School Improvement Plan
2015 - 2016

Willard School
Concord, MA

Submitted by:
Patricia Fernandes
Principal
June 2015
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2014 – 2015 School Advisory Council

Patricia Fernandes, Principal, Co-Chair
Nancy Gruskin, Co-Chair
Elizabeth Berk, Community Representative
Heather Bout, Parent
Jeanne Connolly, Teacher
Kate Hennighausen, Parent
Kristin Martines, Parent
Robin McManus, Teacher
Liz Merrill, Teacher

As developed by the 2013-2014 School Advisory Council, the Willard School Improvement Plan for the 2014-2015 school year identified the following goals:

• By June 2015, Willard students K - 5 will demonstrate mastery in the essential ELA standards at each grade level.
• By June 2015, Willard students K - 5 will demonstrate mastery of essential end of year math benchmarks at each grade level.
• By June 2015, Willard students and staff will demonstrate a positive school climate.
• By June 2015, students in grades 3, 4, & 5 will demonstrate age appropriate use of a collaborative digital platform. Students in grades 1 & 2 will engage in digital writing experiences. Students in grades 1-5 will learn skills associated with digital citizenship. Teachers will use software for student data management and record keeping associated with professional goals.

Progress on the 2014-2015 School Improvement Plan

Goal #1 – English Language Arts

During the 2014-2015 school year, Willard continued to provide a strong focus on literacy through the established, research-based curriculum and the revised Massachusetts State Standards (Common Core). Teachers in grades 2 – 5 have continued to place a strong emphasis on the development of Close Reading Strategies. Every six weeks during Grade Level Progress Meetings, teacher teams planned and monitored students’ progress in Guided Reading and/or flexible reading groups, literature circles, and in the implementation of the Lucy Calkins Writing Curriculum, supplementing instruction with Empowering Writing lessons and materials, as appropriate, to develop proficiency with all writing genres: narrative, informational, and persuasive. Job-embedded professional development in Close Reading strategies was provided to teachers in Grades 2 -5, in keeping with the increased rigor of the Common Core. The district provided training in Close Reading with Nancy Boyles, a highly regarded expert in this topic. All teachers in grades 2 – 5, special education teachers, and several tutors participated in one of two trainings. Students in grades 2 -5 also developed their research skills. In addition to classroom instruction, the technology specialist and the library media specialist provided research support to students in many classrooms.

Goal 1a: Grades 1-5 incorporated more nonfiction into their Guided Reading and flexible reading groups to align with the MA Common Core Standards. Instruction in reading groups continued to stress essential elements of reading: vocabulary development, word analysis and phonics, the use of text features, fluency, comprehension and direct instruction in reading strategies in order to promote student progress. The instructional emphasis this year, in grades 3 through 5, focused on the use of evidence-based terms in writing and on teaching students how to incorporate evidence from the text into their
writing with a particular emphasis on preparing students for the three types of writing required in PARCC. In addition, teachers continued their focus on close reading strategies in keeping with Common Core standards. Writing Workshop in all grades addressed all writing genres: narrative, informational, and persuasive. After the School Improvement Plan was developed and submitted in early June 2014, the Concord Public Schools decided to participate in the PARCC pilot. Therefore, we will have no ELA MCAS to report on. While PARCC 2015 results are not available, we expect that approximately 90% of grade 5 students will achieve Proficiency. In 2014, 91% of Grade 5 students scored Advanced/Proficient in ELA on MCAS.

Goal 1b: The Marie Clay Observational Survey, Teachers College Assessment (1-5) and the GRADE (3-5) will have been completed by June and at this point Willard students appear to be on target to meet the 80% proficiency standard for end-of-year benchmarks. Results of these common literacy assessments were reviewed throughout the year to guide instruction and to identify students for RTI intervention. During the course of the year, Grade Level Teams met with the ELA Curriculum Specialist, Reading Teacher, and Principal to review assessment data in order to adjust instruction and plan for Tier 1 intervention (classroom based), Tier 2, and Tier 3 intervention outside of the classroom.

Goal 1c: Students in grades K-5 were selected for all Tier 2 and Tier 3 RTI based on teacher input and the data from the appropriate grade level assessments. Students received appropriate RTI support from one of the following: Reading Specialist, Language Arts Specialist, Special Education Teachers and Literacy Support Staff. The students’ progress was monitored and adjusted to meet each student’s evolving instructional needs.

The literacy progress of K-2 students has been closely monitored through Common Assessments and via progress monitoring for RTI students using Benchmark Assessments, DRA 2, YOPPS Screening, Read Naturally, Quick Phonics Screening, & Story Grammar Marker. Tier 2 and 3 intervention has been broadened to include more LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) groups. Students have moved between the tiers of intervention in first grade. Several children have received RTI support with Special Education staff. Three grade 2 Booster Club groups were differentiated by different skill needs: text level, decoding, comprehension, and fluency. Most progress monitoring discussions occur during Grade Level Progress Meetings and ongoing discussions occur between classroom teachers, RTI providers, and RTI liaisons.

As described above, the Literacy RTI models are flexible. First and second grade students can be moved up and down tiers or into appropriate skill groups. Most second graders receive support during a designated RTI block which eliminates scheduling issues in grouping children. A few children in grade 1 and grade 2, after receiving RTI support, have been or will be evaluated for a Special Education evaluation.

Willard staff members provided Literacy RTI to 82 students. All students have made progress as a result of the intervention. Most students will achieve benchmark. A few have been referred for an evaluation due to continued concerns.
**Lexia**, a computer-based program to teach and reinforce phonics and phonemic awareness, was another tool used to support literacy instruction through RTI. Regular and special educators used this program successfully with some students to improve their skills. A few grade levels piloted **Track My Progress** to measure literacy growth over the course of the school year. **Flocabulary**, a program designed to promote vocabulary growth, was also used with particular students.

Goal 1d: The teachers in grades 1-5 worked collectively in Grade Level Teams to plan and monitor the writing curriculum. While the Lucy Calkins Units of Study serve as the core writing program, teachers occasionally supplement instruction with the **Empowering Writers** program. In addition, teacher teams worked collaboratively to score writing samples using the revised district writing rubrics. First grade teachers revised their timeline for Narrative Writing (Small Moments).

Goal 1e: During the summer of 2014 a few teams of teachers (grade 2 and grade 5) worked with grade level colleagues to design close reading units and lessons. They shared those lessons with colleagues and implemented the lessons during the school year. To further build their skill set, teachers and some reading tutors participated in district sponsored Close Reading Training by Nancy Boyles, an educational consultant. The Language Arts Specialist used Grade Level Progress Meeting time throughout the year to provide effective job-embedded professional development to all grade levels.

Goal 1f: While helping students become more skilled in developing their written responses to Open Response questions, teachers in grades 3 – 5 have taught students how to use evidence from text to support their written responses. In addition, teachers have provided students with direct instruction in PARCC writing tasks (Literary Analysis, Narrative, Research Simulation) that reflect Common Core expectations for writing.

**Goal #2 – Mathematics**

Goal 2a: During the 2014-2015 school year, students in grades 1 - 5 received math instruction for 70 minutes each day. Teachers continued to implement the revised **Investigations in Number, Data, and Space (TERC)** curriculum. Teachers also used a variety of materials to supplement the program in order to meet new Common Core mathematics standards. A few grade levels successfully enhanced their instruction by drawing from selected units/lesson from the program **Engage NY**. This fall, under the direction of the Director of Teaching and Learning and the Elementary Steering Committee, a variety of math curricula were reviewed for possible adoption by the district. After a careful review, **Everyday Math 4** was selected for a limited pilot. The pilot occurred between January and March. A range of Willard teachers at every grade level, except for grade 4, participated in the pilot. Throughout the pilot, teachers provided a great deal of feedback about the units and the instructional materials. After much discussion, it was decided that more information was needed. During the 2015-2016 school year, many teachers across the district will pilot EM4 for the full year. Some
teachers will pilot new *Investigations* units when they become available. By spring of 2016, either *Everyday Math 4* or the revised *Investigations* program will be adopted for the K-5 district for the following school year.

Throughout the year, teachers participated in Grade Level Progress Meetings every 6 weeks with the Math Specialist and Principal. The meetings provided time to discuss the *Investigations* curriculum, and share supplementary materials. The meetings provided time to discuss students’ performance on common assessments, align instruction with Common Core standards, review student work, and discuss Team Goals. The Math Specialist used Grade Level Progress Meeting time throughout the year to provide effective job-embedded professional development to all grade levels.

Goal 2b: Common Assessments were implemented in all grades (K – 5). The Math Specialist and Principal met with Grade Level Teams at 6-week intervals throughout the year to review common assessment data and to discuss student learning. During the 2014-2015 school year, teachers were expected to analyze assessment data and use the data to guide their instruction. Teachers used the assessment data to identify students who needed re-teaching and/or Tier 1 RTI. While PARCC 2015 results are not available, we expect that at least 80% of grade 5 students will achieve Proficiency. In 2014, 94% of Grade 5 students scored Advanced/Proficient on MCAS.

Goal 2c: Individual teachers and grade level teams monitored student progress at regular intervals. Fifty-three Willard students from K-5 received RTI intervention outside of the classroom this year. All students have made progress and most will achieve or come close to achieving grade level benchmarks. A few have been referred for an evaluation due to a very slow rate of progress. It is expected that at least 80% of students (K-5) will achieve Proficiency on most, if not all, of the essential standards on the end-of-the-year Progress Reports.

Goal 2d: Grade Level Teams continued their collaboration with the Math Specialist to align the curriculum with the Common Core standards and to align materials accordingly, shifting and sharing materials between and among grade levels, as appropriate based on curriculum adjustments to align with the Common Core.

Grade 3, 4, and 5 teachers have continued their work with the math practices in various ways. Grade level teams have discussed the work and their approaches in Grade Level Progress Meetings throughout the year. Grade 4 introduced, and grade 3 continued, their work with a *Contexts in Learning* unit this year. These math units embed instruction in rich projects, which bring out the math practices more than a typical math unit might. Grade 4 and 5 teachers continued working on their professional goals which focused on the math practices, using multi-step problems to highlight the practices.

K–2 teachers are just beginning to think about how the math practice standards play a role in their classrooms. The Math Specialist has provided them with some resources (such as posters for their classrooms which describe how the practices might look in the
primary grades), and will build on this foundation in the coming year by exploring each of the practices more explicitly.

**Goal #3 – School Climate**

Goal 3a: Open Circle is an integral part of the culture at Willard with the expectation that 100% of classrooms are engaged in 1 or 2 weekly sessions. The common vocabulary taught in Open Circle has become a school-wide vocabulary, evidenced by consistent use of Open Circle concepts and vocabulary by students and staff. This year, two new classroom teachers participated in Open Circle Training to learn the Open Circle curriculum. School Counselor Julee Vitello, the Willard Open Circle Coach, monitored and assisted them in their implementation of Open Circle.

Goal 3b: Several Willard teachers worked with Ms. Vitello to enhance their Open Circle curriculum by adding program materials on topics such as Empathy, Anti-Bullying, Tattling, etc. The staff has expressed interest in supplementing existing Open Circle materials with recently published Open Circle updates.

During the 2014-2015 school year, there was a significant reduction in office referrals for behavior. There are a few possible reasons for this decrease; the effectiveness of the Open Circle message and the increased pro-active intervention by the School Counselor and School Psychologist. In addition, the pro-active intervention of the Open Circle/Bullying Prevention programs in several classrooms may have contributed to this reduction in social conflicts. Furthermore, school counseling/lunch bunch numbers increased this year to an average of 40 students seen regularly each week. These counseling sessions play a dual role: helping to pre-empt social conflict and equipping students with the skills needed to avoid social conflict.

Our School Psychologist and School Counselor, who is the Open Circle coach, share responsibility for facilitating the resolution of student conflicts at the Peace Table. The Peace Table formalizes the peer conflict resolution process, and puts into practice the problem-solving steps that are taught in the Open Circle curriculum, grades K-5.

The implementation of Open Circle and Bully Proofing curriculum, combined with the pro-active intervention by the Willard Mental Health Team, has had a significant effect on the climate of the school, and does appear to have a positive impact on climate and social problem-solving among students, as evidenced by the social behavior of a majority of Willard students. As of early May when this information was tabulated, the Bus Referral/Behavior data reflects about a 40% reduction in behavior referrals in 2014-2015 compared with the previous school year.

Finally, Willard continued the practice of presenting a “Wow Willard Award” to deserving students. Students were nominated by staff members, and given verbal recognition by the principal during morning announcements and were called down to the
office to receive a Wow Award for promoting positive behavior, acts of kindness, being an upstander, and other positive contributions to the school community.

Goal 3c: The Willard School Community began the school year with an all school assembly. The Principal shared a read aloud of a picture book *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown. After selecting this book, she incorporated a bit of poetic license and added a page to the book incorporating her thoughts about Willard. As a follow-up activity, she invited all students to complete the statement – **The important thing about Willard School is . . .** Students were encouraged to reflect on their feelings about Willard and complete that statement with words and/or pictures. All student work was posted on a large bulletin board. The year-long display was designed to provide a powerful reminder of the many ways that Willard School is a special place.

Over the course of the year, each grade level (Grades 1 – 5) planned and led an All School Assembly. Individual grade level teams determined the content of their assembly. In all cases, the assemblies provided students with an opportunity to perform publicly by sharing their learning with the entire school community. The assemblies provided students with an authentic opportunity to speak publicly, collaborate and cooperate with their peers, and to plan, organize, and problem solve with their peers. Singing the Willard School Song to conclude most assemblies serves as a unifying thread and a fun way to conclude Willard assemblies throughout the year.

Goal 3d: Many students opted to participate in Trick or Treat for UNICEF. Students collected $785.34 that was donated to UNICEF. This activity has been a Willard tradition for many years. In mid January, Willard School launched the annual *Willard Souper Bowl* campaign. Students were invited to bring in canned soups or other canned goods. Open Table benefitted greatly from this successful canned soup drive. This year the Willard Annual Food Drive was a success, once again. Fifth graders worked directly with the School Counselor and their classroom teachers to promote, advertise, collect and organize the food donations sent to Open Table in Concord. Approximately 70 boxes of food and personal hygiene items were collected. In addition, Willard students celebrated half way day (the 90th day of school) by making a donation to Open Table in exchange for coming to school dressed in a fun half-way fashion.

All grade 5 students participated in a Service Day in May. Under the supervision of parent volunteers, students completed service projects at Gaining Ground, The Old Manse, and Emerson Field. In addition, some 5th graders offered their time on Service Day in the Willard cafeteria creating craft items and centerpieces for Open Table.

In addition to these activities, various classrooms engaged in community service projects such as a classroom Quilt Project for Minuteman Arc, Letters to Veterans, classroom involvement in the Read to Feed Program, a classroom 100 Acts of Kindness Project, Petals for Peace service project to name a few.
Goal 3e: This year 15 Willard staff members participated in a Mindfulness Training course as part of a district-sponsored Mindfulness in Education Initiative that began with a grant written by Willard School Counselor Julee Vitello. Three Willard staff members served on the district Mindfulness Steering Committee. Willard’s building-based Mindfulness Committee met a few times during the school year; inclement weather led to the cancellation of a few meetings during the winter. The committee will meet before the end of the school year to plan strategies for sharing ideas with staff and moving the initiative forward to interested staff during the 2015-2016 school year.

Goal 3f: Efforts were made between and among members of the Willard Community to promote elements of the Dignity Work that the district engaged in between selected representatives from the K-8 staff, CTA leadership, and the CPS administration with Donna Hicks. While the number of educators on the team was relatively small, it was agreed that all district groups would work to be mindful of being respectful in all dealings with all constituents.

Goal 3g: K-5 teachers, Curriculum Specialists, the Technology Specialist, and the principal, participated in Grade Level Progress Meetings every 6 weeks throughout the school year. This time was used productively to collaborate on curriculum, instruction, and assessment and to look at student work and review student assessment information in order to identify students for intervention and to discuss their progress in RTI.

Goal 3h: The Willard Leadership Team discussed the issue of equitable access to professional development funds for all Willard teachers. It was determined that teachers who had not received professional development funds during the 2013-2014 school year would have access to the Willard Professional Development funds for 2014-2015. As it turned out, Willard received an increased amount of professional development funding so there was not a need to budget the funds so stringently.

Goal #4 – Technology (On-line Writing & Digital Citizenship)

Goal 4a: In August 2015, teachers in grades 3-5 were offered a district sponsored full day workshop on Google Drive to establish and/or build upon their knowledge and skills and plan for the implementation of Google Drive in the classroom. Teachers learned useful ways to integrate Google Drive into the curriculum. Digital Citizenship skills were also discussed. As part of the training, teachers created a folder system to manage student work. Tech Specialists shared new and enhanced features of the Google Drive platform during Tech Tuesday sessions. This year all students in grade 3-5 used Google Drive as their main word processing and presentation tool. In addition, students use the platform to access curriculum content such as photos, movies, and worksheets and to follow-up at home with class work and homework tasks.

The use of this platform has deepened the collaborative community at Willard School. Teachers have had the opportunity to support many digital writing skills as well as several digital citizenship skills with this platform. Students have learned the responsibility of having an online account, sharing appropriate content, and knowing how
an online workflow functions.

In the Library, all students in grades 3 -5 have used Google Drive during library classes. Since the beginning of the year, fifth graders have used it extensively to organize collaborative projects. Third and 4th grade students were introduced to Google Drive later in the school year. All students in grade 3 -5 have used the platform for independent assignments and for collaborative projects with classmates.

All 5th grade students used KidBlog as part of their participation in Massachusetts Book Award reading project. Many students in other grades had experiences with KidBlog as well. KidBlog is a safe online blog service for students to create discussions, write comments and share information. Students learned how to participate in an online discussion and learned how to write to a larger audience beyond their classrooms.

Goal 4b: All students in grades 1-5 participated in the K-5 Library program We ARE Digital Citizenship Curriculum. All lessons are designed to give students the information they need to be Appropriate, Responsible, and Effective users of the Internet and technology. In grades 1 and 2, lessons focused on online safety. Beginning in grade 3, students learned what it means to be a good citizen of cyberspace and the responsibilities that go with online access. Students also learned about the dangers of cyberbullying and how to protect their personal and private information. In 4th grade, students learned about copyright laws and plagiarism. In grade 5, students explored these topics in greater depth and also learned Internet research skills.

Goal 4c: The district decided not to implement the use of Baseline Edge for the collection and organization of student data so this goal was not implemented.

Goal 4d: Grade Level Progress Meetings were held every 6 weeks from September through June for all grade levels. These meetings provided grade level teams with the opportunity to collaborate with their grade level colleagues, ELA & Math Curriculum Specialists, Technology Specialist, Special Education Teacher, and Principal. Meetings were divided into three components: Literacy, Math, and Teacher Time/Curriculum. Over the course of the year, teams engaged in productive discussion, reviewed assessment data and teacher input to identify students for RTI, discussed the progress of RTI students, used assessment data to inform instructional decisions, reviewed curriculum timelines, and considered curriculum changes/modifications that were necessary to meet students’ needs. All of these efforts were directed toward the essential goal of helping all students reach grade level benchmarks.
## District Goals 2015-2016

### Concord Public Schools

#### DISTRICT SMART GOAL:
By June 2016, students in grades K-12 will master critical end of year grade level standards.

#### WILLARD SMART GOAL:
By June 2016, students in grades K-5 will demonstrate mastery in the essential ELA standards at each grade level.

#### DISTRICT SMART GOAL:
By June 2016, students will demonstrate proficiency in grades 2-5.

### Key Actions:

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<th>Outcome Benchmarks</th>
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<td>1. Grade Level Teams will plan &amp; monitor</td>
<td>By June 2016, Willard students K-5 will demonstrate mastery in the essential ELA standards at each grade level as evidenced by:</td>
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<td>2. Achievement of Grade Level Standards on end-of-year PARCC/MAAS</td>
<td>2. Grade Level Teams will collaborate in the refinement of Close Reading Strategies in grades 2-5.</td>
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<td>3. Students will make progress toward grade level benchmarks</td>
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<td>4. Grade Level Teams will collaborate and collect research-based curriculum (K-5) in grade READING with the Common Core (K-5) in grade READING with the Common Core</td>
<td>4. Grade Level Teams will collaborate and work with ELA Specialist to teach writing genres &amp; assess students’ progress with the district genre-specific rubrics drawing from a range of writing prompts.</td>
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<td>5. Develop, implement &amp; deepen close reading instruction (Narrative, Informational, Persuasive)</td>
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Concord-Carlisle Regional School District

District Goals 2015-2016

Close Reading lessons and strategies enabling students to read & understand complex texts across the curriculum (informational & literature).

Assess students’ ability to compare & synthesize ideas from across related texts, engaging in text-focused discussions and produce written work aligned with the standards.

Collect and score student responses using a rubric. Provide feedback based on the rubric for students to develop lessons and techniques to develop proficiency in narrative, analytical writing, and research.

Continue to strengthen students’ competency in writing to texts in grades 3-5.

Grade level teams will collaborate to develop opportunities for students to develop proficiency in narrative, analytical writing, and research.

Students will score proficient or higher in their future responses. 80% of students will score proficient or higher.
**DISTRICT SMART GOAL:**
By June 2016, Willard students K-5 will demonstrate mastery of essential and year end math benchmarks at each grade level.

**WILLARD SMART GOAL:**
By June 2016, students in grades K-2 will master critical end of year grade level standards.

**DISTRICT SMART GOAL:**
By June 2016, students in grades K-5 will demonstrate mastery of essential and year end math benchmarks at each grade level.
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<td>1. Implement Open Circle (K-5)</td>
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<td>2. Teachers and professional staff will consult with Mental Health staff as needed.</td>
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<td>3. Students will participate in outreach and service opportunities.</td>
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<td>3. Students will provide holiday cards for Emerson patients &amp; others.</td>
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<td>4. Teachers and professional staff will discuss and provide opportunities for staff and students to access and discuss.</td>
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**DISTRICT SMART GOAL:**
By June 2016, Willard students and staff will demonstrate a positive school climate, as evidenced by:

**WILLARD SMART GOAL:**
Increase K-12 students' social and emotional learning.

**DISTRICT GOALS 2015-2016**
Concord-Carlisle Regional School District

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Concord Public Schools

Concord-Carlisle Regional School District

Concord - Carlisle Regional School District

Concord Public Schools

District Goals 2015-2016
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<td>1. Increase responsibililty for stewardship of our school.</td>
<td>Social and emotional learning opportunities including updated Open Circle materials/lessons and/or mindfulness related opportunities. Encourage teachers and grade level teams to draw on building based mental health strategies and practices that promote calm needed and draw from a variety of resources.</td>
<td>Raise awareness of Willard School's environmental stewardship. Students will be encouraged to assume some of these responsibilities. Students will grow in their understanding of the green elements of Willard.</td>
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<td>2. Teachers will deepen their desirousness about the “green elements” of Willard. Students will be encouraged to assume some of these responsibilities. Students will grow in their understanding of the green elements of Willard.</td>
<td>6. Allot time for staff members to present/share information and/or best practice during monthly Faculty Meetings.</td>
<td>8. Continue to implement grade level Progress Meetings every 6 weeks.</td>
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<td>3. Staff will collaborate to make decisions about curriculum and will use assessment data to plan professional development.</td>
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<td>8. Continue to implement grade level Progress Meetings every 6 weeks.</td>
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<td>4. Staff will share the new learning and/or best practice.</td>
<td>7. Grade level Teams, ELA Specialist, Math Specialist, Technology Specialist, SPED Staff will collaborate to make decisions about curriculum and will use assessment data to plan professional development.</td>
<td>8. Students will grow in their understanding of the “green elements” of Willard. Students will assume some of these responsibilities. Students will demonstrate environmental stewardship.</td>
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DISTRICT SMART GOAL:
During the 2015-2016 school year, administrators and teacher leaders will lead all educators and teams to use student data, research and best practices in instruction, assessment and technology to improve student learning.

WILLARD SMART GOAL:
By June 2016, students in grades 3-5 will demonstrate age-appropriate use of a collaborative digital platform. Students in grades 1-2 will engage in digital writing experiences. Students in grades 1-5 will benefit from digital citizenship practices. Teachers will use software for student data management and record keeping associated with professional goals.

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<th>Key Actions</th>
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1. Technology specialist will work with Grade 3-5 teachers to strengthen the process of writing in a collaborative, digital environment.
2. Students in grades 1-5 will learn digital citizenship skills during library classes and will continue to apply these skills in the classroom.
3. 100% of students in grades 1-5 will be introduced to age-appropriate, safe, digital environmental that supports technology in the classroom.
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