



# MT. VERNON HIGH SCHOOL

Highly Effective Schools Accreditation and School Improvement Plan

2024-2025

Mt. Vernon High School

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation

8112 North 200 West, Fortville, Indiana 46040

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## **MT. VERNON HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL PROFILE**

Mt. Vernon High School is located in Fortville, Indiana, and is part of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation, which serves the northwest portion of Hancock County. Within the boundaries of the Mt. Vernon School Corporation are several small towns that comprise the school community. To the north are the towns of Fortville, McCordsville, Woodbury, and Mohawk. Mt. Comfort, Cumberland, and Philadelphia make up the southern part of the district. The small-town atmosphere is one of the attractions which brings families from the city to settle in the country. The Mt. Vernon School district is located near 3 major interstates, I-70, I-69, and I-465 which gives easy access for Hancock County residents to work in the surrounding cities such as Indianapolis, Muncie, and Anderson.

According to the most recent demographic data, Mt. Vernon High School has a current enrollment of 1455 students. Class cohort enrollment numbers are as follows: Cohort 2024 - 344 students; Cohort 2025 - 383 students; Cohort 2026 - 382 students; Cohort 2027 - 346 students. The minority population of Mt. Vernon High School is 25.7%. The current breakdown of our student population is as follows: White - 74.3%; Black/African-American - 13.3%; Multiracial - 5.7%; Hispanic - 4.7%; Asian - 2.0%. Mt. Vernon High School has 5.8% of students qualify as English Language Learners. 28% of our student population qualify as economically disadvantaged, and 13% of our student population qualify for special education services (Indiana Department of Education).

Mt. Vernon High School has committed to implementing Professional Learning Communities within our school and all other schools in the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation. We have committed to the vision that all students can and will learn at high levels and have actively taken steps to make that vision a reality.

## **Mt. Vernon HES Plan**

### **Maintenance Plan**

The mission of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon High School is to Engage, Educate, and Empower today's students to seize tomorrow's opportunities. Our vision states, "Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is where parents choose to send their children, students are successful, highly qualified personnel desire to work, and the community is proud to support. We are committed to serving a diverse population in a safe, secure, and challenging learning environment where students are engaged in a rigorous, relevant, and technologically-enhanced curriculum. Student success is nurtured through diverse instructional methods enabled by partnerships fostered between students, parents, school, and community. A strategic and fiscally responsible approach ensures a sustainable, highly effective learning experience inside and outside the classroom. We respect the uniqueness of each student as we engage, educate, and empower them to seize their futures as responsible members of society." All members of the school community have worked to create an environment where the core values and beliefs that are included within our mission and vision are brought to fruition.

To provide our students with a rigorous, relevant, and technology-enhanced curriculum, our staff has worked to set learning goals by developing "Essential Learnings" (ELs), which provide a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all our students. Staff have also developed common formative and summative assessments for these essential learnings so that progress toward mastery of those learning targets can be measured and monitored so we can ensure that all students are progressing toward high levels of learning.

Analysis of student results data drives our work to intervene when students have not yet mastered the targeted essential learnings and enrich learning when they have mastered it. This data analysis also helps to guide our own professional development as we can use it to help pinpoint and identify what forms of professional development would be the most impactful for our students' learning.

To provide the time and opportunity for a collaborative culture and a collective responsibility for our students, MVCSC and Mt. Vernon High School operate on an "Early Release" schedule each Wednesday throughout the school year, except for the first and last Wednesday of the school year. Each MVCSC school dismisses students 45 minutes early. After dismissal, teachers meet with their Professional Learning Community (PLC) teams and engage in the activities of a PLC. Each PLC's work is guided by an "Instructional Planning Sheet," which provides a framework for the teams to address the four essential questions of the PLC process. This includes collaborative teams selecting an essential learning to focus upon and evaluating the curriculum to ensure that it will fully address that given learning target, utilizing common formative assessments to measure the students' learning, reviewing and analyzing achievement data of students from assessments, determining next steps for teaching and learning based on the data, and/or identifying the most effective and powerful instructional practices. By working in this collaborative manner, PLC teams can work together to ensure that ALL our students can progress toward mastery and high levels of achievement.

Teachers at each grade level have identified essential learning targets for content areas. They have also connected those essential learning targets to prioritized state standards. Collaborative team members work to track progress on developed common formative assessments and common summative assessments. These PLC teams use one-stop data sheets

and/or shared agenda documents for planning and as an assessment data/progress monitoring tool. The PLC teams use the data to determine which students have mastered the Essential Learning targets, need additional instruction and interventions, or need enrichment activities. Teachers also use the assessment data to determine if adjustments need to be made to their instructional strategies and practices. When students are identified as needing additional support, the PLC team establishes research-based interventions to implement as part of our Core Intervention approach and may determine a need to move the student into interventions at the Tier II level. This could include working with a math or reading specialist to provide differentiated instruction outside the core math and reading instruction. Students receiving interventions are reassessed, and their progress is monitored to determine if interventions have been effective in helping students master learning targets. Mt. Vernon High School will maintain performance in this area by designating 45 minutes weekly for PLC team meeting time. Additionally, school administrators will continue to monitor the teams' work and provide instructional support to teachers to ensure that all students achieve at high levels.

### **HRS Level 1: A Safe, Supportive, and Collaborative Culture**

We have created leadership teams to ensure a safe, supportive, and collaborative culture at MVCSC and Mt. Vernon High School. Leadership team members comprise one teacher from each grade level, one special education teacher/special area teacher, and the building-level administration. Leadership teams meet at least monthly and as needed to support and communicate various district and school-based initiatives. After each meeting, the team members meet with their grade level team to ensure all have a voice in the decision-making process. The leadership team is asked to provide feedback to the building administration to ensure supportive

and collaborative decisions are made. Often, consensus is used to make decisions. When decisions are made, the problem/need is identified, and guiding principles are used when the team makes a declaration. The leadership team also meets to review data, including surveys, behavior data, and school improvement goals.

The leadership team has been instrumental to the climate and culture at MVCSC and Mt. Vernon High School. This team has created a framework and opportunity to ensure all voices are heard and valued. The Mt. Vernon High School leadership team has also taken the lead during PLC time each Wednesday. A PLC team leader facilitates the discussion, ensuring the team is following the norms they created as well as the agenda that guides their PLC time.

In addition to the leadership team, collaborative teams regularly meet to discuss common issues regarding curriculum, assessment, instruction, and the achievement of all students. Teams meet in Professional Learning Communities weekly on Wednesdays for 45 minutes. During this time, each team is engaged in the activities of a PLC. They review common formative assessments, discuss instructional practices that worked, and work to ensure that all students are learning at high levels. Pre, post, and post-post assessment data is recorded for all essential learnings (ELs) that are cycled by the collaborative team. If teams are not cycling an EL, the post-assessment data is still recorded to track progress toward mastery of ELs.

District-wide collaborative teams met over the summer to review proficiency scales and success criteria and to update CFAs to align with the recently adopted Math and ELA curriculum. During this meeting, teams will review and scale their essential learnings and build scaled common formative assessments. The district-wide collaborative teams meet quarterly at the elementary level and, as needed, at the secondary level throughout the school year to continue this work.

As mentioned above, our PLC teams use Instructional Planning Sheets, a progress-monitoring tool, to organize and evaluate assessment data. The PLC teams use the data to determine which students have mastered the Essential Learning targets, need additional instruction and interventions, or need enrichment activities. Teachers also use the assessment data to determine if adjustments need to be made to their instructional strategies and practices. These data sheets are shared with key stakeholders in each building. For example, the special education team, specialists, and administration have access to all Instructional Planning Sheets, allowing those staff members to monitor progress, provide feedback, and analyze progress.

### **HRS Level 2: Effective Teaching in Every Classroom**

We will continue to build our collective understanding of *The New Art and Science of Teaching* (NASoT) framework. *The goal is to create an instructional model using these research-based strategies.* In July 2021, the newly hired specialists in the district spent a full day learning about this framework. We also trained all administrators and some teacher-leaders on the NASoT framework in the fall of 2021. As of the summer of 2024, we have aligned our teacher evaluation rubric and walkthrough tool with the NASoT research base.

MVCSC will use this new rubric for teacher evaluation while utilizing Standards for Success to curate observations and evaluations. Teachers receive short “walkthrough” observations from their evaluators throughout the year as part of our evaluation process. MVCSC implements a walkthrough model directly related to the ten design areas in *The New Art and Science of Teaching*. This walkthrough tool, where only observed practices are noted, provides an instructional snapshot of what we hope to see in the classroom. This walkthrough model, which can be seen below, will continue to be used to gather data on instructional practices and to target professional development for faculty. A district-level committee and our principal

leadership team reviewed our teacher evaluation rubric to simplify the process and align it better with the NASoT research base in the spring of 2024.

*MVCSC Classroom Walkthrough Model*

<b>Ten Design Areas</b>	
✓ YES	<b>INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE</b>
	<b>1. Clear Learning Goals</b>
	- Learning objectives are clearly stated and visible to students.
	- Students demonstrate an understanding of the learning goals for the lesson.
	<b>2. Engagement Strategies</b>
	- Students actively participate in the lesson.
	- Engagement strategies promote student involvement.
	<b>3. Checking for Understanding</b>
	- The teacher checks for understanding at various points throughout the lesson.
	- Students respond to the teacher's use of assessment related to class progress toward learning goals.
	<b>4. Feedback and Support</b>
	- The teacher provides timely and specific feedback to students.
	- Students receive support or guidance when encountering difficulties.
	<b>5. Teacher-Student Interactions</b>
	- Teacher-student interactions demonstrate mutual respect and support.
	<b>6. Differentiated Instruction</b>
	- Instructional strategies are tailored to meet individual student needs.
	- The teacher provides additional support or challenges based on students' abilities.
	<b>7. Instructional Materials</b>
	- Instructional materials are aligned with the learning objective and student needs.
	- The teacher effectively utilizes technology or instructional resources to enhance instruction.
	<b>8. Student Collaboration</b>
	- Students are engaged in collaborative learning activities.
	- Students work together effectively to achieve learning goals.
	<b>9. Classroom Management</b>
	- Disruptive behavior that impedes learning is addressed.
	- Clear expectations and routines are established.
	<b>10. Technology Usage</b>
	- Technology is being used to enhance student learning

- Technology use is balanced for active engagement
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To orchestrate growth in teaching practices at the classroom level, the walkthrough tool / Instructional Snapshot will also be utilized as a framework for instructional rounds. The Instructional Snapshot approach to instructional rounds is different from the problem-based approach touted by [Elizabeth City](#), but school leadership teams have chosen to focus on one area of the NASoT Snapshot that is related to their individual school improvement plan during a given school year. In addition, as noted above, teachers have been provided professional development via webinars with Marzano to support the NASoT launch. Ongoing professional development needs will be identified as the PLC cycle highlights growth opportunities.

MVCSC has spent a few years launching Trust-Based Relationship Intervention (TBRI) at the elementary and middle school levels. This year, the teachers at Mt. Vernon High School will be trained to implement TBRI. This training supports the school's relationships and culture, tying directly to the context category and relationships design question in the NASoT framework.

### **Rounding Process**

School leadership teams will identify at least two times during the school year where all teachers will conduct instructional rounds. Small teams of teachers will visit a set number of classrooms or view pre-recorded lessons to observe behaviors related to the NASoT Snapshot. Post observation(s), the small teams will discuss what they saw during their approximately 10-minute visit. As the team leader (administration or specialists) facilitates the debriefing conversation, team members (teachers) will undoubtedly seek to understand how an observed colleague designed strategies to align with one or more of the elements from NASoT. Each

faculty member is provided with their own copy of The Handbook for the New Art and Science of Teaching as a resource.

### **Data Reviews and Growth**

Since 2022, we have implemented the NASoT instructional strategies for invitational improvement. Cumulative data from rounds and walkthroughs by administrators have been curated for faculty to track and to help see where their collective instructional strengths lie. Opportunities to dive deeper into the 43 elements within the ten design questions and the associated instructional strategies will be ongoing during regular staff meetings and building newsletters throughout the year. Our building administrators will use the data gathered through walkthroughs and instructional rounds to provide brief, targeted PD sessions as a part of regular faculty meetings to address areas of growth. For example, English and math teachers participate in professional development sessions to align our curriculum to prepare students better as Indiana transitions to using the SAT as the state exam. Finally, our schools will continue to seek to provide staff members with various professional development sessions related to creating more effective assessments, which will, in turn, produce more high-quality data to drive instructional decisions.

### **HRS Level 3: A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum**

Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon High School have developed a system for creating our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. We have a committee of teachers representing grade levels, teaching teams, and schools who volunteer to be a part of our Curriculum Collaborators committee. This committee's work started by identifying essential standards deemed by teachers to be critical for students to learn from each content area and grade level. These essential standards we termed "essential learnings" or ELs and these ELs have

resulted in the design of our Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum. The curriculum collaborator committee categorized ELs by nine-week quarter views and has curated our curriculum on our curriculum website that all staff can access. The ELs for each subject are broken down into quarter views to ensure teachers can teach the intended curriculum in the allotted time during the school year. Curriculum Collaborator committee members continue to meet periodically to unpack standards and adjust ELs as necessary.

Our individual school PLC teams collect student data on each of their grade level and content area ELs to determine if all students are learning. PLC teams use this data to create SMART goals to inform instruction and develop interventions for students who need remediation to meet proficiency. PLC teams reflect and celebrate student success and achievement of SMART goals. They acknowledge and note instructional practices that worked and what they want to do similarly or differently in the future. Our district has been exploring creating a district-wide data dashboard to display and monitor school and grade level progress toward meeting our vision that all students will learn at high levels. As teams choose ELs to cycle, they will use post-assessment data to target reteaching throughout the year. Teachers will provide reteaching on the ELs they cycle and reassess students for proficiency.

Mt Vernon High School has a tiered system for instruction to ensure all students learn at high levels. All four levels of instruction are built into the daily master schedule and have designated times throughout the school day. Below is a sample schedule:

<b>Period 1</b>	<b>Block 1 - Math</b>	<b>Tier I</b>
<b>Period 2</b>	<b>Block 2 - English</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>

<b>Period 3</b>	<b>Block 3 - Science or Elective</b>	<b>Tier 1</b>
<b>SRT</b>	<b>Student Resource Time</b>	<b>Tier I</b>
<b>Period 4</b>	<b>Block 4 - Success English (Tier II ) or Basic English (Tier III)</b>	<b>Tier II or Tier III</b>

Tier I instruction is the uninterrupted, high-quality classroom instruction that all students receive. This core instruction is standards-based, differentiated, and offers a variety of assessments that are used to monitor student progress toward mastery and guide instruction. Tier II instruction is supplemental instruction provided to students whose data shows a need for more intense instruction. Students in Tier II are given additional time to practice the strategies and skills with content specialists. Instruction in Flexible Groups is the differentiated instruction students receive based on their individual learning needs or paths. Some students receive enrichment or an extension of learning, while others receive remediation. Tier II instruction is a separate time for each team of teachers to provide individualized remediation for identified students. There are times when students need more intensive Tier III instruction. Tier III is a wrap-around approach to provide identified students with the most intensive instructional support. Tier III instruction is in addition to the Tier I and Tier II supports in place and can occur at a greater frequency and/or a longer duration than Tier II.

All buildings have hired two additional faculty members to serve as specialists. One was to focus on reading, and one on math. These specialists work with grade-level teams and their students to provide targeted Tier II instruction based on students' needs to learn the established ELs. Students who do not respond to Tier I through Tier II instruction will be referred for Tier III support and/or intensified special education services, which will provide an array of individualized instruction for identified students. Tier III support will be given outside of Tier I

and Tier II time. This support will be provided by trained specialists and students will be progress monitored to track the effectiveness of the intervention.

Mt. Vernon High School has data review meetings each quarter to review data and determine placements in Tier II and Tier III. During these data analysis discussions, teams may adjust the intervention, continue the intervention, or dismiss it if the student has shown mastery. All progress monitoring will be reviewed in those meetings.

## **GROWTH PLAN**

The mission of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation is to “Engage, Educate, and Empower today’s students to seize tomorrow’s opportunities.” This mission is the foundation on which Mt. Vernon High School has built its core belief that all students can learn at high levels. As a staff and school community, Mt. Vernon High School recognizes that while we certainly have areas of strength, we also have areas where we can continue to improve. For the purposes of this plan, we have identified two specific areas to focus on for the 2024-2025 school year. Two areas of growth for Mt. Vernon High School are 2.6 *Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching* and 3.4 *The school establishes clear and measurable goals that are focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement at the school level.*

### **First Area of Growth**

*2.6 Teachers have opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching.*

***Goal: 100% of teachers at Mt. Vernon High School will observe another teacher, reflect on the observation, and discuss the observation and reflection with peers during the 24-25 school year.***

During the 2023-2024 school year, all high school teachers observed two other teachers and then participated in discussions about the observation and effective teaching practices. Marzano emphasizes the importance of this process when he states, “This process has the potential to expand individual teacher practice schoolwide and cultivate collaboration regarding instructional practice” (2018). John Hattie notes that collective teacher efficacy and teacher self-efficacy have a significant impact on student achievement. Instructional rounds allow teachers to observe, reflect, and discuss teaching, supporting their own self-efficacy and collective efficacy benefiting students (2009). During the instructional rounds, teachers reflected on what they observed that affirmed what they do in the classroom, what they would like to know more about, and what they observed that they would like to try in their classrooms. Additionally, teachers use *The Handbook for The New Art and Science of Teaching* as a resource for a common instructional language and research-based instructional practices (2019). *The Handbook for The New Art and Science of Teaching* is also a foundation for classroom walkthroughs, providing additional opportunities for teachers and administrators to discuss research-based instructional practices (2019). Finally, all teachers had opportunities to discuss student data and effective instructional practices during weekly PLC meetings.

## **Second Area of Growth**

*3.4 The school establishes clear and measurable goals that are focused on critical needs regarding improving overall student achievement at the school level.*

***Goal: 100% of teachers will establish measurable essential learning goals with their PLC teams during the 2024-2025 school year.***

PLC teams will establish SMART goals for each Essential Learning. Teachers will review data common assessment data to determine achievement gaps. Teachers will work collaboratively with their PLC teams to determine which students need reteaching, interventions, or enrichment. Additionally, teachers will work collaboratively to determine the most effective instructional strategies that support student learning.

**School-Wide Goals:** The work of the PLC teams will support school-wide achievement goals to improve SAT scores in EBRW by 5%, math by 10%, and special education by 5% in both EBRW and math. **SAT Passrate Goals: EBRW - 68%, Math 36%, Special Education EBRW 28%, Special Education Math 10%.**

SAT Results						
MVHS EBRW						State Average
	EBRW Below Benchmark	EBRW Approaching Benchmark	EBRW At Benchmark	EBRW Total Tested	EBRW Benchmark %	EBRW Benchmark %
2022-2023	114	43	222	379	58.60%	50.50%
2023-2024	98	40	235	373	63%	52.8%
MVHS Math						State Average
	Math Below Benchmark	Math Approaching Benchmark	Math At Benchmark	Math Total Tested	Math Benchmark %	Math Benchmark %
2022-2023	131	103	145	379	38.30%	30.70%
2023-2024	144	133	96	373	26%	25.2%

SAT	2022 -2023	202 2 -2023	2022 -2023	2022 -2023	2023 -2024	2023 -2024	2023 -2024	2023 -2024
Demographic Performance Data	MVHS EBRW	State Average EBRW	MVHS Math	State Average Math	MVHS EBRW	State Average EBRW	MVHS Math	State Average Math
American Indian	***	50.30%	***	30.20%	***	47.30%	***	19.40%
Asian	75%	63.70%	66.70%	53.00%	***	66.00%	***	51.30%
Black	46.30%	26.20%	19.50%	9.20%	30.20%	27.20%	9.40%	7.40%
Hispanic	41.20%	34.10%	17.60%	16.20%	59.10%	35.80%	31.80%	13.30%
Multiracial	66.70%	46.90%	50.00%	24.70%	60.00%	48.80%	5%	19.00%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	***	36.00%	***	22.70%	***	39.80%	***	21.60%
White	60.10%	57.70%	39.90%	36.90%	70.30%	59.50%	30.00%	30.40%
Paid meals	63.10%	61.20%	44.00%	40.80%	70.30%	62.00%	30.40%	33.90%
Free/Reduced price meals	45.40%	34.20%	21.60%	15.40%	45.50%	36.40%	14.50%	12.10%
General Education	65.10%	55.50%	43.40%	34.20%	68.70%	56.80%	28.80%	28.10%
Special Education	12.80%	15.70%	2.10%	6.60%	23.40%	17.00%	4.50%	4.90%
Non-English Language Learner	59.50%	52.40%	37.30%	31.80%	65.30%	54.30%	26.60%	26.50%
English Language Learner	35.70%	7.60%	64.30%	5.10%	12.50%	8.60%	6.30%	3.10%
Female	65.50%	53.00%	37.60%	28.20%	62.10%	53.30%	22.40%	23.50%
Male	51.40%	48.10%	38.90%	33.20%	63.80%	50.40%	28.60%	26.90%
<b>All Students</b>	<b>58.60%</b>	<b>50.50%</b>	<b>38.30%</b>	<b>30.70%</b>	<b>63.00%</b>	<b>51.80%</b>	<b>25.70%</b>	<b>25.20%</b>

### CONCLUSION

The mission of the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation and Mt. Vernon High School is to “Engage, Educate, and Empower today’s students to seize tomorrow’s opportunities. By working on the identified indicators throughout this next school year, Mt. Vernon High School staff will be able to promote and ensure high levels of learning for all students.

## REFERENCES

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