Steady at the Helm: Restructuring, Reallocating, and Realigning Resources
The "helm" is the place where one controls a ship's direction. "Take the helm" means to take control of where the ship goes. To "steady the helm" means to ensure a straight and steady course and not turn the ship. Answers.com / Wiki Answers
Seven Guiding Principles to Ensure the Future Academic and Financial Success of the School District

- Make educational and financial investments based on best practices, proven methods, and strategies for long-term success.
- Enhance the quality of educational programs and services for all students.
- Continue to keep the focus on effective teaching and learning, increased student achievement, and high-performing schools.
- Promote an open work environment where all employees experience empowerment, ownership, and accountability to grow professionally.
- Make targeted investments, reallocate resources, and integrate new strategies to meet the changing needs of 21st century learners.
- Strike a balance between what is educationally sound for students and fiscally responsible for taxpayers.
- Streamline operations, maximize human and financial resources, and eliminate unnecessary spending.
Steady at the Helm: 2011-2012 Priority Goals

- Enhance overall educational programs and services for ALL students by building capacity and consistency for effective change and sustainability.
- Increase capacity, accountability, and efficiency for improved effectiveness among administrative and professional personnel.
- Promote team building and shared responsibilities among administrative and professional personnel.
- Assign principals, assistant principals, and central office administrators realigned leadership and coordination responsibilities, improving District-wide organizational capacity.
- Realign duties and responsibilities of administrative and professional personnel for greater effectiveness, both vertically and horizontally within the organizational structure for collaborative and strategic purposes.
- Maximize the use of K-12 Department Heads, recognizing their expertise as an integral part of the organizational structure.
Leadership and supervisory responsibilities have been delineated in revised job descriptions reflecting new administrative titles and assignments for the following positions:

- **Dr. Mary Anne Hazer** – Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education (leadership and oversight for early childhood, early intervention, and student services).

- **Dr. Tracy McNelly** – Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education (leadership and oversight for K-12 STEM Education, K-12 Department Heads, and Title II Professional Development).

- **Ms. Maggie Zimmer** – Director of Special Education and Student Services (leadership and supervisory responsibilities for special education and student services, including but not limited to: guidance, psychological services, gifted, health, student assistance programs, social work services, and special programs).
Assign leadership and oversight responsibilities, including K-12 Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII), to school psychologists.

Reassign day-to-day RtII responsibilities to K-12 Guidance Counselors and eliminate the RtII Coordinator's position.

Reassign administrative Federal Program responsibilities to the Sheridan Terrace building principal.

Restructure the K-4 Reading program services, pending teacher retirements, for maximum educational and financial benefits using existing staff.

Restructure 9-12 Gifted program services, pending teacher retirements, for maximum educational and financial benefits using existing staff.

Restructure 7-12 Library program services, pending retirements, for maximum educational and financial benefits using existing staff.

Provide increased fiscal oversight by the Director of Business Affairs, for respective Title I, Title II, ACCESS, and IDEA Federal funds.
# District-level Administrative Responsibilities

**Administrator**
- Ms. McCracken
- Ms. Harris
- New Principal Hire
- Ms. Newell
- Ms. Dvorchak
- Mr. Henderson
- Ms. Kozusko

**Leadership / Coordination Responsibilities**
- K-6 Mathematics & Science
- K-12 Health and Wellness
- K-6 Reading and Language Arts
- K-6 Title I Reading/Federal Programs Coordinator
- K-6 Environmental Education
- K-6 Social Studies
- K-12 Student Assistance Programs & Response to Instruction and Intervention
### District-level Administrative Responsibilities

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Restructure Pupil Services and Special Programs as a Department of Special Education and Student Services to provide across-the-board consistency and continuity when meeting individual student needs and enhancing programs and services, under the provisions of the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Pennsylvania School Code – namely Chapters 14 (Special Education Services and Programs), Chapter 15/Section 504 (Protected Handicapped Students), and Chapter 16 (Special Education for Gifted Students). **Priority goals are:**

- To enhance communication, critical thinking skills, and collaboration among administrative and professional personnel.
- To increase capacity, accountability, and efficiency for improved effectiveness among administrative and professional personnel.
- To enhance Special Education and Student Services information on the District website and through other venues to better inform parents/guardians regarding educational programs and services.
Restructuring Activities

- Review a list of Norwin School District professional employees with Special Education and Bridge certifications with the intent of providing these services in-house at a lower cost than the District incurs presently.
- Create an internal flow chart which delineates responsibilities for administrative and professional personnel to build capacity, accountability, and efficiency, and to avoid duplication of services.
- Review and make the case for a more equitable distribution of IDEA funds from the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit.
- Review and make recommendations for a smooth transition of WIU Learning Support, ESL, and other related services to District operations for continuity, supervision and cost-effectiveness.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Services; Speech and Language Services; and District operated services for Learning Support, Emotional Support, Visually Impaired, Autism, and Life Skills.
Restructuring Activities

- Add administrative responsibilities with title changes for District School Psychologists: (1) Coordinator of Special Education and Student Services and (2) Coordinator of Special Education and Psychological Services.

- District School Psychologists will provide leadership and enhanced oversight of K-12 Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) and K-12 Student Assistance Programs in collaboration with Elementary and Secondary Guidance Counselors.

- Revise the job descriptions of the Elementary, Middle, and High School Counselors to build capacity and include K-12 responsibilities for Student Assistance Programs, Character Education, and Career Education and Work Standards.

- Revise the job descriptions of the High School Guidance Counselors to include: an Office of Collegiate Affairs, an emphasis on Career Education and Work Standards, and a nexus to Student Leadership and Senior Internship Opportunities.
Restructuring Activities

- Follow-through with respective K-12 Department Heads for Guidance Services and Special Education for a more inclusive team-building effort with planning and implementation of programs and services.

- Create a new job description for the current Work Study/Transition Coordinator for grades 9-12, adding performance responsibilities related to special education, community-based initiatives, and career and technical education.

- Implement a more efficient delivery of 9-12 Learning Support instruction at Norwin High School by modifying the inclusionary model and by assigning instructional aides to respective Learning Support teachers for maximum benefits, both educationally and financially.

- Instructional aides will not be assigned for general education purposes. Non-instructional aides will be assigned to meet the individual and/or classroom needs of students with an Individual Education Plan.
Restructuring Activities

- Implement a more efficient delivery of 9-12 Emotional Support instruction at Norwin High School with the goal of increasing capacity and efficiency for maximum benefits, both educationally and financially.

- Identify the root cause of increased student referrals for eligibility of Special Education programs and services. Meet with building principals and teachers, an integral part of the referral process, for improved management and oversight of the diagnostic, intervention and referral process for special education eligibility.
Restructuring Activities

- Delineate the respective performance responsibilities for the Director of Special Education and Student Services and the Director of Business Affairs related to the fiscal accountability of ACCESS and IDEA Funds.

- Present the restructured Special Education and Student Services Department at the monthly Joint Administrative Leadership Development and Training session.

- Met with Special Education teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists and other professional staff to inform them about the restructured Special Education and Student Services Department and their roles and responsibilities within the new framework.
Restructuring Activities

- Inform Parents Advisory Committee of the restructured Special Education and Student Services Department and include additional parents of special needs children as part of the PAC for greater inclusiveness.

- Convene regular monthly meetings that will involve appropriate educators to ensure across-the-board communication and collaboration between and among all administrators, department heads, counselors, nurses, school and home visitor, school psychologists, mental health agency representatives, etc. (Procedural Safeguards).
Effective Communication, Critical Thinking Skills, and Collaboration provide the foundation for building capacity, accountability, and efficiency.

The process of restructuring, reallocating and realigning resources is a continuous effort. Sustaining the Norwin School District, without compromising the integrity of our quality educational programs and services, requires fiscal responsibility now more than ever.
The Norwin Board of Education believes that it is a high priority to strike a balance between what is educationally sound for students and fiscally responsible for the taxpayers.

The Superintendent of Schools believes that “Steady at the Helm” ensures a straight and steady course for the Norwin School District. As the budget and staffing processes unfold, the Administrative staff will have on going discussions with the Board of Education. Based on efficient and effective operations, this advanced planning with a steady hand will result in a smooth and orderly transition to meet the changing needs of the Norwin School District.