major factor in lack of student success. The chart below of students with 11 or more absences in spring semester 2007, their GPA (4.0+ possible) and average credits earned to date (7 credits per semester possible):

Grade	# Students	Average GPA	Av. Credits Earned
9 <sup>th</sup>	67	1.57	5.4
10 <sup>th</sup>	55	2.09	17.6
11 <sup>th</sup>	29	1.73	26.8
12 <sup>th</sup>	109	2.67	40.5
Total Students	260	2.16	

In addition to a lower attendance rate, the group concluded that student absenteeism is a definite factor in failure to earn credits to graduate. Therefore the CHS faculty has seen it as a priority to set in place a new attendance policy.

### **Special Education**

Services for special education students are provided through a joint cooperative which serves Fayette County, as well as Rush and Centerville. The CFR (Centerville-Fayette-Rush) Special Services for Exceptional Learners has its headquarters in the Waterloo wing of Connersville High School. Inclusion is the model used as general education and special education teachers team in these classes to co-teach and differentiate instruction for students. Inclusion and general ed. teachers evaluate the program each year. For 2010, some special ed. teachers will be working with Tier 2 interventions in Basic Skills Labs to target a year's growth in a semester.

### **Testing**

ISTEP + End of Course Assessments (ECAs) for 2009 show 43.8% passing Algebra 1, 46% passing Biology, and 68% passing English 11. With these scores, CHS has shown growth in all three disciplines. The chart below shows the percentage of students passing the Graduate Qualifying Exam (GQE) over a number of years and how each year compares to the state average:

GQE	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-11
CHS math	65	61	63	58	55	63	65	retest
State math	68	68	65	65	66	67	74	
CHS ELA	63	63	70	68	61	70	66	
State ELA	70	70	69	69	68	68	71	
CHS % Pass	63.7	62.2	67	64.8	65	67.8	65.6	
State % Pass	68.7	71.0	71.5	72.9	72.6	73.3	73.7	

Except for every three years in language arts scores, CHS has scored below the state average in most indicators for GQE/ISTEP. We are placed in PL 221 category "academic watch" and this year "provisional accreditation" as a result. In 2007-08 because of the improvement in ELA and math scores and because our special ed. group made "safe harbor," CHS made AYP then for the first time since 2002-03. We are currently a district in corrective action, year 3 and we know we need to dig deeper into our data to improve.

Students in the Freshman Center (begun 2005-06) take Star Math, Star Reading, NWEA and ETS tests to help them and their teachers understand skills for reteaching and remediation. Student learning focused on state standards is necessary to see improvement in achievement. The CHS data board shows annual achievement on these assessments in language arts and math from a baseline year of 2004-05 (when the new ISTEP test was introduced). Common statistics (DOE ASAP) show CHS performance usually below state averages:

Statistic CHS	04-05	State Av.	05-06	State Av.	06-07	State Av.	07-08	State Av.	08-09	State Av.	09-10	State Av.
% Honors Diplomas	19	31	24	31	34	32	35	32	40	32		
Core 40 Diplomas	46	65	51	68	62	68	64	73	73	75		
SAT Score	987	1012	980	1007	980	1004	968	1004	1433	1484	1447	
ACT Score	22.1	21.6	21.7	21.7	22.3	22	21.5	22	21.4	22	21.1	22.2
% Pursue College	68	75	70	76	76	76	71	77	76			
Stability % enrolled	89.1	89	91.6	88.5	89.3	88.9	91.1	89.1	91.1			
AP exams 3+	23	51	21	48	26	51	17	50	14	50		
Sp.Ed %	21.8	14.5	22.2	14.4	20.8	18.5	13.8	14.7	14.8		14.2	
Made AYP	No		No		No		Yes		No			

We believe that CHS is addressing the areas of weakness identified in this data and more in crafting and implementing action with the current SIP goal and subgoals.

### Extra-Curricular

The following trend data shows the growth in athletic participation and continued scholarship--

		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
FALL	PARTICIPATION NO.	219	252	248	243	246	246
	G.P.A.'S	3.21	3.29	3.51	3.51	3.43	3.42
WINTER	PARTICIPATION NO.	182	189	187	197	176	201
	G.P.A.'S	3.24	3.36	3.39	3.39	3.3	3.38
SPRING	PARTICIPATION NO.	141	154	171	178	165	191
	G.P.A.'S	3.62	3.52	3.41	3.52	3.38	3.37

	Participation numbers remain constant with an upward trend in GPAs.						
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CHS is a member of the Olympic Athletic Conference which includes two other teams: Muncie South and Jay County. CHS Athletes achieved a 3.49 grade point average overall.

Connersville High School has 30 groups which meet on a formal basis during clubs and organization time in SRT (a schedule is shown on p. 2). A description of each of these clubs and organizations is handed to students in SRT and during class meeting. Club hold callout meetings in the fall and solicit members during a September Club Fair.

**Student Conduct**

Student conduct at CHS is average in comparison to other schools of similar location and size (*IndyStar.com/data/education*). The majority of student referrals stem from violation of classroom rules, such as not following directions, showing disrespect, and classroom tardies.

With classroom tardiness, the administration implemented a one-minute "warning" bell before the class period beginning bell in an effort to cut down on the number of tardies. We use in-school study (I.I.) and detention (either before: 7:25 a.m. or after 3:45 p.m.) as interventions before suspension becomes a consequence.

The number of student suspensions has varied in the past five years and the number of student expulsions has risen. Expulsions have not increased dramatically however, because of the implementation of "behavior contracts" established between the student, parent and administration.

Below are some tables showing student suspensions/expulsions:

# Student Suspensions	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
	207	323	251	281	377	384	200	171

# Student Expulsions	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
	8	14	16	14	26	25	14	16

Expulsions/Suspensions Involving	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10
Drugs, Weapons, or Alcohol	6 / 8	3 /12	8/ 21	8 / 24	14 /31	18/27	10/14	17/34

An increase in suspensions and expulsions for drug possession has occurred this year. If one looks at our community arrests/statistics in this area, these have also increased. Students who have been suspended may make up their missed work for full-credit. For suspended students, their grade may not be jeopardized to the point that they are unable to pass a class.

Students who have been suspended for lower level infractions (not for fighting, alcohol, drugs, etc.) may use one time only the "parent option" in which their parent attends class alongside the

student during the school day. The student does not have to miss class and is monitored by their parent all day long. CHS administrators and staff believe that our suspension rate grew larger in 2006 to 08 in part because the size of the school population was larger, a turnover in faculty (with first-year teachers tending to have more problems), changes in discipline policy, better follow-through on attendance, and increasing cell phone use. In 2004-05, CHS enrollment was 1091; in 2005/06 - 1175, 2006/07 - 1223, 2007/08 - 1245, 2008/09 - 1260 and 2009/10- 1238. Statistics show that there are more discipline issues in the freshman and sophomore classes. In 2008-09, there was improvement in discipline stats with better intervention and a new attendance policy.

Another area of concern (as noted in our *Compact for Student Success* meetings) for teachers, parents, students and administrators is the lack of motivation we sometimes see in students. Therefore, in 2007-08, our faculty discussed chapters from Bob Sullo's Activating the Desire to Learn, a work that features William Glasser's choice theory and current insights around it. This year, we read Curwin, Mendler and Mendler's Discipline with Dignity, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (2008). Moreover, we have completed a School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) plan. Our faculty has voted to implement it as a part of Response to Instruction (RTI) to find the best procedures to create a positive and productive learning environment at CHS.

### **Student Feedback**

In the Spring, 2006, Connersville High School participated in the High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) through Indiana University. Students were given a questionnaire asking impressions of CHS and personal motivations and work ethic. Some areas of interest in High School Survey of Student Engagement\* (HSSSE), 2006 that inform our goal 3: Engage students through graduation and increase the graduation rate by 10% yearly include:

#### **Caring environment**

83% of students say that there is at least 1 adult at school that cares about them and knows them well.  
80% of students feel supported by teachers.  
70% of students feel good about being here at CHS.  
63% of students feel most of their teachers want them to do their best work.  
63% of students care about CHS.  
57% of students feel supported by administrators.  
53% of students feel their opinions are respected at school.  
45% of students feel school rules are fair.

#### **Student motivation to learn**

86% of our students say they are motivated by the desire to succeed in the world outside of school.  
82% of students say they are motivated by good grades.  
80% of students view written work as important to top priority importance.  
70% of students view studying and reading for class as important to top priority importance.  
68% of students say they are motivated by a teacher that encourages them.  
66% of students say they are motivated by a desire to learn.

50% of students view reading for yourself (by choice) as somewhat important to top priority importance.

### In-class engagement

85% of students feel that their classes require them to work hard.

80% of students say they have answered questions in class..

70% of students say they have participated in a class discussion with no clear answers.

69% of students say they have connected ideas and concepts from one class to another.

67% of students say they are engaged at school.

49% of students say they have written a paper of more than 5 pages

34% of students spend 0 hours/week in extra-curricular school-sponsored activities.

### Outside-of-school engagement

63% of students work part-time jobs.

62% of students say they have talked to an adult about career goals.

Almost half of our students volunteer weekly - 40% of our students view it as important to volunteer.

Current students provided input on the CHS Vision during a January, 2008 Student Government meeting. Students were chosen randomly to fill out each survey for the North Central Accreditation Standards Assessment Report. Students also serve on the seven strategy teams built from *The Compact for Student Success* meetings of 2006. A Student Government nominated group also serves as the Principal's Advisory, which meets each month. Our *CHS Today* student staff and the *Clarion* (student newspaper) and *Cohiscan* (yearbook) staffs do a great job of reporting student perceptions in their publications (artifacts).

## **Connersville High School Technology Plan is used to improve student achievement by--**

### 1. Integration

1. Meet requirements
2. Provide access
3. Train those interested
4. Let people know what's out there
5. Wish list for future educational needs

2. Inservice - Tuesday after-school workshops - teachers attend when they are paid a \$15 an hour stipend. For a few years, technology options were offered at every inservice - more inservice time and options needed.

### 3. Solving hardware issues -

- Maintaining the inAccess Labs, Television studio (computers and cameras), Journalism, Media Center, *Project Lead the Way*, Science, Business Labs, Special Education, Agriculture, CPL
- There's not enough computers during testing times
- More LCD projectors/bulbs to main LCD projectors
- Teacher computers (maintain, replace, update)

#### 4. Solving software issues

- Continue with Linux, or switch to Windows or go to dual desktop
- Upgrade EasyGradePro
- Use ARK for parent contact and parents seeing grades
- Maintain *Criterion* access
- Facilitate podcasting grant in math
- Video editing in television studio
- Student login to all computers should be consistent (like Moodle)
- Teacher login should allow more open access to the Internet

#### 5. Replacing technology

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- Replacing teacher computers
- Maintaining all of the labs
- Replacing televisions as needed
- Replacing/updating/maintaining phone system
- LCD projectors (more)
- Document cameras and tech writepads

6. Establishing clear district guidelines with teachers as a part of committee as well as the administration and the technology department. The guidelines should also allow for changes as technology changes.

#### 7. Meeting new technology needs

- Emergency message system (cell phone texting, calling, email)
- Fully utilize ARK
- Security cameras in Media Center/more security cameras
- Two carts of notebook computers
- Virtual field trips
- Video podcasting extended beyond the grant
- Smartboards and smart pens for teachers

#### 8. Promoting visionary thought and use of technology

- Expand wireless access
- Student handhelds could tap into the wireless access (still filtered)
- One night a week, the computer lab would be staffed and open to the community
- Grant writer for the school corporation

#### **Professional development used for teachers and staff includes:**

- After-school sessions will include offerings dedicated to professional development with technology (since inservice is limited to two days).

- Professional development is offered by some inACCESS teachers after school hours.
- The CHS media specialist works with teachers individually, as a group, and with the teacher or his entire class.
- The inACCESS program uses Open Source Software, *Criterion*, and *Moodle*.
- Teachers continue to attend technology conferences (ICE, NECC.)
- The committee will work on strategies to standardize electronic portfolio development.
- Teachers will share technological tools through after-school and inservice.

**Use of Internet, telecommunications and other technology is assessed and revised.**

The Connersville High School Technology Committee makes observations and recommendations concerning present and future needs by using this action plan--

- Develop and implement online survey tools to gather data yearly from teachers, administrators, and parents. For example, to do our NCA profile this year, we developed two different surveys on SurveyMonkey for our faculty to answer.
- Data discussions are held with all staff during faculty meetings concerning current data and technology needs.
- Solicit end of year feedback from staff concerning current and future technology needs.
- The Fayette County School Corporation Technology Curriculum Standards are facilitated by in ACCESS teachers and computer applications teachers, grades 9 - 12.
- The overall program will continually be assessed and evaluated:

- 1) The school improvement team (CLASS) and the technology integration committee evaluate this plan annually.
- 2) The technology integration committee gives a survey or surveys to assess the staff to plan meaningful professional development using the results of the survey(s)
- 3) The school's technology committee reviews the school's technology assessment and evaluation procedures annually.
- 4) The committee assesses technology growth using NCREL's Technology Evaluation Rubric, using SurveyMonkey to solicit feedback.
- 5) The committee will support the development of assessment rubrics for technology use in the

**Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment**

CHS has a "Safe and Orderly" Strategy team that has the goal of creating and maintaining a healthy, disciplined environment conducive to learning. The team has worked on the following:

1. Spring of 2006- Surveyed staff on concerns for Flu Pandemic preparedness--
  - Surveyed staff on Tornado and Fire drill concerns.
  - CHS was represented on the corporation crisis team that
  - Developed the FCSC Flu Pandemic Policy.
2. Staff members at CHS are given inservice training on emergency training and fire safety at each faculty meeting. Results of surveys led to changes in the emergency exit routes.
3. New security cameras have been purchased and installed (we now have a total of 24).

4. In the fall of 2006 a meeting was held at CHS with members of all community emergency response members in attendance. They were given a copy of our crisis plan and were urged to give input. Their recommendations were taken into consideration when the crisis plan was revised in the spring of 2007.
5. Staff members were given inservice on "Bullying" by our Family and Consumer Science teacher, Jamey Rose, and students. This group also presented information to our PTO.
6. Staff members have been reminded to wear their ID badges by the committee and urged to stop visitors to ask them questions and direct them to the office.
7. We are working with the FCSC administration and transportation department to develop a safe pick-up area for students after school.
8. Custodians have been instructed to lock all doors to the facilities that are not facing the courtyard.
9. In the fall of 2007, CHS started taking attendance during all fire drills and reporting absent or extra students.
10. CHS has planned School wide Positive Behavior Support for the 2010-11 school year.

Other strategy teams (Cultural competency, Community service, Real world opportunities) help to plan and implement positive action to improve relationships with our community by promoting activities throughout the year.

In Spring, 2004 and 2006, Connersville High School participated in the High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) through Indiana University Bloomington in which all students randomly were given a questionnaire about perceptions of CHS, their personal motivations and work ethic. In comparison with the 450+ high schools participating in the survey, CHS students reported fewer homework assignments, fewer multi-page papers, fewer projects, and a lower level of education completed by both mother and father than the norm. Other key responses on noted earlier in this report.

### **Cultural Competency**

All students bring their own cultures to our schools each day. These differences in cultures include music, food, traditions, beliefs, and values. It is important that the Fayette County School Corporation and CHS recognize the various cultures in our community, while being both tolerant and informative about them. It is critical that we see and understand the children we teach by having the courage to reflect about ourselves. Facing our biases openly, recognizing the limits imposed by our own immersion in our culture and experiences, and accepting the influence of emotions on our actions are extraordinary challenges. To achieve cultural competency, professionals show compassion and respect for people who are culturally different.

As a Public School Corporation, we achieve Cultural Competency by integrating knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific practices and policies applied in appropriate cultural settings. Many students who walk through our school doors are at an advantage because their teachers have some of the same cultural experiences. Our challenge as educators is to teach and

reach those students with whom we do not share the same backgrounds and/or ethnicity. As we prepare our students for their future careers and places in society, we must provide them opportunities to grow in their knowledge and experiences in a quickly changing and multicultural society.

#### Strategies for CHS Implementation of Cultural Competency:

1. Help people to understand differences as they relate to disabilities. At CHS, we have student aides who partner with special needs children, sharing what they have learned and experienced. We have inclusion classes with co-teachers in English and math, and in some social studies and science classes.
2. Guest speakers visit classes to share experiences in life, career, music and art. They include people with disabilities, people of different cultures, arts performers, etc.
3. CHS yearly has four to five foreign exchange students who help us with cultural understanding of the world. We also send groups of students to other cultures and we host students from other cultures /countries (Japan, France, Spain, Mexico, etc).
4. We have incorporated school-wide activities, such as International Foods Day to educate and promote cultural diversity, which was facilitated by the CHS Cultural Competency Strategy Team. This group updates their action plan yearly to implement student and staff activities.

#### **Strengths of CHS**

1. The academic program serves all students well. Opportunities have greatly expanded and include a broader range of courses. Dual credits Early College High School with Ivy Tech, Richmond and IU Advanced College Project; *Project Lead the Way*, and Finance Academy graduates increasing. Data is utilized to determine programming for the special education population, including using a co-teaching model in English and math inclusion and offering lab classes. Vocational and technical training is available next door at Whitewater Technical Career Center (WTCC). Center for Performance Learning (CPL), credit recovery and counseling with a Freshman Success Coach provide interventions for at-risk students. Taking the regular course and a lab class in math and English strengthens academic skills for students who score low on standardized tests. (Citations: Open House parent surveys, 2004-2010; Consensus of *Compact for Student Success*, 2006, 2009; Implementation and yearly evaluation of ECHS, 2008-10; Finance Academy implementation, 2006-07; PLTW implementation, 2007-08; WTCC Annual Report, 2006-10; HSSSE survey, 2006; PLAN survey, 2007-10; Inclusion rubric, 2003-10; CFR improvement reports, 2003-10).
2. The staff is well-educated, a blend of experienced and new professionals, secretaries and administrative assistants who want to improve Connersville as a quality school. Fourteen teachers qualify to teach in the Early College High School courses that are dual-credit with Ivy Tech, Richmond, because they have content work at the masters level. (Citation: IDOE

documentation of certification and experience- *IDOE ASAP School Profile, 2009; HSSSE survey, 2006; ECHS dual-credit MOUs*).

3. In order to reach our school goals for students to improve in math, English, and reach AYP and PL 221 goals, our school must be a safe place to teach and learn. The school environment at CHS is secure. Parents, students and faculty indicate that they feel CHS is safe. (Citation: HSSSE survey 2006-75.84% of students agreed that they felt safe at school, Freshman Survey 2006- 80.4% of freshman felt the school was safe, Parent Surveys, 2009-10- 83% of parents felt CHS to be a safe learning environment.) CHS has an active strategy team (Safe and Orderly) that yearly revises the plan for crisis management and works as a steering committee for Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS).
4. Goal-setting and career planning for the future are given much attention. Counselors meet individually with students and parents on these areas during each year of a students' high school. A *CHS Career Planner* is published each year for use in planning academic course work that will prepare students for a post high school career path. (Citation: Economic & Workforce Development Forum Report, Dec. 2004; NCA Standards Assessment Survey analysis, Jan. 2008; Fall Parent "Open House Night" survey, 2009; HSSSE survey, 2006; Tally of Concerns voiced from **Compact for Student Success**, 2006, 2009; Fall Parent "Open House Night" surveys; and PTO meetings, parent praise/concerns noted).
5. Technology is used daily as a tool for student success. The inACCESS classrooms have a computer for each student in all English and two of the seven social studies classrooms. *Moodle*, *Criterion*, and Internet resources are used extensively. *Moodle* is a program which allows students access to quizzes, homework, and other teacher-directed material via the Internet. *Criterion* is language arts software that allows students to input their writing sample for scoring, grammatical analysis, and other possible revision. In *Project Lead the Way*, students use of state-of-art 3D-modeling software and equipment to design and engineer real world problems. *Read Now Power Up*, a program to help struggling readers, and *Accelerated Math* programs are used in 9<sup>th</sup> grade language arts and math lab classes to build skills for students in need of remediation. *PLATO*, another skills program, is used for Basic Skills Lab remediation also. The Media Center provides an online catalog, as well as databases available through *Inspire* . (Citation: 100% of parents note use of computers/Internet to help child learn on Oct. 11, 2006-10, Parent Open House Surveys; Visitations to inACCESS Program 2005-10, Technology and Professional Development Grants, 2006-10.)
6. Curriculum to standards is in progress with continuous review and updating. Vertical articulation is progressing. All middle school and high school courses are taught in accordance with the Indiana Department of Education standards which create a natural vertical articulation. (Citations: Curriculum guides, pacing guides, lesson plan rubrics, P.D in-service topics and after-school workshops, etc.)

## Weaknesses of CHS

1. Although improvement has been made, language arts skills continue to need attention in all curricular areas. Writing process, reading comprehension and writing applications need intervention as shown in trend data. (Citation: 2004-10 SAT, ACT, PLAN, NWEA, ISTEP+/GQE scores and ELA Academic Standards Drilldown on *ASAP*; *Criterion* pre-test and post-test, 2006-10; ETS and Star Reading Growth Reports, 2007-10).
2. Improvement has been made in math skills, but growth needs to continue. Discernable weaknesses in quadratic and linear equations, sketch and interpreting graphs, measurement, data analysis and probability, number sense are noted by trend data. (Citation: 2004-10 SAT, ACT, PLAN, NWEA, ISTEP+ ECAs/ GQE scores and math Academic Standards Drilldown on *ASAP*; Star Math Growth Report, ETS grade 9 scores, 2006-10).
3. Revision of policies and programs is needed to improve the graduation rate. A new attendance policy and student discipline reviewed yearly for more student success has led CHS to plan and implement **Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support**. Credit recovery at CPL with PLATO and workbook courses is offered each semester and in summer school. A high failure rate in some courses needs to be addressed with research-based strategies. (Citation: Failure to make AYP, 2003-2007, 2009; Grades analysis, 2004-10; Credits lost analysis, 2006-10; Tracking at-risk freshmen, 2007-10; CLASS and faculty meeting minutes, 2002-10; School Board Resolution, July 2004).
4. Freshmen need interventions to improve their academic success. Response to Instruction (RTI) identified students take Tier 2 lab classes in math and/or language arts to improve their skills/ success. Progress is monitored by NWEA, ETS, Star Math and Star Reading, as well as assessment of *Accelerated Math*, *Read Now Power Up*, and the *QRI 5 Inventory*. In 2007-08, a Freshman Success Coach joined the faculty to work with grade 9 at-risk students. He/she mentors, as well as coordinates 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars 9-12. Doubling coursework with the utilization of math, language arts and basic skills labs are strategies to support Tier 2 and 3 of RTI. Progress is monitored in these labs and intervention plans written for students not showing growth (Citation: Grade 9 ISTEP scores, Star Math and Star Reading scores; NWEA scores; Semester grades graphs and charts, 2003-10; exit interviews; *Summary of CHS Visit by CMS Teachers*, 1997-98).
5. Lack of involvement by parent and community stakeholders is a concern. Involvement of all stakeholders to motivate students is needed. Mentoring programs, *Compact for Student Success*, PTO, Finance Academy and Early College High School offer opportunities for community engagement for student success, but engagement has not increased significantly. This summer a Dropout Summit held at the end of July hopes to encourage more community involvement. (Citations: PTO average attendance over 4 years has diminished to 5 members on average per meeting, student grade graphs, 2005-08, 2006-07 Distribution of F by Dept., No

significant improvement in numbers of students in extracurricular activities (see p. 9), trend data on attendance rate, attendance lists of 10+ absences, Graduation rate, 2005-09.)

**SIP Target Goal:** Engage all students to improve graduation rate to meet the school target of 80 % and improve 3% yearly.

Data on which goal was based: DOE graduation rate reports, 2004-10; Credits earned by January, 2007 - 2010; Discipline statistics, 2003-10; Failure rates for grades 9-11, 2005-10; Attendance rate, 2005-10; ELA and math grade graphs, 2005-10; Grade of "F" Analysis by Course, 2006-07; HSSSE, 2004 and 2006 and SWPBS Student Survey, 2009.

Because we value that all students want to graduate and have success, CHS will focus on the following subgoals and strategies:

1. **Improve language arts skills and scores so all students have one year or more growth**
  - Improve writing across curriculum - use open-ended essay questions on tests
  - Use strategies for pre/during and post reading during lessons
  - Focus on vocabulary and word recognition skills - build visual literacy
2. **Improve math skills and scores so all students have one year or more growth**
  - Use a variety of strategies so students explain reasoning, think deeper and show this thinking
  - Help students to monitor their progress on standards mastery
3. **Improve student engagement with activities that connect school with life and work**
  - Implement Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support
  - Use new ways to involve parents and community

The above strategies were data-driven, researched as a best-practice and voted by faculty for inclusion in the SIP during March, 2009 community Compact for Success meeting and faculty/ CLASS meetings in April and May, 2010.

Data on which the subgoals were based: ISTEP= ECAs/GQE, SAT, PSAT, ACT, PLAN, NWEA, ETS, and Star Reading and Star Math scores, and assessment of student writing by *Criterion*.

**Professional Development: The CHS philosophy is --**

- All faculty are committed to strategy team and CLASS planning and implementation
- PD action plan and inservice focus teacher learning on goal areas
- Best practice *Teachers-Teaching-Teachers* model used for inservice
- Each teacher develops an individual goal based on the SIP goal
- Feedback on progress used to revise Department Goal Action Plan yearly
- PLC s focus on building benchmark assessments and interventions

Professional development at CHS includes all the core principles offered as best practice by the Indiana Department of Education—

**A. Reflecting research-based approaches** to effective adult learning, a variety of modes of learning are used to foster self-directed professional development:

**1. *Teachers Teaching Teachers***

Teachers and staff who attend seminars and workshops outside of the building present notes passed along by email on ideas relevant to CHS. Individual teachers are also encouraged to present classroom ideas and strategies during inservice.

**2. *Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)***

All staff focus on improving student achievement through peer interaction. Each core content group decides its focus as it relates to our school improvement plan and meets for 40 minutes to set SMART goals, evaluate progress and adjust for improved student results.

**3. *Individual teacher goal-setting***

Staff members work with language arts and math strategies appropriate for their subject. Many concentrate using activities that connect subject's relevance to life and work.

**4. *Alignment/mapping of curriculum to standards and development of local assessments***

All departments have crafted pacing guides into six-week grading periods for core courses. English, math, social studies, foreign language departments included assessments for each indicator, many of which are featured in their curriculum maps.

**5. *Technology workshops***

CHS has a program of inservice facilitated by our media specialist, tech-savvy teachers, and the CHS Technology Committee. The CHS Technology Plan is revised yearly.

**B. Integrating education improvement priorities.** Consistent and continuous links by the administrative team and department chairs/ teachers are made with the school improvement plan, Indiana Professional Standards Board, and Indiana DOE--

**1. *Setting a School Improvement Committee (CLASS) goal yearly***

School improvement committee (CLASS), as well as parents and faculty have determined that our graduation rate is a cause for concern and our major goal. Student learning in language arts and math must show one year or more growth. PLC work, and professional development are focused on improving language arts and math benchmarks so reteaching and mastery of important skills can occur. Individual students who are struggling work in language arts and math during student resource time, study-table before and after school, summer school classes, and ELA and math lab courses. ELA and math activities are used by all classroom teachers are documented in their lesson planbooks.

**2. *Departments review and align curriculum to standards and build local assessments***

All departments are working on or have mapped courses to current standards. Each is adding differentiated strategies and interventions appropriate for their students and curriculum to his daily lesson plans. A lesson plan rubric gives feedback to teachers and shows areas of strength and for growth. Planbooks are assessed by the teacher and an administrator and turned in at the end of the school year.

**C. Incorporating both discipline-specific and interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, assessment, and preparation for the world of work--**

1. ***PLCs provide the perfect framework*** These staff groups are an excellent model for improving student learning. Research shows that collegiality, co-planning and peer support is a staff development model with excellent staff and student results. Implementing appropriate pacing, as well as interdisciplinary, differentiated, and discipline-specific strategies into the classroom is its major purpose.
2. ***Adjustment of the seven-period schedule*** Frequent interaction is necessary for successful student learning, as well as appropriate for individual needs. Implementation of early-release Wednesday gives time for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). It provides time for department teachers to work together to improve classroom best-practice strategies.
3. ***Training in best-practices and various technology to integrate into the classroom*** Training sessions in the last few years have accommodated needs assessment surveys and teacher requests. The priority has been on offering workshops in Best practices in Language Arts, Differentiated Instruction, and Technology, including work with *Microsoft Word, Moodle, Criterion, Excel, PowerPoint, and GradePro*.

**D. Including explicit best-practice strategies for setting high expectations and meeting the diverse learning needs for all students--**

1. ***Use of inclusion in math and English*** CHS staff collaborate to offer a "least restrictive environment" for special needs students and to be proactive for Response to Instruction. Special education and general ed. teachers continue to research and implement best practices. They yearly evaluate progress using an inclusion rubric to note areas of needed growth.
2. ***Daily reading plan uses SSR in some courses*** Data which show increased reading fluency since inception of SSR time in 2004-05.
3. ***School improvement strategy teams involve students, parents*** The seven strategy teams have students and parents as members to determine ways to motivate students and improve conditions of their learning.

4. ***CHS Technology is cutting-edge*** The CHS staff looks at a variety of ways to use technology as a tool in the classroom. InACCESS classrooms and Finance Academy use it for learning daily as part of a lesson. Students serve on the inACCESS Strategy Team where the group discusses computer use, hardware and software needs and seeks to improve curriculum and assessment through its use. We are currently working with an IDOE Learning Technologies Competitive Grant to implement high school students teaching math lessons to grade 4 through podcasting.
5. ***Exploring and integrating new modes of assessment*** The English and math departments in grade 9 use ETS tests each six weeks and NWEA testing in the fall, winter and spring. ELA lab teachers use *Read Now Power Up* (Renaissance Learning) and its assessment Star Reading to gauge student progress, while the math department uses *Accelerated Math* and Star Math. All departments are developing local assessments to standards. All also use rubrics to evaluate presentations, writing and projects. InACCESS teachers have been trained to use *Moodle* and *Criterion*, which offer a variety of activities and assessments.
6. ***Learning and integrating diverse techniques*** *Teachers teaching teachers* is the model most-often used for inservice. Moreover, working in PLCs is a proven method of promoting leadership capacity, as well as facilitating differentiated teaching techniques. Both processes encourage teachers to take ownership in refining teaching and optimizing student engagement. The CHS PD plan shows the strategies where teachers feel they need more education, where they need to know and be able to do a better job each year. Inclusion and gen. ed. teachers also seek to improve their co-planning model yearly.
7. ***Expanding cultural competency*** The Cultural Competency Strategy Team takes the challenge to "incorporate culturally appropriate strategies", plan and implement them. Activities planned for the next three years include 1) Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration; 2) Continued improvement/ refinement of inclusion; 3) International Day, highlighting the customs, dress, and philosophies of diverse groups.

**E. Receiving adequate resources.** In order for the professional development initiatives above to be implemented and to be successful, Connersville High School receives state and local monies as per PL 221, as well as its teachers and administrators write grants to support initiatives. The professional development initiatives in this plan are using a budget of \$8,700 for 2009-10.

## Connersville High School Professional Development, 2010-2011

**Professional Development Goal:** All staff will work to improve student academic success, by showing one year or more growth in scores on state assessments.

<b>Strategies to implement</b>	<b>In charge</b>	<b>Teachers need to know, be able to do</b>	<b>Measure of effectiveness</b>
Improve writing process, use open-ended questions	PLCs/ Dept. chairs	Use writing process, improve feedback, share student work	Test scores up 1-yr.+
Improve use of reading strategies	PLCs/ Dept. chairs	Implement in lessons, activities, projects, etc.	Test scores up 1-yr.+
Improve student vocabulary, visual literacy	PLCs/ Dept. chairs	Variety of vocabulary and feedback strategies used	Test scores up 1-yr.+
Use "Habits of the Mind" for deeper discussions.	PLCs/ Dept. chairs	Lesson plans show variety of discussion and displayed thinking strategies	Test scores up 1-yr.+
Set student goals to improve standards mastery	PLCs/ Dept. chairs	Standards-based formative, summative assessments used for reteaching	Test scores up 1-yr.+
Implement SWPBS	All staff	Train students in RICHER principles	Improve attendance, discipline stats
Cultivate parent help	All staff	Use multiple communications paths	Improve how community rates school on surveys