



Acton Public School Committee Meeting

July 28, 2010

8:45 p.m. approx.
(following ABRSC meeting)

**at the
Sargent Library, Boxborough**

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Sargent Library
427 Massachusetts Ave.
Boxborough

Wednesday, July 28, 2010
6:00 p.m. Joint Executive Session
followed by Joint School Committee Workshop
followed by Joint School Committee Meeting
followed by Acton-Boxborough Regional SC Meeting
followed by Acton Public SC Meeting (separate packet)

- I. STATEMENT OF WARRANT
- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of 6/3/10 (*addendum*), 6/17/10 (*addendum*), 7/12/10
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
 - 1.. Fincom Update
 - 2.. Enrollment Update/Kindergarten status
 - 3. Staffing Update
 - a.. Appointment of Priscilla. Kotyk (Assistant Principal, Conant & Gates)
 - b.. Appointment of Matthew McDowell (Assistant Principal, McT & Merriam),
 - c.. New staff hired
 - d.. Leaves/retirements/resignations
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - 1. Recommendation to accept gift from Community Ed to Conant School – **VOTE** – S. Mills
- VI.. FYI
 - 1.. School Improvement Plans (FY 10 and FY 11)
 - 2.. Updated APS R&Ds,
 - 3.. DESE Letter re meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Goal
- VII. ADJOURN

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chairs which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

NEXT MEETINGS: Sept 2 at 7:30 p.m. at the JHL - AB Regional School Committee Meeting
 Sept 16 at 7:30 p.m. at DOUGLAS – Acton Public School Comm Meeting

**ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Draft Minutes**

**Room 121
Acton Town Hall**

**July 12, 2010
9:00 p.m. (following Joint Meeting with BOS)**

<i>Members Present:</i>	Xuan Kong, Terry Lindgren, Sharon Smith McManus, John Petersen
<i>Members Absent:</i>	Michael Coppolino
<i>Others:</i>	Brandy Brandon, Dennis Bruce, Bill Guthlein, Herman Kabakoff, Beth Petr

The Acton Public School Committee meeting was reconvened at 9:00 p.m. by John Petersen.

The minutes of the 7-12-10 Joint meeting with the Acton Board of Selectmen were approved as read by Beth Petr. They will be voted on by the Board of Selectmen at their next meeting.

Herman Kabakoff was welcomed as the new member of the School Committees. He will be sworn in tomorrow morning by the Town Clerk.

John Petersen asked for ideas for the July School Committee Workshop. Xuan Kong said that long term goals should be discussed, as well as having members become specialists in some areas.

Xuan Kong suggested that with many new faces in the Central Office, it might be worthwhile to have a meeting with both School Committee and the Central Office Administration for a discussion of current issues facing the School districts.

Terry Lindgren said that an Executive Session would also be needed on July 28 to strategize for negotiations.

The Acton Public School Committee adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr
Secretary to the School Committee

NEXT MEETING

Joint APS/AB School Committee Meeting – Wednesday, July 28, 6:00 p.m. Sargent Library in Boxborough

Staff Children
Case []
CAD, DAD, GAD, TAD, and MAD - ALL DAY PROGRAMS

Projected
Acton Public Schools
2010 - 2011
7/23/10

7/23/10
11:20 AM

Grade YOG	Conant				Total	Douglas				Total	Gates				Total	McCarthy-Towne				Total	Merriam					Incoming	Total	#Sec.	Avg. Size	
Rm	CAD	CB	CC			DAD	DB	DC			GAD	GB	GC	2#		TAD	TB	TC	[1]2#		MAD	MB	MC	MC2	4#		New	8#		
K-23	21	20	21	62		21	20	21	62		21	20	20	61		Case +	22	21	20	63		21	20	20	20	81	0	328	16	20.5
Rm 3	4	5				3	4	5	1#		1	3	8	1#		113	311	312	[1]2#			135	231	321	2#		6#			
Gr. 1-22	22	22	22	66		21	21	22	64		21	23	23	67		Case +	23	22	22	67		22	22	22	22	87	0	350	16	21.9
Rm 6	7	8				6	7	8			5	6	10	2#		114	301	302	[2]			322	323	234	1#		3#			
Gr. 2-21	23	23	23	69		23	23	23	69		23	24	24	71		Case +	25	23	24	72			22	23	23	68	0	347	15	23.1
Rm 9	10	17				9	10	11			7	9	17			212	213	314	[2]1#			230	330	224	1#		2#			
Gr. 3-20	23	23	24	70		23	23	23	69		24	24	24	72		Case +	23	23	25	71			22	23	23	68	0	348	15	23.2
Rm 18	19	20				12	13	14			18	19	20	1#		115	210	310	[3]			331	233	222	4#		5#			
Gr. 4-19	24	25	25	74		24	25	25	74		24	25	25	74		Case +	28	25	25	78			24	25	25	74	0	371	15	24.7
Rm 14	15	16				19	20	21	1#		14	15	16			211	303	313	[4]			324	334	232	1#		2#			
Gr. 5-18	24	24	25	73	(+1)	24	24	25	73		24	24	24	72		Case +	24	28	24	76			24	24	25	73	0	363	15	24.2
Rm 11	12	13				15	16	17			11	12	13			112	214	215				325	335	332	323	1#	1#			
Gr. 6-17	24	24	25	73		24	24	25	73		24	24	25	73			25	25	25	75		24	24	25	25	98	0	392	16	24.5
Total Staff	0#					2#					6#					5#					14#					27#				
Total	21 Sec. Average		23.2	487		21 Sec. Average		23.0	484		21 Sec. Average		23.3	490		21 Sec. Average		23.3	489		24 Sec. Average		22.9	549		0	2499	108	23.1	
Range	20 25					20 25					20 25					20 25					20 25					20			20	25

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/ Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3211

**Statement regarding the Appointment
of**

Priscilla Kotyk

to the position of

**Assistant Principal
Conant and Gates Schools**

June 17, 2010

=====

Superintendent of Schools Stephen Mills is pleased to announce the appointment of Priscilla Kotyk to the position of Assistant Principal at the Conant and Gates Schools.

Priscilla has worked in our school districts for the past 16 years. For the past eight years, she has served as the Director of Technology Integration and Instruction in the Acton Public and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts. She also serves on several district strategic planning committees including the Cyberbullying Task Force, the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Committee and the Professional Development Committee. Priscilla has her Bachelor of Science in Education, her Master of Education, and her Doctorate of Philosophy in Educational Studies, all from Lesley University. Priscilla is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Massachusetts Computer Using Educators, Inc., the Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the National Association for Staff Development.

Priscilla Kotyk will assume her official duties on July 1, 2010.

Office of the Superintendent
Acton Public Schools/ Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools
978-264-4700, x3211

**Statement regarding the Appointment
of**

Matthew McDowell

to the position of

**Assistant Principal
McCarthy-Towne and Merriam Schools**

June 17, 2010

=====
Superintendent of Schools Stephen Mills is pleased to announce the appointment of Matthew McDowell to the position of Assistant Principal at the McCarthy-Towne and Merriam Schools.

Matt has taught in the Stow Public Schools for the last twelve years. He taught second grade for five years and fifth grade for the last seven years. Matt was the program coordinator for the Center School Homework Club for five years, and coordinated a summer MCAS remediation program. Matt has his B.A. in English from Hamilton College, his M.Ed. in Elementary Education from the University of Hartford and a CAGS in Educational Leadership Management from Fitchburg State College with a K-6 Principal Certification. Matt has served on the school building committee, the math and science curriculum committees and the negotiations team in Stow. Matt was also an assistant camp director, and he has various experiences that he brings to his classroom including community theatre and music.

Matthew McDowell will assume his official duties on July 1, 2010.

7/23/10

IV.3.c.

APS Schools - by school
2010-2011

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Sal. Step</u>	<u>FTE</u>
<u>Conant</u>				
Sarah Senna	4 th Gr Teacher	CON	1M	1.0
<u>Douglas</u>				
Noel Erickson	Reading Specialist	DOU	3M	1.0
Beth Warner	Art Teacher	DOU	9M +15	.4
<u>Gates</u>				
<u>McCarthy-Towne</u>				
<u>Merriam</u>				
Katharine Shiebler	¾ Loop Teacher	MER	1M	1.0
Kerry Cusick	Reading Specialist	MER	10M	1.0
<u>Additional APS new staff:</u>				
Kerrin E. Stewart	Music Teacher	CON/MER	1B	1.0
Matthew McDowell	Asst Principal	McT/Merr		1.0

Total APS new staff: 7

APS/AB Staff: 2 - Amy Bisiewicz, Donald Aicardi

TOTAL APS/AB NEW STAFF: 22

**Acton Public Schools
2010-2011**

Certified Staff Leaves of Absence

Rosemarie Begin
Mary Ann Mehler
Elizabeth White
Hilary Tolan

Returning To APS

Vanessa Bergman
Alexandra Ganss
Kari James
Linda Nadolny
Heather Matthews

Certified Staff Not Returning

Tina Bloom
Emily Murphy
Leah Robb
Catherine Suess

Certified Staff Retirements

Melany Appelle
Mariann Eden
Laurie Jaffe
Judy Melillo
Aurora Winters

A-B Community Ed

Memo

To: Damian Sugrue
From: Erin Bettez *EB*
CC: Stephen Mills
Date: July 6, 2010
Re: Conant Extended Day – Second Disbursement of Surplus Funds

Enclosed please find a check in the amount of \$25,000 made payable to Conant School. Community Ed is pleased to provide this gift to the school. It represents the second disbursement of Conant's share of the surplus generated by A-B Community Ed's Extended Day Program at Conant during FY10.

** Original going to Beth Petr as check is a "gift" and must be accepted by School Committee before it can go to Conant.*

Conant School Council

School Improvement Plan for the 2010 – 2011 School Year

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

**Principal: Christine G. Price, Ph.D.
Principal as of July 1, 2010: Damian Sugrue, M.Ed.**

June 1, 2010

Table of Contents

I. Background and Rationale

A. About the School Council -----	3
B. School Council Membership -----	4

II. Evaluation of Current School Year Improvement Plan

A. School Council Goal One:----- Community Building	5
B. School Council Goal Two:----- Respect, Safety, Health, and Diversity	5
C. School Council Goal Three: ----- Community Service Learning	6
D. School Council Goal Four: ----- Academic Goal: Science and Nature	6
E. School Council Goal Five: ----- Technology	7

III. Plans for the 2010-2011 School Year

A. Continued Goals from 2009-2010: ----- Respect, Safety, Health, and Diversity	7
B. Continued Goals from 2009-2010: ----- Community Service Learning	7
C. Continued Goals from 2009-2010: ----- Academic Goal:	7

IV. New Goals for 2010-2011

A. A Successful Administrative Transition: -----	8
B. Improve/ Enhance School Council Communication: -----	8
C. Community: Conant's 40 th Birthday Celebration: -----	8

I. Background and Rationale

A. About the School Council:

In the past, the Conant School Council generally met on the second Wednesday of each month except for December. In 2009-2010, the Council met on the fourth Wednesday of the month, in the early mornings to accommodate Dr. Price's Wednesday afternoon commitments. In 2010-11, it is anticipated meetings will be held before school again, as we are on the late schedule.

Council meetings are structured so that issues or ideas are presented and discussed, with a group approach to solution-finding and 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. In 2009-2010, the Health and Wellness Subcommittee was convened as an interest group of the School Council, in response to the directive of the new district Health and Wellness Policies and Procedures. This group focused on three major strands of wellness: food allergy awareness, healthy food choices, and anti-bullying initiatives.

Meetings focus on monitoring the progress made toward accomplishing the Council's goals and discussing school policy issues which parents, students, or staff have requested be considered and which are not being addressed elsewhere by other groups in the school. In this latter capacity, the Council acts as a sounding board and advisor to the principal.

The Conant School Council, as a state-mandated and elected 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.

A. 2009 – 2010 Conant School Council Membership:

The School Council Membership convened a full slate of representatives in the Fall of 2009. In 2009-2010, we included a representative from our PTO leadership team to keep them informed of school-wide issues and discussions.

All members had committed to a two-year term, with the agreement that they were open to extending their terms for additional year. With the announcement of Dr. Price's departure all but two members (Mrs. Kennedy, Kim McOsker) agreed to stay on for a third year. Mr. Sugrue will hold elections to fill these seats in September. Rebecca Oddsund will serve as PTO Chair for 2010-2011.

Our Health and Wellness Subcommittee was convened in October, and included School Council members, Conant staff, district staff, and interested parent volunteers. The committee met four times during the year.

Our membership for 2009-2010:

<u>Conant School Council</u>		<u>Length of Term</u>
Principal:	Christine Price	
Parents:	Maureen O'Brien	2008 - 2010
	Cheryl Petersen	2008 - 2010
	Kristin Grip	2008 - 2010
Staff:	Mary Cole	2008 - 2010
	Melissa Hayes	2008 - 2010
	Janet Kennedy	2008 - 2010
	Jana Bardsley	2008 - 2010
PTO Leadership:	Kim McOsker	2009 - 2010
Community:	Keith Campbell	2008 - 2010
Health and Wellness Subcommittee:		
Principal:	Christine Price	
School Council Members:	Kim McOsker	
	Cheryl Petersen	
	Melissa Hayes	
	Mary Cole	
Additional Conant Staff:	Heather Makris, School Nurse	
	Debi DiDuca, Kitchen Manager	
District Staff:	Kirsten Nelson, Food Services Director	
Parent Volunteers:	Valerie Ryan	
	Peter Golovchenko	

II. Evaluation of Current Year School Improvement Plan

This year, the School Council opted to keep its goals highly focused, building on those areas it had been working on 2008-2009. It was felt that in the past there were too many sub-goals under each heading, and that this “muchness” hampered achievement of the goals. This strategy was recommended based on the relative newness of the committee members and the reconstituted status of the Council.

Progress Towards Meeting Goals for 2009-2010:

A. Goal One: Community Building

- Analyze results of our Parent Survey, establishing priorities based on data
- Plan appropriate parent education programs that promote discussion and awareness across the community
- Continue informal outreach through parent coffees and the Conant Crier

Responsible Parties: School Council, PTO, Dr. Price, Faculty volunteers

Outcomes: Our challenge in this area continued to be relatively low participation by our parent community. Fifteen surveys were returned, which was not enough data to analyze for trends or issues. The on-line format may have been one factor in the low response; as information gathering will be a priority for our new principal, the mode of communication should be considered. Similarly, our parent coffees were lightly attended, though they were scheduled both in the morning and the evening. This may reflect a working family issue, i.e., one or both parents are unavailable due to work schedules, or it could be a general satisfaction with the way the school is running, and thus, a lack of urgency. However, our parent education initiative, a presentation by School Officer Keith Campbell on cyberbullying, was well-received and well-attended, probably due to the timeliness of the topic and the timing of the actual event (after a regular evening PTO meeting). Again, these factors will be considered in planning for 2010-2010.

B. Goal Two: Respect/Safety/Health/Diversity

- Explore avenues for re-starting the Second Step Program in grades 2-6
- Increase school officer's time to focus on cyberbullying in upper grades
- Identify outside organizations in the community as resources for anti-bullying initiatives
- Increase visibility of school officer at all grade levels, to promote positive perceptions of law enforcement
- Establish a “cultural ambassador” program to promote general cultural understanding across the community as well as extend outreach to cultural constituencies

Responsible parties: School Council, PTO, staff, Dr. Price

Outcomes: Goals in this area were shared with the newly formed Health and Wellness Subcommittee. It was timely that the district convened its Task Force on Bullying in the fall; many of our discussions were linked to the work of that group, and carried over into the work of the Health and Wellness Subcommittee. The Second Step program, we learned, was grant funded, and therefore difficult to revive this year. However, “Eyes on Bullying,” a free program from the Educational Development Company (EDC), was reviewed by the larger Task Force and shared with both the Council and Health and Wellness. This guide for teachers and parents seemed to be a great entry point for discussions and proactive thinking. It will be explored in greater depth in 2010-2011. The increased awareness on cyberbullying was quite successful, with Officer Campbell working the Fifth and Sixth Grades and presenting an informative program for parents after our March PTO meeting. Officer Campbell also made classroom visits this year to promote seasonal safety, such as sledding in the Winter and bike safety in the Spring.

A still un-met goal, which had been carried over from last year’s School Improvement Plan, was developing a cultural ambassador program. However, our annual Festival of Cultures program, a collaboration with Douglas School, continued to be a very successful venue for promoting community spirit and cultural sharing.

C. Goal Three: Community Service Learning

→ Identify and partner with local community service initiatives to reinforce awareness of local needs (e.g. HGRM, Community Supper, COA, etc.)

Responsible parties: School Council, Community Service Learning Committee

Outcomes: The Community Service Learning Committee continues to sponsor a wide range of activities to support local causes. The intent of the goal was to have a more formalized relationship with perhaps a single Acton-based group; while this did not happen this year, the Conant community’s response to all initiatives was enthusiastic. And on a global response level, the bake sale and coin collection drive the Student Council held in the wake of the Haiti earthquake was tremendously successful.

D. Goal Four: Science and Nature Program

→ Working with the PTO, examine the Naturalist program and consider ways to better integrate with science curriculum

→ In final year of science strand review, staff will assess effectiveness of enhanced curriculum units and revise or extend accordingly

Responsible Parties: School Council, PTO Nature Program rep, faculty at each grade level, Dr. Price

Outcome: Owing to time constraints, the Naturalist program review was tabled for 2009-2010, and will be undertaken in 2010-2011.

Conant Staff completed the final year of its Science program review.

E. Goal Five: Technology

→ Working with staff and TRC, support implementation of mobile lab initiative and SmartBoard applications on a school-wide basis as appropriate
→ Support wireless capacity and promote its applications for diversity of building uses.

Responsible parties: School Council, Staff, TRC, Tech Specialist, Dr. Price

Outcomes: The Council's role in achieving technology goals was largely informational this year; Dr. Price kept the Council informed of the implementation of the mobile lab initiative and the use of Smartboards in the classrooms.

Plans for 2010-2011 Academic Year

A. Continued Goals from 2009-10:

As noted above, the Council has recommended that several goals be continued for the 2010-2011 school year, so that work completed this year may be extended/expanded.

→ Goal One: Respect/Safety/Health and Wellness:

- Anti-Bullying Initiatives and District policies and procedures*
- Food Allergy Awareness*
- Healthy Food Choices*
- Keith Campbell in the Classrooms
- Cyberbullying Education and Outreach*
- Anti-Bullying Initiatives in the classroom*

Responsible parties: Staff, Principal, Assistant Principal, Pupil Services, Keith Campbell/School Resource Officers, School Council, Health and Wellness Committee Food Services Department, Pupil Services * Shared with Health and Wellness Subcommittee

→ Goal Two: Community Service Learning

- Establishing Local Initiatives

Responsible parties: Community Service Committee, School Council, PTO, Staff

→ Goal Three: Supporting Academic Programs

- Nature Program Review (coordinated with PTO)

Responsible parties: Principal, Assistant Principal, PTO Chair and Nature Program Chair, Staff, TRC staff, Technology Specialist

B. New Goals for 2010-2011

In light of the coming transition to a new administrative team, the Council agreed that the goals for the coming year needed to be specific and focused. Thus, one goal supports the transition itself, one goal enhances communication between the Council and the community, and one goal fosters community connection and pride through the celebration of Conant's 40th birthday in 2011. The detailed strategies for achieving these goals will be developed by the new administrative team and the School Council when they convene in September 2010.

→ Goal One: A Successful Administrative Transition:

- Supporting the new Principal and Assistant Principal
- Developing parent/community survey to inform new principal
- Adding new membership (staff, parents)

Responsible parties: School Council, Staff, Principal, Assistant Principal

→ Goal Two: Improve/Enhance School Council Communication

- Put School Improvement Plan on-line--- link on website
- Standing PTO rep to School Council (Chair/Co-Chair)
- Coordinate efforts with PTO--- standing report-out at PTO meetings
- Standing School Council report-out at Staff meetings
- Minutes of School Council meetings on-line/ newsflash

Responsible parties: School Council, PTO Chair and Co-Chair, Staff reps to School Council and PTO, Principal, Assistant Principal

→ Goal Four: Community

- Conant's 40th Birthday Celebration in 2011
 - Holistic view of celebrating community: alumni, community members
 - Connect with New Playground Initiative: investigate CPA or grant funds
 - Time Capsule opening and celebration: Spring 2011
 - Future visions of Conant

- Responsible parties: School Council, PTO, Conant Staff, Principal, Assistant Principal

Douglas School Improvement Plan Spring 2010



School Council Members: Christopher Whitbeck, Judy Rowland, Scott Howe, Lisa Racie, Kathleen McDonagh, Tamara Ricciardone,

The Douglas School Council generally meets every six weeks. This past year, we met on the following dates:

November 4th
January 12th
March 31st
June 2nd

Part One: Progress with Goals for 2009-2010

The Douglas staff and School Council have had one overarching goal scheduled for completion over two school years. This two-year goal has been to **Improve student assessment systems**. The school year '09-'10 saw the initiation of work on this goal.

Based on identified student needs, this school improvement goal is subdivided into more specific goals. In year one, teachers focused on the identification of needs, effective solutions, and begin to implement programs. In the second year teachers will fully implement programs and assess effectiveness.

Our goal is tied to the already established system-wide goals of continued enhancement of curriculum, instruction and assessment for all students, as well as effectively meeting the teaching and learning needs of an increasingly diverse school community.

Goal 1: Improve Student Assessment Systems

Goal Statement #1: Assessment to Improve Student Learning & Create a Fair Assessment Systems for All Students:

Rationale: The Douglas school assessment system will be organized around the primary purpose of improving student learning. It should provide useful information about whether students have reached important learning goals and about the progress of each student. The assessments will be consistent with learning goals, curriculum, instruction, and current knowledge of how students learn.

Classroom assessment that is integrated with curriculum such as Everyday Math and Reading Street will be the primary means of assessment. Teachers will also assess student learning through structured and informal observations and interviews, projects, performances and exhibitions, audio and videotapes, experiments, portfolios, and journals.

Assessment systems, including instruments, policies, practices and uses, will also be fair to all students. They will allow for multiple methods to assess student progress and for multiple but equivalent ways for students to express knowledge and understanding. The goal of all assessments will be to reflect a student's actual knowledge. These assessments are created or appropriately adapted and accommodations are made to meet the specific needs of particular populations, such as English language learners and students with disabilities.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams working to identify age appropriate, skills and concepts.

Strategies

1. Collection of current and possible assessments
2. Analysis to match skills and assessment

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas reference of assessments correlated to specific skills.

Target Completion Date

June 2010

Assessment of Progress

This product is completed for reading and math. Assessments have been identified based on desired skills and data collection has begun to yield patterns of achievement that can be used to analyze student progress and inform teaching. Such assessments for social studies and science will be identified in the coming year.

Costs \$0

Goal Statement #2: Professional Collaboration and Development

Rationale: Knowledgeable and fair educators are essential for high quality assessment. Assessment systems depend on educators who understand the full range of assessment purposes, use appropriately a variety of suitable methods, work collaboratively, and engage in ongoing professional development to improve their capability as assessors.

Douglas School teachers will identify and participate in professional development and work together to improve their assessment craft. They may engage in small groups of teachers scoring student work, or other untested practices to develop a school-wide knowledge of skills and assessments.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams that work to organize and identify and participate in high quality professional development.

Strategies

1. Collaborative, cross grade teams K – 6 review assessments, study student work, and attend assessment workshops. Teams will then develop/guides that specifically addresses identified skills and effective assessments that lend themselves to collaborative teacher work.

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas guideline for effective assessments including purposes, collaborative practices and examples.

Target Completion Date

This is a two-year part of the goal and should be completed in June of 2011.

Assessment of Progress

Usefulness of the assessment work will be evaluated based on comparison of assessments to identifying student skills.

Anticipated Costs

Approximately \$2,000 for Professional Development each year.

Source of Revenue

Allocated Budget & PTO funding.

Goal Statement #3: Communication about Assessment is Regular and Clear:

Rationale: The teachers at Douglas School will regularly discuss assessment system practices and student progress with students, families, and the community. Such communication will include: the purposes, methods, and results of assessment. They focus reporting on what students know and are able to do, what they need to learn to do, and what will be done to facilitate improvement. They report achievement data in terms of agreed-upon learning goals. Examples of assessments and student work will be made available to parents and the community so they know what high quality performance looks like. Wherever possible, assessment communication will take advantage of school district electronic communication systems such as Powerschool.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams that work to establish an assessment system that provides feedback on a regular basis.

Strategies

1. Redesign report cards so that they reflect student competence in specific skills and concepts.
2. Design or purchase assessments that provide formative and summative information on student progress for specific skills and concepts. These assessments directly reflect skills and concepts in report card.
3. Collect initial assessment data to evaluate effectiveness of curriculum, report card, and to begin discussion of needed differentiated instruction.
4. Improve access to and use of electronic assessment communication tools such as Powerschool.

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas curriculum that includes assessment documents:
 - a. Report cards
 - b. Formative and summative assessments
 - c. Tools for analyzing and discussing assessment data

Target Completion Date

This is a two-year part of the goal and should be completed in June of 2011; however, the majority of work in this area is complete. Report cards at Douglas are completely on-line at this time. Using the full capabilities of PowerSchool, Douglas School makes report card available to families three times per year via a parent portal on PowerSchool. This year staff reviewed and refined the standards that guide instruction and those standards are ready to be revised on the electronic report card. A common evaluation language was agreed upon in grades 1-6 and these changes will be made public with the November parent report card. As noted in goal 1, assessments have been identified in Reading and Math and further review, including data analysis tools will continue throughout the following year.

Anticipated Costs

No Additional Costs as of this time

Source of Revenue

NA.

Part Two: Plans for Next Year

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR 2010-2011

The following list includes this year's Rationale, Responsible Parties, Strategies, Defined Outcomes, Target Completion Dates, Assessment of Progress, Assessment Instruments, Anticipated Costs, and Source of Revenues for our stated goals.

I. Focus on Anti Bullying:

The Douglas staff and School Council will be working on one additional one-year goal. This two-year goal is to **Review and revise programs and procedures to address incidents of bullying within the school community.**

Based on identified student needs, each school improvement goal is subdivided into more specific goals. Teachers begin to address this goal through a focus on the identification of needs, effective solutions, and then implementation of programs. Our goal is tied to the system-wide goal of supporting students within a positive school culture and climate.

Goal 1: Gather Data

Goal Statement #1: Assessment of school climate, particular to peer to peer relationships and incidence of bullying behaviors:

Rationale: The Douglas school core values focus on Caring and Community. Within this community is a diverse student and adult population interacts in complex ways. One of the first steps of this goal will be to collect important individual perceptual data regarding the positive and negative experiences of members of the community. This will provide the faculty with the information needed to address specific concerns and make educated decisions on programmatic implementation within the school.

Responsible Parties

Principal and teachers volunteers will work as members of a committee to create, distribute and analyze survey data from students, teachers, and community members.

Strategies

1. Design and distribute survey
2. Analyze and communicate data

Define Outcomes

1. A written summary of data analysis with focus areas for programmatic change.

Target Completion Date: Fall 2010

Assessment of Progress

Costs \$0

Goal 2: Implement Program Change

Goal Statement #1: An Assessment of school climate will provide information on bullying behaviors which will be addressed procedurally and programatically within the school:

Rationale: Given the assumption that within a diverse community, conflict is inevitable, a community must decide how to handle such conflict. It is the intent of the Douglas community to be both proactive in teaching positive community building skills as well as clearly define procedures for responding to incidents of bullying behavior defined by Massachusetts General Laws as:

“The repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.”

Responsible Parties

Principal and all teachers will work to develop procedures and identify or develop programs to address bullying within the school community.

Strategies

1. Review survey data
2. Identify successful anti-bullying programs
3. Develop procedures regarding bullying behavior

Define Outcomes

1. Identified programs and procedures regarding bullying behavior.

Target Completion Date: June 2011

Costs \$400/grade level Total for 7 grades = \$2800

Funding Source: Appropriated budget

II. Improve student assessment systems:

The Douglas staff and School Council will be working on one additional one-year goal. This two-year goal is to **Review and revise programs and procedures to address incidents of bullying within the school community.**

Goal 1: Improve Student Assessment Systems

Goal Statement #1: Assessment to Improve Student Learning & Create a Fair Assessment Systems for All Students:

Rationale: The Douglas school assessment system in social studies and science will be organized around the primary purpose of improving student learning. It should provide useful information about whether students have reached important learning goals and about the progress of each student. The assessments will be consistent with learning goals, curriculum, instruction, and current knowledge of how students learn.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams working to identify age appropriate, skills and concepts.

Strategies

1. Collection of current and possible assessments
2. Analysis to match skills and assessment

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas reference of assessments correlated to specific skills.

Target Completion Date

June 2011

Assessment of Progress

Goal Statement #2: Professional Collaboration and Development

Rationale: Knowledgeable and fair educators are essential for high quality assessment. Assessment systems depend on educators who understand the full range of assessment purposes, use appropriately a variety of suitable methods, work collaboratively, and engage in ongoing professional development to improve their capability as assessors.

Douglas School teachers will identify and participate in professional development and work together to improve their assessment craft. They may engage in small groups of teachers scoring student work, or other untested practices to develop a school-wide knowledge of skills and assessments.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams that work to organize and identify and participate in high quality professional development.

Strategies

1. Collaborative, cross grade teams K – 6 review assessments, study student work, and attend assessment workshops. Teams will then develop/guides that specifically addresses identified skills and effective assessments that lend themselves to collaborative teacher work.

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas guideline for effective assessments including purposes, collaborative practices and examples.

Target Completion Date

This is a two-year part of the goal and should be completed in June of 2011.

Assessment of Progress

Usefulness of the assessment work will be evaluated based on comparison of assessments to identifying student skills.

Anticipated Costs

Approximately \$2,000 for Professional Development each year.

Source of Revenue

Allocated Budget & PTO funding.

Goal Statement #3: Communication about Assessment is Regular and Clear:

Rationale: The teachers at Douglas School will regularly discuss assessment system practices and student progress with students, families, and the community. Such communication will include: the purposes, methods, and results of assessment. They focus reporting on what students know and are able to do, what they need to learn to do, and what will be done to facilitate improvement. They report achievement data in terms of agreed-upon learning goals. Examples of assessments and student work will be made available to parents and the community so they know what high quality performance looks like. Wherever possible, assessment communication will take advantage of school district electronic communication systems such as Powerschool.

Responsible Parties

Principal, all grade level teachers and special educators will work as members of teams that work to establish an assessment system that provides feedback on a regular basis.

Strategies

1. Redesign report cards so that they reflect student competence in specific skills and concepts.
2. Design or purchase assessments that provide formative and summative information on student progress for specific skills and concepts. These assessments directly reflect skills and concepts in report card.
3. Collect initial assessment data to evaluate effectiveness of curriculum, report card, and to begin discussion of needed differentiated instruction.
4. Improve access to and use of electronic assessment communication tools such as Powerschool.

Define Outcomes

1. A Douglas curriculum that includes assessment documents:
 - a. Report cards
 - b. Formative and summative assessments
 - c. Tools for analyzing and discussing assessment data

Target Completion Date

This is a two-year part of the goal and should be completed in June of 2011; however, the majority of work in this area is complete. Report cards at Douglas are completely on-line at this time. Using the full capabilities of PowerSchool, Douglas School makes report card available to families three times per year via a parent portal on PowerSchool. This year staff reviewed and refined the standards that guide instruction and those standards are ready to be revised on the electronic report card. A common evaluation language was agreed upon in grades 1-6 and these changes will be made public with the November parent report card. As noted in goal 1, assessments have been identified in Reading and Math and further review, including data analysis tools will continue throughout the following year.

Anticipated Costs

No Additional Costs as of this time

Source of Revenue

NA.

Gates School Improvement Plan

2010 – 2011

**Lynne Newman
Principal
Gates School
Acton, MA 01720**

School Improvement Plan

2010 – 2011

Goal # 1: Language Arts – Reading

A. Responsible Parties

- * Curriculum Specialist, Reading Specialist, & Teachers
 - Principal
 - Assistant Principal

B. Defined Outcome

- * Classroom teachers in grades 4-6 will meet and discuss benchmark reading assessments appropriate to these grade levels (such as DRA2, QRI, etc) and decide which benchmark reading assessment tool will be used.
- * Ongoing training and support will be provided for teachers in grades 1-3 using the DRA2. In addition these teacher will explore new reading programs and identify additional resources needed to support student learning.

C. Target Completion Date

- *This goal will continue into September 2010 –June 2011.

D. Anticipated Costs

- Cost of assessment tools \$600 - \$3000.
- Substitute coverage for grades 1-3 = \$1800
- Additional resources \$1500

E. Source of Funding

- * Funding will be provided by the Gates School budget.

Goal # 2: Implement Anti-bullying policy

A. Responsible Parties

- * Principal, Assistant Principal
- * Classroom teachers K – 6
- * Specialists K - 6
- * Students, Parents

B. Defined Outcome

- Gates School will examine the Second Step program for grades K – 2 and Steps for Respect for grades 3 – 6. Staff will create additional lessons that focus on anti-bullying practices at grade level and staff meetings.

C. Target Completion Date

- * June 2011

D. Anticipated Cost

- * \$1500

E. Sources of Funding

- * Funding will be through the Gates School budget.

School Improvement Plan

2009 – 2010

Final Outcomes

Goal # 1: Language Arts - Reading

A. Responsible Parties

- * Curriculum Specialist, Reading Specialist, & Teachers
- * Principal

B. Defined Outcome

- * Teachers will explore Reading programs and assessment tools used in grades K – 6.
- * Grade level and staff meetings will be devoted to topics related to reading, assessment, and instruction.

C. Target Completion Date

- *This goal will begin in September 2009 – June 2010. It is anticipated that a second year will be needed from September 2010 - June 2011.

D. Anticipated Costs

- * None at this point.

E. Source of Funding

- If minimal costs occur, funding will be through the Gates School budget.

F. Final Outcome

The Reading assessment committee met during the 2009 – 2010 school year and examined Benchmark reading assessment tools. Benchmark reading assessments assess student's abilities in reading, specifically his/her fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. They monitor student progress and help teachers to make instructional decisions such as flexible grouping, individual reading, and literature circles. It was determined that the DRA2 would be used to assess reading in grades 1–3. Further collaboration is needed in grades 4-6 to research and purchase Benchmark assessments tools. Currently classroom teachers use the following assessment tools in the five elementary schools: the DRA2 (Developmental Reading Assessment), QRI (Qualitative Reading Inventory), Benchmark Assessment by Fountas and Pinnell, and the Rigby READS (Reading Evaluation and Diagnostic System).

Goal # 2: Revise and Reestablish the Core Values that define the Gates School.

A. Responsible Parties

- * Classroom teachers
- * Specialists
- * Students / Student Council
- * Principal

B. Defined Outcome

- * Committees will be formed to revisit, revise, and reestablish the Core Values of the school. Emphasis will be on Core Values and how they are incorporated academically, socially, and emotionally.
- * “GATES” Core Value posters will be visible throughout the school to share the message of Generosity, Acceptance, Trust, Enthusiasm, and Scholarship.
- * A Community Service Committee will be established.
- * Update Student Handbook

C. Target Completion Date

- * June 2010

D. Anticipated Cost

- * \$500

E. Sources of Funding

- * Funding will be through the Gates School budget.

F. Final Outcomes

New core values were introduced to the staff and students in September 2009. Each month the school gathered to celebrate a core value through poetry, skits, and song. Core value murals were designed by 5th graders and are on display in the cafeteria. The Gates School and Student Council continue to support community service projects throughout the year. The updated student handbook will be posted on the Gates homepage and hard copies will be available to families at the start of the 2010-2011 school year.

McCarthy-Towne School

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Report for 2009-2010
&
School Improvement Plan for 2010- 2011

I. Background and Rationale

A. School Council Responsibilities

The McT School Council provides three useful functions:

- a) It increases communication within the school community;
- b) It provides a forum for a small group of faculty, parents, and community representatives to discuss issues, thorny problems, and difficult situations;
- c) It provides oversight to certain school wide projects.

The job of the School Council is to decide how student, faculty and parent concerns may be handled and to recommend the appropriate group or individual to do so. It serves as a forum to identify and discuss issues and problems and refer them to the appropriate group or decision maker(s) for final determination. The faculty, PTSO Steering Committee, subcommittees and Student Council provide the mechanisms for accomplishing whatever needs to be done.

In some Massachusetts communities the School Councils receive funds directly from the School Committee to help finance projects that will improve the learning of students in their schools. The McCarthy-Towne School Council requests that the APS School Committee set aside \$5,000 for each School Council to fund special projects to help each school attain its improvement plan.

B. Current School Council Membership - [All are two year terms except for principal.]

Parent Representatives:	Amy Hedison	2008-2010
	Carolyn Imperato	2006-2010
	Maureen Jones	2009-2010

Community Representatives:	John Rowse M.D.	2004-2010
----------------------------	-----------------	-----------

Faculty Representatives:	David Krane, Principal	Permanent
	Robin Kynoch	1998-2010
	Kate Fitzmaurice	2007-2010
	Betty Johns, School Nurse	2009-2010

C. School Council Meetings

The McT School Council schedules five regular meetings during each academic year. These meetings usually occur in October, November or December, January or February, March or April, and May or June. Other meetings may be added if necessary.

One part of each meeting is devoted to hearing concerns from the faculty, the parents, and the Student Council. Another part is to hear how work is progressing on the School Improvement Plan. Each meeting usually focuses on one or two of the School Council's goals. A third part of each meeting is set aside for discussion of any other issues.

II. School Improvement Plan Goals for 2009-2010.

Goal # 1:

Focus on advancing the mathematical concepts and skills of students at McT. The faculty will:

- a. Implement the effective use of the new Scott Foresman curriculum materials**
- b. Continue monthly grade level discussions and study to refine understanding of the level of students' concept/skill mastery and how it is accurately assessed.**

Goal # 2:

Continue to evaluate the implementation and practice of McT values during the period of administrative transition. We will:

- a. Ensure that McT values are supported and remain the foundation of the school's programs**
- b. Continue and enhance communication of McT values to the parent community, school district and administration**
- c. Encourage and develop communication of McT values to the greater Acton community.**

Goal # 3:

Oversee the implementation of the Wellness Policy. A sub committee of the School Council in communication with the School Council will:

- a. Develop guidelines for each standard (Nutrition Education, Physical Activity and other school-based events;)**
- b. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Wellness Guidelines.**

Goal # 4

Explore ways in which McT can expand its place in the global community

- a. Explore the possibilities of a World Language Program
- b. Continue to enhance and improve the integration of international families into the McCarthy-Towne Community.
- c. Continue to explore and develop outreach and connections with the global community.

III. Assessment of the current year's School Council work:

Goal #1 Math

The new enVisionMATH curriculum was purchased in the spring of 2009 for the use of all grade levels at McCarthy-Towne, Kindergarten through Grade Six. The faculty decided that a comprehensive curriculum that carried the same vocabulary and instructional language from K through Grade Six was a critical consideration in providing continuity. Trainers from the publisher, Scott Foresman, provided two days of intensive instruction in the delivery of the new curriculum in September 2009. Some of the monthly Grade Level meetings were used to share questions that were raised as well as to share experiences and professional concerns and questions.

The academic assessment questions that were posed last year are still being studied: *How does each grade level assess the level of mastery? Do we need to revise the assessment?* Other questions have been raised over the course of the past year, as well: *Are there some areas of study within the enVision curriculum, at each Grade level, that are developmentally appropriate?*

Grades K-6 are teaching the units of study from the new curriculum; all the while examining it's effectiveness.

Goal #2 The Implementation and Practice of McT Values

It was critical to the McCarthy-Towne School community that its values be supported and maintained during the period of administrative transition. To this end, last year, the faculty worked to more clearly articulate important components. Ours is a school where trust, process and community are highly valued and this was communicated clearly during monthly faculty meetings, Advisory Group meetings and at School Council meetings during conversations among faculty and staff. It is a key component of the Kindergarten Tours and of the annual presentation to prospective families. It is also woven into the fabric of the classroom community, where there is "... a deep investment in the social curriculum. Most teachers utilize the Responsive Classroom approach." This was underscored in a fall presentation to the School Committee on the structure and routine of community building.

Arts Integration continues to be an essential and vital piece of what McCarthy-Towne is. The Arts Integration Consultant, Hanna Melnychuk, continues to work closely with faculty and staff, including our Sloyd teacher, Heidi Kupferman, to merge the visual arts with classroom content areas.

Goal #3 Implementation of the Wellness Policy

A Sub-Committee of the School Council, Nurse Betty Johns, Maureen Jones, Kate Fitzmaurice and Dr. John Rowse was formed to develop a Wellness Action Plan. This plan was developed in order to maintain a balance of independence for each classroom teacher in regard to celebrations, both personal and those related to the curriculum, and children's safety. It also adheres to the essential tenets of the District's Wellness Policy. The three goals of McCarthy-Towne's Wellness Action Plan:

- Apply Wellness Policy and Procedures to McCarthy-Towne
- Apply Life Threatening Allergy Policy and Procedures to McCarthy-Towne
- Explore other questions and concerns around Wellness issues as pertain to McT

Goal #4 Explore Ways in which McT can expand it's place in the global community

Budget restraints kept McCarthy-Towne from implementing a World Language program, but we continue to enhance the integration of international families by continued articulation of McCarthy-Towne values of community, trust and process. In a school District which embraces school choice and which has five excellent elementary schools to choose from, we believe that clear expression of these values continues to make McCarthy-Towne an excellent choice. The process of learning is highly valued, an appreciation of many kinds of diversity exists throughout the school and students and parents are considered essential components for the success of our school.

IV. School Improvement Plan Goals for 2010-2011

Goal #1:

Explore ways in which McT can celebrate its unique qualities in a school-choice community. We will:

- Ensure that McT's values are supported and remain the foundation of the school's programs;
- Enhance and continue communication of McT values and strengths to the school community, including families and students, the APS District, the Administration, and to the greater Acton community.

Goal#2:

Focus on advancing the mathematical concepts and skills of the students at McT. The faculty will:

- Continue to implement the effective use of the Scott Foresman curriculum materials;
- Reshape grade level discussions and study to refine and increase the understanding of the level of student concept/skill mastery and how these are assessed.

Goal #3:

Incorporate and integrate the District's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy into McCarthy-Towne's current policy regarding behavior. We will:

- Continue to take a pro-active, educational approach to creating a positive social environment that fosters respect and compassion for all;
- Make every effort to have the faculty and staff trained and/or re-trained in the methods and philosophies of the Responsive Classroom social curriculum;
- Engage the entire McCarthy-Towne community (staff, students and families) in the implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.

V. Election of School Council members for 2010-2011

Election of new faculty and parent representatives of the McCarthy-Towne School Council for the coming school year usually takes place in June, before the end of the current school year.

The members of the 2009-2010 McCarthy-Towne School Council submit this School Council Report and School Improvement Plan to the Acton Public Schools School Committee.

**Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District**

Merriam School

School Improvement Plan Report 2009-2010
School Improvement Plan 2010-2011

**Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District**

Merriam School

Part One: Background and Rationale

Members of the Merriam School Council

Ed Kaufman	Principal	
Maryann Ayers	Teacher	2nd of 3-year-term
Colm McDermott	Teacher	2nd of 3-year-term
Karen Sonner	Teacher	1st of 3-year-term
Zuzka Blasi	Parent	1 st of 3-year-term
Beth Davis	Parent	2nd of 3-year-term
Jenny Patterson	Parent	2nd of 3-year-term
Lisa Pearson	Parent	1 st of 3-year-term
Trish Underwood	Comm. Member	3rd of 3-year-term
Margaret Miley	Clerk	

Merriam School Council Meeting Dates 2009-2010

October 13, 2009	February 9, 2010
November 17, 2009	March 9, 2010
December 8, 2009	April 13, 2010
January 12, 2010	May 11, 2010

After introducing new members to the role of the School Council, the Merriam School Council began the 2009-2010 school year organizing the plans/strategies for the School Improvement Plan and developing global plans for the school year. The teachers, parent representatives and principal on the School Council reported progress on the work toward meeting the goals at each meeting. Along with ongoing work on School Improvement Goals, the School Council worked to maintain a strong connection with the PTO and discussed long-range goals for Merriam School.

This spring, the School Council reviewed, reflected on and discussed the 2009-2010 goals.

Part Two: Evaluation of Current School Improvement Plan 2009-2010

Goal One: Continue to help teachers become more comfortable and skilled with the new technology, providing opportunities for integrated instruction.

Strategies:

- 1) Teachers will set individual goals in technology (ITIP) for the school year.
- 2) Teachers on grade levels will work with the technology specialist on specific skills and projects. This instruction will permit teachers to integrate technology instruction with already existing curriculum.
- 3) Depending on needs at different grade levels, teachers will become familiar with and will utilize appropriate technology such as: digital cameras, LCD Projectors, SmartBoards, notebook software, teacher laptops, student laptops, and Alphasmarts.
- 4) Periodic demonstrations and technology discussions will take place at staff meetings.
- 5) Teachers/students will demonstrate use of technology for Merriam parents, either at Open House, classroom or grade level presentations or school-wide evening events.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: All teachers will become more proficient at using and integrating multimedia technology in the classroom.

Target Date: May, 2010

Assessment: Last year, the fifth and sixth grades completed a technology project using the new student laptops. At the May PTO meeting teachers presented student work that demonstrated both teacher and student learning in the technology arena. Teachers expanded their use of technology over the course of this year. Grade levels met periodically with our technology integration specialist. Eleven classrooms received new SmartBoards this year, and teachers attended study groups and trainings to learn the skills to aid instruction in the classroom. Teachers using SmartBoards planned lessons embedded with short videos, podcasts, and interactive maps. Teachers without SmartBoards utilized In-Focus and document camera devices in their planning. Some sixth-grade classes used iMovie to showcase original poetry, while others posted and discussed their work on a classroom blog. Fifth grade classes created fairy tale or fable podcasts. Fifth and sixth grade students used iWeb to format and publish the school newspaper as well as digital cameras and iPhoto to produce pictures. Grade four filmed astronomy skits, Native American plays, and/or made podcasts of creation myths. The second graders took photos and made voice recordings, which were organized into a PowerPoint presentation of a "typical day in first grade." This presentation will be shown next year to grade one parents and students. SmartBoards were used by staff at PTO, School Council, and Open House meetings.

Goal Two: Revise the Merriam “End of Year Assessment Summary Documents”.

Strategies:

- 1) A study group of Merriam faculty will meet monthly to organize and conduct research for the revision process. Feedback from Merriam parents will be requested early on in the process.
- 2) Faculty meetings and grade level time will be devoted to this process.
- 3) Parents will be updated about the revision process via written correspondence and discussions.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: Outlines (at least) of the new “End of Year Assessment Summary Documents” will be completed by the end of the year.

Target Date: May, 2010

Assessment: As the staff began to discuss this topic both at staff meetings and in the study group, it became clear that this goal needed to be revised. The goal was broadened to “Review and Revise the End of Year Conference at Merriam School”. The staff realized that three components were important to examine: the portfolio process, the end of year document, and the presentation of information to parents. Over the course of the year, grade levels created drafts of what will go in portfolios, in order to ensure consistency. The study group created a survey for parents about their experience of the end of year conference, and received input about the survey from the rest of the staff and from the School Council. Parents will fill out the survey after their end of year conference and data will be examined in the fall. The revision of the assessment summary document will become the central portion of this goal for next year.

Goal Three: Examine and share staff strategies for increasing students' social skills and decreasing bullying behavior.

Strategies:

- 1) At several staff meetings, staff will share exercises and philosophy of social skills programs that are being utilized.
- 2) At several staff meetings, staff will share proactive and reactive strategies for dealing with bullying behavior.
- 3) If possible, we will pilot a new "Bullyproof" program provided by the Open Circle organization.
- 4) A "Community Conversation" will be devoted to this topic, where strategies will be shared and discussed with parents.
- 5) An article will be written in the Merriam newsletter to convey additional information to parents about this topic.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: Merriam staff will increase their knowledge about how to promote students' social skills and decrease bullying behavior.

Target Date: May, 2010

Assessment: All Merriam classroom teachers are now trained in the Open Circle program. Several staff meetings were devoted to discussions about how the program is utilized and about how to prevent and respond to bullying. Scenarios were discussed at one of these meetings. The School Council created additional scenarios that were presented as part of a joint School Council/PTO Community Conversation about bullying. Over forty people attended that discussion. In addition Ed Kaufman wrote an article for the Merriam newsletter about this topic. Members of the Merriam staff met with members of the Open Circle staff to plan a "bully prevention and response" program that will be piloted next year.

Part Three: School Improvement Plan 2010-2011

Goal One: Continue to promote a school culture that prevents bullying while also developing additional ways to respond to bullying situations.

Strategies:

- 1) Staff will discuss the new district bully prevention policies and guidelines, and will develop school procedures that will follow those guidelines.
- 2) The staff will begin a bully prevention and response pilot program sponsored by the Open Circle program.
- 3) The School Council will sponsor another community conversation on this topic, as a follow-up to the previous year's workshop.
- 4) Parents of children in grades 4-6 will be invited to join staff for discussions about how to prevent and respond to cyberbullying.
- 5) A School Council member will write a newsletter article on this topic.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: The entire Merriam community will demonstrate efforts to work together to both prevent and respond to bullying situations.

Target Date: May, 2011

Goal Two: Re-energize the use of the Merriam Core Values in the school community.

Strategies:

- 1) Some classroom projects will be devoted to the core values.
- 2) The School Theme for the year will be related to the core values, and Theme Days will include activities related to the values.
- 3) The School Council will design activities or community conversations that will involve families utilizing the core values.
- 4) A newsletter article will be devoted to the core values.
- 5) Core values in action will be documented in some way for the community.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: All members of the school community will be able to describe the core values and there will be evidence of the core values in action.

Target Date: May, 2011

Goal Three: Review and Revise the Merriam School “End of Year Conference “

Strategies:

- 1) Staff will initially discuss the “End of Year Conference” survey results, and then will bring those results to the School Council.
- 2) The survey results and the portfolio work done by the staff will be presented to the school community at a PTO or School Council forum.
- 3) The staff will use these results, the portfolio work done, and additional discussions and research to create a new end of year assessment document.
- 4) A newsletter article will be written to explain the changes to the end of year conference information and process.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: The three major components of the conference review (portfolio consistency by grade level, the creation of a new end of year document, and agreement about how to present all of the information to parents) will be completed and implemented.

Target Date: May, 2011

ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DESCRIPTIONS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

2010-2011

<u>No.</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
1	Eileen Sullivan	Nearby Nature [continued]	This will be the continuation of a joint project begun last year with teachers from both Merriam and McCarthy-Towne Schools. The results of the project will be an expansion of the nature activity backpack program for classrooms in the Parker Damon Building.	\$3,400
2	Deborah Bookis	ELA: Non-Fiction 6 Trait Lessons	Teachers will have an opportunity to work with a 6 Trait consultant as they create 6 Trait Writing Lessons in social studies and science.	\$4,332
3	Mary Tsacoyeanes	Phonics/Word Study	Conant Primary Teachers (Grades K-3) will create a Scope and Sequence for Phonics instruction. They will use Fountas and Pinnell's Phonics Program and Bradley Phonics, together with other teacher-created resources, to design large and small-group phonics lessons at each grade level.	Inservice Credit
4	Jennie Granado	Book Group: Book Whisperer	Grade six teachers will discuss how strategies and techniques from <u>The Book Whisperer</u> by Donnalyn Miller can be incorporated into the ELA program. Following the discussion, time will be spent to create actual lessons/plans using the discussed material.	Inservice Credit
5	Sharon Ryan	McT Bookroom	This R & D will explore and begin the development of a bookroom at the McT School to support the literacy needs of K - 6 teachers/ students within the guided reading setting. Basic materials, organization, and ordering will be completed and shared with the staff next fall.	Inservice Credit
6	Sharon Ryan	Children's Literature	This R & D will afford classroom teachers and specialists the opportunity to read an array of children's literature pertinent to their particular grade level/content area. Each participant will then create materials, vocabulary lists, or lesson plans to support the incorporation of literature into his/her grade level curriculum.	Inservice Credit
7	Robyn Harding	Conant 5 th -Grade Spelling and Vocabulary	This R&D will provide the opportunity to create a spelling/vocabulary program that includes approximately 20 weekly lessons on spelling strategies, base words, prefixes, suffixes, and word origins to help students learn how to define, and spell, appropriate grade-level vocabulary.	\$510 + Inservice Credit

July 21, 2010

W. Z.

8	Deborah Bookis	Kindergarten Math Center/Lesson Materials	Many of the mathematics programs do not include enough student practice activities for students to develop an understanding of the mathematics concepts, counting and number relationships. The activities created this summer will incorporate many of the <i>Assessing Math Concepts</i> intervention activities, which will help teachers differentiate learning based on the formative assessments.	\$1,602 + Inservice Credit
9	Deborah Bookis	K Richardson Math Intervention Strategies and Activities [K-2]	Classroom Teachers and Special Education Teachers will share which intervention strategies they felt were most effective for the assessments and share ideas about how to differentiate the activities in order to meet the needs of all students.	\$2,622
10	Jennie Granado	Gates Grades 5/6 Report Card Committee	Gates School fifth- and sixth-grade teachers will meet to restructure the current shared report card.	Inservice Credit
11	Diana Woodruff	VA: Creating Common Units	This R&D will give Visual Arts staff the opportunity to continue the collaborative work on curriculum development begun during the 2009-10 school year. K-6 art staff have developed core units in drawing, painting, sculpture for grade 6 using a modified version of <i>Understanding By Design</i> backwards-planning model. This summer work will involve development of core units in drawing, painting, and sculpture for grades 3-5.	Inservice Credit
12	S. Szwarczewicz	Review of Training Materials from ELL Category 4B	Elementary ELL teacher and McT Reading Specialist will review extensive materials from the ELL Category 4B training attended earlier this year and select topics that would be most useful for the classroom teachers we work with. Our goal is to design a workshop on some aspect of reading and writing instruction for ELLs, to be offered as part of professional development during the 2010-2011.	Inservice Credit
13	Melissa Reinhardt	3 rd and 4 th Grade ELA Curriculum Notebook	The R&D participants will discuss the ELA objectives for 3 rd and 4 th grade and develop an understanding of the objectives at each grade level. They will combine/share their ELA resources and create a resource for new staff members.	\$1,602
14	Eileen Sullivan	Energy Conservation	One 6 th -grade teacher per elementary school, plus the Curriculum Specialist, will meet to work with JD Head to plan a strategy for implementing energy conservation measures in the schools. This will give teachers some planning time in order to involve students in the districtwide endeavors.	\$1,044

15	Ed Kaufman	Editing and Reformatting Merriam School Publications	Merriam School publications (i.e., Visitor Handbook, Merriam School Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Parent Volunteer brochure, etc.) will be checked for accurate information, changed/updated as needed, and prepared for online and hard copy publication.	Inservice Credit
16	Mary Cole	Language Arts (Trade Books)	Two new trade books will be added to Conant's LA curriculum in the fall. For this R&D, the books will be read and activities will be created to use with them.	Inservice Credit
17	Elise Simeone	Fundations Integration with Reading Program	Participants will work toward integrating the Fundations program with their current reading materials. They will develop an understanding of the new phonics program and will develop a weekly plan for teaching it together with the other components of their reading program.	Inservice Credit
TOTAL \$\$				\$15,112



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

June 17, 2010

Superintendent Stephen Mills
Acton Public Schools
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Superintendent Mills:

Congratulations!

The Department has received and certified your district's 2009-2010 Education Personnel Information Management System (EPIMS) data. We are pleased to see that your district has met the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) goal of 100%.

As you are aware, in the state's continuing efforts to meet this goal, *all* school districts and charter schools are required to submit an updated Teacher Quality Improvement Plan (TQIP) annually to the Department. There have been some revisions to the previous year's TQIP, starting first and foremost with a change in title, from the "Teacher Quality Improvement Plan" to the "Teacher Effectiveness & Quality Improvement Plan" (TEQIP). This change reflects the state's strategic priority to develop and retain an effective, academically capable, diverse and culturally competent educator workforce. Accordingly, a *Teacher Effectiveness* section has been added to the teacher quality improvement plan.

The primary purposes of the TEQIP have remained the same – to help districts meet their 100% HQT goals and to ensure that poor or minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other children in the district. As such, your district must outline its strategy for ensuring the equitable distribution of HQ teachers in the Equitable Distribution Plan (EDP) section of the TEQIP. To help facilitate this process, the TEQIP is pre-populated with your district's EDP from 2008-2009 for your use when outlining this year's district plan.

For step-by-step instructions crucial to completing the TEQIP, please review the TEQIP instructions document. You can open this document by selecting the "Word" or "PDF" hyperlink located on either the 2009-2010 TEQIP homepage or in the "Instructions" area (the upper right-hand corner) of your district's TEQIP page.

Use the following procedure to access the TEQIP application:

- Your district's Directory Administrator must assign the appropriate district level administrator (Superintendent, district HQT contact, etc.) a security role for the 2009-2010 *Teacher Effectiveness & Quality Improvement Plan* to provide him/her with access to the TEQIP application. This individual should be aware of the HQT requirements and should oversee implementation of these requirements at the district level.
- You can view a list of Directory Administrators for each district at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/diradmin/list.asp>.
- You must log in to the 2009-2010 TEQIP application through the Department's Security Portal at <https://www4.doemass.org/auth/Login>.

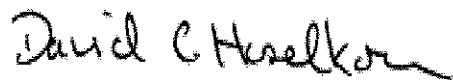
The deadline for submitting this plan is **August 16, 2010**.

Finally, as in previous years, the Department will be offering Professional Development Institutes (PDIs) this summer at no cost to educators. Registration priority for these PDIs is given to special education and English as a second language educators working to meet the HQT requirements in districts with less than 97% HQT by way of a HOUSSE plan*. Many of the institutes are offered in partnership with school districts, colleges, universities and cultural institutions, and focus on providing high quality professional development in the core content areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/cinstitute/09/>.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact our HQT office at HQThelp@doe.mass.edu.

Thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of improved teaching and learning.

Sincerely,



David Haselkorn
Associate Commissioner
Center for Educator Policy, Preparation, Licensure and Leadership Development

* The High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) option is only available to special education and veteran ESL educators.