

MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STRATEGIC PLAN

SCHOOL YEARS 2005-10

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Melrose Public Schools

Strategic Plan

2005-2010

The Melrose Public Schools Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 is based upon the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan created for the school district in 2003 by a Strategic Planning Committee composed of Melrose School Committee members, district administrators and teachers, and interested community members who worked diligently with a consultant, Jan Williams, a former Melrose resident. We are rolling the timeline for this plan forward because although most of the major work identified in the earlier plan has been completed, other work needs to be initiated and some work remains to be completed.

In reviewing the existing plan, we updated the vision, values and mission statements contained therein to more accurately reflect the underlying philosophy that drives all we do in the Melrose Public School District.

Our VISION What we are reaching for

All Melrose Public School students will become life-long learners and successful participants in our global community.

Our VALUES Foundational practices

1. Honesty and integrity are the fundamental principles guiding all our actions, interactions and decisions.
2. We take pride in and respect ourselves, others, our schools and our community.
3. We work together in positive ways to solve problems and to achieve goals.
4. We honor and celebrate diversity, differences and individuality.
5. We look beyond our personal interests and encourage good citizenship, acts of kindness, charity, and community service.
6. We make decisions based upon the collective good.

Our MISSION STATEMENT Statement of purpose

Every child in the Melrose Public Schools is given the opportunity to reach his/her maximum potential and to achieve educational excellence through the dedicated efforts of inspired and caring educators and the support of family and community.

GOALS

Our Goals for Student Success...

- To achieve "Adequate Yearly Progress" for all learners at the district and school level.
- To design and continually assess curricula ensuring quality content that is aligned with state and national standards.
- To provide students with a healthy, stimulating, and safe learning environment.
- To provide educationally appropriate resources that support the teaching and learning process.
- To ensure that curricula and instructional practices are differentiated, dynamic, and innovative, appreciating and accommodating the differences in the ways children learn.
- To provide support the academic and social skill development of children.

Our Goals for Staff Success...

- To provide leadership and research based staff development that inspires continuous growth in knowledge of the content area and instructional strategies, performance and accountability.
- To recruit and retain effective educators who meet the “highly qualified” criterion.
- To collaborate and communicate among staff throughout the district.
- To use strategic planning to guide our work and to use the plan to benchmark our progress.

Our Goals for Success in the Community...

- To continue to be committed to fiscally responsible development and management of the school district's budget.
- To promote communication and collaborative relationships between the schools, city departments and the community.
- To partner with families, community agencies and individuals to support student success.
- To build and maintain state of the art facilities.

Review of our Accomplishments:

Before expanding our initial plan to the year, it is important to review the major accomplishments of the 2003-08 original plan.

Included among our accomplishments from the original plan are:

1. Focus Area #1 – Facilities and Plant
 - A debt exclusion override was passed, a plan for housing middle school students was developed and implemented, and the construction of a new middle school has begun.
 - Melrose High School facilities issues noted in the 2000 NEASC Report, with the exception of improving our athletics fields, were addressed during the renovation of the open space areas.
 - A Capital Improvement Plan was created for the school district.
 - District-wide custodial and maintenance needs were addressed.
2. Focus Area #2 - Curricula, Instruction and Student Learning
 - A plan for integration of technology services with the city was developed and implemented.
 - A plan for the maintenance and replacement of technology hardware is in place.
 - The Curriculum Council was created and implemented for the purpose of reviewing proposed changes to curriculum, instruction and assessment before their implementation in the district.
 - NEASC recommendations have been implemented by the High School resulting in on-going, unconditional high school accreditation.
 - The Community Service program at the High School is fully developed and implemented.
 - A 5 year technology plan has been created and submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Education.
 - An action plan has been developed by the Curriculum Council to assess our mathematics program at the elementary level and to review other programs.
 - The alignment of our mathematics benchmarks with the state mathematics frameworks has been completed.
3. Focus Area #3 - Recruit, Train, and Develop Quality Educational Staff to Provide Excellence in Teaching
 - A fully developed mentoring program for new teachers as well as new administrators in place.

- Professional development programs for teachers to enhance teachers' knowledge of instructional strategies were planned and implemented.
 - A 3 year plan for professional development is embedded in the Curriculum Renewal Plan.
4. Focus Area #4 - Student Support Services
 - Anti-bullying policy and programs are in place throughout the school district.
 - An after-school program was created, implemented and is continuing at the Horace Mann School.
 - PPS staff has been reorganized to more effectively deal with the needs of our children with disabilities.
 - Specific programs for our children with disabilities were developed with goals and entry/exit criteria.
 - Title 1 program is evaluated annually.
 - A fully staffed guidance department is in place at the High School.
 5. Focus Area #5 - Leadership and Governance
 - Mission statements and goals have been developed and publicized for the Early Childhood Center and for all elementary schools in the district.
 - The Exit Interview process for professional staff was established and implemented.
 - Regular communication with staff, parents, students and community using print and visual media is now an integral component of the school district.
 - Central Office has been reorganized to provide the efficient and effective coordination and implementation of all system-wide education responsibilities.
 - Contract negotiations with the teachers' union were successfully completed and in a timely manner.
 6. Focus Area #6 - Budget and Finances
 - Budget development process was reviewed, revised, and a new process implemented in order to keep the Melrose community informed and educated about the needs of the school district.
 - Budget documents including a narrative citing school district achievements for the previous year and the goals of the school district for the coming year are presented to the Melrose School Committee and to the community at-large.
 7. Focus Area #7 - School Community Relations
 - Bi-weekly meetings are held with City officials in order to keep them informed of the needs of the school district.
 - The issues of substance abuse in the district are addressed both at the high school and the middle school through Drug Abuse Summits.
 - Launch, the community education association has been reconstituted with a clear charter and new Board of Directors.
 - The facilities rental policy was revised.
 - Volunteer activities and participation through the BRIDGE have expanded.

Expanding our Strategic Plan:

Because we found overlap while working with the seven strategic focus areas identified in the original plan, we compressed these seven focus areas to four areas in which we concentrate our efforts for the next five years. The strategic focus areas for the 2005-2010 plan include:

1. Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Student Learning
 - a. Curriculum Development
 - b. Recruitment and Training of Highly Qualified Staff

- c. Student Services
- 2. Budget, Finances, Facilities and School Operations
- 3. Leadership and Governance
- 4. Communication and School Community Relations

In creating this strategic plan, it is our intention to complete those areas that have already been identified in our 2003-08 plan. We are also expanding this plan to include other initiatives as we move our school district forward to the 2010-2011 school year.

Each initiative identified in the strategic focus areas will need an **action plan** outlining action steps, person (s) responsible, beginning and completion dates, projected expenses and indicators of accomplishment. (See attached template.) These action plans will be developed by the Leadership Team and other appropriate constituencies and incorporated into the District Improvement Plan as we progress through the 2005-10 school years.

1. Strategic Focus Area #1 - Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

- a. Curriculum Development
 - i) Review, evaluate, and revise where necessary, in light of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Melrose Public Schools student achievement data:
 - (1) Mathematics program.
 - (2) E/LA program
 - (3) Science, Technology and Engineering program.
 - (4) Social Studies program
 - (5) Health and wellness program
 - (6) Fine Arts program
 - ii) Plan, implement and evaluate a Sheltered English Immersion Program for English Language Learners (ELL) as mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Education
 - iii) Review, evaluate and revise the technology plan.
 - iv) Research the possibility of an Early Learning Center and present findings to the Melrose School Committee and the community at-large.
 - v) Evaluate and revise the Title 1 program in light of the September 2005 Coordinated Program Review findings.
 - vi) Expand the program offerings at the high school to include more opportunities for vocational education as noted in the Coordinated Program Review.
- b. Recruitment and Training of Highly Qualified Staff
 - i) Provide professional development programs that meet the needs of our principals and other administrative staff members including department heads and central office personnel as they strive to enhance student academic achievement.
 - ii) Provide professional development programs that meet the needs of our professional staff as they strive to enhance student academic achievement.
 - iii) Provide professional development programs that meet the needs of our paraprofessional staff as they strive to meet highly qualified standard.
 - iv) Review, evaluate, and revise where necessary our mentoring programs for professional staff.
 - v) Enhance our collaborative efforts with Colleges of Education.
- c. Student Services
 - i) Develop and implement the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for our Melrose Public Schools as mandated by the Massachusetts DOE.
 - ii) Review and implement suitable recommendations of the Special Education Task Force.

- iii) Create 2nd and 3rd tier Intensive Therapeutic programs that will allow those students who are disabled both cognitively and physically to remain in our school for their elementary school years.
 - iv) Develop a community communication mechanism to share information about special education programs and student services.
 - v) Expand the number and roles of academic specialists at all schools.
- 2. Strategic Focus Area #2 - Finances, Facilities and Operations.**
- a. Review, evaluate and revise the budget process and document making both more transparent to the community.
 - b. Revise Capital Improvement Plan district wide.
 - c. Review and evaluate academic and extracurricular offerings.
 - d. Review and evaluate the grade configuration of our elementary schools.
 - e. Continue to work with City and State officials, as well as with private foundations, to build commitments to expand funding for the Melrose Public Schools.
- 3. Strategic Focus #3 - Leadership and Governance**
- a. Further collaborative efforts between the Melrose Public Schools and the City of Melrose.
 - b. Further collaborative efforts between the Melrose Public Schools and community agencies.
 - c. Continue to expand the work of the district's Leadership Team to include developing and enhancing the roles of:
 - i. School site councils
 - ii. PTO
 - iii. Student Council/government at appropriate levels
 - d. Provide mentoring programs for professional personnel.
 - e. Further the collegial efforts of the district's Administrative Team.
- 4. Strategic Focus #4 - Communication and School Community Relations**
- a. Develop and implement a communication mechanism that allows for communication to flow both horizontally and vertically throughout the Melrose Public Schools.
 - b. Develop and implement a communication mechanism that allows for communication to flow both horizontally and vertically between the community and the Melrose Public Schools.
 - c. Support and enhance community collaboration through the Community Service Program at Melrose High School.
 - d. Investigate the implementation of a Community Service Program at the Middle School.