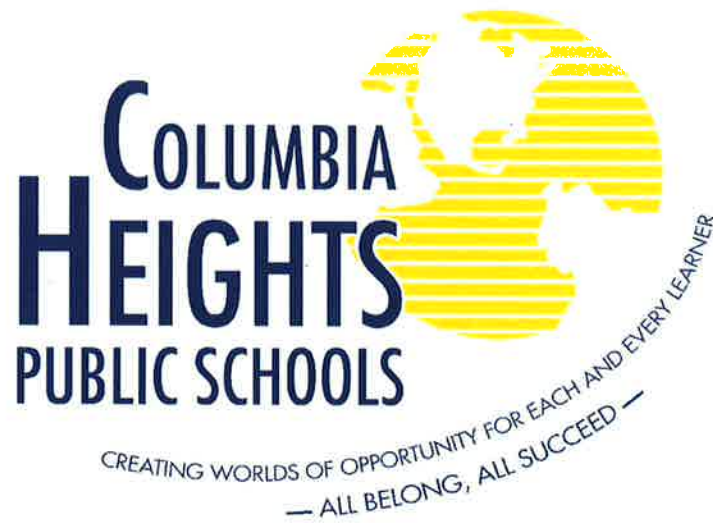


Columbia Heights Public Schools  
Columbia Heights High School Literacy Plan: Grades 9-12



***Meets Requirements for:***

WBWF: World's Best Workforce (Minn. Stat. § 120B.11)

ESSA/SRCL: Every Student Succeeds Act's Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy grant (Public Law No. 114-95, § 1177)



Columbia Heights Public Schools is committed to ALL students achieving reading proficiency in Kindergarten through Grade 5 in order to lay a strong foundation for continued literacy development throughout the remainder of their formal educational process. Columbia Heights Public Schools recognizes that all students need to continue to develop their ability to read and write during middle school years across content areas. Our goal is that every child is college and career ready upon graduation from high school with the skills and passion to be a lifelong reader. Building a strong foundation in reading at an early age is critical to realizing this goal.

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# 1. Data

Columbia Heights Public Schools recognizes the need to provide instruction to students targeted to their specific needs. In order to customize instruction to individual students, it is important that accurate data are reviewed on a regular basis to determine the level of incremental growth in proficiency students demonstrate in phonics, fluency, comprehension, phonemic awareness and vocabulary. The use of multiple assessments for screening proficiency level, diagnosing specific areas of need, and monitoring progress is an important part of the process. With these data, staff determine the steps needed for Columbia Heights students to reach their highest potential.

## **a. Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS) is a small urban district with many needs. The district borders Northeast Minneapolis. It has three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school with a total enrollment of 3,309. The racial and ethnic makeup of the district is 33% Hispanic students, 33% Black students, 20% White students, with a smaller number of students identifying as Asian, American Indian, Biracial and other. CHPS students speak more than 30 languages in their homes. The free/reduced lunch rate, an indicator of poverty, in CHPS is presently 77%, which is 40% higher than the statewide average and higher than urban districts such as Minneapolis and St. Paul. All five schools qualify for Title I services due to such a high student poverty level. Additionally, CHPS has a homeless rate of about 3%, which is more than double the statewide average. Finally, the population of English Learner students in CHPS is more than three times greater than the statewide average (26% vs. 8%).

Data has become part of weekly conversations by Columbia Heights Public Schools administrators and teachers. It is used to support instructional decisions, intervention plans, progress monitoring assessments, and discussions with families. Each year, time is dedicated for teachers and administrators to collaborate and look at data to see what students are telling us through their previous years standardized tests including the MCA-III, MAP and ACCESS.

Academically, CHPS has performed significantly below state averages in reading, math, and science. Last year alone (2017), CHPS had lower MCA-III proficiency rates compared to the state average in Reading (38% vs. 60%), in Math (33% vs. 59%), and in Science (34% vs. 54%).

According to the 2016 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) grade 8 data, 15% of students report changing schools 1, 2 or 3 times within the school year, thus interrupting their learning. While over one-third of 8<sup>th</sup> graders (33%), are earning mostly Cs, Ds, or Fs, over 88% of the students report that they care about doing well in school. Outside of the school day, over 76% of the students report that they do not visit a library during a typical week. All of the data points to students who are willing and interested in learning and at the same time students who are facing many barriers to achieving at high academic levels.



**b. Assessment Plan**

Columbia Heights High School is limited in the assessments available to them.

Type of Assessment	Purpose of Assessment	Assessment	Frequency	Proficiency Determination
Informal Assessments	Teachers use informal assessments to adjust instruction including flexible small groups and technology intervention supports.	Language Arts teachers use pre- and post-assessments for each unit to monitor progress of Minnesota State Standards.	Weekly/Bi-Weekly	Proficiency determined by PLC work for unit assessments
Formal Assessments	Standardized testing used to show student growth throughout the year as compared to others in the state or others of a similar age.  Standardized tests also give individual student lexile ranges to support differentiated instruction.	9-12: ACCESS 2.0 test for English Learners  10: MCA-III Literacy Test  9/10: PSAT Test  11: SAT Test	ACCESS, and MCA-III are given once a year in the Spring  PSAT is given once a year in the Fall  SAT is given one time a year in the Spring	Proficiency determined by exam

**c. Identification for Dyslexia**

Columbia Heights uses data from the Oral Reading Fluency in PreK-8 to identify all students at risk. Observation and informal assessments are used at the High School level. After identification, students are provided interventions in addition to core instruction. Teachers document results of students' responses to interventions to look for growth and level over time. Teams of teachers (usually including English Learner and Special Education teachers) evaluate progress to determine next steps which could include Child Study, 504 plan, or evaluating for a disability if students are not showing progress.

**d. Identification for Convergence Insufficiency Disorder**

Columbia Heights uses data from the Oral Reading Fluency in PreK-8 to identify all students at risk. Observation and informal assessments are used at the High School level. After identifying students they are provided interventions in addition to core instruction. Teachers document



results of students' responses to interventions to look for growth and level over time. Teams of teachers (usually including English Learner and Special Education teachers) evaluate progress to determine next steps which could include Child Study, 504 plan, or evaluating for a disability if students are not showing progress.

## 2. Continuous Improvement

### *a. Teams and Meetings*

Monitoring and improving literacy in Columbia Heights is done through the input and support of many stakeholders. All principals meet monthly with the Superintendent, Director of Technology, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Student Services, Director of Community Education and district coordinators to discuss continuous improvement. Other teams in the district that work toward continuous improvement include:

- World's Best Workforce Committee
- EL (English Learner) Leadership Team
- Teaching and Learning Leadership Committee
- School Board
- AVID Site Team
- K-12 AVID Vertical Team
- School site teams
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The aforementioned teams consist of district staff, school-level staff, parents and community members. The teams meet on a regular basis to discuss data and gather input on curriculum, inclusive curriculum/instruction, interventions, and school/home connection.

### *b. Strategic Action Planning*

Columbia Heights Public School District has aligned district-wide required goals and plans such as the World's Best Workforce, Title, Achievement and Integration, American Indian Education Program, Strategic Plan, and AVID so the work of the district maintains a focus on academic achievement of all students.

Goal Area	Goal
Kindergarten Readiness	Students enrolled in PreK3 and PreK 4 will show growth in all assessed areas as measured by TSGold assessments given in the Fall of 2019 and Spring of 2020.
Third Grade Literacy	Increase reading proficiency by 5% for third grade students from all ethnic groups as measured by the MCA Reading in 2019-2020.
Equity/Achievement Gap	The achievement gap in Columbia Heights Public Schools will

	decrease by 8% in the 2019-2020 school year as measured by the MCA reading in grades 3-11.
College and Career Readiness	Increase the percentage of students by 10% overall that reach proficiency on the following benchmarks: MCA reading at 4th, 7th, and 10th and MCA math at 5th, 8th, and 11th.
Graduation	Increase graduation rate by 2% from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020.
Kindergarten Readiness	Students enrolled in PreK3 and PreK 4 will show growth in all assessed areas as measured by TSGold assessments given in the Fall of 2019 and Spring of 2020.

***c. Action Planning***

*i. Assessing and Evaluating Student Progress*

Assessing and evaluating student progress occurs in a variety of ways. The administration participates in monthly Lead and Learn meetings which consist of data-driven discussions and check-in meetings among all principals, district staff and the superintendent. The Columbia Heights High School AVID Site Team meets monthly to participate in professional development and to lead literacy instruction throughout the content areas in the school. Teacher teams participate in PLC data discussions to review pre-and post-assessment data and progress monitoring data disaggregated by student groups and also to discuss instructional strategies and interventions. The District Assessment Coordinator meets with administration and teacher teams to facilitate the dissemination of disaggregated data and to support the data analysis process. The district uses a secure online data warehouse where student data can be sorted and disaggregated. The warehouse is used by PreK – 12<sup>th</sup> grade staff.

*ii. Process to Assess and Identify Student for Participation in Gifted and Talented Programs*

Gifted services in Columbia Heights exist to provide academic challenge for gifted students. The identification process for gifted students is based on a body of evidence, and not limited to one measure. The district follows a three-step identification process. First, a universal screener is given to all students in grade 2 and 5, and in middle school by teacher/parent request. Students are assessed using the non-verbal NNAT Ability Test. Second, students who receive a qualifying score in step one, are assessed using the Cognitive Abilities Test. The third step is implemented with a team of staff members reviewing multiple performance measures to help inform the identification process.



*iii. Early Admission to Kindergarten*

Columbia Heights conducts early childhood screenings twice a month during each school year. Through the results of the screening and in collaboration with parents/ guardians, students have access to early admission to Kindergarten.

*iv. Curriculum and Instruction*

Columbia Heights staff receive annual professional development on effective instructional practices. The implementation of the instructional practices is monitored by school and district staff using formal and informal walkthrough rubrics, a feedback protocol is used to support the implementation.

The school board-approved curriculum implementation is evaluated by principals, lead teacher teams and the District Curriculum Coordinator. The four-step process includes: Study/ Preparation, Program Design, Implementation, and Refine/ Sustain. Throughout this process, implementation rubrics are used by district and school staff to monitor the curriculum implementation process and its alignment to standards.

*v. Principal Evaluations*

The principal evaluations take place on an annual basis. The criteria for principal evaluations are; instructional leadership, school performance, stakeholder survey, smart goals, leadership action and other measures.

*vi. Teacher Evaluations*

The evaluation of teachers' use of effective instructional practices and curriculum implementation is evaluated by a combination of Principals and Peer Reviewers using "Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching" Model. Teachers work with their designated Peer Reviewer to set individual growth and development goals. Peer Reviewers and Principals conduct walkthroughs and formal observations of teachers. Other components of the evaluation process include student learning goals, student survey data and shared goals.

*vii. Equitable Distribution of Teachers and Strategies*

The district administrative team in Columbia Heights Public Schools, including the Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals when applicable, the Director of Human Resources, Director of Student Services and Director of Teaching and Learning follow an annual process to identify and discuss placement and evaluation of probationary and veteran teachers. Included in the process is a thorough discussion of evaluations based on the "Charlotte Danielson's Framework of Teaching" Model. During the discussions, the team identifies where additional support or professional development is needed. Probationary teachers who are not performing are not renewed. Tenured teachers are on a three-year cycle for evaluations; when identified as not performing, they are placed onto an improvement plan.



In addition to the annual staffing process, the district administrative team analyzes and discusses enrollment monthly. In the spring and fall of each year, the team discusses staff and student placement protocols in order to support students with special needs and language development. Low-income and minority student enrollment is equitably distributed among the three elementary schools based on the attendance areas. Columbia Heights has one middle school and one high school so all students at those grade levels attend the same school and have access to high-quality instruction.

*viii. Acceleration*

Teachers in gifted programs receive professional development on student needs and acceleration. Columbia Heights has a multi-age gifted classroom where students have access to accelerated curriculum. The students are assessed using multiple measures including the NWEA MAP to determine their reading and math proficiency and growth. In other elementary classrooms, identified gifted students are clustered into flexible classrooms in which the teachers are able to differentiate instruction to provide acceleration. In secondary schools, identified gifted students have access to multiple levels of acceleration, including Advanced Placement (AP) and Honors, in different subject areas.

*ix. Personalized Learning*

Columbia Heights engages students through Personalized Learning which includes technology. Technology devices are used to create self-paced differentiated instruction to:

- individualize instruction
- use formative assessment to increase rigor
- increase student engagement through relevant, exciting learning
- provide equity by challenging and supporting all students with flexible tools and differentiated content
- increase rigor leading to college and career readiness for all students

The Personalized Learning Initiative spans elementary through high school grades and is supported by Technology Integration Specialists. The Integration Specialists provide professional development and in-class coaching and support. Columbia Heights has a professional collaborative culture. Staff collaborate in the following ways:

- Co-teaching: General education, Special education and English Learner identified students are supported in some classrooms through a co-teaching model.
- Professional Learning Communities: Teacher teams meet by department weekly to review student progress toward standard and share instructional practices.
- Leadership teams: Teachers meet in vertical teams (K-12) and in grade-level teams multiple times throughout the year. The leadership teams receive professional development and also inform instructional practices.



### 3. Interventions

Columbia Heights Public Schools implements a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for literacy. Using screening data, diagnostic data, and progress monitoring data teams of teachers are able to identify and support students' growth.

#### **a. Identification**

Teachers determine which students need intervention support as well as students who are above the benchmark target. Teachers work with families to decide on a plan to support students using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

#### **b. Multi-Tiered System of Supports**

Teachers use MCA, PSAT, and SAT data or curriculum-created assessments based on standards to determine which students need additional support at Tier 1, 2, or 3. These supports include:

**Tier 1: Columbia Heights High School addresses literacy in all content areas.** All students in grades 9-12 read and write every day in all classes. While more time is devoted to literacy-skills development in English Language Arts (ELA) classes, all teachers are trained in schoolwide approaches to building background knowledge, teaching vocabulary, and reading comprehension skills. Teachers also implement critical reading strategies for activating prior knowledge, focused rereading of text, and writing to learn through note-taking and summary. Columbia Heights High School uses AVID critical reading strategies to support literacy in all content areas.

**Tier 2 and 3:** When standardized reading test scores and classroom Tier 1 assessments indicate that a student is struggling to reach grade-level proficiency, additional instructional support is provided through Tier 2 and 3 Interventions. Students identified as needing Tier 2 interventions in grades 9-12 are provided with additional support.

### 4. Parent & Community Engagement

Improving literacy skills of students begins with collaboration between the students, teachers, and families. Through various school events including curriculum night, EL (English Learner) Family Night, and conferences, families learn and provide input on literacy strategies the schools are implementing. Families are supported with literacy activities students can do at home in English or in their native language.

Columbia Heights schools work hard to support families and our community using various tools and engagement strategies to enhance communication. Some of these include:

- [College and Career Guides](#) for each step of their journey PreK-12



- Communication through Blackboard and emails
- PTA and PTO
- Family Literacy Events

World's Best Workforce plays an important part creating our literacy goals, monitoring our progress, and providing input into resources and strategies. More about the role of the World's Best Workforce and District Advisory Committee are included in the [Continuous Improvement](#) section.

## 5. Communication Plan

Literacy Plans are created in collaboration with many stakeholders including teachers, administration, families, and community members. Goals are created and analyzed in partnership with these stakeholders.

### ***a. Reporting to Stakeholders***

Communicating results to the many stakeholders is a joint effort between the Teaching and Learning department and Communications department. Communication around literacy data and results, efforts to identify students including students with dyslexia or convergence insufficiency, and literacy action plans are shared by:

- Publishing [WBWF](#) on the district website.
- Mailing the [Annual Report](#) to all residents of Columbia Heights
- Sharing with each school at Curriculum Nights and/or School meetings
- Holding an annual World's Best Workforce meeting for the public
- Sharing with district committees including World's Best Workforce, leadership teams, administration teams

### ***b. Reporting to Parents/Guardians***

Supporting students to the fullest includes a partnership with families. Each fall, families with students who are identified as not reading at, or above, grade-level receive the data and information about services to support students' progress.

## 6. Professional Development

Columbia Heights Public Schools professional development plan is grounded in research, national standards and equips teachers to meet state re-licensure requirements and to work collaboratively to support implementation of instructional practices. The plan articulates the needs identified for staff and by staff to ensure processes and practices are implemented well.

The professional development plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment and aligned to the district, school, and individual goals grounded in "Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching" four domains: Planning and Preparation; Environment; Instruction; and Professional Responsibility. The framework aligns with the teacher evaluation program and



supports all elements of effective instruction. The plan incorporates systems of provision and monitoring of fidelity tools to inform continuous improvement and future needs for professional development.

The World's Best Workforce comprehensive long-term strategic plan provides direction to professional learning to improve teaching and learning and includes education practices that integrate high-quality instruction, rigorous curriculum, technology, and a collaborative professional culture that develops and supports teacher quality, performance, and effectiveness.

Professional learning is provided in three ways: professional workshops, professional learning communities/collaborative grade-level teams/data teams, and individual coaching. A distributed leadership model is used to provide professional learning in a collaborative setting allowing teacher leaders to facilitate the learning of their peers. Training and support are also provided to administrators to provide quality professional learning for capacity building. Peer Reviewers play a primary role in supporting educators with professional learning around individual goals as well.