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## **Summary of Summer Curriculum Work and Educator Professional Learning**

### **September 2025**

The summer offers educators an opportunity to engage in sustained curriculum development and revision, along with professional development. We are excited to share some of the many summer highlights from our collaborative work over the last several weeks.

#### **Summer Curriculum Projects**

- **32 summer curriculum projects** happened during July and August, including:
  - embed more authentic, real-life civic action examples into 8th grade Social Studies curriculum
  - revising English Language Arts curriculum maps at the high school level to further incorporate public speaking and grammar
  - incorporating manipulatives into MidSchool Math instruction
  - improving consistency and rigor in Food Science student learning assessments
  - development of World Language Unit Guides
  - redesigning Grade 4 Instrumental Music curriculum to include bells
  - and more!
- **over 100 educators participating** in summer curriculum work
- Competitive application process, emphasizing collaborative projects aligned with district priorities

We are so grateful to our educators for devoting their time and talents this summer to these important projects, and can't wait to see the impact on our students and colleagues over the course of this year.

#### **Summer Professional Learning:**

This summer, Westwood Public Schools offered four professional development courses for staff, developed and facilitated by Westwood educators:

- *Building Classroom Culture: Success through Strategies*, facilitated by Katherine Stewart, Thurston Middle School Humanities Department Head
- *Building a Math Community*, facilitated by Jen Gillis, Pine Hill Math Specialist, and Valerie Sharpe, Pine Hill Teacher
- *Deepen Your Science Understanding*, facilitated by Andrew Miller, WHS Science Chair, and Chris Taylor, WHS Science Teacher
- *The Well-Oiled Wolverine: Plan Ahead to Save Time* facilitated by Tom Millett, WHS Assistant Principal

We extend our biggest thanks to Katherine, Jen, Valerie, Andrew, Chris, and Tom for their investment in our continued learning; to the Professional Development Committee for their work to identify promising PD proposals and develop the Westwood PD Catalog; and to district Professional Development Coordinator Angela Wilson.

**New Teacher Orientation:**

On Wednesday, August 20th, we welcomed approximately 25 new staff (or current staff, returning to new roles this year) for our three-day New Teacher Orientation (NTO). New staff were greeted by our building leaders and Central Office staff, and enjoyed breakfast together; Superintendent Piwowar gave the morning's welcome and opening remarks. During NTO, educators learned about district technology, our systems for feedback and continuous growth, and the equity work Westwood is engaged in. As is tradition on Day 2, we took the learning "on the road," bringing our new folks together at Hale for a morning of community building and collaborative learning. That afternoon, new educators met their Westwood mentors over ice cream in the High School cafeteria courtyard. Finally, on the third day of NTO, educators reported to their school buildings, and school principals provided key information and time for questions and conversations at the school and grade level. Our newest Westwood staff bring a wealth of experiences, perspectives, and ideas, and we are excited to learn from them as they learn about our district and students.