

Mission

A school and community partnership that creates excited learners, inspires excellence, and fosters integrity.

District Goal #1: Advance Standards Based Learning

To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

Objective #1:

Essential content and learning expectations that are aligned to state standards will be clearly identified for each grade level/subject area, and will be clearly communicated to teachers, students, and parents.

Objective #2:

Common assessments, collaborative data analysis and specific student feedback will become a part of the instructional practice of all teachers.

Objective #3:

Students in all classrooms have the opportunity to increase their achievement because they experience instruction that is differentiated and grounded in best research practices.

Objective #4:

Students (and parents) receive explicit feedback regarding progress towards meeting identified learning objectives on a regular basis.

Objective #5:

The professional development and teacher supervision programs ensure learning opportunities that: are job-embedded; enable teachers to acquire rigorous and relevant content knowledge; enable them to implement best instructional strategies; provide support and guidance; and are directed towards individual teacher career growth.

District Goal #2: Develop the social and emotional skills of all students.

To ensure that students have the social and emotional competencies that enable them to be self-aware, to have social and relationship skills, to self-manage, and to make responsible decisions.

Objective #1:

All students will have a meaningful connection to an adult in the school system.

Objective #2:

Strong school cultures will promote a sense of participation, wellness, safety, and security for all students.

Objective #3:

Schools will partner with parents to provide consistent social and emotional experiences for students.

Objective #4:

Students will improve social and emotional skill development through consistent, layered, and effective instruction at all levels.

District Goal #3: Promote Active Citizenship

To ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate productively in the local and global communities and commit them to action as learners and citizens.

Objective #1:

Students will engage in age appropriate service activities that enable them to contribute to or act on local or global social needs and that provide them opportunities to develop social, civic, and academic skills through reflection and analysis of their efforts.

Objective #2:

Students will develop competencies to enable them to understand and effectively address matters of diversity, racism, ethnocentrism, and bias in the context of the pluralistic communities in which they live.

Objective #3:

Students will develop proficiency in a language other than English and develop the cultural, technological, and civic skills necessary to adapt and respond to the conditions of 21st century global change.

District Goal #4: Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals.

To build and carry out a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that enables our learning goals and is responsive to student and school needs.

Objective #1:

Long-range resource planning documents will support a sustainable school infrastructure and operations.

Objective #2:

The technological infrastructure, including hardware, software, support, and training, will be sufficient to meet 21st century needs for accessibility and reliability in order to enhance communication, enrich collaboration, and sustain teaching, learning, and administrative environments.

Objective #3:

Modern and efficient information systems and training opportunities will be in place and used regularly to manage school and district operations that support staff, parents, and students, and will be aligned to programmatic and curriculum initiatives.

Objective #4:

Core services including staff recruitment, compensation and benefits management, employee relations and human resource information management will promote a safe and healthy work place that facilitates and promotes a positive work ethic and reflects the district's core values.

District Goal #1: Advance Standards Based Learning

To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

Objective #1:

Essential content and learning expectations that are aligned to state standards will be clearly identified for each grade level/subject area, and will be clearly communicated to teachers, students, and parents.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
Identify learning expectations at each grade level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure documents are in place that detail elementary, middle and high school essential content and learning expectations for each subject area. 	Principals Dir. Program Dev. K-12 Curriculum Leaders, Teachers	2010-2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct Special Education program review to ensure an appropriate level of services, maximize student learning and ensure effective use of resources. 	Dir. Student Dev. Special Ed Dir.	2010-2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an action plan for addressing the viable recommendations from English Language Arts Program Review. 	K-12 ELA Curriculum Leaders,* Principals Dir. Program Dev. Teachers	2010-2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure special education staff are engaged in/aware of mainstream curriculum learning expectations, modifications, and program changes. 	K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Spec. Ed. Directors Special Ed Teachers	2010-2012
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot human sexuality education units in selected grades, 5-12. 	Principals Dir. Program Dev. K-12 Curriculum Leader, Teachers	2010-2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new elementary math program; <i>Think Math!</i> 	* includes Dir., Dept. Chairs, Coord., Instr. Specialists	2010-2012

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To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

<p>Objective #2: Common assessments, collaborative data analysis and specific student feedback will become a part of the instructional practice of all teachers.</p>		
Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Ensure common assessments that help teachers to gain insight into student learning are in place in each grade level and subject area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop two common assessments and pilot in at least one grade, subject area or course at each level. • Analyze data from these common assessments and use information to modify assessment and instructional practices and provide intervention as needed. <p>Provide teachers with the opportunities to learn, practice, and receive specific feedback on instructional methods that are grounded in best practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for teachers to learn/practice/share skills in collaborative groups within a Professional Learning Community model. 	<p>Director Program Dev. Principals K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Teachers</p> <p>K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Teachers</p> <p>Principals/ Asst. Principals K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Teachers</p> <p><i>*includes Directors, Dept. Chairs, Coordinators, Instructional Specialists.</i></p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

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To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

<p>Objective #3: Students in all classrooms have the opportunity to increase their achievement because they experience instruction that is differentiated and grounded in best research practices</p>		
Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Provide differentiated instructional opportunities for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide middle and high school students with opportunities to learn in an online environment within the framework of existing courses. • Begin to use online tools in collaborative learning environments to enhance the current classroom curriculum and instruction practice. • Incorporate into Professional Development program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - opportunities that help teachers to learn how to differentiate instruction and implement these practices into their lessons. - opportunities that help teachers to further their understanding of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ instructional practices for ELL and special education students, ▪ Effective co-teaching practices ▪ Standards-based practices (mapping, assessments, rubrics, grading) • Assess parent data regarding curriculum enrichment opportunities. 	<p>Dir. Program Dev. Principals/ Asst. Principals MS/HS Curr. Leaders Dir. Technology Instructional Tech Specialists Teachers</p> <p>Dir. Program Dev. Principals/ Asst. Principals MS/HS Curr. Leaders Dir. Technology Instructional Tech Specialists Teachers</p> <p>Dir. Student Dev. Dir. Program Dev. K-12 Curriculum Leaders* <i>*includes Directors, Dept. Chairs, Coordinators, Instr. Specialists.</i></p>	<p>2010-2012</p> <p>2010-2012</p> <p>2011-2012</p>

District Goal #1: Advance Standards Based Learning

To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

Objective #4:

Students (and parents) receive explicit feedback regarding progress towards meeting identified learning objectives on a regular basis.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Examine, plan, and implement standards based feedback systems at each level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for development & implementation of a standards-based report card for grade 2. • Ensure that each school develops a plan to implement a standards-based student feedback system and that it pilots the practice in at least one area/grade level, or course. 	<p>Director Program Development K-5 Principals K-5 Curriculum Leaders Directors (including Sped) Teachers</p> <p>Director Program Dev. Principals K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Teachers</p> <p><i>*includes Directors, Dept. Chairs, Coordinators, Instructional Specialists.</i></p>	<p>2010-2012</p> <p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #1: Advance Standards Based Learning

To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enable each student to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

Objective #5:

The professional development and teacher supervision programs ensure learning opportunities that: are job-embedded; enable teachers to acquire rigorous and relevant content knowledge; enable them to implement best instructional strategies; provide support and guidance; and are directed towards individual teacher career growth.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Implement comprehensive professional development and supervision and evaluation programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train teachers and administrators who will pilot the proposed new supervision and evaluation model. • Develop common professional development plan that is required for staff to complete prior to receiving professional status. 	<p>Dir. of Human Resources Principals Asst. Principals Teachers</p> <p>Dir. Human Resources Dir. Program Dev. Dir. of Student Dev. K-12 Curriculum Leaders* Teachers</p> <p><i>*includes Directors, Dept. Chairs, Coordinators, Instr. Specialists.</i></p>	<p>2010-2012</p> <p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #2: Develop the social and emotional skills of all students

To ensure that students have the social and emotional competencies that enable them to be self-aware, to have social and relationship skills, to self-manage, and to make responsible decisions.

Objective #1:

All students will have a meaningful connection to an adult in the school system.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
Establish and evaluate structures (advisory, mentoring, 2 nd Step, Responsive Classroom, etc.) at all levels that facilitate adult/student relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate current practices through student and staff surveys and interviews, determining student perceptions of having an adult to talk to and the efficacy of current models in place. • High school athletic coaches, parents, and athletes will be provided training in positive coaching techniques to support young athletes. 	Director of Student Development Principals Assistant Principals Athletic Director	2010-2012 2010-2011

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Objective #3:

Schools will partner with parents to provide consistent social and emotional experiences for students.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Establish parent programs at all levels to educate parents about the social and emotional skill development of their children and to involve them in supporting these efforts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide social and emotional learning curriculum information to parents through principal newsletters. • Develop the social and emotional learning page on the NPS website to provide current information and parent materials, including anti-bullying information. • Establish and evaluate the effectiveness of the middle school parent program (<i>Resiliency Parent Conference</i>). • Partner with PTCs, community groups, and the SEPAC to establish an annual calendar of parent events that reflect the home-school partnership. 	<p>Director Student Development Principals</p> <p>Department Directors/ Chairs</p> <p>Director of Community Education</p>	<p>2010-2012</p> <p>2010-2011</p> <p>2010-2011</p> <p>2010-2011</p>

District Goal #2: Develop the social and emotional skills of all students

To ensure that students have the social and emotional competencies that enable them to be self-aware, to have social and relationship skills, to self-manage, and to make responsible decisions.

Objective #4:

Students will improve social and emotional skill development through consistent, layered, and effective instruction at all levels.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Improve current instruction by ensuring fidelity, consistency, and quality of instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the SEL Steering Committee to monitor the district’s progress toward meeting program goals; recommend professional development needs based on survey data. • Fully implement the 2nd Step program. • Conduct the Social Emotional Learning survey of all PreK-5 classroom teachers to determine SEL program implementation. 	<p>Director of Student Development Principals Department Directors/Chairs</p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #3: Promote Active Citizenship

To ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate productively in the local and global communities and commit them to action as learners and citizens.

Objective #1:

Students will engage in age appropriate service activities that enable them to contribute to or act on local or global social needs and that provide them opportunities to develop social, civic, and academic skills through reflection and analysis of their efforts.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a service learning leader position in each school. • Develop a school and district service learning team that guides efforts to integrate service activities and opportunities within classrooms, schools, and the district. • Expand service learning activities and opportunities for all students. 	Superintendent Principals Department Directors/Chairs	2010-2012

Objective #2:

Students will develop competencies to enable them to understand and effectively address matters of diversity, racism, ethnocentrism, and bias in the context of the pluralistic communities in which they live

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
Ensure programs and practices allow all students and staff to develop multiple perspectives, strategies, and opportunities to understand and work with a diverse population. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Diversity Planning Team to facilitate the district’s work in this area. • Assess the district’s ability to provide equity and access for all students, particularly special education, ELL, low income students and for students of color. 	Director of Student Development Human Resource Director METCO Director	2010-2012

District Goal #3: Promote Active Citizenship

To ensure students have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate productively in the local and global communities and commit them to action as learners and citizens.

Objective #3:

Students will develop proficiency in a language other than English and develop the cultural, technological, and civic skills necessary to adapt and respond to the conditions of 21st century global change.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Articulate standards, competencies and experiences that reflect the skills required to be successful in today's global environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider the existing middle school foreign language scheduling model to maximize student learning and the use of resources; consider the implementation of Mandarin and Latin at the middle school level to complement the high school program. • Assess the learning impact of the high school's online courses. • Identify opportunities for students to engage in experiences that develop STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), civic, economic, and intercultural awareness and skills. • Explore international collaborations to promote learning and student and staff educational exchanges. 	<p>Principals</p> <p>Director Program Development</p> <p>Middle School Principals</p> <p>Department Director</p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #4: Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals.

To build and carry out a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that enables our learning goals and is responsive to student and school needs.

Objective #1:

Long-range resource planning documents will support a sustainable school infrastructure and operations.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Articulate and disseminate information and plans that detail school needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and share long-range forecast of school operating expenditures, to better understand the “big picture” and inform the resource allocation process. • Update Town Facilities Master Plan to reflect current capital priorities together with realistic financing plan (Mitchell, Hillside, Newman, Administration). • Develop sustainable technology plan that addresses 21st century skills, assistive technology requirements and modern administrative systems. 	<p>School Committee Superintendent</p> <p>Director of Financial Operations</p> <p>Director of Technology & Innovation</p> <p>Director of Student Development</p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #4: Ensure Infrastructure Supports District Values and Learning Goals

To build and carry out a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that enables our learning goals and is responsive to student and school needs.

Objective #3:
 Modern and efficient information systems and training opportunities will be in place and used regularly to manage school and district operations that support staff, parents, and students, and will be aligned to programmatic and curriculum initiatives.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Ensure administrative technology and training facilitates efficient school operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a human resource information management system. • Implement system to permit on-line and electronic payments of school fees, in conjunction with the Town. • Update financial policies and procedures manual to reflect current practices and new policies. • Develop a handbook for administrative staff on administrative systems (Aesop, HTE, etc.) • Develop a staff handbook for all employees. 	<p>Director of Human Resources</p> <p>Director of Media and Technology Services</p> <p>Director of Financial Operations</p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

District Goal #4: Ensure Infrastructure Supports District Values and Learning Goals

To build and carry out a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that enables our learning goals and is responsive to student and school needs.

Objective #4:

Core services including staff recruitment, compensation and benefits management, employee relations and human resource information management will promote a safe and healthy work place that facilitates and promotes a positive work ethic and reflects the district's core values.

Action Steps	Facilitator(s)	Timeline
<p>Ensure human resource management programs meet district needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify critical areas where staff turnover is likely and work with affected departments to develop a comprehensive retention and succession plan. • Develop a professional development program for clerical staff. • Conduct regular market compensation studies to ensure competitive salaries. • Improve support staff (clerical, teaching assistant) evaluation instruments through the collective bargaining process. 	<p>Director of Human Resources</p> <p>Director of Financial Operations</p>	<p>2010-2012</p>

Glossary

Academic Achievement: The relative success of students in learning and mastering the school subjects that they study, as measured by tests of the knowledge and skills that were taught. Some educators believe that academic achievement should include a broader sample of performances than just test scores.

Achievement Gap: Persistent differences in achievement among different groups of students as indicated by scores on standardized tests, grades, levels of educational attainment, graduation rates, and other data. Narrowing or closing this gap is one of the rationales for standards-based reform, which aims to ensure that additional attention is paid to low-performing students and that expectations are similar for all students.

Action Research: The systematic investigation by teacher of some aspect of their work to help them improve their effectiveness. Action research requires that the participants identify a question or problem and then collect and analyze relevant data. It differs from conventional research in that the participants study an aspect of their own work in the classroom and intend to use the results themselves.

Assessment: A test. An assessment may be part of a system for testing and evaluating individual students, groups of students, schools, or districts. Different types of assessment instruments include achievement tests, minimum competency tests, developmental screening tests, aptitude tests, observation instruments, performance tasks, and authentic assessments. Assessment may contain questions in any number of formats—multiple-choice, short response, and open-ended response.

Benchmarks: Any specific, measurable goals or objectives for students to meet at various points during the school year. Benchmarks are sometimes represented by samples of student work either from current students or from students from previous years. A set of benchmarks can be used as checkpoints to monitor student progress in meeting performance goals within and across grade levels.

Common Assessments: An evaluation developed by a group of teachers who teach the same grade, subject, or course on a common unit of study for the purpose of using the data for making decision about improving instructional practice.

Content Standards: Standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in core academic subjects at each grade level. The purpose of content standards is to create a common curriculum, so that all students have access to the same curriculum and so that teachers know what they are supposed to teach.

Curriculum Frameworks: A grade-by-grade description of the curriculum that will be taught in each of the subject areas as determined by a state's educational agency. They determine what teachers will teach and what students are expected to learn.

Data-Based Decision Making: The process of making decisions about curriculum and instruction on the basis of analysis of classroom data, school data, or the results of standardized tests.

Differentiated Instruction: A form of instruction that seeks to maximize each student's growth by recognizing that students have different ways of learning, different interests, and different ways of responding to instruction. In practice, it involves offering several different learning experiences in response to students' varied needs.

Formative Assessment: Evaluation carried out, often continuously or periodically, for the purpose of gathering information to improve student performance; teacher performance; and instructional methods, programs, and products.

Global Education: Academic programs devoted to the study of the histories, cultures, geography, economics, and governments of the world. The emphasis is on the study of cultures over the study of political history and struggles for power between and within nations.

Learning Outcomes/Expectations: An objective that states a goal or benchmark that students are expected to meet at a particular grade level in a particular subject. Specific expectations of what students are supposed to know or be able to do as a result of a specific course or learning activity.

Professional Development: Learning opportunities that are designed to increase the professional knowledge and skills of teachers who are currently working in the schools.

Research-Based: A descriptor of a program or policy that relies on credible, long-term studies of its effectiveness in practice.

Service Learning: Service learning refers to community service by students in a non-school setting. It aims to deepen students' social learning and to promote problem solving by having them engage in socially useful activities in the local community. It also provides them opportunities to discuss their experiences and to frame their learning within the context of current social issues.

Social and Emotional Skills/Competencies: Social-emotional skills, or 'emotional intelligence', is the name given to the set of abilities that allows students to work with others, learn effectively, and serve essential roles in their families, communities and places of work. Research shows that social-emotional skills can be taught to students and that their presence in classrooms and schools improves academic learning.

Standards-Based Learning:

Unified system of research based practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment that are focused on student learning. It is characterized by clearly defined expectations for students (i.e. standards), instructional strategies that give students multiple ways to learn and assessment practices that provide meaningful feedback for students.

Summative Assessment: Evaluation used to document students' achievement at the end of a unit or course or and evaluation of the end product of a student's learning activity.

* Excerpted from Diane Ravitch, *Ed Speak* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007)