

Needham Public Schools District Goals 2016-2017

Goal One: Advance learning for all students

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

Objective #1: Students have the opportunity to increase their achievement as a result of instruction that is differentiated and responsive to their learning needs.

Objective #2: Students learn about themselves and their world through innovative world language, technological, civic, and STEAM programs and practices.

Objective #3: Educators identify essential curriculum content and learning expectations for each grade level/subject area that are aligned to state standards.

Objective #4: Educators support continuous growth for themselves and their students through the use of high quality instructional coaching, implementation of common assessments, and data to inform and improve student learning.

Goal Two: Develop social, emotional, wellness, and citizenship skills

To ensure students develop the knowledge and skills that empower healthy, resilient, engaged, and culturally proficient citizens who act with integrity, respect, and compassion.

Objective #1: Students develop problem solving skills, a positive sense of identity, social competence and awareness, and a sense of purpose through the effective instruction of social, emotional, and wellness skills at all levels.

Objective #2: Students and staff develop competencies to address matters of diversity, socio-economic status, racism, gender, and bias in the context of the pluralistic communities in which they learn and live.

Goal Three: Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals

To develop, promote, and implement a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that supports learning for all and is responsive to school and student needs.

Objective #1: School leaders engage in long-range planning that supports sustainable school infrastructure and operations.

Objective #2: School Leaders implement efficient information systems and training programs to enhance learning, manage school and district operations, strengthen communication, and ensure student safety.

Objective #3: Educators and school leaders support a culture of professional learning, growth, and innovation.

Goal One: Advance learning for all students

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

Objective #1: Students have the opportunity to increase their achievement as a result of instruction that is differentiated and responsive to their learning needs.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a coherent and tiered system of academic support for students. • Continue to implement the use of digital and mobile learning devices at elementary and secondary levels. • Increase the number of students who have met DESE target expectations for ELA, Math, and Science. 	<p>Completion of a tiered system of support document that includes academic and SEL instruction and interventions needed to support all students.</p> <p>Chromebooks piloted at elementary schools; 9th graders begin 1 to 1 program.</p> <p>MCAS results indicate all Needham Schools attain Level One status.</p>

Objective #2: Students learn about themselves and their world through innovative world language, technological, civic, and STEAM programs and practices.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop interdisciplinary learning experiences for all students in grades K-12. • Pilot the “thinking like a historian” framework in grade 6-12 social studies. 	<p>High school & middle school administration examine existing curriculum for interdisciplinary opportunities; new interdisciplinary units proposed in program of studies. Elementary options explored and STEAM curriculum strengthened.</p> <p>Teachers pilot and evaluate model lessons at each grade level that incorporate the “thinking like a historian” strategies for that grade level. Feedback from teachers serves to inform next steps.</p>

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Objective #3: Educators identify essential curriculum content and learning expectations for each grade level/ subject area that are aligned to state standards.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vertically articulate special education programming from preschool to postgraduate.• Implement realigned math program in the 9th grade.• Implement four reading units of study at grades 1-5 and two units in kindergarten.• Identify the cross cutting concepts and science and engineering practices in new science standards; integrate into curriculum.• Refine/update content, learning expectations and standards alignment in ATLAS for subject/grade level curriculum maps.	<p>Coherent Pre-K through PG program documented and shared broadly; decreased number of out-of-district placements; decreased number of IEP rejections.</p> <p>New program implemented in grades 7-9.</p> <p>Reading units of study become part of instructional practice in all classrooms; classroom observations and school SIPs reflect progress.</p> <p>Revision of science curriculum units completed.</p> <p>Maps published on the web provide parents and community with up to date and accurate curriculum information.</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, creative, and rigorous learning experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

Objective #4: Educators engage in continuous growth for themselves and their students through the use of high quality instructional coaching, implementation of common assessments, and data to inform and improve student learning.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop meaningful common assessments that generate data to inform instruction.• Increase capacity at school level to analyze data and use the information to inform instructional practice, provide intervention, or facilitate student transitions.• Prepare students, staff and resources for proposed changes in state testing.• Study staff and parent survey results related to the efficacy of curriculum and use of student feedback.	<p>Inventory of common assessments provides additional options for teachers to use for determining student growth.</p> <p>Coaches/ curriculum/ department leaders provide support for grade/ course/ subject area teams to use protocols to analyze data from common assessment; collaborative team conversations about practice are grounded in data that has been collected and analyzed.</p> <p>New state testing models successfully implemented.</p> <p>Report to School Committee detailing concerns and opportunities for growth.</p>

Goal Two: Develop social, emotional, wellness, and citizenship skills

To ensure students develop the knowledge and skills that empower healthy, resilient, engaged, and culturally proficient citizens who act with integrity, respect, and compassion.

Objective #1: Students develop problem solving skills, a positive sense of identity, social competence and awareness, and a sense of purpose through the effective instruction of social, emotional, and wellness skills at all levels.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a digital citizenship curriculum that includes a cyber-bullying component that can be integrated into all disciplines. Expand integration of SEL with competencies in Cultural Proficiency and continued development of Service Learning. 	<p>Digital citizenship curriculum is developed and shared with all teachers; leads into a plan on how curriculum will be integrated into practice; teachers and students understand guidelines and demonstrate good practice.</p> <p>SEL competencies updated to reflect integration of cultural proficiency and service learning; SEL competencies shared with faculty.</p>

Objective #2: Students and staff develop competencies to address matters of diversity, socio-economic status, racism, gender, and bias in the context of the pluralistic communities in which they learn and live.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for students, staff, and families to develop an understanding and awareness of Culturally Proficient (CP) practices. Encourage local and international collaborations and learning opportunities for students and staff. Understand staff, parent, and student perceptions about how curriculum reflects diversity. 	<p>Increased staff and student participation in programs designed to understand and respond to diverse, at risk, and marginalized students; increased staff, student, and community involvement in the Diversity Summit.</p> <p>Increased participation in international travel, exchanges, and online learning; increased opportunities for students to travel and learn in local communities.</p> <p>Focus groups held; initial feedback provided to District Leadership Team.</p>

Goal Three: Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals
 To develop, promote, and implement a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that supports learning for all and is responsive to school and student needs.

Objective #1: School leaders engage in long-range planning that supports sustainable school infrastructure and operations.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop robust and detailed financial enrollment and capital projections. • Develop technology strategic plan. • Provide guidance on Full Day Kindergarten implementation • Secure funding for new Hillside School; complete high school space needs feasibility. • Review current central office administrative structure to consider efficiencies and areas requiring support. 	<p>Enrollment projections that provide useful district and school and student demographic data presented; capital plan presented to Town Boards.</p> <p>Completion of a technology plan that addresses student, staff, and administrative needs.</p> <p>Initial plan presented to School Committee.</p> <p>Voters approve new school; feasibility study presented to School Committee and other Town boards in anticipation of a design funding request.</p> <p>Initial findings shared with district staff and School Committee.</p>

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Objective #2: School leaders implement efficient information systems and training programs to enhance learning, manage school and district operations, strengthen communication, and ensure student safety.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in technology systems. • Update district website. • Adopt A.L.I.C.E. school safety protocol and articulate roles and responsibilities. • Continue to develop and implement human resource programs that meet local and federal needs. 	<p>Educator evaluation software (Teachpoint) fully implemented; Google Apps for Education implemented in classrooms; Personalized Learning Initiative fully implemented in 9th grade.</p> <p>New website launched.</p> <p>A.L.I.C.E. protocol implemented in all schools.</p> <p>Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) implemented; Educator evaluation survey system piloted; SEL plan implemented.</p>

Objective #3: Educators and school leaders support a culture of professional learning, growth, and innovation.

<i>Key Activities</i>	<i>Evidence that demonstrates progress</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinated Program Review (CPR) prepared for the site visit. • Negotiate competitive, fair, and fiscally sustainable contracts for Units B, C, D, and E. • Collaborate with the NEA to develop a culture that empowers teacher voice and agency. 	<p>CPR visit shows few recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>Employee contract negotiations successfully concluded.</p> <p>Survey results show teachers and administrators report initial success in the development of processes to empower teacher voice.</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.

Coherent Curriculum: A program that is well organized and purposefully designed to facilitate learning, free of academic gaps and needless repetitions, and aligned across lessons, courses, subject areas, and grade level.

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.

Common Core: State Standards that detail what K-12 students should know in English language arts and mathematics at the end of each grade.

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.

Cultural Proficiency: a model for shifting the culture of the school or district. It is a way a person or an organization make assumptions for effectively describing, responding to, and planning for issues that arise in diverse environments. Cultural proficiency is a paradigm shift from viewing cultural difference as problematic to learning how to interact effectively with other cultures. (*Cultural Proficiency A Manual for School Leaders, 2009*)

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.

District Determined Measures: Assessments of student learning, often common assessments, developed at the local level and implemented to improve student learning and to ensure educator accountability and growth.

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.

IEP: Individual Learning Plan developed for students eligible for special education.

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.

Response to Intervention (RtI): A method of intervention to provide early and responsive assistance to students experiencing academic difficulty.

Service Learning: Service learning aims to deepen students' social learning and to promote problem solving by having them engage in socially useful activities in the local community and school. 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.

Vertical Articulation: Clear and consistent expectations for supports, services, and programs PreK through high school.

Wellness: An active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward a healthier and successful life. It involves growth and balance in six primary dimensions of wellness: physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and occupational.