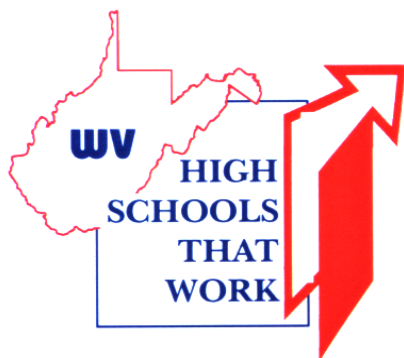


21st Century High Schools That Work



21st Century High Schools That Work



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21st Century High Schools That Work

21st Century High Schools That Work (HSTW) is an effort-based school improvement initiative based on the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) *HSTW* Design (www.sreb.org).

The design is based on the conviction most students can master rigorous academic and career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment and culture that motivate students to make the effort to succeed. School leaders and teachers can motivate students to achieve at high levels when they:

- Engage students in **RIGOROUS** academic and technical curricula that develop students' capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, provocative and challenging. The quality of thinking required expects and supports students to learn and demonstrate that learning at high levels.
- Create supportive **RELATIONSHIPS** between students and adults so the high school is a place where students want to be. Students feel safe, have a sense of belonging, and believe that someone cares whether they are doing well, academically, socially, etc. Support structures are in place to ensure every student is able to achieve high standards; student attitudes, attendance, participation, achievement and satisfaction all improve. The school engages students' families as partners in the students' education.
- Use a variety of strategies and environments to make instruction **RELEVANT**. Real world applications of knowledge and skills help students link education to their future. Teachers act as coaches and facilitators to promote more active involvement of students in their own learning.
- Focus on measureable student achievement goals and **RESULTS**.

The West Virginia 21st Century *HSTW* Design encompasses a framework of Structures for Success, Goals, Key Practices, and Key Conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards. It recommends research-based practices for schools to improve academic and career/technical instruction to increase student achievement. Research has shown that sustained school improvement and student achievement occur when state, county, school and teacher leaders work together.

The 21st Century *High Schools That Work* aligns with the West Virginia Framework for High Performing High Schools http://wvde.state.wv.us/frameworks/Framework_Schools_High.pdf and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills www.21stcenturyskills.org/.

21st Century High Schools That Work

Structures for Success

The following Structures for Success must be addressed to fully implement the 21st century HSTW design in West Virginia high schools

High Performing Learning Culture

A high performing learning culture makes a school an intellectually stimulating place in which to work and learn. There is a widely shared vision that everyone wants to achieve. Faculty and administrators have high expectations for themselves, are open to new ideas, and share responsibility for the learning of all students. Collaborative professional relationships provide opportunities for collective inquiry, reflection and sharing best practices. Technology is used to communicate, manage and monitor school structures and data. The school celebrates successes along the way.

Strategic Structures for Supporting Student Learning and Success

The school's policies and structures are aligned to focus on student achievement. Resources are effectively used to support and advance learning. A comprehensive guidance and advisement system assists students in making academic, career, personal and social decisions. Professional development is site-based; adequate follow up and monitoring are provided to ensure transfer to classroom practice. Data drives most all of the decisions made in the school. 21st century technology tools are used to facilitate communication between and among teachers, students, parents and the community.

Transitions that Support Student Success

Building a strong bridge from the middle grades to high school is essential in raising student achievement and keeping students in school. Middle and high school administrators, teacher leaders and counselors set goals and priorities for curriculum, instruction and assessment that will get all students ready for high school. Professional development, staff assignments, and academic and social support structures are in place at the high school to ensure entering freshmen are successful in rigorous and challenging high school courses.

The high school provides students and their families with information about postsecondary education and work readiness expectations. Students are assisted to set and achieve goals for postsecondary education and careers and the school engages students' families as partners in the students' education. The high school offers college readiness courses, credit recovery options, and other support structures focused on helping students successfully transition from

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high school to postsecondary education and careers. Opportunities for advanced academic and career and technical courses and senior projects are provided to all students.

High Quality Career and Technical Education

High quality career and technical education provides students technical preparation supported by rigorous academic and employability skills. Career and technical courses and programs are student centered, performance driven, and industry focused for the 21st century economy. Career and technical completers receive dual preparation for both postsecondary education and the workforce.

Literacy Across the Curriculum

Literacy proficiency is key to success in postsecondary education and the workplace. The school promotes literacy across the curriculum by encouraging students to read, write, speak and present across curricula areas during all four years of high school. Students learn and practice a set of literacy skills needed to handle the variety of text and information they will encounter and produce as they go through high school and beyond.

Numeracy Across the Curriculum

Numeracy is mathematical competence in applying numbers and numerical concepts to solve problems in real-world contexts. Numeracy includes analyzing and using data presented in graphs, charts and tables. The school promotes numeracy across the curriculum by encouraging students to dig deep into all curriculum, looking for and using mathematical concepts for greater understanding across the content areas.

21st Century Teaching and Learning

Instruction and assessment clearly address established content standards. Teachers use research-based best practices that require students to solve problems, think critically, use 21st century technology tools and skills, and create projects, products and performances. Students are assessed based upon known criteria, standards and exemplars. Students become self-directed learners as they are given regular opportunities to rethink and revise their work based on ongoing feedback.

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21st Century High Schools That Work Goals

Each 21st Century High Schools That Work site is charged with achieving the following goals:

- Increase to at least 50 percent, the number of *all* high school students who perform at the above mastery and distinguished levels in reading, mathematics and science, as measured by West Virginia's state assessment, WESTEST 2.
- Increase to 85 percent, the number of students who meet the *HSTW* reading, mathematics, and science performance goals on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced *HSTW* assessment.
- Increase to at least 50 percent, the number of *all* high school students who perform at the proficient and advanced levels in reading, mathematics and science, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced *HSTW* assessment.
- Increase to 85 percent, the number of high school graduates who complete postsecondary preparatory courses in mathematics, science, English/language arts and social studies and a professional or skilled career concentration.
- Increase to 100 percent, the number of students who graduate having met the standards for a College Readiness and/or Work Readiness Credential.
- Increase to 90 percent, the number of high school students who enter grade nine and graduate from high school four years later.
- Increase to 100 percent, the number of students successfully transitioning from the middle grades to high school.
- Advance state and local policies and leadership initiatives that sustain a continuous school improvement effort.

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21st Century High Schools That Work Key Practices

These Key Practices provide direction to school improvement, student learning, and the acquisition of 21st Century knowledge and skills. The key practices were developed through the High Schools That Work initiative of the Southern Regional Education Board.

- **High Expectations**

Motivate more students to meet high expectations by integrating high expectations into classroom practices and frequent student feedback.

- **Program of Study**

Require each student to complete a rigorous academic core and a concentration.

- **Academic Studies**

Teach more students the essential concepts of the postsecondary preparatory curriculum by encouraging them to apply academic content and skills to real-world problems and projects. School leaders need to:

- ✓ align core academic courses to essential state and national standards that prepare youth for postsecondary studies and careers; and
- ✓ align student assignments, student work and classroom assessments to at least the proficient-level standards as measured by state high school assessments.

- **Career/Technical Studies**

Provide more students access to intellectually challenging career and technical studies in high-skill/high-demand fields that emphasize the higher-level mathematics, science, literacy and problem-solving skills needed in the workplace and in further education. School leaders need to:

- ✓ develop standards for awarding postsecondary credit in high-skilled career and technical fields; and
- ✓ provide students opportunities to work toward a recognized employer certification: an associate degree in a career field, an applied science associate degree; a certificate in a career field, apprenticeship, and/or a state-issued license.

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- ***Structured Experiential Learning***

Actively engage students in developing quality work-based, service-based, community-based, and/or research-based learning experiences. These experiences require students to integrate knowledge and skills from academics, career/technical education, and/or the arts and demonstrate the personal qualities, skills, knowledge, and understandings they need to be leaders in the 21st Century.
- ***Teachers Working Together***

Provide teams of teachers the time and support to work together to help students succeed in challenging high school studies. School leaders need to support:

 - ✓ all teachers in engaging students in reading, writing, making presentations, using technology, and applying high-level problem-solving and thinking skills; and
 - ✓ mathematics, science, and career and technical teachers working together to better align and integrate concepts and skills into assignments and assessments.
- ***Students Actively Engaged***

Engage all students in academic and career/technical classrooms in rigorous and challenging proficient-level assignments using research-based instructional strategies and technology.
- ***Guidance***

Involve students and their parents in a guidance and advisement system that develops positive relationships and ensures completion of an accelerated program of study with an academic or career/technical concentration. Provide a system of guidance and advisement which provides each student with the same mentor throughout high school to assist with setting goals, selecting courses, reviewing the student's progress and suggesting appropriate interventions as necessary. School leaders need to:

 - ✓ support teachers in forming nurturing academic relationships with students aimed at improving students' work and achievement;
 - ✓ engage parents in annual meetings with students and their mentors to develop and review progress related to the students' Individual Student Transition Plan (ISTP); and
 - ✓ develop efforts to educate middle grades, school and teacher leaders, and students about the achievement level needed for challenging high school studies and to educate high school parents, students, and teachers about the achievement level needed for postsecondary study and high-demand, high-income jobs.

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- ***Extra Help***

Provide a structured system of extra help to assist students in completing accelerated programs of study with high-level academic and technical content. School leaders need to:

- ✓ support all students to become independent learners by building into their learning experiences opportunities to practice habits of successful learners such as study and literacy skills, time management, and learning with others;
- ✓ give students easy access to opportunities to meet course standards and graduate with their peers;
- ✓ plan transitional learning experiences for entering ninth-graders who are not prepared to succeed in college-preparatory courses; and
- ✓ identify 11th-graders not ready for postsecondary study; develop special courses for the senior year to get these students prepared.

- ***Culture of Continuous Improvement***

Use student assessment and program evaluation data to continuously improve school culture, organization, management, curriculum and instruction to advance student learning. School leaders need to:

- ✓ use formative assessments and benchmarks to assess student learning;
- ✓ monitor instructional practice for the use of research-based strategies, including technology; and
- ✓ conduct surveys of students, teachers, and parents and analyze responses to determine the impact of school structure and practices.

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21st Century High Schools That Work Key Conditions

When these key conditions are in place, schools are more likely to see students succeed. The key conditions were developed through the High Schools That Work initiative of the Southern Regional Education Board.

- ***A Clear, Functional Mission Statement***

Schools need a clear, functional mission statement to prepare middle grade students for challenging secondary studies and high school students for success in postsecondary education and the workplace.

- ***Strong Leadership***

Each county and school needs strong and committed leaders to improve, align and benchmark curricula to high standards, to improve the quality of instruction and to raise student achievement. At each high school, a leadership team is created, consisting of the principal, assistant principal and teacher leaders. School and county teams participate annually in a series of leadership development workshops aimed at fully implementing the 21st Century *HSTW* design.

- ***Strategic Plan for Continuous Improvement***

County and school leaders create an organizational structure and process that ensures continuous involvement with faculty on what to teach, how to teach it, what students are expected to learn, how to assess what they have learned, and how they relate to each other, to the students and to the home and community.

- ***Highly Qualified Teachers***

Middle grade and high school teachers have in-depth knowledge of their subject areas and of teaching strategies appropriate to students' grade levels. Middle grade teachers lacking majors in their subject areas are supported by the county to acquire them. The school and county employ teachers who have depth in their teaching fields and support them in learning how to teach well.

- ***Commitment to Goals***

School boards, school leaders and teachers are committed to achieving the 21st Century *HSTW* Goals and implementing the Key Practices. Continuous review of local policies and practices ensures that a strong message of high expectations is sent to both the high schools and the middle grades.

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- ***Flexible Scheduling***

School superintendents and school boards permit high schools to adopt flexible schedules enabling students to earn more credits.

- ***Support for Professional Development***

County and school leaders provide teachers with instructional materials, time and professional development for implementing the 21st Century *HSTW* design.

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Measuring and Reporting Progress

Data helps schools do many things: understand where they are, define where they want and need to go, and measure progress along the way. The following performance and school effectiveness measures are used to determine sites' progress in implementing the 21st Century HSTW Design.

Performance Measures

- Increase to at least 50 percent, the number of *all* high school students who perform at the above mastery and distinguished levels in reading, mathematics and science, as measured by West Virginia's state assessment, WESTEST.
- Increase to 85 percent, the number of students who meet the *HSTW* reading, mathematics, and science performance goals on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced *HSTW* assessment.
- Increase to at least 50 percent, the number of *all* high school students who perform at the proficient and advanced levels in reading, mathematics and science, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)-referenced *HSTW* assessment.
- Increase to 100 percent, the number of students who graduate having met the standards for a College Readiness and/or Work Readiness Credential.
- Increase to 90 percent, the number of high school students who enter grade nine and graduate from high school four years later.
- Increase to 100 percent, the number of students successfully transitioning from the middle grades to high school.
- Advance state and local policies and leadership initiatives that sustain a continuous school improvement effort.

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School Effectiveness Measures

- Annually, have all students indicate they have developed a ISTP that is reviewed by the student, teacher mentor, and a parent;
- Increase annually, the number of students enrolled in and earning college credit through Advanced Placement (AP), Earn a Degree-Graduate Early (EDGE), college or dual credit;
- Increase annually, the number of students who pass career and technical assessments; and
- Decrease annually, the number of students enrolled in developmental classes at the postsecondary level.

Other measures as defined by the biennial *HSTW* NAEP-referenced assessment are:

- Increase the number of students who indicate they experience high expectations.
- Increase the number of students who indicate their school has an intensive focus on literacy across the curriculum.
- Increase the number of students who indicate their school has an intensive focus on numeracy across the curriculum.
- Increase the number of students who indicate they experience quality mathematics and science instruction.
- Increase the number of students who fully complete the *HSTW* recommended curriculum.
- Increase the number of students who indicate their career and technical courses require them to use reading, writing, mathematics and science skills and knowledge to complete career/technical assignments.
- Increase the number of students who report they participated in quality work-based learning experiences.

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- Increase the number of students who indicate they experienced quality guidance and advisement throughout high school.
- Increase the number of students who strongly believe in the importance of their high school studies.
- Increase the number of students who need extra help and indicate they are able to get the help easily.
- Increase the number of teachers who indicate the school has the highest level of implementation and focus on:
 - ✓ Having a functional mission;
 - ✓ Raising expectations and providing extra help;
 - ✓ Teaching challenging academic and technical content;
 - ✓ Engaging high school students in learning;
 - ✓ Guiding and supporting students;
 - ✓ Helping students make successful transitions; and
 - ✓ Supporting teaching in continuous school improvement.

21st Century High Schools That Work

What Participating West Virginia Sites Agree to Do

Schools and school systems participating in the West Virginia 21st Century HSTW state network agree to do the following:

- Have school leaders — superintendents, school board members, the principal and a core group of teachers — examine the Structures for Success, Goals, Key Practices and Key Conditions and decide if the 21st Century *HSTW* Design is viable for their school and community.
- Approve by a vote of at least 70 percent, the Faculty Senate’s commitment to the 21st Century *HSTW* Design and sign the school’s Memorandum of Understanding.
- Participate in an annual review and renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with staff from the West Virginia Department of Education.
- Appoint coordinators at the county and school levels to promote the implementation of 21st Century *HSTW* through professional development and technical assistance; data collection; progress monitoring; communication; and the integration of *HSTW* Structures for Success, Goals, Key Practices, and Key Conditions with other state and local improvement efforts.
- Commit local funds annually to support the school in implementing the 21st Century *HSTW* Design.
- Organize an overall school leadership team composed of key academic and career and technical teachers administrators, and school counselors.
- Establish school-based teams that address each of the following Structures for Success:
 - ✓ High Performing Learning Culture;
 - ✓ Strategic Structures for Supporting Student Learning and Success;
 - ✓ Transitions that Support Student Success;
 - ✓ High Quality Career and Technical Education;
 - ✓ Literacy Across the Curriculum;
 - ✓ Numeracy Across the Curriculum; and
 - ✓ 21st Century Teaching and Learning.

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- Promote a vision of high achievement for all students among faculty and staff, parents, students, and community members.
- Align the Structures for Success to the school's Strategic Plan.
- Give students access to 21st Century career and technical education either in the high school, area career and technical center, or in a work setting that is connected to school-based academic and career and technical studies.
- Coordinate with feeder middle schools to improve students' transition to high school.
- Participate in the state Learning, Individualized Needs, Knowledge and Skills (LINKS) guidance and advisement system.
- Administer the biennial *HSTW* Assessment to seniors to measure progress in raising student achievement.
- Administer the biennial *HSTW* Teacher Survey to all teachers to evaluate the site's progress in implementing the 21st Century *HSTW* Design.
- Participate in online surveys for West Virginia seniors and teachers for data gathering.
- Host a technical appraisal involving a team led by Southern Regional Education board (SREB) or West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) to review progress and determine actions that will lead to increased student achievement.
- Commit school personnel to serve on technical appraisals.
- Complete and submit annual data profile.
- Participate in county, state and national professional development.
- Become an active member of the state network for sharing information and ideas.
- Submit a proposal to present a best practice at the annual *HSTW* Summer Staff Development Conference, and have team representation at the event.
- Complete the *HSTW* Annual Report of Progress and submit the report electronically.

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What the West Virginia Department of Education Agrees to Do

- Name a representative to serve on the SREB/*HSTW* Consortium Board.
- Designate a state *HSTW* coordinator.
- Assign WVDE staff as liaisons for each 21st Century *HSTW* site.
- Provide targeted technical assistance for each 21st century *HSTW* site.
- Allocate discretionary funds to help school sites implement the 21st Century *HSTW* design.
- Conduct technical appraisals of sites on a rotating basis.
- Link staff development to schools' Strategic Plans and create opportunities for teachers and administrators to participate in state-sponsored institutes, workshops, and conferences.
- Support sites in participating in the biennial *HSTW* assessment and teacher survey and assist in utilization of data in improving schools' strategic plans.
- Foster networking of sites through meetings, visits, and electronic communication.
- Convene sites regularly to share resources and address student achievement.
- Designate a representative to serve on the annual *HSTW* Staff Development Conference planning committee.
- Send representatives to the annual *HSTW* Staff Development Conference and the national, state and local leadership forums.
- Participate in the *HSTW*/SREB assessment program.
- Identify best practices in the state and disseminate contact information to all sites.
- Link with other school improvement initiatives within the state.
- Identify and promote opportunities for cooperative planning, joint staff development activities, and collaborative funding.

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- Maintain accurate files and records.
- Prepare an annual report to SREB. The status report will maintain a focus on the state's role in meeting the 21st Century *HSTW* goals.
- Publish an annual report of sites' progress in implementing the 21st Century *HSTW* Design and achieving established benchmarks.

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What SREB/HSTW Agrees to Do

High Schools That Work (HSTW) *agrees to provide leadership, guidance, information, and assistance to support schools, districts, and states in improving student achievement.*

For schools participating in the West Virginia network, priority services include the following:

- Support the state agency that manages and coordinates *HSTW* sites;
- Provide consultation to the state and its network schools;
- Collaborate with the state to develop statewide *HSTW* councils that provide overall guidance to *HSTW* efforts;
- Provide information and dissemination services to support state and site efforts using print, video, and Internet resources;
- Evaluate sites' progress in implementing the *HSTW* Enhanced Design and raising the achievement of students in reading, mathematics, and science through biennial NAEP-referenced *HSTW* Assessment; a teacher survey; a follow-up study of graduates; and providing state and site reports of findings;
- Manage and help states lead on-site technical assistance;
- Provide professional development opportunities for states and sites through national professional development that includes a major annual conference for all network sites and state leaders in July that typically attracts more than 7,000 participants and national experts;
- Create networking opportunities for sites to share strategies and resources;
- Conduct annual leadership forums for teams and district leaders from all *HSTW* states;
- Seek support from the private sector and foundations for delivery of *HSTW* services; and
- Disseminate information and publications about *HSTW* best practices to state organizations.

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