Strategic and Continuous School Improvement and Achievement Plan

Homestead High School
Southwest Allen County Schools 0047
Submitted by: Park D. Ginder
Position: Principal
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Narrative description of the school, the community and the educational programs

Homestead High School is an AdvancED school. The school is using the continuous school improvement format of the AdvancED as its model for compliance with PL221.

Homestead High School, a four-year comprehensive public high school, is the sole high school in the M.S.D. of Southwest Allen County in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The school district encompasses predominantly suburban areas in the Aboite and Lafayette Townships of Allen County, covering an area of seventy square miles. Homestead serves a growing community with a transitory population caused by job transfers/promotions and families moving from urban areas to suburban areas. The school is fully accredited by the AdvancED of Colleges and Secondary Schools and currently has an enrollment of 2317 students. Over the past five years Homestead has increased its student population by approximately 100 students. Our school year consists of two 18-week semesters. Students are enrolled in seven 47-minute classes.

Homestead High School is committed to continually improving the quality of education for all its students. The mission of Homestead High School is prepare today’s learners for tomorrow’s opportunities.

While we take great pride in our rigorous standards-based curriculum delivered in a blended learning environment and the high level of student achievement, we are continuously examining data from a variety of sources to ensure that all students are successful. Homestead has been listed multiple times on Newsweek’s list of America’s Best High Schools. Over the past seven years we have been integrating the principles of professional learning communities school-wide to improve student learning. The Homestead community has also identified and studied the importance of a smooth transition from middle school to high school and high school to post high school. As a result of this study, Homestead instituted a Ninth Grade Academy Program and a Senior Experience Program to provide a structure that will facilitate successful transitional strategies. Each student in the school is part of Advisor/Advisee program which focuses on career mentoring & preparation for students’ post high school graduation transitions.

Statement of mission, vision, or beliefs

Mission: Preparing today’s learners for tomorrow’s opportunities.

Vision: SACS will be nationally recognized as a provider of an excellent 21st century education

Beliefs:

- Parents are the first and essential teachers of their children.
- SACS is the hub of a diverse community and serves:
  - as professional educators, providing consultation and partnership with SACS parents;
  - as more experienced co-learners, providing wisdom and guidance for our students;
  - and as an educational workplace of choice, providing support and opportunities for our employees.
• A culture of learning embraces change, flexibility and innovation.
• Learners will experience the joy of learning and working in a safe and secure educational environment.
• Learning is neither bound by place nor time and must be appropriate and accessible to all learners.
• Learning encompasses critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, citizenship, digital literacy, perseverance and resiliency.

Outcomes: Our Graduates
• think critically,
• think creatively,
• effectively communicate their ideas,
• effectively collaborate with others,
• are responsible citizens,
• are digitally literate,
• are resilient problem solvers,
• and compete globally.

Goals: In order to build upon a history of successful academic achievement in every school and in every classroom, SACS will:

• implement its own district learner accountability measures for its graduate outcomes,
• motivate by providing a learner-centered environment accessible to all,
• recruit and retain valuable employees,
• broaden our partnership with parents,
• and develop district branding that invites partnerships:
  o to increase awareness and involvement;
  o to create educational opportunities;
  o and to identify new funding sources.

A list of the statutes and rules that the school wishes to have suspended from operation for the school

Homestead High School is not requesting a waiver.

Description of the curriculum and information concerning the location of a copy of the curriculum that is available for inspection by members of the public.

Homestead’s curricular offerings for high school credit are designed to meet the Indiana State Standards. Additionally, its courses are rigorous and promote student success in achieving and exceeding national, state, and local standards. Besides the general high school
curriculum, there are programs in place to allow students to take part in college courses on and off campus, distance education, Advanced Placement courses, mentorships, vocational courses, and co-op programs as well as remediation opportunities. We also offer a growing alternative high school program (IMPACT) that offers a different approach to learning with a nontraditional, career-oriented curriculum in a less structured environment. Our curriculum offers extensive and diversified opportunities in core, elective, and co-curricular courses, as well as extracurriculars. A copy of the curriculum is located on the district website http://www.sacs.k12.in.us/Page/57 (select Departments, then Academics) and hard copies are available in the main office at Homestead High School. Homestead High School offers a core curriculum of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. It also has extensive and diversified electives in four world languages, the visual and performing arts, business, physical education, practical arts, and technology. By offering very broad and deep curricular offerings we give our students unique learning experiences.

The **Business Education** curriculum is developed in accordance with both state and national business education standards. The course offerings in this department are comprehensive and designed to meet the personal, college, and career needs of high school students. Courses provide students with basic skills and business/economic information to adapt to an ever-changing society. A Personal Finance course and a Preparing for College and Career course were added to the curriculum beginning in 2012-13. In 2009, Radio, TV Broadcasting, and Telecommunications courses were moved to the Business Department as vocational courses. Beginning in 2015, we began offering the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Computer Science pilot course, and in 2016 will offer Computer Science Principles and Computer Science A. The Business Department is also pleased to report that it has formed a coalition with Indiana’s Higher Education Crosswalk and offers seven dual credit courses.

The **Engineering and Technology Education** curriculum is designed to help students understand and participate in the technological society surrounding them. In addition to the regular state approved courses, Homestead participates in the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) initiative in partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology. This program promotes pre-engineering courses for high school students. The Tech. Ed. curriculum offers five PLTW courses, four of which are also dual credit: Intro to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering, Digital Electronics, Civil Engineering and Architecture, and Engineering Design and Development.

The **English** Department has incorporated the Criterion writing program as a tool to improve student writing at all levels. Four years ago, Scholastic's Read 180 program was implemented to strengthen identified “at risk” students’ reading and comprehension levels. The Read 180 program is helping students make significant increases in their reading capabilities. Nine dual credit courses have been added to accommodate student interest and access to college credit at the high school level. The English Department also offers a variety of honors and AP courses.

The **Family and Consumer Sciences** courses empower students to manage the challenges of living and working at home, in the community, in the workplace, and in a diverse and global society. The relationship between work and family is a unique focus of the program. Courses apply to a variety of post high school careers including childcare, hospitality and food service, health services, education, housing and design, social services, food science, and clothing and fashion design. These courses emphasize a project-based approach. Adult Roles
and Responsibilities, a personal financial responsibility course, is offered to students, as well as, a dual credit Cadet Teaching course.

The **Health and Physical Education** courses stress the importance of achieving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle for students. The state of Indiana requires that high school students successfully complete two credits of physical education and one credit of health. Students may then elect to enroll in advanced physical education and advanced health after completing the prerequisites. Achieving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is an important consideration in electing to take a health or physical education course at Homestead High School.

**Mathematics** courses emphasize conceptual understandings, multiple representations and connections, mathematical modeling, and mathematical problem solving. The integration of ideas from algebra and geometry is particularly strong with graphical representation playing an important connecting role. The use of technology as a tool and mental estimation and computation are included throughout all courses. The curriculum strives to teach all core mathematical topics to all students at an appropriate level. Current honors courses offered to students include Honors Algebra II, Honors Pre-calculus with Trigonometry, and Honors Precalculus with Discrete, two of which are also available for dual credit. Advanced Placement courses available are AP Statistics and Probability, AP Calculus AB, and AP Calculus BC.

**Science** is as much a way of knowing as it is a body of knowledge. The science department at Homestead is dedicated to a laboratory approach to science education that involves each student in the process of discovery. This approach enables students to have practice in the kinds of analytical problem solving that will help them throughout life. Current honors courses available to the students include biology, chemistry, and physics. The science department also offers several AP courses: AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics B and C. Additionally, HHS currently offers four levels of Project Lead The Way’s (PLTW) Bio-Med courses, in partnership with Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis. These courses have met with great success over the past four years and student interest continues to grow. Dual credit physics, chemistry, anatomy and physiology, and biology courses have recently been added to the department course offerings.

The **Social Studies** curriculum meets all Indiana State Standards and offers a variety of Advanced Placement courses and electives. In addition to the core courses in world history, U.S. history, U.S. government, and economics, Homestead also features AP courses in world history, U.S. history, U.S. government, microeconomics, and macroeconomics. Psychology is offered as both an AP and dual credit course. In total, nine dual credit offerings are available. Our AP results are consistently among the top in the state. The “We the People” program has won the district competition for fourteen consecutive years and also consistently finishes among the top teams at the state competition. Our economics classes win state honors each year in the Stock Market Game. Electives in psychology, sociology are also offered. The department emphasizes writing and research skills, and the world history classes, in particular, have instituted Problem-based Learning common projects to replace traditional semester exams.

The **Visual and Performing Arts** curriculum supports learners in a variety of interest areas. Drawing, photography, sculpture, painting, and film/video are some of the visual arts offerings. The performing arts courses include concert band, orchestra, jazz band, a variety of choral programs, and dance performance. All performing arts groups have won many state and national awards. Four dual credit courses are offered.
A four or five-year curriculum beginning at the middle school level in World Languages is taught at Homestead High School (French, Spanish, Latin, and German). Homestead added an AP Spanish course that began in 2010-2011. Currently, eight dual credit courses are offered. Latin students participate in the National Latin Exam and they frequently rank as top scorers. Students who graduate from Homestead do exceptionally well on World Language college placement exams.

A description and name of the assessments that will be used in the school in addition to Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+) assessments.

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**Students should take the test upon completion of the course of study.**
NWEA Testing
NWEA testing is conducted in SACS grades K-9. The assessments are used to monitor students' academic progress/growth in reading, language usage, and mathematics from year to year. Additionally, results are used to assist in diagnosis of need for extra support services and to determine eligibility for honors placement/testing.

ISTEP+ End-of-Course Assessments
As per state statute, we have students taking the ISTEP+ and ECA.

Common Assessments
Common Assessments are teacher developed common summative assessments that are given to students at the end of each unit, quarter, and/or semester. Teachers use the data from these assessments to identify how his or her students performed on each skill compared with other students.

Accuplacer
Accuplacer is a series of tests in math, reading, and writing. The Accuplacer Placement Exam is given to students who do not pre-qualify for Ivy Tech Dual credit via their PSAT, SAT, or ACT scores.

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)
The PSAT/NMSQT is a national test that measures verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities important for academic performance in college.

American College Test (ACT)
The ACT is a national test used as an evaluation tool in the college admission process.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT-I)
The SAT is a national test used as an evaluation tool in the college admission process.

SAT-II
The SAT-II is a national test used as an evaluation tool in the college admission process.

Advanced Placement Tests (AP)
The AP courses are taught according to a prescribed curriculum and the purpose of the testing is to obtain college credit for courses completed in high school. Students must register at Homestead to take the tests, which are administered locally. Students who enroll in AP courses are strongly urged to take the AP test. Complete information on this testing program is available from an AP teacher or a counselor.
Plan to maximize parental participation in the school.

An important aspect of our school community is the support afforded the school and its programs by parents and parent organizations. Four parent organizations operate independently to provide volunteer personnel support and financial support for programs: the Parent Club, ALPHA Parent Group, Music Boosters and Athletic Boosters.

The Homestead High School Parent Club invites every parent to become a member. Headed by an executive committee, the officers and committee chairs meet regularly with the principal to review school programs, activities, and promote communication. This organization financially supports several programs, including but not limited to Academic Honors program, National Honor Society, Honor Roll Recognition, and SAT/ACT practice testing. The Parent Club also provides volunteers for the Career Resource Center, the media center, hearing screenings, college night, registration, fine arts week, Back-to-School night, teacher appreciation, chaperones, clerical backup, graduation planning, senior activities, prom party/trips, and school picnics. This group also provides feedback for the SIP development/student performance data process.

The ALPHA Parent Group provides support for high ability education at Homestead, including honors courses, AP courses, and a mentorship program. The parent group sponsors a variety of educational speakers and activities and collaborates with the school district to maintain an informative up-to-date website. The group supports high ability education with funding for outside program evaluation, faculty professional development, and student scholarships.

The Music Boosters aid the music programs at Homestead High School by donating funds for contest fees, band uniforms, student awards, and Orchestra Appreciation Night and providing funds to help students with financial need meet musical expenses. Contributions are made to the general operating funds of Homestead Band, Orchestra, Choirs, and Dance Team. The Music Boosters also helped fund, design, and install the landscape for the Homestead Student Plaza.

The Athletic Boosters support the sports programs at Homestead. The Spirit Committee, which includes parent representatives from all sports, promotes school spirit with a variety of activities, including providing yard signs to athletes. This group also funds awards, trophies, ribbons, and certificates for student athletic recognition. Direct financial contributions are made to the Athletic Department for purchases, including uniforms and equipment.

Community Partnerships

Homestead High School recognizes the importance of establishing effective partnerships and internships with the larger community—parents, patrons, businesses, government agencies, and other educational systems. It strives to develop the community’s allegiance to and a sense of ownership in the school.

To support such a school, the larger community:

· upholds the mission, vision and values of the school.
· has access to the school’s resources and facilities.
· provides resources to assist the school.
· actively participates in the school by volunteering its expertise and time.
· is knowledgeable about and supportive of the curriculum, program, activities, and staff.
attends school activities.
· establishes partnerships between the school and the workplace.
· provides students ample contact with positive role models.
· establishes partnerships with other educational institutions.
· supports the work of the Key Club and the many hours of community service.

Recognizing the special role parents/guardians play, they:
· take an active role in the education of their children.
· monitor their children’s academic performance.
· embrace, follow, and support school policies and procedures.

Location of Homestead School Improvement Plan
Homestead High School’s School Improvement Plan can be accessed via the Homestead High School web page; choose the “School Improvement Plan” selection under the Parents tab.

http://sacs.schoolwires.net/domain/62

Provisions which allow and encourage all students to earn an Academic Honors Diploma or complete the Core 40 curriculum

   The curriculum at Homestead High School provides courses and options that allow all students to earn an Academic Honors Diploma. In each curricular area, students may select from a variety of courses, which includes Advanced Placement and Dual Credit that are appropriate for their interests and career plans. At Homestead High School, all students are encouraged to earn an Academic Honors or Core 40 diploma. Prior to entering ninth grade, an evening is held to educate prospective parents on the requirements needed to graduate with an Academic Honors or Core 40 diploma and creating a freshman schedule. Eighth grade students are also provided this information when high school counselors visit their schools prior to scheduling. As a follow up, freshmen meet with their counselors to review and revise their four-year plan. A copy is stored electronically so students can reference for future course selections.

   Each year, counselors meet with students individually to review their academic progress and to select appropriate courses for the following year. At each meeting, students are made aware of their progress towards an Academic Honors or Core 40 Diploma. Students with academic difficulties are encouraged to attend summer school classes in order to stay on track for graduation with a Core 40.

   Using this method of planning, students become familiar with graduation requirements in ninth grade and set forth a plan to achieve an Academic Honors or Core 40 diploma. Students take an active role in their course selections and take ownership for their educational planning.
Professional development is coordinated with proposed interventions and supports sustainable school improvement efforts.

**Professional Development Goals**

Data on best school practices, planning for Smaller Learning Communities, and school improvement goals that we developed for AdvancED and Indiana’ Public Law 221 (PL221) drives professional development needs. Staff members have the flexibility in choosing the manner and delivery system of some professional development opportunities in order to meet their learning needs and styles. Professional development opportunities occur during faculty meetings, in-service days, e-Learning flex days, department meetings, and team collaboration meetings for training and/or data analysis.

The School Improvement Committee, composed of our Department chairs and volunteers collaborates with all departments on school improvement initiatives. The success of our school goals are contingent upon the faculty understanding, embracing, and integrating the tenets of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Smaller Learning Communities into their daily practice. As part of our professional development plan, the entire school is composed of collaborative teams of staff that work interdependently to achieve our school’s improvement goals. Daily collaboration times as well as designated professional development days are provided to all staff.

During these times, groups of teachers focus on three critical questions:

- What do we believe students need to know and/or be able to do?
- How will we know when each student has acquired the essential knowledge and/or skills?
- Have the knowledge and skills students have acquired adequately prepared them for their next transition?

Specifically, teachers and administrators discuss best practices, reflect on current practices, and assist each other in developing new ideas and strategies to raise current levels of student understanding and achievement. Homestead High School is a data informed school. The staff has developed common summative assessments which they use at least twice a year to monitor individual student learning and to impact instructional practice so that all students master intended outcomes. The use of standards based daily learning targets has also been implemented by all teachers in order to focus student attention on specific objectives. Regular checks for understanding are integrated into the curriculum by teachers to gauge student comprehension and collect qualitative data. The teachers use all data to identify improvement goals and to monitor progress toward those goals. Professional development and its impact on student learning is a key focus for our school as outlined under the AdvancED.
Provisions to maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment for students and teachers.

Homestead High School strives to provide a safe and secure learning environment through the joint efforts of our students, parents, faculty, staff, and community. These efforts include, but are not limited to, the following lists below.

**Homestead focuses on security through the use of:**
- Staff and visitor identification badges.
- Locked exterior and interior doors to create a sally-ported entrance into the building, staffed with trained receptionists in questioning individuals wishing to gain entry.
- Improved camera surveillance through the use of interior and exterior security cameras with improved digital video recording capabilities; current coverage includes all interior hallways, the cafeteria, and both gymnasiums; exterior surveillance is also being enhanced to three times the current capacity.
- A trained crisis response team.
- Building-wide anti-bullying training.
- A school resource officer (SRO)
- Increased awareness of emotional and mental health issues in our building.
- Improved communications with emergency personnel; information and floor plans are updated regularly to the Pierce Responder System for first responders.
- Improved emergency drills requiring real-time actions and decisions from administration, staff, and students.
- Improved emergency procedures including updated evacuation plans and maps; established a unified rallying point for evacuations.
- Increased emergency training for all building personnel and students; instituted the A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) protocol to empower teachers and students to better protect themselves in the event of an active shooter.
- Building-wide distribution of medical supplies for emergency events involving injuries.
- Increased visibility of administrators throughout the building.
- All administrators to be trained at the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy.
- Upgraded digital radios distributed throughout the building.

**Homestead focuses on developing a disciplined learning environment by:**
- Maintaining a physically safe and supportive environment.
- Expecting personnel and students to conduct themselves in a way that contributes to a safe and orderly atmosphere.
- Providing an environment that is free of alcohol, illegal drugs, and violence.
- Providing well maintained facilities and up-to-date equipment that meet the needs of the staff, students, and community.
- Offering a positive, challenging, and stimulating academic experience.
- Encouraging all students to accept responsibility for their own actions and progress while giving them the freedom to dream, to develop vision, and to believe they can reach their full potentials.
- Supplying the information, assistance, and support that enables students to develop appropriate educational and career goals.
• Recognizing and celebrating individual efforts and achievements.
• Maintaining open communication between all stakeholders: students, parents, staff, administrators, school district, and community.

Coordination of Technology Initiatives

Goals

• To enrich the educational experience of students by using technology as a tool for effective communication, personal productivity, and lifelong learning.
• To provide learning environments that enhance and challenge students to use information technology to meet high academic and ethical standards. This will include skills in effective use of the Internet and electronic communication.
• To provide increased opportunities for students and teachers to master basic and advanced technical, academic, and job-related skills.
• To motivate students to participate in their own academic growth through the use of student information software to monitor their own progress.
• To provide effective use of the current data mining student information software. Teachers and staff will be trained to analyze student data in order to develop better methods of implementing curriculum to improve student performance.
• To improve the quality, flexibility and delivery of instruction.

Technology will support the Community by:

• Creating a relationship between the school and community by enhancing communication through the sending and receiving of information.
• Providing evaluation data concerning Homestead High School and all other related data.
• Providing parent engagement/involvement through the use of technology including: Internet safety, online grades, attendance, school website, calendars, newsletters, PTA, et cetera.

Technology and Educational Development

Homestead High School will provide curriculum and professional development to increase the competency of students, teachers, staff, and parents. Research-proven strategies and the effective integration of instructional technology systems will be used to increase our student's achievement and prepare them for a technologically based global society. Homestead High School will assist the educational community to achieve technological literacy to prepare our students for success in technological careers and higher education. Homestead High School will use current and emerging technology to create a learner-centered instructional environment that will enhance academic achievement. Southwest Allen County Schools has incorporated a “think tank” group to discuss, develop, and plan new ways in which technology can benefit its students. The SACS School Board approved a 1:1 technology proposal in the spring of 2012. Every Homestead High School student receives a laptop computer at the beginning of each school year. In addition, the Board has employed a Technology Consultant to help support professional development focuses for our staff. This person will be focusing on changing the
culture of using technology in a 1:1 laptop environment. Part of that culture change will be how to manage laptops in a classroom, Web 2.0 technologies, and changing instructional strategies used in the classroom now that every student has a laptop computer.

Plan for Monitoring and Evaluating
The administrative team will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the Technology Plan. In order to do so, the committee will

- Meet at least four times a school year, once every nine weeks to assess the implementation of the Technology Plan. The new Technology Consultant will additionally be meeting with departments throughout the year to discuss, train, assess teacher needs.
- Reassess the goals and activities of the Technology Plan in order to ensure that it reflects the current situation.
- Review and update inventory of equipment and software.
- Assess the progress of students, teachers, staff, and parents development with regard to effective use of technology.
- Assess the degree to which technology has been integrated into normal classroom teaching. Assess the degree to which technology has enhanced communication between the school and the community.
- Assess the school's progress toward revising instructional guidelines, as indicated by data driven research through technology.

Professional Development Program

(i) A summary analysis of data regarding student learning. Qualitative data revealed findings which informed our decisions concerning professional development. Decisions concerning teacher professional development are based on administrative classroom observations and the need to improve instructional practices. The 2015-2016 school year saw Homestead High School move into its fourth year of teaching and learning in a 1 to 1 computing format. We continue to see growth and the need for growth in our students and teaching faculty.

(ii) Strategies, programs, and services to address student learning needs. Our students deserve educators who are at the forefront of technological implementation. Today’s students live in a world vastly different than students in the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s, the time in which most educators went to school (even undergraduate course work) themselves. Because learning, and life needs have changed, it is imperative that our teachers be in a constant state of improvement in using and developing 21st Century skills in the use of technology and digital literacy.

(iii) Activities to implement the strategies, programs, and services. Our plan has been, and will continue be to use eLearning Flex Days to drive professional development for our teachers. In the fall of 2015 eLearning Flex Days provided 16 hours of focused professional development for our faculty. We intend to use the Flex Day format well into the future to support faculty
learning in areas directly related to 1 to 1 computing, blended learning environments and digital literacy

**(iv) Evaluation that will be conducted of the impact of the activities.** We evaluate each eLearning Flex Day for usefulness and for direct benefits to our students by surveying our faculty and students to determine the usefulness of the learning experiences provided.

**(B) An assurance that the program complies with the board's core principles for professional development.**

Professional development and its impact on student learning is a key focus for our school as outlined under the AdvancED Recommendations of 2012. Our Board is apprised of progress and planning throughout the eLearning process and will continue to be informed moving forward.

For extensive detailed reports provided by the Indiana Department of Education please go to the following website: [http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/overview.aspx?type=school&id=0047](http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/overview.aspx?type=school&id=0047)

**Homestead’s instructional strategies support the achievement of Indiana Academic Standards**

The fundamental purpose of our school is academic and skill achievement for all; therefore, Homestead teachers use a variety of instructional techniques to improve student learning. Homestead utilizes blending learning in a 1 to 1 computing learning environment. Within the classroom, teachers use learning targets, Socratic Seminars, collaborative and cooperative learning, problem solving activities, problem and/or project based learning, multi-sensory activities, student self-discovery, role-playing, and guest speakers/performers. Teachers are improving daily at integrating the use of technology into their curriculum. Students are encouraged and required to use technology available to them when doing classroom projects or presentations.

As a leader in the inclusive practice for special education students, Homestead provides a full continuum of services for students with identified disabilities. Co-teaching specific to the area of English education has proven an effective practice for our students. Accommodations are made in general education classes on an as needed basis for individual students. Our Special Needs students regularly interact with peer tutors who provide physical assistance and mentoring. Itinerate specialists and job coaches use differentiated instructional methods with these students to help them complete tasks successfully.

Homestead High School has a Math Resource Room that is staffed during the school day by general education mathematics teachers. This center provides assistance for all students who need extra help in math. Students can go to the Math Resource Room for the following: review sessions, make-up tests and quizzes, homework assistance, computer work, project assistance, and Alg. 1 ECA review. Additionally, general education students are afforded the opportunity on their schedules to utilize a directed learning lab. After school, National Honor Society members provide tutoring in the Resource Room. Help is available in all subjects three days a week.
Homestead offers several cooperative education programs through our Business Department. These programs allow seniors to incorporate work experience into their academic plans and receive on-the-job training. Students interested in technical and career-specific skills attend Career Academy at Anthis to prepare for careers in automotive technology, child care, information technology, construction trades, cosmetology, emergency services, allied health careers, hospitality services, firefighting, law enforcement and engineering technology.

Homestead offers nearly sixty Dual Credit options for our students. We are teaming up with several colleges from around the state of Indiana to create as many options as possible for our students to earn college credits before graduating from high school.

By improving our student to guidance counselor ratio, we believe it has given us the ability to address more student needs and to provide a greater opportunity to monitor, shepherd and coach our “at risk” students to complete graduation requirements with their cohort.

In addition to retaking a failed course, students may recover credits through other methods. The Math, English and Social Studies departments offer summer school programs that provide targeted instruction in their deficient skill areas, in an effort to recover credits and to pass their respective ECA exams. Our science department offers credit recovery courses for Biology during the school day. Additionally, on-line courses with credit by exam options are available to students through various universities. We have expanded options for our students at our Impact Alternative Program. These expanded options, plus the addition of online credit accrual options have had an immediate positive impact on our students.

Analysis of student achievement based on ISTEP+ and other assessment strategies.

Student achievement conclusions, based on information from ISTEP+, ECA, NWEA, and other assessment strategies

Historically, the State testing results have shown that most students at Homestead perform extremely well on the various tests used to measure academic success. However we do understand that there are areas where we can improve and the administration and staff are working to develop interventions to address these areas of concern, while improving instruction for all students. This will help us to achieve our goal of having all students achieve high standards of academic excellence.

Student Performance

For extensive detailed reports provided by the Indiana Department of Education please go to the following website:  http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/istep.aspx?type=school&id=0047
**Attendance Rate**

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Refocusing our goals to align with our Smaller Learning Communities will combine strong interventions for all students, particularly subgroups, to positively impact student attendance. Adding relevance and relationship component practices to our current emphasis on rigor strengthens our effort toward this end.

Changes in past attendance policies and practices have been made to provide structural support to encourage improved student attendance. Data shows growth in internal attendance and tardiness, with an 84% decrease over four years in students missing class time due to attendance related discipline.

**Graduation Rate**

For extensive detailed reports provided by the Indiana Department of Education please go to the following website: [http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/graduates.aspx?type=school&id=0047](http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/graduates.aspx?type=school&id=0047)

Homestead’s four year cohort graduation rate is consistently above the state average.

**Specific Areas Where Improvement Is Needed**

Homestead has experienced increasing enrollment each year since 1994, and expects to continue this pattern for the next several years. With this increase in enrollment, Homestead is challenged with serving an increasingly economically and racially diverse population. In contrast to students who have been in Southwest Allen County Schools through elementary and middle school, many of the move-in students are entering high school without the essential skills needed to be academically successful at Homestead High School. Test results show that our free or reduced lunch, Black, and Hispanic students continue to perform below the state average and below the school average. To that end, the district has created a Student Support Service position to serve all students, but with a specific eye on those who are traditionally underserved. Also of concern is the achievement of our special education students. Approximately ten percent of the students at Homestead are receiving special education services. The number of students identified as receiving free or reduced lunch has grown during the past 4 years. Specific efforts toward addressing these areas are reflected in the Goal Action Plans.

Based on this information, Homestead has developed and implemented alternative strategies to ensure improvement. These changes include the following:

- The addition of math, science, and English labs at the 9th grade level
- The addition and realignment of Algebra Enrichment classes for Algebra 1 students
- The addition of English and Math labs at the 10th grade
- Ongoing mathematics resource room support for all math students staffed by licensed teachers every school day, during the academic day
- The addition of a Peer Tutor Program to support 9th grade students
- Restructuring and realignment of the Special Education staffing to better support student skill development
- The addition of guidance counselors who will more actively involved in coaching students through the academic process and who act as a team leader for RTI.
- The addition of a Directed Learning Lab to provide help for students who do not have special education labels but need or desire specific help throughout the day
- Expanded alternative school options for students at risk of not graduating
- Expanded credit recovery options for all students who fall behind
- The addition of Physics First science course for At–Risk students

We are continuing to assess, monitor, and refine the interventions that have been put into place. Preliminary data has shown that these interventions are having a positive impact on student achievement. Additionally, we have implemented co-teaching in English 9, English 10 and Algebra 1 lab classes. Training was provided to both general and special education teachers prior to this intervention being implemented. Homestead faculty and staff will continue their collaborative planning and implementation of support services and teaching strategies to help us reach our goal of having all students achieve high standards of academic excellence. The NWEA testing has been implemented to obtain timely student academic growth data to better help teachers address student needs.

**Benchmarks for progress that specify how and to what extent the school expects to make continuous improvement in all areas of the education system.**

Improvement towards reaching the School Improvement Goals stated below is monitored and evaluated throughout the school year by utilizing State and local assessment results. Increased ECA scores last year indicate that the implementation of the SIP goals and AdvancED recommendations has supported greater achievement for all student levels. In reviewing ECA disaggregated data and comparing it to data from the past several years, we noted a large improvement in closing achievement gaps for our first time test takers in multiple categories.

**Algebra 1:ECA First Time Test Takers**
There is no data for 2015-16 as students are now required to take the ISTEP+ Math

**Algebra 1: ECA Re-testers 2015-2016 (to be phased out)**
- Homestead only had 27 re-testers in 2015-2016. In 2009-2010, we had 158 re-testers.
- 14 re-testers were special education students. This is a 33% decrease since 2009-2010.
- 13 re-testers were general education students. This is a 91% decrease since 2009-2010.
- 25% of Paid Lunch re-tester students passed. This is an 8% increase since 2012-2013.
English 10 is now ISTEP+ English

- Special education passing rate increased by 58% when compared to 14-15.
- The gap between special education vs. general education passing students is 28% points, down from 55% points in 2014-2015.
- Multi-racial students’ passing rate increased by 8% points.

As evidenced by the goals listed below, closing the achievement gap between all subgroups is a priority for Homestead High School.

**Math and English Goal:** By 2020, Homestead High School will improve academic achievement scores on the new ISTEP+ exam for all students while closing gaps between subgroups.