



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

Update to the Needham School Committee: February 2, 2021

School Council Members:

Tamatha Bibbo, Principal and Co-Chair
David Dussault, Teacher
Chris Giancola, Parent
Skylar Helfman, Student
Karen Mullen, Community Representative
Claudia Pape, Parent and Co-Chair
Michael Ryan, Teacher
Maura Lia, Teacher
Lisa Mancino, Teacher
Yasmin Fathaulla, Parent
Caterina Krug, Parent
Charlie Novak, 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.

Needham Public Schools



MISSION: A school and community partnership that creates excited learners, inspires excellence, & fosters integrity. ____

VISION: Preparing ALL Needham Public Schools students to be:

- Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers;
- Communicators and Collaborators;
- Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors;
- Responsible and Resilient Individuals;
- Empowered Learners

CORE VALUES:

- Scholarship
- Community
- Citizenship
- Personal Growth

POLLARD CORE VALUES:

All members of the Pollard community will be curious, confident, and independent learners; act with compassion, integrity, and inclusivity; and strive for personal growth.

NEEDHAM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1. All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

- 1A) Incorporate opportunities for student choice, independent learning, & personalized pathways*
- 1B) Provide structures & experiences that enable student efficacy, leadership, and voice*
- 1C) Teach students the content & skills necessary for them to grow personally and academically.*

2. All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning

- 2A) Extend interdisciplinary teaching and learning practices Pre-K to 12*
- 2B) Embed Portrait Competencies, Technology, Inclusive Practices, SEL, and Equity into all curricula and instructional practices*
- 2C) Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through multiple means of expression.*

3. All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments

- 3A) Support and design classroom models and environments that foster collaboration & innovation*
- 3B) Provide time, schedules, and spaces that promote learning objectives*
- 3C) Complement instruction with accessible learning beyond the classroom, within the community, and in partnership with families.*

4. Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

- 4A) Provide staffing, facilities, and budget resources aligned to district priorities*
- 4B) Implement a recruitment, retention, and development process for staff growth and diversity*
- 4C) Establish a professional learning structure supporting equity and the Portrait vision.*

School Goals	Strategic Priority	Action Steps/ Strategies Employed	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students/ Ways to Measure Success	Timeline
1. Implement an integrated science curriculum according to the state's 2018 Science & Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework.	1A, 1B, 1C 2B, 2C 3A, 3C 4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design new curriculum (content and pedagogy). Implement the new curriculum with students. Use common assessment data and revise as needed. 	Science Department Head and department members	Students will apply skills and recognize themes in an integrated science context, while covering the state's revised standards. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Empowered Learners)	June 2020 ✓
2. Define and determine special education and regular education co-teaching model and replicate in both grade levels.	1A, 1C 2B 3A, 3B 4C	<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. 	PATM	Students' learning community will be inclusive and differentiated to support diverse learners. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Empowered Learners)	June 2022 IP
3. Transition curriculum to meet the 2018 Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework	1A, 1B, 1C 2B, 2C 3A, 3C 4A	<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. Add civics requirement to grade 8 	Social Studies Department Head and department members	Students will have the opportunity to learn about more diverse people, places, and ideas. Students will engage in research and demonstrate their learning through authentic assessments Students will participate in a civics action project. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Empowered Learners)	June 2021 ✓
4. Identify bright spots from Remote Learning/ Hybrid model and replicate	1A, 1B, 1C 2B, 2C 3A, 3B, 3C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine positive learning opportunities and expand. Find and replicate positive outcomes of hybrid and remote learning to continue. 	All staff	Students will be provided with unique opportunities to continue to connect in personal ways. Students will enhance their remote learning skills (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Empowered Learners)	June 2022

School Goals	Strategic Priority	Action Steps/ Strategies Employed	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students/ Ways to Measure Success	Timeline
5. Review and modify the current technology offerings to enhance and make effective use of the 1:1 program.	1A, 1B, 1C 2A, 2B, 2C 3A, 3B 4B, 4C	Incorporate electives that reflect innovative and creative programs, etc. (CoSpaces, social media, coding, gaming...).	Principal and Director of Media and Technology	Students will be provided relevant opportunities to develop technological skills to enhance their learning. Students will use the technology to differentiate and demonstrate their thinking/ learning. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Empowered Learners)	October 2020 ✓
6. Audit the impact of the math program (3 year review)	1A, 1B, 1C 2A, 2B, 2C 3A, 3B 4B, 4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create surveys to solicit feedback from stakeholders. • Study other “like” districts and their leveling. • Make recommendations 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. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Empowered Learners)	June 2020 ✓
7. Assess and adjust the world language program to insure all have access and equitable opportunities to advance language skills.	1A, 1B, 1C 2A, 2B, 2C 3A 4C	<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 opportunities to enroll in 2 year language and culture opportunities in 3-4 language options. (Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Empowered Learners)	June 2019 ✓

School Goals	Strategic Priority	Strategies Employed/ Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
8. Actively create and maintain an environment in which staff and students' diverse backgrounds, identities, strengths and challenges are respected and honored. Ensure equitable and culturally responsive teaching and learning.	1A, 1B, 1C 2B 3C 4B, 4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate curricular choices, instructional practices, communication. Include cultural proficiency focus in various curricular and advisory instruction. Complete an inventory of lessons/ maps of what exists now-(curriculum map) Lead/determine equity team Differentiate PD for staff New curriculum in ELA Adopt racial literacy curriculum 	PATM	<p>Students will thrive in a culturally responsive classroom/ school environment. Cultural proficiency creates a community of acceptance and safety for all students.</p> <p>(Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Responsible & Resilient Individuals; Empowered Learners)</p>	June 2022 IP
9. Incorporate and align the recommendations, competencies, and goals from Portrait of a Graduate (POG) work.	1B 2B 4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate the competencies for grades 7 & 8. Identify strengths and areas of growth/ opportunities. Develop learning opportunities. 	PATM	<p>Students will be provided opportunities to learn, practice, and meet the key competencies.</p> <p>(Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Responsible and Resilient Individuals)</p>	December 2020 ✓
10. Implement and evaluate the efficacy of the new transition program for students in need.	1A, 1B, 1C 2B 3B, 3C 4B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate entrance and exit criteria. Collect and assess data. Identify future needs (staffing, space). 	PATM, Guidance and Special Education	<p>Students will be provided a transition space and program with academic and mental health support. Students will be able to transition back to school from excessive absences with proper support.</p> <p>(Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Responsible and Resilient Individuals; Empowered Learners)</p>	June 2021 IP

School Goals	Strategic Priority	Strategies Employed/ Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Impact on Students	Timeline
12. Explore models to expand family involvement.	2B 3C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore cluster-based conferences. Identify opportunities for school/home events. Increase special guests and speakers for parents (collaboration with community partnerships) 	Principal and Assistant Principals	<p>Students and families will increase their partnership with Pollard.</p> <p>(Communicators & Collaborators; Responsible and Resilient Individuals)</p>	<p>January 2021</p> <p>IP</p>
13. LAUNCH a new schedule that provides a highly effective program for all students and address the population growth.	1A, 1B, 1C 2A, 2B, 2C 3A, 3B, 3C 4A, 4B, 4C	<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 the needs of all students. 	PATM, Scheduling Committee	<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>(Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Empowered Learners)</p>	<p>Planning June 2020 ✓</p> <p>Launch September 2021</p>
14. Develop and pilot innovation/ interdisciplinary cluster	1A, 1B, 1C 2A, 2B, 2C 3A, 3B, 3C 4A, 4B, 4C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate interdisciplinary models. Design the purpose, goals, and curriculum. Communicate the program to community. Recruit students and develop schedule. Identify needs and address staffing and building concerns. 	Principal, PATM, NEF	<p>Students will have a unique learning experience in a SWS model- incorporating project based learning in an interdisciplinary way.</p> <p>Students will design, instruct, and assess through a standards-based method.</p> <p>(Creative Thinkers & Problem Solvers; Communicators & Collaborators; Socially & Culturally Responsive Contributors; Responsible and Resilient Individuals; Empowered Learners)</p>	June 2022

Glossary:

BRYT: [Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition Program](#). Partners with Pollard (and many other schools including NHS) in order to bring students back to school after extended absences.

CASEL: [Collaborative for Academic and Social/ Emotional Learning](#). SEL learning standards and benchmarks articulate what students should know and be able to do in SEL from PreK to grade 12 and allow districts to outline intersections of SEL with standards in academic content areas, including the Common Core State Standards.

CoSpaces: [CoSpaces Edu](#) enables students to learn by doing, using the various tools available with the technology. All features in CoSpaces Edu can be adapted to fit different class subjects and learning objectives.

IDEAS: [Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for Students](#). IDEAS will extend the professional learning opportunities available to school districts as they work to enhance the culturally proficient practices identified in Standards II and III of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Model Teacher Rubric.

PATM: Pollard Administrative Team (Principal; 2 Asst. Principals; ELA, math, science, social studies, special education, and literacy coordinators).

Professional Development (PD): Adult to earn or maintain **professional** credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage.¹

School Within a School (SWS): Schools within schools are large public schools that have been divided into smaller autonomous subunits. The National Association of Elementary School Principals officially recognizes a school within a school as "a separate entity, running its own budget and planning its own programs."²

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Professional_development

² <https://www.ericdigests.org/2002-4/schools.html>