



BALA CYNWYD MIDDLE SCHOOL

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LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT, ARDMORE, PENNSYLVANIA 19003

School Learning Plan 2018-19

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Attached is the Bala Cynwyd Middle School (BCMS) Learning Plan for 2018-19. Our Learning Plan is a compilation of many instructional, programmatic and professional development initiatives for this school year. These plans come from data analysis. We always review student achievement and develop plans to improve our students' skills and knowledge.

As you know, we have an excellent staff, engaging and motivated students and supportive and involved parents. Lower Merion School District and BCMS are committed to providing many opportunities for success. Our work is directed by the district strategic plan. This plan embraces a collective, intentional, positive approach to change. It is driven by our belief in continuous improvement and an unyielding passion for high-quality public education.

Along with academic goals, we also embrace additional improvement initiatives for student growth and success. Currently, we are reviewing results of student and parent Challenge Success surveys at our secondary schools. This will inform discussions on topics such as school start times, homework procedures, restorative practices and student engagement.

Thank you for your attention and ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Mark Pellico, Ph.D.
Interim Principal
Bala Cynwyd Middle School

Bala Cynwyd Middle School Learning Plan

2018 - 2019



Section 2: Districtwide Teaching and Learning Goals

Analysis of assessment data at the District level will help determine topics that are difficult to learn for students across the District. The curriculum team will identify these areas of focus and determine some system-wide actions and explorations that will be taken. Building-level teams will examine their data in relation to district trends to determine if anomalies exist.

2.1.1.	Area of Focus
	<p><i>What is the districtwide teaching and learning priority? What skill(s) is/are identified as a districtwide need?</i></p> <p>Initial noticings of the data in Mathematics include... Geometry, which continues to be challenging across the district. We show a significant drop in demonstrated understanding from 4th to 8th grade and Statistics and Probability where we see a negative trend from 6th to 8th grade.</p> <p>Initial noticings in ELA include... Text Dependent Analysis (TDA) continues to have a small percentage of students earning scores in the top half of the rubric</p> <p><i>Why is this a priority need?</i></p> <p><i>Math:</i> The structure of our Middle School math curriculum and sequencing focuses on success in Algebra and does not currently offer a course dedicated to the 8th grade math standards where Geometry and Statistics are critical components. This can lead to gaps in understanding in future math courses.</p> <p><i>English/Language Arts (ELA):</i> Success in analyzing text, which is text-dependent analysis, is a key skill to be applied across disciplines and grades. It requires students to understand and apply multiple ELA skills and strategies including evidence-based analysis and close reading.</p>

2.1.2.	Baseline Data on Area of Focus
1	<p><i>Math:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geometry: In 4th grade over 50% of students scored in the top $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state, while in 8th grade approximately 50% of students scored in the bottom $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state when compared to grade-level peers in this category. • Statistics and Probability: In 6th grade, roughly 40% of students scored in the top $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state, while in 8th grade almost 50% of students scored in the bottom $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state when compared to grade-level peers in this category. <p><i>ELA:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 6 TDA – 21% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA. • Grade 7 TDA – 35% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA. • Grade 8 TDA – 31% of students earned more than an 8 out of a possible 16 points on the TDA on the PSSA. <p><i>School-based Data on Areas of Focus</i></p>

2 Mathematics – BCMS decrease trend in percentage of students who are Proficient/Advanced in PSSA Geometry standard and Statistics/Probability Standards

PSSA 2018 Results - BCMS	Percentage Proficient/Advanced
Grade 6 – Geometry Standard Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume.	70.2%
Grade 7 – Geometry Standard Demonstrate an understanding of geometric figures and their properties	83.2%
Grade 7 – Geometry Standard Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving angle measure, circumference, area, surface area, and volume.	46.5%
Grade 8 – Geometry Standard Demonstrate an understanding of geometric transformations.	53.6%
Grade 8 – Geometry Standard Understand and apply the Pythagorean theorem.	72.4%
Grade 8 – Geometry Standard Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving volume.	46.0%
Grade 6 – Statistics/Probability Standard Demonstrate understanding of statistical variability by summarizing and describing distributions.	70.6%
Grade 7 – Statistics/Probability Standard Use random sampling to draw inferences about a population.	84.2%
Grade 7 – Statistics/Probability Standard Draw comparative inferences about populations	44.2%
Grade 7 – Statistics/Probability Standard Investigate chance processes and develop, use, and evaluate probability models.	82.2%
Grade 8 – Statistics/Probability Standard Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data.	60.5%

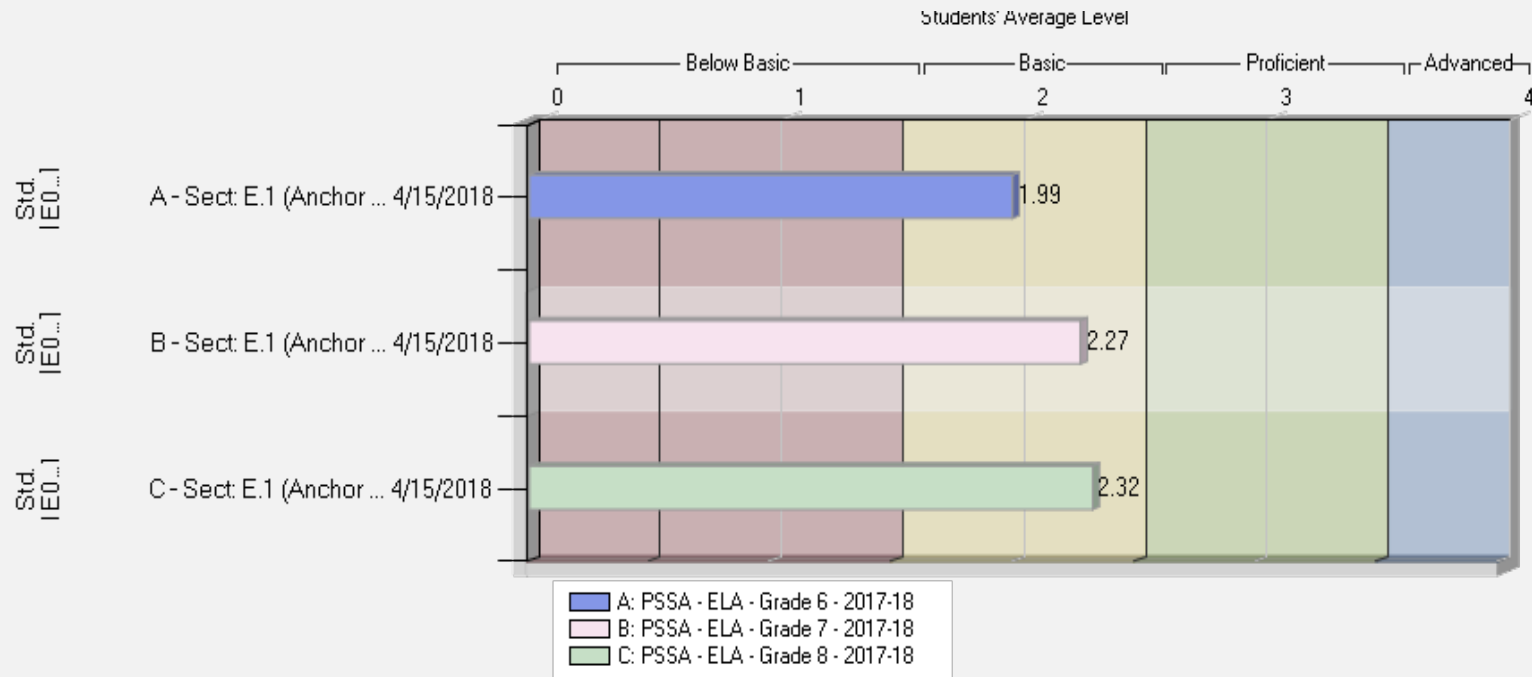
Mathematics – Achievement gap at BCMS (PSSA data)

2017-2018 Math BCMS	PSSA 2018 All Students Percent Pro/Adv	PSSA 2018 AA Students Percent Pro/Adv

Grade 6	74.4%	n=309	31.6%	n=19
Grade 7	73.1%	n=301	31.8%	n=22
Grade 8	60.8%	n=260	29.4%	n=17

ELA – PSSA Average TDA Results for BCMS – Category 5

The TDA rubric includes 4 score points, 1-2-3-4. The same scoring rubric is used grades 4-8. The rubric score (1-4) is multiplied by 4 when listed in Category 5—Text-Dependent Analysis, which is why students’ scores are 0-4-8-12-16 when reported out. The average TDA scores from BCMS’ three feeder scores—Cynwyd, Merion, and Penn Wynne—is 2.38. This highlights how of students’ performance on TDA tasks has been relatively consistent Grades 5-8 with a performance dip in grade 6, where students are expected to make increasingly abstract observations, inferences, and analysis with fewer scaffolds.



BCMS: PSSA 2018 ELA—Category 5 Text-Dependent Analysis.

This chart shows the number of students at each Performance Score Point on the TDA Rubric (16, 12, 8, 4/0), which is pulled from Performance Tracker. This chart also shows how students performed compared to peers from across the state, which is pulled from the State’s High/Medium/Low Report and then paired to Student Performance Results. Finally, the third column and fourth column

compare the percent of students at each score point to District level results, which is pulled from Performance Tracker by running the same report at the District level.

	Score-Point on TDA Rubric	Number of Students at BCMS who Earned that Score	Percent of Students at BCMS who earned that score	Percent of Students in the District who Earned that Score	Where These Scores Fall on the Strengths Profile Comparing Performance Across State
8 th Grade	16	20	8%	4%	High
	12	81	31%	27%	High
	8	126	48%	48%	Medium
	0/4	37	14%	20%	Low
7 th Grade	16	17	6%	4%	High
	12	100	33%	31%	High
	8	135	44%	44%	Medium
	0/4	52	17%	21%	Low
6 th Grade	16	3	1%	1%	High
	12	63	21%	20%	High
	8	169	55%	57%	High
	0/4	72	23%	22%	Low

ELA – Achievement Gap at BCMS (PSSA data)

2017-2018 ELA BCMS	PSSA 2018 All Students Percent Pro/Adv	PSSA 2018 AA Students Percent Pro/Adv
Grade 6	90.2% n=307	78.9% n=19
Grade 7	85.5% n=304	47.8% n=23
Grade 8	87.5% n=264	70.6% n=17

2.1.3. Actions to be taken at the District Level

What will be more deeply explored and what actions will be taken by the curriculum team as a result of these initial noticings? What questions are raised by these initial noticings?

Math:

- Shift the Geometry and Statistics units to be earlier in the year and embed those Geometry and Statistics skills and practices into other units throughout the year where appropriate. Emphasize the topics that are included as part of the PA Math 8 Standards. Specifically address weaknesses such as: Solving real-world and mathematical problems involving angle measure, circumference, area, surface area, and volume, demonstrate an understanding of geometric transformation, draw comparative inferences about populations and Investigate patterns of association in bivariate data.
- Add a Math 8 course to our current course offerings and allow students time to mature mathematically before placing them into an Algebra 1 course.
- Continue to explore an Integrated Math curriculum for courses beyond Math 8. This will be implemented in 2019-20 school year.
- Utilize cumulative quarterly assessments to replace math benchmark tests. These assessments will monitor student progress within their coursework and will also be used as a component of determining placement.
- Investigate opportunities for collaboration between math and science teachers for professional development related to co-teaching and implementation of required special education accommodations and modifications.
- Continue use of Asset STEM Inc. for staff training on student-centered classroom instruction.

ELA:

- Support a comprehensive understanding of “teaching reading” in systemic ways at the middle school level.
 - Continue the systematic embedding of evidence-based analysis and close reading throughout classroom experiences. Emphasize that analyzing text is an essential embedded part of ELA and not an “event.”
 - Continue the work started last year with Andy Fishman to develop and revise TDA prompts to align with instructional expectations presented to students.
- Continue to support existing ELA curriculum with clear reading and writing expectations for students.
 - Continue to support common instructional and assessment language.
 - Continue to support Guaranteed Writing Experiences
 - Administer two common TDA prompts this year at each grade level with the goal of all students earning 3 or 4 points or more on the PDE TDA standard assessment rubric. PLCs administer, collaboratively score, and analyze these items.
 - Explore Caukins’ Writing and Reading Workshop approach through both the attainment of resources and professional learning opportunities
- Begin curriculum revision process for 8th grade alignment guided by the District’s Strategic Plan.

Section 3: Action Plan

List in this section the plan for reporting on addressing topics that may or may not be related to the Districtwide curricular goals.

	Action Steps	Expected Outcomes	Person/s Responsible	Timeline
	<i>Provide concise descriptions of the actions that teams will take at the local level in response to the Districtwide Teaching and Learning Goal. Providing baseline data that supports the need for taking action.</i>	<i>Explain how you will know if the approach has been effective. Describe the measurable, observable outcomes that are expected.</i>	<i>List team or person/s responsible for this action.</i>	<i>Provide dates for key events associated with this approach.</i>
1	<p>Work with grade level PLC teams to assess and teach close reading and critical analysis of text. This will occur in ELA PLCs as well as reading in grade 6. Staff will develop and implement TDA assessments aligned with the curriculum.</p> <p>OVERALL ELA GOAL: All students will advance a score point on the TDA rubric with the long-term goal of all students performing at the 3-4 rubric level. This should be considered higher level Depth of Knowledge and “CROSSING THE BAR INTO ANALYSIS”</p>	<p>Improvement on TDA scores from November to February TDA benchmark assessment.</p> <p>Collection of examples for assuring implementation.</p> <p>Ongoing review of instructional practices to improve performance on curriculum assessments as well as TDA strand on PA assessments.</p>	<p>Dr. Pellico ELA Content Lead Teacher Dr. Pratt</p>	<p>Fall Writing: September TDA Assessment: November TDA Assessment: February Spring Writing: March</p>
2	<p>Teacher Leader will collaborate with MCIU Professional Learning Network (PLN) to improve strategic remediation of reading skills as identified by District Learning Plan and PSSA assessments.</p>	<p>Teacher will attend four MCIU meetings and bring recommendations to the District, guiding implementation at the PLC, building, and District level.</p>	<p>Dr. Pellico Dr. Pratt Ms. Morrison (assigned reading specialist)</p>	<p>Development of TDA lessons and aligned informal interim assessments to gauge student understanding in advance of November and/or February TDA assessments</p> <p>TDA Assessment: November TDA Assessment: February</p> <p>PSSA 2019 ELA scores</p>

3	Professional development through MCIU workshops on topics such as Evidence-based Writing (TDA) and Growing Student Depth of Understanding Current assessment data indicates that many students achieve at the Basic level on the TDA rubric.	Staff attend four MCIU professional development opportunities and complete turn-around training for implementation. Improvement in quarterly assessments and PSSA achievement will be monitored.	Dr. Pellico Dr. Pratt Staff = Ms. Tzabari, Ms. Colburn, Ms. Healy	Review of scores on TDA assessments throughout the school year.
4	Review of current ELA/Reading scheduling and student assignment structures that may optimally support the implementation of the Caukins' Model	Assess implementation of Caukins Model as integrated within current instructional model.	Dr. Pellico Dr. Pratt	Review of scores on TDA assessments throughout the school year.
5	Continue to support shared language and practice around close reading.	Comparative analysis of TDA implementation within all English classes.	Dr. Pellico Dr. Pratt	Ongoing collection of lesson plans, instructional materials and assessments
6	Participate in district professional development that includes collaboration between middle school staff. Assure an expectation that staff will share what is working (improved writing and analysis skills) and how to incorporate best practices within each school.	Staff will participate in professional development, identify best practices and implement strategies and curriculum options. Student achievement will be monitored.	Dr. Pellico Mr. Hall Dr. Pratt	Ongoing collection of lesson plans, instructional materials and assessments
7	Continue ongoing utilization of technology in reading/writing instruction. For example, Document Camera lessons that relate to text analysis and close reading	Staff will increase the use of technology in reading and writing lessons and improve feedback to students	Dr. Pellico Dr. Pratt ELA Content Lead Teacher	Ongoing work within department meetings. January 2019 staff development opportunity
8	Identified faculty will attend ongoing training on supporting diverse learners. This includes attendance at MCIU conference on Teaching Tolerance: This workshop will help teachers explore strategies for facilitating critical conversations with students and colleagues. Participants will learn strategies for creating supportive learning environments that encourage risk-taking during critical conversations. Finally, they'll investigate methods of teaching about implicit bias, race, and other critical topics.	Trained staff will provide professional development to the faculty on supporting the achievement of diverse learners. Outcome will be indirectly assessed by monitoring student achievement of disaggregate groups.		

	Mathematics			
1	Work with grade-level PLC and curriculum supervisor to implement an integrated mathematics approach focused on inquiry. Pilot Integrated Mathematics 8 course.	Students will demonstrate growth on district and PA standardized assessments in mathematics	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher	8 th grade quarterly assessments, mathematics grades, PSSA 2019 mathematics scores
2	Implement grade-level Math Lab during LEARN periods. Students will be assigned based on current math class performance. Students will receive small-group pre-teaching and preparation for assessments.	Math Labs will be led by content lead teacher and math specialists. Students will show ongoing progress through improved grades and assessment scores	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math specialists	Ongoing review of student test scores with comprehensive review of student achievement on a quarterly basis.
3	Optimal utilization of two math specialists. Work will focus on skill development at the individual, class and grade level. This will focus on individualized pre-teaching, support implementation of differentiated instruction, ongoing consultation with math department staff and implementation and assessment of integrated math program.	Students will demonstrate growth on district and PA standardized assessments in mathematics	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math specialists	Ongoing review of student test scores with comprehensive review of student achievement quarterly assessments.
4	Supplement Algebra 1, part 1 with Envision Math 8 – This is an additional resource that strengthens math 8 skills (almost all these students are not Pro/Ad on PSSA)	Students will demonstrate growth on district and PA standardized assessments in mathematics	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher	Ongoing review of student test scores with comprehensive review of student achievement quarterly assessments.
5	Work with grade level PLC's to assure coverage of geometry and statistics topics prior to PA assessments at all grade levels.	Student performance will increase on geometry and statistics standards on PA assessments.	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly	Local assessments incorporating geometry and statistics and PSSA 2019 mathematics scores
6	Implement cumulative quarterly assessments – PLC ongoing collaboration to assure comprehensive standards-based instruction	Students will demonstrate growth on district and PA standardized assessments in mathematics	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher	Ongoing review of student test scores with comprehensive review of student achievement quarterly assessments.

7	Implement student-focused mathematics support for students in disaggregate groups to reduce the achievement gap in mathematics at all grades.	Develop tutoring assignments for non-proficient students as well as an efficient teacher-tutor-parent/guardian collaboration model for to assure communication regarding student achievement	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math Specialists	Quarterly assessments, mathematics grades, PSSA 2019 mathematics scores.
8	Infuse curriculum with real-world instructional activities, especially regarding geometry and statistics standards content	Monitor delivery of instructional activities related to “real-world” applications of geometry and statistics content. Support PLC focus on this strategy.	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math Specialists	Review of instructional materials ongoing as well as assessments including these standards.
9	Targeted support for Math 6. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of quarterly assessment - 6th grade teachers reported that they use the quarterly review questions within their daily warm-up questions and provide students with corrective feedback - Assure homework is closely linked to the skills taught that day in class - Assure that the norm for students to receive immediate verbal feedback about their work in the beginning of each class period 	Review Quarterly assessment data and determine areas for additional instructional support. Identify student who can benefit from Math Supplement and Math lab. Develop goals for student achievement within each math level of instruction.	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math Specialists	Quarterly Assessments Monthly department review of common assessments.
10	Targeted support in Pre-Algebra. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of Quarterly assessment - Students review the problems they missed (using a key and the original assessment). Meeting with the students who scored 80% or less individually during Learn in the weeks leading up to the second quarterly. Using the problems that a large percentage of the students missed as models for Problem of the Day in January through May. - Homework has been an issue for only a handful of students, some of higher 	Continued monitoring of student progress and developing system to track students who are struggling with content mastery and work completion. Expecting to see improvement in both test scores and classwork/homework completion	Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math Specialists	This is an ongoing effort with interventions and supports implemented as student needs are determined.

	<p>achievers in some cases. Reaching out to a fair number of parents for a multitude of issues, one of which is homework</p> <p>Use of Assessments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two teachers give the same tests and they discuss our results afterward. They incorporate the earlier skills in with the new skills when applicable. - The Pre-Algebra PLC meets during 6th period when she teaches a class, so she is not able to attend. All sharing occurs on in-service days. This teacher <u>requires students make corrections for all assessment for homework</u> (no grade change). If a student has errors on the corrections, I meet with him/her during Learn. 			
11	<p>Targeted support in Algebra I. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of Quarterly Assessment – The integrated series cycles the questions within each unit through the practice problems and homework. 1-1 conferences are done with specific students to go over major issues. Homework is closely related to the content presented in class and is reviewed <p>In addition to what the teachers are doing in the classroom, the math specialists have pulled specific students to during LEARN, and other appropriate times to provide additional support.</p>	<p>Review Quarterly assessment data and determine areas for additional instructional support. Identify student who can benefit from Math Supplement and Math lab. Develop goals for student achievement within each math level of instruction.</p>	<p>Dr. Pellico Mr. Lilly Math Content Lead Teacher Math Specialists</p>	<p>This is an ongoing effort with interventions and supports implemented as student needs are determined.</p>
	Student Achievement Initiatives			
1	<p>Identified faculty will attend ongoing training on supporting diverse learners. This includes attendance at MCIU conference on Teaching Tolerance:</p>	<p>Trained staff will provide professional development to the faculty on supporting the achievement of diverse learners.</p>	<p>Dr. Pellico Assistant Principals Dr. McGinley (Dean of School Culture and Climate)</p>	<p>Training will commence in April 2019. Faculty training will be ongoing.</p>

	<p>This workshop will help teachers explore strategies for facilitating critical conversations with students and colleagues. Participants will learn strategies for creating supportive learning environments that encourage risk-taking during critical conversations. Finally, they'll investigate methods of teaching about implicit bias, race, and other critical topics.</p>	<p>Outcome will be indirectly assessed by monitoring student achievement of disaggregate groups.</p>	<p>Trained staff</p>	

