

Belmont Public Schools

Learn Think Create Serve

**644 Pleasant Street
Belmont, Massachusetts 02478**

Strategic Improvement Plan 2005-2010

May 3, 2005

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Goal: To provide a balanced curriculum which promotes educational excellence, challenges and supports student learning and thinking, documents individual student progress, and prepares students to meet state, national, and global educational standards.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Promote universal academic proficiency.
- Develop additional approaches to assess, analyze and report student learning.
- Address ways to improve achievement patterns of all student sub-groups
- Enrich and refine curriculum offerings to incorporate evolving knowledge bases and to meet the needs of various student populations.
- Develop diverse programming for students whose needs cannot be met in the traditional program
- Expand differentiated instructional approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Advocate for system wide administrative positions that will address increasing accountability demands for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Ensure the integration of technology into the core curriculum.
- Institutionalize research and development to support innovative practice in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Use the seven-year curriculum review cycle to ensure on-going evaluation of all curriculum documents and units of study.
- Focus and align curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet guidelines of MERA and use data to inform instruction.
- Further integrate support services within the regular classroom.
- Attain reasonable class size and adequate staffing levels to sustain a high quality program of studies for all students.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- BPS students' performance in all sub groups on standardized measures will improve and meet the NCLB targets.
- All students will meet NCLB guidelines for proficiency and MERA guidelines for graduation.
- Appropriate technology hardware and software will be used to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Data driven decisions regarding curriculum, instruction, and assessment will be student-centered and standards based.
- New reporting systems and assessment techniques will better inform all constituencies and agencies on students' ability to meet local, state, and national standards.

Student Life

Goal: To contribute to and support the intellectual, social and personal development of students so they actively and productively participate in and contribute to the life of the school and the greater community.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Review and adjust all extra-curricular and co-curricular programs for content, variety, levels of engagement, and cost effectiveness.
- Work with appropriate local agencies to address and control substance abuse by students.
- Hire an administrator for K-12 guidance to oversee and expand programs and services to students, especially at the high school and middle school.
- Assist teachers to better deal with complex student social, emotional and behavioral issues.
- Explore ways to adjust schedules, services, and protocols to better meet student learning needs.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Foster effective relationships between students and adults and establish advisory connections with students.
- Establish a climate in all schools that is conducive to learning, advances inclusion initiatives, and supports positive socialization.
- Support in a variety of ways those students within the BPS schools who come from outside the community.
- Embed anti-bias program elements throughout system programs.
- Explore more and healthier school lunch options.
- Increase student participation in after school, athletic, fine and performing arts, and other curricular related activities.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- The participation rate of Belmont High School students in extracurricular activities, community service projects, academic clubs, and student performance groups will increase.
- A survey of students, parents, and faculty will indicate strong formal and informal connections between staff and students and will identify programs in place which encourage these connections.
- A survey of students, parents, and faculty will indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the guidance and mental health programs and services provided to students.
- A series of recommendations about additions and/or deletions to the extra curricular and co-curricular programs at BHS and CMS will be made.
- An administrator for K-12 guidance will be hired and successfully integrated into the administrative team.

School Management and Leadership

Goal: To engage the talents and expertise of both school personnel and community resources to build effective learning environments for all students.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Use the new Mission Statement, Vision, and Strategic Improvement Plan for the Belmont Public Schools to shape planning and decision making.
- Develop all appropriate informational databases on students and staff so as to fulfill state and federal mandated reporting requirements.
- Assess and improve transition services from grade to grade and school to school in order to ensure a smooth flow of information and support to students and parents.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Ensure that staff and students understand and actively strive to embody the district's Mission and Motto in their practice and study.
- Align each School Improvement Plan with the district's Mission, Vision, and Core Values.
- Provide opportunities for students, parents, staff, and community members to participate meaningfully in school improvement.
- Increase the use of technology for management purposes, including data collection.
- Establish a climate in all schools that supports respect, collaboration, and personal responsibility.
- Engage all levels of personnel in system wide and school based participatory decision making and improvement efforts.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- The Mission Statement for the Belmont Public Schools will be published in all appropriate materials for faculty, students, parents, and the community. It will be displayed in all schools and understood by all.
- The school system will have a fully networked computer system with which to fulfill its management responsibilities in a technologically proficient and efficient manner.
- Incoming ninth graders' transition process will include better course selection and placement procedures and clearer expectations of high school academic and behavioral standards.
- All students will enjoy smooth transitions from grade to grade as well as school to school.

Human Resource Development

Goal: To develop a diverse and highly qualified work force for the Belmont Public Schools committed to continuous improvement in teaching and learning through a cohesive staff development program, and supported by comprehensive human resource services.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Ensure that all staff are highly qualified.
- Provide professional development opportunities on: Sheltered English Immersion, differentiated instruction, and other programs that address individual student learning needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of, and adjust as necessary, the staff development offerings in terms of their impact on classroom instruction and student achievement.
- Seek additional ways to recruit highly qualified staff and staff of diverse racial backgrounds.
- Enhance leadership opportunities for staff.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Maintain a focused staff development program aimed at improving student achievement.
- Recruit, hire, retain, and develop the best staff possible for the Belmont Public Schools.
- Expand the management skills and capabilities of the administrative staff of the Belmont Public Schools.
- Use the evaluation process to clarify performance standards for all staff and to promote professionalism and accountability.
- Inform teachers of the state requirements for professional licensure.
- Provide opportunities to build and support teamwork and collegiality at all levels.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- System staffing reports will indicate that all teachers in the Belmont Public Schools are highly qualified.
- Survey of staff will indicate that staff development programs have had an impact on classroom instruction and the ability to differentiate to meet student learning needs.
- Teachers will be conversant with the principles of skillful teaching, anti racist education, English Language Education, and other district determined staff development needs.

Communications and Community Relations

Goal: To increase and enhance communication and interaction with all constituencies within the Belmont community.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Develop a systematic and coordinated approach to the dissemination of information about the school system through a variety of media.
- Use technology to improve communication between the schools and the home. .
- Articulate and communicate to the larger community the system's Vision and Strategic Improvement Plan initiatives for the near future.
- Identify ways to establish and strengthen connections with town populations not directly involved with the schools.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Provide forums for dialogue with parents and community members on key issues of importance to the school system.
- Encourage teachers to make greater use of technologies to communicate in predictable and sustainable ways.
- Enhance and coordinate volunteer activities throughout the system.
- Administer parent surveys every five to seven years to determine level of satisfaction with the school system.
- Foster and support regular and ongoing meetings with Town officials to address issues of mutual interest.
- Expand and cultivate diverse partnerships within and outside the community.
- Improve and promote communication opportunities with all constituent groups.
- Increase opportunities for collaboration and consolidation with town boards and departments.
- Communicate progress on strategic improvement initiatives annually to all constituencies.
- Continue to develop partnerships with the Foundation for Belmont Education and other support groups to enrich school programs.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- Parent survey data will indicate satisfaction with the amount and type of information they receive from the schools.
- Information about the schools will be more visible to the entire community, on a regular basis, in a variety of media.
- Data from the Director of Technology will indicate increased use of the Belmont Public Schools' web site.
- There will be increased outreach to members of the community who have no direct involvement with the schools.
- Local elected and appointed officials will report that cooperation and collaboration benefited both the town and the schools.

Facilities and Financial Planning and Management

Goal: To secure broad community support so that significant resources are provided to ensure that all facilities, equipment, and programs meet the educational needs and interests of the entire Belmont community.

Strategic Improvement Initiatives

- Advocate for adequate, predictable and sustainable funding for the Belmont Public Schools.
- Advocate for funding needed to rebuild the Roger Wellington School and for the renovations at Belmont High School.
- Begin long range planning for a full day kindergarten program.
- Establish a secure funding source for a technology asset renewal program.

On-going Improvement Activities

- Continue to incorporate operating efficiencies, cooperative purchasing, and long range planning for capital expenses.
- Explore opportunities for cost saving through collaboration with the town, other communities, and collaboratives.
- Maintain support for technology in the town and school budgets.
- Maintain knowledge of state funding formulas and advocate for increased state funding for local schools.
- Continue to address infrastructure and equipment needs for administrative and instructional use of technology.
- Ensure safety and security in school facilities and on school grounds.
- Continue regularly scheduled maintenance program for all school buildings.
- Continue to articulate specific improvements that increased funding for the schools would allow.

Anticipated Improvement Outcomes

- By 2010 Belmont will have completed a new Roger Wellington School and will have begun the renovation plan for Belmont High School.
- Funding and plans will be in place and measurable progress made toward a full day kindergarten.
- The Belmont Public Schools will enjoy funding that provides for program growth and development, meets the needs of all students, and fulfills the educational expectations of the community.
- All schools will have safety and security protocols in place.