

**BLANCHARD MEMORIAL SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
2015-2016**



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## SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS 2014-2015

		<u>Term Expires</u>
Dana Labb	Principal	
Karen Tower	Assistant Principal	
Susan Kenyon	Parent	2015 (2-year term)
Ted Davis	Parent	2016 (2-year term)
Tracey Sierra	Parent	2018 (3-year term)
Tessa McKinley	Parent	2016 (2-year term)
Kirsty Kerin	Parent	2017 (3-year term)
Maribeth Higgins	Faculty	2016 (2-year term)
Connie Long	Faculty	2018 (3-year term)
Patricia Harrison	Faculty	2016 (2-year term)
Mary Pavlik	Community	Appointed
John Fallon	Community	Appointed

## **MISSION STATEMENTS**

### **Acton-Boxborough Regional School District: Mission Statement**

*To prepare all students to attain their full potential as life-long learners, critical thinkers, and productive citizens of our diverse community and global society.*

*As a Community, We Value:*

- ✓ An environment that promotes social development and emotional and physical well-being for the entire school community.*
- ✓ An excellent academic program that prepares all students to achieve their individual potential.*
- ✓ Diverse extracurricular opportunities accessible to all students that provide for student growth.*
- ✓ A community that welcomes and respects the differences among us.*
- ✓ Literacy, communication and technology skills for life-long learning.*
- ✓ Educational policy and resource decisions informed by research and evidence.*

### **Blanchard Memorial School: Mission Statement**

*The Blanchard Memorial School is a community reaching for the STARRs (Support, Teamwork, Attitude, Respect, Responsibility) with excellence of mind, imagination and body.*

## **PROGRESS 2014 – 2015**

### **Technology (Achieved)**

- The School Council has determined that Blanchard Memorial School has achieved its technology goal and recommends revisiting this goal when the District Education Technology Department has concluded the extensive upgrade to the computer lab.
- The Technology Curriculum Committee has now become part of the region and has been very active in providing staff with professional opportunities. We continue to support technology at the building level by purchasing hardware to supplement Innovative Learning Program Proposals, creating a physical environment for a permanent maker space. Teachers have been creating individual webpages; twitter accounts and adding to a district Google calendar in order to inform families.

### **English Language Arts (Ongoing)**

- The development of literacy assessment has been the primary focus of the staff in English Language Arts in 2014-2015. To meet Goal 1, standardizing the administration of a complex comprehension assessment, the Benchmark Assessment System, a consultant, Dr. Condie, was hired to develop conversations and consensus in both the administration of the assessment and the interpretation of results both horizontally, within the grade level, and vertically from kindergarten through sixth grade. The staff used the BAS data during the data day discussions to determine which students met benchmark standards for the grade in comprehension, accuracy, and rate of reading. The sensitivity of the BAS data yielded a refined understanding of students' reading levels within the grades and a comprehensive profile of learning. The BAS assessment texts, as well as the texts from Teachers College, enable staff to monitor the growth and progress of all the students, but the focus is on students in Tier II, who are just below benchmark levels in literacy skills, and Tier III, who are more significantly below. These assessments provide a more robust discussion of progress and the interventions that can be tried to

facilitate growth. Because more data is available about students, the Teacher Assistance Team has incorporated the data into its protocol to discuss student growth.

- The staff has been working on developing a leveled reading library to provide “Just Right” books for the students for individual reading and for use in small group work in the English Language Arts block as well as the Tiered Support time (or Response to Intervention) that will facilitate interventions as well as enrich the reading of students reading at benchmark levels and above. The purchase of books and materials for the library will be completed by July and functional by the start of the 2015-2016 school year. Sharon Ryan, the ELA Coordinator for the district, Karen Tower, the Assistant Principal, and Connie Long, the district Librarian Coordinator have been instrumental in this effort.
- The staff at Blanchard continue to create intervention strategies to aid struggling students, particularly during the Tiered Support time. The program remains strong throughout the grades. In general, the focus is on reading, decoding and comprehension in the first trimester, writing in the second trimester, and mathematics in the third trimester.
- In addition, a school-wide flat file database (not relational) has been developed, with the aim of allowing the teachers to share student data. The standardization of spreadsheets from one grade level to the next has been an on-going project to facilitate the evaluation of progress during a single school year and from kindergarten through sixth grade. Creating visual graphs from the data to allow the faculty to understand grade level and school-wide needs remains a goal.

### **Mathematics (Ongoing)**

2014-2015 was the initial rollout phase of the new Mathematics curriculum; Math In Focus. Much of the year was dedicated to staff familiarizing themselves with the curriculum while creating units and lesson and adjusting as they moved throughout the year. Upon surveying staff in the April 2015, there were significant trends that still needed to be addressed and therefore are the basis for, and outlined within, next year’s Goal 3. Blanchard’s 2014 -2015 progress in Mathematics included:

- As a staff, we began journaling in September in order to facilitate a monthly critical support group during staff meetings as outlined in the 2014-2015 plan. Although this process was helpful in metacognition, we have determined that concentrating on closing curriculum alignment gaps and organizing materials will better utilize this time.
- We have updated the website with videos and links for families and created monthly Community Coffee hours specific to grade level Math Curriculum, as facilitated by Heather Haines, which proved to be popular with parents and we will look to build upon that and include information nights.
- Staff participated in a survey to determine the effective impact on the professional learning:
  - Instead of visiting MIF school based sights or meeting with MIF trainers, teachers felt this time was most effective in building teams.
  - Staff requested more time to prepare and organize the significant supplemental material that they enjoy accessing in order to have a greater lesson impact and support scaffolding for vertical alignment.
- Our April ½ day PD was dedicated to Scope, Pace and Sequence of Math lessons, including reflection data which was collected by grade level teams at the conclusion in order to inform summer work and planning for 2015-2016.
- Heather Haines, Elementary Mathematics Curriculum Specialist and Coach initiated regular meetings with support staff at the request of teachers, in order to provide clarification of pathways and program alignment.
  - Team meetings focused on how to utilize the program to develop and implement a common approach to math instruction that will provide consistency and progressive scaffolding of mathematics skills within the grades and vertically.
  - Increased understanding of Pre and Post MIF assessments as well as creating a new grading system for tests made up of Practice, Computation and Application (Extension) equations.

- In November, classroom teachers (K-6), and related support personnel received a full day PD dedicated to Math In Focus, which was coordinated with the district curriculum office staff. Activities included a Math In Focus Round Robin with the following purpose and expectation: Training & coaching; Best Practices; Scope/Sequence & Pacing.
- Team Representatives from each grade level will be participating in a summer R & D to work on supporting instruction with additional supplemental materials to continue to standardize the instruction of the Houghton Mifflin program for all grade levels.
- We transitioned to Mathematics for Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (RTI) at the conclusion of the ELA MCAS, and some grades are experimenting with flexible MTSS groupings between grade levels as extensions for students.
- We have continued trimester data days to utilize common assessments to inform current instruction, interventions, trends and patterns in student learning, growth and achievement in mathematics. Although we have an understanding of the Math In Focus curriculum and utilize the data cycle to identify targeted student groupings, specific standards and targeted re-teaching and enrichment, we continue to explore new ways to make it visual for staff, students and families.

## **IMPROVEMENT GOALS 2015 - 2016**

### **Goal 1: School Climate (Social/Emotional Health and Well-being)**

To assess and evaluate the Social/Emotional Health (SEH) and Well-Being of students, staff and families in order to understand the needs of our school and greater community and to raise awareness of SEH issues and their impact on learning.

#### ***Goal Objectives:***

- Assess students, staff and community needs;
- Evaluate our current SEH programs;
- Determine next steps; and,
- Educate students, staff and families on our common vision and desired outcomes.

#### ***Strategies:***

- Assess:
  - Faculty survey to assess:
    - Concerns they have;
    - Management of expectations and rewards (School, Grade, Class, Individual);
    - School-based response and supports;
    - Differences in terminology and processes (methods of progressive discipline, routines and expectations, reinforcement);
    - Relationship building with staff and students;
    - Current practices (homework policy, lunches, scheduling, testing, events and awards); and,
    - Utilization of student surveys feedback.
  - Two student surveys to address SEH concerns in Primary (K-2) and Intermediate (3-6).
  - Parent survey to address SEH concerns.
- Evaluate current programs being utilized within the school and district:
  - This includes- Building-based programs: Zones of Regulation, Mindfulness and Second Step and district-based programs: Responsive Classroom, Open Circle and Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC).
- Next Steps:
  - To be determined in the 2016 – 2017 plan.
- Education:
  - Share current grade-level social curriculum with all teachers.
  - Develop an SEH Team, vertically aligned to coordinate efforts.
  - Provide ongoing support:
    - Faculty:
      - Dedicated faculty meetings;
      - Half-day professional learning workshops; and,
      - Targeted lesson planning and co-teaching.
    - Family:
      - Dedicated community meetings for parents/guardian;
      - Evening lectures; and,
      - Online resources and communication with emphasis on our goal.

#### ***How Monitored:***

- Participation and involvement in school and community events.
- Teacher reported classroom observations of implementation of strategies and impact on students.

- Survey conducted by School Council and SEH team.

***Desired Results/Outcomes:***

- Document specific SEH needs as determined by surveys.
- Dedicated and targeted interactions between student and staff that promote social skills.
- Improved life balance and overall health and well being of staff, students and families.
- Define and incorporate common language that is shared by the school community and implemented into daily activities, including digital citizenship.
- Promote cooperative relationships and a respect for differences.
- Encourage balance by scheduling time for conversation, celebration and reflection.
- Increase opportunities for student voices to be heard and shared.
- Open dialogue including protocols and bridging with the Junior High and High School Risk Assessment Teams and Blanchard’s place in the pipeline in providing consistency.

***Resources Needed:***

- Ongoing professional development opportunities.
- A dedicated curriculum.
- Support and collaboration with A/B district and schools.
- Opportunities for flexible scheduling, common planning and release time

**Goal 2: Learning Environment (English Language Arts: Literacy)**

To continue the implementation of literacy assessment through the Fountas and Pinnel Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) tool and use the data from the BAS to inform our Tiered Instruction (MTSS) instructional model for literacy.

***Goal Objectives:***

- To standardize the administration of the District Determined Measure (BAS) of assessment that informs current instruction, interventions, trends and patterns in student learning, growth, and achievement, especially for inter-rater reliability.
- To develop conversations and consensus about the interpretation of the BAS results.
- To continue to develop and implement appropriate instructional materials for intervention, evaluate materials to accommodate students’ needs, and facilitate a common approach to instruction as an ongoing initiative.

***Strategies***

- Support professional development that exposes educators to high-impact learning instruction and assessment.
- Use the three components of balanced literacy assessment, including both summative and formative assessments, including running records, to inform instruction, monitor student progress, and evaluate student achievement.
- Develop an effective, systematic method of data collection and distribution.

***How Monitored:***

- Continue to analyze grade level comprehension assessment data for literacy and evaluate assessments.
- Analyze literacy data for progress monitoring of Tier II and Tier III students.
- Supervision and evaluation process.

**Desired Results/Outcomes:**

- Develop a consistent and progressive scaffolding of literacy skills across the grades and vertically from one grade to the next. In that outcome, teachers will align the curriculum with the Common Core Standard and develop consistent curriculum and objectives for classroom instruction and intervention programming.
- Continue to develop and facilitate intervention strategies to aid struggling students.
- Continue to develop a data progress monitoring system to assess student achievement.
- Revise Data Day Calendar for monthly team meetings.

**Resources Needed:**

- Assessment materials for progress monitoring.
- Purchase of intervention materials, possibly Fountas and Pinnel's LLI.
- Purchase of leveled reading materials.

**Goal 3: Learning Environment (Mathematics)**

To continue year two implementation of the Houghton Mifflin *Math In Focus* program for grades K-12.

**Goal Objectives:**

- Collect and construct supplemental materials and resources to facilitate differentiation;
- Coordinate program pacing to determine gaps in curriculum;
- Support increased access and reliability for teachers create meaningful beginning, middle and end of year (BOY, MOY, EOY) common assessments as well as a district math assessment; and,
- Develop and implement elements utilizing the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support for Mathematics to inform current instruction, interventions, trends and patterns in student learning, growth and achievement in mathematics.

**Strategies:**

- Data and Curriculum Collection:
  - Dedicated staff time for gathering resources and determining re-teaching of concept and extensions utilizing Pearson Envisions, Engage New York, TERC, Scott Foresman, and Kathy Richardson Assessing Math Concepts. Research and Development (R & D) will take place this summer (2015).
- Pacing:
  - Dedicated Professional Learning opportunities that allow for vertical teaming and creation of lessons that address language, understanding of confusing steps and concepts, rigor, independence, and that allow time for Teams to prepare and organize materials and online/virtual supplemental resources.
- Assessment:
  - Coordination with the Curriculum department to develop District Determined Measures for Grade 2 and Grade 6. Provide greater technology support for teachers and support staff so they can edit and revise BOY, MOY and EOY assessments that properly reflect Grade level concept and address *real word* numbers, examples and problems.
- MTSS:
  - Develop an effective, systematic method of data collection and distribution. Continue to investigate effective progress monitoring systems.

**How Monitored:**

- Share-out and review of summer R&D.

- Team pacing guides that address curriculum gaps.
- Pilot document to record the measures and determinations for grades who are ready to report out District Determined Measures (district parameters will be set this summer).
- Ongoing analysis of mathematics benchmark data and formative assessments for progress monitoring for Tier II and Tier III students.

***Desired Results/Outcomes:***

- Develop an understanding of the strategies used in Singapore Math (MIF) that will provide consistency and progressive scaffolding of mathematics skills within the grades and vertically from one grade to the next.
- Research intervention strategies for each grade level.
- Complete organization and alignment of all mathematics programs to supplement program.
- Create an effective data collection and progress monitoring systems for all students that is accessible to teachers.
- Continue grade level flexible groupings for mathematics instruction, especially Tiered Instruction (MTSS) groupings.
- Improved resources for teachers so time can be utilized more efficiently.
- Continue to build and develop common language that is specific to MIF in order to help students better understand directions, steps and concepts.
- Improve resources for parents and home-school communication and resources.

***Resources Needed:***

- Ongoing Professional Learning opportunities.
- Ongoing support and collaboration with A/B curriculum department.
- Opportunities for flexible scheduling, common planning and release time.
- Access to individuals who will support our families in providing information on building specific curriculum, assessment and updates to the common core.