



ISD 877 -- Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools
Local World's Best Workforce Plan 2015
Making a Difference

In accordance with 2013 Minnesota statutes, section 120B.11, the BHM School Board at a public meeting shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce. The plan is intended to serve as a foundational document aligning educational initiatives serving students from pre-kindergarten through high school. BHM's *World's Best Workforce Plan* serves as a blueprint that demonstrates how current district initiatives and plans work together in a concerted effort to create a quality workforce equipped with the necessary skills for the 21st century. The report must review the district's progress toward achieving this vision and be evaluated on an annual basis and reported as the *Local World's Best Workforce Plan*.

- A. A summary of progress towards improving teaching and learning and striving for the world's best workforce, specifically:
- All students ready for kindergarten
 - All students in third grade achieving grade-level literacy
 - Progress towards closing the achievement gap
 - All students attaining career and college readiness before graduating from high school
 - All students graduating from high school
- B. Information about best practice strategies that have been implemented and are showing evidence of impacting the closing of achievement gaps and working toward creating the world's best workforce.

Report Requirements

To meet state requirements the School Board will:

- Meet to review as necessary, student achievement goals, local assessment outcomes, approve strategies and practices for improving curriculum and instruction
- Review the District student achievement goals, benchmarks, and improvement plans
- Hold an annual meeting to review and revise the plan.
- Approve the submission of the electronic summary of its report to MDE each fall
- Seek continual stakeholder input and provide updates publicly throughout the year so the report is not the sole source of information.

To meet state requirements, BHM's Teaching and Learning Department will:

- Title the report "ISD 877 BHM Schools Local World's Best Workforce Plan."
- Place the approved report on the district's web page.
- Submit an electronic summary to the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education each fall
- Periodically survey affected constituencies about their connection to and level of satisfaction.

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Section I:

Assessing and Evaluating Student Progress

BHM uses a comprehensive process to assess and evaluate student progress toward graduation and college and career readiness. The layered system incorporates local, state, and national assessments that provide a complete profile of achievement by individual student, student group, school, and district.

There are a variety of tests used to evaluate the achievement of students as well as instructional programs in the BHM Schools. Students are tested in order to determine instructional level, measure basic skills, evaluate student progress towards achieving state academic standards, and to evaluate program effectiveness. Data from assessments is regularly reviewed by school stakeholders to screen, progress monitor, determine curriculum effectiveness, guide student instruction, evaluate program effectiveness, gauge instructional strategy effectiveness, determine student program placement, diagnose learning difficulties, determine state/federal accountability, determine professional development needs, and inform parents of student progress. A brief description of major assessments follows. For more information on these and other assessments go to the BHM Schools, click on "Departments," choose "Teaching & Learning" and then "Assessment and Testing."

	Dibels/TIES Screeners	Performance Series (M/R)	MCA-III Reading	MCA-III Math	MCA-III Science	ACT Explore*	ACT PLAN	ACT College Entrance
Kindergarten	F/W/S							
Grade 1	F/W/S							
Grade 2	F/W/S	F/S						
Grade 3	F/W/S	F/S	S	S				
Grade 4	F/W/S	F/S	S	S				
Grade 5	F/W/S	F/S	S	S	S			
Grade 6		F	S	S				
Grade 7		F	S	S				
Grade 8		F	S	S		F		
Grade 9								
Grade 10			S		S		F	
Grade 11				S				S
Grade 12								

* ACT Explore was administered in 2014-15 but will not be in 2015-16

Minnesota State Assessments

1. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA-III)

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) are federal and state-mandated tests that assess student progress toward achieving Minnesota standards in reading, math and science. Minnesota students are assessed in math and reading each year in Grades 3-8 and in reading at Grade 10 and math at Grade 11. Minnesota students are also assessed three times in science at Grade 5, 8 and at high school during the year student's complete biology. Data are used for school and district accountability by the state.

2. College and Career Readiness Assessments

BHM Schools utilized ACT's College and Career Readiness assessments during 2014-15 at Grades 8, 10 and 11. While ACT's *PLAN* test has been administered for several years at Grade 10, the *ACT Explore* was also administered to Grade 8 students and the *ACT with Writing* college entrance exam was administered to all Grade 11 students during 2014-15. The *Explore* and *Plan* tests are no longer required or paid for by the state. As a result, the *Explore* test will not be administered to Grade 8 students during 2015-16, but BHM will pay for and continue to make the *Plan* test available to sophomores. The state requires that BHM offer the ACT for juniors without cost and is scheduled for April 19, 2016.

A. ACT Explore: (Grade 8)

At Grade 8 ACT's *Explore* assessment was administered to all BHM students during November 2014. The *Explore* is designed to help eighth graders explore a broad range of options for their future. It prepares students not only for their high school coursework but for their post-high school choices as well. The *Explore* helps students identify areas of academic strength and weakness in four areas important for success in college and the workplace -- English, math, reading, and science. Since *Explore* is a curriculum-based test, its scores show the knowledge and skills that students are likely to have in each of these areas. The *Explore* also includes a career planning component designed to help students consider possible career options. The *Explore* is not a required state assessment in 2015-16 and will not be offered to BHM students during the school year.

B. ACT PLAN: (Grade 10)

BHM has administered the *PLAN* assessment to sophomores for many years. This assessment helps student's build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. The *PLAN* assessment can help all students -- those who are college-bound as well as those who are likely to enter the workforce directly after high school. *PLAN* points out academic strengths and areas where improvement is needed and lets students know if they're on track for college. The *PLAN* helps them find careers that match their interests and even helps connect them with colleges interested in them. Even though the *PLAN* is no longer required by the state, BHM will make this opportunity available to all sophomores in November 2015.

C. ACT Plus Writing College Entrance Exam: (Grade 11)

In the past, only BHM students interested in college admission completed the *ACT College Entrance Exam*. For the first time in 2014-15, all Minnesota juniors participated in *ACT Plus Writing* college entrance exam in April. *ACT* scores will be reportable for college admission, including those receiving ACT-approved accommodations. The *ACT Plus Writing* will be available to any interested juniors on April 19, 2016.

3. Access for English Learners

The *ACCESS for ELLs* is an assessment developed by the WIDA consortium and administered to English learners in order to measure progress toward meeting Minnesota's standards for English language development. The assessment is a federal and state requirement for students still learning the English language. A link to the WIDA Consortium website is available by clicking [here](#).

Locally Adopted Assessments

1. Performance Series Assessments

BHM students in Grades 2-5 are evaluated using online *Performance Series* assessments during the fall and spring and students in Grades 6-8 participate only during the fall. These online assessments in math and reading provide teachers with information on how their students are doing compared to the nation, and provide detailed information on how students are progressing on Minnesota standards.

2. Elementary Screeners

Elementary students are assessed multiple times in a variety of literacy and math skills. *TIES or Dibels* assessments are administered three to four times a year when students are given screeners (probes) to determine how they are performing on grade-level standards. Students who score below the 25th percentile are provided with individualized instruction. K-2 students are also assessed on high-frequency sight words three times a year to make sure students know enough words to work at grade level. Kindergarten students are assessed on letter names and sound recognition three to four times a year. K-1 students are assessed in oral counting and number recognition three to four times a year. Students in Grades 2-5 are administered math fact fluency probes three times a year. These are district-created assessments to gauge student's math skills.

3. Guided Reading Benchmarks

K-5 BHM students have *Guided Reading Benchmarks* (end of the year goals) established for all students to see if they end up where we want them to be.

4. Scholastic Reading Inventory

Students in Grades 6-8 are administered the *Scholastic Reading Inventory* two or three times a year which provides grade-level information used to monitor student progress.

5. Title I Assessments

Title I is a federal grant program available only at elementary schools that qualify by student poverty levels within the district boundary levels. The Title I program is designed to help students who would benefit from extra support to reach their grade level goals. Licensed teachers are hired as Title I teachers. Some Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) are employed under the supervision of a highly-qualified teacher. Title I teachers and support staff use research-based interventions to instruct students.

Students are monitored daily and assessed at least every 2 weeks to see if progress is being made. The interventions are chosen to best meet the needs of individuals or small groups. Most Title I groups will not exceed 6 students. The time frame that groups are seen varies from grade to grade. This is between 15 and 30 minutes.

6. District Common Assessments

All curricular areas have common assessments administered to all students to monitor progress and achievement. The results of common assessments are discussed in professional learning community meetings to identify areas of weakness and strength and develop appropriate instructional strategies.

Section II:

Goals and Benchmarks for Instruction and Student Achievement

BHM Schools has an established structure of strategic systematic goal setting which aims to align all district and building student achievement and staff development goals toward the district's vision. Each year the School Board adopts goals designed to impact instruction and student achievement within the district. All schools develop site plans that are based on these student achievement goals. District progress towards these 2014-15 goals is reported below.

1. School Readiness

BHM Schools strive to assure that all students come to school with the skills necessary to be ready for kindergarten. Approximately 25% of the students who eventually enroll in BHM kindergarten participate in district school readiness preschool which has received a four-star rating by the state. All students participating in this program take part in early childhood screening. Students are assessed and preschool staff partner with special education to provide students with disabilities or special needs with appropriate instruction.

BHM students entering kindergarten are assessed using *TIES "Letter Sound Fluency"* during the first week of school. 67% of kindergarteners in September 2015 were at benchmark level placing them approximately "at grade level." The district changed screeners this year (*Dibels "Letter Name Fluency"* was previously used) so there is no comparison data.

BHM works hard to increase student preparedness prior to kindergarten entry and promote the same screening process with other preschools in the community. A variety of resources for parents are available on the district's website, including an annual workshop provided by a kindergarten teacher to assist parents in getting their children ready for starting school. Community Education ECFE and Adult Basic Education Programs provide family literacy classes for English Language Learners and high need families at the Buffalo and Montrose sites. ECFE also provides parent education including home visits for high need parents and their children with the goal of promoting school readiness and access to community resources.

2. Literacy by Grade 3

In order to ensure that all students are reading by the end of third grade, Minnesota requires that all curriculum, instruction, and assessment be aligned with current research-based practices. Districts are required to examine their current practices and implement local literacy plans. The *BHM Literacy Plan* provides an overview of how to provide students with appropriate, research-based instruction with the goal of having all students reading by Grade 3 or earlier. The plan outlines the main reading components for core instruction with students who are exceeding grade level standards while receiving instruction that continues to progress their learning, and support for students who have not met standards. To view a copy of the *BHM Local Literacy Plan* go to the BHM website, choose "Teaching & Learning" under "Departments."

While BHM Schools is making progress towards all third grade students achieving grade level literacy, the district came up short on meeting its goal. 63.4% of BHM Grade 3 students achieved proficiency as measured on Minnesota state reading assessments administered in the spring of 2015. On the spring 2015 *Dibels "Oral Reading Fluency"* screener, 84% of third graders scored in at grade level or above. On the *Performance Series* reading assessment administered in the spring of 2015, 63.9% of BHM Grade 3 students scored above national norms. Obviously there is still considerable work to be done in order to attain the state goal of all students reading at grade-level by Grade 3 by 2017.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:

The percentage of BHM students enrolled Oct. 1 in grade 3 who earn an achievement level of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standards will increase from 62.2% in 2014 to 66.2% in 2015 on reading accountability tests (MCA and MTAS).

3. College and Career Readiness

Prepare students for career and college readiness is at the heart of BHM’s mission to *make a difference by preparing all students for a successful future in a changing world*. BHM Schools strive to improve in this area by: (A) seeking to increase the math and reading proficiency of all students, (B) increasing the academic growth in math and reading of all students, and (C) providing specific career and college readiness assessments and activities.

A. Increase Math and Reading Proficiency

Although Minnesota was granted a federal waiver under *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), the target for every student to reach proficient levels remains. All BHM schools are striving to increase proficiency levels in both math and reading. The 4% increase represents a meaningful statistical difference for a district our size.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:

“Students will demonstrate a 4% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the math and reading MCAs.”

While BHM students continue to score above MCA state averages at most grades and subjects, the district did not meet its reading or math proficiency goals in 2014-15. Statewide average MCA scores showed slight declines, with some speculating that technical glitches that plagued online testing could be partially responsible.

Similar proficiency targets to raise achievement by at least 4% in both math and reading have been established for 2015-16. All sites are developing improvement plans to reach these goals.

BHM MCA Proficiency Targets/Results				
	Math		Reading	
	BHM	MN	BHM	MN
2014-15 Target	71.1%	N/A	66.9%	N/A
2014-15 Results	67.2%	60.2%	62.6%	59.4%
2015-16 Target	71.2%	N/A	66.6%	N/A

B. Increase Academic Growth in Math and Reading

BHM Schools strives for students to show above average growth as measured by the MCAs as well as the locally-adopted Performance Series assessments. As a result BHM adopted separate district growth goals for the MCAs and Performance Series designed to raise the achievement level of all district students.

MCA Growth:

Student growth is measured by the student’s performance on the MCAs relative to their performance in the most recent year they took the test. Each student’s growth is compared to typical students. These growth scores are known as “z-scores” and indicate whether the student is above or below expectation. A student’s z-score can be calculated as: $Z\text{-Score} = (\text{Student Score} - \text{Expectation}) \div \text{Standard Deviation}$.

A growth z-score of zero indicates that the student met the expectation and demonstrated as much growth as an average Minnesota student. A positive z-score indicates the student had higher than expected achievement. A negative z-score indicates the student achieved below the expectation. Every student receives a z-score so schools can measure the average growth of all students.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:

“All students will have positive average z-score growth at all grade levels in both reading and math as measured by the MMR data which indicates students are making higher than anticipated growth.”

BHM did not attain its rigorous goal for MCA growth for 2014-15. The average BHM z-score was -0.031 in math and -0.043 in reading. While most BHM students demonstrated significant growth they did grow slightly less than typical Minnesota students. It is important to note, however, that these relatively small differences are not statistically significant.

Performance Series Growth:

BHM met its goal for students to score above Performance Series growth norms in both reading and math. 73.7% of district elementary students scored above national growth norms in math, and 61.1% in reading during 2014-15. This means BHM students demonstrated more growth on average than other schools in the nation. Because Performance Series testing is only administered in the fall (and not the spring) at Grades 6, 7 and 8 it is not possible to compare growth to national norms at these grades.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:
“60% or more of BHM students at grades 2-5 will demonstrate above average growth in both reading and math as measured by Performance Series national norms for fall to spring growth.”

C. College and Career Assessments

BHM students participated in ACT’s College and Career Readiness assessments during 2014-15 at Grades 8, 10 and 11. ACT’s *PLAN* test has been administered for several years at Grade 10, but during 2014-15 the *ACT Explore* was also administered to all Grade 8 students and the *ACT with Writing* college entrance exam was administered to all Grade 11 students. During 2015-16 the *Explore* and *Plan* are no longer required by the state, but BHM will continue to offer the *Plan* to all interested sophomores and the *ACT with Writing* for interested juniors.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:
“The senior class of 2015 will attain an average ACT composite score of 23.0.”

1. **ACT PLAN: (Grade 10)**

As a measure of College and Career Readiness, the *PLAN* results show BHM juniors with an average composite score of 18.6 in 2014-15 compared to the national average of 17.2. 58% of BHM juniors attained a *PLAN* composite score of 18 indicating that they are on track for career and college readiness (up from 56.3% in 2013-14).

2. **ACT College Entrance Exam: (Grade 11)**

While the ACT was administered to all juniors during 2014-15, the company releases national comparison data only for seniors (partially because many students choose to take the assessment more than once prior to graduation). BHM seniors last year met the district ACT goal with a composite score of 23.3 (up from 23.1 in 2013-14). The average national 2014-15 *ACT* composite score was 21.0 and the Minnesota state average 22.7.

Subject	BHM	MN	Nat'l
English	21.8	22.1	20.4
Reading	23.6	23.1	21.4
Mathematics	23.5	23.0	20.8
Science	23.6	22.9	20.9
Composite	23.3	22.7	21.0

An *ACT* benchmark score is the minimum score needed on an *ACT* subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses, which include English Composition, Algebra, Social Science and Biology. During 2014-15, 78% of BHM students met the *ACT* English College Readiness Benchmark compared to 74% of the state and 64% of the nation. 43% of BHM students met college readiness benchmarks in all four subjects compared to 39% of Minnesota students and 28% nationally.

Subject	ACT Benchmark	Percent Attaining Readiness Benchmarks		
		BHM	MN	Nat'l
English	18	78%	74%	64%
Reading	22	60%	57%	46%
Mathematics	22	66%	58%	42%
Science	23	64%	53%	38%
Met All Four	21	40%	39%	28%

4. Closing Achievement Gap

Minnesota schools have one of the largest achievement gaps in the nation. Minnesota currently has a waiver from NCLB legislation that targets lowering the achievement gap by 50% by 2017. As a result, BHM is compelled to increase the growth of traditionally lower-performing student groups (American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Black, English Learners, special education and students of poverty) in an effort to reduce the achievement gap.

The achievement gap is measured in two ways – by measuring progress towards annual proficiency targets established by the Minnesota Department of Education and by increasing the growth of traditionally lower-performing groups compared to higher-achieving groups.

A. Proficiency Targets

Under Minnesota’s NCLB waiver, annual targets were established by the Minnesota Department of Education up to 2017 in reading and math for all student groups, including American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Black, White, English Learners, special education and students of poverty. Each district has their own targets based on the number of students enrolled for the full academic year within different grades and student groups. A district is considered on track in 2015 to meeting the 2017 goal if the proficiency index rates for all applicable student groups exceeded the 2015 math and reading targets.

BHM Achievement Gap Reduction Index Targets 2014-15

<i>Student Group</i>	Mathematics			Reading		
	<i>Proficiency Index</i>	<i>Proficiency Index Target</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Proficiency Index</i>	<i>Proficiency Index Target</i>	<i>Difference</i>
American Indian	<10	<10	<10	60.00	39.20	20.80
Asian	79.41	66.29	13.12	72.32	58.46	13.86
Hispanic	56.32	53.93	2.39	58.95	51.62	7.33
Black	64.52	50.16	14.36	54.62	48.35	6.27
White	78.43	80.94	-2.51	74.03	79.77	-5.74
English Learners	47.87	44.17	3.70	42.16	35.02	7.14
Special Education	50.00	55.33	-5.33	44.90	53.51	-8.61
Free/Reduced Lunch	62.45	63.91	-1.46	59.63	60.48	-0.85

The chart above shows district results towards meeting these targets for all identified student groups. The “Proficiency Index” is the district’s score, “Proficiency Index Target” is the state’s benchmark for BHM, and the “Difference” is how we fared compared to state targets which positive numbers indicating success.

Current data from the Minnesota Department of Education shows BHM did not completely meet their achievement gap reduction goals for 2014-15. While most student groups within BHM Schools met established proficiency targets for 2014-15, three student groups did not in both subjects (white, special education and students receiving free/reduced lunch). The district met achievement gap goals for American Indian, Asian, Hispanic and English Learners. The district came close to meeting the targets for free/reduced lunch group -- had 12 more FRL students moved from not meeting standards to the proficient range in math, and 7 more in reading, this group would have met their targets last year.

It is important to remember that the proficiency index targets will increase every year until 2017 and continued improvements in achievement for all students will be needed to become on track in the future.

B. Increasing Growth

BHM is concentrating on increasing the growth of all students as their main strategy for reducing the achievement gap. To see how various student groups are performing, z-scores (discussed on page 6) from lower-performing groups are compared to higher-performing student groups with the expectation that to reduce the achievement gap these students will have to demonstrate more growth than their comparison counterparts.

An achievement gap reduction (AGR) score is then determined by subtracting a student group’s average z-score from their comparison group in both math and reading and averaging the two. If an AGR score is negative, it means students in that student group grew more over the past year than their comparison group (i.e. BHM Asian students grew more in math between 2014 and 2015 than their white counterparts). If the AGR score is positive it means the lower-performing group grew less than their counterparts. For this reason BHM is striving to achieve negative AGR scores for all groups.

*BHM 2014-15 Goal:
“All Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) z-Scores for each student group will be reported as a negative number, therefore indicating BHM students in all student groups are making strides towards reducing the achievement gap. These numbers will be reported through the Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) based on the MCA data in reading and math.”*

The chart at right shows BHM did not reach its goal as most lower performing student groups continued to demonstrate less growth than their comparison groups. However, BHM is making strides towards reducing the achievement gap. While not all student groups registered a negative number, six of seven student groups (American Indian, Black, Hispanic, English Learners, special education and students of poverty) registered improved AGR scores in reading when compared to 2014. BHM Schools strives for all students to be working at grade-level.

BHM Achievement Gap Reduction Progress 2014-15

	Math		Reading	
	Student Count	Combined AGR	Student Count	Combined AGR
American Indian	16	0.1206	17	-0.2322
Asian	40	-0.0504	45	0.1008
Hispanic	84	0.2916	81	0.0678
Black	52	0.1906	52	0.1948
White	2408	0.0246	2470	0.0848
English Learners	23	0.3745	28	0.0889
Special Education	348	0.3088	356	0.1656
Free/Reduced Lunch	679	0.2538	691	0.2317

5. High School Graduation

A high school diploma is a critical step on a student's path to success, and by the year 2020, 70 percent of jobs in Minnesota will require some form of postsecondary education, whether that is through a two-year, four-year or certificate program. While Minnesota high schools strive to get all students to graduate, the Minnesota Department of Education has set a goal for schools to reach a 90 percent graduation rate by the year 2020 with no student group below 85 percent.

BHM 2014-15 Goal:
“95% of seniors will graduate on time using MDE’s 4-year graduation rate.”

The data below provides the 2014 graduation rates (most recent data) for each student group with at least 10 students. Graduation rates are averaged over four, five or six years. Minnesota uses the federally-required "adjusted cohort graduation rate" model. This model follows students in a group, or a "cohort," throughout high school and determines if they graduate within four, five or six years.

The four-year graduation rate shows the number of students graduating from high school within four years after entering grade nine. The five-year and six-year graduation rates show the number of students who took additional time to earn sufficient credits or meet other graduation requirements and to receive a high school diploma from their district.

BHM Schools Graduation Rates 2014

<i>Student Groups</i>	<i>4-Year Percent</i>	<i>5-Year Percent</i>	<i>6-Year Percent</i>
All Students	95.0%	95.5%	94.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	100.0%	91.7%	N/A
Black	90.9%	N/A	N/A
White	95.1%	96.4%	95.9%
Special Education	72.2%	78.0%	84.1%
Free/Reduced Lunch	90.5%	90.4%	90.8%
<i>Minnesota Average</i>	<i>81.2%</i>	<i>81.4%</i>	<i>81.8%</i>

BHM met its goal for a 95% graduation rate. The most recent five-year graduation rate is even higher. The only student group that falls below the 90% target was students receiving special education services. This group, however, does have a much higher 6-year graduation rate. Overall BHM is doing an excellent job helping their students attain high school graduation.

BHM District Student Achievement Goals for 2015-16

Each year BHM adopts goals designed to impact instruction and student achievement within the district. All schools develop site plans that are based on these student achievement goals. Schools develop their own individual goals based on their greatest areas of need. The following are the district's student achievement goals for 2015-16. During the year the district will review its district goal setting process and consider revising previously adopted goals to better align with the WBWF initiative.

1. All Students Ready for Kindergarten

BHM currently does not have an established district goal related to kindergarten readiness. The issue will be reviewed during 2015-16 by administrative teams and Teaching & Learning Councils.

2. All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

The percentage of BHM students enrolled Oct. 1 in grade 3 who earn an achievement level of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standards will increase from 63.7% in 2015 to 67.7% in 2016 on all reading accountability tests (MCA and MTAS).

3. Close the Achievement Gaps Among All Groups

All Achievement Gap Reduction (AGR) z-Scores for each student group will be reported as a negative number, therefore indicating BHM students in all student groups are making strides towards reducing the achievement gap. These numbers will be reported through the Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) based on the MCA data in reading and math.

4. All Students Career- and College-Ready by Graduation

A. Proficiency

Demonstrate a 4% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA in math, and demonstrate a 4% increase in the overall percentage of students meeting proficiency standards on the MCA in reading.

B. Growth

- (1) 60% or more of BHM students at grades 2-5 will demonstrate above average growth in both reading and math as measured by *Performance Series* national norms for fall to spring growth.
- (2) Demonstrate positive average z-score growth at grade levels 4-11 in both reading and math as measured by the MMR data which indicates students are making higher than anticipated growth.

C. ACT Composite

The senior class of 2016 will attain an average ACT composite score of 23.0.

5. All Students Graduate

95% of seniors will graduate on time using MDE's 4-year graduation rate.

Results on progress towards completion of these goals will be reported on in the fall 2016 *BHM Schools World's Best Workforce Report*.

Site Improvement Goals 2015-16

Guided by the strategic plan and the district's student achievement goals, each building has leadership teams comprised of teacher leaders and administrators who use SMART goals to guide their building's efforts towards increasing student achievement. Site Improvement Plans (SIP) are developed after teams analyze and disaggregate student achievement results and growth data for all grade levels and student sub-groups served. All SIPs include school-wide student achievement goals and action plans to support the achievement of each of those goals. These leadership teams assist in planning, organizing and carrying out staff development plans necessary for curriculum, instruction or programming modifications for students not meeting grade level expectations.

Section III:

Reviewing and Evaluating Effectiveness of Instruction and Curriculum

1. Continuing Improvement Process

BHM employs a comprehensive system to review and evaluate the effectiveness of all district curriculum and instruction. The primary goal of BHM's curriculum review process is to develop a guaranteed and viable curriculum. A guaranteed and viable curriculum is one in which the agreed upon essential content and skills are covered within adequate instructional time. BHM recognizes that a guaranteed and viable curriculum has a strong correlation to student achievement (Marzano, 2003). There are seven components to the district's Continuous Improvement Process:

Reflection: Identify program's strengths and weaknesses

Research: Determine program improvement action plan based on identified program strengths and limitations and current research in the field, as well as revised state or national standards. Examination of best practice research, current trends and district test data are reviewed. Essential standards are identified ensuring the identified content can be adequately addressed in the given time.

Pilot: Apply research to the recommended materials, resources and actions for adoption.

Implement: Successfully incorporate the revised curriculum into daily practice. During this phase, teachers develop master curriculum maps for each course. Curriculum mapping involves teachers collaborating to write course and unit essential questions, draft learning targets, and identify essential content and skills. Teachers also develop common summative and formative assessments.

Adjust: Adjust curriculum, instruction and assessment based on implementation findings. During this year, curriculum maps are reviewed for effectiveness by examining common assessment and standardized test data. In addition, curriculum maps are reviewed for horizontal and vertical alignment.

Refine: Monitor student achievement by collecting and reviewing assessment data.

Evaluate: Evaluate the effectiveness of the current curriculum

2. Teacher Evaluation

BHM engages in regular evaluation of probationary and tenured teachers. The goal of the BHM's teacher evaluation system is to articulate expectations, assess performance in the instructional domain, and provide support for the development of high performing teachers capable of delivering outstanding education that improves the quality of teaching and learning. Instruction is improved through self-assessment and reflection, individual and PLC goal setting, and peer observations conducted by instructional coaches.

3. Principal Evaluation

BHM has a comprehensive principal evaluation system designed to evaluate principals in five domains. Principal evaluations are based on school performance data, state level and school performance measures, and feedback from staff and parents. The evaluation involves principal self-reflection, goal setting, and a professional growth plan.

4. Job-Embedded Professional Development (QComp)

BHM is committed to providing professional development within schools focused on quality instruction and student achievement and adopted a QComp plan for 2015-16. Collaborative work with instructional coaches is at the heart of QComp which strives to improve teacher quality. This professional development is closely connected to the actual work of teachers in classrooms with their current students and is designed to improve teachers' instruction, and is directly linked to the goals set for students by the team and school.

5. Constituent Surveys

BHM periodically surveys their constituencies about their connection to and level of satisfaction with its schools. The most recent survey occurred in December 2013 when 400 district residents from Buffalo, Hanover and Montrose were surveyed randomly as a step in developing the district's strategic plan. The Morris Leatherman Company, who conducts similar surveys throughout Minnesota and the Midwest, was contracted to complete the project.

When BHM residents were asked for their first thoughts when thinking about BHM Schools, the vast majority indicated "good" or "excellent academics" or "good teachers." When asked what sets BHM apart from other districts, residents replied "good teachers" or "better academics." When asked to provide an overall quality rating of BHM Schools, 93% responded "good" or "excellent." This is significantly higher than when last surveyed in 2007 when only 77% of residents gave BHM Schools a positive rating. The most important indicator of the district's high-quality was identified as "broad curriculum" chosen by a majority of respondents. By a 15-1 ratio, respondents see education getting better rather than worse. This is an outstanding rating and validation of the direction of the District.

When asked to grade the job performance of district staff, the results were overwhelmingly positive. 89% of respondents gave teachers and instructional staff positive ratings. This was the highest rating the survey company had ever witnessed. School principals and administrators, the School Board and Superintendent also received very strong ratings with at least 82% of residents responding positively.

The survey also uncovered challenges facing the district. When asked what the most serious issue is that the district faces, 26% of residents identified "lack of funding" (although the most common response was "nothing" provided by 35%). When residents were asked about various characteristics of the district, the two highest levels of concern were "class sizes" at 26% and up-to-date technology at 23%. The recently passed levy referendum will remedy some of these concerns.

The results of the constituent survey indicate that residents generally feel that the district is moving in the right direction with 88% percent indicating BHM was doing a good job of preparing students for the future.

Section IV:

Strategies for Improving Instruction and Curriculum

Comprehensive strategies for district/school improvement are developed and/or revised annually and focus on increasing student achievement by enhancing instruction, upgrading curriculum and developing effective programming. Various improvement plans and significant instructional strategies are described briefly below.

1. Site Improvement Plans

Each building within the BHM school system develops plans for improving student achievement, programming and instruction within their individual building. Individual site teams draft Site Improvement Plans (SIP) outlining explicit staff development strategies to ensure professional growth opportunities and curriculum development specific to assisting staff in meeting the building’s student achievement goals. The SIPs are part of a comprehensive method of professional development to ensure all staff members effectively provide instruction which ensures all students remain on track to graduate from high school and attain career and college readiness before completing high school. Strategies for improving instruction, curriculum and student achievement vary among buildings. Specific strategies are identified in each school improvement plan.

2. Curriculum Development

The primary goal of BHM’s curriculum development process is to develop a guaranteed and viable curriculum. A guaranteed and viable curriculum is one in which the agreed upon essential content and skills are covered within the allocated instructional time. The cyclic review involves teacher collaboration, parent/community member input, reflective inquiry, and decision making based on best practices, current research, district data, and state/federal mandates. The process results in a living document that describes content, skills, and assessments both horizontally within a grade level and/or content area and vertically across grade levels. BHM recognizes that a guaranteed and viable curriculum has a strong correlation to student achievement.

<i>Component:</i>	<i>2015-16 Curricular Area:</i>
Reflection	<i>Mathematics</i>
Research	<i>Library Media & Technology</i>
Pilot	<i>Career & Technical Education</i>
Implement	<i>World Languages</i>
Adjust	<i>Physical Education & Health</i>
Refine	<i>Social Studies English Language Arts Science</i>
Evaluate	<i>Art Music</i>

3. District Staff Development

The Director of Teaching & Learning in conjunction with administrators is charged with structuring professional development to improve instruction and ultimately student achievement. The administrative team works closely with Teaching & Learning Councils (TLCs). Together they provide suggestions and guidance to develop goals that align with the district’s strategic direction. These goals direct all building staff development goals and plans toward BHM’s vision.

During 2015-16, the emphasis is working in professional learning communities to use data for instructional decisions. Teachers are learning data-driven decision-making skills and strategies to better enable them to meet the needs of their students.

Section V:

Best Practices

BHM incorporates a wide variety of education effectiveness practices to enhance the achievement of all students. Some of these include:

1. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

All teachers belong to PLCs. PLC leaders ensure teachers have access to common formative assessment data, assist in facilitating the use of this data to inform instruction, and develop skills to identify highly effective practices and strategies which can be emulated in classrooms. PLCs are responsible for researching and sharing effective instructional strategies and practices as a team. Educators implement chosen strategies in their classrooms and bring back student work examples to the team for further discussion and refinement of practice.

2. Data-Driven Dialogue (or Collaborative Inquiry)

The Data-Driven Dialogue is a process for looking at and analyzing student data in an objective way to see areas of strength and areas to work on at school, grade, classroom and individual levels. It provides a technique for teachers and administrators to work hand-in-hand to make sure all students receive appropriate instruction at their level.

3. Literacy By Design (LBD)

BHM uses *Literacy by Design* as a core literacy program for Grades K-5. This program is founded on scientifically research-based reading and writing instruction. LBD uses the research from the National Reading Panel that found literacy instruction should include Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. These five areas are part of a balanced literacy program – phonics instruction, leveled reading, high-frequency sight words and a variety of approaches to learning to read.

4. Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI provides tools to assist in identifying elementary students who need help in reading, writing, math and behavior in an effort to prevent the development of serious learning problems. Elementary students who are screened as below grade-level on two or more assessments are administered research- or evidence-based interventions. These interventions are the first step in identifying the obstacles to a student's learning. Depending on the building, available supports could include Minnesota Reading Corps, Title I, or additional small group instruction from the classroom teacher or other support professionals. Various resources are available to parents on the Student Support website available at:

<https://sites.google.com/a/bhmschools.org/student-support/home>

5. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

Three elementary schools in the district (MES, NES and PES) utilize PBIS which is designed to provide school focus of common language: goals and rules that provide a structure for discussing how to help students who are not responding to school-wide rules.

6. QUEST

Quest is a special program designed to meet the special needs of highly gifted students (top 2 to 3 percent) in grades 2-9. The program is a tuition-free school within a school located at Parkside Elementary (grades 2-5), BCMS (grades 6-8), with some transitional courses at Buffalo High School. The Quest program covers the core areas of English, mathematics, science and social studies within a full-time, elementary classroom for students in grades 2-5, and at the middle school level in grades 6-8. Quest students experience an enriched and accelerated curriculum. Instructors in the Quest program receive specialized training for meeting the needs of highly gifted students. For more information on the Quest program go to:

<http://www.bhmschools.org/departments/teaching-learning/quest>

7. STEM

Currently Tatanka Elementary School provides STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) programming for students in kindergarten through Grade 5. Students receive an education with lessons that integrate science, technology, engineering and mathematics concepts. Through the "Engineering is Elementary" (EiE) curriculum developed by the Museum of Science in Boston, Massachusetts, students apply their knowledge of science and mathematics and use questions and problem solving skills to plan, design, create, and improve a technology. Through these lesson experiences, students collaborate, communicate, critically think, and use creativity to develop a deeper understanding of STEM concepts and the world around them. For more information on Tatanka's STEM program go to:

<http://www.bhmschools.org/schools/tatanka/tatanka-stem-information>

8. Arts Magnet

The BHS Arts Magnet program was launched in 2006 when seven school districts created the Northwest Suburban Integration School District to give students more choices for their educational experience. Currently there are approximately 250 Arts Magnet students enrolled at BHS in grades 9-12. The program is designed for motivated students who possess an interest in the areas of visual arts, music, theater, dance, literary and media arts, and interior or fashion design. The curriculum is based on the belief that the arts teach essential skills for the 21st century. The arts actively engage kids to think creatively, collaborate with peers and advisors, apply critical thinking skills and learn to communicate their ideas. One of the tenets of the program is the belief that students benefit when arts cross cultural and socioeconomic boundaries and prepares students to become productive, responsible, and creative members of their community. The curriculum framework helps students make connections between academic disciplines and to experience real world applications and meaning. For more information on the Arts Magnet program click go to:

<http://www.bhmschools.org/schools/bhs-magnet>

9. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)

AVID is a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities. AVID trains educators to use proven practices in order to prepare students for success in high school, college, and a career, especially students traditionally underrepresented in higher education. The AVID program at BHS concentrates on increasing the achievement of all students.

10. Minnesota Reading Corps

Minnesota Reading Corps is a program for K-3 students just below grade-level who are pulled out and provided with 20 minutes of direct one-on-one instructional interventions with a trained Reading Corps (Americorps) tutor. This program is currently available at four buildings (DES, NES, PES and TES).

11. Required Secondary Courses

At BCMS students who are below grade-level in reading and/or math are enrolled in appropriate courses. Students below grade-level in reading are enrolled in the "English 2" course which doubles the amount of classroom time devoted to reading, as well as incorporating additional reading strategies. Students in Grades 6-8 who struggle in math are enrolled in "Pre-Taught" classes to provide additional instruction. These classes are taught before students attend their regular math classes. This strategy allows these students to work on prerequisite skills and receive additional instruction. There is also a reading course at BHS for students who are well-below grade level in reading.

12. Targeted Services

Targeted Services provides funding for at-risk students outside of the normal school day. Various schools make use of the funding in different ways. For example, Discovery offers a before school *Books and Breakfast* option for struggling readers, Parkside offers a before school *Eagles Club* for students struggling in reading and math, and BCMS offers their EDGE after school math and reading program. Targeted Services monies are also used to support the summer sun block remedial classes.

13. Co-Taught Classrooms

At the secondary level there are classes that include both the regular classroom teacher and a special education teacher who work together. These classes have a larger number of special education students within the classroom. This permits special education students to attend mainstream classes and provides immediate individual attention as needed.

14. Other District Initiatives

There are other initiatives integrated into BHM schools. Some elementary schools utilize *Responsive Classroom* to increase student engagement within the classroom. Some secondary teachers have been trained in *Developmental Design*, a similar program designed to increase student engagement for older students. Many elementary teachers have been trained in *CGI (Cognitive Guided Instruction)* which helps teachers see where their students are at and design appropriate instruction to further their development. Many elementary teachers have been trained in *Visual Phonics* which provides visual clues to help students learn to pronounce sounds within the English language. In addition, many staff have received *SEED* training which engages teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders in creating gender fair, multi-culturally equitable, socioeconomically aware, and globally informed education.

Section VI:

Community Involvement and Budget

BHM Community Teaching & Learning Council

The **BHM Community Teaching & Learning Council (CTLC)** meets monthly from October through May. While parents are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns with their teacher or principal, the CTLC provides an opportunity for parents and community members to actively participate in the district’s curriculum and instruction process. This committee serves as BHM Schools’ curriculum advisory committee. The CTLC is composed of community members, teacher leaders, administrators who represent all students, as well as the communities of Buffalo, Hanover, and Montrose. The purpose of the CTLC is to advise and provide recommendations to the school board regarding BHM curriculum and instruction, thus ensuring BHM students are college and career ready upon graduation. For more information on the CTLC go to the BHM Schools website and choose “Teaching & Learning” from “Departments” and click on the CTLC tab at left. Membership for 2015-16 includes:

- Pam Miller *Director Teaching & Learning*
- Amy Green *Director Special Education Services*
- Don Metzler *Elementary Principal*
- Matt Lubben *Secondary Principal*
- Bev Koopman *Elementary Teacher*
- Jenny Wykle *Secondary Teacher*
- Sue Lee *School Board Member*
- Jeff Trout *School Board Member*
- Beth Davis-Salonek *Parent*

- Phil Giddings *Parent*
- Melissa Gudvangen *Parent*
- Kayla Johnson *Parent*
- Angela Loho *Parent*
- Angela Miller *Parent*
- Matt Nichols *Parent*
- Elyse Phillips *Parent*
- Tom Stanforth *Parent*

Budget

Information on annual district expenditures for curriculum and instruction are shown below. Approximately 75% of all BHM expenditures are used for direct instruction (elementary/secondary, special education, vocational and instructional support services. If pupil support services are included (transportation, nursing, guidance and counseling) BHM would be around 84%.

2014-15 BHM Budget Expenditures

