



**Pollard Middle School
School Improvement Plan
September 2018- June 2021
Needham Public Schools**

Presented to the Needham School Committee, April 2, 2019

School Council Members:

Ann Ahnert, Teacher
Tamatha Bibbo, Principal and Co-Chair
David Blake, Teacher
David Dussault, Teacher
Chris Giancola, Parent
Michael Jeye, Student
Jeniyah Joseph, Student
Kevin Keane, Parent
Karen Mullen, Community Representative
Claudia Pape, Parent
Michael Ryan, Teacher
Jessica Young-Paulson, Student

Pollard Middle School Statement of Purpose

We dedicate ourselves to cultivating academic excellence, civic responsibility, and the personal growth of each member of our community.

We Know:

Students enter Pollard Middle School at a critical phase of their development. They experience rapid physiological and emotional changes, an emerging sense of self, and an increased need for self-assertion. Cognitively, middle school students move from concrete toward abstract thinking. Middle school students strive for self-acceptance and a sense of belonging which shapes their behavior and perceptions. Healthy connections with adults and peers are crucial. Adult recognition reinforces students' sense of worth and their ability to balance extreme and competing developmental needs.

We Believe:

- All students can learn, and it happens at varying rates through multiple learning styles.
- Active learning requires taking risks, and mistakes are valuable for learning.
- Learning through a broad-based curriculum and exposure to different perspectives is integral to educating the whole child.
- Learners should feel safe, cared for, and valued.
- Learning requires a partnership between school, home, and the community.

We Work To Provide:

- A student-centered curriculum that is experiential, interdisciplinary, and exploratory.
- A staff that plays multiple roles in fostering student growth as they share knowledge, serve as role models, and respond to each individual's needs.
- A middle school environment that stresses civic and global awareness and each student's role as a member of a family, a community, and society at large.

We Strive To Develop:

- Creative and critical thinkers.
- Confident and open-minded risk-takers.
- Responsible and thoughtful decision-makers.
- Articulate and reflective communicators.
- Collaborative and socially conscious contributors to the community.

The Improvement Process:

Pollard Middle School is committed to an improvement process that addresses both the short and long-term needs of all students in their middle school years. Our *School Improvement Plan*, which is aligned with the *Needham Public Schools' District Goals*, establishes requisite strategies and actions that manifest themselves through our work and priority areas to support student achievement. We

believe that it is necessary for staff, parents, students, and community to be involved and to work together in this process.

Pollard Core Values

All members of the Pollard community will:

- **be curious, confident, and independent learners**
- **act with compassion, integrity, and inclusivity**
- **strive for personal growth**

District Goal 1: Advance Learning for All Students. To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging, creative, and rigorous learning experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards.

District Goal 2: Develop the Social, Emotional, Wellness & Citizenship Skills. To ensure students develop the knowledge and skills that empower healthy, resilient, and culturally proficient global citizens who commit to act with integrity, respect, and compassion.

District Goal 3: Ensure Infrastructure Supports District Values and Learning Goals. To build and implement a sustainable plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that enables our learning goals and is responsive to student and school needs.

Action Steps	Strategies Employed	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
1.1 Implement an integrated science curriculum according to the state's new Science & Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design new curriculum (content and pedagogy). • Implement the new curriculum with students. • Use common assessment data to reflect on the outcomes, and revise as needed. 	Science Curriculum Coordinator and department members	Students will apply skills and recognize themes in an integrated science context, while covering the state's revised standards.	June 2020
1.2 Integrate enhanced literacy understanding and practices across all curricular areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the Reading Apprenticeship framework as a model for implementation across departments. • Develop “accountable talk” skills and strategies in the classroom 	Principal, Literacy Coordinator, PATM, Literacy Coach	Students will improve disciplinary literacy skills in all content areas (not just ELA).	June 2021

Action Steps	Strategies Employed	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
1.3 Define and determine special education and regular education co-teaching model and replicate in both grade levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and define co-teaching model; • Determine co-teaching and inclusion support. • Create PD and schedule to support co-teaching model 	Principal, Special Education Coordinator, PATM	Students' learning community will be inclusive and differentiated to support diverse learners.	June 2022
1.4 Transition curriculum to meet the 2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze new standards; • Develop and implement new units of study with students; • Remove units of study from the curriculum; • Use common assessment data to reflect on the outcomes, and revise as needed. 	Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator and department members	<p>Students will have the opportunity to learn about more diverse people, places, and ideas</p> <p>Students will engage in research and demonstrate their learning through authentic assessments</p> <p>Students will participate in a civics action project</p>	June 2021
1.5 Evaluate effectiveness of the current Language Based Classroom (LBC) and other sub-separate programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current program and determine needs and best practices. • Identify budget impact and needs. 	Principal and Special Education Coordinator	Students will be better able to access curriculum and receive appropriate supports to meet their needs.	June 2021
1.6 Review and modify the current technology offerings to enhance and make effective use of the 1:1 program.	Incorporate electives that reflect innovative and creative programs, etc. (CoSpaces, social media, coding, gaming...)	Principal and Director of Media and Technology	<p>Students will be provided relevant opportunities to develop technological skills to enhance their learning.</p> <p>Students will use the technology to differentiate and demonstrate their thinking/ learning</p>	October 2020
1.7 Audit the impact of the math program (3 year review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create surveys to solicit feedback from stakeholders. • Study other “like” districts and their leveling. • Make recommendation for future math programming. 	Principal, Math Curriculum Coordinator, NHS Math Department Head	Students will have a standards-based, research based math program that meets their needs.	June 2020
1.8 Assess and adjust the world language program to insure all have access and equitable opportunities to advance language skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research “like” districts • Determine changes to provide 2 year study for all students of level 1 language. 	Principal, K-12 World Language Director	ALL students will have opportunity to enroll in 2 year language and culture opportunity in 3-4 language options.	June 2019

Action Steps	Strategies Employed	Person Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
<p>2.1 Actively create and maintain an environment in which staff and students' diverse backgrounds, identities, strengths and challenges are respected and honored. Insure equitable and culturally responsive teaching and learning in all curricular areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in PD/ in-house workshop • Send teachers to IDEAS course; • Revamp Hot Chocolate/ Hot Topics; • Investigate curricular choices, instructional practices, communication; • Include cultural proficiency focus in various curricular and advisory instruction; • Evaluate and adjust the Identity and American Experience units in Grades 7 & 8. • Use Equity Audit and NPS survey results to drive decisions. 	<p>PATM</p>	<p>Students will thrive in a culturally responsive classroom/ school environment.</p> <p>Cultural proficiency creates a community of acceptance and safety for all students.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>
<p>2.2 Incorporate and align the recommendations, competencies, and goals from Portrait of a Graduate (POG) work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the competencies for grades 7 & 8. • Identify strengths and areas of growth/ opportunities • Develop learning opportunities needed to meet the POG priorities. 	<p>Principal and PATM</p>	<p>Students will be provided opportunities to learn, practice, and meet the key competencies.</p> <p>Students will be well prepared for the future/ post-graduate world.</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
<p>2.3 Develop and design a transition program for students in need.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design entrance and exit criteria. • Communicate the program and its goals to community. • Collect data. • Support the program development through BRYT PD for staff. • Identify needs (staff, space...). 	<p>Guidance and Special Education</p>	<p>Students will be provided a transition space and program with academic and mental health support.</p> <p>Students will be able to transition back to school from excessive absences with proper support.</p>	<p>January 2020</p>
<p>2.4 Implement SEL competencies and benchmarks in all areas (from DESE's CASEL 2017).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the 5 competencies and identify opportunities for students to demonstrate and practice these skills. • Create learning opportunities in each. 	<p>Advisory Team and PATM</p>	<p>Students and staff will be able to identify and understand the 5 SEL competencies.</p> <p>Students will be able to self- assess the 5 competencies and determine future goals.</p>	<p>June 2020</p>

Action Steps	Strategies Employed	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
<p>3.1 Increase and enhance communication efforts including adopting a new district-wide Learning Management System (LMS).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide PD for staff, students and families on new LMS system (Schoology, etc.) • Transition all curriculum, teacher sites, communication to new platform • Use social media, explore use of student portfolios (electronic or other). • Pilot a student-led conference (enhance reflection, goal setting, and self advocacy skills) 	<p>Principal and PATM</p>	<p>Creating transparency will enhance school-home communication for students and families.</p> <p>Students and families will find all curricular materials and resources in 1 online location.</p>	<p>September 2020</p>
<p>3.2 Explore new ways/ models of expanding family involvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student-led portfolio conferences; Internships • Invite guest speakers • Create cluster-based conferences • Identify opportunities for teacher/ parent events • Offer principal open houses/ coffees 	<p>Principal and Assistant Principals</p>	<p>Students and families will increase their partnership with Pollard.</p>	<p>January 2021</p>
<p>3.3 Investigate and create a new schedule that provides a highly effective program for all students and address the population growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review projections and review scheduling options, class size, staffing, and building needs for anticipated increased enrollment. • Create a scheduling committee • Research other districts with similar demographics • Recommend a new schedule in order to meet needs of all students 	<p>Principal, PATM, Scheduling Committee</p>	<p>Students will have a daily schedule that will meet our values and goals as well as address class size and growth.</p> <p>Population growth will impact class size, cluster model, current schedule, and staffing needs (esp. in elective courses)</p>	<p>June 2021</p>

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<p>3.4 Develop and pilot Innovation/ Interdisciplinary cluster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate interdisciplinary models • Find funding and staff to support this innovation cluster • Design the purpose, goals, and curriculum. • Communicate the program to community • Recruit students and develop schedule. • Identify needs and address staffing and building concerns. • Align work to POG. 	<p>Principal, PATM, NEF</p>	<p>Students will have a unique learning experience in a SWS model- incorporating project based learning in an interdisciplinary way.</p> <p>Students will enroll in a cluster that will design, instruct, and assess through a standards-based method.</p>	<p>June 2021- June 2022</p>