



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

School Improvement Plan for

2018-19 School Year

School Improvement Plan Template

School Council Membership

Name	Role	Year of Term
Larry Dorey	Principal	2
Beth Baker	Associate Principal	2
Lauren Gilman	Parent Rep	3
Diane Ross	Parent Rep	3
Julia Du	Parent Rep	2
Cindy McCarthy	Community Rep	3
Janet Maxwell	Staff	4
Lisa Dahill	Staff	4
Connor Champigny	Student Rep	Sr
Michael Li	Student Rep	Sr
Junior Positions Open (3)		
Senior Position Open (1)		
One Faculty Position Open (1)		

Goal: School and Student Wellness

We will put our students' well-being at the center of teaching and learning, build opportunities for wellness into our school structure, and work with caregivers around ways that we can partner in this work.

Background and Rationale:

The high school is moving into year six of work focusing on mental health, wellness, and learning. In 2018-2019 we will focus our efforts on partnering with caregivers in this work and continue building opportunities for wellness strategies into the school day as well as bolstering our preventive measures related to student mental health and wellbeing. We will provide professional learning, training, and resources for staff and students while continuing to engage the community in our work. It is our expectation that all stakeholders (students, staff, and caregivers) will play a role in this work.

Strategies:

- Continue our student learning series on building wellness strategies. During the 2018-2019 school year, we will focus on quarterly topics during wellness lunches, advisory lessons, and classroom connections.

School Improvement Plan Template

- Use the administrative blog as a vehicle to discuss ways the school and caregivers can partner around wellness work.
- Expand upon caregiver outreach, communication, and conversation related to well-being.
- Continue mental health awareness and suicide prevention efforts.
- Continue increasing counselor availability for student check-ins and utilize school social workers to meet with students in crisis and to engage in preventative work.
- Help students identify strategies to promote resiliency and manage short term stress.
- Continue to support student wellness by evaluating the high school schedule and alternate schedules (including start time) to make sure that we have a schedule that best supports student wellness.
- Bolster our engagement with our PK-12 Challenge Success partnership with a focus on school day schedule, workload and homework, and community engagement.

Outcomes:

- Quarterly Wellness Workshops that include speakers and student-led presentations and activities related to active wellness strategies.
- Wellness-themed academic planners distributed to all 9th graders and specialized programs for 2018-2019 school year.
- Designate the admin blog once a quarter to focus on school and caregiver partnership related to wellness.
- Continue counselor led student groups to discuss depression and mental illness and resources to ask for help.
- Expand upon counselor led caregiver coffees to discuss ways to partner around wellness related strategies.
- Increase availability of counselors to meet with students on a drop-in and non-crisis basis
- Signs of Suicide (SOS) trainings and depression/suicide screenings for 9th and 12th graders
- Suicide prevention gatekeeper training for all new staff members
- Challenge Success Survey

Goal: Classroom Instruction and Assessment

We will continue our work related to assessment and instruction focusing on instructional techniques that increase students' and teachers' awareness of and ability to measure student learning. We will continue to work together to develop expectations for workload and assessment including that it be a reasonable amount, that we consider the scheduling of assessments, that assessments are thoughtfully relevant and authentic, and that assessments directly reflect the objectives of a course, unit, or lesson.

Background and Rationale:

During the 2014-2015 school year, we surveyed our students about sources of stress within their experience at A-B. We gained an understanding of which aspects of their experience as high school students most contribute to stress and anxiety.

Assessment was identified as a significant source of stress for students. In response to this information, the high school faculty spent time during the 2015-2016 school year looking closely at teaching and learning and specifically examining the role that assessment plays at the high school. We continued this work for the 2016-2017 school year, including piloting an assessment calendar prior to mid-year week and supporting teachers who incorporated authentic, project-based and other alternative assessments throughout the school year.

In the 2017-2018 school year, our focus was on building capacity within our staff for authentic and alternative assessments. We provided models and incorporated professional learning opportunities with the goal of increasing the number of authentic and alternative assessments across disciplines -- particularly during our pilot schedule.

During the 2018-2019 school year, we will continue our conversations around instruction and assessment focussing on the importance that instruction and assessments allow staff and students to continually assess student learning. We will also continue our discussions around reasonableness of amount, scheduling, and relevance of assessments .

Strategies:

- Adjust midyear week timing and assessment calendar based on feedback from 2017-2018 .

School Improvement Plan Template

- Use faculty meeting, department meeting, and professional learning release time to focus on assessment as feedback for both teachers and students, and how effective and timely feedback supports students' learning and wellness.
- Develop a process for teachers to visit other classes to better understand what assessment and instruction looks like in other content areas. The end goals would be building community, learning from colleagues, and gaining a better awareness of instruction and assessment across the building.
- Individual departments will continue to work together to develop expectations for workload and assessment, including that it be a reasonable amount, that assessments are thoughtfully relevant and authentic, that assessments directly reflect the objectives of a course, unit, or lesson, and that consideration is given to the scheduling of assessments.
- Communicate with caregivers and the community to inform and educate about assessment work that supports our Challenge Success partnership.

Outcomes:

- Students and teachers see the "big picture" of knowledge, including more focus on learning and inquiry and less focus on grades and levels.
- A focus on elements of student and staff wellbeing, including better sleep habits, stress management, and less stress related to assessment.
- Meaningful and varied assessment practices, including flexibility, interdisciplinary learning, and project-based learning that reflects depth of learning.
- Under the umbrella of Challenge Success work, shifts in the school and community culture to value the "whole student" versus grades, test scores, competition, and college admissions and selection.
- A shift from an "assessment" mindset to a "feedback" mindset as a means to empower students to own their learning.
- Feedback measured through the Faculty Survey, Senior Survey, Challenge Success Data, and parent/guardian feedback.

Goal: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We will increase staff knowledge and understanding of cultural proficiency, the diverse groups within the AB community, and the unique and individualized experiences of all students and families within the AB community -- including, but not limited to, families of color, members of the LBGTQ community, those who are differently labeled, religious minority groups, and others who are marginalized.

School Improvement Plan Template

Identify a plan that fosters relationships between school members of the community we serve.

Strategies:

- Train ABRHS Administration and Department Leaders using the SEED Equity training related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Offer the SEED Equity training to all staff as part of our district-wide professional learning.
- Work with the Leadership Team and interested staff and students to create recommendations for staff and student professional learning and support.
- Create a series of Advisory Lessons that focus on sharing stories that create conversations to promote and foster mutual respect, understanding, empathy, and appreciation for diverse experiences.
- The high school will participate actively in the district-wide equity audit and use the information gained through this audit to make the AB community a more equitable, inclusive, and welcoming, school for all students.

Outcomes:

- Staff and students will have a better understanding, empathy, and appreciation of each other's unique experiences.
- Staff and students will strengthen their cultural proficiency.
- All administrators and department leaders will receive SEED training from the National SEED Project, which is a peer-led professional development program that creates conversational communities to drive personal, organizational and societal change toward greater equity and diversity.
- Staff and students will create a professional learning plan for deepening this work in the future.

Assessment of 2017-2018's School Improvement Plan

Goal: School and Student Wellness

We will put our students' wellbeing at the center of teaching and learning and build opportunities for mindfulness and wellness into our school structure.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

School Improvement Plan Template

- Interactive wellness planners sponsored by ABUW and PTSO, distributed to all students and staff.
- Monthly wellness lunches to give both teachers and students exposure to and practice wellness strategies supported by ABUW.
- Monthly wellness topics covered in extended advisory periods.
- Modeling and practicing mindfulness exercises in our opening day with teachers; in the first several days of school, teachers practiced this with their students in advisory.
- The JHS and HS offered on-site resiliency professional learning through The Benson Henry Institute, allowing teachers to embed wellness/resiliency work in their classes.
- SOS screening for grades 9 and 12.
- Increased access to counseling through increased social workers and counselor open blocks, through an online appointment calendar.
- Homework-free weekends.
- Two week pilot schedule, including the implementation of wellness activities during X-block.
- Wellness Week in April 2018 in which student and staff groups led wellness activities.

Ongoing measurement:

- Feedback measured through the Faculty Survey, Senior Survey, Challenge Success Data.

Goal: Classroom Instruction and Assessment

We will continue our work to develop common language and expectations for assessment across the high school. This includes that it be a reasonable amount, that we consider the scheduling of assessments, that assessments are thoughtfully relevant and authentic, and that assessments directly reflect the objectives of a course, unit, or lesson.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

- Continue to use assessment calendar prior to the midyear week.
- Professional learning time related to variety and flexibility of assessments (including sharing assessments and commitments to use alternative

School Improvement Plan Template

assessments across disciplines) that can be embedded into longer class periods like in the pilot schedule.

- Used professional learning time to engage in cross-disciplinary work related to alternative assessment, revision and redemption, and engagement strategies.
- Increased communication to staff regarding homework-free weekends and vacations to clarify expectations during those periods.
- Individual departments worked on departmental professional learning focused on strategies related to assessment.
- A shift from an “assessment” mindset to a “feedback” mindset as a means to empower students to be more aware of their own learning.
- Piloted an alternating block schedule.

Ongoing measurement:

- Feedback measured through the Faculty Survey, Senior Survey, Challenge Success Data.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

16 Charter Road

Acton, MA 01720

978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

RJ Grey Junior High School

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

School Improvement Plan for 2018-2019

Written and Submitted By: Andrew Shen, Principal
June, 2018
School Council Membership, 2017-2018 School Year

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Year of Term</u>
Andrew Shen	Principal, School Council co-chair	NA
Maureen Lin	Junior High Teacher	2nd of 2-year term
Rebecca Mazonson	Junior High Teacher	2nd of 2-year term
Tom Wolf	8th grade parent	2nd of 2-year term
Michelle Hanlon	8th grade parent	2nd of 2-year term
Jack Kline	7th grade parent	1st of 2-year term
James Dillon	7th grade parent	1st of 2-year term

2017-2018 School Council Meeting Dates:

(for minutes and handouts of individual meetings, please go to: <http://rigrey.abschools.org/school-council>)

October 16, 2017
November 7, 2017
December 11, 2017
January 8, 2018
March 5, 2018
May 7, 2018
June 4, 2018

Goal One: Continue to develop and enhance the Junior High curriculum and instructional practices so that it is responsive to the needs of the current student population, and incorporates new learning standards and teaching practices within different academic disciplines. Special emphasis and attention this year will be placed on providing support to classroom teachers and other staff as they review, design and implement curriculum in a number of targeted areas. Specifically, math instruction and the role of the new instructional coach, ELL instruction and assessment, elective courses offered during Grey Block, and the new STEP program within Special Education.

Background and Rationale: Consistent with the District's priorities, the Junior High remains committed to continuous improvement of our curriculum and instructional practices that improves student learning, engagement and investment within various content areas. At its best, this work is committed to identifying additional methods of challenging students who already exhibit strong academic skills and content mastery, and identifies steps and strategies for improving the learning and engagement of those students who have continued to struggle in different content areas. This work runs parallel to, and in collaboration with, the supports and interventions that we have established within both the Special Education and general education landscape - i.e. Academic Support Center, Reading, and ELL instruction. In 2018-2019, we will continue to identify and pursue improvements in our supports for ELL students, support our off-team teachers as they design and teach the new Grey Block elective courses, incorporate the new STEM coaching position, and launch the newly created STEP program within Special Education.

Strategies:

- Plan professional learning sessions during the summer and school year that address strategies for supporting ELL students within the classroom
- Support teacher-led summer work that is focused on creating leveled resources and materials that can be used by teachers who have ell students within their classes.
- Purchase learning materials and resources that teachers identify for supporting their work with ELL students
- Identify multiple opportunities for the STEM instructional coach to provide support to math teachers outside of formal coaching cycles
- Have Math Department Coordinator, Assistant Principal and STEM coach work with Assistant Superintendent's office to articulate a vision of K-12 (and 7-8) math education that can be discussed and understood by members of the Math Department
- Professional learning time for Math and Science Departments that focuses on the coaching model
- Have ETL and Assistant Principal work with new STEP teacher to establish initial subject area goals and curricular materials
- Provide professional learning time for off-team teachers to work closely with STEP teacher to identify appropriate supports that allow STEP program students to participate meaningfully in Exploratory and Physical Education/Health activities

Outcomes:

- Design and offer at least two professional learning programs to staff focusing on teaching ELL students. Staff who have ELL students within their classes report greater comfort and success with supporting ELL students in terms of instructional and assessment practices.
- Staff who have ELL students within their classes report improvement in the collaboration and partnership with the ELL teacher. The ELL teacher also reports improvement in collaboration and partnership with the staff.
- The Teaching & Learning office will have partnered with the Math Department Coordinator, Assistant Principal liaison, and members of the department to develop a working understanding of the District's long-term aspirations for Math Education and have a document that captures those goals and aspirations.

- Off-team teachers have taught their new electives to three different cohorts of students and have identified areas of adjustment and modification that will be implemented in subsequent trimesters.
- Off-team teachers and school leadership will have developed feedback to the different Grey Block elective offerings to determine whether they should be offered in 2019-2020, or if different offerings should be considered.
- The STEP program will have developed an academic curriculum (Math, Science, Social Studies, English, life skills) that allow students to access grade-level content and subject matter.
- The students in the STEP program are thoughtfully included in general education programs where possible, allowing for appropriate engagement with peers and staff throughout the school. This will begin with participation in Physical Education and Exploratory programs and electives.

Goal Two: Implement planned changes to the Junior High schedule and consider adjustments that may meet additional goals. Begin to more closely examine enrollment projections and possible staffing models for subsequent school years and identify changes or additions to scheduling and/or staffing that may need to be considered.

Background and Rationale: The District will be implementing new school start times for the Junior High and High School, which will require a range of adjustments for before and after school programming and activities. This includes, but is not limited to, scheduling of extracurricular clubs and activities, athletic programs, teacher extra help, and staff meetings. These changes will necessitate a variety of operational shifts that involve transportation and before/after school supervision. Additionally, the Junior High is changing its Silent Reading period to an all-school study period. This period will begin as a pure team-based study period for students and our school is interested in identifying additional uses of this period that could potentially serve other goals such as recess, academic intervention, or some form of advisory. Finally, the Junior High is committed to closely examining enrollment projections for the upcoming school years and providing the District and the School Committee with an initial analysis of possible scheduling changes or additions that need to be considered and may have programmatic and financial implications.

Strategies:

- Work closely with Transportation Office to design drop off and pick up protocols that adjust to the new schedule and sequence for buses
- Work closely with the Athletics Department to adjust practice and game schedules, factoring in access to fields and schedules of competing schools
- Facilitate professional learning session(s) in the Fall for teams and teachers to review Study Period logistics and identify possible additions to how time can be used
- Work with Deputy Superintendent to gather enrollment projection data; gather information from comparable middle schools and average team size/teacher caseload, as well as staffing models
- Utilize the School Council to review enrollment projection data and review possible staffing and scheduling models

Outcomes:

- Safe and efficient bus drop off and pick up protocol for before and after school
- Appropriate staffing and supervision plans for before and after school
- Successful shift of extracurricular programs and meetings, including interscholastic practices and games and other related logistics
- Organized and efficient organization of the new all-school Study Period (supervision, transition between classrooms, etc.)
- Teams have identified and piloted a variety of options for utilizing the new Study Period to meet other school objectives related to the student experience (i.e. recess, intervention, team-based activities) while still allowing students to use the time as a study
- A report to the Superintendent and School Committee that examines enrollment projections and introduces possible scheduling and staffing changes that may need to be considered

Goal Three: Continue to evaluate and identify aspects of school practice that can/should be adjusted to better reflect our commitment to supporting all students and understanding of the experiences and needs of our student population as it relates to identity including, but not limited to, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic status.

Background and Rationale: As populations in our two communities continues to shift and change, there is a clear mandate to adapt and adjust various aspects of our core practices to better reflect the needs of our student population. Two areas where we plan to continue reflecting on our practices are gender, and the socio-economic diversity of our student population. As our population of students and families includes a greater percentage for whom finances and school-related costs are a greater challenge, we are committed to improving and diversifying how we ensure that all families can fully and comfortably participate in school-based activities. We also aim to reduce when, how often, and how much we ask all families to pay for a school-related activity. In terms of gender and gender identity, we are committed to reflecting on our individual and larger school practices through that particular lens and assessing whether it is consistent with the shifts towards a more fluid understanding of gender and gender identity. This includes, but is not limited to, discussions about policies and practices regarding transgender and gender non-conforming students.

Strategies:

- Continue to schedule and plan professional learning sessions that offer additional guidance and support for teachers on the subject of gender and gender identity
- Work closely with teachers and teams who may be teaching students who may identify as transgender or gender non-conforming; provide additional training and guidance as needed
- Identify structural changes that will better reflect the fluidity of gender identity regarding physical spaces such as changing spaces and bathrooms.
- Develop a team of teachers to develop protocols and practices related to the planning and funding of field trips; plan summer planning days to establish protocols to be implemented during the school year
- Partner with District staff on including additional questions in the PowerSchool registration portal that allow for collecting information regarding student and family financial need
- Work with Edtech to identify devices that could be appropriately designated for the “loaner” program and provide “hotspots” for the school to purchase and distribute to students as needed
- Identify options within operating budget to absorb cost of loaner/hotspot program; advocate for budget increase if needed and appropriate
- Work with School Council to develop, monitor and improve Annual Appeal initiative and make adjustments as needed

Outcomes:

- Identification of practices that should be adjusted to reflect shifting understanding of gender identity, and working with staff to properly and thoughtfully implement those changes and shifts
- At least one initiative in partnership with Common Ground and/or other student groups that is focused on establishing a safe climate for students
- Convert two single staff bathrooms for student use as gender neutral bathrooms
- Students who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming report that they feel appropriately supported and that the school and staff are responsive to their specific needs and circumstances
- Establishment of a school-based loaner program that provides students with access to Chromebooks and wifi to address the “digital divide”
- Implementation of additional methods for collecting information about families and financial need that also protects privacy and dignity of families, and goes beyond Free & Reduced lunch list
- Successful implementation of annual fundraising appeal to RJ Grey families to generate additional funding to defray the cost of field trips and potentially other school-related costs

**Merriam School
School Improvement Plan for
2018- 2019 School Year**

School Council Membership for 2017-2018:

Name	Role	Year of Term
Ed Kaufman	Principal	
Juliana Schneider	Assistant Principal	
Vanessa Mann	Teacher	1st of 3-year-term
Michele Pruett	Teacher	1st of 3-year-term
Karen Sonner	Teacher	3rd of 3-year-term
Tushar Katarki	Parent	3rd of 3-year-term
Chris Brown	Parent	3rd of 3-year-term
Lara Plaskon	Parent	3rd of 3-year-term
Karen Wolfson	Parent	1st of 3-year-term

GOALS for 2018-2019

Goal 1:

Continue developing projects and aligning our curriculum maps at each grade level with the goal of three consensus projects which integrate multiple disciplines, and integrate the Massachusetts curriculum standards.

Background and Rationale:

As a project based learning school which emphasizes the integration of all subject areas, careful planning of instruction is necessary. Teachers have been working on developing three consensus projects for each grade level, as well as developing curriculum maps which include essential questions, projects, resources, assessments and standards. Such careful planning contributes to creative opportunities for children and collaboration for teachers during the planning process, throughout the execution of projects in classrooms, and while looking together at student work.

During the 2016- 2017 school year we developed a Curriculum Committee to grapple with topics including changing frameworks and creating vertical consistency throughout the school. This work has led us to create protocols for teachers, facilitate professional

learning opportunities and provide resources for teachers to be able to document their work. This work will continue as our curriculum maps remain in progress.

Strategies:

1. Teachers will continue to use grade level time and protocols to develop curriculum maps that incorporate scope and sequence, standards, and essential questions.
2. A representative from the Curriculum Committee will facilitate the continuation of curriculum mapping using a more expansive template and guidelines.
3. Curriculum maps will reflect common projects for grade levels, as well as scope and sequence and standards.
4. Literacy coaches will continue to support teachers in finding texts that support projects, and in supporting the teaching of reading strategies through these texts. Coaches will work with teachers in the planning of integrated curriculum.
5. Building Based Half-Day Thursdays will be used in order to continue curriculum mapping at each grade level.
6. The Curriculum Committee will continue to meet in order to continue developing structures, and in order to communicate around vertical alignment and across grade level goals.
7. Curriculum Committee members who represent every grade level loop, as well as special education will meet during August in order to lay out the Professional Learning plan for the 2018- 2019 school year.

Outcomes:

1. Grade levels will have completed curriculum maps in May 2019, incorporating all content area as well as reading and writing instruction.
2. Grade levels will have three completed projects in December 2018. Project implementation began during the 2016-2017 school year.
3. Projects will remain at the center of our curriculum maps and all literacy instruction (reading, writing, digital literacy) will support this work.
4. Teachers will begin sharing work across grade levels and will look together at student work for the purpose of deepening instructional methods.

Goal 2:

Continue the implementation of the Social Thinking curriculum.

Background and Rationale:

The Merriam School Counselor, School Psychologist and many classroom teachers and special educators have attended Professional Learning seminars focused on Social Thinking. This curriculum focuses on self-regulation and has been implemented in all classes throughout the school. Momentum and excitement has grown, teachers find it to be beneficial and many have asked for a deeper level of training, including how to use social maps for helping children modify and regulate their behaviors. We will train continue our work in providing training for all staff and look for the connections between Social Thinking and curriculum mapping.

Strategies:

1. Provide continued training for all teachers and assistants during our August Professional Learning days.
2. The School Psychologist, the School Counselor and previously trained teachers and support staff will model and co-teach lessons within classrooms as teachers implement the initial lessons at the beginning of the school year, and lessons which add onto the foundation that was built during year 1 of our implementation.
3. Teachers will create teacher resources through committee work. They will integrate Social Thinking, Open Circle and Responsive Classroom. These resources will be available within the Merriam Documents folders, and will be supported by the School Counselor, School Psychologist and administrators.
4. Teachers will use “reading buddy” time in order to review language and concepts from the Social Thinking curriculum with students, and in order to provide the modeling across grade levels.
- 5.

Outcomes:

Staff and students will increase their capacity and toolbox for handling life’s challenges. Teachers will align their language so that every child receives consistent support and language when they are being guided through challenging situations. Teachers will build in connections between academic curriculum and social/emotional learning.

Goal 3:

Implement the theme *water* schoolwide.

Background and Rationale:

Each year Merriam School adopts a theme for the year. The last two years we have had themes that were more abstract (gratitude and resilience) for children, but addressed wellness goals. We decided to move toward something more concrete, but that also addressed elements of wellness. We have decided on the theme “water”.

Strategies:

1. The school will build in two theme days and one community day which will focus on the theme water.
2. During Theme Day meetings, teachers will look for opportunities to connect curriculum (science) to our theme days and community days.
3. Theme day conversations will allow for a wide range of discussions about how water can be integrated into curriculum, wellness, and service-learning projects. There are many potential opportunities to get high school students involved in supporting our theme.
4. The Green Team will focus their efforts on bringing awareness to environmental issues around water. The Green Team presents monthly at our All School Meetings.

Outcomes:

Staff and students will make social, emotional and academic connections through “water”, connecting our learning from kindergarten through 6th grade.

Assessment of 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan

Goal 1:

Continue developing projects and aligning our curriculum maps at each grade level in order to integrate both reading and writing instruction.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

During the summer of 2017, a group of teachers from the Curriculum Committee attended a Curriculum Bootcamp in NYC presented by Heidi Hayes Jacobs. This Professional Learning provided teachers with tremendous resources, and we sent another group to participate in this opportunity in October, 2017. This training has provided our committee with the resources and understandings necessary in order to facilitate project work at every grade level. We are amidst creating three consensus projects at every grade level which integrate all areas of the curriculum. We continue to work in collaboration with our district specialists in the areas of literacy, math and science.

Throughout the year our committee developed multiple protocols. We have a protocol used for project development, standards bundling and developing essential questions which guide our project work. Members of the committee have facilitated our building based professional learning days which occur on half-day Thursday, as well as have facilitated project work during grade level collaboration times.

During our last Professional Learning time, we had a “Curriculum Celebration” where each grade level presented the work they had completed by using artifacts that have represented their process.

Goal 2:

Rewrite our homework guidelines/procedures.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

During the 2017-18 school year staff at Merriam met several times in the fall to create a first version of a homework procedures document that would be consistent with the district policy. Grade level teams met in conjunction with specialists to design the guidelines for each grade level. Teams were asked to keep track of the feedback they received over the course of the year along with their own perceptions of what was working well and what might need to be adjusted.

At our School Council meetings in the winter and early spring we began to discuss how to receive feedback from parents and staff, as a way to decide on any changes in our policy. We sent out a short survey to parents, with the following questions:

1. Please rate the Merriam homework procedures from 1-5 (least to most satisfied).
2. What do you appreciate about the procedures?
3. It would be even better if....

Parents responded separately for each of their children, so that we would have feedback specific to each grade level.

In a faculty meeting several weeks ago we looked at the results of the parent survey and discussed them in small groups. We then asked each staff member to fill out the survey for themselves. At a more recent meeting, we looked together at the results of the staff survey. We identified themes that all grade levels would need to address in the policy as well as themes that were specific to individual grade levels. Each team began to rework their grade level expectations around homework.

This work will be completed before the start of the 2018- 2019 school year.

Goal 3:

Implement the Social Thinking curriculum.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

During our professional days when we returned to school in the fall of 2017, our school psychologist as well as our school counselor provided training for our entire staff in the area of Social Thinking. The professional learning that they provided included ways to address self-regulation through the zones of regulation, as well as using social mapping as a way to understand our actions and reaction.

Every classroom teacher and specialist implemented social thinking lessons, and we began using common language including “expected” and “unexpected” as well as zones of regulation. Our psychologist and counselor have co-taught many lessons within classrooms and have been able to target small groups for more intensive instruction when needed. All children are using this terminology and it has become embedded into our school culture.

Goal 4:

Implement the theme *resilience* schoolwide.

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed:

During the 2017- 2018 school year we had two Theme Days, as well as one Community Day where we focused on the theme Resilience. Children read stories together identifying characters who demonstrated resilience and wrote and performed skits across the entire school that incorporated the theme resilience. Throughout the year, teachers used this theme to guide their thinking when working on our homework procedures. Additionally, many teachers incorporated this theme within their classrooms and performed poems, books and skits which incorporated characters who showed resilience. As the Curriculum Committee continues its work, it is exploring ways to incorporate social thinking and ways to incorporate building resilience with children (reflection, problem solving skills, collaboration).

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org



McCarthy-Towne School
School Improvement Plan for
2018-2019 School Year

School Improvement Plan

School Council Membership

Name	Role	Year of Term
David Krane	Principal (Chair)	Permanent
Marni Zelnick	Parent	2017-2019
Joe Biedenkapp	Parent	2017-2019
Jessica Lubets	Parent	2016-2018
Kerry Lewis	Parent (Co-Chair)	2015-2017
Kari James	Faculty	2016-2018
Bethany Ahern	Faculty	2017-2019
Nancy Kolb	Community Representative	(Appointed)

First Goal: Continue to develop and support the workshop model in all classrooms:

- A. Participate in professional learning activities to improve teaching and learning to support the Common Core curriculum
- B. Continue to inform families about the Workshop Model

Background and Rationale:

McCarthy-Towne School will be entering the fifth year of a professional learning relationship with Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) at Columbia University. For the sixth year in a row, we will be sending a group of teachers to the Teachers College Summer Institutes. These weeklong Institutes add to teacher knowledge and skill base around the Reading and Writing Workshop model. Project Staff Developers visit us across the school year to work with teachers to synthesize work done during the school year with the summer work. Six teachers will be attending Writers Workshop Institutes this summer as our school shifts specific focus to the teaching and learning through the Writers Workshop.

For the coming academic year, we will continue to emphasize writing instruction in the content areas, as well as work on small group work and increased use of Guided Reading in the primary classrooms. To that end, we will be using the services of a consultant previously connected with the Reading and Writing Project. This consultant will provide specific supports for classroom teachers

School Improvement Plan

throughout the coming school year around small group instruction and will visit McCarthy-Towne over the course of the year to coach into this work.

We will also continue to use the Workshop model for mathematics instruction. In mathematics, we will design instruction to blend the content standards and the practice standards. This effort is teacher-driven, using a variety of existing Math Workshop ideas and concepts, and fitting them within the structural framework of the Reader's and Writer's Workshop models as outlined by Teachers College. Familiarity and experience with this structure will allow educators and students to more easily transition into the instruction.

We will plan on using some of the Thursday afternoon Professional Learning time, reading Jo Boaler's *Mathematical Mindsets*, with assigned reading, conversation, and hands-on activities.

This revised goal aligns with the ABRSD Strategic Plan Values around Equity and Engagement.

Strategies:

ELA

- a. Continue to participate as a Project School
- b. Continue to send faculty to Teachers College at Columbia University for on-going training at the Reading and Writing Project
- c. Continue to integrate content instruction during Workshop time, with specific attention to writing in the Science and Social Studies components
- d. Adjust classroom and school-wide schedules to support instructional change
- e. Engaging an expert consultant to work with a specific area of instruction during the Readers Workshop and to coach classroom teachers: small group work and Guided Reading

MATH

- a. Continue to explore the use of assistants to support classroom math instruction
- b. Adjust classroom and school-wide schedules to support instructional change
- c. Continue to evaluate the Math Workshop in the Primary Grades

School Improvement Plan

Outcomes:

Teachers will continue to explore and use new methodology to adjust instruction, examine and integrate Common Core standards, effectively integrate new lessons into the curriculum, and refine lessons to address identified needs.

Second Goal: To enhance social vocabulary and interactions for all children by continuing to use Responsive Classroom for the school community and by continuing to implement ideas and methodology from the Social Thinking curriculum.

We will take a pro-active, educational approach to creating a positive social environment that fosters respect and compassion for all. We will set school community-wide expectations and norms including both adults and children.

Background and Rationale:

Responsive Classroom and Social Thinking are specific research-based curricula that address social interactions that give students strategies to be contributing members of classroom and school communities. We will tie in the Social Thinking and the Responsive Classroom platforms with district-wide goals of building social/emotional health for all students and faculty in the ABRSD.

This self-awareness enables students to connect to the academic realm, including critical thinking, reading comprehension, social problem solving, written expression, and perspective taking.

This is an ongoing goal for our school community. For the coming school year, the School Counselor will expand the range of classrooms for specific whole class instruction around the concepts of Social Thinking, including the use of specific language, vocabulary, and descriptors to develop skills around social problem solving.

This revised goal aligns with the ABRSD Strategic Plan Values around Wellness, Equity, and Engagement.

Strategies:

- a. Schedule parent information forums that specifically address the mechanics and philosophy of Responsive Classroom

School Improvement Plan

- b. Offer teacher-led workshops on specific Responsive Classroom teachings for select groups of staff members, including classroom assistants, on topics such as *Thorny Behaviors* and *Responding to Misbehavior*
- c. Use the language and strategies of Social Thinking in conjunction with the structures of Responsive Classroom
- d. Plan to offer Professional Learning that would blend the ideas and concepts of both Social Thinking and Responsive Classroom

Outcomes:

Increase student and adult self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These factors all contribute to stronger community building for educators, students and families.

Third Goal: Continue to explore and implement methods of integrating visual art into the curriculum at McCarthy-Towne, deepening curriculum understanding and enhancing the social emotional well being of students. To this end, it is important to educate the McCarthy-Towne families and community about the value of Art Integration in the classroom, and to ensure that all faculty understand the importance of art integration and know how to best incorporate art into both the academic units of study and the social/emotional work of the classroom.

Background and Rationale:

Since the early days of McCarthy-Towne, Art Integration has been an important part of who we are as a school. Integrating art with content material has many benefits, including new learning, deeper understanding of concepts and materials, and internalization of the subject matter. Additionally, the experiential process encourages exploration, risk-taking, problem solving, and flexibility, while promoting positive self-image and the ability to express oneself. We believe that all learning needs to be grounded in experiential process, and that the more traditional focus on the product or outcome deprives students of an awareness of how learning can apply to their lives. Making visual art is an example of experiential learning. Additionally, reflecting and speaking about the art not only strengthens students' understanding of the content, but also of themselves as learners. Through art, students also learn to appreciate and value each other as members of a larger community.

This revised goal aligns with the ABRSD Strategic Plan Values around Wellness, Equity, and Engagement.

School Improvement Plan

Strategies:

- a. Designate time for teachers to collaborate and plan with the Art Integration specialist, school counselor, school psychologist, and administrators
- b. Provide school-wide and team-based professional learning opportunities for staff, which may include observing projects in process at various grade levels
- c. Organize presentations to the community on the use of art in the social and emotional curriculum and in the academic curriculum

Outcomes:

More deeply incorporating art integration will strengthen students' resiliency, self-confidence, expression, and academic risk-taking. Art integration will also promote student learning of subject materials, and teacher understanding of student strengths and challenges.

Fourth Goal:

To educate and inform the McCarthy-Towne families, as well as all of the recently hired faculty members, in the three cornerstones of classroom activities which support the mission and vision of the McCarthy-Towne School:

- The Workshop model in literacy, mathematics, and content area instruction
- The Responsive Classroom and Social Thinking tenets, concepts, and curriculum as a way of consistently maintaining the language of social problem solving
- Art Integration as a way of strengthening student engagement, investment in their learning, and commitment to perseverance, risk-taking, and the responsibilities of being a member of a community

Background and Rationale:

The demographics of the ABRSD and of McCarthy-Towne are changing. Acton and Boxborough are becoming places of greater diversity, racially, ethnically, and economically, and so are the schools, including McCarthy-Towne. Our families are now of a different generation and many are unaware of the history of Open

School Improvement Plan

Enrollment and the autonomy that this concept allows each of the ABRSD elementary schools to experience and enjoy. Open Enrollment, or school choice, encourages families to look closely at each elementary school and then choose a school that most closely meets the educational aspirations of the family. As a result, families, more often than not, become a part of a school community that they have selected. This initial “automatic engagement” thus has families and students welcomed into a school community that is closest to their value system. This is what separates ABRSD from other towns and cities in the Commonwealth: parents are not assigned a neighborhood school; rather, they are assigning themselves a school, a school which hews closest to how they believe their children should be educated.

At McCarthy-Towne, the design and structure of strong instruction necessarily includes a strong social curriculum as well as a strong academic emphasis. We believe that Art Integration, Responsive Classroom and Social Thinking, and the Workshop model for reading and writing and mathematics are integral parts of our identity as a school. These three elements also are a significant part of why families are attracted to our school.

Strategies:

Workshop Model

1. Continue to participate as a Project School
2. Continue to send faculty to Teachers College at Columbia University for on-going training at the Reading and Writing Project
3. Continue to integrate content instruction during Workshop time
4. Adjust classroom and school-wide schedules to support instructional change
5. Schedule a Parent Education Evening to allow parents to explore Art Integration in a deeper way

Art Integration

1. Make available to new incoming staff members strategy and history sessions about the why and how of Art Integration
2. Provide time for classroom visits for staff for the exchange of ideas, thinking, and techniques
3. Schedule a Parent Education Evening to allow parents to explore Art Integration in a deeper way
4. Expand the display of student work throughout the school

Responsive Classroom and Social Thinking

School Improvement Plan

1. Expand the role of the School Counselor in direct instruction of the language and vocabulary of Social Thinking
2. Develop specific workshop content for faculty using Responsive Classroom instructional kits
3. Continue to emphasize community expectations around the use of Responsive Classroom and the language of Social Thinking
4. Schedule a Parent Education Evening to allow parents to explore Responsive Classroom and Social Thinking in a deeper way

Outcomes: The McCarthy-Towne community will develop forums, publications, and other means of educating our families about the history, mission, and vision of our school. Understanding that Art Integration is a central part of that vision and history will be a critical component of that educational effort.

Assessment of Previous Year's School Improvement Plan

First Goal: Continue to develop and support the workshop model in all classrooms:

- i. Participate in professional learning activities in order to improve teaching and learning to support the Common Core curriculum
- ii. Continue to inform families about the function and meaning of the Workshop Model

Goal Assessment:

This will always be an on-going goal for the McCarthy-Towne teaching community. We continue to grow as adult learners even as we continue to gain a new cohort of teachers. This growth translates directly into stronger literacy instruction, which is foundational in the study of science and social studies. Although we are finding Math Workshop to be a challenge to implement as

School Improvement Plan

effectively as the literacy workshop models, we continue to explore, experiment, and become more educated about how to best deploy this system. Workshop is inherently differentiated and the structure allows for students to work at many different instructional levels. We are continuing to study how to improve mathematics instruction using the workshop model.

Second Goal: Responsive Classroom for the entire school community

We will take a pro-active, educational approach to creating a positive social environment that fosters respect and compassion for all. We will set school community-wide expectations and norms that include both adults and children.

Goal Assessment:

Morning Meeting, a central tenet of the Responsive Classroom, has become an integral part of the fabric of our school. Each morning at 8:25, one can hear the simultaneous sound of the chime, calling children to the Meeting Area throughout the school.

Responsive Classroom, now linked with the explicit classroom instruction of Social Thinking, has had a visible affect on our school culture over the past few years. As this has become regular practice in the classroom, children are bringing their knowledge and understanding of Responsive Classroom philosophy as ascend through the grades. For many of our students, Responsive Classroom and, now, the language and meaning of Social Thinking, have become a part of school expectations. We will be gaining four new educators for the coming academic year and all of them will be given the opportunity to attend a weeklong workshop and training in Responsive Classroom philosophy and strategies.

Third Goal: Continue to explore and implement methods of integrating visual art into the curriculum at McCarthy-Towne, deepening curriculum understanding and enhancing the social emotional well being of students. To this end, it is important to educate the McCarthy-Towne families and community about the value of Art Integration in the classroom, and to ensure that all faculty understand the importance of art integration and know how to best incorporate art into both the academic units of study and the social/emotional work of the classroom.

Our school teaching community was very successful in making progress in this goal. A committee of teachers organized six Thursday afternoon workshops with

School Improvement Plan

a goal of familiarizing all of the certified staff with the history, the application, and the purpose of Art Integration in the classroom. Kari James, a Second Grade teacher and a member of the School Council, led this effort in large part.

Although a faculty committee developed the scope and sequence and planned the six workshops, all faculty members, including the Music, Physical Education teacher, as well as our Library Media Assistant, enthusiastically supported this work. Heidi Kupferman, our Visual Arts teacher, was also a leader in the preparation of the workshop, as were Fifth Grade teacher Jen Pratt, Second Grade teacher Heather Matthews, and First Grade teacher Heather Wilson. Faculty who has joined McCarthy-Towne in the past few years viewed this work as particularly important, and, as we add more staff members in the coming academic year, we will revisit some of this work for them, albeit in a truncated way.

It was with great pride that we presented to School Committee a slide show this past April illustrating some of the more important features of Art Integration and the impact upon students.

We would like to acknowledge the value of the Thursday afternoon Professional Learning time made available to the school. That time to work on many things important to our school was very valuable.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

Paul P. Gates Elementary School

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

School Improvement Plan 2018-2019

Submitted By: Lynne Newman, Principal

School Council Membership

Name	Role	Year of Term
Lynne Newman	Principal/Co-Chair	
Priscilla Kotyk	Assistant Principal	
June Montepeluso	Teacher	2nd of a 3-year term
Rebecca Rosen	Parent	3rd of a 3-year term
Manoj Thadani	Parent	3rd of a 3-year term
Mani Pandi	Parent/Co-Chair	3rd of a 3-year term
Det. Michael Eracleo	Community Representative	1st of a 3-year term

2017-2018 School Council Meeting Dates

<http://gates.abschools.org/parents/school-council>

October 23, 2017

November 27, 2017

January 29, 2018

March 26, 2018

April 23, 2018

May 14, 2018

Goal One: To understand and support the social-emotional needs of all students

Background and Rationale: Building on the district's work with Challenge Success, Gates teachers will participate in a book study that informs current thinking regarding the emotional well-being of students. There is compelling evidence that students may be struggling with emotional regulation, which impacts their ability to focus on learning.

Teachers will read and discuss social-emotional topics such as difficult behaviors, anxiety, and depression. Our goal is to better understand the causes and patterns of difficult behaviors and identify strategies for getting all students back on track so they can learn effectively.

Strategies:

Timeline: September 2018 - June 2019

Lead Parties: Gates Staff

- Read *The Behavior Code: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Teaching the Most Challenging Students* by Jessica Minahan and Nancy Rappaport.
- Understand what drives patterns of behavior through observations and discussions with colleagues to foster shared responsibility of all students.
- Outline intervention procedures that can be implemented within the classroom and throughout the school.

Outcomes: The staff will create a FAIR Plan as needed for students with challenging behaviors, which includes a Functional analysis of problem, Accommodations, Intervention strategies, and Responsive strategies during the 2018-2019 school year.

Goal Two: To implement *Responsive Classroom* with the focus on *Responsive School Discipline*

Background and Rationale: We continue to work on the full implementation of the *Responsive Classroom* approach, which emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong, safe school community. All teachers have the opportunity to participate in a 4-day summer workshop. To date we have a total of 11 staff members trained in *Responsive Classroom*. In addition to the summer workshop, we have completed the Positive Teacher Talk and the Teaching Discipline in the Classroom professional development kits. During the 2018 - 2019 school year our focus will be to

implement the *Responsive School Discipline* approach to ensure that positive behavior and productive learning takes place throughout the school.

Strategies:

Timeline: September 2018 - June 2019

Lead Parties: Gates Staff

- Offer *Responsive Classroom* Summer Workshop training to teachers
- Provide each teacher with a copy of *Teasing, Tattling, Defiance & More...Positive Approaches to 10 Common Classroom Behaviors*
- Create positive All School Rules that apply everywhere in school so that the whole school community has a shared understanding of the school's behavior expectations.
- Implement "Take a Break" chair and assign Buddy Classrooms K - 6
- Create a schedule that allows students to have recess before lunch
- Establish procedures for lunchtime, recess, and dismissal that are consistent with the schoolwide rules
- Review/revise bus dismissal procedures with a focus on school wide safety and respect
- Share *Responsive Classroom* strategies with parents at Back to School Night, parent teacher conferences and on the Gates Website

Outcomes: Our goal is to standardize our approach to positive discipline with a common vocabulary and set of procedures by implementing the *Responsive School Discipline* approach. A school wide plan will be developed that provides practical strategies for building a safe, calm, and respectful school climate based on deep respect for children and for staff.

"By doing our best every day to get to know children as individual, empathetically coach them in developing skills, and help them learn from mistakes, we give them (and ourselves) hope for a brighter future." p. 13 *Teasing, Tattling, Defiance & More...Positive Approaches to 10 Common Classroom Behaviors*

Goal Three: To continue to Grow a Caring Community through Civility, Respect & Kindness

Background and Rationale: There was great enthusiasm and spirit from the Gates community to continue to offer school-wide activities that foster civility, respect and kindness. In our second year we have plans to expand our repertoire of school-wide initiatives that promote a caring community.

Strategies:

Timeline: September 2018 - June 2019

Lead Parties: Gates Staff

- Celebrate Seasonal themes: Fall - Leaves of Gratitude; Winter - Collecting 100 Acts of Kindness Confetti; and Spring - Notes of Encouragement
- Identify student “Ambassadors” to welcome new students throughout the year
- Celebrate Gates 50th Anniversary
- Foster staff community by scheduling staff luncheons on building-based professional learning Thursdays

Outcomes: The Gates School will continue to expand activities that promote a caring community for students and staff.

Assessment of School Improvement Plan 2017 - 2018

Goal One: Revise K-6 Standards-based Report Card

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed: The K-6 standards-based report cards were updated and revised in September 2017 based on parent feedback and changes in grade level science curriculum.

Goal Two: Continue to Implement *Responsive Classroom* - Complete Positive Teacher Talk professional development and introduce the *Responsive Classroom Teaching Discipline in the Classroom* professional development

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed: Four staff members were trained in July 2017 and we currently have a total of eleven staff members trained in *Responsive Classroom*. The Positive Teacher Talk and Teaching Discipline in the Classroom kits were completed during the building-based professional learning Thursday afternoons. During the first six weeks of school, each classroom developed classroom rules based on the students' "hopes and dreams" for learning. K-6 classroom rules formed the basis of our new school-wide rules that were adopted and shared during our All School Monthly Meeting. The staff continues to be excited about the benefits of adopting and using the positive teacher language and implementing consistent discipline strategies of the *Responsive Classroom* philosophy.

Goal Three: Civility, Respect & Kindness: Growing a Caring Community

Outcomes/evidence and means by which they were assessed: The Gates School established All School Rules that provided positive and clear expectations for students. In September, all classroom teachers helped their students set individual learning goals for the school year, that are also called "hopes and dreams". Classroom Rules were established and linked to the students' hopes and dreams. K-6 classrooms shared their classroom rules and together classroom rules were blended to create the 2017 - 2018 All School Rules: Be respectful, Be kind, Be safe, and Try your best.

In keeping with the *Responsive Classroom* philosophy, we modified our traditional monthly school assemblies and established student centered All School Meetings. At our Back to School pep rally, we introduced our new All School theme: Growing a Caring

Community with students by wearing newly designed staff T-shirts and by sharing some of the new activities planned for the upcoming school year. All School Meetings were reformatted to include: Students musicians, All School greeting, Birthday announcements, Panther Awards, Student Council and Green Team announcements, and singing a variety of songs. This year we focused on increasing All School activities, which included book buddies in all K-6 classrooms and the expansion of the Sixth grade Community Service & Leadership program.

In addition to giving students Panther Awards for Generosity, Acceptance, Trust & Respect, and Enthusiasm, the staff introduced the "Helping Hands" project with students. Trees were created in the cafe and students earned helping hands for their kind and generous actions. Students were proud to see the trees decorated with their name on a helping hand.

The Student Council also focused on growing a caring community by leading community service projects that supported the Acton Food Pantry and Acton Food Pantry Clothes Closet. They sponsored spirit days during the school year and purchased two Buddy Benches for the Gates playground. The Student Council members introduced the Buddy Benches at an All School Meeting with the message of promoting an inclusive, friendly school community



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

Douglas School
School Improvement Plan for
2018-2019 School Year

School Council Membership

Name	Role	Year of Term
Richard Zachary	Parent	Year 2
Jen Moitoso	Parent	Year 2
Sri Tipirneni	Parent	Year 2
George Georgilas	Parent	Year 1
Heather Harer	Community Rep	Year 2
Anne Littlefield	Teacher	Year 2
Christopher Whitbeck	Principal	Ad hoc
Jenna Larrenaga	Assistant Principal	Ad hoc

Goal 1: Shifting Instructional Practice to Support Student Learning Using Visible Learning

Background and Rationale:

Visible Learning, based on the research of John Hattie, focuses on the practices that have the highest impact on student achievement. This matches the school district vision of engaging learners. In the next two years, Douglas teachers will learn about the core concepts of Visible Learning and the research of John Hattie. Through the lens of the Visible Learning evidence, they will identify and implement instruction that works best for their students.

Strategies:

1. Using an all staff read of Visible Learning for Teachers we will study the results of 25+ years of John Hattie's research into effective practices in education.
2. Collect data to focus change that is specific to Douglas School:
 - a. Analyse the data
 - b. Define school goals
 - c. Identify and determine priorities and targets
 - d. Define required knowledge and practices
 - e. Develop an action plan including the monitoring of progress
 - f. Introduce change management concepts to complete a Visible Learning plan for school.
3. Shift Instructional Practices based on data collection and analysis
 - a. Examine evidence from class(es) and transfer this into specific action that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students.

Outcomes:

1. By June 2019 teachers will be familiar with the research of John Hattie, the practices that have the highest impact on student achievement, and have collected data to inform decision making at Douglas.
2. By June 2020 teachers will examine evidence from class(es) and transfer this into specific shifts in instructional practice that will make a positive difference to the outcomes of students .

Goal 2: Responsive Classroom

Parent training of the *Responsive Classroom* approach to improve the connection and use of language between home and school.

Background and Rationale:

Douglas School practices are anchored in schoolwide implementation of the *Responsive Classroom* approach to teaching. The responsive classroom approach coincides with the ABRSD vision of equity, wellness and engagement. Every staff member has ongoing training and support in using *Responsive Classroom* strategies. Teachers and children create classroom rules together. Teachers help children practice the rules, and they respond to inappropriate behavior with consequences that help children learn self-control and responsibility. In addition, in every class Morning Meeting helps create a safe, caring community where every child can learn.

Recognizing that the more parents understand about these and other *Responsive Classroom* practices, the better it is for students, the school will developed ways to work with parents, including parent meetings, materials sent home, and videos.

Strategies:

1. Work with School Council and staff to create parent training/meeting dates.
2. Create trainings, materials for home and videos explaining the various aspects of Responsive Classroom.

Outcomes:

1. Parent Training materials to be used with all incoming parents.
2. Video series illustrating main points of Responsive Classroom for Parents.
3. Parent fluency in Responsive Classroom approach

Assessment of Previous Year's School Improvement Plan

Goal 1: Implement Investigations & CMP3 Mathematics Curriculum Aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Background and Rationale:

After Piloting and receiving feedback on four different math curricula, Douglas staff chose Investigations³ as the K-5 math program and CMP3 as the 6th grade curriculum. The staff required ongoing training to implement this new curriculum and pedagogy.

Strategies:

1. Working with our Math Specialist, Heather Haines, and professional development experts from Investigations, the teachers of Douglas School identified the math pedagogy and practices in which they require the most support.
2. Teachers at each grade level received training, and professional development support needed to implement this new curricula from math specialists, curriculum specialists from Investigations and principals

Outcomes:

1. In September of 2017, one all day PD to support teachers in initial implementation.
2. During building based PD afternoons and collaborative time, teachers administrators and PD experts worked to bring the teachers toward mastery of the curriculum implementation.

Goal 2: Responsive Classroom

Implementation of *Responsive Classroom* approach as an evidence-based social and emotional learning program to improve school climate.

Background and Rationale:

The Acton Boxborough Public Schools work to improve the social and emotional learning of all students. Douglas adopted the *Responsive Classroom* approach after two years of piloting different components. This year will see the implementation of a school wide program designed to improve the social and emotional learning of our students.

Strategies:

1. Eight professional staff have attended a summer training by *Responsive Classroom* (RC).
2. Expand our Professional Development dedicated to entire staff implementation of Morning Meeting, Rule Creation, Interactive Modeling, Positive Teacher Language, Logical Consequences, Guided Discovery and Academic Choice.

Outcomes:

1. Increase of RC trained staff.
2. Daily morning meeting including all specialists
3. Professional development focused on Positive Teacher Language, Logical Consequences, Guided Discovery and Academic Choice
4. Improved greetings of students and staff each morning and use of interactive modeling for many instructional lessons.
5. School staff meetings to share and discuss the approach

Conant School Council

School Improvement Plan for the 2018 – 2019 School Year

**Luther B. Conant School
Acton, Massachusetts**

**Principal: Damian Sugrue, M.Ed.
Assistant Principal: Abigail Dressler, M.Ed.**

May 2018

Table of Contents

I.	Background and Rationale	
	A. About the School Council -----	3
	B. School Council Membership -----	3
II.	Goals for 2018-2019 School Year	
	A. School Council Goal One:----- Teaching and Learning (Wellness)	4
	B. School Council Goal Two:----- Communication (Engagement)	4
	C. School Council Goal Three: ----- Culture and Climate (Wellness, Equity)	5
III.	Past Year in Review -----	6

I. Background and Rationale

A. About the School Council:

The Conant School Council meets regularly to discuss progress on the School Improvement Plan and share ideas about the school in general. Meeting dates are posted on the Conant School website, and all are welcome to attend.

Council meetings are structured so that issues or ideas are presented and discussed, with a group approach to problem solving. If a situation requires additional information, a task force may be formed. Task forces, consisting of at least one school council member and Conant parents and staff, are used to research and make recommendations to the Council on specific school improvement goals that are established each year. The task forces, which are not standing committees, report to the Council. This line of communication helps to provide direction and determines when a task force has completed its assigned task. Subcommittees of Council members meet as needed to accomplish tasks, such as the preparation of the School Improvement Plan. The work of subcommittees, like that of task forces, is submitted to the Council as a whole for approval or review.

Meetings focus on monitoring the progress made toward accomplishing the Council's goals and discussing school policy issues as requested. The Council acts as a sounding board and advisory to the principal.

The Conant School Council, as a state-mandated body representing parents and staff, views itself, in relation to the School Committee, as the appropriate vehicle for communicating the concerns and opinions of the Conant community. It would like the School Committee to continue to seek input from the Councils in each of the elementary schools.

B. Conant School Council Membership:

Conant School Council

Length of Term

Principal:	Damian Sugrue	
Assistant Principal:	Abigail Dressler	(ad hoc member)
Parents:	Andrea Keenan, Co-chair	3 years
	Michelle Brown-Droese	3 years
	Jane Archer	3 Years

Staff:	Kimberly Macey	2 Years
	Mary Tsacoyeanes	3 Years
	Kerrie French	3 years

II. Goals for the 2018-2019 School Year

- A. Goal 1: Teaching and Learning (Wellness):** Year long focus on mindfulness, resilience, and growth mindset through literacy and other subject areas.

Responsible Parties: Administration, Professional Learning Planning Committee, teachers.

Cost: Negligible

Indicators of Success: Well developed professional learning around mindfulness, resilience, and growth mindset to be delivered during building based early release Thursdays.

- Teachers will take part in a book study to focus their thinking and develop common language around the topic.
- The faculty will meet monthly to plan classroom activities and assignments that develop a love of literacy along with mindfulness, resilience, and growth mindset during building based professional learning afternoons.
- Teachers will meet in grade level teams to develop learning activities for students based on their own professional learning.
- A common understanding about our work will be communicated to the parent community regularly, with a focus on how they can support mindfulness and resilience and growth mindset in their children.
- Messages about mindfulness, resilience and growth mindset will also be delivered to students through community meetings.

- B. Goal 2: Communication (Engagement):** Increase volunteerism and build a stronger recruitment system for PTO leadership positions.

Responsible Parties: PTO Board, Principal, and Assistant Principal

Cost: possible cost for computer applications, negligible

Indicator of Success: Increased volunteers for activities and leadership positions associated with the PTO.

- Continue to share news for families by posting across multiple platforms including those currently being used (Facebook, Bright Arrow, Twitter).
- Explore ways to recruit parents of younger students to become involved in the PTO earlier in their child's Conant career.
- Develop cultural liaisons through the PTO to ensure all international families feel welcome to become active in the PTO.

C. Goal 3: Culture and Climate (Wellness, Equity): Continue active involvement in the district's work with Challenge Success.

Responsible Parties: all certified staff

Estimated Cost: \$0

Indicator of Success: All members of the Conant community will have a strong understanding of what we as a district define as true success for our students.

- Ensure the district's definition of success is continuously shared with all stakeholders, especially students.
- Develop assignments and reporting documents that reflect our definition of success.
- Educate parents about how our definition of success ensures a strong, rigorous curriculum that prepares students for the future and encourages better mental health, stronger social skills and more balance in the lives of our children.

III. Past Year in Review

Goal 1: Teaching and Learning: Focus on Literacy

The entire staff took part in planning monthly literacy themes based on the book Every Child a Super Reader. Monthly themes were developed and shared school wide. The themes were taught in ELA classes and carried over into other subjects as well. Themes were omnipresent in the school highlighted in all school meeting performances and bulletin boards. This was a very successful, teacher led initiative.

Goal 2: Communication: Increase parent readership and response to information sent home from school or the PTO.

The PTO worked diligently with the administration and teachers to utilize social media and our Bright Arrow system to keep parents informed of events. There was an increase in parent involvement with the PTO and during school wide events.

Goal 3: Culture and Climate: Continue active involvement in the district's work with Challenge Success.

As the district is continuing this work, we will continue to be as active as possible. Throughout the year we have supported district events and have tried to educate parents about the work of Challenge Success.



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

Blanchard Memorial School School Improvement Plan for 2018-19 School Year

School Council Membership

Name	Role	Year of Term
Dana Labb	Principal (Chair)	
Karen Tower	Asst. Principal (Secretary)	Ad Hoc
Adam Klein	Parent	2019 (2-year term)
Claudine Lesk	Parent	2018 (2-year term)
Alissa Weiss	Parent	2019 (2-year term)
Jill Neuman	Faculty	2018 (2-year term)
Connie Long	Faculty	2018 (3-year term)
Kerin Crockett	Faculty	2018 (2-year term)
Mary Pavlik	Community (Co-Chair)	Appointed
John Fallon	Community	Appointed

Background and Rationale:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Challenge Success outcomes highlight the importance of developing skills for resilient, ethical and motivated learners.
- Blanchard completed a two-year survey through a partnership with Tufts University and WGBH Educational Foundation. This was a study to better understand children's SEL development, competencies and character virtues. Survey results indicate that empathy and compassion can continue to be developed.
- School Council School Improvement Plan 'Tree activity' indicated residual stressors in areas labelled, 'feeling overwhelmed and anxious' as priority focuses.
- Staff Meeting activity 'Taking the temp on improvement priorities' on the teacher thermometer indicated 'well-being' as the primary focus.

Curriculum

- Results from both data curriculum meetings as well as a curriculum survey indicate the desire for fun, engaging and differentiated activities that meet the needs of all students.
- Challenge Success student survey results suggest that student engagement is increased when there is a more balanced and meaningful approach to teaching and learning.

- A revised master schedule allows more opportunity for teacher-driven professional learning and curriculum development in conjunction with the district's newly developed vision and mission as well as three pillars of wellness, equity and engagement.

Culture and Climate

- We wish to improve our inclusion and consideration of new families and families from different cultural backgrounds in our school community.
- There is an increasing awareness that our school population is growing. We strive to engage with all community members (i.e. different socioeconomic backgrounds, different learning histories, transient students).

Given the above background research we have decided as a council to focus our strategies and outcomes on our students, staff, and families. Therefore, the goals are developed for each of these stakeholders.

GOALS FOR 2018-2019

Goal 1: Students...

Will develop as inquisitive, flexible, resilient learners through collaborative and caring relationships.

Strategies:

Social Emotional Learning

- Students will practice STARR values of Support, Teamwork, Attitude, Responsibility and Respect. Students will work in small groups, using teamwork to develop peer partnerships.
- Students will take responsibility/initiative for their own learning and roles as members of a community of learners.

Curriculum

- Students will focus on the '5 Cs': Creativity, Collaboration, Cooperation, Communication, and Critical Thinking.
- Students will develop norms and supports for problem solving. Developing norms and supports for working in teams at both the primary and intermediate level will improve student understanding of how to learn.
- Students will increase engagement and independence through a proactive role in advocating for their own learning.

Culture and Climate

- Students will participate in phase 1 of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).
- Students will share their diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences throughout the year.
- Students will take advantage of leadership and citizenship opportunities throughout the school.
- Cross grade buddies will engage in activities that emphasize different cultural viewpoints.

Outcomes:

Social Emotional Learning

- Students will be expected to engage in general warm and welcoming interactions within the school day.
- Students will have increased engagement in the process for showing work, making connections to the real-world, applying concepts and developing a joy of inquiry.

Curriculum

- Students will participate in opportunities for team and independent problem solving through an atmosphere that focuses on the '5 C's' and emotional intelligence including perseverance, grit and resilience.
- Students will understand and participate in daily meeting, math problem of the week and number talks as determined by their teachers.
- Students will be equally as engaged and invested as their teachers.
- Students will comment on success, curiosity, originality, and relationships as delivered through the curriculum.
- Students will show engagement in their own learning through multiple platforms and modalities.

Culture and Climate

- Students will have a better understanding of the common expectations and shared language to be used in common areas and the shared language used to support them.
- Students will encourage and compliment each other using the language learned through PBIS.
- Students will be exposed to diverse cultural backgrounds and experiences throughout the year and through cross grade and school wide activities.

GOAL 2: Staff...

Will develop high quality, equitable educational opportunities supported by a healthy community.

Strategies:

Social Emotional Learning

- Staff will develop their ability to care for each other's social and emotional health by creating more space and time to meet competing personal and professional demands and interests.
- Staff will embed time in meetings to incorporate the facilitation of new procedures, processes, initiatives, surveys and training.
- Staff will design and lead professional learning as it relates to SEL.

Curriculum

- Staff will pilot two new math curriculums.
- Staff will continue to create an engaging environment with a focus on growth mindset for both students and staff following Challenge Success survey results.
- Staff will support student success, curiosity, originality, and relationships by providing equitable opportunities for students to be engaged, invested in learning by sharing their expectations with students.
- Administration will develop and support new and exciting opportunities and strategies for teachers to offer to students.
- Staff will encourage a 'Future Thinkers' mentality in their students with strategies that will support motivation, accountability, risk taking and self regulation.
- Staff will design and lead professional learning as related to curriculum.

Culture and Climate

- Staff will support the STARR Values as well as district goals of Wellness, Equity and Engagement through cross grade activities that emphasize different cultural viewpoints.
- Staff and Administration will communicate and initiate phase one of PBIS to students and families.
- Staff will design and lead professional learning as related to culture and climate.

Outcomes:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Staff will feel supported in balancing work/home demands.
- Staff will have increased support for meeting the needs of students.

Curriculum

- Staff will evaluate and select a new math curriculum.
- Staff will be empowered to develop their growth mindset as models for students in creating an effective learning environment.

- Staff will implement practices to ensure equitable opportunities and achievement for students of all races, incomes, languages, and genders.
- Staff will provide multiple platforms and modalities for students to share what they have learned.

Culture and Climate

- Staff will provide equitable opportunities for students to share their individual identity.
- Staff will be better able to manage behavioral expectations in common areas (ie. gym, cafe, hallway, restroom) and have a greater understanding of the expectations of their colleagues.

GOAL 3: Families...

Will develop ongoing partnerships with the Blanchard community that are collaborative and complimentary.

Strategies:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Families will partner with the school community to prioritize social emotional wellness, which is necessary for learning and developing resilience.
- Families will discuss STARR values as a common language to link the different home and school experiences around a central and shared theme.

Curriculum

- Families will read school communications to understand academic expectations and curriculum.
- Families will be active participants in learning outside of the classroom to extend their understanding of the content through regular family conversations and experiences.

Culture and Climate

- Families will participate in a culture and climate survey.
- Families will reinforce the language and behaviors to support PBIS.
- Families will share personal experiences and diverse cultural traditions by volunteering and participating in school sponsored events.
- Families will be presented with a diverse set of giving and volunteering opportunities according to their ability and inclinations

Outcomes:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Families attend and participate in community outreach events to foster relationships.
- Families are aware of the STARR values and practice them at home.

Curriculum

- Families are well versed in the academic expectations and curriculum.
- Families will have a better understanding of what students are learning and their ability to apply the concepts learned through the curriculum.

Culture and Climate

- Families will experience a climate that is safe and welcoming and a culture that is open and accessible.

Assessment of Previous Year's School Improvement Plan

Goal 1: Students

To develop inquisitive, flexible, resilient learners through collaborative and caring relationships.

Outcomes and Evidence:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Students required prompting to engage in general warm and welcoming interactions. This led to initiating PBIS in this year's plan. PBIS provides more direct instruction of the social interactions desired around the school.
- Students showed increased engagement in the process for showing work, making connections to the real-world, applying concepts and developing a joy of inquiry. As evidenced through student led conferences in the primary grades and uploading and posting their work to various student portfolios. (Seesaw and Google classroom)

Curriculum

- Students showed progress in participating in opportunities for team and independent problem solving through an atmosphere that focuses on various competencies and emotional intelligence including perseverance, grit and resilience. As evidenced by participation in morning meeting, problem of the week and number talks as determined by their teachers, students are integrating the language of growth mindset, such as "not yet" and "still learning" as part of their vocabulary.
- Students are showing signs of being equally as engaged and invested as their teachers which has been driven by choice and interest opportunities throughout the content areas. Evidence for this is derived from the success of incorporating outdoor learning, Three-Act lessons and other student choices that came from building-based PL supports designed to increased engagement.
- Students are able to comment on their success, curiosity, originality, and relationships as delivered through the curriculum. Teachers report student feedback forms are completed with more fidelity. Additionally, in classroom lessons and writing assignments, students are able to comment and inquire with more

depth. Examples can be found throughout the sound convention and “I think... I wonder...” statements.

Communication

- Students can clearly articulate their responsibilities in all school settings. This is ongoing as new students arrive. This appears under the ‘Culture/Climate’ goal.
- Rather than creating a formal STARR Team, we opted to provide leadership opportunities for more students. These included composting facilitators, kindergarten tour guides, community meeting appearances and community service. This is ongoing in our Culture and Climate.

GOAL 2: Staff

To develop high quality, equitable educational opportunities supported by a healthy community.

Outcomes and Evidence:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Staff reports feeling increasingly supported in balancing work and home demands. This is a focus for continuing through our Culture and Climate goal.
- Staff have increased support for meeting the needs of students. The administration provided building-based professional learning. For example the entire staff read a responsive classroom textbook

Curriculum

- Staff have implemented best practices and policies in a streamlined and coordinated effort. Evidence of this is a teacher created building-based professional learning.
- Staff continue to improve and enrich MTSS to reach all students.
- Staff understand students’ interests and motivations to be effective in delivering curriculum as evidenced by student surveys, beginning of the year introductions, fall conferences, interest inventories, student conferences, special person projects, community meeting talent segment and principal lunches.
- Staff are empowered to develop their own growth mindset (Jo Boaler, Sarah Ward, Tracy Zager) as models for students in creating an effective learning environment as evidenced by risk-taking, encouraging inquiry, sharing in peer-peer opportunities that were enabled via the principal who acted as a substitute for the teachers during this time.
- Staff decided next steps for mathematics as a math curriculum team and incorporated that into this year’s plan.

Communication

- Staff use electronic and print communications to share updates on curriculum and classroom activities via the bi-monthly Bulldog Barks.

- Administration and staff developed a school agreement on communication expectations which included the use of at least two medium, traditional and electronic.
- Staff developed presentations each month to highlight STARR values at community outreach events.

GOAL 3: Families

To develop ongoing partnerships with the Blanchard community with stronger communication.

Outcomes and Evidence:

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Families attended and participated in community outreach events to foster relationships. The PTF auction was the highest attended in recent history. More people attended the community coffees partially due to offsite locations.
- Families are increasingly aware of the STARR values.

Curriculum

- Families support reading at home either independently or with a family member. This was confirmed by the homework survey and reflected by the homework policy. The frequency of books checked out from the library increased.
- Families were provided a number of building based and district wide family learning seminars including multiple showings of "Screenagers" and seminars on digital citizenship.

Communication

- Families helped to identify the need for new ways of giving and to shape our new goal of culture and climate.