

The Mind of the Middle-Schooler

Hartford Performs and Hartford Public Schools



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Hartford Public Schools
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District Model For Excellence

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022

MISSION

Inspire and prepare ALL students to create their own success in and beyond school.

VISION

HPS students will transform their world.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES



Teaching & Learning

Guarantee that students are provided rigorous instruction and the skills, knowledge, voice and social emotional support they need to graduate ready for college.



Family & Community Partnerships

Guarantee mutually beneficial learning-focused partnerships with families, businesses, government, faith-based partners, higher education, and the community.



Operational Effectiveness

Guarantee that resources, initiatives and operations minimize redundancies, maximize efficiencies, and support excellent teaching and learning.



School Culture & Climate

Guarantee that ALL students feel safe and valued at school.

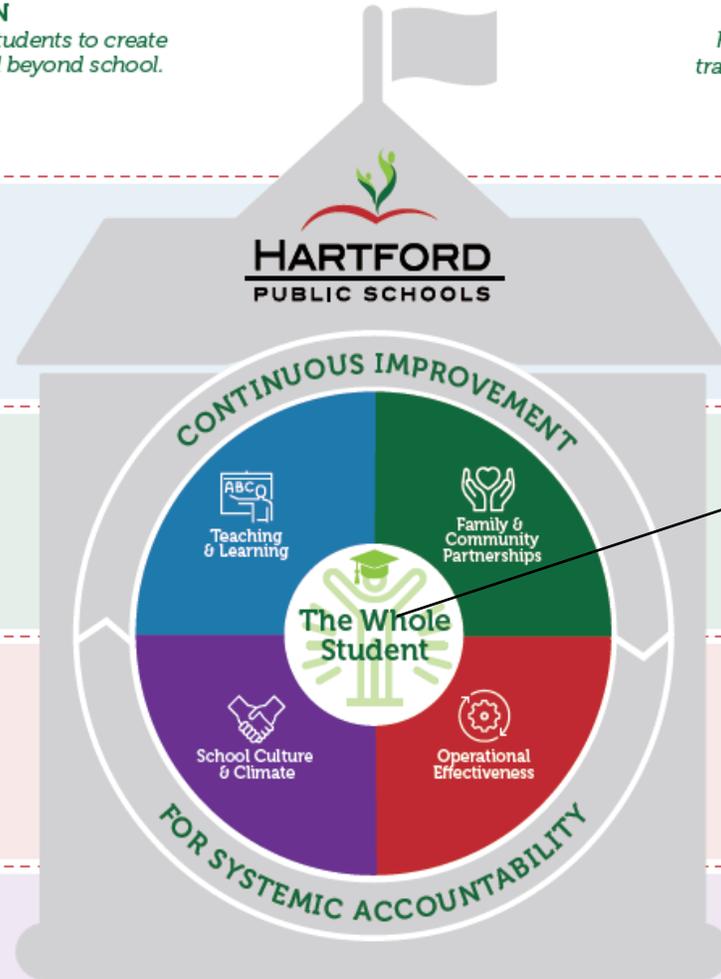
MAJOR GOALS

1. Increase ELA proficiency in grade 3 at or above grade level 22 percentage points by 2022
2. Increase graduation rate 9 percentage points by 2022

3. Progressively work towards creating community schools at all school sites by 2022

4. Work towards a balanced and equitable district budget for long-term financial sustainability by 2022

5. Decrease chronic absenteeism 7 percentage points by 2022
6. Increase student perceptions of feeling safe and valued at school by 2022



Arts and Wellness

Quick Self-Reflection

► Stop and Jot

1. Briefly jot down a time when you had a successful middle school lesson and what you think made it successful.

2. Briefly jot down a time when you had a middle school lesson that was challenging and what made it challenging.

► Turn and Talk to a table partner and share your reflections/memories – about 2 minutes each.



Grades 6-8

How the **MIND** of a **MIDDLE SCHOOLER** works

Middle school students typically have an attention span of **10-12** minutes.

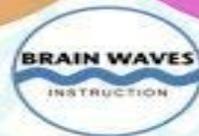
The brain growth that occurs between the ages of **10-15** is the 2nd greatest in human life.

Teens learn best through **interaction** and activity.

Adolescents misinterpret emotions and instructions up to **40%** of the time.

Middle schoolers retain **5-7** bits of information at a time.

Adolescents need **9+** hours of sleep per night to function best.



- ▶ The average middle school student has an attention span of 10-12 minutes.



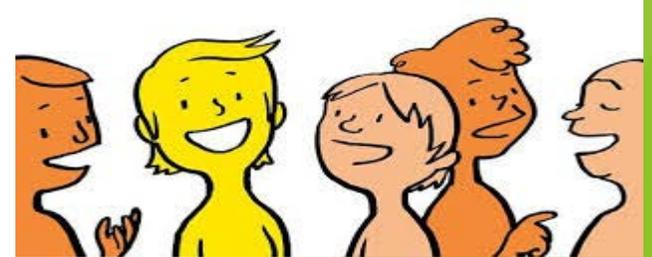
Here are some ways to structure lessons:

1. Teach mini-lessons and then give students an opportunity to change tasks so that they can practice and demonstrate their learning
2. Provide as many hands-on activities as possible during each lesson
3. Lead students through quick stretching exercises every 10 minutes
4. Reset students' attention span by providing brain breaks several times throughout a class period
5. Structure the class more like an elementary classroom and less like a college seminar
6. Purposefully create lesson plans with short activities rather than one long lecture
7. Have students swap seats with another student in the classroom every 10 minutes to reset their learning clocks
8. Create classroom centers or stations and have students rotate around the classroom

- ▶ Middle-schoolers learn best through interaction and activity.
- ▶ Adolescents need real opportunities to talk about learning.
- ▶ If we don't build in chances for students to talk in our classes, they'll talk anyway. Talking and interacting is how many of them make sense of the world and what we're teaching them.

Some Strategies:

1. Break up instruction with opportunities for students to turn and talk to classmates
2. Create lessons with a ton of variety
3. Infuse lots of small group activities into the instruction
4. Encourage students to work with partners to demonstrate their learning
5. Hold classroom debates about critical topics
6. Incorporate art, music, and movement into lessons



▶ BIG STRATEGIES: FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- ▶ *1. Keep your consequences as minimal as possible.*
- ▶ *2. Appropriate curriculum is a classroom management strategy.*
- ▶ *3. Rehearse transitions.*

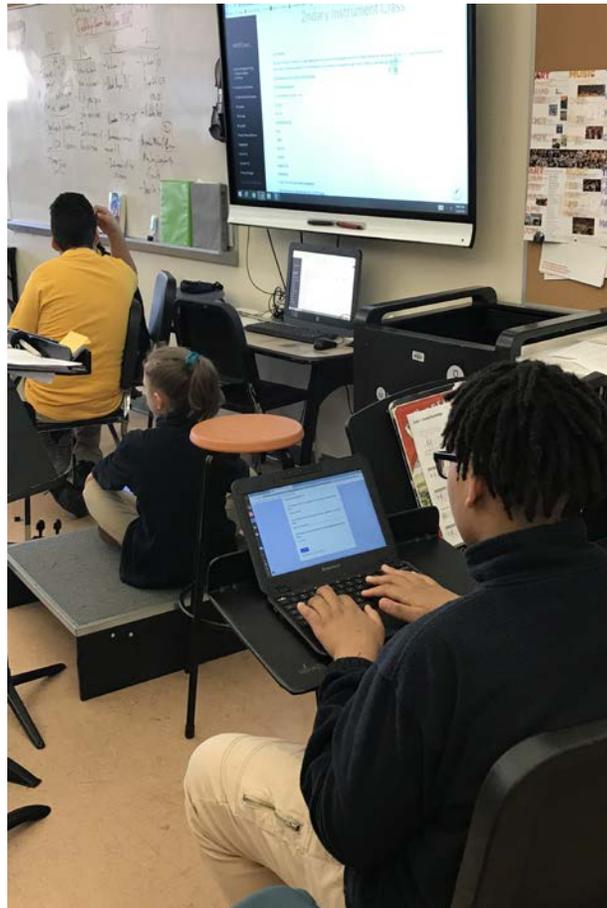
▶ LITTLE THINGS: QUICK INTERVENTIONS THAT SUPPORT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- ▶ *1. Give students choices*
- ▶ *2. Show students that it pays to make good choices.*
- ▶ *3. Build content-related anticipation.*
- ▶ *4. Find things to appreciate.*
- ▶ *5. Ramp up your enthusiasm.*
- ▶ *6. Publicly announce classroom management goals.*
- ▶ *7. Establish routines.*
- ▶ *8. State the truth when things go wrong.*

Respect
yourself,
your **peers**,
your **teacher**,
and your
surroundings

Noticings and Wonderings

“I notice.....” “I wonder.....”



Tap into Student Interests and Strengths



Circle Back

1. Circle back to the “challenging time” you shared in the beginning of the presentation. After hearing a few strategies that could work with Middle School students, what can you do next time to turn that challenge into a success?
2. Briefly jot down your ideas.
3. Turn and talk with your table partner.

