

**Bremen High School  
School Improvement Plan  
2011 Review and Revisions**

Beginning: 2011  
Ending: 2014

Administration

Principal: Mr. Bruce D. Jennings  
Assistant Principal: Mr. Nathan McKeand

School Improvement Team Co-Chairpersons

Mr. Chad Berger, Vocational Agriculture Teacher  
Mrs. Kristi Monesmith, English Teacher

School Improvement Team Faculty Members

Mrs. Melissa Manges, School Counselor  
Mr. Nate McKeand, Assistant Principal  
Mrs. Kathy Cullers, Math Teacher  
Mrs. Connie Newcomb, English Teacher  
Mr. Kevin Ecenbarger, Science Teacher  
Mr. Kyle Hanyzewski, Social Studies Teacher  
Mrs. Kate Johnson, Art Teacher

Student, Parent, Patron Involvement

BHS Student Council Members  
Business Leaders at BPS Strategic Planning Workshop  
Parents & Students Participating in Quality Assurance Review Process

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## **Introduction & School and Community Descriptions**

### **School Description:**

Bremen High School is a part of the Bremen Public School system. The school system is located in Marshall County, Indiana, approximately 130 miles north of Indianapolis, 60 miles west of Fort Wayne, and 95 miles east of Chicago. The total land area of the corporation is approximately 65 square miles, and includes the town of Bremen and German Township. The corporation is bordered by Plymouth, Union-North United (Laville H.S.), South Bend, Penn-Harris-Madison, Triton, and Wa-Nee (Northwood H.S.) school corporations.

Bremen High School receives students from the Bremen Elementary-Middle School, one of the few K-8 grade level facilities in Indiana. The complete K-12 school facility (all under one roof) is comprised of students drawn from German Township and the town of Bremen. The town is located ten miles northeast of the county seat of Plymouth, situated at the junction of US 6, and State Road 331. This location provides businesses and community members with easy access to the Indiana Toll Road, US 31, and US 30. Bremen has an active and ongoing industrial and economic development plan in operation to attract and maintain support to the community; however, the community has not been immune from a rise in unemployment during the past three years.

Bremen High School is categorized by the Department of Education, as a small rural school. It has a grade structure of 9 -12, and is staffed by 26.5 (FTE) teachers, 3.5 administrators, 1.5 guidance staff members, 0.5 media specialist, and 10 support personnel. Nevertheless, the number reflects a decline from the 2005-06 school year that resulted in the loss of a full time guidance counselor, a full time media specialist, a full time English/French teacher, and the elimination of the French Language Program. The social studies/PE position that was also lost in the 2005-06 school year, was gained back during the 2007-08 school year; however, it was again lost through attrition at the end of the 2010-11 school year. The office staff was also shrunk when the Principal's secretary/office manager retired at the end of 2010 and was not replaced.

Student enrollment has increased slightly during the past five years, averaging approximately 475 students per year over the past 10 years. The 2009-10 official enrollment was 482, and the enrollment at the beginning of 2011-12 is 511 students (the largest enrollment at BHS since the 1970s). The school graduated 113 seniors (including two foreign exchange students) in 2010 and will enrolled approximately 130 incoming freshmen for 2011-12. The calculated student-teacher ratio has increased to approximately 20:1 in 2011-12.

Bremen High School has received a Four Star School rating four times, and has been named a "Best Buy" High School by the Indiana Chamber of Commerce during 14 of the 15 years of the recognition program. In addition, at the conclusion of the 2010-11 school year, Bremen High School passed all categories of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and received a letter grade of "A" (exemplary progress) in the IDOE category placement for Public Law #221.

### **Cultural Characteristics:**

Bremen High School has experienced an increase in the number of students with Hispanic backgrounds. The employment opportunities that have existed during the past decade in and around the Bremen community have encouraged many families to relocate in our corporation.

The current ethnic/educational breakdown of the community is:

White Non Hispanic: 86%

Hispanic: 12%

Multi-Racial

02%

The cultural breakdown within Bremen High School:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Native Am.</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Muti-Racial</b>
1996-97	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	3.4%	95.2%	0.0%
1997-98	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	4.6%	94.0%	0.0%
1998-99	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	4.5%	94.3%	0.0%
1999-00	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	4.5%	93.9%	1.1%
2000-01	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	5.4%	94.1%	0.0%
2001-02	0.0%	0.6%	0.9%	4.7%	93.8%	0.0%
2002-03	0.0%	0.9%	0.6%	6.0%	92.5%	0.0%
2003-04	0.0%	0.2%	0.9%	5.6%	92.4%	0.9%
2004-05	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	9.8%	88.5%	1.1%
2005-06	0.0%	0.0%	0.06%	10.4%	88.0%	0.8%
2006-07	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%	10.7%	88.0%	0.0%
2007-08	0.0%	0.2%	0.8%	11.3%	85.7%	1.9%
2008-09	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	11.4%	85.7%	2.7%
2009-10	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	12.9%	85.9%	1.0%
2010-11	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	14.3%	84.0%	1.5%

### **Community Description:**

The area of the School Corporation is predominately prime agricultural land, producing livestock, poultry, corn, soybeans and wheat. In addition, Bremen has a long history of strong manufacturing with over fifty manufacturers operating today. Many different types of businesses find Bremen a favorable place to conduct their business activities. A combination of factors, including the availability of skilled labor, and the proximity to major markets support the advantages of Bremen's business climate.

The town of Bremen has a population of approximately 5,000. It is the second largest town in Marshall County. It is estimated that, in recent years, Bremen's population has been growing at an annual rate of less than one percent. Reports show that crime levels in the Bremen area are lower than Indiana's average.

### **Description of Educational Programs:**

Bremen High School has thirteen departments covering core content and elective course-offerings. Special programs exist in the areas of Special Education and English as a New Language. Each of these programs operates under a combination of inclusive and direct instruction. All curriculum areas are based on reviews of existing state standards conducted during the scheduled years of textbook adoption. Mathematics and Language Arts was the area of focus during the 2009-2010 school year, and science and social studies curriculum revision occurred in 2010-11. In 2009, BHS began the implementation of "The Eight Step Process" with an emphasis on instructional calendars and formative assessments. The transition to the Common Core Standards is a major emphasis for all departments during the next three years.

Bremen High School offers educational programs that result in an Academic Honors Diploma, Technical Honors Diploma, Core 40 Diploma, and a General Diploma based on attainment of the minimum state and local requirements, including the passage of Algebra & English 10 ECAs/GQE. In addition, the School Board has adopted policies allowing specific students who achieve at levels below the Diploma level, to

acquire a Certificate of Completion or Attendance, provided they have met standards established by a Case Conference Committee, or have met all other requirements except ECA/GQE completion. Remarkably, Bremen High School has rarely found it necessary to acquire a diploma waiver for seniors since remediation efforts have proven to be very successful.

Bremen High School has programs of study for college preparation, technical school preparation, and direct entry into the world of work. The high school has created a “Bremen Academy” program in “alternative education and credit retrieval” to assist students who are behind in credits. Since 2007-08, approximately forty-five students per year have acquired credits through the computer based “PLATO” instructional delivery system.

Bremen High School changed its approach to advance course work in 2006-07, by emphasizing dual credit courses. Although AP Spanish and AP Calculus are also BHS course offerings; five courses are currently offered for dual credit through the Advanced College Project associated with Indiana University and IUSB. These courses included ACP Calculus, ACP English Composition, ACP Literature, ACP Advanced Speech, and ACP Business Administration. We have supplemented these in-house dual credit courses with distance learning opportunities through various online school options including those offered by Indiana University, Ball State University, and the Indiana Academy in Muncie. This improves the transferability of credits earned to more colleges within the state. The ACP program compliments articulation agreements that are already in place with IVY Tech for students in our CAD/Industrial Technology and Vocational Agriculture programs. During the 2010-11 school year the Social Studies Department offered Honors World Civilizations, with plans to convert the curriculum to an ACP or AP World Civilizations program. An Honors U.S. History section is being offered in 2011-12 with the same plans (to convert the Honors class to an ACP or AP course), when they will also add Honors US History. By the 2015-16 school year the Social Studies Department hopes to offer ACP and/or AP courses in Economics, Government, US History, and World Civilizations.

Approximately thirty students (juniors and seniors) each year have access to the Elkhart Area Career Center for training in a wide variety of vocational programs, and students (juniors and seniors) can also complete on-the-job training through an Interdisciplinary Cooperative Education program. In addition, students are able to receive training and certification in Microsoft Systems Engineering through The Crossroads Academy in Plymouth. Finally, Bremen High School has partnered with The Crossing Alternative School in Nappanee for the purpose of student dropout recovery.

Bremen High School has operated under a trimester schedule for the past twelve years. The structure of the schedule follows five, seventy-minute class periods each day. Each term consists of a twelve-week grading period covering sixty school days. Instructional programs are also supported by a twenty-one minute “bonus period” at the start of three days each week. Each Thursday and Friday, teacher collaboration occurs in lieu of bonus period. The students arrive at school twenty-five minutes later each Thursday, and the students depart school twenty minutes early each Friday to provide this vital time for teachers to analyze student data and participate in professional development opportunities.

During the 2005–2006 school year, the Guidance Department conducted a review of their program and created a “Guidance Curriculum” by completion of the Gold Star guidance standards developed by the State. In 2007, the Bremen High School Guidance Department was recognized as a “Gold Star School.” The “Gold Star” status will be re-evaluated and renewed in 2011-12.

### **Curriculum Description and Location:**

Bremen High School offers a broad range of courses and programs. Courses within each of the thirteen

departments offer students entry-level opportunities and provide for advanced study. All courses are documented in a "Course and Program Guide" that is reviewed by the faculty and adopted by the Board of School Trustees on an annual basis. Courses are in place to allow students the opportunity to meet all state graduation requirements, as well as those established by the local school board. In addition, courses are offered which allow students to receive Core 40, Academic Honors, or Technical Honors designation on their diplomas and transcripts. Students must now acquire a minimum of forty-seven credits in order to be eligible for graduation. Under our current scheduling structure, all students have the opportunity to earn sixty credits over their high school career, without supplementing through summer school. All students can reach the Core 40 or Academic Honors Diploma level, if they remain on track and do not experience multiple failures.

Each course offered at the high school is supported by a complete written curriculum design developed by the faculty, and formally adopted by the Board of School Trustees. Each curriculum design begins with a study of the State (and now the Common Core) Standards and essential skills developed for the course. Following the identification of standards, the faculty develops objectives and activity designs that allow students to demonstrate competency on each standard. The staff has developed and revised "Power Standards" (essential skills) for all classes in the curriculum. During the 2009-10 school year, the School Corporation adopted the 8-Step Process for school success based on the book *"Closing the Achievement Gap: No Excuses"* by Patricia Davenport and Gerald Anderson. The English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies Departments have created Instructional Calendars and implemented the program that emphasizes the use of formative assessments to drive instruction. Faculty members of other departments have received 8-Step Process training and act in a supportive role.

The curriculum design also includes a description of the assessments that will be incorporated throughout the term of the course to assess student achievement of the standards. These assessments include a wide range of levels from formative assessments (i.e. simple quizzes) during class time to summative term examinations and/or associated Core 40, End-of-Course Exams.

Vertical articulation of the curriculum designs are reviewed prior to adoption by the Board of School Trustees. In addition, all academic programs are supported by, or enhanced by, a strong extra-curricular program covering athletics, clubs, fine arts, and academic teams.

The curriculum plans developed by each department allow students to experience introductory levels of learning, and then pursue in-depth, advanced study in each department area. Programs are in place for students who qualify for special education services, and Bremen High School operates under an inclusion model that has been in place for over twenty years. Special education students operate in the general education classrooms for all classes, unless the IEP ("Individual Education Plan") requires an alternate placement. Basic classes in English and math are offered through this setting. Students have access to two resource rooms throughout the school day for assistance as determined through their IEP's. ENL ("English as a New Language") students are offered ENL classes (based upon the results of LAS LINK assessments) during each term to develop English language skills. In addition, a resource study hall and/or bonus period is provided to support instruction in the content areas.

The Corporation has invested in a comprehensive reading software program to assess reading levels of students and/or provide instruction in reading to those students who have fallen behind in reading ability and comprehension. Use of this program has allowed students to show significant gains in reading level and comprehension over one term of instruction. "Merit" software replaced "Reading Plus" in 2009-10.

Vocational programs exist in Agriculture and Family & Consumer Sciences (FACS). In-depth vocational training is provided through the Elkhart Area Career Center and through an Interdisciplinary Cooperative

Education program involving local employers. Bremen High School also provides a structured vocational component for special education students.

Each staff member has a copy of the written curriculum plan associated with his/her department. A copy of each curriculum is submitted to each School Board member for review before formal adoption. Master copies of the complete curriculum are maintained in the high school office.

### **Assessments to Support the Plan:**

Bremen High School uses the following assessment instruments to evaluate the progress of students and to assist in planning program changes. These are supplemented with information obtained from formative assessments.

1. Core 40 ECAs: The fundamental assessments that impact the school and the corporation to the greatest extent are the End-of-Course Assessments in English 10 and Algebra I – The Graduation Qualifying Exam. Variances in the success of our students on these tests cause teachers in math and English to alter instructional strategies and techniques to improve performance. BHS also administers the state endorsed Biology End-of-Course Assessment.

2. Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT): This test is provided to both sophomores and juniors. During the 2008-09 school year, all sophomores and juniors took the PSAT assessment. It measures student performance skills in math, writing and verbal areas. Juniors use this test to prepare for the Scholastic Aptitude Test, and to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program. All sophomores and most juniors took this test in the fall of 2009 (and likewise in the fall of 2010).

3. Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) I and II, and Achievement Tests: The SAT is used for college application purposes. Students are assessed in verbal, math, and writing performance. Students generally begin taking this test in the junior year and continue through December of their senior year. This is the predominant college entrance test completed by our students. Members of our English Department provide an SAT preparation course prior to the school day each year.

4. American College Testing (ACT): The ACT provides a broader range of skill assessment for college admission purposes. It covers math, reading, science, and English. It is an alternative to the SAT for college applications. During the 2011-12 school year, Bremen High School will be participating in the IDOE state pilot program that will provide free assessments to all freshmen (EXPLORE assessment), sophomores (PLAN assessment), and juniors (ACT). In addition, juniors will experience the COMPASS placement assessment in February of 2012, and identified students will be assessed with the COMPASS diagnostics assessment in February of 2012.

5. ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery): This test is sponsored by the military and helps to identify interests for possible career and military placements. Bremen students take this test through the Elkhart Career Center and as juniors at Bremen High School. It is the final career related assessment given to assist students with post-secondary planning, and it will be offered to juniors in 2011 (as it was in 2010) as an alternative to the PSAT.

6. Freshmen complete an online career interest inventory when completing their required Career Unit as part of the new Planning for College & Careers course. The information obtained from this assessment helps to support the development of four-year plans.

7. Advanced Placement (AP) Test: Developed by The College Board, students who wish to acquire

advanced standing in college take these tests in May and submit the results to the colleges of their choice. These assessments are directly related to courses taught at a collegiate level. Any student who has enrolled in either a distance learning course, or who has completed an AP course through independent study can take these tests. AP Physics, AP Calculus, and AP Spanish are offered to BHS students.

8. Language Assessment Scales (LAS) Links: This test provides the school with information related to a student's oral language ability. English language learners' performance levels can be identified and proper program placement is facilitated. All ENL students have been assessed using this screening test. This test is now the only State-approved instrument for initial placement/screening of new language minority students.

9. Special Education Testing: The departmental staff conducts a variety of intelligence and performance tests that allow members of case conference committees to make informed decisions regarding placement and qualification for services. These tests vary according to the needs identified through the referral process. Typically, prior to testing, the RtI (Response to Intervention) Building-Based Team meets with each student and parent to be sure interventions have been implemented in an effort to increase achievement.

10. Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Testing: This assessment has been utilized (in the fall and spring) at the freshmen level since 2008. It is a state-aligned computerized adaptive assessment used (1) as a "universal screener" for Response to Interventions, (2) to identify the skills and concepts that individual students have learned, and (3) to diagnose instructional needs for individual students.

11. WorkEthic Certification: About 15% of the juniors and seniors participated in the "WorkEthic Certification" Program offered through Workforce Development and the State of Indiana during 2008-10. This assessment program served to document student performance in areas that are important for success in employment and in post-secondary education. This program has given us measurement data for many non-academic aspects of our mission statement and our expected learner outcomes. Regretfully, the State of Indiana is no longer supporting this program.

12. Local Assessments: In addition to all of the formal assessments listed above, the staff also provides a wide variety of formative and summative assessments to monitor student performance. These assessments include: homework, journals, notebooks, research papers, lab reports, outlines, reading summaries, essays, short-answer test items, and short quizzes to check levels of understanding.

13. Oral Presentations: Students are required to give oral presentations at every grade level, through English classes. In addition, students give presentations across the curriculum associated with assignments developed by individual teachers.

14. Projects & Products: Teachers supplement more formal assessments with hands-on experiences that allow students to demonstrate understanding. These take the form of performance tests, construction & model-making, power-point development, drawings, lab products, skill tests, role plays, video production and group projects.

A formal final-examination process is conducted at the conclusion of each 12-week term, either by testing or through project completion, and student performance results are then used to determine a student's final course grade.

## Statements:

Bremen High School's (and the Bremen Public Schools') Mission Statement (as revised in 2008):

The Bremen School community works collaboratively to provide a safe, nurturing environment where students are empowered academically and socially to succeed in life.

Core Values: (1) Mutual Respect, (2) Caring School Community, and (3) Great Expectations

### Mutual Respect:

- We will all support each other.
- We will show respect for self and all members of our school community.
- We will build trusting relationships.
- We will listen and value others' ideas/perspectives
- We will demonstrate honest communication.

### Caring School Community:

- We will emphasize teamwork.
- We will collaborate.
- We will involve the community in our schools and involve the school in the community.
- We will insure physical and emotional safety and security.
- We will celebrate growth and success.

### Great Expectations:

- We will commit to a proactive approach.
- We will remain optimistic through all challenges.
- We will engage our students in challenging curriculum.
- We will expect personal bests.

Vision of Expected Learner Outcomes:

## ACADEMIC PREPARATION:

### **Mathematic Skills**

A person is prepared in mathematics when he/she...

1. Mathematically calculates accurately
2. Possesses problem-solving and reasoning skills
3. Interprets and communicates data effectively

### **Language and Communication Skills**

A person is prepared in language and communication skills when he/she...

1. Reads proficiently and comprehends
2. Writes effectively
3. Communicates and listens effectively
4. Speaks coherently
5. Comprehends and follows directions

6. Interprets and communicates data effectively

### **Thinking Skills**

A person is prepared in this skill area when he/she...

1. Thinks critically and draws conclusions founded on research and a broad base of knowledge.
2. Integrates information and uses interdisciplinary approaches
3. Has learned how to learn
4. Continues personal development

### **Work Ethic and Social Skills**

A person is prepared for work in our society when he/she...

1. Demonstrates organization and responsibility for completing tasks on time.
2. Maintains a high level of attendance
3. Knows when and how to seek help
4. Perseveres and remains mentally and emotionally focused
5. Develops adaptability to keep up with future demands
6. Demonstrates teamwork and leadership skills
7. Demonstrates honesty, integrity and ethical behavior in all situations.
8. Works for the betterment of the school and community

### **Technological Skills**

A person is prepared to live in a technology based world when he/she...

1. Is computer literate
2. Is technologically literate

## **SOCIAL PREPARATION:**

### **Responsibility**

A person demonstrates responsibility when he/she...

1. Learns and assumes responsibility for his/her actions
2. Reaches decisions based on sound rationalizations
3. Understands and accepts both positive and negative consequences.
4. Actively and positively participates in society
5. Sets priorities and goals for the future and takes the necessary steps to reach them.
6. Is self-reliant and economically self-sufficient.

### **Respect**

A person demonstrates respect when he/she...

1. Shows respect for him/herself and others in all situations
2. Shows respect for those in positions of authority
3. Shows respect for personal property and the property of others
4. Calmly accepts and discusses differences of opinion, and works with others regardless of these differences.

### **Self-Control/Conflict Resolution**

A person demonstrates self-control and proper approaches to conflict resolution when he/she...

1. Exhibits control of actions and emotions
2. Appropriately resolves conflicts
3. Accepts constructive guidance
4. Manages stress effectively

### **A Student Takes A Positive, Active Role When He/She...**

1. Takes ownership in a community to make it a better place to live
2. Participates willingly and constructively, with good motives, as an informed citizen
3. Demonstrates empathy and concern for others

### **We believe that...**

1. Change will be a constant
2. The rate of change will increase in many aspects of people's lives
3. Education will emphasize life-long learning
4. More people will be self-employed and will be hired as needed
5. Competition and human interaction will become globally focused
6. Individuals will assume more responsibility for...
  - a. Themselves
  - b. The development of their communities
  - c. People in need and an aging population
7. Technology will be a dominant factor in most business and personal interactions.

## **Summary of Data Related to Current Status of Educational Programming**

### **1. Annual Performance Report Data**

#### **A. Attendance Data:**

Bremen High School has maintained an attendance rate that exceeds 96% each year over the past ten years. For the past four years, the attendance rate at Bremen High School has averaged 96.7%. This attendance rate, which exceeds the state average) is attributed to the strong attendance policy adopted by the Board of School Trustees and the consistent enforcement of this policy by the administration. A short-term incentive program has also existed for the purpose of enhancing the attendance rate. The program grants unique privileges to juniors and seniors who have maintained perfect attendance, passed the required ECAs, and avoided disciplinary consequences during each three weeks of the school year.

Note the attendance rate for the past four years:

2007-08	96.52%
2008-09	96.81%
2009-10	96.70%
2010-11	96.73%

**B. Graduation Rate:**

The State of Indiana established a new formula for the calculation of graduation rates beginning with the 2006 cohort group (Class of 2006). For example, the graduation rate for the Class of 2007 using the new formula was:

<b>cohort size=103, Graduates=83</b>	
Graduates	83
Still in Cohort	6
Dropout	7
Sp Ed Cert	4
GED	2
Course Completion	1
<b>Name</b>	<b>Grad Rate</b>
Bremen Senior High School	0.8058      0.8058= 83 / 103

This 80.58% graduation rate in 2007 has since been increased to 92.3% for the 2010 cohort group (compared to an 84.5% State graduate rate). The increase in this calculated retention rate was accomplished through a combination of early intervention and extensive counseling of students identified as at-risk.

**BHS Graduation Rates:**

Class of 2007	80.6%
Class of 2008	85.6%
Class of 2009	86.5%
Class of 2010	92.3%

**C. Adequate Yearly Progress Information:**

Bremen High School has met AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) standards every year since 2002 except 2006 and 2009. Each failed year was due to low graduation rates (in comparison to the target rate). In 2010-11, Bremen High School met AYP expectations with an overall 85% passing rate in English, a 90.0% passing rate in math, and a 92.3% graduation rate.

**D. Category Placement (Public Law #221) Information:**

Bremen High School was rated an “A” school for 2010-11, and the 86.6% passing performance combined with a 10.4% improvement rate indicated that Bremen High School has made “exemplary progress.”

## E. Diploma Types:

The structure of our current schedule supports attainment of the Core 40 Diploma and/or the Honors Diploma (Technical and/or Academic). Through encouragement by the staff and Guidance Department, based on recommendations received from college admissions counselors, students are being guided into the Core 40 courses unless a failure situation occurs.

Cohort Group	Core 40 Diploma	Honors Diploma	General Diploma
2010 Cohort	68.5%	20.4%	11.1%
2009 Cohort	54.2%	34.4%	11.5%
2008 Cohort	38.3%	32.7%	29.0%
2007 Cohort	50.6%	31.3%	18.1%
2006 Cohort	37.3%	41.2%	21.6%

## F. Advanced Placement Exam Participation & Passing Rate

The 2010 Cohort Group had 3.7% participate in an AP Exam, and 1.9% passed with a 3, 4, or 5 score.

### Conclusions Drawn From Data:

#### 1. Curriculum Support of Educational Standards

All curriculum documents covering the core areas of English, math, social studies, and science, and the remaining elective areas, have been completed for the second time, using the Indiana Standards documentation supplied by the state. Each document begins with a description of the standards and all successive unit designs and activities relate directly back to the standards. The transition to the Common Core Standards has begun.

Members of the staff have received the following support materials and training to assist with instruction:

- a. Rubrics for Writing, Research Papers, and Oral Presentations. This document was locally developed by the members of our English Department. The information was presented through a formal in-service activity attended by the full faculty. The information from this project reinforced an earlier corporation-wide emphasis on "Writing Across the Curriculum."
- b. During the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years, members of the English and Special Education Departments implemented the "Reading Plus" Program into their instructional curriculum to assist low performing students with reading fluency and comprehension improvement.
- c. We also revised our math curriculum to provide low-performing students with extra support and direct instruction in basic computational skills required to be successful on the GQE. In addition, a Math Lab remedial course was added in 2010.
- d. The staff investigated concepts proposed by Dr. Ruby Payne, related to the impact of poverty on student performance.
- e. All departments conducted a review of existing curricula to identify Power Standards (essential skills) for each entry level class in their area(s). This review also resulted in discussions of content alignment with State Standards and alignment across all grade levels.

- f. Staff members participated in mini-courses related to classroom instruction. Courses included: Student-led Conferences, Introduction to Web Page Development, and the Gold Star Counseling Program. The Guidance Staff led a review of their programs to develop a guidance curriculum based on the Gold Star Counseling initiative.
- g. The staff received training in the capabilities and use of the Plato Learning System to assist in the development of a Credit Retrieval and Alternative Education Program. They made site visits to programs in place at the Kokomo, Wawasee, and Tippecanoe Valley school systems. The Bremen Academy has since been developed and implemented at Bremen High School as an alternative school setting.
- h. The Freshman Focus program was implemented in the fall of 2007 to help incoming students transition from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to the high school. This program will continue to evolve as staff members become more knowledgeable about how to ease this transition.
- i. During the 2008-09 school year, the Freshman Focus Program was changed to include a book study of Sean Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*.
- j. During the 2008-09 school year the Catch Up Café program was created to improve student passing rates through compelling them to complete all homework assignments. During this first year the school implemented a ZAP program (Zeros are Preventable) with designs to move to Zeros are Prohibited in subsequent years. Under the Catch Up Café program students who fail to turn in required assignments can be assigned a lunch time detention until the course work is completed and turned in.
- k. During the 2009-2010 school year the staff formed 4 cross-curricular collaborative groups that were tasked with adopting a grade level and then classifying students within each grade level based on data related to achievement and graduation. The students were sorted into one of three categories: Green, students who were easily on track to meet all graduation requirements within a 4 year time span. Yellow, students who were at risk in one or two areas of the graduation requirements, but still had a reasonable chance to graduate with their class. Red, students who were at risk of not graduating with their cohort for a variety of reasons that included but were not limited to insufficient credits, attendance or behavioral problems, or failure to obtain the required cut score on the GQE. Once students were identified as being in the red category they were assigned a teacher mentor who established and maintained contact with the student through the end of the school year with the express purpose of trying to help the student successfully pass classes during the third trimester of the school year when the mentor program was implemented.
- l. Curriculum review and revision is conducted annually as the school gears up for the next year of student scheduling.

## **2. Current Instructional Strategies That Support Achievement of Academic Standards**

Students are encouraged to read for 20-40 minutes every week, dependent upon grade level, through a school-wide silent sustained reading program during Bonus Period.

Language labs are available throughout the year to provide students with extra support in reading and writing activities. We have acquired the "Merit" software program to assist students with reading and writing skill development. Computer programs assist in the delivery and assessment of performance.

Specific emphasis has been given by the staff to move from a lecture-style delivery to provide more

opportunities for demonstration and participation. Students work in cooperative learning groups in class work and lab settings as evidenced by observations and survey results.

### **3. Analysis of Student Achievement**

Our ECA passing percentage after students' sophomore year has met or exceeded targeted goals; however, more improvement is certainly possible. An analysis of the sub-skill categories for English/Language Arts indicated that we reversed the negative trends related to reading performance in almost every category.

Causes for concern expressed by the staff continue to be the lack of motivation by our freshmen and sophomore level students, and weak preparation to begin high school level work. We researched the number of students who showed weak performance (D+ or lower) in the first year of high school, in the two critical performance areas of math and English. As a result of this data, we investigated the number of students who, by the end of the freshman year, are already in danger of not graduating in four years and "an endangered species list" (of students) was targeted by teachers for additional attention (both social and academic).

### **4. Extent of Parental Involvement:**

All teachers have telephones within the classroom and direct contact with parents can be made as needed. Parents also have the opportunity to schedule conferences with teachers.

Extensive use of email communication occurs. Parents and teachers expedite the communication process through the use of this option. In addition, parents can solicit multiple responses from all teachers, counselors, and administrators associated with the child. This provides all parties with immediate feedback on student performance and behavior. Extensive efforts are made to plan IEP and case conference meetings at times convenient for the parents.

In 2009, the Harmony Student Management System was implemented allowing students/parents real time access to attendance, discipline, and academic progress. Surveys of parents have shown that this program is greatly appreciated and has helped parents have a better grasp of their student's day-to-day progress.

Parents support the total school program through their involvement in many booster programs associated with student activities. We have parent groups for most athletic teams, band, show choir, and drama. Advisory groups meet with teachers to help guide departmental planning. This is most notable in the vocational areas. Several key additions to the involvement of parents, students, and patrons in our programs have been through participation in the Gold Star Counseling review process, the Health Advisory Council, the School Improvement Team, the Quality Assurance Review Process, the Strategic Planning Process, the Textbook Adoption process, and the development of the Career & Technical programs.

Parents are asked to be directly involved in the development of their student's four-year plan. All scheduling activities require students to take plans home and review them with parents before they are finalized. Online registration was implemented in the fall of 2011.

### **5. Technology as a Learning Tool:**

The Bremen Public Schools are very well supported by the Bremen community and taxpayers. We have made effective use of technology grants, state funding sources, and capital projects funds to supply both teachers and

students with technology to support learning and instruction. Every teacher has a computer to use to plan, develop, and deliver instruction. Teachers use these workstations to connect to the in-house video projection system to display information during instruction for students to follow. In addition, teachers use this equipment to maintain academic and attendance records. Electronic grade books provide students and parents with immediate documentation of progress as soon as information is entered. The implementation of the Harmony program allows parents and students to check their course progress on-line at any given time.

Almost all aspects of the school are computerized. The media center has moved the collection of print and resource materials to an electronic database. Access to a wide range of research databases are provided to students and staff through the center. The lunch process operates using a computerized accounting tracking system. The corporation operates all heating and energy management through a computerized system.

The high school has multiple computer labs to support learning. Lab structures exist in business, science, English, industrial technology, student publications, art, and agriculture. Additional labs are available in the Media Center to support student work and research for every department. In 2009, two new computer labs were made available to students at the completion of the building project.

Students have laptop computers available through sixty wireless laptop stations in addition to laptop computers available for student checkout from the Media Center to complete work at home if necessary. Teachers develop instructional units that require products that are generated through the use of the technology provided. Internet access is available and operates under well defined usage policy established by the board. The English department has implemented the use of Turnitin.com, an internet-based plagiarism detection program that is used not only to verify that student work is original, but also to help provide instruction on properly paraphrasing and developing research. This program has been made available to the entire school through individual training sessions as requested by other departments.

Additional technology is present in the form of presentation stations and multi-media systems in each classroom for demonstrations and student presentations. All departments have technology related to their subject area, and the school is planning to provide laptop computers for every student in the fall of 2012 with a transition being made to online textbooks/curricula materials. The infrastructure at Bremen High School is now capable of wireless computer technology, and every student at Bremen High School was issued a flash drive during registration at the beginning of 2011-12.

The Corporation provides Microsoft Office, which is an industry standard, for student and teacher use. This allows for increased productivity from all areas of the building. Each student and teacher has a password protected file to store documents and projects. In addition, students/teachers use point-to-view cameras and intelli-slates to aid instruction.

The technology and information delivery system is maintained by a full-time staff of three technicians that are shared corporation-wide. Their time is in high demand throughout the school day. During the 2009-2010 school year, a full time technology integration coach was added to the technology department to assist with training for teachers and technology integration within the corporation's classrooms. This person conducted several staff development seminars introducing new technologies and new uses of existing programs. Additionally, the technology integration coach is available to work with teachers on creating technology based projects for the classroom or to assist individuals with technology concerns. Every certified and classified employee had a technology-related goal for 2009-10.

## **6. Safe and Disciplined Learning Environment:**

The Board of School Trustees has established operational policies that support a safe learning environment for

students. First, and probably most important, is the expectation that all students should be in school 90% of the time. This policy insures that truancies and unexcused absences are minimized. The policies established at the board level are supported by additional expectations outlined in the "Student and Parent Handbook" that is distributed to all students on an annual basis. During the 2011-12 school year, The Handbook was provided online and via a flash drive provided to each student. Expectations for student behavior, academic performance and attendance are stated in this document. Consequences and disciplinary processes are also outlined.

IDOE data indicates that our average suspension and expulsion rate per 100 students is 5.5 over the past 10 years. This is the one of lowest rates in Marshall County. One primary factor in maintaining this level of discipline is the easy access to our parents, and the constant communication that occurs between the school and the home. This communication is further supported by an exceptionally cooperative relationship established between the school and the juvenile justice system of the county. Out of school suspensions are required to occur at the Marshall County Suspension Center, located in Plymouth. This process requires parental involvement, and has the potential to place a student directly in front of the Juvenile Judge for repeated misconduct. The assistant principal serves on the Local Coordinating Council to review recommendations for students needing service. In addition, the county operates a Teen Court system, in which Bremen students participate as jurors, that handles specific types of juvenile offenses.

Bremen High School has three trained School Safety Specialists (Principal, Assistant Principal, and the Head of Maintenance) who oversee the emergency preparedness of the corporation. Each teacher has a copy of the emergency procedures to follow for a variety of situations. These include "lock-down" steps and emergency evacuation processes. Fire drills, disaster drills, and lock down drills are conducted according to state requirements. In addition, new evacuation signs were posted in every classroom in 2007 following the most recent building project.

Finally, the Corporation established a Committee that developed an Evidence-Based Discipline Plan per State expectations. The plan was formally approved for implementation at Bremen Schools (K-12) in 2011.

## **7. Professional Development Activities:**

Members of the high school staff participate in a variety of development activities, most of which are chosen by the individual. Staff members have the ability to submit individual requests for activities, workshops, and conferences that directly relate to their content areas or are needed to improve their instructional methodology. These requests are granted based on the availability of funding through corporation sources. Staff members have attended state-level conferences in business, agriculture, family and consumer sciences, science, writing, etc.

Additional opportunities exist, through grant funding, to attend regional or national level programs. Over the past five years, staff members have attended the National High Schools That Work Conference, the National Reading Association Conference, the National Dropout Prevention Conference, AdvancED National Conference, National Careers Conference, the Midwest Conference on Focus on Freshmen, the state conference on English as a Second Language, state and national conferences for FFA, and a national workshop on transition activities for middle and high schools sponsored by HSTW.

Locally, staff members have participated in the following:

2010-2011: "The Eight Step Process" Continued  
AdvancED District Accreditation Process Training  
Continued Refinement of RtI  
McREL Teacher Evaluation Standards

## *Standards-Based Grading (Thomas Guskey)*

- 2009-2010: Differentiated Instruction/High Ability Workshop  
Refining RtI Process  
*Leading with Data (Ellen Goldring)*  
*Are We There Yet? (Patricia Davenport)*  
“The Eight Step Process” Continued (Consultants Phil Talbert and Dave Randall)  
Problem-solving the Quality Review Recommendation  
KEYS of Excellence Online Survey Analysis
- 2008-2009: *Closing the Achievement Gap – No Excuses (Patricia Davenport)*  
*Learning by Doing (Richard DuFour)*  
RtI Focus and Implementation  
Refining Freshmen Focus  
Standards Assessment Review and Quality Assurance Review (AdvanceED)  
“The Eight Step Process” (Consultants Phil Talbert and Dave Randall)
- 2007-2008: *What Great Teachers Do Differently (Todd Whitaker)*  
Development concerning the identification/retention of potential drop outs  
Freshman Focus training  
Drug Prevention Seminar (Isabelle Burke)  
Preparation for NCA/AdvancED visit during the 2008-2009 school year  
RtI (Response to Interventions) training through the Superintendents’ Study Council
- 2006-2007: Motivating the Unmotivated Student (Franzy Fleck)  
Power Standards Development for Entry Level Classes  
Development of Common Assessments Based on Power Standards  
Alternative Education Concepts  
Plato Learning System: Software Capabilities and Included Curriculum Review  
School Improvement Plan Data Analysis and Program Development  
Mini Courses in Beginning Spanish, Classroom Motivation, Technology  
Cross-Grade Level Curriculum Planning and Discussion  
“Failure Is Not An Option” Training Through Superintendents’ Study Council

## **What Are Our Challenges?**

1. Though our graduation rate has improved from 80.6% in 2007 to 92.3% in 2010, we would like to improve in this area with the belief that all of our students are capable of earning a diploma. In addition, though our attendance rate exceeds the state average, poor attendance is a factor in student course failure. Continued focus on factors we can control, particularly consistent high expectations for attendance, failure rates, and the retention of current students, will be most successful in improving our attendance and graduation rates in the future.
2. Our recent (2010-11) performance on the math and English ECAs has improved our status from “academic watch” to “exemplary status,” for which we are very proud. Nevertheless, sustaining this effort each year will certainly be a problem and we must guard against complacency. In order to continue to make an “A” grade, we must keep students focused on learning the standards, particularly during the students’ freshmen and sophomore year. In addition, we must focus our attention on the total percentage passing rate for the sophomores to determine which line/level of the placement we have attained.

3. We must prepare all students for college and careers, and leave no child behind. The number of students taking dual credit courses, AP courses, career & technical courses must increase. The percentage of students earning the Core 40 and/or Honors diplomas must increase. The opportunities that students have to research and investigate career options and earn workplace certification must increase.

The life of our school depends on how we are going to address each of these issues. It is time to take direct action in finding solutions to our problems.

## **Key Questions for Planning and Professional Development**

Generic Questions:

- As we focus on student learning, how does it change the way we teach?
- What development activities will be required for us to improve in the problem areas?
- What are best practices in each of these areas?

Problem Area 1: Attendance & Graduation Rates:

1. Who is missing school and/or dropping out and what are the stated reasons versus the ‘realities.’
2. What data do we need to collect to monitor this area and determine whether improvement has/has not occurred?
3. What activities, services, and program opportunities should/could we provide to address these reasons?

Problem Area 2: Performance on End-of-Course Assessments in Algebra I and English 10

1. What groups or types of students are consistently under-performing?
  - a. Is the size of the group substantial enough to consistently impact our performance?
  - b. Is there a correlation between performance on this test and performance in the classroom?
2. What standards on the ECA tests have been consistently low in student performance? Trends?

Problem Area 3: College & Career Readiness

1. Is the current core curriculum challenging all students to be well-prepared for college and careers?
2. Are identified student failures to be prepared connected to a lack of basic preparation, teaching methodology, disinterest in curriculum, or other contributing factors? How will we find this information out?
3. How can we better assess the college & career readiness of our students?

**Goal Statements:**

### **1. Attendance & Graduation Rates:**

GOAL: Students will attend school each year at an average rate of 98%, and each cohort group of students will exceed a 90%, zero waiver, graduation rate culminating with an historic 100% graduation rate with the Class of 2015.

### **2. Performance on End-of-Course Assessments in Algebra I and English 10:**

GOAL: By the end of students’ sophomore year, 90% of students who have taken the Algebra I ECA and 85% of the students who have taken the English 10 ECA will have passed this important graduation

qualifying exam. By the end of students' senior year, after four years of high school, 100% of the students in each cohort group who have taken the Algebra I and English 10 ECA have passed the graduation qualifying exam.

### **3. College & Career Readiness:**

GOAL: All students will experience a common academic core that prepares them for both college and workforce training, regardless of their future plans.

### **G. Goal Statements, Benchmarks and Student Achievement Objectives:**

(Derived from an assessment of the current status of educational programming.)

The data from the analysis of student achievement indicates that there are specific areas of improvement that will be essential for the school to continue to maintain Adequate Yearly Progress status and Public Law #221 improvement in the categories required by State Statute. The required improvement areas continue to be:

- Attendance Rate,
- Graduation Rate, and
- The Percentage of Students That Meet the Academic Standard.

Success in meeting and making improvement in the areas above require improvement in the following sub-categories as identified by the faculty through the analysis of student performance. These areas are:

- Initial passing rate on the GQE for all students and reduction of failure rate in all courses at all levels.
- Assuring that all students experience a common academic core that prepares them for both college and workforce training.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

#### **1a. Attendance:**

GOAL: Students will attend school each year at an average rate of 98.0%.

Benchmark: The average attendance rate for the past four years (2007-2011) was 96.7%.

- The attendance rate following the 2011-12 school year will meet or exceed 98.0%.
- The attendance rate following the 2012-13 school year will meet or exceed 98.0%.
- The attendance rate following the 2013-14 school year will meet or exceed 98.0%.

#### **1b. Graduation Rate:**

GOAL: Each cohort group of students will exceed a 90%, zero waiver, graduation rate culminating with an historic 100% graduation rate with the Class of 2015.

Benchmark: Using the new calculation method, established in 2005-2006, the average graduation rate for the past four years (2007-2010) was 86.3%.

- The graduation rate for the 2012 cohort will meet or exceed 90.0%.
- The graduation rate for 2013 cohort will be no less than 93.0%.
- The graduation rate for 2014 will be no less than 96.0%.

- The graduation rate for 2015 will be no less than 100.0%.

## 2. Performance on End-of-Course Assessments in Algebra I and English 10:

GOAL: By the end of students' sophomore year, 90% of students who have taken the Algebra I ECA and 85% of the students who have taken the English 10 ECA will have passed this important graduation qualifying exam. By the end of students' senior year, after four years of high school, 100% of the students in each cohort group who have taken the Algebra I and English 10 ECA have passed the graduation qualifying exam.

Benchmark: Using data from the 2010-11 ECAs (90% in Algebra I and 85% in English)

- The 2014 cohort group will have a passing percentage of 90% in Algebra and 85% in English after their sophomore year.
- The 2015 cohort group will have a passing percentage of 93% in Algebra and 88% in English after their sophomore year.
- The 2016 cohort group will have a passing percentage of 95% in Algebra and 90% in English after their sophomore year.

## 3. College & Career Readiness:

GOAL: All students will experience a common academic core that prepares them for both college and workforce training, regardless of their future plans.

Benchmark #1: The 2010 Cohort Group had 3.7% participate in an AP Exam, and 1.9% passed with a 3, 4, or 5 score. In addition, approximately 10% of the students at Bremen High School annually acquire dual credit and/or workplace certification through course work at either Bremen High School or through the partnership with the Elkhart Area Career Center.

- Beginning with the 2012 cohort group, and in subsequent years, the percentage of students taking an AP exam, acquiring dual credit status, or workplace certification will meet or exceed 25%.

Benchmark #2: The percentage of students in the 2010 Cohort Group that graduated with an Academic Honors Diploma was 20.4%, and 11.1% of the cohort earned a General Diploma. 68.5% of the 2010 Cohort earned a Core 40 Diploma.

- Beginning with the 2012 cohort group, and in subsequent years, the percentage of students who earn a Core 40 or an Academic Honors Diploma will meet or exceed 95%.

Benchmark #3: As of the 2010-11 school year, no comprehensive Career Pathways program has been established at Bremen Schools, and no specific course emphasizing colleges and careers has been offered at Bremen High School.

- Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, a "Planning for College & Careers" course will be required for graduation (phased in with the 2015 Cohort Group).
- A comprehensive Career Pathways program will be developed in 2011-12, and implemented beginning in the 2012-13 school year.

Benchmark #4: As of the 2010-11 school year, no measure of reading level is used at BHS other than NWEA for freshmen.

- Literacy skill improvement will be emphasized and reading growth will be measured through the adoption of the Explore assessment (for freshmen), the Plan assessment (for sophomores), and the ACT (for juniors) beginning in 2011-12.
- All students will read at grade level.

## H. Specific Areas Where Improvement Is Needed Immediately:

- The graduation rate has been a serious problem; however, the rate during the 2009-10 finally hit 92.3% (exceeding our target goal). Nevertheless, sustaining a graduation rate that consistently exceeds 90.0% will always be a challenge. Likewise, our attendance rate has always been good, but not great. We want to strive for greatness!
- Our performance on the ISTEP test between the ninth grade and the tenth grade years has, in the past, caused the school to be placed in the Academic Watch category for several consecutive years; however, we recently (summer of 2011) were notified that we had achieved “Exemplary Progress” status (an “A” grade). Though we are thrilled by this accomplishment, we also acknowledge the challenge of sustaining the status. It is imperative that the staff continue to perfect existing interventions (i.e. The 8-Step Process) and develop new strategies which focus on improving the performance of all students on all assessments – especially the ECAs in English and Algebra I.
- Continued emphasis needs to be placed on developing reading and language skills and basic computation and reasoning skills for math as we make the transition from assessing the Indiana Standards to the Common Core Standards during the next three years.
- Our core curriculum needs to be strengthened to place more of an emphasis on college & career goals for all students. Career pathways need to be researched, developed, implemented, and clearly communicated to stakeholders.
- We continue to see an increase in enrollment, especially our Hispanic population and our special needs population. This change in demographics may have a significant impact on our performance over the next three years. We will need to reinforce and improve strategies for these students over the next year, especially in preparation for their initial attempt on the ECAs.
- All entering freshmen must begin with a plan that includes completion of the Core 40 curriculum/diploma.

## **I. Recommended Interventions To Meet Stated Objectives:**

The faculty, after reviewing the data contained in our AdvancED documentation process and in preparation of our plan, discussed interventions that may be employed to improve student achievement. These interventions are based on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

- **Disconnected and Unmotivated Students:** What are the common characteristics of these students? What draws their attention away from school? How can the value of education be communicated effectively to reclaim these students prior to the end of the sophomore year, and especially prior to the graduation date?
  - A survey of the faculty indicated that this was the number one area of concern. This concern was also expressed by parents and committee members associated with the Gold Star Counseling Program.
  - Consequently, we are increasing our focus on relationship-building, the use of data to drive instruction, college & career readiness goals that are relevant to our students.
- The Public Law #221 Category Placement Process has, historically, been based on improved performance of the same group of students as they pass from Grade 9 to Grade 10, and complete the ISTEP Testing. For the past several years, our students have not been able to display the level of

improvement required to move the school out of the “Academic Watch” category; however, the use of the 8-Step Process has raised our school to “Exemplary Progress” status, and we must strive to continue the momentum by assuring the fidelity of this best practice.

The faculty must also work on interventions for the three categories established by the state as primary indicators of success. In addition, the College and Career Readiness goal will have specific interventions.

#### **Attendance:**

The current policies will be reviewed by the faculty, the administration, and the Board of School Trustees on an annual basis to see if improvements can be made.

- Timely notification of attendance issues and problems will occur through the Attendance Office.
- Members of the staff, guidance department, and administration will identify students who have demonstrated previously high absence rates to provide counseling and support.
- Incentives and recognition will be provided to encourage students to improve their attendance at school.

#### **Graduation Rate:**

The calculation method clearly focuses on the number of students who drop out of school over the four years following initial entry into high school.

- First and foremost, the staff believes that we need to establish specific data that identifies why students choose to drop out of school. An exit survey will be used to help define the reasons given when students withdraw from school. Students who express a desire to drop out of school will receive multiple levels of counseling.
- Faculty members continue to be the first line of defense in reclaiming disinterested students. Making daily positive contact in classes promotes attendance and connectivity. Members of the guidance staff will work actively to keep parents informed of issues that may prevent a student from graduating. This triangle of communication often involves issues outside of the school building that might be causing a student to become distracted.
- The administration meets with all students who are intent on quitting. This counseling session involves both the student and the student's parent to search for ways to keep the student in school.
- Bremen High School will continue to refine the Credit Retrieval and Alternative Education opportunities that were piloted during the 2006-07 school year and implemented as The Bremen Academy during 2008. By giving students credit retrieval opportunities to get caught up with their peer group, more students will reach graduation within four years.
- An “endangered species” data wall will track students’ progress who are at risk.
- Staff members will model acceptance of all students and develop classroom atmospheres that rely upon mutual respect, high expectations, and a caring school community.

#### **Percent of Students Meeting Academic Standards (Performance on ECAs):**

The faculty at Bremen High School will continue to emphasize reading and mathematics within their individual content areas.

- High School teachers will collaborate with teachers in the middle school to identify students who are already behind in math or English. The staff will make contact with these students prior to the scheduling process to introduce them to the school and develop a mentoring relationship with these students. The guidance staff will coordinate this process.
- Frequent formative assessments, followed by data log meetings, will provide feedback to teachers so that instruction can be modified for identified students who need assistance with standard skill

development.

- Concepts proposed by Alan Blankstein in “Failure Is Not An Option,” will be incorporated into instructional practices. A series of progressing interventions and safety nets will be established to give students multiple opportunities to receive extra help and assistance.
- Language/Math Lab (using specific software and low student/teacher ratios) and/or Summer School will be required of students who fail to pass the English/Math ECA by the end of their second year at Bremen High School.
- An “Intervention Team” consisting of two math teachers, two English teachers, and two Guidance Counselors will customize interventions for students who do not pass the ECA by the end of their second year at Bremen High School.
- A “Peer Tutoring” program will be implemented along with a “Catch-up-Café” process to hold students accountable for work completion.
- All freshmen will be assigned to a homeroom (Bonus Period) with a teacher-mentor and an upperclassman peer-mentor. The homeroom time will be used to present freshmen with information and training to be successful in the regular classroom.
- Staff members will continue to align course curricula with expectations and standards held for reading, language, and math in the Common Core Standards in preparation for the transition from ECA’s to the PARCC assessment.

### **College & Career Readiness:**

All students will experience a common academic core that prepares them for both college and workforce training, regardless of their future plans.

- Alumni follow-up data will be collected, assessed, and used to guide course and curriculum decisions at Bremen High School.
- A 12-week course focused on “Planning for College & Careers” will be implemented beginning in the 2011-12 school year. This course will be a graduation requirement for students at Bremen High School beginning with the 2015 Cohort Group.
- The ACT series of assessments (“Explore,” “Plan,” “Compass,” and “ACT”) will be required of all students beginning with a pilot program in 2011-12. These curriculum-based assessments will provide educators with data to inform essential student interventions and to implement changes in curricular and instructional programs for better meeting student needs. Benchmarks for growth will be established in the areas of English, math, reading, and science. In addition, the assessments will provide a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years. By implementing this assessment, we hope to have tools for student planning, instructional support, a longitudinal assessment of student achievement, and a comprehensive analysis of student growth over time.
- Indiana’s Career Pathways guidelines and recommendations will be researched, developed, and implemented during the next three years.

### **J. Professional Development Required to Implement the Proposed Interventions:**

A half-hour each week will be set aside for horizontal and vertical collaboration in addition to planned professional development opportunities. This will occur routinely from 7:45-8:15 a.m. each Thursday. In addition, twenty minutes each Friday afternoon has been set aside for teacher-leader collaboration, staff development, and parental/student contact opportunities.

### **Identified Need: Staff members expressed the need to coordinate common practices in “The Eight Step**

## **Process.”**

The staff has phased in the implementation of The 8-Step Process of “*Closing the Achievement Gap*” beginning with the English and Math Departments, then Science and Social Studies. Now the emphasis is on refinement and fidelity.

Students will...

- encounter instructional calendars in a “scope and sequence” manner that engage students in inquiry and research and that promote uncovering the essential concepts of the intended curriculum.
- receive instruction in writing across all content areas, through a unified approach to performance expectations and formative assessments.
- be provided with additional learning opportunities that cause them to remain in school and earn a diploma.

All staff members will be included in the training program. Release time from regular instruction will be provided to promote participation. The use of this instructional calendar/formative assessment design process forces the teacher to make connections between instruction and curriculum during the lesson planning process, and students will be evaluated using common assessments for writing, projects and oral presentations. In addition, all teachers will be encouraged to have a project-based learning goal.

### **Identified Need: Staff members expressed the need to receive training in strategies to reduce the drop-out rate, and to improve the motivation of high school-age students.**

Staff experts and outside presenters will provide training in the latest methodologies designed to actively engage students in the learning process.

Students will ...

- receive instruction that incorporates more hands-on and project-based styles of learning through improvement of teachers' basic teaching tools.
- have increased opportunities to demonstrate learning through the use of technology.
- receive instruction that intentionally focuses on the use of reading strategies and math.

The data will include notations in classroom observations, recorded lesson plans developed by the teachers, and instructional materials developed by the staff. Staff responses to evaluation surveys will help determine the value and use of the information presented.

### **Identified Need: Staff members expressed the need to learn about concepts that will help them deal with disconnected students so that all students experience a common academic core that prepares them for both college and workforce training, regardless of their future plans.**

Teachers will identify students who are at risk of dropping out of high school at the earliest possible point in their school careers, and an ongoing data wall to track individual student progress will be constructed using “Dashboard” software.

Teachers will build respectful relationships with all students based on academic performance versus possible misperceptions that can result from perceived economic status.

All students will receive high quality instruction and curricular programs that are evaluated under the standards of AdvancED, the IDOE, and eventually PARCC assessments that will assess the Common Core Standards.

All staff members will be included in the training program. There are foundation principles in this training that include resources that make a difference in student success. These, coupled with the information on discipline strategies, will allow teachers to modify and differentiate instruction for their students in ways similar to those qualifying for special education services.

The staff will continue to track the ECA scores, failure rates, and discipline information on all students. We will begin to see significant levels of improvement in student performance from the areas we have identified for this goal.

Student failure rates, passing rates of low-income students on standardized tests, classroom observations, and teacher feedback will be collected and reviewed to determine the impact of the professional development in this area.

**Identified Need: The staff will need to continue to meet the expectations stated in the 2009 NCA/AdvancED Quality Assurance Review.**

The follow-up Accreditation Progress Report was completed in the spring of 2011, and AdvancED authorized full accreditation to Bremen High School. The follow-up report was a required component of the accreditation process and was submitted two years following the school's Quality Assurance Review (QAR).

*To be accredited by AdvancED, schools must:*

**1) Meet high standards**

The standards require that the school has a clear vision and purpose; has effective and responsive leadership; has a rigorous curriculum taught through sound, research-based methods; collects, reports, and uses performance results; provides adequate resources and support for its educational programs; and values and communicates with its stakeholders.

**2) Engage in continuous improvement**

To demonstrate continuous improvement, schools must implement an improvement plan based on student performance and school/community data that includes clear goals for raising the achievement of all students. Schools also must document growth in student performance and organizational effectiveness.

**3) Demonstrate quality assurance through external review**

Schools must be evaluated by a team of professionals from outside the school on a periodic basis. The team engages the school staff in a healthy, professional dialogue about school improvement efforts, validates that the school meets the standards for accreditation, and provides feedback and makes recommendations concerning future efforts to improve student performance and organizational effectiveness.

As a result of the Quality Assurance Review, Bremen High School will continue to build on the development of the "Professional Learning Communities" concept, and the staff across the corporation will develop common expectations for students as they progress through the grade levels through enhanced vertical collaboration efforts. One of the foundation observations resulting from the collaborative efforts of "Professional Learning Communities" is the acquisition of powerful learning that defines good teaching. Collaboration promotes the development of new skills and knowledge that is applicable to the classroom and to instruction. Bremen High School will also join the Bremen K-8 School to work toward District-wide accreditation beginning in 2012-13.

Bremen High School, in collaboration with the Bremen K-8 School must conduct regular and systematic evaluations of all school programs in order to review and revise plans for improvement. Planning for district-wide accreditation is based on a thorough, systematic evaluation of existing programs and activities.

- a. Teachers will understand the need to base decisions on data gained from program review.
- b. Teachers will make revisions to existing programs and instruction based on the results obtained through proper evaluation methods.
- c. The school will meet the expectations held by the North Central Accrediting Agency.
- d. Student achievement will improve from curricular and instructional changes derived from a

systematic evaluation of all programs and the implementation of “The Eight Step Process.”

All staff members will be included in the AdvancED training program. This training focuses on a set of criteria established for quality performance across all aspects of school life, and staff evaluation surveys will be used to modify the structure and content of this training.

**K. Statutes and Rules to Be Waived:**

With the approval granted by the State Board for the trimester structure, no rules or statutes need to be waived. This plan requires no waiver of assigned rules.

**L. Timeline for Implementation:**

The timeline for implementation of this plan is included in the Objective and Benchmarking information. The plan will be reviewed and revised annually by the staff and the department chairpersons. The professional development component will be extended or revised during the same process with input from the staff. The staff will continue focusing on increased levels of experience in each identified program over the three-year period through the end of the 2014 school year.

Data received during the school year from the state and local assessments will be used as the foundation for modifications to the plan. Adequate Yearly Progress and Public Law #221 information will also be used to develop additional strategies.