

Dedham Middle School School Improvement Plan 2015-2017



**Accredited by the New England Association of
Schools and Colleges**

DEDHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2015-2017

Ms. Debra Gately, Principal
Dr. Margo Fraczek, Assistant Principal

School Council

Mrs. Meg Duncan- Community Representative
Mrs. Virginia Ferentinos – Community Representative
Dr. Julie Jeannetti – Parent Representative
Mrs. Ann Mercer – Parent Representative
Mrs. Lori Purdy – Parent Representative
Mrs. Kim Roslonek – Parent Representative
Mrs. Elizabeth Sieminski – Parent Representative
Ms. Susan Lyons – Teacher – Dedham Middle School
Mr. Christopher Nadeau – Teacher – Dedham Middle School
Victoria Horard - Grade 7
Kara Kilroy - Grade 7
Ryan Vassalotti - Grade 7
Lorenzo Lemasa - Grade 7

School Council Meetings - 2014-2015

All meetings held at DMS Main Office Conference room 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
September 25, 2014
November 13, 2014
February 5, 2015
March 19, 2015
September 24, 2015

School Overview

Dedham Middle School is located in Dedham, Massachusetts. The current middle school was built in 2007 as a result of an reaccreditation study by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Dedham Middle School is one of three middle schools in Massachusetts, and one of twelve middle schools in New England, to hold this accreditation. The population of the town of Dedham was 24,729 at the 2010 census. Dedham is located on Boston's southwest border. On the northwest it is bordered by Needham, on the southwest by Westwood and on the southeast by Canton. Dedham Middle School is the only public middle school located in the town and it currently services 669 students in grades 6-8.

Dedham Middle School Mission Statement

It is the mission of Dedham Middle School, with the support of our families and community, to prepare students to meet the demands of our local and global community, technological world, and an innovative education. We expect and encourage our students to apply their best efforts and creative abilities.

Dedham Middle School is comprised of students from the four elementary schools in Dedham. These schools also designate the neighborhood areas from which these students reside. Students who attend Dedham Middle School have previously attended the Avery, Greenlodge, Oakdale and Riverdale Schools. Additionally, many students transfer into Dedham Middle School from area parochial elementary schools. The professional staff at Dedham Middle School is comprised of 100% highly qualified teachers.

Professional Staff & Support Staff - Student to Teacher Ratio: 11.3 to 1

Professional Staff (Classroom Teachers)	58.8
<u>Support Staff</u>	
School Nurse	1.5
School Psychologists	2.0
School Adjustment Counselors	1.0
Speech Language Pathologists	1.5
ABA Specialist	.25
Guidance Counselors	2.0
Library/Media Specialist	1.0

This past year we implemented the Second Step character and career readiness guidance program for grades six, seven, and eight, in which our guidance counselors teach curriculum on a quarterly basis to our students. In 2014 DMS was awarded a grant for \$10,000 from the Blue Hills Bank Charitable Foundation for the purchase of graphing calculators for our grade eight algebra classes. For the current school year we have a newly created position in special education to work with students who will be transitioning from a specialized sub-separate program at the elementary

school to DMS. Our major initiative which began in September of 2015 was the implementation of a 1:1 initiative in which all Dedham Middle School students received a Chromebook to use in school and at home. Over the past year we have been focusing our professional development at the building level on researching the appropriate device for our students to use as well as having DMS teachers collaborate and instruct our faculty on how to integrate the Chromebooks into their daily teaching and practice.

10-Year Historical School Trends

Race	State (2015)	DMS (2015)	DMS (2014)	DMS (2013)	DMS (2012)	DMS (2011)	DMS (2010)	DMS (2009)	DMS (2008)	DMS (2007)	DMS (2006)
African American	8.7%	7.6	7.9	7.0	7.6	7.0	7.7	5.5	5.5	6.6	6.8
Asian	6.3%	2.5	3.8	3.7	3.9	2.8	2.4	1.8	1.6	1.8	1.7
Hispanic	17.9%	11.8	11.6	11.1	10.8	10.3	9.5	7.2	5.8	5.0	6.8
Native American	0.2%	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.6	0.9
White	63.7%	75.0	74.5	75.7	75.5	78.1	78.6	83.6	85.6	84.8	82.9
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	3.1%	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.2	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.2	0.7

Gender	State	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Male	489,731	344	319	325	338	348	358	331	343	339	357
Female	466,133	336	339	317	311	295	305	323	331	326	333
Total	955,844	680	658	642	649	643	663	654	674	665	690

Demographics	State	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
First Language non-English	18.5%	9.1	9.3	10.3	11.2	12.8	11.2	11.0	8.8	8.3	9.9
ELL	8.5%	2.8	4.0	3.7	4.5	4.4	3.5	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.2
Special Education	17.1%	19.0	21.4	22.3	22.0	20.1	18.9	18.7	19.1	19.4	20.1
High Needs	42.2%	*	44.2	43.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Low income	26.3%	*	30.2	28.2	22.8	26.3	23.2	22.9	22.8	21.7	22.8

Mobility Data

		All Students	ELL	High Needs	Low Income
2015	Enrollment	692	26	263	143
	%Intake	2.3%	15.4%	4.2%	5.6%
	Stability Enroll	681	25	255	135
	%Stability	97.8%	88%	96.9%	97.8%
2014	Enrollment	671	29	313	221
	%Intake	1.9%	10.3%	2.2%	2.7%
	Stability Enroll	659	26	306	215
	%Stability	98.2%	96.2%	97.1%	96.3%
2013	Enrollment	661	28	302	203
	%Intake	2.6%	10.7%	4%	4.9%
	Stability Enroll	651	27	294	197
	%Stability	98%	92.6%	95.9%	94.9%
2012	Enrollment	663	30	280	167
	%Intake	2.1%	0	3.6%	5.4%
	Stability Enroll	651	30	272	160
	%Stability	98%	96.7%	96.3%	96.9%
2011	Enrollment	654	29	--	187
	%Intake	2.3%	3.5%	--	4.3%
	Stability Enroll	644	29	--	183
	%Stability	97.8%	96.6%	--	95.6%

School Improvement Plan 2013-2015 Goals and Highlights

The DMS School Improvement Plan for 2013-2015 focused on four major goals of having an academically challenging environment, aligned curriculum, data-driven decisions and an engaged community. There were three significant action steps featured in this plan which are on-going but achieved significant results between 2013 and 2015.

Academically Challenging Environment

The first action step addressed the needs of at-risk students. We have successfully identified students for the after school enrichment program in ELA and Math, enrolled at-risk students in support classes in ELA and Math and established grade level and team-based data teams to look closely at individual students and to develop detailed assistance plans. The second action step was increased collaboration between academic content directors and teachers with special education teachers. We have created additional inclusion programs in ELA, Math and Science and established meeting times through assigned monthly professional development for teacher collaboration. The third action step was to improve reading and writing performance for all English Language Learners. In the past two years we have successfully achieved compliance to the state guidelines for ELL and have a full-time teacher of English Language Learners who is trained in administering and analyzing the ACCESS for ELL/WIDA tests.

Aligned Curriculum

The second action step was to continue to implement a rigorous and relevant curriculum that gives students inquiry-based, authentic learning experiences. In the past two years, all curriculum guides have been aligned to the Common Core standards and pacing charts have been developed. Through current work on the district-wide committees for curriculum and assessment, we are looking at integration of technology in our curricular areas and piloting diagnostic assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics, including the TenMarks program for summer math review.

Data-driven decisions

The third action step was to use data available through academic student reports, technology-based diagnostic programs and state testing to make decisions at the classroom and school level to help students to learn best and how to effectively utilize our resources. We have established team-based data teams with the specific focus on three main questions - What is the student capable of doing?, How can we help them achieve more?, and is there a discrepancy between classroom performance and MCAS scores? We have determined that the Acuity diagnostic tests no longer provide the data we need to evaluate student performance and we are looking more at student work and social/emotional factors that affect student performance.

Engaged Community

The fourth action step was to increase student involvement in the creation of a positive and safe school climate for students, teachers and families. Over the past two years staff members have been trained and a team has been established in PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports) in order to address how to best engage our students and families. Our student leadership team has implemented school-wide recognition opportunities as well as social awareness opportunities including teen fun night, 8th grade lock-in and the Day of Silence.

Areas of Focus vs. Areas of Strength

Areas of Focus

- Improve writing across grades and content areas.
- Improve performance on science standards in grade 8.
- Review current homework policy for relevance and research based approach.
- Review current schedule to assess effectiveness, consider elective choices, and evaluate value of all programs.
- Continue to improve transitions from elementary to middle and middle to High school.
- Increase the number of after school clubs offered at the middle school.
- Increase awareness and resources for students from traditionally underserved populations.
- Based upon the school council survey results increase the staff's understanding of the many obligations and commitments for students outside of the school day.
- Based upon the school council survey results increase rigor for our highest performing students across the curriculum.
- Based upon the school council survey results increase consistency and transparency with the disciplinary process for both teachers and students.

Areas of Strength

- Development of PBIS behavior program with a positive focus towards improving student behavior.
- Increased the amount of recognition with term recognition nights (sports, attendance, grades, etc)
- Increased field trips for students. Started grade 8 Washington DC trip.
- Seen an improvement in math test scores across grade levels.
- Creation of a data team to analyze relevant data for teachers to use to inform instruction.
- The use of SAT and PBIS teams as an additional support for students with academic, social and behavioral concerns.
- Implementation of a co-taught English model for students with special needs.
- Implementation with appropriate professional development for the 1:1 Chromebook initiative.
- Development of school wide, spirit focused staff videos to improve school culture.
- The inclusion of a full time ELL teacher to improve educational opportunities for ELL students.
- Improved communication with parents through quarterly team newsletters, principal newsletters, and guidance newsletter.
- Based upon school council survey results the majority of students at DMS feel safe in the classroom, in the halls, and in the school as a whole.
- Based upon the school council survey results the majority parents, staff, and students feel welcomed when they come to DMS.

Since the implementation of the 2013-2015 school improvement plan we have seen an overall improvement of the school culture at DMS. There has been a reduction in bullying behaviors, an increase in students feeling safe with reliable adults available and teachers building strong collegial

relationships within the school. For the 2015 school year we have seen the implementation of two major initiatives: the 1:1 Chromebook and the PBIS student behavior program. Both of the programs aim to increase student engagement in their learning, while creating a positive and highly functioning environment for students to learn.

There remain several areas of need to be addressed by the new SIP. Particularly DMS needs to focus on increasing the rigor across all programs. Ensuring the the content being taught is relevant to students, sensitive to the multitude of factors affecting students in the world today, research based, and aimed at improving student achievement both on summative assessments as well as towards long term performance in high school and beyond.

2015 MCAS Data Analysis

English Language Arts

Grade 8

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	21	18	23	12	21
Proficient	65	72	63	73	66
Needs Improvement	9	5	10	13	10
Warning	5	5	3	2	3

Grade 7

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	15	19	11	5	8
Proficient	68	63	66	75	66
Needs Improvement	14	15	20	17	22
Warning	3	3	4	3	5

Grade 6

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	26	18	11	22	19
Proficient	51	54	62	56	52
Needs Improvement	21	19	22	16	23
Warning	2	10	5	6	6

Mathematics

Grade 8

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	28	20	24	18	33
Proficient	34	44	44	41	38
Needs Improvement	24	25	22	29	21
Warning	13	11	10	12	8

Grade 7

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	15	21	22	22	27
Proficient	36	39	39	44	34
Needs Improvement	34	32	27	22	23
Warning	14	7	12	11	15

Grade 6

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	25	35	28	42	41
Proficient	41	35	45	28	30
Needs Improvement	28	23	19	23	20
Warning	6	7	9	8	9

Science/Technology Engineering**Grade 8**

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Advanced	1	4	6	2	2
Proficient	33	44	36	37	46
Needs Improvement	52	40	47	47	44
Warning	14	11	10	15	7

Goals for 2015-2017

Student Learning Goals - Expand student learning beyond the classroom. Creating a school curriculum that incorporates the needs of the varied cultures of our school population into the daily curriculum.

GOALS	Time Line	Staff Responsible	Evaluation	Budget
Improve reading and writing performance for all students through the analysis of data and modification of the curriculum in all subject areas.	Sept. 2015-June 2016	Classroom Teachers Department Chairs Building Administrators	Weekly & Monthly data team meetings to evaluate individual student performance. Bi-weekly and monthly professional development time to develop common writing expectations.	No additional cost
Increase use of Chromebooks in daily learning experiences for students.	Sept. 2015 - June 2016	Classroom Teachers Department Chairs Building Administrators	Monthly designated professional development time for departments and teams to collaborate.	Maintenance of Chromebooks by the school department following the initial purchase by the Town.
Implement peer observation protocols for teachers to observe one another during the school day.	January 2016-June 2016 (Phase 1) September 2016-June 2017 (Phase 2)	Classroom Teachers Department Chairs Building Administrators	Weekly discussions among faculty members, dept. chairs and building administrators identifying strong teaching practices and areas of improvement.	Daily substitutes in order to provide teacher coverage.

School Improvement Goals - Continue to create a school environment that provides a consistent foundation in academics and social-emotional support for students and teachers.

GOALS	Time Line	Staff Responsible	Evaluation	Budget
Implementation of PBIS to decrease negative behaviors and recognize and teach positive behaviors to entire school community.	Sept. 2015-June 2016 (Tier 1) September 2016-June 2017 (Tiers 2 & 3)	PBIS Team, building administrators, classroom teachers, guidance staff	Monthly PBIS meetings that analyze data on behaviors.	Grant funded through special education.
Incorporation of the <i>Botvin Life Skills Training Program</i> in grades 7 & 8. The focus of this program is to provide prevention education against youth substance abuse.	Sept. 2015-June 2016 (Grade 8) September 2016-June 2017 (Grade 7)	Health and Guidance staff School Resource Officers Building Administrators	In program surveys and data collection.	Grand funded through the Dedham Police Dept.
Creation of a new school-wide homework policy based upon research and reflective of the ages of middle school students and their active lives.	September 2015-June 2016	Building administrators Classroom teachers Guidance staff	Submission to the superintendent and school committee for review and approval.	No additional cost - development during school day and professional development time.
Development of a new middle school schedule which incorporates increased opportunities for students to engage in choice electives.	September 2015-June 2016 (incorporation of band/chorus into the school day as well as Health into grade 6) September 2016-June 2017 Increase student choice for electives.	Building administrators Classroom teachers Department Chairs	Submission to the superintendent and school committee for review and approval.	No additional cost - development during school day and professional development time.