



## WHITMORE LAKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

8845 Main St., Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

Phone: 734.449.4464 | Fax: 734.449.5336 | [www.wlps.net](http://www.wlps.net)

Exceptional, Personalized Education

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Superintendent Tom DeKeyser

### **Strategic 23g Plan**

On July 20, Governor Whitmer signed into law Public Act 103 that includes funding for the MI Kids Back on Track program. The \$149.6 million appropriated will be available to districts to support programs provided before, during, and after school or during the summer. These funds are designed to address unfinished learning, get students to grade-level academic standards, provide additional academic assistance to students at risk of falling behind their peers, or help high school students prepare for postsecondary education.

The Covid 19 Pandemic has affected student learning in every grade level. Students in Whitmore Lake Public Schools, like the rest of the state and country, have suffered the impact of lost or “unfinished” learning. Our most recent student performance results of standardized testing and local assessments confirm that our students are not performing as they were in pre-pandemic levels. Our high school students continue to need opportunities to recover credits. Additionally, they need opportunities to explore options for college and careers beyond high school in order to make learning for relevant.

To that end, Whitmore Lake Public Schools will commit all of the State allocated funds with the direct intention to address the following:

**Goal Summary: Students will have opportunities to prepare for postsecondary education.**


#### **Data Story**

The needs addressed by this grant would be used to expand the postsecondary opportunities for our students. The data story includes the initial data discovery, a gap analysis, the initial initiative inventory and the final summary. To draw these conclusions, in addition to using the data below, we gathered feedback from staff, stakeholders and other community members that share our vision. What our students accomplish after high school is important to us as a community, and the pandemic has impacted the levels of success that we have had in the past in helping our students become college and career ready.

## Initial Data Discovery

The data shows that students need more support with developing career goals. Students are given an exit survey at the end of their senior year. This survey indicates that only 32% of students feel the school contributed to their career goal planning. Additionally, 68% of students planned to enroll in a 4-year college, and of those, 40% plan to pursue business as a career. By adding supplementary options for exploring postsecondary plans, we hope to diversify the areas of study that our students choose and expand the opportunities for students who choose not to pursue a 4-year degree. Also, we aim to increase the number of students who feel supported by the school to help make a career choice.

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Open with  Figure Summary of Results

	Overall	School
<b>High School Experiences (experienced "often")</b>		
A school environment safe from physical violence	58%	64%
Coursework that seemed worthwhile and relevant to my life	20%	8%
Fellow students who knew me well and cared about me as a person	44%	40%
Opportunity to select a wide variety of course options and electives	47%	32%
Teachers who demanded my best efforts	49%	44%
<b>Reading and Mathematics Instruction</b>		
Use several different strategies to aid understanding when reading for school	58%	38%
Spent 4 or more hours per week on assigned readings for class	23%	12%
Spent 4 or more hours per week on personal reading outside of class	22%	16%
Believe they are good at mathematics	68%	40%
<b>Afterschool Activities</b>		
Athletic teams	60%	70%
Musical groups	40%	35%
Scholastic clubs	33%	39%
<b>Willingness to Recommend</b>		
Would recommend school to other students	87%	80%
<b>My school contributed to my development in these areas "very much"</b>		
Developing career goals	31%	32%
Speaking effectively	42%	38%
Thinking critically	49%	40%
Treating people with respect	55%	40%
Writing effectively	51%	44%
<b>Postsecondary Plans</b>		
Enroll in a four-year college	73%	68%
<b>Likely to pursue the following fields</b>		
Business, economics, marketing, information technology	24%	40%
Creative, visual, or performing arts	13%	12%
Health sciences, health care, medicine	23%	28%
Science, technology, engineering, mathematics	28%	20%
Social sciences, education, psychology	16%	16%

**Note:** **Green** text indicates school-level results are more than five percentage points *greater* than overall results, and **red** text indicates school-level results are more than five percentage points *less* than overall results.

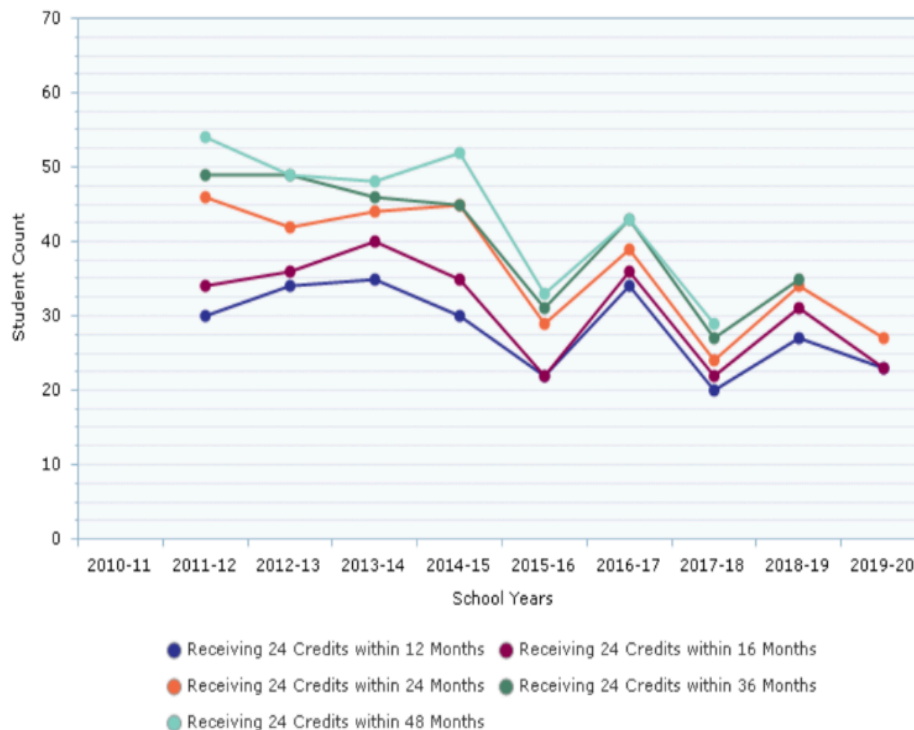
Additionally, the data below shows that Whitmore Lake High School students need increased opportunities to explore postsecondary education options beyond a 4-year college degree. Below is the number of students who complete 24 college credits after graduating high school. Based on this data, a 2- or 4-year college isn't the right fit for all of our graduates, so students need increased awareness of options beyond traditional college for career planning purposes. These numbers have continued to decrease throughout the years following the pandemic.



MI School Data

10/05/2023

**Students Completing 24 Credits Following High School Trend Whitmore Lake High School (04515): 2020-21 / College Type (All) / All Years / All Students**



## **Initial Initiative Inventory**

Every effort is made to ensure students are exposed to the varied opportunities that exist beyond high school. To that end, we take students on a variety of field trips during their time at Whitmore Lake MS|HS. These opportunities include the following:

- Just Build It Career Expo
- MI CareerQuest
- Manufacturing Day
- College visit to University of Michigan
- College visit to Washtenaw Community College to explore certificate programs, skilled trades, and Associate degree programs
- College visit to a big public university and a small, private, liberal arts school

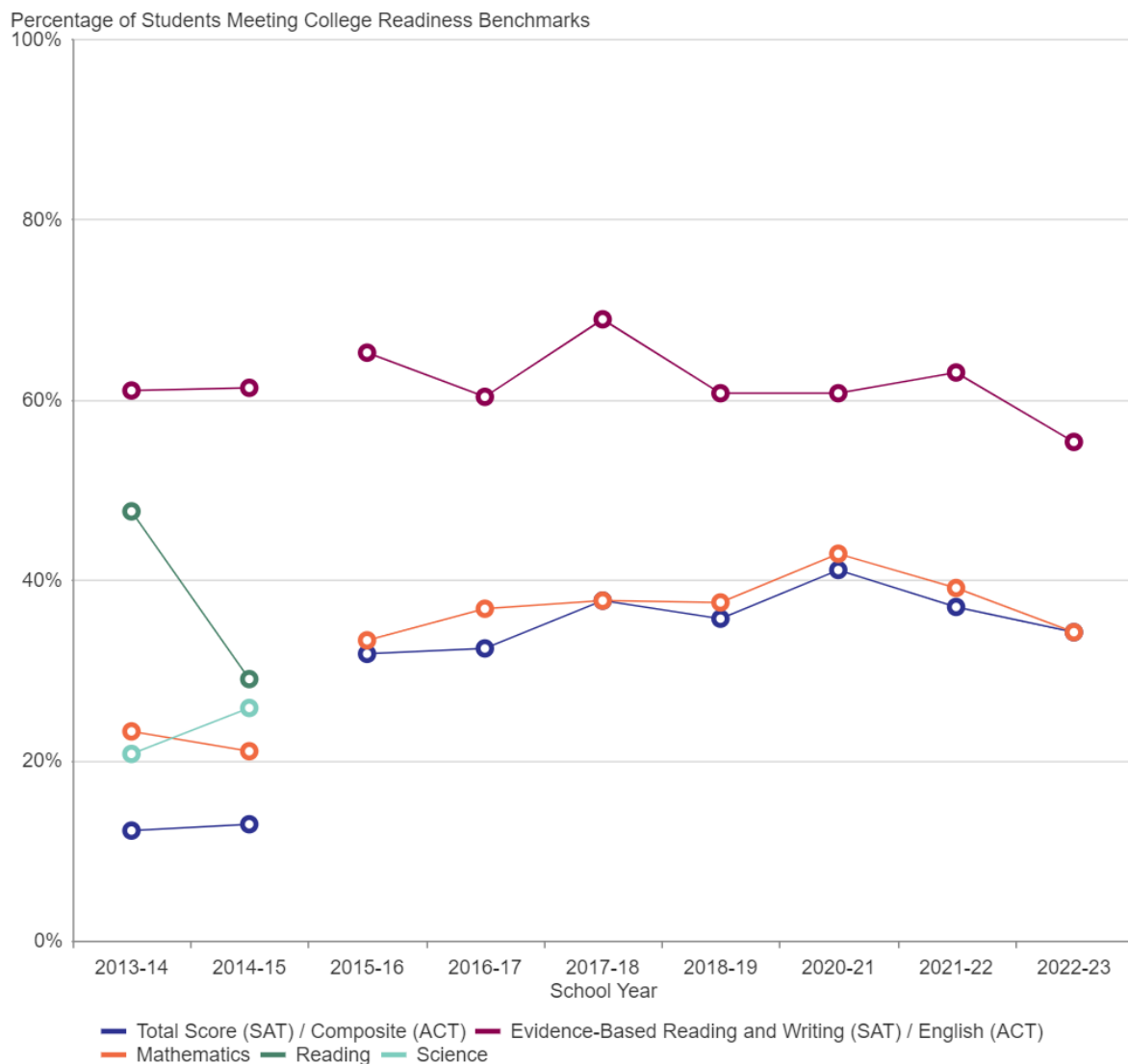
Additionally, students take numerous assessments to help them have a better understanding of their likes and interests, strengths and challenges, and personality traits and how those things can translate to career paths. Assessments include the following:

- PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, SAT
- ASVAB
- Career Cluster Finder
- AchieveWorks Learning and Productivity
- AchieveWorks Personality
- AchieveWorks Skills
- Career Interest Profiler
- Strengths Explorer

In spite of all these activities and assessments, students still leave our building unprepared for their next step. It's unacceptable to us that only 34% of students meet college readiness benchmarks when 70-80% of students each year identify that college is their next step.

## Gap Analysis

Only 34.2% of juniors met both benchmarks on SAT in April of 2023. This is a significant drop in our scores from the past. The trend data shows a decrease in scores for the past two years. We believe this is due to the lasting impact of learning loss from the pandemic. Students need opportunities to catch up on credits and classes, which will lead to increased SAT scores. Our future goal is to see an increased percentage of students meeting the benchmark scores for both EBRW and Math. The benchmark scores need to increase to pre-pandemic levels.



### **Data Summary:**

Based on the data above and the trend data over the last few years, we feel our area of focus of giving students more opportunities to prepare for postsecondary options is appropriate and supported by data. The efforts we have made so far need to be expanded, and this grant will support our goals and vision for preparing students for the future.

### **Strategies and Evidence-Based Practices:**

Our strategies and evidence-based practices focus on helping high school students prepare for postsecondary education. The plan identifies career pathways and expanded learning time and personalized learning environments as our two strategies.

1. Expanded learning time and tutoring: Students will have tutoring during the school day, after school and during the summer to increase their achievement scores.
2. Career pathways: Students will have opportunities to attend field trips to colleges/and or career fairs locally for all grade levels 7-12. Additionally, the school counselor will hold college and career speaker panels based on student interest surveys.

### **Activities:**

The activities described below support our strategies.

#### **1. Expanded Learning Time and Tutoring**

The Director of Student Services, Melissa Heuker, will oversee the high school counselor (Kathy DeKeyser) and learning enrichment coordinator (Jennifer Petzke), who will facilitate the implementation of expanded learning time and after-school and/or summer tutoring. This will consist of virtual options and in-person tutoring for students who are struggling to graduate on time or not meeting grade level benchmarks. Targeted math interventions during Trojan Time, after school and during the summer will be a focus in middle school. Tutors and interventionists will be certified teachers and other staff who are qualified to help students close academic gaps during the summer and after school. Varsity tutoring will be utilized where appropriate. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to take virtual classes at a reduced rate, which will allow more students who are economically disadvantaged to afford classes for credit and to close learning gaps. Incentives for both growth and participation will be provided as appropriate.

#### **2. Career Pathways**

The high school counselor, Kathy DeKeyser, already offers many opportunities for high school students to explore career and college pathways. However, we need additional opportunities to meet the varied postsecondary plans of our student population. Under the supervision of Melissa Heuker, Director of Student Services, the counselor plans to work with one of our retired high school teachers to create a meaningful career event that will address the needs of all grade levels in the building (7-12). This event will include career panels, which will focus on individual pathways. Within each pathway, students will be exposed to multiple job opportunities that require different levels of education. Additionally, there will be targeted sessions on college-specific topics, including financial aid and student support resources. With additional funding to support transportation costs, the counselor will provide more field trip opportunities that target the needs of all students, not just our four-year college-bound students. These trips give students valuable insight into the programs and opportunities available to them in order to be successful after graduation.

**Contact information:**

For parents who would like additional information regarding activities on this strategic plan, please contact Kathy DeKeyser at [Kathy.DeKeyser@wlps.net](mailto:Kathy.DeKeyser@wlps.net) or 734-3449-4461.