

# School Improvement Plan

September 2017



Thomas Jefferson Middle School

1600 Roosevelt Rd.

Valparaiso, IN 46383

*Home of the Vikings*



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## **Mission Statement**

Thomas Jefferson Middle School recognizes that each of our students comes to us with unique and individual needs. Our mission is to challenge all of our students to reach their greatest potential through a fully integrated curriculum. We encourage students to become lifelong learners by developing a passion for knowledge and a desire to enhance their community and the world around them. We strive to appreciate a diverse community that fosters mutual respect and social responsibility enhanced by a strong partnership between home, school and the community.

## **TJMS Core Values**

1. Be Respectful
2. Be Responsible
3. Be Supportive
4. Be Safe

## **WE BELIEVE ALL STUDENTS**

... benefit when school staff, parents, and community collaborate in the educational process.

... need to be provided a solid academic foundation which includes communication, research, and technology skills.

... need skills to adapt, compete, and achieve in an ever-changing society.

... need to feel valued and respected as individuals with diverse experiences and backgrounds while developing character, citizenship, and responsibility

## **Valparaiso Community Profile**

Thomas Jefferson Middle School is one of two middle schools located in the town of Valparaiso, Indiana. The community has seen steady growth over the past fifteen years, and plans are being made to meet the future needs of the city. As the Porter County Seat, Valparaiso strives to be a leader for the surrounding area. Located fifty-five miles east of Chicago, Illinois, the citizens of Valparaiso have strong ties to one of the largest cities in the United States. Valparaiso Community Schools provide an education for over 6,000 students every year.

The city of Valparaiso boasts a high employment rate compared to surrounding communities in Porter County, distinguishing it as a growing economic hub in Northwest Indiana. With this expansion in employment opportunities, the city has also seen a higher-than-average level of growth in its overall population. From the years 2000 through 2010, the city saw the population increase by over 16%, much higher than the state average of 7% growth during the same time period.

As of the 2010 Census, Valparaiso has a population of approximately 28,512 residents. Not only has the city experienced a general growth in population, it has also become slightly more diverse by a few percentage points in almost all categories. As of 2010, approximately 89.9% of the population is Caucasian, 3.3% African-American, 7.1% Hispanic, 2.1% Asian, 2.1% Multiracial, 2.6% other races.

Coping with expansion has kept local planners busy preparing projects to handle the increased needs of the community. Many new civic projects have been completed, including the construction of the new Porter Regional Hospital and multiple downtown amenities (such as Central Park Plaza and the most recent addition, the William E. Urschel Pavilion). In addition to these valuable attractions to the Valparaiso community, the city has also undergone a multitude of infrastructural changes including the implementation of roundabouts in areas that have experienced high volumes of traffic throughout the city.

## **Thomas Jefferson Middle School Profile**

Thomas Jefferson Middle School serves approximately 600 students from five of the eight elementary schools in the Valparaiso Community Schools district.

Approximately 75.8% of the student population is Caucasian, 5.9% African-American, 11.0% Hispanic, 2.4% Asian, 4.6% Multiracial, and 0.3% American Indian. Additionally, approximately 35.0% of the students were on free or reduced lunch for the 2016-2017 school year.

Under the leadership of one principal and one assistant principal, Thomas Jefferson Middle School is served by forty-four full-time and four part-time teachers, including 2 full-time guidance counselors and one part-time testing/career education coordinator. In addition, we have one full-time social worker, four full-time special education teachers, one part-time special education teacher, three instructional aides, four paraprofessionals, one media specialist, two visiting speech therapists, one registered nurse, one part-time resource officer, one full-time ELL director, one full time ELL aide, one full-time technology integration coach, and one full time computer technician. The student-to-teacher ratio remains below the Indiana state average of 17:1. Additionally, our building houses two full-time leadership/climate coordinators. Also housed at TJMS, is the Healthy Vikes Clinic, a school-based telemedicine program partnership between HealthLinc, Valparaiso Community Schools, and Managed Health Services. This program, available to all Valparaiso Community School students and staff, focuses on keeping children healthier and reducing the number of absences due to illness.

**Points of Pride at Thomas Jefferson Middle School**

- Academic excellence in the classroom
- 1:1 technology integration
- National and State Championship Teams in Science Olympiad
- 10 State Titles in a row for the TJMS Spell Bowl
- State Honors in The Junior Academic Super Bowl
- Conference Titles in numerous athletic teams
- Multiple initiatives in student enrichment and school climate
- Restorative Practices and PBIS incentives
- Before and After School Study Table Programs (daily)
- Team Peace and Team Lead Mentor Program and Philanthropy Boot Camp
- This Is Our Story (visual and musical performance)
- Arts – a – Budding (Best of Porter County visual arts display at Valparaiso University)
- Spring Into The Arts (community-wide art show sponsored Valparaiso Community Schools)

**Course Offerings**

The community can find more information on course curriculum on the [Thomas Jefferson Middle School website](#)

| <b>Core Academic Classes</b> | <b>Specialty Classes</b> | <b>Allied Arts</b>          | <b>Performing Arts</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| English/Language Arts        | Algebra                  | Art                         | Band                   |
| Communication Arts           | Biology                  | Digital Communications      | Choir                  |
| Math                         | English Lab              | Family & Consumer Science   | Orchestra              |
| Science                      | Math Lab                 | General Music/PLTW          |                        |
| Social Studies               | Spanish                  | Industrial Technology       |                        |
|                              | German                   | Physical Education / Health |                        |

**Extra-curricular Offerings**

| <b>Sports</b>                 | <b>Clubs &amp; Activities</b> | <b>Academic Clubs</b>         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Cross Country - 6,7,8         | Buddies Club                  | Junior Academic Super Bowl    |
| Football - 7,8                | Builder's Club                | Geography Bee                 |
| Volleyball - 7,8 (girls)      | Connection Group              | Science Olympiad              |
| Gymnastics - 6,7,8 (girls)    | Drama Club                    | Spell Bowl                    |
| Basketball - 7,8              | Games Club                    | National Junior Honor Society |
| Wrestling - 6,7,8             | New Student Greeter's Group   | Math Club                     |
| Track & Field - 6,7,8         | Student Council               | Media Technology Club         |
| Intramural Activities - 6,7,8 | Team Lead / Team Peace        | Yearbook Club                 |
| Polar Bear Club - 6,7,8       | Philanthropy Boot Camp        | Book Club                     |
| Tennis (6,7,8)                | Chinese Club                  | STEAM Club                    |

## Annual Performance Report for Thomas Jefferson Middle School

| Indicator  | 2012-2013 | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017  |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <b>A-F Accountability Grade</b>                            | <b>C</b>  | <b>C</b>  | <b>B</b>  | <b>B</b>  | <b>TBD</b> |
| Student Enrollment   | 724       | 716       | 670       | 585       | 625        |
| Grade 6 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Math Standard               | 87.5      | 89.6      | 70.1      | 72.5      | 70.8       |
| Grade 6 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Language Arts Standard      | 82.7      | 81.6      | 73.5      | 75.1      | 70.3       |
| Grade 6 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Science Standard            | 83.1      | 87.1      | 83.1      | 80.8      | 79.2       |
| Grade 7 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Math Standard               | 78.7      | 82.3      | 60        | 55.6      | 66.1       |
| Grade 7 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Language Arts Standard      | 76.7      | 80.2      | 82.5      | 71.8      | 82.3       |
| Grade 7 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Social Studies              | 77.6      | 79.8      | NA        | 74.0      | 80.2       |
| Grade 8 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Math Standard               | 83.2      | 85        | 66.8      | 58.6      | 71.1       |
| Grade 8 Percent Passing ISTEP+ Language Arts Standard      | 79.7      | 80.3      | 73        | 73.5      | 71.1       |
| Percent of 8th Graders in Algebra I                        | 21        | 24.1      | 28.2      | 26.2      | 29.9       |
| Pupil Enrollment to Certified Employee Ratio               | 15        | 14        | 13        | 12.7      | 14.2       |
| Attendance Rate  | 96.8      | 96.9      | 96.4      | 96.6      | 97.1       |
| Number of Students with More Than 10 Unexcused Days Absent | 3         | 7         | 14        | 4         | 6          |
| Number of Students absent greater than 10% of School Year  | 34        | 19        | 31        | 8         | 19         |
| Number of Students Suspended                               | 51        | 99        | 68        | 30        | 84         |
| Number of Students Expelled                                | 1         | 3         | 3         | 2         | 4          |
| Number of Out of School Suspensions                        | 42        | 118       | 75        | 44        | 71         |
| Number of In School Suspensions                            | 36        | 104       | 87        | 72        | 48         |

## Attendance

| Grade      | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | 2016-17 |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Grade 6    | 96.6%   | 97.2%   | 97.0%   | 97.3%   | 96.5%   | 96.8%   | 96.9%   |
| Grade 7    | 96.6%   | 96.4%   | 97.0%   | 96.7%   | 96.5%   | 96.6%   | 97.6%   |
| Grade 8    | 96.5%   | 96.6%   | 96.5%   | 96.8%   | 96.2%   | 96.5%   | 96.9%   |
| All Grades | 96.5%   | 96.8%   | 96.8%   | 96.9%   | 96.4%   | 96.6%   | 97.1%   |



| <b>Data Dashboard: <a href="#">Click Here</a> to view the TJMS Data Dashboard</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Additional Information</b>   |  |
| Curriculum Location and Description   | Curriculum Maps are found on our Valparaiso Community School Google Team Drives.   |
| Assessment in Addition to ISTEP   | VCS uses NWEA to monitor student growth throughout the year.   |
| Include Needs of all Learners   | Our Special Education Department is part of the Porter County Education Services. This department’s information is available <a href="#">online</a> .  |
| Opportunities for Parent Participation  | Parents are encouraged to participate in school and corporation events through newsletters, Skyward access, calendar events, and education tips. These are all available <a href="#">online</a> as well through Skyward and email.   |
| Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment   | <p>The VCS LEAD and SOS (Sources of Strength) Programs are designed to enhance positive school climate by embedding research-based protective factors and developmental assets throughout both the school and community. A growing body of evidence suggests that school climate is one of the major factors differentiating successful schools from those that are not. Improving school climate has been shown to be an asset for all schools; a large body of research suggests that school climate, connectedness, and developmental assets directly impact the academic and social-emotional success of students. VCS LEAD philosophy is founded on research-based developmental assets and the three biggest protective factors for kids: Authoritative schools and families, Connectedness, and Higher Purpose (altruism and service). These larger themes also include protective factors of resilience, empathy, accountability, and social intelligence.</p> <p>Extensive information about our program including our complete plan, newsletter, and three-pronged approach is available <a href="#">online</a>.</p> |
| Technology Initiatives  | As technology is ever present in today's society, Valparaiso Community Schools is working to expand technology and technology-based curriculum for all students in all grades and all schools. From mobile labs at VHS to iPads in kindergarten, VCS is striving to provide the best technologically-supported educational experience for its 6000+ students every day. <a href="#">Here is a link to our school's Technology page.</a>  |
| Professional Development Program Narrative  | <p>Valparaiso Community Schools (VCS) is devoting professional development time for programs in support of data-driven decision making in order to drive curriculum and instructional decision making with alignment of all systems. This work will support the implementation of data-driven decision making in the classroom at both school and district levels. This work will drive curriculum and instructional alignment.</p> <p>Our work throughout the 17-18 school year will move towards a data-driven culture through focus areas of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. implementing a data driven culture through the development and use of data dialogue team meetings</li> <li>2. training of administrators and teachers to utilize multiple forms of data to drive both curriculum and instructional decision making</li> <li>3. evaluating and realigning curriculum maps for continued academic achievement</li> </ol>  |
| Cultural Competencies   | VCS encourages both knowledge and support of cultural competencies through our <a href="#">Culture and Student Services Team</a> .   |

**Goals**

**GOAL 1: Students will demonstrate growth in language arts.**

**Benchmark Goals**

1. 2016-2017 – 55 % of students will increase NWEA language arts RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.
2. 2017-2018 – 56 % of students will increase NWEA language arts RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.
3. 2018-2019 – 57% of students will increase NWEA language arts RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.

| <b>SUPPORT DATA</b>  | <b>STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS</b>  | <b>LOCAL ASSESSMENTS</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student grades</li> <li>2. NWEA RIT scores</li> <li>3. ISTEP Pass Rates</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NWEA</li> <li>2. ISTEP</li> <li>3. PSAT</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NWEA</li> <li>2. Study Island</li> <li>3. Reading Counts</li> </ol> |

**SCHOOL - WIDE STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT ATTAINMENT OF LEARNING GOAL**

| TIER I STRATEGIES   | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE  | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES   |
|---|--|-------------------|----------|---|---|
|   |  | BEGIN             | END      |   |   |
| Grade level appropriate curriculum in Language Arts; Reading Counts; Cross-curricular integration of ELA skills | Classroom teachers and interventionists                              | August 2016       | May 2019 | NWEA data and/or classroom performance in all courses               | <p>Teachers will participate in Team/Department meetings to work on power standards, unpacking standards, curriculum mapping, and developing a pacing guide</p> <p>Reading Counts incentive program</p> <p>All disciplines will implement instructional strategies that reflect the ELA state standards</p> |
| TIER II STRATEGIES  | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE  | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES   |
|   |  | BEGIN             | END      |   |   |
| Low-growth students will be identified using prior ISTEP+ data and NWEA Fall scores.                            | Administrators, counselors, classroom teachers, and interventionists | August 2016       | May 2019 | Students show documented growth NWEA from Fall to Spring testing    | All staff members should be familiar with using NWEA and interpreting test data; NWEA student goal setting; Study Island, and Fast Forward  |
| Fast Forward  | Classroom Teachers, interventionists                                 | August 2017       | May 2020 | Student growth data in Fast Forward or classroom performance in ELA |   |

| TIER III STRATEGIES                              | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE   | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES   |
|--|---|-------------------|----------|---|---|
|  |   | BEGIN             | END      |   |   |
| Assignment to RTI Advisory program; Study tables | Administrators, classroom teachers, interventionists, school psychologist | August 2016       | May 2019 | Student growth data on NWEA or in classroom performance in ELA      | Interventionists and grade level teams will participate in developing small group/individualized plans of remediation and instruction |
| Fast Forward                                     | Classroom Teachers, interventionists                                      | August 2017       | May 2020 | Student growth data in Fast Forward or classroom performance in ELA |   |

RESEARCH/BEST PRACTICE FOR INTERVENTION:

NWEA: [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org) “Research Based Tools for Data Driven Education”

Study Island: “The Impact of Study Island as a Formative Assessment Tool” by Tyson Curtis Ostroski

Study Island: [www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com) “Study Island Scientific Based Overview”

## GOAL 2: Students will demonstrate growth in math.

### Benchmark Goals

1. 2016-2017 – 58% of students will increase NWEA math RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.
2. 2017-2018 – 59% of students will increase NWEA math RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.
3. 2018-2019 – 60% of students will increase NWEA math RIT scores by their projected growth goal from FALL to SPRING testing.

#### **SUPPORT DATA**

1. Student grades
2. NWEA RIT scores
3. ISTEP Pass Rates

#### **STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS**

1. NWEA
2. ISTEP
3. PSAT

#### **LOCAL ASSESSMENTS**

1. NWEA
2. Study Island
3. Reading Counts
4. Math XL

| TIER I STRATEGIES   | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE   | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES  |
|---|---|-------------------|----------|---|--|
|   |   | BEGIN             | END      |   |  |
| Grade level appropriate curriculum in Math; Cross-curricular integration of Math skills | Classroom teachers and interventionists                                   | August 2016       | May 2019 | NWEA data and/or classroom performance in all courses                   | Teachers will participate in Team/Department meetings to work on power standards, unpacking standards, curriculum mapping, and developing a pacing guide |
| Advisory grade checks   | Classroom Advisory Teachers   | August 2017       | May 2020 | Course Grades   | Reading Counts incentive program<br><br>All disciplines will implement instructional strategies that reflect the Math/ELA state standards                |
| TIER II STRATEGIES  | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE   | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES  |
|   |   | BEGIN             | END      |   |  |
| Low-growth students will be identified using prior ISTEP+ data and NWEA Fall scores.    | Administrators, counselors, classroom teachers, and interventionists      | August 2016       | May 2019 | Students show documented growth NWEA from Fall to Spring testing        | All staff members should be familiar with using NWEA and interpreting test data; NWEA student goal setting; Study Island, and Math XL                    |
| Math XL   | Classroom Teachers, interventionists                                      | August 2017       | May 2020 | Student Growth data in Math XL or student classroom performance in Math |  |
| TIER III STRATEGIES   | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE   | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |          | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT  | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRED RESOURCES  |
|   |   | BEGIN             | END      |   |  |
| Assignment to Math Lab, Integrated Science/Math Lab; RTI Advisory                       | Administrators, classroom teachers, interventionists, school psychologist | August 2016       | May 2019 | Student growth data on NWEA or in classroom performance in Math/ELA     | Interventionists and grade level teams will participate in developing small group/individualized plans of  |

|                       |                                      |             |          |  |                             |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| program; Study tables |                                      |             |          |  | remediation and instruction |
| Math XL               | Classroom Teachers, interventionists | August 2017 | May 2020 | Student growth data on Math XL or in classroom performance in Math |                             |

RESEARCH/BEST PRACTICE FOR INTERVENTION:

NWEA: [www.nwea.org](http://www.nwea.org) "Research Based Tools for Data Driven Education"

Study Island: "The Impact of Study Island as a Formative Assessment Tool" by Tyson Curtis Ostroski

Study Island: [www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com) "Study Island Scientific Based Overview"

## GOAL 3: The TJMS community will promote pro-social behaviors that will strengthen the values of respect, acceptance, and compassion.

### Benchmark Goals

1. The percentage of students demonstrating age appropriate (see PBIS core values) behavior in all classrooms by the end of the 2016-17 school year as measured by classroom and office behavior referrals will be at least 85%.
2. The percentage of students demonstrating age appropriate behavior in all classrooms by the end of the 2017-18 school year as measured by classroom and office behavior referrals will be at least 85%.
3. The percentage of students demonstrating age appropriate behavior in all classrooms by the end of the 2018-19 school year as measured by classroom and office behavior referrals will be at least 85%.

| <u>SUPPORT DATA</u>  | <u>STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS</u> | <u>LOCAL ASSESSMENTS</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Office referral data</li> <li>2. Incentive point records</li> <li>3. PBIS records</li> </ol> | N/A                             | N/A                      |

## SCHOOL-WIDE STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT ATTAINMENT OF LEARNING GOAL

| TIER I STRATEGIES   | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE                                       | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |           | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT   | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ REQUIRE RESOURCES  |
|---|---|-------------------|-----------|--|--|
|   |   | BEGIN             | END       |  |  |
| PBIS stations<br><br>Community circles<br>Safety drills<br>Extra-curricular call-outs<br>Team Lead and Mentor Program<br>Game Room<br>Pride Cards | TJMS staff<br><br>Culture and Student Services Team         | Aug. 2016         | June 2019 | Pride cards earned<br><br>Extracurricular involvement<br><br>Discipline referral rates (2 or fewer annually) | PBIS training<br><br>Restorative practices training<br><br>Restorative practices committee                                       |
| TIER II STRATEGIES  | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE                                       | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |           | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT   | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRE D RESOURCES   |
|   |   | BEGIN             | END       |  |  |
| Responsive circles for detention and other disciplinary issues.<br>Check-in/Check-out<br>Incentive Rewards  | Office staff<br><br>Guidance staff<br><br>Grade level teams | Aug. 2016         | June 2019 | Office referral rates<br><br>Guidance logs<br><br>Team/School incentive records                              | Sources of Strength Training<br><br>PBIS Tier II Committee<br><br>School Safety Committee<br><br>Restorative Practices Committee |
| TIER III STRATEGIES   | PERSON(S) ACCOUNTABLE                                       | TIMELINE – 3 YEAR |           | EVIDENCE OF ATTAINMENT   | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/REQUIRE D RESOURCES   |
|   |   | BEGIN             | END       |  |  |
| Restorative Circles for Suspended   | Guidance staff  | Aug 2016          | June 2019 | Guidance office records  | See Tier II<br><br>Restorative practices training  |

|  |                  |          |           |                    |                       |
|--|------------------|----------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Students' Re-entry   |                  |          |           |                    |                       |
| Behavior Intervention Plan   | Guidance Staff   | Aug 2017 | June 2020 | Behavior referrals | Restorative Practices |
| In-school suspension room  | Interventionists | Aug 2017 | June 2020 | Behavior referrals | Restorative practices |
| RESEARCH/BEST PRACTICE FOR INTERVENTION: PBIS Indiana, PBIS Learning Community, Safe Schools, Restorative Practices: Chuck Saufler, "Connecting Restorative Practices to Brain Research to Bullying Prevention." |                  |          |           |                    |                       |