

Ninth Grade: Our Last Chance

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Ninth Grade—Our Last Chance

Issues Affecting My School

	Attendance	
	Discipline and Behavior	
	Dropouts	
	Cycle of Failure	
	Literacy	
	Quality of Instruction	
	Class Size	
	Elective Programs	
	Assessment	
	Climate	
	Retention Rates	
	Staff Capacity	
	Teacher Attitudes	
	Expectations	

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Vertical Transition Programs

<i>Academic Rigor</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Priority (H,M,L)</i>
Literacy			
Assessments			
Vertical core teams			
AVID-like support programs			
Summer programs			
Vertical goal-setting			

<i>Personalization</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Priority (H,M,L)</i>
Staff member assigned			
Summer programs			
Family services			
Mental Health/Drug and Alcohol Services			
Crime, violence and gang prevention			
Vertical counseling teams			
Vertical administrative meetings			
Consistent discipline policies			
Attendance Panels			

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What Can You Do For Ninth Graders?

	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Priority (H,M,L)</i>
1. All first time 9th graders are identified			
2. Separate scheduling for “froshmores” and transfers			
3. House plan – teams of common teachers			
4. Core academic teachers on team - plus others, e.g. PE			
5. Common planning period/time for core teachers			
6. Clear, owned, 9th grade mission statement			
7. Core beliefs/values agreed upon by all 9th grade teachers			
8. Core beliefs and mission is monitored by administration and teachers			
9. Measurable goals – past year’s comparisons			
10. Small class sizes in core academics (20-25) – ideally 20			
11. Common instructional model used by all teachers			
12. Daily, engaged teaching/learning with emphasis on rigor and relevance			
13. Strong across-the-curriculum literacy emphasis			

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14. Entry level reading levels provided to all 9 th grade teachers			
15. District supports extra professional development for 9th grade team			
16. Inclusion and extra support for the most challenged students (<i>ELL, Sp.Ed.</i>)			
17. Adult and student success recognition			
18. Integration of guiding principles (character)			
19. Use of formative data on student achievement driving teaching and learning adjustments			
20. Effective 9th grade communication plan with faculty and other groups			
21. Evaluation plan – at least twice a year			
22. Technology integration			
23. Total school support			
24. Significant support and encouragement from the district office			
25. Planning for what happens in grade 10 (looping?)			
26. There is a plan for transitioning students from grades 8-9, and 9-10			
27. Assuming the data supports a need, what special efforts are being made to insure male success?			

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28. Separate and unique administrator assigned just to 9th grade leadership			
29. Assertive active involvement and support from the principal			
30. Separate and unique counselor assigned to 9th grade			
31. 9th graders separated from 10-11-12 (lunch, classrooms)			
32. Teachers are some of the schools best and most committed			
33. Seamless transition strategies with middle school partners			
34. 8 to 9 summer “bridge” programs			
35. Separate 9 th grade facility			
36. A special parent communication and involvement component			
37. Special parent conferencing emphasis and strategies			
38. Extra time, extended school day/year options for those needing			
39. Voluntary tutoring			
40. Mandatory tutoring			
41. Adult and student mentors			
42. Strategies to “leverage” grades 11-12 positive role models			

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43. Extracurricular advisors and coaches make academics first			
44. Strong commitment to early intervention when students do not perform			
45. An agreed upon and applied pyramid of academic interventions			
46. An agreed upon and applied pyramid of social/behavioral interventions			
47. Strong student attendance emphasis and strategies			
48. Attendance contracts (parents and students) for identified incoming 9th graders			
49. Academic performance contracts (parents and students) for identified incoming 9 th graders			
50. Year-end culminating cross-curriculum project for all students			
51. Emphasis on study skills, note taking, time management, goal setting, career awareness, learning styles, etc.(agendas/planners)			
52. Special “freshman seminar” course			

T.C. Williams High School
Competence To Excellence Matrix

Core Learning	Stretch Learning	Engagement	Skill Development
Meet AYP	50% of students enrolled in AP courses	Individual Learning Plan for every struggling learner	All graduates are college-ready
90% pass rate on all 11 SOL tests	2/3 score 3+ on AP exams	95% ADA	Literacy – Reading and writing strategies evident throughout the school
Special Ed. to national avg.	25% of students graduate with a semester of college credit	80% Graduation Rate (under current NCLB calculations)	Lexile - 1300 L all graduates - 1200 L by 12 th - 1100 L by 11 th - 1000 L by 10 th
Summer School - Alignment w/ Standard Curriculum	Vertical Articulation – Disciplinary Teams construct road map for preparing students for college-level AP courses	10% reduction in out-of-school suspensions	All students ready for college level math.
Assessment <i>for</i> Learning- Common Assessments in all core subjects and in summer school	Expanded Dual Enrollment w/ NVCC	Reduction in retention and repeat courses	All students write at college level – writing rubric, style guide
Time - Master schedule indicates students have time they need to succeed	Virtual AP Courses offered attractive alternatives to all students	Relevance is emphasized in each lesson across the curriculum	Learning to learn – Note taking, study skills etc.
Team Development – Subject area teams set goals, develop formative assessments, and design interventions	Honors courses moderated and aligned with skills and knowledge required for AP course work		
ESL realignment – Students are placed in courses according to their ability to succeed in those courses while maintaining rigorous standards	Increase in number of students completing Trigonometry and beyond. (Tied to Alg. 1 completers by end of grade 8)		
Interventions for struggling learners 1. After-school tutoring 2. Saturday School			
Vertical Articulation – Subject area teams hold regularly scheduled meetings to discuss curriculum, assessment, and outcomes			
Study Halls evolve to Independent Learning			

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Resources

NASSP – <http://www.principals.org>
“Creating a Culture of Literacy”
“Breaking Ranks II”
“Breaking Ranks in the Middle”

National Center for Dropout Prevention - <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/>

International Center for Leadership in Education - <http://www.daggett.com/>
“Reinventing the Ninth Grade”

Alliance for Excellent Education - <http://www.all4ed.org>

Center for Applied Linguistics - <http://www.cal.org/>

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development - <http://www.ascd.org/>