

NITTANY VALLEY CS

1612 Norma St

Comprehensive Plan | 2021 - 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Nittany Valley Charter School is: To provide a flexible learning environment with small classes and a high teacher-student ratio where individualized instructional programs are designed to meet the needs of the whole child. We believe that school must be able to accommodate each child's individual learning style and developmental pace, and respond not only to their intellectual needs, but, equally importantly, to their emotional, social, and physical needs. To provide opportunities for students to interact with a variety of instructional materials, as well as to stress the importance of learning from each other, from adults, and from community resources. We believe experiences outside the traditional classroom setting are an essential component of learning. To involve parents as an integral part of the overall school program. To integrate the learning process with a personal understanding of the natural environment. Our vision is a school where individualized instruction, small classes, and a flexible, open classroom environment encourages the development of an intrinsic motivation to learn. This offers the opportunity for the academic success of all students and also contributes to the essential character traits of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-sufficiency. The need for this charter school comes from the broad spectrum of children's educational needs. The small classes and high teacher-student ratio at Nittany Valley Charter School make it possible for teachers to individually design each student's educational program. This creates an environment where all children can strive to reach their highest potential. We feel the charter school model is perfect for our mission. It gives Nittany Valley Charter School the autonomy to admit those students whose families are in agreement with the mission and are willing to uphold the requirements of the school's charter. That autonomy will also be important to hiring staff who must also be dedicated to the school's mission and all aspects of its implementation. The charter school will afford the opportunity of an option in education to all district students.

VISION STATEMENT

Vision Statement: At Nittany Valley Charter School, we hold a vision of every child learning in the way that is best for them and having a major role in determining what they will learn. As involved, valued learners they will develop a foundation for continued growth, both academically and as human beings. They will have the confidence to ask for help when needed and to work toward personal goals. Every student has limitations, strengths, and their own personal style. By developing those strengths and overcoming limitations, each child will move ahead in their own style to meet their potential.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE STATEMENTS

STUDENTS

Our students feel that it is important to be a part of our community and feel accomplished when they can give to others. Our students give back to the community in a number of ways, including our charity work to create Jared Boxes for ill children, making lap blankets for the homeless shelter, and partnering with our local park to help keep it clean and assist with maintenance. We seek out opportunities to include inter-generational experiences with our local retirement homes, participating in reading buddies, and giving several singing performances. We are very much looking forward to continuing these community service opportunities once the Covid restrictions relax! We are always working to influence and expose our students to the importance of being a positive member of society and a helping-hand in the community.

STAFF

First, we must understand every child holistically. Developing a relationship with each child is the first step. Once a child can feel comfortable and safe here, then they can “communicate” their needs in verbal and non-verbal ways. We must listen very closely to these communications and act upon them. Additionally, we cannot ignore the whole child as we concentrate on academics. Rather, we must first acknowledge the emotional, physical, and social needs of the child. Meeting those needs can help the student achieve academically. Second, we must value everyone and their ability to learn in a variety of ways. Our teaching should incorporate all of the various learning styles and allow the students to seek out those experiences that work for them. In this way, we can create active and engaged learners. To accommodate different learners, flexibility in our educational environment is key. We need teachers with many strengths and talents; we need a curriculum that easily adjusts to different interests and levels of skills; we need caring support personnel to provide for all of each child’s needs. Still, as a school we cannot do this alone. We must involve parents in all aspects of the school; we must reach out to the community to give and to receive; we must use resources provided locally, statewide, and internationally through the use of technology and interactions with others. Third, we should be forgiving of ourselves and others when we struggle to meet these needs. We must work together to find solutions to problems and learn from our mistakes. Our school is a work in progress. We continue to grow, adapt, and change, and we do so consciously.

ADMINISTRATION

Nittany Valley Charter School is a small school with 48 students, one Chief Executive Officer, and seven full-time certified teachers. Five of the teachers serve in the multi-grade classrooms, one assists with small group or one:one instruction, and one full-time Special Education teacher works to meet the needs of our identified and struggling students. We also employ one certified Speech Therapist, one Physical Education/Health teacher, one part-time Paraprofessional and one part-time certified School Nurse. We contract in several other certified therapists including Occupational, and Vision. and a School Psychologist. Our school serves grades Kindergarten through sixth grade. Our small charter school has used it's mission, established in 1998, to drive all decisions related to the education of our students while remaining current in the ever-growing changes in educational practices.

PARENTS

When you talk to parents of Nittany Valley Charter School, you will hear about “compassion”, “patience”, and “kindness”. NVCS provides many multi-age opportunities for interaction and learning between the grades. Teachers and students enjoy each other’s company and treat all individuals with thoughtfulness. Children feel valued by both students and teachers alike. But there is more than that. One parent said, “You gave my son a FUTURE and a love of learning he will carry forever. We will be forever grateful that we found NVCS.”

COMMUNITY

The student population reflects the community of this university town, with diverse cultural and national backgrounds, family education levels, and socio-economic standings. Yet the school provides a close-knit learning community, in large part due to the family emphasis with multiple siblings attending the school and mandatory parent participation. Pennsylvania State University is the main industry in our town as well as a great community resource. Nittany Valley Charter School students are able to attend plays, art shows, historical exhibits, and educational tours at the university.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Building/Group
Kara Martin	Administrator	Nittany Valley Charter School
Verna Etchells	Staff Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Brandy Prebble	Staff Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Kristin Lodge	Board Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Emily Strausbaugh	Board Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Heather McIntosh	Board Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Gina Thompson	Community Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
David Parmelee	Parent	Nittany Valley Charter School
Aimee Parmelee	Board Member	Nittany Valley Charter School
Kathleen Zdenek	Parent	Nittany Valley Charter School

ESTABLISHED PRIORITIES

Priority Statement	Outcome Category
We will use fundraising opportunities and create budgets that will allow us to be able to purchase newer technology equipment.	STEM
We will make math a focus for the upcoming years through discussions and trainings with teachers.	Mathematics
We will have the staff participate in SEL trainings, and hire a staff member who can manage this class for all students.	Professional learning Social emotional learning

ACTION PLAN AND STEPS

Evidence-based Strategy	
Use Progress Monitoring	
Measurable Goals	
Goal Nickname	Measurable Goal Statement (Smart Goal)
Math Score Increase	PSSA data will show an increase in proficient scores in math.

Action Step	Anticipated Start/Completion	Lead Person/Position	Materials/Resources/Supports Needed
Progress Monitoring in Math for all students at least three times/year	2021-08-24 - 2024-08-24	Kara Martin/ CEO	Purchase NWEA MAP Growth Software Training (year one) required to use this software program

Anticipated Outcome

We can use the data obtained to better drive our math instruction for each individual student, hoping to also see an increase in our PSSA math scores.

Monitoring/Evaluation

Three times yearly, the CEO and Director of Education will examine the testing data to verify growth.

Evidence-based Strategy

Responsive Classroom Approach to Learning

Measurable Goals

Goal Nickname	Measurable Goal Statement (Smart Goal)
SEL Training	Make social and emotional learning a priority and a part of our school's daily curriculum.
Hire an SEL Teacher	Have a class period devoted to social and emotional learning, taught by a qualified teacher.

Action Step	Anticipated Start/Completion	Lead Person/Position	Materials/Resources/Supports Needed
Hire an SEL Lead Teacher	2021-08-01 - 2021-08-30	Brandy Prebble/ Special Education Director	Resources: Salary and Benefits Materials: SEL classroom supplies (yoga mats, blocks, yoga straps, etc.)
Professional Development for all teachers: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School	2021-08-01 - 2022-08-01	Verna Etchells/Director of Education	Resource: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School books Materials: POP Charts for each classroom and develop lesson plans

Anticipated Outcome

Add SEL into our daily classroom settings as well as an SEL class period per classroom.

Monitoring/Evaluation

Brandy Prebble will monitor the progress of this teacher, and evaluate the student's ability to better self-regulate.

Evidence-based Strategy

Assessment Practices

Measurable Goals

Goal Nickname	Measurable Goal Statement (Smart Goal)
Technology	We will have enough chromebooks and ipads for the students to be able to complete online standardized

Goal Nickname**Measurable Goal Statement (Smart Goal)**

assessments.

Action Step**Anticipated
Start/Completion****Lead
Person/Position****Materials/Resources/Supports
Needed**

Fundraising and budget planning to have the funds available to purchase Chromebooks and ipads that are new enough to run the MAP Growth Software (and PSSA testing) for online assessments across classrooms.

2021-08-24 -
2023-06-30

Kara
Martin/CEO,
Business
Manager

Resources: Funds for new
technology Materials:
Chromebooks and ipads

Anticipated Outcome

To be able to have all of our students have access to newer technology in the classrooms and be able to take assessments online.

Monitoring/Evaluation

We will continue to monitor the technology needs of our students and teachers yearly.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STEPS AND TIMELINES:

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Professional Development Step	Anticipated Timeline
PSSA data will show an increase in proficient scores in math. (Math Score Increase)	Use	Progress	08/24/2021
	Progress	Monitoring in	-
	Monitoring	Math for all students at least three times/year	08/24/2024

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STEPS AND TIMELINES:

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Professional Development Step	Anticipated Timeline
Make social and emotional learning a priority and a part of our school's daily curriculum. (SEL Training)	Responsive Classroom Approach to Learning	Professional Development for all teachers: Carla	08/01/2021 -
Have a class period devoted to social and emotional learning, taught by a qualified teacher. (Hire an SEL Teacher)		Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School	08/01/2022

APPROVALS & SIGNATURES

Assurance of Quality and Accountability

Assurance of Quality and Accountability

The Building Administrator, Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer and President of the School Board will affirm the following statements.

We affirm that our school has developed a School Improvement Plan based upon a thorough review of the essential practices to advance educational programs and processes and improve student achievement.

We affirm that the action plans that we will be implementing address our specific school needs, include strategies that provide educational opportunities and instructional strategies for all students and each of the student groups, increases the amount and quality of learning time, and provides equity in the curriculum which may include programs, activities, and courses necessary to provide a well-rounded education. These plans address the needs of all children in the school, but particularly the needs of those at risk of not meeting the challenging State academic standards.

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that the school level plan has been duly reviewed by the Building Administrator, Superintendent of Schools and formally approved by the district's Board of Education, per guidelines required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

We hereby affirm and assure that this plan:

- Addresses all the **required components** prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Meets **ESSA requirements**
- Includes **at least one evidence-based strategy that meets one of the three highest levels of evidence outlined in ESSA**
- Has a **high probability of improving student outcomes**
- Has sufficient **LEA leadership and support to ensure successful implementation**

With this Assurance of Quality & Accountability, we request the Pennsylvania Department of Education grant formal approval to implement this plan.

School Board Minutes or Affirmation Statement

Signature (Entered Electronically and must have access to web application).

Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer

School Improvement Facilitator Signature

Building Principal Signature

ADDENDUM A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO INFORM PLAN

Strengths

Maintaining the employ of highly effective and qualified teachers should help to improve our students abilities and be reflected in our standardized test scores.

Continuing to have a student population who enjoy coming to school and keeping our attendance at a high level.

As one of the only local schools that continued with in-person learning last year, we feel our students received a better education than most who were distance learning.

Our Environmental Education Program provides us with opportunities to interact with a variety of people in our community which exposes students to many career paths as well as offering hands-on learning experiences to our students.

PSSA ELA scores indicate that we have a higher than average percent of students scoring in the Advanced category.

All students do show growth in the data from MAP testing for math.

Our environmental education program, which focuses on hands-on learning opportunities through weekly field trips based on our

Challenges

Purchasing newer technology so that our students can participate in online assessments.

Covid-19 continues to be one of the largest challenges for all schools.

A side effect of the pandemic and the closure of schools seems to have created a need for more focus on our social and emotional needs.

Teaching reading comprehension and writing skills to some of special education students remains a challenge.

Our PSSA math scores are lower than we would like.

Our PSSA data indicates that the subject of math is a relative weakness in our school.

Monetary challenges, related to our small school size/enrollment, do not always allow for the latest technology.

Our special education population has academic struggles.

Our technology to use for online standardized testing is outdated.

Strengths

rotating science curriculum, is a strength in our mission that helps our students better understand the world around them.

Our special education population is included in the regular education classes with their peers most of the school day.

A safe and nurturing school environment.

Our ESL students are doing well and are able to participate in the regular education programs.

Promote and sustain a positive school environment where all members feel welcomed, supported, and safe in school: socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically. This is what we do best!

Identify and address individual student learning needs.

Challenges

We would like to provide more supports for our Special Education population.

Engaging families to support learning has been a challenge, especially with Covid-19 restrictions.

Most Notable Observations/Patterns

Challenges	Discussion Point	Priority for Planning
A side effect of the pandemic and the closure of schools seems to have created a need for more focus on our social and emotional needs.	Prioritizing SEL Professional Training and SEL in the classrooms.	
Our PSSA data indicates that the subject of math is a relative weakness in our school.	Make math a focus for the upcoming years through discussions and trainings with teachers.	
Our technology to use for online standardized testing is outdated.	Fundraising and budgeting will focus on being able to meet the need for newer technology equipment.	
We would like to provide more supports for our Special Education population.	Hiring more supporting teachers to support special education students in the classroom.	

ADDENDUM B: ACTION PLAN

Action Plan: Use Progress Monitoring

Action Steps	Anticipated Start/Completion Date
Progress Monitoring in Math for all students at least three times/year	08/24/2021 - 08/24/2024

Monitoring/Evaluation	Anticipated Output
Three times yearly, the CEO and Director of Education will examine the testing data to verify growth.	We can use the data obtained to better drive our math instruction for each individual student, hoping to also see an increase in our PSSA math scores.

Material/Resources/Supports Needed	PD Step	Comm Step
Purchase NWEA MAP Growth Software Training (year one) required to use this software program	yes	no

Action Plan: Responsive Classroom Approach to Learning

Action Steps**Anticipated Start/Completion Date**

Hire an SEL Lead Teacher

08/01/2021 - 08/30/2021

Monitoring/Evaluation**Anticipated Output**

Brandy Prebble will monitor the progress of this teacher, and evaluate the student's ability to better self-regulate.

Add SEL into our daily classroom settings as well as an SEL class period per classroom.

Material/Resources/Supports Needed**PD Step****Comm Step**

Resources: Salary and Benefits Materials: SEL classroom supplies (yoga mats, blocks, yoga straps, etc.)

no

no



Action Steps**Anticipated Start/Completion Date**

Professional Development for all teachers: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School

08/01/2021 - 08/01/2022

Monitoring/Evaluation**Anticipated Output**

Brandy Prebble will monitor the progress of this teacher, and evaluate the student's ability to better self-regulate.

Add SEL into our daily classroom settings as well as an SEL class period per classroom.

Material/Resources/Supports Needed**PD Step****Comm Step**

Resource: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School books Materials: POP Charts for each classroom and develop lesson plans

yes

yes



Action Plan: Assessment Practices

Action Steps	Anticipated Start/Completion Date
Fundraising and budget planning to have the funds available to purchase Chromebooks and ipads that are new enough to run the MAP Growth Software (and PSSA testing) for online assessments across classrooms.	08/24/2021 - 06/30/2023

Monitoring/Evaluation	Anticipated Output
We will continue to monitor the technology needs of our students and teachers yearly.	To be able to have all of our students have access to newer technology in the classrooms and be able to take assessments online.

Material/Resources/Supports Needed	PD Step	Comm Step
Resources: Funds for new technology Materials: Chromebooks and ipads	no	yes

ADDENDUM C: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Professional Development Step	Anticipated Timeline
PSSA data will show an increase in proficient scores in math. (Math Score Increase)	Use	Progress	08/24/2021
	Progress	Monitoring in	-
	Monitoring	Math for all students at least three times/year	08/24/2024
Make social and emotional learning a priority and a part of our school's daily curriculum. (SEL Training)	Responsive Classroom Approach to Learning	Professional Development for all teachers: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School	08/01/2021
Have a class period devoted to social and emotional learning, taught by a qualified teacher. (Hire an SEL Teacher)		08/01/2022	

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Professional Development Step	Audience	Topics of Prof. Dev
SEL Training	All staff members	Read the book: Everyday SEL in Elementary School Meet and discuss the reading material. Develop lesson plans to include SEL in all classrooms. Carry-out lesson plans and meet again to discuss outcomes. Tweak lessons as needed, and determine the need for additional PD.

Evidence of Learning	Anticipated Timeframe	Lead Person/Position
Attendance, Sign-in sheets	08/01/2021 - 08/01/2023	Brandy Prebble

Danielson Framework Component Met in this Plan:	This Step meets the Requirements of State Required Trainings:
2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning	Teaching Diverse Learners in an Inclusive Setting
2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning	Teaching Diverse Learners in an Inclusive Setting

Professional Development Step	Audience	Topics of Prof. Dev
Progress Monitoring in Math	All Math teachers	Training provided by NWEA for using MAP Growth Software Creating Math Assessments for all students Printing Reports and analyzing the data to help drive instruction Meeting with other math teachers to discuss the data and share resources

Evidence of Learning**Anticipated Timeframe****Lead Person/Position**

Standardized testing scores improve

08/24/2021 - 06/30/2024

Verna Etchells

Danielson Framework Component Met in this Plan:**This Step meets the Requirements of State Required Trainings:**

3d: Using Assessment in Instruction

Teaching Diverse Learners in an Inclusive Setting

4a: Reflecting on Teaching

Teaching Diverse Learners in an Inclusive Setting



ADDENDUM D: ACTION PLAN COMMUNICATION

Measurable Goals	Action Plan Name	Communication Step	Anticipated Timeline
<p>Make social and emotional learning a priority and a part of our school's daily curriculum. (SEL Training)</p> <p>Have a class period devoted to social and emotional learning, taught by a qualified teacher. (Hire an SEL Teacher)</p>	<p>Responsive Classroom Approach to Learning</p>	<p>Professional Development for all teachers: Carla Tantillo Philibert's Everyday SEL in Elementary School</p>	<p>2021-08-01 - 2022-08-01</p>
<p>We will have enough chromebooks and ipads for the students to be able to complete online standardized assessments. (Technology)</p>	<p>Assessment Practices</p>	<p>Fundraising and budget planning to have the funds available to purchase Chromebooks and ipads that are new enough to run the MAP Growth Software (and PSSA testing) for online assessments across classrooms.</p>	<p>2021-08-24 - 2023-06-30</p>

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Communication Step	Audience	Topics/Message of Communication
SEL in the classrooms	Entire School Community	Mindful Movement Newsletter to report on SEL classes

Anticipated Timeframe	Frequency	Delivery Method
09/01/2021 - 05/01/2024	Monthly	Newsletter

Lead Person/Position
Kathleen Zdenek

Communication Step	Audience	Topics/Message of Communication
Fundraising Goals for Newer Technology in the classrooms	Entire School Community	Reporting on our Fundraising Goals

Anticipated Timeframe**Frequency****Delivery Method**

10/01/2021 - 05/26/2023

Quarterly

Newsletter

Lead Person/Position

Kara Martin



ADDENDUM E: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

Communication Step	Topics of Message	Mode	Audience	Anticipated Timeline
Share this plan on our website	Comprehensive Plan Review	website	School Community	10/29/2021
Share this plan with the NVCS Staff Members	Comprehensive Plan Ready for Review	Email	NVCS Staff Members	10/21/2021
Share this plan with the School Board for approval.	Comprehensive Plan Ready for Review	Email and Zoom Meeting	NVCS School Board Members	10/25/2021
