



NORTHVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN SY 2016/17 – SY 2019/20

APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL GOVERNANCE COUNCIL MAY 2016

SECTION I. Strategic Planning Background and Approach

In May 2012, the Georgia Board of Education voted to make Fulton County Schools the state's largest charter system. The charter system model offers increased autonomy and flexibility, both at the school level and system-wide, to employ research-based methods to improve student achievement, even if such innovations require exemptions to current state laws and regulations.

Given this framework, individual schools within Fulton County have the ability to work in dramatically new ways. We are asking our communities to help drive change by redefining engagement in our schools. Our collective vision is that every Fulton County school will have a school leader and local School Governance Council equipped to lead effectively in a charter system environment--improving student achievement through innovation and flexibility. Schools will be empowered to consider the best uses of resources at the local level and design innovative practices that align with school needs.

Northview High School began the strategic planning process in the spring of 2016. In order to plan our strategic direction, we first engaged with our community to understand our specific strengths and challenges and consider a path to address them collectively. Our School Governance Council began the work by leading a reflection on the previous strategic plan and discussing what worked well and what did not work well in the implementation of the plan. The Council then held multiple meetings with the school's Leadership Team to conduct a needs assessment and begin generating consensus on the future goals and direction of the school. Students were consulted through focus groups and interviews, and the broader community was engaged through surveys.

Our process included five distinct phases: (1) a needs assessment; (2) the identification of priority issues; (3) the establishment of long-term outcomes, focus areas, & short-term goals; (4) the formulation of strategic initiatives; and (5) the development of a monitoring plan. Developed over a period of several months and designed collaboratively with input and guidance from many stakeholders, the strategic plan represents our deliberate approach to shape and guide what **Northview High School** is, what we do, and why. Our students deserve the best educational experience we can provide, and this plan sets our vision and direction for making that happen.

SECTION II. Context for the Strategic Plan: The School’s Needs Assessment

For every school, the strategic planning process involves a thorough consideration of the following questions: Why is reflecting on our practices, processes, and perceptions critical to achieve our long-term outcomes? How will we address the root causes identified in our needs assessment? How will we know we are moving in the right direction? What will we do differently? By identifying strengths and weaknesses within the school and examining opportunities and challenges within the external environment, schools lay the foundation for building a strategic plan that builds on their positive attributes while overcoming any weaknesses or areas for improvement.

Northview High School began the strategic planning process by conducting a needs assessment. Through a close analysis of the internal and external environments, we sought to identify stakeholders’ perceptions of our school and enhance our understanding of the political, socio-economic, and demographic environment in which the school operates. By analyzing a comprehensive set of school data, the leaders of **Northview High School** reflected on progress toward 2012-2016 strategic plan long-term outcomes, clarified performance trends and identified the school’s most critical areas for improvement.

Progress toward 2012-2016 Strategic Plan Long-Term Outcomes

Long Term Outcome 1: Increase healthy connections for students

Northview strives to instill excellence in our students while promoting a balanced learning environment. It is our goal to ensure that our students manage academic success in a healthy manner. As a high-achieving school, academic pressure weighs heavily amongst our students. One of the primary goals of our 2012-16 Strategic Plan was to reduce anxiety and increase student support. Providing resources for our students and increasing healthy connections within our community was imperative to decrease student academic stress and promote a well-rounded student.

We have made great progress toward this long-term outcome. In the 2013-14, Northview took the bold step of eliminating class rank. While we still recognize top academic students through our Honors Night program and name a Valedictorian and Salutatorian of each graduating class, we have eliminated the pressure and stress that was caused by students anticipating the receipt of their academic rank among their peers.

In the 2014-15 school year, Northview High School launched the Community Nights initiative. Each semester, four nights (typically one per month) are designated as “Community Nights.” On these nights, no homework is assigned and no assessments or major assignments are due the following day. Students and staff are encouraged to take a break from the academic routine and enjoy a stress-free evening with friends and family. The Community Nights initiative has been very successful, and has now expanded to include Northview’s feeder schools as well. We have partnered with local business partners to add to Community Nights; e.g., local restaurants encourage Northview families to visit on these evenings, and they donate a portion of the proceeds back to the school.

In the 2014-15 school year, Northview High School added Yoga to our Physical Education course offerings. In this class, students are taught life skills of mindfulness and relaxation techniques while also benefiting from daily physical exercise.

Due to the focused work of Northview’s Counseling Department as well as a partnership with Summit Counseling, Northview has seen a decrease in the number of mental health referrals each month among our student body.

Long-Term Outcome 2: Increase students’ leadership and communication skills

Northview strives to develop leadership and communication skills in all our students. Enhanced leadership and communication skills are necessary for a competitive economy. As we prepare our students for a college and career post placement it is necessary to broaden our students’ experiences and offer more opportunities for career and technology experiences. Creating community partnerships with top leading hospitals and engineering companies create authentic and valuable learning experiences for our students. Consequently, we are preparing our students for the real-world, as well as producing leaders of a global society.

Northview has made progress toward this long-term outcome. Through a partnership with the city of Johns Creek, Northview sponsors the Student Leadership Johns Creek program. This program provides a year-long leadership development opportunity to approximately 20 Northview students. Interest in the program has grown each year, from 42 applicants in 2015 to 68 applicants in 2016.

Northview’s Student Council conducts a monthly meeting for all the club presidents at which leadership skills are taught. The school continues to add opportunities for students to serve as leaders, whether as peer tutors, student ambassadors, or mentors. Through the launch of our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports initiative, Northview is encouraging and teaching the leadership behaviors of integrity, compassion, personal responsibility, and a positive attitude.

Long-Term Outcome 3: Increase students’ college and career readiness

Northview has created a well-crafted plan which provides alternative course options aligned with students’ needs and interest, enhancing instructional delivery in support of career connections and authentic learning experiences. It is our goal to fully prepare our students for the most prominent and successful positions our global economy has to offer.

Through a Seed Fund grant, Northview was able to purchase the equipment and supplies to outfit a classroom for our new Healthcare Sciences Pathway courses. The monies enabled Northview to launch these courses which are giving students the option of completing an entire Healthcare Science pathway. The courses have been very popular with students, and Northview is pleased that our career/tech course offerings have been expanded – particularly in the healthcare field, which is a popular career interest of many of our students. The Healthcare Sciences program grew from two sections of students enrolled in the first level of the pathway during the 2014-15 school year to three sections of students enrolled in the first two levels of the pathway during the 2015-16 school year.

During the 2015-16 school year, Northview has placed a strong emphasis on teacher professional learning. Teacher leaders have led professional learning communities that are focused on sharing and learning instructional strategies to enhance the rigor of student learning.

In an effort to ensure that all students at Northview are guided to apply to college, Northview’s Counseling Department has begun coordinating college visits aimed at our traditionally underperforming subgroups of students.

Needs Assessment – Process

Northview High School began the needs assessment process in February 2016. The school’s administrative team, leadership team, teacher leadership team, and School Governance Council worked together to review school data and conduct an in-depth study of the strengths and areas of growth at Northview High School. Over the course of multiple sessions, and using a structured data protocol, the team examined the following data sources (see Appendix A for detailed data):

- Spring 2015 End-of-Course Milestones Results
- Graduation rates over the past 5 years
- Northview’s College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)
- Demographic data over the past 5 years
- Discipline data
- Course grade summaries (e.g., percentage of students making As, Bs, Cs, Fs in each course, per semester)
- Student counseling data
- STAR testing & literacy data

In order to draw in-depth and objective conclusions from the review of data, the participants used a protocol called “Data Driven Dialogue” developed by the National School Reform Faculty (see inset “Data Driven Dialogue Protocol”).

During the first session of collaborative data analysis, the leadership team developed a list of notable findings. A few weeks later, the same team reconvened and engaged in a Situation Appraisal protocol in order to prioritize the findings and determine the key areas of strategic focus for Northview. In small groups, participants reviewed a list of 47 preliminary findings that had emerged as significant during the original data dialogue and evaluated each finding for its timing, trend, and impact. Subsequently, all small groups discussed their findings.

In addition to analyzing school-wide quantitative data, Northview’s leadership team also gathered qualitative feedback through student focus groups. In March 2016, Northview’s teacher leaders conducted focus groups with students to gather feedback on their experience at the school. The focus groups consisted of 60 Northview students chosen randomly and evenly across all grade levels, ability levels, and races. Students were asked to share their thoughts in response to several open-ended questions, including the following:

- What kinds of things do your teachers do that make you feel really engaged in the lesson? What kinds of things do they do that make you feel disconnected/bored?
- I wish my teachers knew this...about being a student here at Northview?
- What do you feel are the big stresses of being a Northview student? What do you think could reduce those stresses?
- How would you describe the culture of Northview? What would make Northview a better place for you or for your friends?

Over the course of several months, and through the engagement of a key group of leaders in comprehensive data analysis, Northview High School determined its priority issues—those issues so significant to the overall success of the school that they require the full and immediate attention. Described in the following section, these prioritized findings are the foundation of Northview’s Strategic Plan for the next four school years.

Data Driven Dialogue Protocol

The three phases of data-driven dialogue assist groups in making shared meaning of data. The dialogue tool helps to replace hunches and feelings with data-based facts, examine patterns and trends of performance indicators, and generate “root-cause” discussions that move from identifying symptoms to possible causes of student performance.

Phase I: Predictions (Surfacing perspectives, assumptions, predictions, questions, and expectations.)

Phase I Predictions dialogue takes place before you see the data. During this time, you activate prior knowledge, surface assumptions, and make predictions, thus creating readiness to examine and discuss the data. You hear and honor all assumptions and ideas as “building blocks for new learning.”

Phase II: Observations (Analyzing the data for patterns, trends, and new questions that “jump” out.)

During Phase II Observations dialogue, you engage with the actual data and note only the facts that you can observe in the data. Conjectures, explanations, conclusions, and inferences are off-limits. You make statements about quantities (e.g., Over half the students...), the presence of certain specific information and/or numerical relationships between ideas (e.g., Over 90% of the students achieved below standard in Problem Solving; Compared to last year’s data, the percentage of students performing at the advanced and on-standard levels in Skills increased by 8%...).

Phase III: Inferences (Generating hypotheses, inferring, explaining, and drawing conclusions.)

During Phase III Inferences dialogue, you (a) generate multiple explanations for your Phase II Observations; (b) identify additional data that may be needed to confirm/contradict your explanations; (c) propose solutions/responses; and (d) identify data needed to monitor implementation of your solutions/responses.

Needs Assessment – Data Highlights and Prioritized Findings

Northview High School opened in the fall of 2002 to serve students residing in northeast Fulton County. The school boasts a rigorous, well-rounded academic program that includes extensive fine arts and technology course offerings to prepare a diverse student population for further study after graduation. The student body, which represents at least 51 countries and 23 different home languages, is unique in its diversity and commitment to excellence in academics, arts, and athletics.

Northview offers an array of rigorous academic course designed to prepare our students for college and careers. Course options include 29 Advanced Placement courses, Georgia Tech Calculus, and 28 Honor courses in four

core subjects. The special programs offered include: Cooperative Business Education, Broadcast and Video Production, Computer Science, Pre-Engineering, Tutoring, Mentorship, SAT Preparation, ACCEL (Dual Enrollment) Program, Inter-Related Resource (IRR), and Talented and Gifted (TAG).

Northview takes great pride in maintaining an excellent record of student achievement, and consistently ranks among the best high schools in the state of Georgia. The school boasts an impressive graduation rate (figure 1). Northview’s students outperform the district and state averages in graduation rates, ACT and SAT scores, and other standardized achievement measures (see Tables 1-4). The school’s academic record has garnered it multiple recognitions and awards at the state and national level (see figure 2).

Figure 1. Northview High School Graduation Rate, 2015

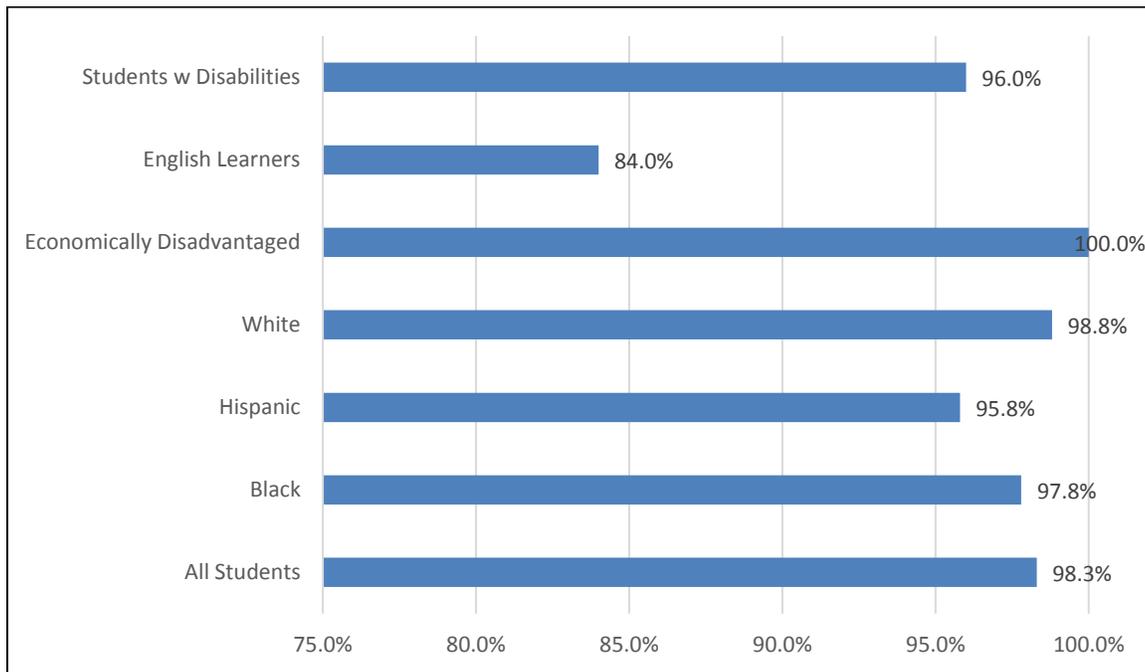


Table 1. Average ACT Scores

	2015 Composite Score
Northview	26.4
Northview Top 10%	34.4
Fulton County Schools	22.9
Georgia	21.0
National	21.0

Table 2. Average SAT Scores (2015)

	Reading	Math	Writing	Total
Northview	575	622	582	1779
Northview Top 25%	640	700	670	2010
Fulton County Schools	518	525	515	1558
Georgia	488	485	472	1445
National	497	513	487	1497

Table 3. Advanced Placement Summary: Percent of Exams Passed (2015)

	# of Exams Given	# Passed	% Passed
Northview	2,075	1,700	81.9%
Fulton County Schools	18,403	12,220	66.4%
Georgia	162,161	91,543	56.5%

Table 4. Four-year Cohort High School Graduation Rate

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Northview	89.4%	96.0%	94.2%	96.2%	98.3%
Fulton County Schools	70.1%	71.3%	75.5%	78.7%	85.3%
Georgia	67.4%	69.7%	71.8%	72.5%	78.8%

Figure 2. Northview Awards and Accolades

2012 U.S. News and World Report "Top 100 High School"	2004 and 2005 State AAAAA Governor's Cup Recipient
2005-2010, 2012-2014 Newsweek Magazine "Top 1,000 High School"	2010 Platinum Award 2009 Platinum Award 2006, 2008 Gold Award 2005, 2007 Silver Award
2005-2010, 2012 Atlanta Magazine "Best High School"	Governor's Office of Student Achievement
2007-2012 Siemens Award for Advanced Placement	

While Northview has much to be proud of and our school and student achievements often draw other educators to look to Northview as a model of best practices, the school strives to continue growing. Our quest for continued excellence and improvement is captured in our mission tagline: “Ever upward and onward!” Through the needs assessment process described above, Northview High School has identified several key areas of growth that will guide our work over the next four years.

Prioritized Finding #1: Gaps in Achievement on Standardized Assessments

Northview’s overall achievement on the 2015 Georgia Milestones End-of-Course Tests is well above state and district averages (see table 5). However, a close look at Northview’s EOCT results disaggregated by race/ethnicity and enrollment in special programs (including remedial, ELL, and special education) reveals substantial gaps in the levels of achievement among different student subgroups. Detailed graphs showing the achievement levels disaggregated by subgroups are contained in the appendix. Highlights of what these graphs portray include the following:

- Of all Northview students tested in spring 2015, 67 percent scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels on the Ninth Grade Literature EOCT. However, only 50 percent of Hispanic students, 35 percent of Black students, 39 percent of economically disadvantaged students, and 15 percent of English Language Learners scored at these same achievement levels.
- Of all Northview students tested in spring 2015, 68 percent scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels on the Biology EOCT. However, only 47 percent of Hispanic students, 35 percent of Black students, 33 percent of economically disadvantaged students, 0 percent of English Language Learners, and 17 percent of students with disabilities scored at these same achievement levels.
- Of all Northview students tested in spring 2015, 82 percent scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels on the Analytic Geometry EOCT. However, only 57 percent of Hispanic students, 43 percent of Black students, 33 percent of remedial students, and 34 percent of students with disabilities scored at these same achievement levels.

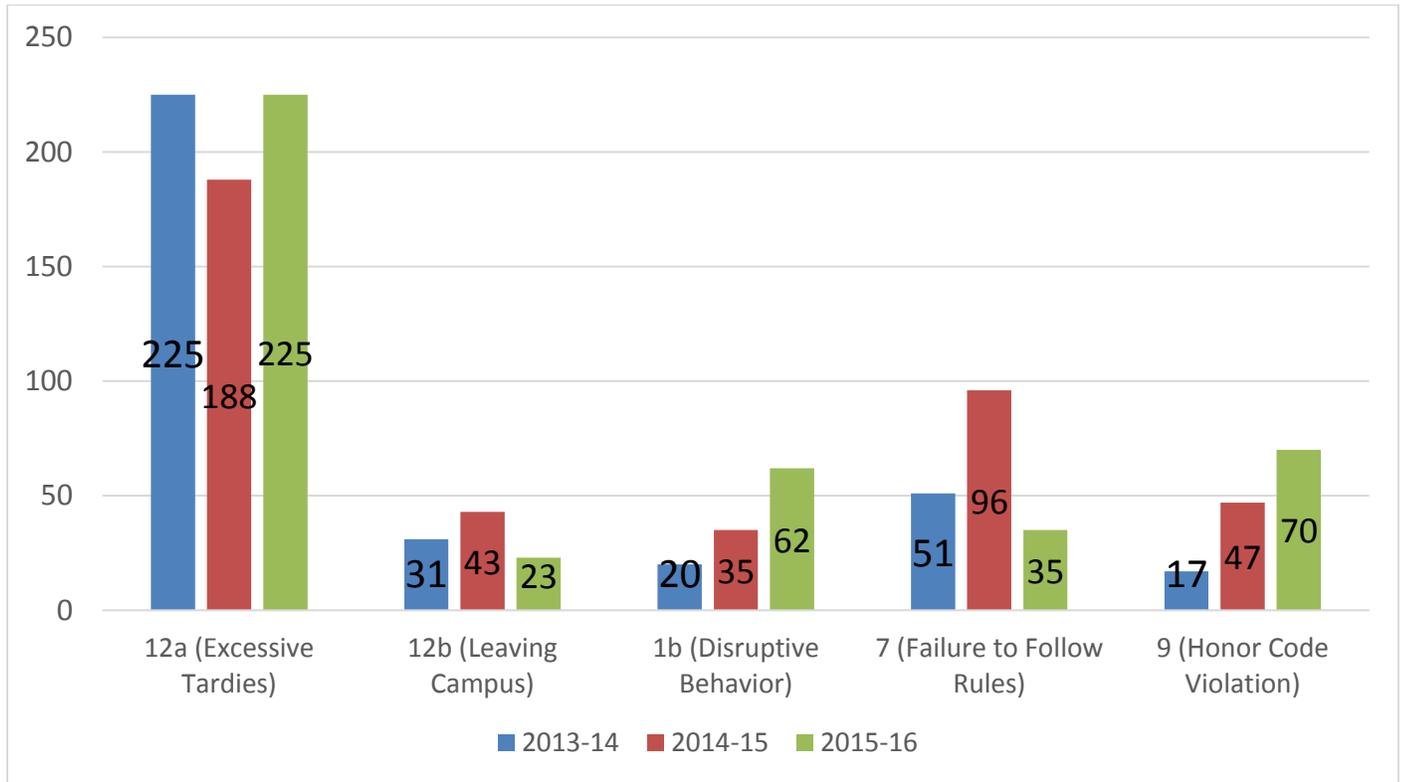
Table 5. End of Course Results: Spring 2015 Administration

	Percentage of Students Scoring at Developing, Proficient, & Exemplary (Level 2, 3, & 4)	Percentage of Students Scoring at Proficient & Exemplary (Levels 3 & 4)
9th Grade Literature & Composition		
Northview	93	67
Fulton	78	44
State	76	39
American Literature & Composition		
Northview	93	70
Fulton	77	44
State	76	36
Coordinate Algebra		
Northview	96	70
Fulton	70	41
State	69	34
Analytic Geometry		
Northview	96	82
Fulton	70	44
State	65	29
Biology		
Northview	87	68
Fulton	66	43
State	63	38
Physical Science		
Northview	81	39
Fulton	60	33
State	65	31
United States History		
Northview	92	66
Fulton	75	44
State	74	40
Economics		
Northview	76	54
Fulton	70	42
State	69	37

Prioritized Finding #2: Tardiness and Honor Code Violations

Northview is a safe, orderly school with a supportive learning environment. However, a review of discipline data shows that Northview has a large number of student tardies each year and that the number of honor code violations has increased each year since 2013-14 (figure 3).

Figure 3. Highest Student Discipline Incidents Per School Year at Northview High School



Prioritized Finding #3: Course Failures

At the aggregate level, Northview High School students earn high grades in their academic courses. As shown in table 6, the top 20 percent of the student body maintains a high-A cumulative grade point average. However, an analysis of the final course grades for fall semester of the 2015-16 school year reveals that greater than 10 percent of students earned an “F” in at least one core class (table 7). In the Geometry course that is coupled with a math support course, the percentage of students with a failing grade was greater than 25 percent.

Table 6. Grade Distribution at Northview High School, 2015

Percent of class	Cumulative GPA Range	
	High	Low
Top 1%	103.200	102.383
5%	-	100.419
10%	-	98.936
20%	-	96.152

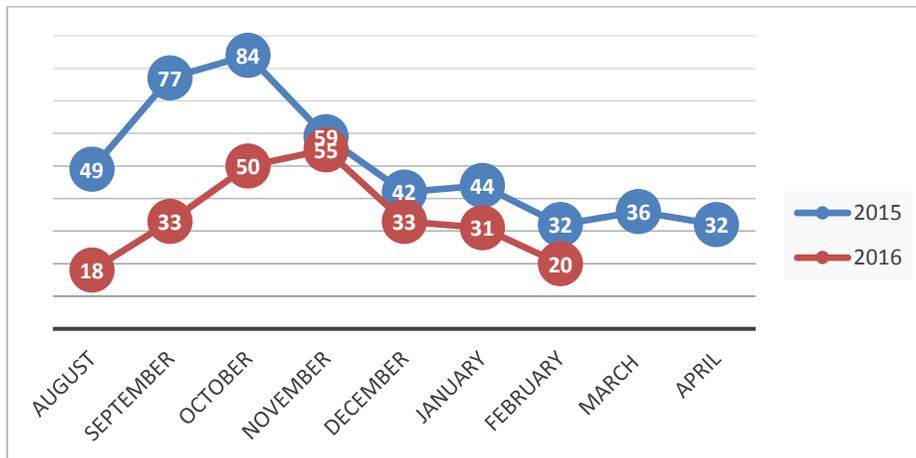
Table 7. Northview High School Course Failure Data: Semester 1 of School Year 2015-16

Course	Percentage of Failing Grades
MATH	
Algebra I (stand-alone, without support)	7.4%
Algebra I (blocked with support)	6.5%
Geometry (stand-alone, without support)	1.9%
Geometry (blocked with support)	27.4%
Algebra II (stand-alone, without support)	4.3%
Algebra II (blocked with support)	14.3%
ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS	
9th Grade Lit	5.2%
9th Grade Lit Honors	1.8%
10th Grade Lit	8.8%
10th Grade Lit Honors	0.0%
SCIENCE	
Biology	10.6%
Biology Honors	0.7%
Physical Science	13.9%
Physical Science Honors	3.4%
SOCIAL STUDIES	
American Government	2.8%
Economics	2.3%
US History	4.2%
World History	3.1%

Prioritized Finding #4: High Number of Students in Crisis

As part of Northview’s commitment to reducing the mental stress negatively affecting our students, counselors are equipped with skills and protocols to use when a student is in a state of emotional crisis. Data tracking the number of students who meet with counselors and are referred to mental health services suggest that Northview continues to have a high number of students in mental and/or emotional crisis (figure 4).

Figure 4. Number of Students in Crisis as Measured by Mental Health Referrals at Northview High School



Prioritized Finding #5: High Number of Students Reading Below Grade Level

In the spring of 2016, Northview High School leaders analyzed data from the STAR reading test for all students currently enrolled in eighth grade and those enrolled in tenth grade on-level English courses. The data revealed that among Northview’s rising ninth graders, 33 percent are reading below their current grade level (figure 5). Additionally, among Northview’s rising eleventh graders, one-half of students are reading below their current grade level (figure 6). This data suggests that Northview has an urgent need to address literacy for many of its students.

Figure 5. STAR Test Results for 8th graders (Northview’s upcoming 9th grade students), Spring 2016

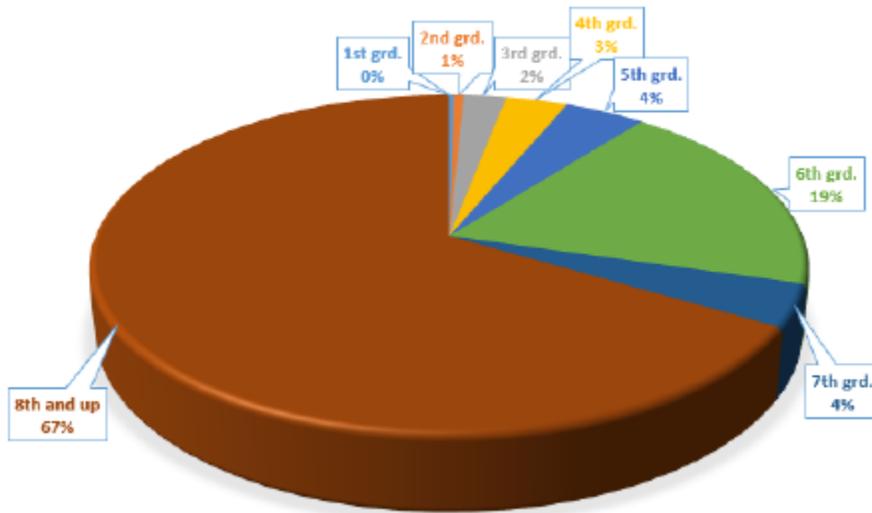
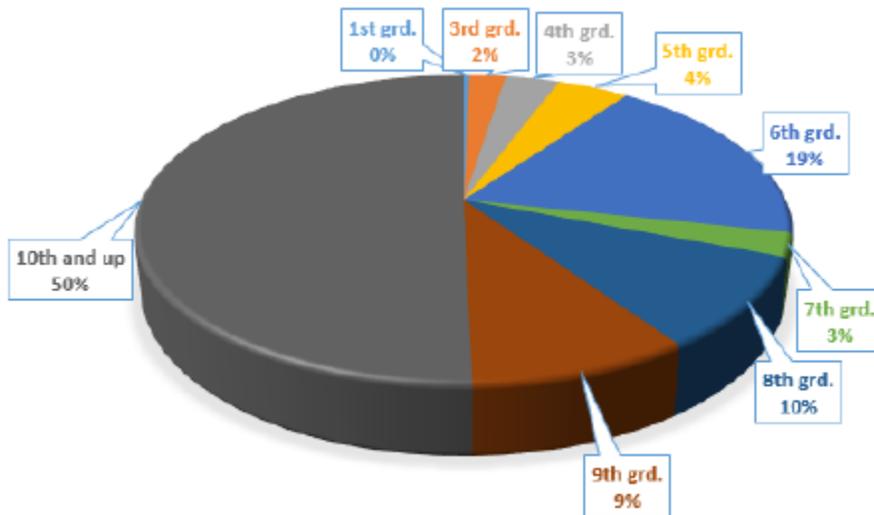


Figure 6. STAR Test Results for 10th graders (Northview’s upcoming 11th grade students), Spring 2016



SECTION III. Long-Term Outcomes

Northview is dedicated to continuing our tradition of excellence in academics, arts, and athletics. While maintaining our standard of excellence, we are also committed to improving the educational experiences and outcomes for all students who enter our doors. The needs assessment and resulting prioritized findings led the school's leadership team and School Governance Council to establish the following long-term outcomes. These goals are what we strive to accomplish over the next four academic years.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 1. Increase the academic success of each unique student.

While Northview boasts high academic rankings when compared to the district, state, and nation, a closer look at student achievement data reveals that significant gaps exist in the performance of subgroups of students. Graduation rates vary among racial and ethnic groups; course pass rates vary by student demographics; and performance on End-of-Course tests differ by student subgroup. In order to support the academic needs of each unique student and ensure that all students at Northview have the resources and opportunities to meet high academic goals, our school must focus on better understanding the differentiated needs of each student and increasing the success of each student in the school.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME 2. Improve the mental health and well-being of all students.

Northview strives to instill excellence in our students while promoting a balanced learning environment. It is our goal to ensure that our students manage academic success in a healthy manner. As a high-achieving school, academic pressure weighs heavily amongst our students. Our goal is to reduce anxiety and increase student support. Providing resources for our students and increasing healthy connections within our community will decrease student academic stress and promote a well-rounded student.

SECTION IV. Focus Areas, Short-Term Goals, and Strategic Initiatives

In order to meet the long-term outcomes identified above, Northview's staff must focus our work within a few critical areas and must strive to meet specific goals in the short-term. By implementing the key initiatives described below, we are confident that we can achieve the vision of this strategic plan over the next three school years.

FOCUS AREA 1. Teaching and Learning

Of utmost importance are the teaching and learning that occurs in the classrooms within Northview High School on a daily basis. While our school has been recognized regularly for its high academic standings, we must continue to improve our instructional practices and vary our teaching strategies in order to meet the academic needs of each unique student and to prepare all students for success in their lives beyond high school.

To mark our progress within this focus area, we will strive to meet the following short-term goals:

1. Decrease the number of course failures at the fall and spring semester mark.
2. Increase the number and percentage of students reading at or above grade-level.
3. Increase the level of rigor and engagement within all classes.
4. Decrease gaps in subgroup achievement on End-of-Course assessments and other standardized assessments.

FOCUS AREA 2. Supportive and Student-Centered Culture

The remarkable achievement of our students and the array of rigorous courses available to students at Northview can create a high level of stress among the student body. We must continue to support our students not only to meet college readiness standards, but to maintain balance and good health during their high school years. By striving to maintain a positive school culture and increase our supports for students, we can better equip our students to lead healthy, happy, and balanced lives.

To mark our progress within this focus area, we will strive to meet the following short-term goals:

1. Decrease the number of students needing mental health referrals.
2. Decrease the number of Honor Code violations.
3. Increase the variety of ways for students to meet graduation requirements and explore their unique interests.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In partnership with students, parents, and community members, the staff of Northview High School will implement the following strategic initiatives in order to make progress toward the short-term goals listed above and ultimately, achieve our long-term outcomes.

- Cross-departmental Professional Learning Communities (referred to as “METIS teams”) focused on learning and sharing best instructional practices
- Personalized Learning to customize and vary the learning experience based on student need
- Literacy Across the Curriculum to increase literacy within all courses and with all students
- Revamp Support Classes to ensure that students receive the academic supports needed to master the math curriculum and to decrease course failures
- Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports (PBIS) to support and reward positive school culture
- Find Your Passion/What’s Your Why?, a speaker/seminar series to help all students explore career, athletic, and extracurricular interests and build confidence

- Community Nights, a monthly initiative to reduce academic work load and encourage relaxation and community involvement among students and families
- Parent University, a series of parent workshops intended to equip parents with tools and resources to support their students and help them navigate the often-stressful environment of high school and make the best choices for future college and career pathways
- Academic Innovation Committee, made up of a group of school leaders/stakeholders, charged with investigating ways to enhance the student experience by creating new, unique means for students to meet graduation requirements and be successful academically

SECTION V. Next Steps

The strategic plan is a living document and provides important opportunities for the school community to collaborate. The next step forward is for the plan to be shared with all stakeholders, including students, faculty, parents, and community members. The plan will be available in both hard copy and electronic copy for review. Two documents, an executive summary of the plan for adults and an executive summary version of the plan for students, will also be available. Continuous communication of the plan via the school website, staff meetings, parent nights, and student meetings will be the norm.

The principal will manage the Strategic Plan while various leadership team members will share in the collective accountability for the document and the implementation of the strategic initiatives. Key staff members in this process will include the administrative team, members of the leadership team, department chairs, student leaders, and key parent leaders. The administrative team will collect and communicate data. Updates will be provided to the School Governance Council each semester.

APPENDIX. Additional Data

