



# *Needham School Committee*

## *Broadmeadow School Performance Center*

*Tuesday, March 19, 2024*

*6:30 p.m.*

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at:

<https://needhamchannel.org>

Please click the link below to access meeting for Public Comments:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84784804233?pwd=UFBCMGs4bFhrdm9xWG9VKy8rcTVDZz09>

Webinar ID: **847 8480 4233** Passcode: **443766**. Or One tap mobile: +13126266799



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## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024 6:30 p.m.

**Broadmeadow School Performance Center**

**Next School Committee Meeting: April 2, 2024 6:30 p.m.**

Broadcast on the Needham Channel municipal and HD channels, live stream at: <https://needhamchannel.org>  
Please click the link below to join the webinar for **Public Comments**:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84784804233?pwd=UFBCMGs4bFhrcm9xWG9Vky8rcTVDZz09>

Webinar ID: 847 8480 4233 Passcode: 443766. Or One tap mobile:+13126266799

**6:30 p.m. Public Comments**

**6:35 p.m. School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

**6:40 p.m. Superintendent's Comments**

*Mitchell School Fifth Grade Chorus*

**6:50 p.m. Consent Items**

1. Minutes of the Meeting of February 6, 2024
2. Disposal of Surplus Items

**Discussion Items**

**6:55 p.m. Mitchell School Improvement Plan**

**7:45 p.m. Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: 9-12 Math**

**8:35 p.m. Needham High School Student Advisory to School Committee Report**

**9:05 p.m. Action Items**

- Approve Student Opportunity Act Plan
- Approve Creation of Transportation Reimbursement Fund

**9:15 p.m. School Committee Comments**

**Information Items**

Student Activity Funds FY2022 Accountants Report

Revised ACCEPT Education Collaborative Agreement





## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:    **Public Comments**

Background Information:

- The School Committee Chair will offer the opportunity for the public to speak to the School Committee on issues not on the agenda.



## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

Background Information:

- The Chair and subcommittee members may offer brief updates on issues not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Andrea Longo Carter, Chair

Elizabeth Lee, Vice-Chair

Connie Barr

Michael Greis

Michael O'Brien

Alisa Skatrud

Matthew Spengler

Lea Gruen, Student Representative member of School Committee

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## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Superintendent's Comments**

Background Information:

Superintendent Daniel E. Gutekanst will apprise the School Committee of events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.

The Superintendent will welcome Mitchell chorus fifth graders who will perform *True Colors*.

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## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Consent Agenda**

1. Approve Minutes of the Meeting of February 6, 2024
2. Disposal of Surplus Items

Chair: "Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?"

If none removed:

"There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent."

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Needham School Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting  
February 6, 2024

The Chair of the School Committee, Andrea Longo Carter called the meeting of February 6, 2024 to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members of the School Committee present were:

Andrea Longo Carter	Elizabeth Lee
Connie Barr	Michael Greis
Matthew Spengler	Alisa Skatrud
	Lea Gruen (Student Representative)

Members of the Central Administration present were:

Dan Gutekanst	Alexandra McNeil
Anne Gulati	Mary Lammi
Carmen Williams	

**Public Comments**

There were no Public Comments.

Public  
Comments

**School Committee Chair and Subcommittee Updates**

There were no School Committee Chair and Subcommittee updates.

SC Chair  
Subcommittee  
Comments

**Superintendent Comments**

Superintendent Gutekanst congratulated performing arts Pollard Middle School students- they performed to a sold-out crowd in Frozen last weekend.

Superintendent's  
Comments

The 2024 Massachusetts Music Educators Association All State Festival will take place on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at the DCU Center and Boston Symphony Hall on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Several students have been recognized and will participate in the state festival.

The Superintendent gave a shout out to the Elementary Honors Chorus; they performed the National Anthem at a recent BC hockey game.

**Consent Items**

1. Minutes of the Meeting of December 19, 2023 and January 2, 2024 and January 16, 2024

Consent Items

## 2. Disposal of Surplus Items

Chair:

“Does anyone wish to remove any items from the consent agenda?”

If none removed:

“There being no objection, these items are adopted by unanimous consent.”

### **Agenda Item: Discussion**

#### **Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Wellness**

Denise Domnarski presented along with Jon Grant and Courtney Todesco – along with eighth grade students Cal and Owen Hammerstrand. Ms. Domnarski explained that the mission within the K-12 Wellness program is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to make healthy lifestyle choices across their lifespan. Their main focus is engaging students and learning through experience.

Mr. Grant commented at High Rock they try to incorporate team and group dynamics. In Health, they work through a decision making process and then evaluate what will happen next based on the result of that decision. Ms. Todesco said at Pollard every Health unit that they do has a skills focus. Ms. Domnarski remarked at the High School they are focusing on individual as well as community wellness.

A question was asked about how the Sexual Education program supports students that are gender diverse. It was explained that sexuality is taught in several grades. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade Health, the first primary topic is focused around identity and sexuality. They focus on respectful language, empathy and gender expression stereo types.

### **Agenda Item: Discussion**

#### **Pollard Middle School Improvement Plan**

Principal Tamatha Bibbo and the School Council members presented. The School Council consists of a community member, 4 parents, 4 educators and 4 students (2 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and 2 8<sup>th</sup> grade students).

Pollard has monthly community meetings which highlight birthdays, shout outs and communication of events throughout the building. The advisory classes have circle meetings almost every day. The counselors host lunch groups for the smaller groups of students that need to meet more frequently; they might need to resolve a conflict with peers or just to come together to talk about something happening in their community.

Portrait of a  
Needham  
Graduate  
Presentation:  
Wellness

Pollard  
Middle  
School  
Improvement  
Plan

Dr. Bibbo also explained that they are reducing suspensions – they want to keep students in school. They are looking at their model around discipline as restorative rather than punitive.

7<sup>th</sup> grade ELA Book Club is done throughout the year; it promotes choice, improves reading stamina and increases student voice. Family and Caregiver communication has increased. Dr. Bibbo hosts twice monthly chats on Zoom, a weekly newsletter for families. Student communication has also increased with a daily bulletin and a student run TV show.

**Agenda Item: Discussion**

School  
Committee  
Policies

**School Committee Policies**

The School Committee reviewed the following policies. They will be brought back to the Committee at a subsequent meeting for a vote.

Revision: Draft Policy IJNDB-1 Revision 1 Staff Responsible Use of Digital Resources  
And Rescission of Outdated Policies:

- CA Administration Goals
- CBA Qualifications and Duties of the Superintendent (Job Description)
- CHA Development and Dissemination of Administrative Rules
- GCDC Filling of Administrative Positions
- GCPB Submission of Resignation
- GDBDA Staff Leaves
- GDLA Support Staff Visitations and Conferences
- JBA *Gender Equity Policy\**
- JE School Attendance
- JED Student Absences and Excuses
- JEDA Truancy
- JEDAA *Religious Absence\**

*\*The content of these policies has been updated in more recent policies (e.g. Policy AC Non-Discrimination & Harassment), and student handbooks.*

**Action Item**

Approve  
Middle  
School and  
High School  
Programs of  
Studies

**Approve Middle School and High School Programs of Studies**

Dr. Gutekanst mentioned that there was reconsideration regarding an issue raised by Alisa Skatrud about Wellness and Physical Education at the High School. The staff responded to the concern and are providing flexibility for the staff in working with students and families.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the FY2024-2025 Middle School and High School Programs of Studies as submitted.

Moved by Michael Greis and seconded by Alisa Skatrud.

The vote was 6-0-0.

**Action Item**

Approve Fees  
for FY25  
Revolving  
Funds

**Approve Fees for FY25 Revolving Funds: Preschool, Transportation, Community Education, Athletics and Nutrition Services**

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the FY25 fees for Preschool, Transportation, Community Education, Athletics and Nutrition Services as submitted.

Moved by Michael Greis and Seconded by Elizabeth Lee.

As they are voting under the doctrine of the rule of necessity there is a roll call vote.

Roll call vote: Matthew Spengler votes aye; Connie Barr votes aye; Michael Greis votes aye, Alisa Skatrud votes aye; Elizabeth Lee votes aye; Andrea Longo Carter votes aye.

The vote was 6-0-0.

**School Committee Comments**

SC Comments

Alisa Skatrud reminded the community that Jazz Fest is at the High School on Friday February 9<sup>th</sup>. This event is free and there is a professional guest artist that has been rehearsing with the students.

**Information Items**

Information  
Items

1. Presentation to Community Preservation Committee: Costs for Needham High School Tennis Courts Improvement
2. ACCEPT Education Collaborative FY24 Second Quarter Report

**Adjourn**

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Michael Greis moved, and Elizabeth Lee seconded the motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting of February 6, 2024.

Adjourn



Vote: 6-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,  
Chrissy McCourt

A list of all documents used at this School Committee meeting is available at:  
[School Committee packets](#) 2023-24

**NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** March 19, 2024

**Item Title:** **Disposal of Surplus: Curriculum Office Administration**

**Item Description:** This request seeks approval to dispose of the following items, which are either obsolete, non-functioning, or the repair cost exceeds the value of the equipment.

**From Curriculum Office:**

- 87 Pieces of Outdated Curriculum Material

**Issues:** Chapter 30B Section 16 of the Massachusetts General Laws permits a governmental body to dispose of a tangible supply no longer useful to the governmental body, but having a resale or salvage value, at less than the fair market value to a charitable organization that has received a tax exemption from the United States by reason of its charitable nature. Transactions between governmental entities also are exempt from Ch30B. Chapter 30B Section 15 and Needham School Policy #DN further authorize the disposal of surplus school property, other than real estate, having a net value of less than \$10,000 through the exercise of sound business practices by the Procurement Officer.

**Recommendation/Options:** That the Needham School Committee be informed of the disposal of the above items, to the Town Transfer Station of the aforementioned surplus equipment in accordance with MGH30B Section 15&16.

**Rationale:**

**Implementation Implications:**

**Supporting Data:** None.

**School Committee (circle one)**

Action            Information            Discussion            Consent Calendar

Central Administrator            Town Counsel            Sub-Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Will report back to School Committee (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully Submitted,

*Anne Gulati*

Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations



## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Discussion**

### **Mitchell School Improvement Plan**

Background Information:

- The Mitchell School Council has worked collaboratively this past year to advise Principal Greg Bayse and develop and maintain the School Improvement Plan.
- In accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 71, Section 59c, the Superintendent has approved the Mitchell School Improvement Plan.

Person(s) Available for Presentation:

Greg Bayse, Principal of Mitchell School  
Gabrielle Oliveira, School Council Parent Representative  
Leo Helman, Mitchell 5<sup>th</sup> grade student

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# William Mitchell Elementary School

## School Improvement Plan

### 2024-2027



#### Mitchell School Council Members:

Gregory Bayse, Principal  
Joseph Chiu, Parent Representative  
Shayna Dudley, Alum / Community Representative  
Alessandra Diamantis Fink, Parent Representative  
Gershona Fein, Faculty Representative

Karen Hodys, Parent Representative  
Kate Keane, Alum / Community Representative  
Gabrielle Oliveira, Parent Representative  
Sara Rosin, Parent Representative  
Jeffrey Stoll, Parent Representative

Collaboratively developed by the faculty, staff, parents, and alumni of Mitchell Elementary School

## Mitchell School Improvement Plan 2024-2025

### A Legacy of Community Involvement

Founded in 1950 and named after Needham pediatrician and land donor Dr. William Mitchell, Mitchell Elementary School is a thriving hub of learning dedicated to academic excellence and strong character development. With roughly 440 students and 80 dedicated staff, it stands as the third-largest elementary school in Needham, Massachusetts.

Mitchell boasts a rich history. Many current parents were once Mitchell students, and countless volunteer hours are donated annually by community members with fond memories of their time at the school. This enduring spirit extends beyond the school walls, positively impacting the wider community for over 74 years. Additionally, the school receives valuable support from the School Council, Parent Teacher Council (PTC), Boston Family and Friends (BFF), and Needham Education Foundation (NEF). Notably, strong parent and staff involvement in the PTC fosters a collaborative and purposeful school environment.

### Embracing Diversity, Building Community

Committed to preparing children for a diverse and inclusive future, Mitchell embraces these values within its learning environment, allowing students to develop the skills and understanding necessary to navigate a multicultural world. As a METCO partnership school, it enrolls students from Boston, fostering an integrated learning environment with increased diversity and reduced racial isolation. Additionally, the school welcomes children of Needham Public School employees, enriching the student body with diverse backgrounds and experiences. This inclusive environment allows students of all cultures, backgrounds, and abilities to learn and grow together, fostering a sense of belonging and mutual respect. At Mitchell, everyone is valued and celebrated. This goal drives the school's mission to cultivate passionate learners, inspire excellence, and nurture integrity.

### A Commitment to Educational Excellence and Equity

Mitchell prioritizes a robust, culturally responsive academic program that utilizes research-backed curriculum and teaching methods. Dedicated faculty collaborate to ensure consistent, rigorous instruction across all grade levels. The school embraces the Responsive Classroom model and the frameworks established by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) to nurture both academic and social-emotional well-being.

### Living Our Values, Shaping the Future

As a community, Mitchell embodies three core values:

- **Take Care of Myself:** Personal Responsibility
- **Take Care of Others:** Responsibility to and for Others
- **Take Care of Our School:** Responsibility as a Group - Fostering a positive and inclusive environment.



The following School Improvement Plan (SIP) outlines goals and action steps for the next three years (2024-2027). Developed collaboratively in the wake of a challenging public health crisis, this plan reflects extensive conversations and efforts by faculty, staff, leadership, and the School Council. It aligns with the Portrait of a Needham Graduate and the Mitchell Elementary School Vision, paving the way for a future filled with learning, growth, and community spirit.



## Mitchell Elementary School Vision

**All members of the Mitchell School** are valued for their diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, and abilities. We are socially and culturally responsive contributors to the community. We respect diversity and act with empathy and courage to promote equity and an anti-racist culture.

**Students** at Mitchell are expert learners who are curious and engaged in their learning. They are able to adapt to change, persist to overcome challenges, and actively contribute to the community.

**Staff** at Mitchell demonstrate a commitment to ongoing learning and an understanding of current research and best practices in education. Staff employ a universally designed, inclusive, tiered instructional model that includes a rigorous, comprehensive curriculum.

**Families** at Mitchell feel welcome and engaged in their children's education. A diverse representation of parent voices work collaboratively with the school to support student academic and social-emotional growth.

***Everyone at Mitchell feels a sense of belonging, and the school is a physically and emotionally safe space for all students, staff, and members of the community.***



## 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:

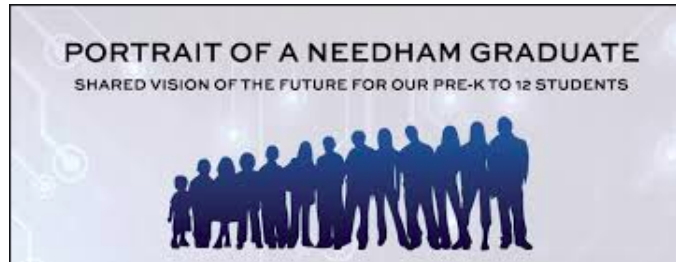
- Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers;
- Communicators and Collaborators;
- Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors;
- Responsible and Resilient Individuals;
- Empowered Learners

### CORE VALUES

- Scholarship
- Community
- Citizenship
- Personal Growth







## NEEDHAM STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 1. All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

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

### 2. All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning

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

### 3. All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments

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

### 4. Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

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



# NPS PRIORITIES & MITCHELL SCHOOL GOALS

## **District Priority 1: All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning**

**School Goal 1.1:** - Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning.

**School Goal 1.2:** - Ensure Equity & Culturally Proficient practices across all students' experiences

## **District Priority 2: All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning**

**School Goal 2.1:** - Develop common understandings and intentional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

**School Goal 2.2:** - Embed SELMH strategies and mental health supports across the school.

**School Goal 2.3:** - Implement with fidelity Responsive Classroom

## **District Priority 3: All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments**

**School Goal 3.1:** - Expand learning opportunities by utilizing varied resources and voices

**School Goal 3.2:** - Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences

## **District Priority 4: Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students**

**School Goal 4.1:** - Provide structures in support of Mitchell staff retention and professional development



**DISTRICT PRIORITY 1:**

All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Continue to expand UDL with a phased implementation that increases opportunities for agency, voice, &amp; choice.

**SCHOOL GOAL 1.1:**

Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning.

Action Step	Process	Priority	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Provide opportunities for professional development on UDL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Pre- and post-training assessments:</i> Measure teachers' knowledge and skills related to UDL before and after the training.</li> <li>❖ <i>Teacher feedback:</i> Gather feedback from participants on the quality and effectiveness of the training, and on their confidence in integrating UDL concepts.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observe classroom instruction:</i> Look for evidence of UDL strategies like multiple means of presentation, engagement, and action and expression.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observation of classroom practice:</i> Create opportunities for teachers to observe interdisciplinary practice at other NPS schools.</li> </ul>	1	Mr. Bayse; Ms. Hayden	In Progress ▾
Implement UDL principles in lesson planning and curriculum development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Review lesson plans and curriculum documents:</i> Use rubrics or checklists aligned with UDL principles to assess whether the instruction accommodates diverse learners.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observe classroom instruction:</i> Look for evidence of UDL strategies like multiple means of presentation, engagement, and action and expression.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student feedback:</i> Ask students how lessons cater to their individual needs and learning needs.</li> </ul>	2	Curriculum Coaches	Not Started ▾
Create opportunities for student choice in learning activities and assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Review choice menus or project options:</i> Ensure diverse choices are available and cater to different learning needs and interests.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student engagement metrics:</i> Track student participation in chosen activities and assessment types.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student self-reflection:</i> Ask students how their chosen activities helped them learn.</li> </ul>	3	Teachers	Not Started ▾
Provide opportunities for student leadership and self-reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Observe student leadership</i> in classrooms and school activities.</li> <li>❖ <i>Review evidence of student self-reflection</i> journals or portfolios.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student surveys:</i> Ask students how leadership and self-reflection activities impacted their learning.</li> </ul>	4	SEL Committee; Teachers	Not Started ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 1:**

All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Establish content and learning standard objectives for culturally responsive instructional practices by grade level.

**SCHOOL GOAL 1.2:**

Ensure Equity &amp; Culturally Proficient practices across all students' experiences

Action Step	Process	Priority	Person(s) Responsible	Status
<b>Audit school-wide practices in need of attention and develop plans for improvement.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Identify areas</i> where content, experiences, or instructional practices may be culturally insensitive or biased.</li> <li>❖ <i>Develop</i> plans and timelines to address identified gaps in equity and cultural proficiency..</li> </ul>	3	MLT	Not Started ▾
<b>Integrate culturally responsive practices and Equity education across the students' experience.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Establish content and learning objectives</i> for culturally responsive instructional practices and content.</li> <li>❖ <i>Integrate</i> the work of the REAL Coalition into the practices at Mitchell</li> <li>❖ <i>Student self-reflection</i>: have students reflect on their learning through written, creative, or interactive opportunities.</li> </ul>	2	Curriculum Leadership; REAL Reps	In Progress ▾
<b>Audit systems, protocols, and policies for areas in need of attention and develop plans for improvement.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Review systems, protocols, and policies</i> with standards and CP principles.</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify areas</i> where content and structures may be culturally insensitive or biased.</li> <li>❖ <i>Track progress</i> on internal and external structures, policy documents, and district surveys.</li> </ul>	1	Mr. Bayse; Ms. Hayden	Not Started ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 2:**

All Students Experience Integrative Teaching &amp; Learning

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Expand Interdisciplinary Learning

**SCHOOL GOAL 2.1:**

Develop common understandings and intentional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

Action Step	Process	Priority	Person(s) Responsible	Status
<b>Provide opportunities for professional development on effective interdisciplinary teaching practices.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Pre- and post-training assessments:</i> Measure teachers' knowledge and skills related to interdisciplinary teaching before and after the training.</li> <li>❖ <i>Teacher feedback:</i> Gather feedback from participants on the quality and effectiveness of the training, and on their confidence in implementing interdisciplinary approaches.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observation of classroom practice:</i> Look for evidence of interdisciplinary instruction in classrooms after the training, such as collaborative projects, thematic units, or guest speakers from other disciplines.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observation of classroom practice:</i> Create opportunities for teachers to observe interdisciplinary practice at other NPS schools.</li> </ul>	1	Teachers MLT Building Admin	In Progress ▾
<b>Identify opportunities for interdisciplinary connections within the existing curriculum.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Review existing curriculum documents</i> and identify themes, concepts, or skills that can be connected across disciplines. Look for natural overlaps or shared learning goals.</li> <li>❖ <i>Teacher brainstorming sessions:</i> Facilitate discussions among teachers from different disciplines to explore potential interdisciplinary connections.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student feedback:</i> Ask students to identify topics or interests that could be explored through multiple disciplines.</li> </ul>	2	Teachers MLT Building Admin	Not Started ▾
<b>Create interdisciplinary projects and units that require collaboration across disciplines.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Project evaluation:</i> Develop rubrics or assessment tools that focus on collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and integration of knowledge from multiple disciplines.</li> <li>❖ <i>Project implementation:</i> Each grade level and special area will be able to identify one interdisciplinary project or unit at their grade level or special area.</li> <li>❖ <i>Student self-reflection:</i> Have students reflect on their learning through journals, exit tickets, or presentations, focusing on how they used knowledge from different disciplines and collaborated effectively.</li> <li>❖ <i>Pre- and post-assessments:</i> Conduct assessments before and after the project to gauge student understanding of core concepts and their ability to apply them across disciplines.</li> </ul>	3	Teachers MLT Building Admin	Not Started ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 2:**

All Students Experience Integrative Teaching &amp; Learning

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Implementation of the District's SELMH Framework

**SCHOOL GOAL 2.2:**

Embed SELMH strategies and mental health supports across the school

Action Step	Process	Priority Step	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
<b>MLT will Examine the SELMH Framework to understand the foundational principles necessary for all students to be successful.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Examine the framework's</i> text, identify key components, goals, and guiding philosophies.</li> <li>❖ <i>Explore each domain</i> individually, understanding its intended role in student success.</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify</i> how different domains and elements within the framework interrelate and support each other.</li> </ul>	1	MLT	In Progress ▾
<b>Integrate SELMH practices into core Tier 1 instruction.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Identify</i> the interrelated aspects of the SELMH Framework and existing SEL practices.</li> <li>❖ <i>Establish</i> a layered scope and sequence of SEL practices and instruction that meets the needs of Mitchell students.</li> </ul>	2	SEL Rep & Committee	In Progress ▾
<b>Provide professional development to teachers on integrating SELMH Strategies with Responsive Classroom and across disciplines.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Pre- and post-training assessments:</i> Measure teachers' knowledge and skills related to Social Emotional and Mental Health support strategies before and after the training.</li> <li>❖ <i>Teacher feedback:</i> Gather feedback from participants on the quality and effectiveness of the training, and on their confidence in implementing SELMH approaches.</li> <li>❖ <i>Observation of classroom practice:</i> Look for evidence of preventative practices for all students and target group intervention for some students.</li> </ul>	3	SEL Rep; Mr. Bayse	Not Started ▾
<b>Prioritize and support staff well-being.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Staff feedback:</i> Gather data on staff's level of feeling of belonging, respect, value, and trust.</li> <li>❖ <i>Examine causes</i> of staff reported areas of stress and reductions in well-being</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify and implement</i> resources and activities that positively support well-being and ensure they are readily available to all staff</li> </ul>	1	Mr. Bayse; Ms. Hayden	In Progress ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 2:**

All Students Experience Integrative Teaching &amp; Learning

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Implement with fidelity Restorative Practices

**SCHOOL GOAL 2.3:**

Implement with fidelity Responsive Classroom

Action Step	Process	Priority	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
<b>Learn, develop, and implement the practices of Responsive Classroom across the school community.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Build understanding and shared vision</i> of Responsive Classroom</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify common practice and protocols</i> that will be expected across the school.</li> <li>❖ <i>Fully implement identified common practices</i>, allowing for gradual learning and adjustments</li> </ul>	1	District Leadership; Mr. Bayse	In Progress ▾
<b>Integrate Restorative Practices into Responsive Classrooms.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Identify</i> Mitchell-specific restorative practices for community building and for responding to unexpected and unacceptable behaviors.</li> <li>❖ <i>Provide Opportunities</i> for staff to practice Restorative Practices as they relate to Responsive Classroom</li> </ul>	2	MLT	Not Started ▾
<b>Monitor student behavior data to assess the effectiveness of Restorative Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Develop</i> a consistent method of tracking behavioral data</li> <li>❖ <i>Share</i> behavioral data with staff in an ongoing manner in order to identify behavioral trends.</li> <li>❖ <i>Adapt</i> new and existing Restorative Practices to the identified behavioral trends.</li> <li>❖ <i>Integrate</i> Panorama student surveys into the model of Restorative Practices</li> </ul>	1	Ms. Hayden; Guidance Staff	Not Started ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 3:**

All Students Learn &amp; Grow Within Adaptable Environments

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Explore additional pathways to learning

**SCHOOL GOAL 3.1:**

Expand learning opportunities by utilizing varied resources and voices

Action Step	Process	Priority	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
Support the Mitchell PTC in growing the diversity of its volunteer base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Survey Families:</i> Use new and existing survey data to the sense of belonging and connection of diverse Mitchell families.</li> <li>❖ <i>Expand Relationships</i> with the Mitchell PTC and support the PTC leadership in recruiting a diverse representation of Mitchell families.</li> </ul>	2	Mr. Bayse; School Council	In Progress ▾
Ensure that field trips and curricular enrichment activities are engaging and representative of our diverse community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Pre- and post-activity surveys:</i> Conduct surveys with students before and after participating in community activities to gauge their engagement, knowledge gain, and overall satisfaction.</li> <li>❖ <i>Build relationships with</i> community, business, organizations, and civic leaders in Needham and Boston that provide learning opportunities.</li> </ul>	2	MLT	Not Started ▾
Expand student learning through use of parent and community member knowledge and professions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Develop monthly community meetings</i> that are thematic in nature, include varied speakers, and highlight the diversity of our community and world.</li> <li>❖ <i>Survey</i> existing volunteer programs to ensure that adequate opportunities exist for families to participate in their child's education.</li> <li>❖ <i>Create new pathways</i> for families to be involved in their child's education.</li> </ul>	1	Guidance Staff; SEL Rep	Not Started ▾

**DISTRICT PRIORITY 3:**

All Students Learn &amp; Grow Within Adaptable Environments

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Pilot and Assess new scheduling options and models that provide consistent time on learning, student support, targeted intervention, collaboration, and teaming.

**SCHOOL GOAL 3.2:**

Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences

Action Step	Process	Priority	Leaders(s) Responsible	
Review and improve scheduling at Mitchell to ensure that time is being allocated in a manner that benefits student learning and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Establish a data-inquiry cycle</i> that measures the effectiveness of student learning and growth of classroom intervention blocks (WIN).</li> <li>❖ <i>Continue to grow</i> an adaptable model for intervention blocks that supports all students in academic achievement and in becoming expert learners.</li> </ul>	2	Curriculum Coaches	Not Started ▾



**DISTRICT PRIORITY 4:**

Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students

**DISTRICT FOCUS:**

Implement a recruitment, retention, and development process for staff growth and diversity

**SCHOOL GOAL 4.1:**

Provide structures in support of Mitchell staff retention and professional development

Action Step	Process	Priority	Leaders(s) Responsible	Status
<b>Review and improve Mitchell models for new staff induction in the first three years of employment.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Partner with HR</i> to survey schools in the MetroWest area to learn best practices for new teacher induction within the first three years.</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify</i> new teacher induction practices to adopt at Mitchell</li> <li>❖ <i>Establish</i> a structure and timeline for implementation</li> </ul>	3	Mentor Rep Mr. Bayse	Not Started ▾
<b>Establish a model for learning labs at Mitchell</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <i>Collaborate</i> to determine the model of learning lab that works best for our school size and structure.</li> <li>❖ <i>Establish</i> a structure and timeline for implementation</li> <li>❖ <i>Identify</i> priority focus areas for learning labs</li> </ul>	1	Curriculum Coaches; Mr. Bayse	Not Started ▾

## Glossary of Terms



### **ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate)**

Training to prepare individuals to handle the threat of an armed intruder. ALICE teaches individuals to participate in their own survival, while leading others to safety.

### **Benchmark Assessments**

Benchmark assessments are short tests administered throughout the school year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards.

### **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.

### **Collaboration Time**

Weekly time devoted to grade level and department teams to consult, collaborate, and discuss problems of practice and possible instructional implications.

### **Common Core State Standards**

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn in each grade level and in every content area.

### **Community Meetings**

Monthly school assemblies that follow a Responsive Classroom meeting format, which invite the school community to greet one another, share their accomplishments, participate in an activity and hear about class/school news and announcements.

### **Cultural Proficiency (CP)**

A paradigm shift from viewing cultural differences as problematic to celebrate and learn how to interact effectively with other cultures.

### **Enrichment/Extension**

Learning that is extended beyond mastery of grade level standards. Enrichment opportunities can be provided in all content areas as needed based on student achievement.

### **Flexible Grouping**

A method of splitting students into groups for instruction based on specific goals, interests, and learning needs, rather than grouping the students by ability alone. Assessment data is used to determine which group students should participate in, and these groups are fluid, as student needs change.

## Formative Assessment

Formative assessment including diagnostic testing is a range of formal and informal assessment procedures conducted by teachers during the learning process in order to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student learning.

## Elementary Leadership Team

Stipend positions at the elementary level that allow classroom grade level representatives to meet with school administration and one another monthly to collaborate on school related Issues.

## Growth Mindset

In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment (Courtesy of C.Dweck).

## Guided Reading

Small group reading instruction with a targeted purpose; used as a best practice approach in a Reader's Workshop instructional model.



## High Needs

For purposes of state assessment and accountability this category refers to all students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students, or low income students.

## 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.

## MLT

The Mitchell Leadership Team brings together our building administration and representatives from each grade level and special-area teachers to problem-solve and address critical issues in our school. MLT members coordinate collaboration at their grade level.



## MTSS

A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that each and every student receives a high quality educational experience.

## Professional Development (PD)

Education for teachers and other school staff regarding school and district based initiatives. Currently, PD time is provided during staff meetings, early release and delayed opening days, as well as during the school day as needed.

**Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

Grade level teams that collaborate to develop strategic goals aimed towards increasing student achievement.

**Responsive Classroom (RC)**

Responsive Classroom is a research- and evidence-based approach to elementary education that leads to greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate.

**Response to Intervention (RTI)**

A framework to provide early interventions to students based on data in order to reduce referrals to special education.

**Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Social-Emotional Learning is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

**Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) SEL Representative**

The Social and Emotional Learning Representative is a stipend position in each school in the Needham Public Schools. The role of the SEL Representative is to support and promote social and emotional learning within the school community.

**STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math)**

Area of new programming implemented in FY15 school year for grades 1-3.

**TAT—Teacher Assisting Teachers Team**

A group of Mitchell classroom teachers, special educators, guidance counselors, literacy specialists, and administrators that meets weekly to discuss individual and small groups of students and provide strategies and/or targeted interventions that can be implemented to support student growth. Data is collected based on student progress to determine if interventions have been successful.

**Tiered Interventions (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3)**

Tiered intervention refers to levels of support offered to individual students who struggle academically. Tier 1 refers to in-class support provided by the teacher. Tier 2 refers to support offered by a specialist teacher (i.e., a literacy coach). Tier 3 refers to a very high level of support such as the modified curriculum of special education.

**Units of Study (UOS)**

Lucy Calkins is the author of the popular classroom materials Units of Study for Teaching Reading series and the Units of Study for Teaching Writing series. The Units of Study for reading and writing offer grade-specific support for teachers to develop instruction that helps students meet and exceed the Common Core State Standards.

# Mitchell Elementary School School Committee Update

March 19, 2024

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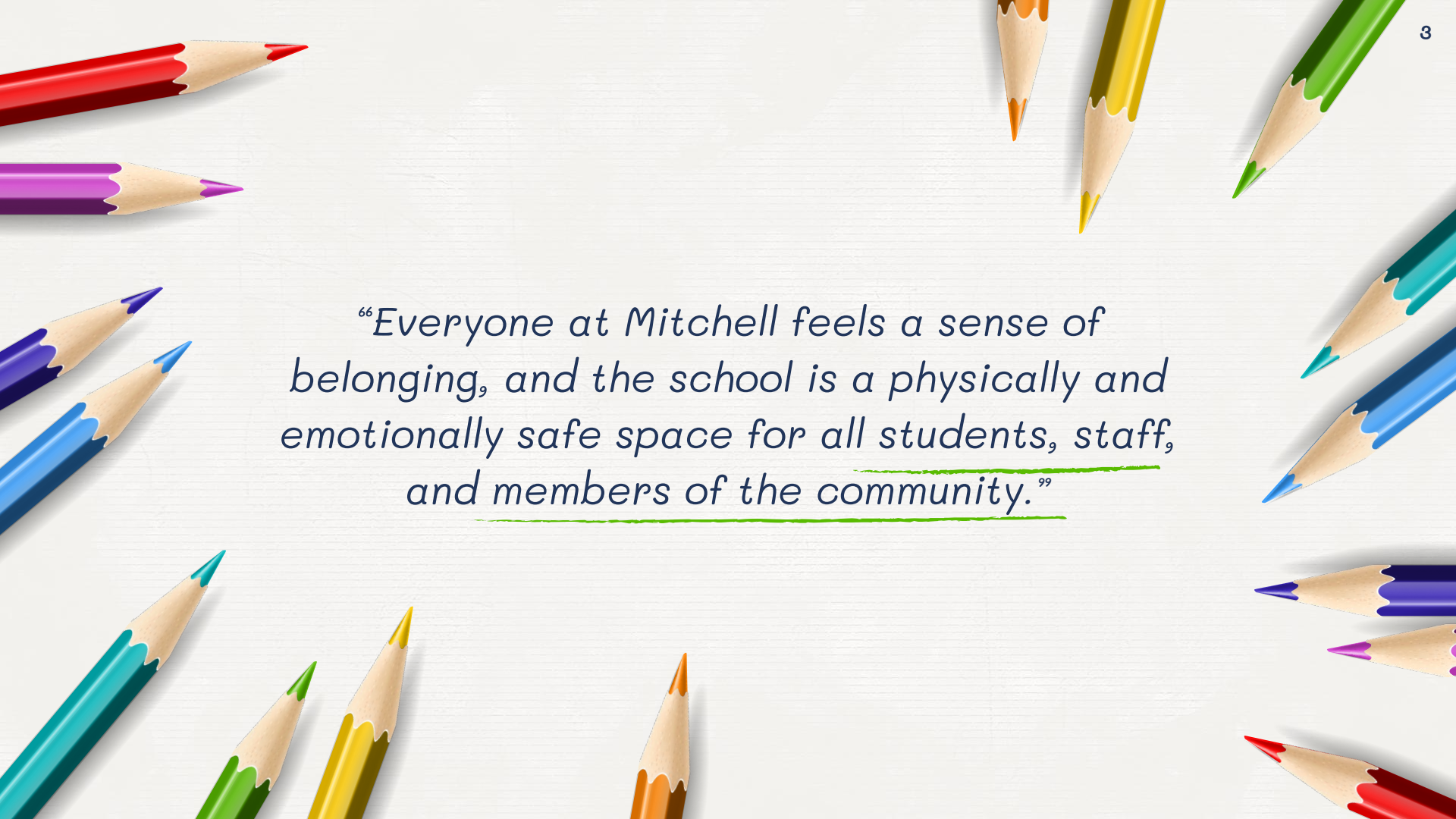
## As A Community, Each Day We Strive to Live Out Our Core Values:

Take Care of Yourself - Personal Responsibility

Take Care of Others - Responsibility to and for Others

Take Care of Our Space - Responsibility as a Group





*“Everyone at Mitchell feels a sense of belonging, and the school is a physically and emotionally safe space for all students, staff, and members of the community.”*

# Focused Areas for Growth - 2023-2024

## Curriculum & Pedagogy

1. Goal to be completely staffed in September 23
2. Growth of Tiered Interventions to support diverse student needs
3. Expand use of data to inform instruction
4. Additions to special education staff to meet growing need

## SEL Growth

1. Implement additional organizational strategies that continue to promote SEL as a schoolwide priority, creating a climate and culture conducive to learning.
2. Application of restorative practices to student discipline

## Engagement & Equity

1. Expand opportunities for parent engagement within and beyond the classroom.
2. Reinvigorate communication around school mission, vision, and operation





# Mitchell School Goals



## **District Priority 1: All Students Are Drivers of Their Own Learning**

**School Goal 1.1:** - Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning.

**School Goal 1.2:** - Ensure Equity & Culturally Proficient practices across all students' experiences

## **District Priority 2: All Students Experience Integrative Teaching & Learning**

**School Goal 2.1:** - Develop common understandings and intentional opportunities for interdisciplinary learning.

**School Goal 2.2:** - Embed SELMH strategies and mental health supports across the school.

**School Goal 2.3:** - Implement with fidelity Responsive Classroom

## **District Priority 3: All Students Learn & Grow Within Adaptable Environments**

**School Goal 3.1:** - Expand learning opportunities by utilizing varied resources and voices

**School Goal 3.2:** - Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences

## **District Priority 4: Infrastructure Supports Needs of All Students**

**School Goal 4.1:** - Provide structures in support of Mitchell staff retention and professional development

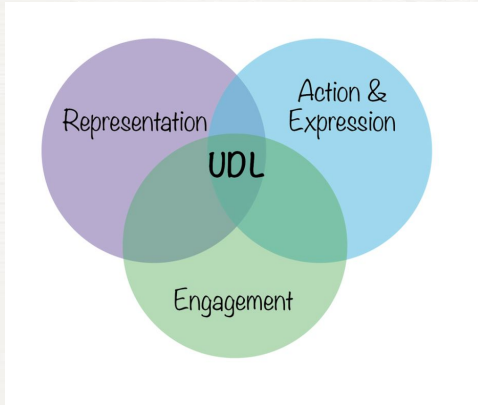
# Mitchell School Goals



- 1.1: - Foster student agency, voice, and choice in all aspects of learning
- 3.2: - Provide learning access and opportunity across all students' experiences



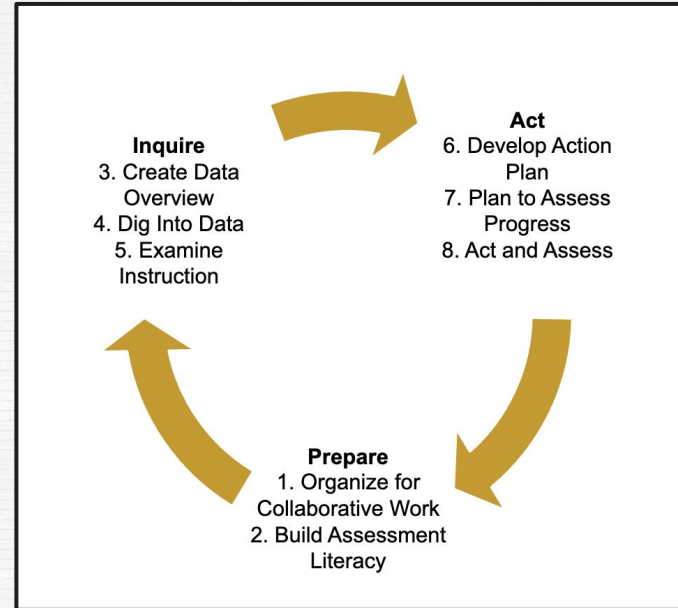
# Foster Student Agency, Voice, and Choice in All Aspects of Learning



# Provide Learning Access and Opportunity Across All Student's Experiences



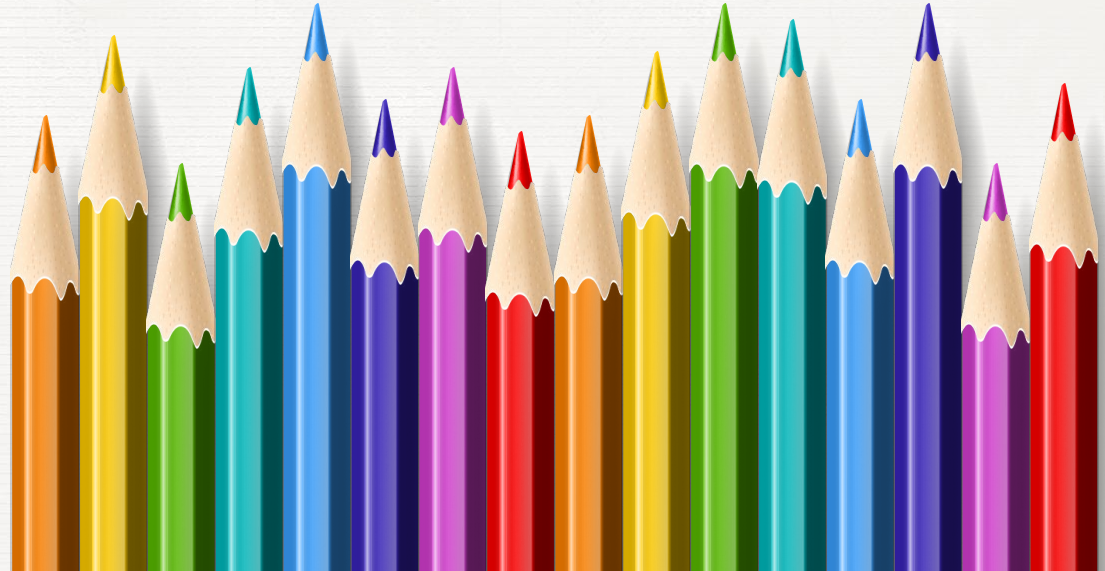
How do we grow adaptable models of instruction and learning to meet diverse student needs?





# Parent Update

Gabrielle Oliveira, Ed.D.

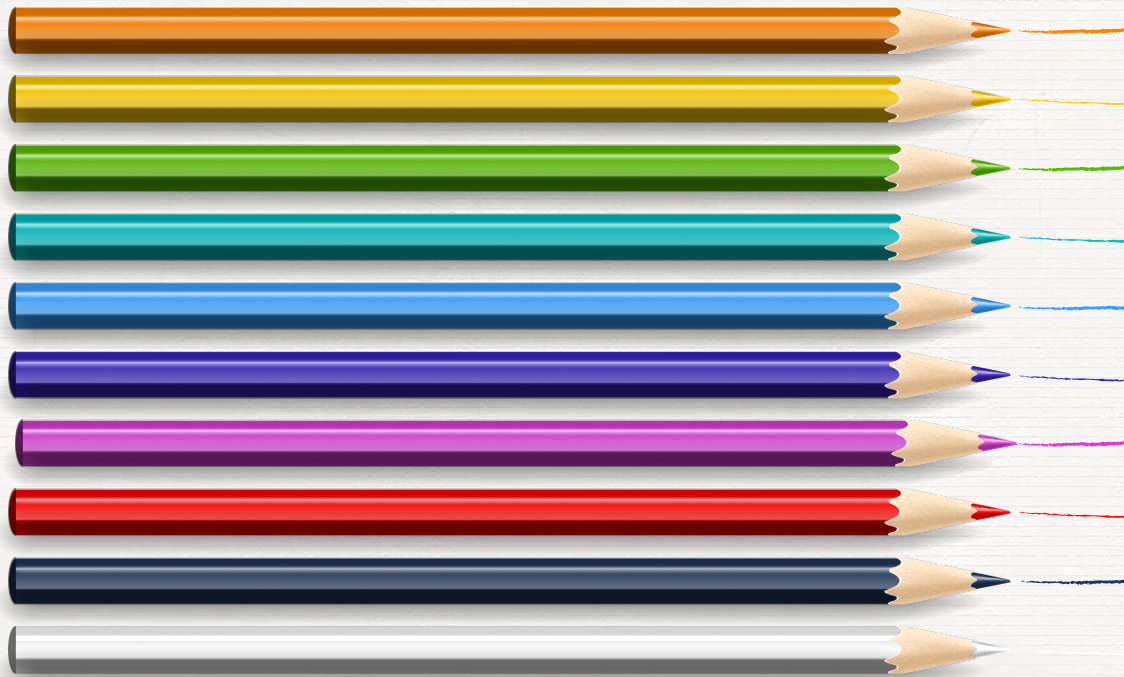


# Student Update

Leo Helman, 5th Grade



# Thank you!





## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:    **Discussion**

**Portrait of a Needham Graduate Presentation: Grade 9-12 Math**

Background Information:

- Throughout the school year different schools and staff will share how one of the five attributes in the Portrait of a Needham Graduate are reflected in teaching and learning in the Needham Public Schools:

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

- The presentation will showcase some of the student work and student learning experiences connected to Portrait of a Needham Graduate.

Person(s) Available for Presentation:

John Shea, Needham High School Math Department Chair  
Austin Williams, Needham High School 9<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Lacey Williams, Needham High School 9<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Aidan Williams, Needham High School 9<sup>11h</sup> Grade

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# NHS Mathematics and PoNG

How NHS Math is preparing our  
students for PoNG Success

Tuesday, March 19, 2024



“From passive learners to problem solvers: Collaborative activities spread engagement and empower resilient students in efficient equitable classroom”

# Presentation overview

01.

**Presentation Goals**

02.

Our road trip on PoNG

03.

**The student experience**

04.

**A time for questions**

# 01. Presentation Goals

- To share the work of the Needham High School Mathematics Department over the past few years
- To showcase some of the student work and/or student learning experiences connected to Pong
- To allow time for any questions you may have related to our work

02

# Our Road to PoNG



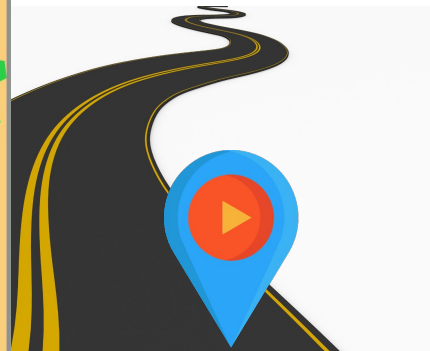
## 02.–Our Road to PoNG

- Before PoNG
  - Unpacking The Standards of Mathematical Practice
- Blended Learning
- Equity in our Math Classrooms
  - Professional Development-Learning Together
  - “Choosing to See”
  - Engagement
    - UDL and Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC)
- Aligning our work to PoNG



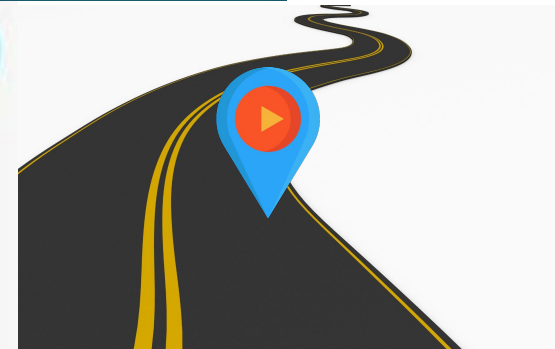
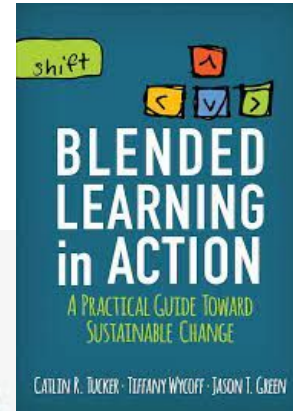
## 02.–Our Road to PoNG

- Before PoNG
  - Unpacking the Standards of Mathematical Practice



## 02.–Our Road to PoNG

- Blended Learning
  - Modeled in Department meetings
  - Teachers brought this to their classrooms and continue to do so

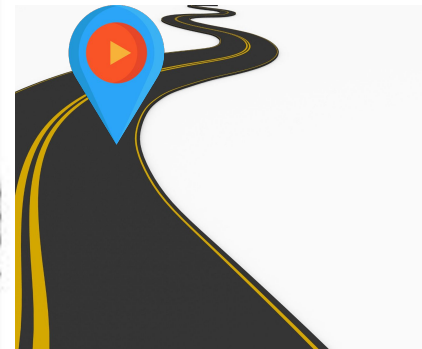




# 02.–Our Road to PoNG

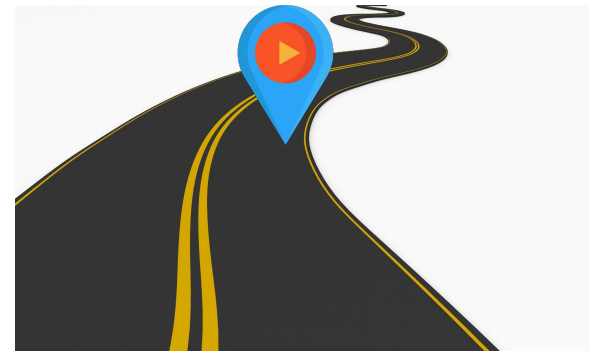
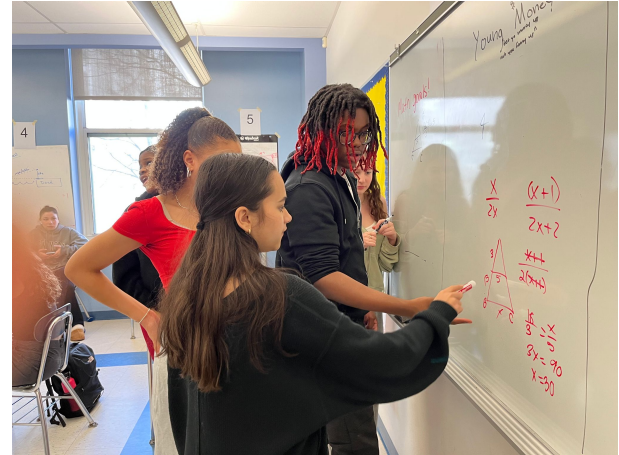
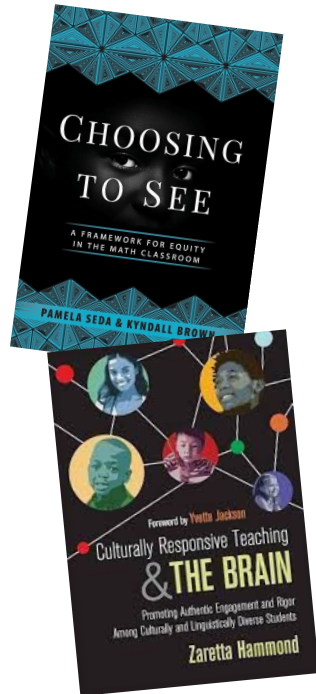
- Equity in our Classrooms

- Professional Development
  - Sunil Singh
    - Author of “Math Recess” and “Chasing Rabbits”
  - Francis Su
    - Professor at Harvey Mudd College and author of “Mathematics for Human Flourishing”
  - Deborah Hughes-Hallett
    - Professor at Arizona State and Harvard University
    - Textbook Author
  - Nathan Alexander
    - Math Professor
      - Morehouse College (former)
      - Howard University
  - Henry Turner
    - Principal of Newton North
    - Author of “Change the Narrative”



## 02.–Our Road to PoNG

- Equity in our Classrooms
  - “Choosing to See”
  - “Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain”
    - Engagement
      - “We Got this”
      - UDL and Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC)



## 02.–Our Road to PoNG

- Equity in our Classrooms
  - Engagement
    - “We Got this”
    - Instructional strategies related UDL and Building Thinking Classrooms (BTC)



# 02.-Our Road to PoNG

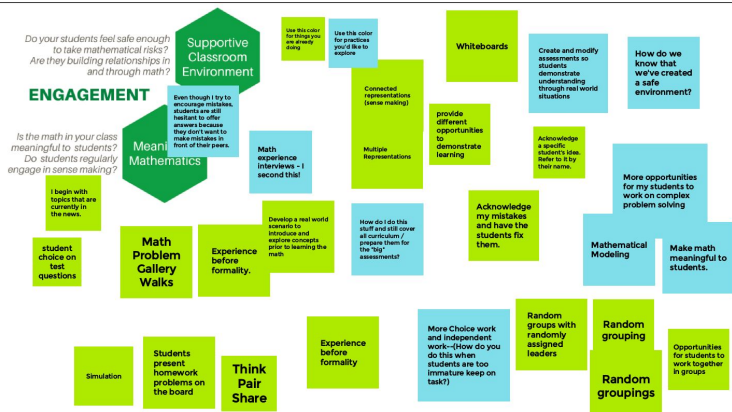
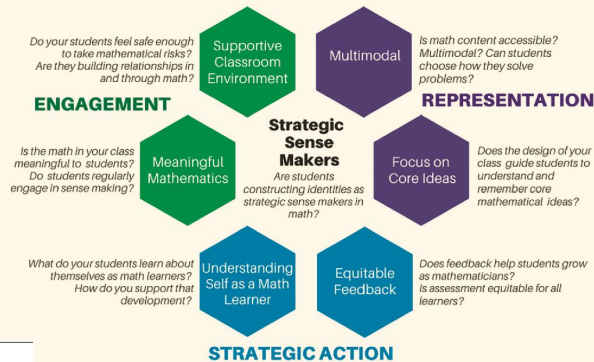
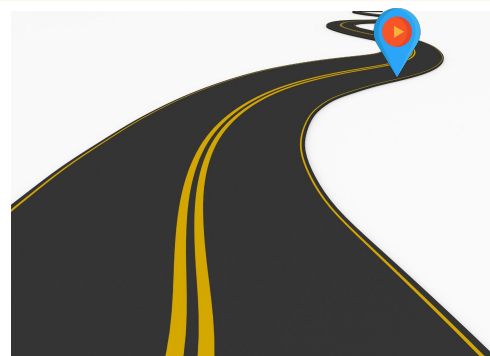
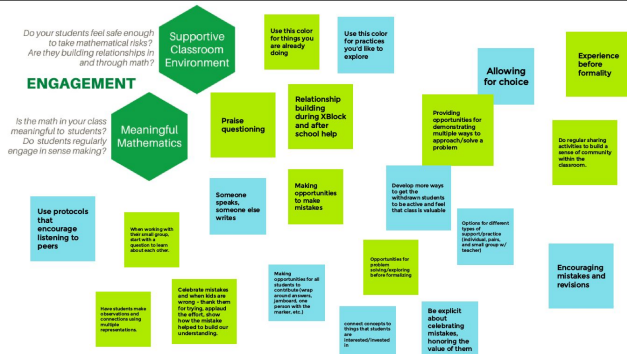


Fig. 2

## UDL Math Design Elements

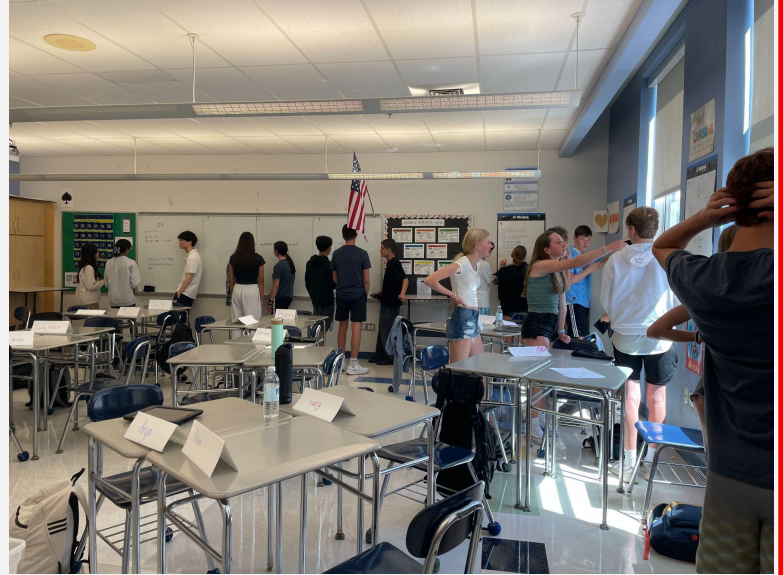


Lambert 2021



03

# The Student Experience



*How are we providing learning experiences and opportunities for students so that they can meet each of the PoNG competencies?*

The poster is titled "PORTRAIT OF A NEEDHAM GRADUATE" and "SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR OUR PRE-K TO 12 STUDENTS". It features a silhouette of a diverse group of people of various ages and heights. The poster lists six competency areas: Creative Thinkers and Problem Solvers, Communicators and Collaborators, Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors, Responsible and Resilient Individuals, and Empowered Learners. Each area includes a brief description of the skills and behaviors expected. The Needham Public Schools logo is in the bottom right corner.

**PORTRAIT OF A NEEDHAM GRADUATE**  
SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR OUR PRE-K TO 12 STUDENTS



**PREPARING ALL NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS TO BE...**

**CREATIVE THINKERS AND PROBLEM SOLVERS**  
Raise questions driven by curiosity; Analyze relevant information;  
Express creativity; Design and innovate solutions

**COMMUNICATORS AND COLLABORATORS**  
Listen effectively; Articulate ideas using a variety of communication strategies and skills; Interact with others respectfully and productively;  
Contribute to teamwork

**SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONTRIBUTORS**  
Understand and respect diversity; Act with empathy and courage to ensure equity, access, and an anti-racist culture; Address local and global issues through civic and community engagement

**RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT INDIVIDUALS**  
Take responsibility for actions; Make healthy choices to achieve physical and emotional well-being; Self-advocate;  
Persist to overcome personal challenges; Adapt to change

**EMPOWERED LEARNERS**  
Discover and integrate content from multiple disciplines;  
Engage in self-directed learning; Use technology to support learning and navigate a digital world

**Needham**  
Public Schools



In what ways have you or can you incorporate this competency in to your course(s)

**KV: Allow students to problem solve and look for patterns before formalizing rules, express creativity with portfolio**

**Stats Medic** curriculum uses the Experience Before Formally method of introducing content. (AJC)

**Teach procedures, have students work through them, then ask "do you agree with this?", "does this seem fair?", etc.**

When introducing derivative rules (chain, quotient) have students guess derivatives of these new functions and check for validity using a graphing tool or other means. MD

**JP: Experience before formality--desmos explorations**

**EG: Agree with different explorations, such as Desmos and Geogebra. Students try to formalize results**

Students creating their own reference sheets by identifying relevant and important information.

Build strong foundational skills. There's a lot of education research that suggests the most creative thinkers and those with the strongest foundational skills - Brett

**Problems of the Week**

In 9IP in our power and influence we had students using sketch design software -Bookston

giving short required assignments for daily homework. I also assign many other tasks that are optional. If kids feel that they need more practice or the content given in a different way, they can access these

Desmos has been a wonderful tool this year for discovery. Especially ahead of a lesson for students to get a feel for what they are about to learn. -Jen

I have incorporated this in 9IP as we have shared units that connect the disciplines and are project based which empowers the students and encourages more self directed learning. -Bookston

Providing additional resources that further explore topics - whether that is a more challenging extension that we won't get to, an example of the topic in the news, etc. Give students the chance to dig deeper (if they choose)

**Desmos, Khan Academy and Delta math**

**AP and Honors Stats: Students explore a data set of their choosing and answer a question that is meaningful to them (AJC)**

**7IP: Students have been utilizing Desmos, AP Classroom and Khan Academy to learn new topics on their own time. I have tried to give students choice in how they engage with the content.**

**ARTICULATORS AND COLLABORATORS**

articulate ideas using a variety of communication  
Interact with others respectfully and productively;  
Contribute to teamwork



In what ways have you or can you incorporate this competency in to your course(s)

**KV: students collaborating in groups, asking questions to clarify or to the class**

worksheet or problem set in groups - make the students take turns one by one. Thinking aloud! When the student is finished talking, then the rest of the group can chime in. I forget what this is called but it forces them to

I did a "speed dating" activity with my AP Calc class where they had to answer prompts and then "chase" and "chase" the "chase."

randomly paired and had to collaborate on solution. Students had worked on the problem and shared their thinking with their partner. Students needed to listen and be willing to hear each other's thinking. Finally, they

**Project Based Group**  
Projects to support collaboration.

competency in to your course(s)

In 9IP the unit projects are done in groups and our 21st century skill of focus this year is on effective collaboration. We have designed lessons around group roles. - Bookston

Group work explaining/presenting problems from homework/classwork

EG: Students have to support their conclusions/decisions, written and/or verbally

**Students present their AP or CW Calc class where students can practice being able to explain where their work comes from.**

**Digital Portfolios**

I finance that where students have a choice to be in the portfolio or not. -Bookston

**Digital Portfolios**

**2IP: Collaborators--working in groups to discover new concepts and explore new ideas together (can't wait to have this back in a better model next year!!!!)**

1

**CREATIVE THINKERS AND PROBLEM SOLVERS**

Raise questions driven by curiosity; Analyze relevant information  
Express creativity; Design and innovate solutions

**EMPOWERED LEARNERS**

Discover and integrate content from multiple disciplines;  
Engage in self-directed learning; Use technology to support learning and navigate a digital world



In what ways have you or can you incorporate this competency

**KV: Analyze data related to a range of issues; share about diverse mathematicians; create a safe space for students to learn; grade with equity in mind**

Haven't had the time to include it this year, but Personal Finance is trying to compile a diverse list of financial literacy advocates for students to follow/explore on social media (AJC)

**Stats** incorporates the *Shaw The Script* curriculum which uses statistics as a way to gain insight into social issues (AJC)

The unit we are currently doing in 9IP is on disease and equity and the students are creating documentaries that tell the story of how different groups were impacted by an assigned disease outbreak. -Bookston

**5**  
solutions to problems.

**EG: Agree with many items listed**

Let students know you think about current events and the world at large. You don't need to say anything profound (though it certainly helps if you do!) - Brett

**Math 9 Ext** project where students explore responses to gender equity survey.

Search actively for learning resources that reflect a diverse set of voices and opinions. Finding underrepresented groups in Computer Science.

**JP: Analyze the effects of the pandemic on different populations through real-life data**

**EG: Small units that hit on topics in current news like elections and gerrymandering**

**SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONTRIBUTORS**

Understand and respect diversity; Act with empathy and courage to ensure equity, access, and an anti-racist culture; Address local and global issues through civic and community engagement



In what ways have you or can you incorporate this competency in to your course(s)

Students take a lot of responsibility for their own work and assignments to encourage students to critique their own work and effort as well as set goals to improve.

**Students complete accountability rubric based on performance in class and then set goals to become better learners**

supportive because we don't know how hard this really is for each kid and family. -Jen

google classroom. This has been a struggle for many students.

I want students to ask questions about their homework if they have any. I want them to take on the responsibility to ask for help. We should all ask for help when we need it!

**Using resources!**  
Having kids make sure they have exhausted all possible resources - Classroom notes, online tutorials, Desmos or Khan Academy videos

Allow students the opportunity to redo/resubmit assignments. Being more flexible with due dates

**KV: Giving space for students to reflect on their work, encouraging students to be honest and allow them to make amends when they engage in academic dishonesty**

**COMMUNICATE** when they are not doing well. I have tried to emphasize that it is okay and expected that we are not okay this year, especially, but what I want from them is to learn to communicate when they are struggling

**EG: Flexibility with due dates. Relating to the students needs and adjusting accordingly. Students just need to let me know what's happening!**

**RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT INDIVIDUALS**

Take responsibility for actions; Make healthy choices to achieve physical and emotional well-being; Self advocate;  
Persist to overcome personal challenges; Adapt to change



3

**KV: Allow students to problem solve and look for patterns before formalizing rules; express creativity with portfolio**

**I want students to ask questions about their homework if they have any. I want them take on the responsibility to ask for help. We should all ask for help when we need it!**

**Using resources!  
Having kids make sure they have exhausted all possible resources - Classroom notes, online tutorials, Desmos or Khan Academy videos**

**KV: Analyze data related to a range of issues; share about diverse mathematicians; create a safe space for students to learn; grade with equity in mind**

**JO - Creating self assessment and reflection forms and assignments to encourage students to critique their own work and effort as well as set goals to improve.**

**The unit we are currently doing in 9IP is on disease and equity and the students are creating documentaries that tell the story of how different groups were impacted by an assigned disease**

**randomly paired and had to collaborate or solution. Students had worked on the problem and shared their thinking with their partner. Students needed to listen and be willing to hear each other's thinking. Finally, the**

**Students have been utilizing Desmos, AP Classroom and Khan Academy to learn new topics on their own time. I have tried to give students choice in how they engage with the content.**

**Desmos has been a wonderful tool this year for discovery. Especially ahead of a lesson for students to get a feel for what they are about to learn.  
~Jen**

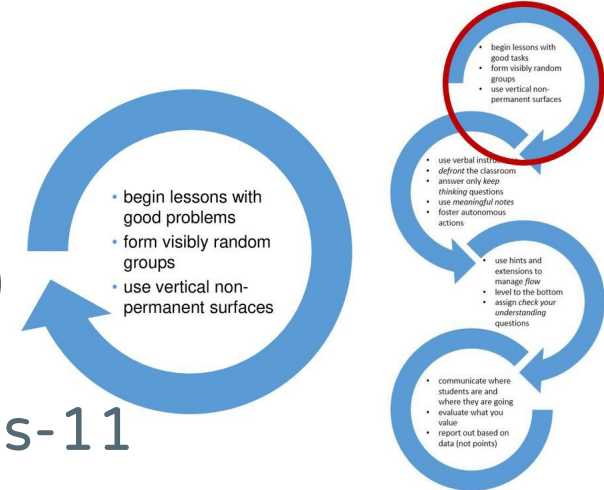


# 03–The Student Experience

## Creative Thinkers and Problem solvers & Communicators and Collaborators

### Building Thinking Classroom Activities

- All Levels All Grades
  - Solving Problems related to
    - Graphing Quadratics–9 (Math 9)
      - Similarity-10 (Geometry)
      - Solving Exponential Equations-11 (Precalculus)
      - Differentiation-12(Calculus)



# 03–The Student Experience Creative Thinkers and Problem solvers & Communicators and Collaborators

Find the value of  $x$  that makes the equation true.

$$3^x = 9$$

$$3^x = \frac{1}{27}$$

$$2^x = 16$$

$$4^x = \frac{1}{16}$$

Medium: Find the value of  $x$  that makes the equation true.

$$3^{x+1} = 3^3$$

$$2^{2x} = 2^{x-1}$$

$$4^x = 4^4$$

$$\frac{1}{4} 4^{x-1} = \frac{1}{4} 3$$

Spicy: Find the value of  $x$  that makes the equation true.

$$3^{2x+1} = 9$$

$$4 = 2^{x+1}$$

Extra Spicy: Find the value of  $x$  that makes the equation true.

$$3^{2x+1} = 9^{3x}$$

**Problem 2-Vertex form  $a \neq 1$  (D)**

Graph:  $f(x) = -\frac{1}{2}(x+3)^2 + 4$   
Include the axis of symmetry and 5 coordinate points for your graph. Determine if the vertex is a maximum value or a minimum value.

Which points did you include and why?

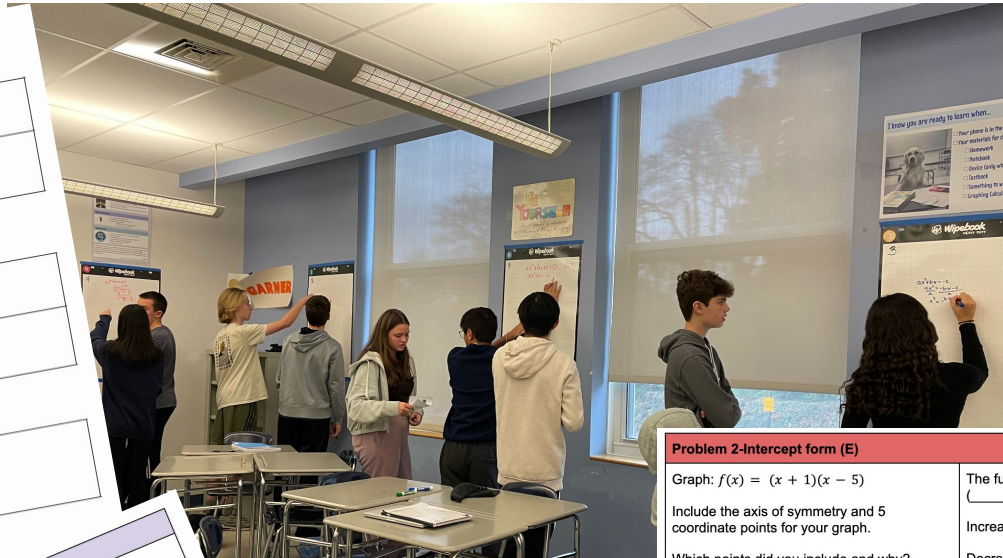
The function has a max/min at \_\_\_\_\_

Increasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

Decreasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

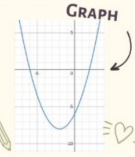
Domain: \_\_\_\_\_

Range: \_\_\_\_\_



## Example Problems

### QUADRATIC WITH REAL ZEROS



#### SOLVING FOR X

- $0 = 1/2(x-2)^2 - 8$  ADD/SUBTRACT +8
- $8 = 1/2(x-2)^2$  FROM BOTH SIDES
- $16 = (x-2)^2$  TAKE THE SQUARE ROOT OF BOTH SIDES
- $\pm 4 = x-2$  ISOLATE X
- $x = 6$  FIND X WHERE  $a \neq 1$
- $x = -2$  AND WHERE  $a \neq 1$

#### INTERCEPT FORM

$f(x) = 1/2(x+6)(x-2)$   
we know:  $h$ -inter,  $k$ -value

#### VERTEX FORM

$f(x) = 1/2(x+2)^2 - 8$   
we know: vertex,  $a$ -value

#### STANDARD FORM

$f(x) = 1/2x^2 - 2x - 6$   
we know:  $y$ -int,  $a$ -value

#### COMPLETING THE SQUARE

- $f(x) = 1/2x^2 + 2x - 6$
  - $0 = 1/2x^2 + 2x - 6$
  - $0 = 1/2(x^2 + 4x) - 6$
  - $z = 1/2(x^2 + 4x + 4) - 6$
  - $z = 1/2(x+2)^2 - 6$
  - $0 = 1/2(x+2)^2 - 6$
- SET = TO 0  
FACTOR OUT 1/2  
ADD  $(b/2)^2$  TO BOTH SIDES  
FACTOR THE PERFECT TRINOMIAL  
SET = TO 0

#### Problem 2-Intercept form (E)

Graph:  $f(x) = (x+1)(x-5)$

Include the axis of symmetry and 5 coordinate points for your graph.

Which points did you include and why?

The fur \_\_\_\_\_

Increasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

Decreasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

Domain: \_\_\_\_\_

Range: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Problem 3-Standard form $a=1$ (C)

Graph:  $h(x) = x^2 - 2x - 4$

Include the axis of symmetry and 5 coordinate points for your graph.

Which points did you include and why?

The function has a max/min at \_\_\_\_\_

Increasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

Decreasing interval: \_\_\_\_\_

Domain: \_\_\_\_\_

Range: \_\_\_\_\_



# 03–The Student Experience

## Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors

- Student voice and choice as part of their learning
- Identifying strengths vs. perceived deficiencies
- Viewing the world through a mathematical lens
- Allowing multiple perspectives and celebrating students' approach to problem solving
- Sharing and capturing student work



# 03–The Student Experience

## Socially and Culturally Responsive Contributors

Talk with your partner:

What are taxes?

What does "income" mean?

1) Think: What's a profession you may like to enter? Write it below.

### Find Someone Who Can

1. Factor the quadratic expression. $-2x^2 + 6x + 8$	2. Factor the equation and solve for x. $-3x^2 = 3x$	3. Determine the Greatest Common Factor and use it to factor the expression completely. $-x^3 - x^2 + x$
4. Factor the equation and solve for x. $-2x^2 - 10x = 0$	5. Factor the equation and solve for x. $15x^2 - 3x = 0$	6. Use the zero product property to solve the equation. $(4x + 9)^2 = 0$
7. Factor the expression completely. $12x^3 - 10x^2 - 8x$		



### Mathematics and Gerrymandering

#### Essential Questions

- What is gerrymandering and can it be described using number(s) (quantitated)?
- How does the mathematical concept of compactness relate to gerrymandering?
- How does it mean from a mathematical perspective to "waste a vote"?
- How does the idea of a wasted vote to understand partisan gerrymandering?
- What are the consequences of gerrymandering for our states and our political representation?

What is affecting domestic fertilizer prices, and how does it affect the price of food?

Clayton Pachus



## 03–The Student Experience Responsible and Resilient Individuals

Students are invited to:

- Reflect on their own learning
  - Post assessment
  - At the end of a term
  - At the end of the school year
- Correct and reflect on assessment errors
- Mistakes are celebrated





# 03–The Student Experience Responsible and Resilient Individuals

$$A = P_0 \left(1 + \frac{0.01}{12}\right)^{12t}$$

$$2 = 1 \left(1 + \frac{0.01}{12}\right)^{12t}$$

$$\log 2 = \log \left(1 + 0.0008\overline{3}\right)^{12t}$$

$$\log 2 = 12t \log \left(1 + \frac{0.01}{12}\right)$$

$$12t = \frac{\log 2}{\log \left(1 + \frac{0.01}{12}\right)}$$

$$\frac{12t}{12} = \frac{83.52}{12}$$

$$t = 6.96 \text{ months}$$

*I think I overcomplicated it for myself when I could've used easier numbers like 2 & 1 rather than 2 & 4. The first three steps I did it right but then I carelessly went back a step for some reason using me I completed answer why I did that steps of it should've been log of 2*

	Reflect on your <b>process</b> (WHAT you are doing). Consider what you have invested in this class. What have been your strengths so far? What are some areas of growth? (Are you... engaged in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, working cooperatively, etc.)	Reflect on your <b>progress</b> (HOW you are doing). Assess the quality of your work in this class. How well are you understanding the concepts? Do your assessments reflect your understanding? Is there something you didn't understand at first and now do? Do you still have questions about the content?
Term 1	This year I feel like I've participated in class a decent amount, but I could do much better with completing assignments to their full potential. I come to x block and before school, but I feel like I could work harder on keeping up with all the work and making sure I understand content before we move on to the next concept.	So far this year I think I struggled to grasp factoring. I never really got it in early years and so I think it set me back going into this year. I usually try to complete the assignments on time and in full but I definitely think I could be putting more time and effort into the class.
Term 2	I think that this term I lacked in completing some of the practice work and getting extra help when needed. I realized that I could have really benefited from the delta math, since the practice worksheets weren't exactly giving me all the support I could need. Also, like term one, I still want to solidify concepts before moving on because I think long term it will help my understanding and work overall in class.	I think that this term I got much better with my algebra and solving equations, which was a harder concept for me at the start of the year. I still feel like I need to work on my graphing capabilities and learn how to not only be better at reading graphs, but getting a much bigger understanding of how to draw them as well. Some of my content questions would relate to drawing graphs from equations and then figuring out the domain aspect of it as well.
Term 3		
Term 4		

Part 2) Talk to your group about the content of the quiz. Ask a question about a problem you didn't know how to answer and/or answer a question for a peer. Make note of any questions that no one in your group is able to answer.

1) What is something you learned from a classmate? (Or what is something you helped a classmate to better understand?)

2) What is something you can improve going forward? (This can be specific content or notation from the quiz or something related to your overall process or work in this class.)



## 03–The Student Experience Empowered Learners

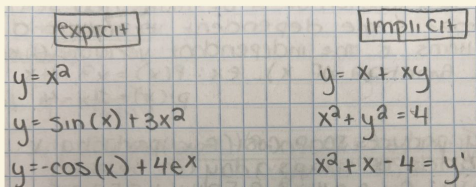
- 9IP and 10IP along with learning experiences in many of our courses
- Students make choices about their learning
- Students create content
  - Digital Portfolios
- Students apply content
  - to connect their learning to everyday life
  - to make sense of the content, concepts and skills



# 03–The Student Experience Empowered Learners

## Implicit differentiation

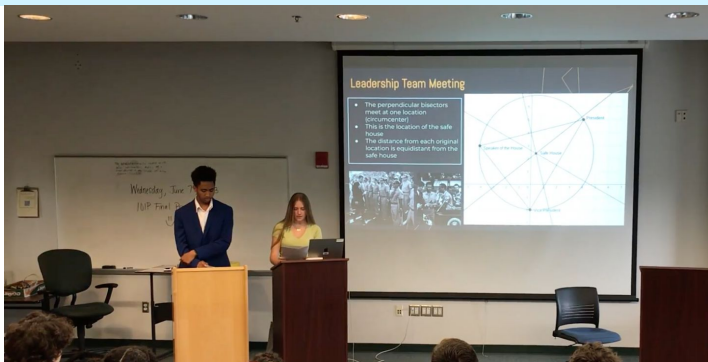
How you find the derivative of a function that is defined as implicit



- Steps:
- 1) Differentiate BOTH sides with respect to "x"
  - 2) Solve for  $dy/dx$

Implicit relations

- X is the "independent variable" and y is a function of x
  - Think of y as f(x)



## CHOOSE 2 OF THE OPTIONS BELOW!

Option 1: Khan Academy	Option 2: Problem Set with a Partner	Option 3: Delta Math
<p><b>Why choose this option:</b></p> <p>You feel like you need a little more instruction and could benefit from videos.</p>	<p><b>Why choose this option:</b></p> <p>You feel like you have a pretty good grasp on the material but could benefit from a peer helping you.</p>	<p><b>Why choose this option:</b></p> <p>You feel like you understand the material and are ready for individual practice.</p>
<p><b>If you choose this option:</b></p> <p>Let Mr. de Chaves know so he can assign you <a href="#">Khan Academy</a> Work and hand out the <a href="#">worksheet</a> for the videos.</p>	<p><b>If you choose this option:</b></p> <p>Let Mr. de Chaves know so he can give you the <a href="#">worksheet</a>. The problem set is also linked here. <b>Show all work.</b></p> <p>You and your partner will only work on one worksheet. You should alternate scribing each problem.</p>	<p><b>If you choose this option:</b></p> <p>Let Mr. de Chaves know so he can share the Delta Math assignment with you.</p> <p>Then you can go to <a href="http://www.deltamath.com">www.deltamath.com</a> to complete the assignment: (C)Choose 2: Solving With Square Roots</p> <p>You must show all your work and hand it in</p>
<p><b>What to submit</b></p> <p>Hand in the worksheet for the videos. The 2 problem sets must be completed online.</p>	<p><b>What to submit</b></p> <p>ONE WORKSHEET PER PAIR</p> <p>The worksheet should have alternating handwriting for all of the problems.</p>	<p><b>What to submit</b></p> <p>You must show all your work and hand it in</p>

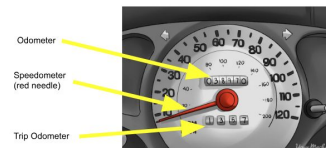
## Drive & Collect Data

**Print**  
Print the Data Table (Attachment 1). You will use the Data Table to record all the necessary information.

**Plan**  
Set aside a half hour for your drive. During the trip it is important that you are the passenger, as you cannot record and drive simultaneously.

**Drive & Record**  
**IMPORTANT:** Record the initial odometer reading *BEFORE* you start your drive. Take a picture. Write this number on your Data Sheet. Also record when you finish. Every 2 minutes you will record the speed in miles per hour (mph) from the speedometer. Passenger: *How fast?*  
Driver: *25 mph!*

The traffic conditions will also be important to observe (e.g. highway, local roads, number of stop signs, traffic lights).



Before you continue...

- Did you print the Data Table?
- When are you going to do your drive? (Day & Time)
- Who will be driving while you record?
- How many data points are you recording during the 20 minute drive?
- Do you have Pencil, Timer, Initial Odometer reading?



**What some  
of our  
students  
have to say**

**Aidan  
Williams**

**Lacey  
Williams**

**Austin  
Williams**

Questions





## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Discussion**

### **Needham High School Student Advisory to the School Committee Report**

Background Information:

- This is the third of several reports the Student Advisory to the School Committee (SASC) will provide the School Committee this year.
- The SASC meets regularly with the principal to discuss school issues, concerns, and ideas with the high school administration.
- The students are excited and prepared to discuss these issues with the School Committee and welcome your questions and comments.

Person(s) Available for Presentation:

Lea Gruen  
Max Scott  
Danielle Sockol  
Otis Tsingos  
Zufash Khan

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## MEMORANDUM

To: Needham School Committee

From: Student Advisory to the School Committee

Date: 19 March 2024

The Needham High School Student Council would like to thank the School Committee once again for the opportunity to present the current events of Needham High School.

### **Class Updates:**

#### **9th Grade:**

The ninth graders have been settling very well into high school and look forward to our upcoming events and getting ready for our sophomore year. We have just undergone the class selection process and are getting excited for the upcoming school year. We currently have hoodies for sale on MySchoolBucks and had a successful Comellas fundraiser in late January. We also had a successful bake sale going towards the class of 2027 recently in the past week. Coming up on March 20th and 21st, we will be hosting a school-wide March Madness Basketball Tournament with hopes of bringing the school together and building spirit.

#### **10th grade:**

The class of 2026 has also completed our course selection and are anticipating the upcoming and more rigorous Junior Year. This past week, we had a Flash Merchandise Sale on MySchoolBucks. We are planning a field trip for student council members to Top Golf for a fun bonding activity. Lastly, will be holding a Parents Night Out Fundraiser on April 27th in the High School Cafeteria and urge families in the community to attend.

**11th grade:**

The Junior Class is getting ready for some big events. JHarb is coming up quickly, happening in mid-May. Ticket prices recently increased, and the Student Council feels that ticket sales are going well and hopes to see a large portion of the great at the event. We are also creating new merchandise for our senior year which is rapidly approaching. Academically, NHS juniors are also facing milestone events. A large group of NHS students took the SAT at Needham High School on March 9th, and students are preparing for AP testing and their JRP. At the peak of a challenging year, the juniors are excited to move into senior and face their last time at NHS.

**12th grade:**

The senior class is looking forward to the end of the year as future decisions such as college commitments continue to roll in. We are still flocking into March, an event that has been successful over the past months with raising a lot of spirit and funds from the Needham community. We have sent out our plans for a senior week - including a Senior Award Video, Senior Picnic, Graduation Rehearsal along with a Clap-Out, and Field Day Finish Line - and have been advertising for prom ticket sales. Along with prom tickets, we are also reaching out to teachers asking for chaperones for the dance. Overall, we can sense the apprehension that comes with graduating, but also the excitement prevalent from our peers as we begin a new chapter of our lives.

**At-Large Updates:****Events:**

For at-large events, we have been holding off on planning a spring semi-formal as there seems to be a lot of stigma regarding this dance. As a result, we are hoping that by providing a few years in between the next dance, we can attempt to reduce this stigma around semi.

Hopefully, after doing so, we can revive spring semi-formal again without the misconceptions of the dance, and allow for students to enjoy it once again.

**Policy:**

The at-large student council has been discussing numerous important policy issues that have been of concern to students. The main three policies we have been discussing are attendance, wellness requirements, and library sign-ins. We will be sharing a PowerPoint with the different data we have found, discussions we have had, and the conclusions we have come to.





## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:    **Action**

**Approve Student Opportunity Act Plan**

Action Recommended:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the Student Opportunity Act Plan as submitted.

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# Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan: Needham Public Schools

## Section 1: Summarize your district's plan

*Please write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your 3-year SOA plan. (Describe the commitment to specified evidence-based programs to address targeted disparities and the investment over the next three years, by program and total.)*

Guided by our district's Portrait of A Needham Graduate Strategic Plan, Needham Public Schools is committed to continuously improving how we provide an enriching, accessible, and equitable education for all our students, including those who have historically not performed at levels commensurate with many of their peers. As we monitor the subgroup achievement gaps more closely, our three-year Student Opportunity Act addresses persistent disparities, particularly for our students with disabilities, students with low income, our Black/African American students, Hispanic/Latinx students, and our English learners.

Needham's SOA plan aligns with priorities in the district's strategic plan and represents examples of the district's equity work and antiracist practices. Our SOA plan focuses on promoting students' physical and mental health and wellness; the implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports; and the use of an MTSS process for academic support and interventions for all students.

The following evidence-based programs are included in the SOA plan for the Needham Public Schools:

- 1) Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health
- 2) Comprehensive Tiered Supports
- 3) High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities

In total across each of these three evidence-based programs, Needham will invest an estimated \$10,540,000 as follows:

Targeted School Year Interventions/Coaching by Instructional Staff (Math, Literacy, Social Studies): \$8,095,342

Targeted Summer Interventions - Elementary Math & Science, Special Education: \$1,144,462

Professional Development (SEL, SELMH, Responsive Classroom, UDL, Inclusive Practices, Co-Teaching, Curriculum Implementation): \$563,950

Therapeutic Services: \$184,581

Administrative Platforms to Support Interventions/Track Student Progress: \$290,315

Curriculum Implementation (SEL, Math): \$261,978

Total: \$10,540,628

## Section 2: Analyze Your Data and Select Student Groups for Focused Support

*In conducting your data analysis, where did you observe the most significant disparities in student learning experiences and outcomes? On which measures and for which student groups?*

Our district dedicated professional learning time and teacher collaboration time to examining progress on MCAS achievement and growth metrics over the past three years and compared those findings with pre-pandemic data. Needham is steadily recovering, and is slightly lower in exceeding or meeting expectations from pre-pandemic scores for students in grade 10 in English Language Arts (82%), and comparable with pre-pandemic scores of 88% in Math. However, we identified significant disparities in the rate for students with disabilities, students with low-income status, and African American/Black students when compared to the rate for all students. In grades 3 and 6 for these sub-groups, only 19% to 28% Meet or Exceed Expectations in ELA and Math. The data illuminate disparities in learning experiences for these students across grade levels. Likewise, ACCESS test data for our English learners indicate that more high school students than in past years are at a beginner level of English, particularly those

students arriving in Needham from the Ukraine and Afghanistan. In 2022, an indicator shows 71.4% of ninth grade English learners passing.

Beyond MCAS and ACCESS data, the latest biennial MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey results from 2021 showed that 11% of Middle School students and 31% of High School students reported “life was very stressful” in the past 30 days. Reports of anxiety increased to 28% of Middle School and 42% of High School students. Depressive symptoms increased to 13% of Middle School and 22% of High School students. Mental health problems are higher among students with disabilities – 1.5 times higher for High School students with disabilities and 1.9 times higher for Middle School students with disabilities as compared to students without disabilities. The 2023 MetroWest Adolescent Survey results will be available in April to further inform our SOA plan.

We also analyzed chronic absenteeism. The highest rate of chronic absenteeism was during 2022. However, the 2023 rate is considerably higher than pre-pandemic at 13.3% for all students. Among subgroups of students, we find that students with low-income status, Hispanic/Latinx students, and students with limited English proficiency are disproportionately high on chronic absenteeism at 30.5%, 24.9% , and 22.5% respectively.

In sharing this survey data with teachers and counselors, we gathered their feedback about pandemic-related disruptions in education and isolation as the root cause of exacerbating mental health issues and further contributing to disparities in the academic performance of our students. To provide the conditions necessary for learning, the district's priority is to ensure the well-being and safety of all students and staff. The district also is committed to supporting those students who continue to struggle academically and social-emotionally.

***What does your deeper analysis (including the triangulation of multiple types of data) suggest are the best ways to address these disparities across student groups?***

Below is a summary of how we plan to address the disparities across student groups that were revealed in our deeper analysis.

- 1. Accelerate the implementation of a Social-Emotional Learning and Mental Health (SELMH) Framework across the district:** The district’s SELMH Framework is built on a continuum of evidenced based, universally designed, developmentally responsive, trauma informed, and equity focused best practices. When integrated, these foundational principles inform decisions about how to best address the academic, social, emotional, mental, and behavioral health needs of all students. A solid understanding of these foundational principles is the first step towards implementing a successful district-wide SEL and mental health plan. The goal is full implementation of the SELMH framework over the next three years.
- 2. Be vigilant and attentive to the right move for each student with a multi-tiered system of supports:** Teachers struggle with the complex work of determining how to elevate, impact, and attend to the unique needs and characteristics of their students. Data-driven decision making and progress monitoring are critical to the success of the MTSS process. Therefore, the district plans to prioritize the use of a data dashboard which will enhance the promising Student Support Team (SST) practices and the use of a coaching model. The district believes we can drive student growth with clear insights about each student’s strengths & needs.
- 3. Provide professional learning for all Teachers & Instructional Assistants in high-leverage instructional practices:** Keeping students with disabilities in mind, the district recognizes the opportunity for student growth if we support all staff in enhancing their implementation of high-leverage practices in such areas as reading, writing, math, and social-emotional learning. A comprehensive rollout of professional learning with a focus on UDL is possible over the next three years. Our plan is to strengthen Tier 1 instruction while creating structures for Tier 2 and Tier 3. We envision the use of scaffolded supports, explicit instruction, flexible grouping, and adapted curriculum and tasks being evident district-wide.

***Based on your identification of the greatest disparities in outcomes, which student groups will require focused support for rapid improvement as you implement your evidence-based programs over the next three years?***

- English Learners
- Students with Disabilities
- Students with Low Income
- Black/African American Students
- Hispanic/Latinx Students

### **Section 3: Set Ambitious Three-Year Targets for Improving Student Achievement**

***Confirm that your district will use DESE's three-year targets for increasing performance for the "Lowest Performing Students" group in ELA and math.***

Yes. We will adopt the three-year improvement targets established by DESE for the "Lowest Performing Students" group as our district's SOA plan improvement targets.

### **Section 4: Engage Families/Caregivers and other Stakeholders**

***Describe the approaches your district uses to regularly engage with families/caregivers. In your response, please be sure to address what steps you will be taking to meaningfully engage with families/caregivers of student groups you are targeting for accelerated improvement as this plan is implemented.***

In Needham Public Schools, meaningful engagement with families and caregivers is an integral component of the District Strategic Plan and each School Improvement Plan. There are regularly scheduled meetings, in most cases held monthly, with families representing different stakeholder groups, including: Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC); English Language Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) launched last year; the METCO Needham Parent Council; PTC President meetings with the Superintendent; as well as PTC meetings, School Council meetings, and informal Family Coffees with principals at each of our 8 schools. The School Committee also interacts informally with families two times per year at Open Houses. The ongoing conversations at these meetings provide an opportunity to engage representatives from the families of student subgroups most in need of support and open the door to training volunteers from diverse backgrounds to serve as cultural brokers to help engage other families.

In addition, the district offers Parent Open Houses and Parent University to partner with families/caregivers on how to support children at home and to provide opportunities for families to enhance their understanding of the school curriculum and student mental health challenges. The district also is piloting programs for the translation of teachers' phone and text messages to accommodate families needing translation services.

To complement these meetings and programs, the district has a well-established 58-member REAL Coalition (Race, Equity, Access, Leadership) with representative students, parents, educators, and community members (from the Needham Human Rights Committee and the Needham Housing Authority) who focus on equity in our classrooms. The REAL Coalition meets for half-day sessions several times per year to learn about the district's equity work, provide feedback, and grow as leaders who can promote equity within our schools and community. The REAL Coalition will be engaged in accelerating growth for student groups targeted in our SOA plan.

***Describe the ways in which you engaged different stakeholder groups in the development of your three-year SOA Plan. How have you integrated the perspectives of those groups into the three-year plan? How will you continue to engage stakeholders throughout the implementation of your plan?***

A significant source of feedback from different stakeholder groups is the annual District Survey of families, students,

and staff. The survey is translated into all the languages needed by our English Language Learners and families whose home language is not English. Results are compared with data from previous years, by stakeholder groups including families and students who are English learners or have disabilities; and those who identify as Black/African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latinx, Multi-race, White. The survey findings along with regular engagement with different stakeholder groups helped the district to identify areas for growth within subgroups and informed the decisions for next steps in the SOA planning process.

As we work toward effective implementation of the SOA plan to address systemic issues that impact those from historically underserved groups in the Needham Public Schools, we will continue to monitor feedback from families, students, and staff through the annual district survey and regularly scheduled meetings. In-depth analysis of the data will continue along with stakeholder focus groups, as needed, to explore emerging issues and to dig deeper into the perspectives of the subgroups.

*Confirm you engaged with the following stakeholder groups in the development of this plan: parents/caregivers, special education and English learner parent advisory councils, school improvement councils, and educators in the school district.*

YES

*Confirm that your school committee voted to approve this plan and provide the date of the vote.*

- **Agenda item for the School Committee Meeting being held March 19, 2024**

## Section 5: Select Evidence-Based Programs to Address Disparities in Outcomes

*Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.*

**Focus Area 1.1:** Promote students' physical and mental health and wellness in welcoming, affirming, and safe spaces

*Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?*

**EBP 1.1B - Enhanced Support for SEL and Mental Health:** Expand capacity to address social-emotional learning (SEL) and mental health needs of students and families (e.g., build knowledge and skills of staff, add specialized support staff, partner with community-based providers, strengthen plans for responding to behavioral health medical emergencies, etc.)

*Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).*

Needham Public Schools has been providing students with social-emotional learning and mental health support for many years. The district adopted CASEL's 10 Indicators of School-Wide SEL. These indicators capture what we see in the classroom when SEL is fully implemented such as explicit SEL instruction, SEL integrated with academic instruction, youth voice and engagement, and supportive school climate, among other indicators. As we continue to recover from the impact of COVID and school disruptions, these practices have become even more important. To that end, the district formed a Mental Health Committee in FY23 comprised of educators, counselors, behaviorists, psychologists, and school and district leaders who began to collaborate with the SEL Committee members representing each of our 8 schools. Together they drafted the district's SEL and Mental Health (SELMH) Framework as a tiered continuum of supports.

The district now recognizes that more work needs to be done at both the Tier One proactive core level for general education as well as Tier Two and Tier Three intervention level to provide services universally, consistently, and skillfully across all schools. Therefore, one of the district's professional learning priorities will focus on the SELMH Framework and implementation of Responsive Classroom and Second Step Curriculum with fidelity for grades K to 5 and Restorative Practices for grades 6 to 12. Over the next three years, there will be targeted, data-informed SELMH professional learning rolled out through a variety of methods including Summer work, Early Release Day professional development, Faculty Meeting workshops weaved into training programs on specific topic areas, coaching sessions, during observation conversations, and reinforced as a general practice to make progress in addressing disparities in our data. By including Restorative Practices, we aim to create a more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive environment for all students, and a potential reduction in office referrals and disciplinary measures. This is a critical step as we work to counter disproportionality in discipline practices for certain student groups based on race, low-income status, and ability.

The SOA plan, when fully implemented, will enable student access to evidence-based and data-driven mental health supports and strategies, with a strong general education experience promoting mental health for all, as well as supplemental supports and strategies if/when needed.

***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?***

District-wide

***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.***

We anticipate spending approximately \$564,000 across three years in all categories.

***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.***

Second Step Online Subscription: \$56,165 - Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology  
Restorative Practices from Suffolk: \$103,000 - Professional Development  
Responsive classroom training: \$37,200 - Professional Development  
Ongoing PD and consultation: \$30,000 - Professional Development  
Stipends for SEL Committee and Mental Health Committee: \$59,264 - Classroom & Specialist Teachers  
Stipends for SST Screening & Intervention: \$18,520 - Classroom & Specialist Teachers  
Summer curriculum work for implementation of SELMH: \$ 15,000 - Classroom & Specialist Teachers  
Panorama for SEL platform: \$85,015 - Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology  
Book for restorative practices: *Circle Forward* \$30/each (K-8 Teachers): \$9,450 - Professional Development  
Therapeutic Clinical Consultation: \$150,000 - Pupil Services  
Total: \$563,614

***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***

(e.g., Professional Development, Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Instructional Materials, Equipment & Technology)

Administration: \$0  
Guidance & Psychological: \$0  
Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$92,784  
Other Teaching Services: \$0  
Pupil Services: \$150,000  
Professional Development: \$141,180  
Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: \$179,650  
Other: \$0  
Total: \$563,614

***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.***

- Change in SEL and Mental Health measures from District Survey of students in grades 3 to 12
- Change in select indicators from biennial MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey of students in grades 6-12
- Decrease in chronic absenteeism and out-of-school suspensions

***Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.***

**Focus Area 1.2:** Implement a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) that helps all students progress both academically and in their social, emotional, and behavioral development

***Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?***

**EBP 1.2B - Comprehensive Tiered Supports:** Provide a comprehensive set of tiered supports for all learners across all three domains - academic, social/emotional, and behavioral - that are culturally sustaining and universally designed

***Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).***

The district is making progress with a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for students to receive interventions in literacy, math, and social-emotional learning. With MTSS, the district is working towards proactively identifying and addressing the strengths and needs of students through data-driven decision-making and progress monitoring. Evidence-based supports and strategies with increasing intensity are being used to support student growth.

Here are a few examples of what the district has in place to identify Tier Two and Tier Three needs of our students:

- All kindergarten students are screened using a tool aligned to the science of reading. This universal screening is an important part of the district's earlier identification of children at risk for dyslexia and other reading struggles in order to provide them with the supports they need in grades K, 1, and 2.
- STAR Math, a multiple-choice test used to measure math progression, is being used to provide our teachers with insights into each student's math proficiency and address student outcomes.
- A research-backed Student Well-Being Survey, provided through Panorama Education, is being administered with all students in Grades 3 to 5 and helps teachers measure their students' positive and challenging feelings, as well as how supported students feel through their relationships with others.
- There is a Student Support Team (SST) process with educators and administrators meeting to address concerns about students at risk. The SSTs both anticipate and prevent issues before they occur by identifying/providing interventions or resources.

Here are a few examples of what the district has in place as MTSS interventions and resources:

- Over the past two years, the district has provided equity-focused coaching for classroom teachers. Our instructional coaching model is a collaborative process which supports adult professional learning and impacts the academic and social-emotional learning of students. Coaches are working alongside teachers and teams to set goals for student learning and collaborate to achieve those goals through co-planning, co-teaching, observation, and reflections as well as analyzing evidence of student growth. In addition, student intervention cycles on targeted goals are delivered by coaches.
- The Summer Bridge Program was started in response to the pandemic. Literacy and math data showed that the impact for some of our elementary students was greater than for others. The data also confirmed that the interruption in learning due to COVID exacerbated existing inequities for our students of color and historically underserved communities. Summer Bridges incorporates universally designed and culturally relevant lessons, materials, scaffolds, and supports over an intensive 4-week learning experience to boost the reading and math skills of rising students in grades 1 to 5 who require targeted intervention.



- A math curriculum review was inspired by a state high-quality implementation grant for K-5 implementation and has become a full PK-12 review of math content, scope, and sequence as well as supporting pedagogy to meet the needs of diverse learners. The curriculum review will support staff members in examining curriculum, implementation, and student outcome data for more equitable outcomes. The review includes classroom observations at all grade levels, focus groups, and surveys in addition to state and local assessment analysis. Findings will be used to support the selection of curriculum resources, professional learning opportunities, and improve student placement procedures.

Over the next three years, the district will bring cohesion to our Multi-Tiered System of Supports by continuing the promising coaching model and the SST process, and by prioritizing a data dashboard that enables data usage practices across the district. In addition to the Math curriculum review in process, the district's next step in providing a comprehensive set of tiered supports necessitates a Literacy curriculum review in order to fully implement Needham's SOA plan.

***Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?***

District-wide (though some are level specific)

***What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.***

Approximately \$8,672,000

***Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.***

STAR Math: \$82,509  
 Summer Bridges Staff, Transportation, and Coordination: \$258,524  
 Data Dashboard to support data usage practices: \$205,300  
 Consultant for Curriculum review: \$12,000  
 Stipends for SST Screening & Intervention: \$18,520  
 Instructional Coaches (Literacy, Math): \$7,143,298  
 Instructional Coaching Administration (Literacy, Math, Social Studies): \$952,044  
 Total: \$8,672,195

***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***

Administration: \$982,044  
 Guidance & Psychological: \$0  
 Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$7,310,428  
 Other Teaching Services: \$12,000  
 Pupil Services: \$79,914  
 Professional Development: \$0  
 Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: \$ 287,809  
 Other: \$0  
 Total: \$8,672,195

***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.***

- Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on Math and ELA MCAS
- Decrease in Chronic Absenteeism rates
- Change in select indicators from local assessments

**Select the Focus Area that your district will prioritize over the next three years to address the academic disparities identified in your data analysis.**

**Focus Area 2.2:** Use the MTSS process to implement academic supports and interventions that provide all students, particularly students with disabilities and multilingual learners, equitable access to deeper learning

**Which EBPs will your district implement within this Focus Area?**

**EBP 2.2B - High Leverage Practices for Students with Disabilities:** Train all staff in high-leverage instructional practices designed for students with disabilities (e.g., providing scaffolded supports, explicit instruction, flexible grouping, and adapting curriculum and tasks based on students' specific learning goals)

**Provide a short description of what your district has in place now related to this EBP and what you anticipate will be in place by the conclusion of the plan's implementation (by June 2027).**

In the current school year, 18.2% of the district's student population receives special services to accommodate disabilities. The Needham Public Schools provides a wide range of specialized instruction that represents a continuum of service delivery options. In keeping with the federal mandate of Least Restrictive Environment, teams consider providing specialized instruction in the general education classroom first. The vast majority of our special education students receive their specialized instruction within an inclusive environment, spending more than 80% of their day in the general education classroom.

Currently, there is a consult structure for reviewing progress toward IEP goals. In addition, there are "What I Need" (WIN) Blocks scheduled at every level for direct support of immediate, individualized student goals. There are Extended School Year services provided that target the areas in which a student with special needs is at risk of substantial regression and these, historically, have been offered for 4 to 6 weeks over the summer.

The complex task ahead is translating the many research-based, high leverage practices that exist into classroom instruction across different content domains and grade levels for students with disabilities and for other students with learning differences. Over the next three years, we plan to support all teachers and instructional assistants in enhancing their implementation of these high-leverage practices in such areas as reading, writing, math, and social-emotional learning.

Consulting services from Novak Education and others have been provided to several educators in the district, covering the importance of bridging the gap between special education and general education practices and utilizing the principles of Universal Design for Learning. A more intensive and comprehensive approach to the rollout of professional learning to all teachers and instructional assistants with a focus on UDL will help move the district forward in fully implementing this portion of our SOA plan. The district will strengthen Tier 1 instruction while creating structures for Tier 2 and Tier 3. We envision district-wide use of scaffolded supports, explicit instruction, flexible grouping, and adapted curriculum and tasks to support students with disabilities.

**Which schools will be impacted by these efforts (answer can be district-wide)?**

District-wide

**What is the anticipated amount of funding that will be allocated to this EBP over the next three years (FY25 + FY26 + FY27), across all funding sources? Total should be cumulative.**

Approximately \$1,305,000

**Describe the anticipated allocation of funds to this EBP in more detail.**

Special Education Extended School Year Program: \$920,519  
Math Review: \$180,000

UDL Training: \$129,300  
Inclusive Practices Training: \$37,500  
Co-Teaching Training: \$37,500  
Total: \$1,304,819

***Which budget foundation categories (G.L. c. 70) will be included in this anticipated annual allocation?***

Administration: \$0  
Guidance & Psychological: \$0  
Classroom & Specialist Teachers: \$885,938  
Other Teaching Services: \$0  
Pupil Services: \$34,581  
Professional Development: \$384,300  
Instructional Materials, Equipment, & Technology: \$  
Other: \$0  
Total: \$1,304,819

***What metrics will your district use to monitor progress on this EBP? Please keep in mind that you will be asked to report on progress against these metrics in your annual update to DESE starting next year.***

- Increase in % of students meeting or exceeding on Math and ELA MCAS
- Decrease in Chronic Absenteeism rates
- Local assessments
- Increase in % of students completing Advanced Courses by subgroups



## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Action**

**Approve Creation of Transportation Reimbursement Fund**

Action Recommended:

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent, that the Needham School Committee approves the creation of a transportation reimbursement fund as submitted.

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***NEEDHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE***

**Agenda Item #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** March 19, 2024

**Item Title:** **Create Transportation Reimbursement Fund**

**Item Description:** The recently approved legislation, “An Act Relative to School Operational Efficiency” (Acts of 2022 Chapter 198), gives municipal school districts the ability to create a transportation reimbursement fund under MGL c. 71 s. 99, similar to what regional schools are already able to do under MGL c. 71 s 16C.

Under the new law, a school district can deposit transportation-related reimbursements made by the Commonwealth under MGL c. 71 directly to the fund, and can expend them for school transportation purposes without further appropriation. Reimbursements made by the Commonwealth pursuant to this statute, which include reimbursements for regular education students living more than 1.5 miles from school and for foster care students, may carry forward for one fiscal year. Currently, Needham does not receive reimbursement in either category, although it has the ability to claim and receive reimbursement for foster care transportation, when applicable.

**Issues:** MGL c. 71 s. 99 authorizes the creation of a Transportation Reimbursement Fund.

**Recommendation/Options:** Approve the creation of a Transportation Reimbursement Fund pursuant to MGL c. 71 s. 99

**Implementation Implications:**

**Supporting Data:** Session Law – Acts of 2022 Chapter 198

School Committee (circle one)

Action       Information       Discussion       Consent Calendar

Central Administrator      Town Counsel      Sub-Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Will report back to School Committee (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully Submitted,

*Anne Gulati*

Anne Gulati  
Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

## Acts (2022)

### Chapter 198

#### AN ACT RELATIVE TO SCHOOL OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 4 of chapter 30B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out subsection (a) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(a) Except as permitted pursuant to this section and section 7, for the procurement of a supply or service for a governmental body in the amount of \$10,000 or greater, but not more than \$50,000, a procurement officer shall seek written quotations from not fewer than 3 persons customarily providing the supply or service; provided, however, that for the procurement of a supply or service for a municipal or regional school district, such amount shall be \$10,000 or greater but not more than \$100,000. The procurement officer shall record the: (i) names and addresses of all person from whom quotations were sought; (ii) purchase description used for the procurement; (iii) names of the persons submitting quotations; and (iv) date and amount of each quotation. Such information shall be retained in the file required pursuant to section 3. A governmental body may require that any procurement for the governmental body in an amount of not more than \$50,000 shall be subject to section 5; provided, however, that any procurement for a municipal or regional school district such amount shall be not more than \$100,000.

SECTION 2. Section 5 of said chapter 30B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out subsection (a) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(a) Except as permitted under section 6 or section 8, award of procurement contracts in the amount of more than \$50,000 or, in the case of a municipal or regional school district, award of procurement contracts in the amount of more than \$100,000, shall conform to the competitive sealed bidding procedures set forth in this section. This subsection shall not apply to contracts for the procurement of real property.

SECTION 3. Said section 5 of said chapter 30B, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the figure “\$50,000”, in line 38, the following words:- , or, for a municipal or regional school district, more than \$100,000.

SECTION 4. Section 6 of said chapter 30B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure “\$50,000”, in line 2, the following words:- , or, a municipal or regional school district, more than \$100,000,.

SECTION 5. Section 6A of said chapter 30B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure “\$50,000”, in line 2, the following words:- , or, a municipal or regional school district, more than \$100,000.

SECTION 6. Section 7 of said chapter 30B, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the figure “\$50,000”, in line 2, the following words:- , or, a municipal or regional school district, more than \$100,000,.

SECTION 7. Section 56 of chapter 41 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by adding the following sentence:- This section shall not prohibit payment to be made for: (i) school travel prior to the date of travel; or (ii) the payment of software licenses, software maintenance agreements or online subscription services for school curriculum prior to the fiscal year in which services shall be rendered.



SECTION 8. Section 53F½ of chapter 44 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “utility”, in line 4, the following words:- , school transportation service.

SECTION 9. Said section 53F½ of said chapter 44, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the word “enterprise”, in line 22, the following words:- ; provided, that for a school transportation service the appropriate local entity shall be the school committee.

SECTION 10. Section 49A of chapter 71 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 6, the words “, provided that no payment therefor shall” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- ; provided, however, that payment may.

SECTION 11. Said chapter 71 is hereby further amended by adding the following section:-

Section 99. Notwithstanding section 53 of chapter 44 or any other general or special law to the contrary, a school district may establish a School Transportation Reimbursement Fund. Reimbursements made by the commonwealth pursuant to this chapter may be deposited into the fund and may carry forward for 1 fiscal year. Funds received by a school district shall be deposited with the treasurer of the city or town and held as a separate account and expended by the school committee for the purposes of school transportation without further appropriation.

SECTION 12. Section 8A½ of chapter 90 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following paragraph:-

The registrar shall act upon an application for a license issued pursuant to this section within 14 days after of submission to the registry.

Approved, August 26, 2022.



## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:    **School Committee Comments**

Background Information:

- Members of the School Committee will have an opportunity to report on events, information, and matters of interest not on the agenda.

Members of the School Committee available for comment:

Andrea Longo Carter, Chair

Elizabeth Lee, Vice-Chair

Connie Barr

Michael Greis

Michael O'Brien

Alisa Skatrud

Matthew Spengler

Lea Gruen, Student Representative member of School Committee

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## Needham School Committee

March 19, 2024

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Agenda Item:     **Information Items**

- Student Activity Funds FY2022 Accountants Report
  - Revised ACCEPT Education Collaborative Agreement
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**INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT ON APPLYING  
AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES TO MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION'S (DESE)  
AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES AND AUDIT GUIDELINES: STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS**

To the Superintendent and School Committee  
**Town of Needham, Massachusetts**

We have performed the procedures enumerated below, related to the requirements set forth in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (the DESE) *Agreed-Upon Procedures and Audit Guidelines: Student Activity Funds* for the year ended June 30, 2022. The Needham Public Schools' (the School District) management is responsible for its compliance with those requirements.

The engaging party, the School District has agreed to and acknowledged that the procedures performed are appropriate to meet the intended purpose specified in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) *Agreed-Upon Procedures and Audit Guidelines: Student Activity Funds* for the year ended June 30, 2022. This report may not be suitable for any other purpose. The procedures performed may not address all the items of interest to a user of this report and may not meet the needs of all users of this report and, as such, users are responsible for determining whether the procedures performed are appropriate for their purposes.

Our procedures and results are reported in the attached Schedule of DESE Agreed-Upon Procedures and Audit Guidelines: Student Activity Funds Results.

We were engaged by the School District to perform this agreed-upon procedures engagement and conducted our engagement in accordance with attestation standards established by the AICPA. We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review engagement, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on compliance with the DESE's requirements for student activity funds for the year ended June 30, 2022. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

We are required to be independent of the School District and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our agreed-upon procedures engagement.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the School District and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

*Marcum LLP*

Andover, MA  
March 4, 2024

**DESE AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES AND AUDIT GUIDELINES: STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS RESULTS**

DESE Policy Guideline or MGL Requirement	Agreed-Upon Procedures	Results
<b>I. ADMINISTRATION</b>		
<p>A. The School Committee should adopt policies and procedures for the creation, operation, control and public reporting of student activity accounts. These policies should be reviewed periodically and amended when necessary. The accounts by statute are the responsibility of the school principal and thus it is the direct responsibility of the principal to ensure that the statute, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures are fully adhered to in all aspects of operating student activity accounts.</p>	<p>1. Inquire and obtain evidence that policies and procedures have been adopted by the School Committee. Inspect School Committee minutes as evidence.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
	<p>1. Inspect formal policies and procedures for the existence of the following DESE requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Policies must require adequate internal control to ensure protection of student monies.</li> <li>b. Policies must be complete and satisfy MGL.</li> <li>c. Policies must only govern student activity money and not money that is governed under other MGL. (see related Massachusetts General Laws and Appendix E of DESE compliance supplement)</li> </ul>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>

	<p>d. Procedures should be developed that support policy and provide for segregation of duties.</p> <p>e. Policies and procedures must be updated when applicable.</p>	
<p>B. Although not required, it is good practice for the School Committee to approve each student activity annually. This should be done before the start of the school year unless activities are new and created during the year. The approval should include specific funding sources and objective/mission for each activity.</p>	<p>1. Obtain a listing of each active student activity and inquire if each student activity has been approved annually by the School Committee or if new, was approved during the year. Confirmed that the approval was included in the School Committee minutes through a School Committee vote.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
<p>C. A student activity account may be used for funds raised by student organizations which will be expended by those students for their benefit. Funds raised or donated that are governed by laws other than the student activity laws cannot be deposited to a student activity account. (See section on related Massachusetts General Laws and Appendix E.) In addition, funds belonging to staff through sunshine funds or vending machines or other activities not related to the students may not be deposited in the student activity account.</p>	<p>1. Obtain a listing of each active student activity. From this list, determine the source of funding and objective of each student activity. Determine if student activity accounts are appropriately classified based on Massachusetts General Laws.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
<p>D. An accounting system for the student activity funds must be implemented and in a sufficient manner to facilitate basic reconciliation and control procedures. An accounting system may be an off-the-shelf accounting application, a properly designed electronic spreadsheet or for smaller student activity accounts, a manual system. The determination of the appropriate accounting system will vary school by school based on a variety of factors including volume and frequency of student activity transactions and the skills of those in charge with administering the day-to-day accounting for student activities.</p>	<p>1. Through inquiry and observation, determine that the accounting system used for the student activity funds facilitates the following:</p> <p>a. Accurate recording and reporting of cash receipts and disbursements by each student activity fund in the school student activity ledgers;</p> <p>b. Recording of a general cash and/or investment account that can be reconciled with the bank checking account for student activity maintained by the Principal, combined with agency savings account maintained by the City/Town/District Treasurer; and</p> <p>c. General cash and/or investment accounts in aggregate can be reconciled to the</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>

	aggregate detailed fund accounts within the student activity fund recorded for and held by each student activity.	
E. The qualifications of the individuals involved with processing, recording and reporting student activity account transaction is adequate, and an ongoing process of training is in place to ensure that these individuals maintain the required level of skills to possess such duties.	1. Through inquiry, determine if all individuals who process, record, and report student activity transactions have been trained in the skills necessary to perform the duties in an adequate manner.	Procedures performed without exception.
	2. Through inquiry, determine if there is an ongoing process of training in place.	Procedures performed without exception.
<b>II. STEWARDSHIP AND CUSTODIAL RESPONSIBILITY</b>		
A. Section 47 of Chapter 71 of MGL as amended by Chapter 66 of the Special Acts of 1996, requires that once the School Committee has accepted the provisions of this law, an agency account must be set up by the City/Town/District Treasurer. These are generally established as an interest bearing savings account, and, if authorized by the School Committee A checking Account which acts as an imprest (replenishment) account to be administered by the School Principal.  Maximum checking account fund levels are established and annually voted on by the School Committee.  All deposits for fund raising and other student activities must be deposited in the agency account with the City/Town/District Treasurer. Disbursements may be made from either account.  The Principal may request replenishment of the checking account to the maximum established balance by presentation of a funds request to the City/Town/District Treasurer, accompanied by invoices or other support for disbursements previously made from the checking account	1. Determine if the School Committee has accepted the provisions of Section 47 of Chapter 71 of MGL and that the acceptance is evidenced in School Committee minutes through a School Committee vote or certification of vote.	Procedures performed without exception.



<p>The Principal or their designee who are designated to operate and control the student activity checking account shall give bond for faithful performance to the municipality or district in such amount as the City/Town/District Treasurer shall determine to secure the Principal's faithful performance of their duties in connection with such account. Annually, the School Committee should authorize any such designees and ensure bond coverage.</p> <p>There shall be an annual audit of the student activity funds which shall be conducted in accordance with procedures as agreed upon between the School Committee and the auditor based upon guidelines issued by DESE. In addition, DESE recommends the audit be performed by an outside independent audit firm once every three years for those with activities greater than \$25,000. In the intervening years, the audit may be conducted by a responsible individual independent of the student activities, with the approval of the School Committee. Such an individual could be the Town Accountant, who already has audit powers under MGL Chapter 41 the Treasurer, or the School Business Manager if the School Business Manager is not involved in the administration or transactional processing of the student activities.</p>		
	<p>2. Determine that all student activity deposits are made to an agency account maintained by City/Town/District Treasurer.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
	<p>3. Determine if the School Principal makes requests for replenishment of funds to the imprest checking account, including submission of original invoices or equivalent supporting documentation.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
	<p>4. Inspect selected checking account bank statements to determine if checking account balances exceeded amounts established by the School Committee.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>

	5. Determine if the School Principal and/or their designee (if applicable) have given bond to the City/Town/ District Treasurer for faithful performance, and that all designees have been properly authorized by the School Committee.	
	6. Determine if annual audits have been performed, either by an outside independent audit firm or as is permissible, internally.	Procedures performed without exception.
<b>III. GENERAL OPERATING PROCEDURES</b>		
<p>A. Section 47 of Chapter 71 does not address the adoption of specific policies or procedural guidelines, but does require adherence to administrative procedures as may be prescribed. DESE makes recommendations to maintain minimum general operating procedures in the administration of student activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bank reconciliations must be done at least quarterly (preferably monthly). A copy of the bank reconciliation should be sent to the School Business Administrator, School Committee, student officers, and City/Town/District Treasurer. Sign-offs must be performed by preparers and reviewers.</li> <li>▪ Standardized forms should be used for deposits and disbursements whenever possible;</li> <li>▪ The School Committee and School Business Administrator should establish periodic reporting timelines. Financial reports should be created and submitted in accordance with those guidelines to the School Committee, School Business Office, Town Accountant, Treasurer and the individual student activity class/club advisors;</li> <li>▪ The school Principal shall maintain individual subsidiary accounts by program within the student activity control account. This will allow proper matching of program expenditures against revenues that are collected for that purpose as</li> </ul>	1. Through inquiry, observations, and inspection of bank reconciliations, determine if bank reconciliations are prepared at least quarterly and sent to the appropriate parties for review; and that sign-offs by both preparer and reviewer are included in the process.	Procedures performed without exception.

<p>well as allow for the efficient determination of the program balance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aggregate subsidiary account balances should be reconciled no less than quarterly to the total control account, and;</li> <li>▪ Total control account balances should be reconciled no less than quarterly to the aggregate total of the School Principal's reconciled checking account and the agency account maintained by the Treasurer.</li> </ul>		
	2. Determine if standard forms for deposits and disbursements are used.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Through inquiry and inspection, determine if a requirement for the preparation and periodic submission to the School Committee, School Business Office, Town Accountant, Treasurer and the student activity class/club officers of financial reports exists; and if such policy is adhered with.	Procedures performed without exception.
	4. Through inquiry and inspection, determine if subsidiary student activity account detail is maintained and if the aggregate of the subsidiary accounts were reconciled to the control account on a monthly basis.	Procedures performed without exception.
<b>IV. REVENUE, RECEIPTS AND DEPOSITS</b>		
<p>A. The receipts process is most susceptible to theft and abuse since cash collections for student activities are normally decentralized, and individuals collecting cash are often young students inexperienced with cash handling.</p> <p>DESE recommends strict procedures for control of all receipts and should include at a minimum, the following controls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Receipts generated from the sale of a high volume product such as the yearbook or admission to a highly attended event like the</li> </ul>	1. Through inquiry of the School Principal or their designee, documented the process by which receipts are administered in order to gain an understanding of the internal control process in place. In addition, while conducting the inquiry, determine if the following have been addressed or developed:	Procedures performed without exception.

<p>prom or other dance or ball, should be controlled through the use of pre-numbered receipts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A reconciliation process should be in place whereby pre-numbered receipts, tickets, attendance logs or other revenue source documents are reconciled to cash collected for particular activities prior to making a deposit in the bank. In the situation where it is impractical to use source documents, two people should count the cash and sign off on the process.</li> <li>▪ The cash collection and deposit function should be segregated from the accounting and recording function.</li> <li>▪ All student organizations receiving monies from any source should turn over such money to the School Principal or the Principal's designee within twenty-four hours from receipt of such funds. (If received on the weekend, then on the first business day after receipt of the funds.)</li> <li>▪ Any money not deposited on the same day must be kept overnight in a locked vault, safe, or other secured locked area - <b>under no circumstance, should student activity monies be taken home overnight.</b></li> <li>▪ All money turned over to the school by a student organization shall be accompanied by a school deposit slip stating the source of the monies, the amount being deposited, and signed by the person turning over the money to the office. If turned in by a student, this should be co-signed by the group advisor or a teacher, who should also keep a duplicate of the deposit slip.</li> <li>▪ The School Principal or the Principal's designee should deposit into the agency account all monies received from student activity organizations at a minimum on a weekly basis. Written evidence of receipt should be obtained from the City/Town/District Treasurer.</li> <li>▪ Interest earned by the student activity agency account shall be retained by the student activity</li> </ul>		
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<p>fund. The use of the aggregate earnings shall be at the discretion of the School Committee for the benefit of the students and shall be so stated in the School Committee policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An ongoing philosophy of the importance of handling money with care, honesty, and accuracy should be conveyed to the students, advisors and teachers through roundtable meetings and educational trainings.</li> <li>▪ Money collected for purposes other than student activities shall not be deposited into the student activity account and must be handled by the MGL that governs its administration.</li> <li>▪ Any monies paid to the school or to a student activity as commissions or revenue sharing belong to the students and shall be deposited into the student activity agency account. Such funds shall be expended for the benefit of the students in accordance with School Committee policies and may not be spent to benefit the staff or to supplement the school budget. Refer to Frequently Asked Questions Q4 for the appropriate treatment of these revenues.</li> <li>▪ A policy must be adopted by the School Committee that specifies how any other undesignated receipts will be distributed and such receipts must be deposited into the student activity agency account. No student activity revenues will be deposited into the School Principal's checking account.</li> </ul>		
	a. Determine if pre-numbered receipts, tickets, and attendance logs are used;	Procedures performed without exception.
	b. Determine if any pre-numbered receipts or tickets were skipped and investigate why;	Procedures performed without exception.
	c. Determine if a reconciliation process is performed between pre-numbered receipts, tickets, and attendance logs and the funds being turned over;	Procedures performed without exception.
	d. Determine that in situations when pre-numbered receipts, tickets and attendance	Procedures performed without exception.

	logs are not practical, that two responsible people have each counted the cash received;	
	e. Determine if funds collected for student activities are turned over to the School Principal's Office within twenty-four hours;	Procedures performed without exception.
	f. Determine if funds not immediately turned over are stored in a secure location;	Procedures performed without exception.
	g. Determine if the School Principal is turning funds over to the City/Town/District Treasurer agency account weekly (at a minimum); h. Determine if an interest earned policy exists and is documented;	Procedures performed without exception.
	i. Determine if a commission or revenue sharing policy exists and is documented;	Procedures performed without exception.
	j. Determine if a policy for undesignated earnings exists and is documented; and	Procedures performed without exception.
	k. Determine if a philosophy exists through ongoing training that monies are to be handled with care, in an accurate manner;	Procedures performed without exception.
	2. Made a sample of receipts (5 from each school) that were made from the school deposit slips. If possible, the sample should be made from the population of duplicate deposit slips maintained by the class advisor.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Upon determination of the sample, performed the following procedures on each:	
	a. Agreed to the receipt amount included on the deposit slip.	Procedures performed without exception.
	b. Agreed to the deposit included in the bank statement.	Procedures performed without exception.
	c. Agreed the deposit amount with the accounting system's records.	Procedures performed without exception.
	d. Determine that the receipt was for a proper student activity account.	Procedures performed without exception.

	e. Agreed the receipt to the proper subsidiary activity in the student activities' ledger.	Procedures performed without exception.
	f. Determine if pre-numbered receipt used.	Procedures performed without exception.
	g. Determine that the funds were remitted within twenty-four hours or within the next business day (if a weekend day) to the School Principal's Office.	Procedures performed without exception.
	h. Determine that the funds were remitted by the School Principal's Office to the City/Town/District Treasurer's agency account within one week.	Procedures performed without exception.
	i. Determine that the receipt was accompanied by a school deposit slip.	Procedures performed without exception.
	j. Determine that there is written evidence of receipt of the deposit from the City/Town/District Treasurer.	Procedures performed without exception.
	k. Determine that a duplicate of the school deposit slip is maintained by the advisor and signed by the advisor.	Procedures performed without exception.
<b>V. PURCHASING AND DISBURSEMENTS</b>		
<p>A. MGL 71, Section 47 gives the responsibility for the establishment of student activity accounts to the School Committee and the enforcement of School Committee policies to the School Principals; such is the case with purchasing and disbursements. It is important that disbursement policies are sound, controlled, and designed to benefit only the students.</p> <p>In order to accomplish this goal, DESE recommends the following at a minimum are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advance of funds should be avoided whenever possible. If it is anticipated that an advance is necessary, prior written approval must be obtained from the School Principal.</li> <li>▪ Equipment and supplies purchased with student activity funds are the property of the student activity groups and not any individual student or other organization. Equipment and supplies</li> </ul>	<p>1. Through inquiry of the School Principal or their designee, documented the process by which disbursements are administered in order to gain an understanding of the internal control process in place. In addition, while conducting the inquiry, determine if the following have been addressed or developed:</p>	Procedures performed without exception.



<p>purchased with student activity funds should be used exclusively for co-curricular student activities and not for the general use of School operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student advisors, or others involved in purchasing, may not benefit personally from any purchasing – either directly or indirectly.</li> <li>▪ Student activity funds may not be used for any purpose unrelated to student activities or for the benefit of any staff person.</li> <li>▪ All disbursements shall be made by check.</li> <li>▪ The policy adopted by the School Committee should specify the method or methods to be used to pay for expenses, including how to handle the reimbursement of funds when personal credit cards are used. (This is important because of the potential “reward” benefits the credit card holder may accrue).</li> <li>▪ Disbursements exceeding \$600 in aggregate to any one individual or entity must be reviewed to determine if a Form 1099-MISC. is required. Process should be coordinated with the Town Accountant or Treasurer to ensure compliance.</li> <li>▪ Checks may not be written to cash.</li> <li>▪ Checks shall be signed only after they are completely prepared.</li> <li>▪ Check signature authority shall be in accordance with School Committee policy. Consideration should be given to require two signatures for individual disbursements made over a certain dollar amount.</li> <li>▪ Individuals responsible for writing checks should be segregated from the record keeping and reconciliation process; or assurances should be made that other mitigating controls are in place such as a monthly review of all activity by an independent responsible individual.</li> <li>▪ All disbursements are required to have adequate external supporting documentation such as a vendor invoice, bill contract or receipt.</li> </ul>		
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A record of all checks will be maintained, including void checks. Numerical order of checks should be retained.</li> <li>▪ Checkbook reconciliations should be performed monthly.</li> <li>▪ A standardized form should accompany all requests for check issuance.</li> <li>▪ The standardized form shall be accompanied by the supporting documentation and must state to whom the check shall be payable, the reason for the payment, the amount of the check, the student activity account to be charged, and the approval signature of the advisor or student officer.</li> <li>▪ All requests for replenishment to the School Principal imprest checking account must be adequately supported and processed through the City/Town/District accounts payable warrant process.</li> </ul>		
	a. Determine if disbursement policies are established by the School Committee.	Procedures performed without exception.
	b. Determine if all disbursements require the Principal's (or designee's) approval.	Procedures performed without exception.
	c. Determine if all disbursements require supporting documentation.	Procedures performed without exception.
	d. Determine if cash advances are prohibited.	Procedures performed without exception.
	e. Determine if standard requests for disbursements are prepared.	Procedures performed without exception.
	f. Determine if student activity funds are used on student activities.	Procedures performed without exception.
	g. Determine that steps are in place to prohibit advisors or other individuals involved with purchasing to personally benefit in any way.	Procedures performed without exception.
	h. Determine if all purchases are recorded and check records are maintained.	Procedures performed without exception.
	i. Determine if all void or missing checks are accounted for.	Procedures performed without exception.
	j. Determine authorized signers on bank accounts.	Procedures performed without exception.

	k. Determine if a competitive process for purchasing is encouraged.	Procedures performed without exception.
	1. Determine if disbursements may only be charged against the accounts for which funds have been designated.	Procedures performed without exception.
	m. Determine if segregation of duties exists between the check writer and the individual who reconciles the bank statements. If not, determine if there are mitigating controls in place to limit risks.	Procedures performed without exception.
	2. Made a sample (5 from each school) of disbursements from the check register.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Upon determination of the sample, performed the following procedures on each:	
	a. Determine that the disbursement is accompanied by a standard request form for disbursement signed by the advisor or student treasurer.	Procedures performed without exception.
	b. Determine that the disbursement is accompanied by adequate supporting documentation (i.e., vendor invoice or receipt).	Procedures performed without exception.
	c. Determine that the disbursement is approved by the Principal.	Procedures performed without exception.
	d. Determine that the disbursement agrees to the amount in the accounting system.	Procedures performed without exception.
	e. Determine that the disbursement agrees to the amount debited on the bank statement.	Procedures performed without exception.
	f. Determine that the disbursement agrees to and is supported by a cancelled check.	Procedures performed without exception.
	g. Determine that the cancelled check is properly endorsed by an authorized signer.	Procedures performed without exception.
	h. Determine that the disbursement is an appropriate use of student activities monies, based on DESE guidelines.	Procedures performed without exception.

	i. Determine that the disbursement is charged against the proper student activity account.	Procedures performed without exception.
	j. Although not legally required, as a best practice, determine that the purchase was procured competitively.	Procedures performed without exception.
	k. Determine that no one other than students benefited from the disbursement.	Procedures performed without exception.
	l. If the disbursement is made to an individual and the disbursement causes that individual to equal or exceed \$600 in total disbursements, determine that a Form 1099-MISC has been issued to the individual.	Procedures performed without exception.
	m. Determine that the disbursement properly excludes any payments for sales tax.	Procedures performed without exception.
<b>VI. CLASS INACTIVE ACCOUNTS AND DEFICITS</b>		
A. It is DESE's opinion that, because graduates are no longer students, monies for student class grades that have graduated cannot be legally maintained in student activity accounts. DESE recommends that the School Committee approve a policy that specifies how these funds shall be disposed of upon a class' graduation. Notification of the manner of disposition should be given to the class officers and all students who contribute to the class accounts. Such policy should specify how long the class account should remain active after graduation (i.e. 90 to 180 days after graduation to permit the school to pay all class obligations). After the waiting period, the policy should specify if and how the remaining funds will be transferred to the graduates, if the funds will revert to other student activity groups (such as the incoming senior class), or other specific disposition instructions	1. Inspect School Committee policies and determine the policy for disposition of class account.	Procedures performed without exception.

	2. Obtain listing of all individual student activity accounts and scanned the listing for class accounts for students who have already graduated.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Determine if disposition is in accordance with School Committee policies.	Procedures performed without exception.
B. Any student activity inactive for a period of three (3) years or more, and for which there has been no receipts or disbursements recorded on their behalf, shall require the following actions in order to be closed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Written notification by the advisor or student officer to the School Principal or other authorized administrator that the activity will cease to be a viable account. If an advisor or student officer is not available, such discontinuance shall be by vote of the School Committee.</li> <li>▪ All assets of the recognized student activity shall be identified and stated in writing.</li> <li>▪ Any disposition of assets of an inactive recognized student activity shall be determined by the School Committee, but in no case shall the disposition benefit specific individuals.</li> <li>▪ Such policy will be communicated to the students who contribute to the accounts, when possible.</li> </ul>	1. Inspect School Committee policies and determine the policy for disposition of inactive accounts and compliance with DESE guidelines.	Procedures performed without exception.
	2. Obtain listing of all individually listed student activity accounts. Scanned listing for accounts that do not have any current or prior years' activity in order to determine if they are inactive.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Determine if disposition was in accordance with School Committee policies.	Procedures performed without exception.
Individual activity accounts should not be permitted to be in a deficit position because such a position becomes a liability to other individual activities or possibly to future classes. DESE recommends that the School Committee develop a policy for remedial action whenever a deficit	1. Inspect School Committee policies and determine the policy for the remediation of individual student activity deficit balances and whether the policy is consistent with DESE recommendations.	Procedures performed without exception.

<p>not resulting from timing exists. Possible remedial action could included funding from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School Committee appropriation;</li> <li>▪ Accumulated investment earnings;</li> <li>▪ Surpluses of inactive accounts;</li> <li>▪ Gift from an activity with a surplus balance through approval of the advisor; or</li> <li>▪ Any other legal means.</li> </ul>		
	<p>2. Obtain listing of all individually listed student activity accounts. Scanned listing for accounts and determine if any have deficit balances.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
	<p>3. Determine if disposition of deficit balances is in accordance with School Committee policies.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>
<p><b>VII. STUDENT TRAVEL</b></p>		
<p>A. The School Committee should adopt policies and procedures for student travel related to student activities (i.e. field trips, overnight, and abroad). The policy should address how travel is to be authorized, the method or methods of paying travel expenditures, and final accountability for all travel costs associated with a trip.</p> <p>The following should be included in the travel policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A request for travel authorization and funding must be prepared well in advance of the time the funds are needed</li> <li>▪ The request should be submitted by the advisor or other person responsible for the activity trip; furthermore, the request should be approved by the School Principal in accordance with policy established by the School Committee.</li> <li>▪ The request should be submitted by the advisor or other person responsible for the activity trip; furthermore, the request should be approved by</li> </ul>	<p>1. Inspect School Committee policies and determine if the policy for student travel includes the DESE requirements.</p>	<p>Procedures performed without exception.</p>

<p>the School Principal in accordance with policy established by the School Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Travel Authorization Forms should contain at least the following: date of request, date funds needed, destination and purpose of trip, estimated departure and return times, number of persons traveling, estimate of cash required for tips and other various sundry items, estimate of expenses, signature of person requesting authorization, signature of person authorizing the request, check number and date of payment, and signature of the School Principal.</li> <li>▪ The approved travel authorizations are to be submitted to the School Principal or their designee to ascertain that sufficient funds are available.</li> <li>▪ Approved Travel Authorization Forms should remain in a pending file until final accountability for the trip has been completed.</li> <li>▪ The policy adopted by the School Committee should specify the method or methods to be used to pay travel expenses, including how to handle the reimbursement of funds when personal credit cards are used. (This is important because of the potential “reward” benefits the credit card holder may accrue).</li> <li>▪ A statement of final accountability must be submitted by the authorized trip sponsor promptly after the completion of the trip. Final accountability statements should include at least the following: date; notation of advance funds received (if applicable - amount, date, and check number); complete listing of itemized expenditures paid - together with documentary evidence of payment; totals of cash or checks expended; notation and totals of credit card or open account expenses (if applicable); the amount returned to the student activities if advances received exceed documented expenditures; the amount of additional</li> </ul>		
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reimbursement requested if travel expenses incurred exceed travel advances received; signature of person completing final accountability statement and signature of School Principal or their designee to indicate that there has been an acceptable final accountability.		
	2. Inspect one travel expenditure from each school and determine that the travel is properly authorized, that there is a final accountability, and there is documentation supporting all travel-related disbursements.	Procedures performed without exception.
	3. Determine that travel expenditures are in accordance with School Committee policies.	Procedures performed without exception.

# **ACCEPT Education Collaborative**

## **Articles of Agreement**

Amended Pursuant to *MGL c 40, § 4E*

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**ACCEPT Education Collaborative Agreement**  
Pursuant to *MGL c 40, § 4E*

**PREAMBLE/ AUTHORIZATION**

This document constitutes the Collaborative Agreement of the ACCEPT Educational Collaborative (hereinafter ACCEPT or the Collaborative), established pursuant to the provisions of MGL Chapter 40, Section 4E of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and acts or amendments thereof as they may from time to time be enacted by the legislature, and 603 CMR 50.00.

This Agreement replaces the original Agreement dated September 1, 1976, as most recently amended on May 19, 2015, entered into by and between the School Committees and charter school boards which are listed in Section I (hereinafter, the "member districts") and will be effective on July 1, 2024 after the approval of the member districts and the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as indicated on the signatory page.

**SECTION I: MEMBERSHIP**

All member districts will appoint their superintendents or charter school board member as their appointed representatives. The membership of the ACCEPT Education Collaborative, as of the effective date of this Agreement, includes the School Committees from the following school districts, as indicated by the Chairs of the School Committees:

- Ashland
- Dover
- Dover-Sherborn
- Framingham
- Franklin
- Holliston
- Hopkinton
- South Middlesex Regional Vocational (Joseph P. Keefe Technical)
- Medfield
- Medway
- Millis
- Natick
- Needham
- Sudbury
- Sherborn
- Wellesley
- Westborough

**SECTION II: MISSION, OBJECTIVES, FOCUS, AND PURPOSES**

**Mission, Purpose and Focus**

Since its formation in 1974, ACCEPT Education Collaborative has established trusted partnerships to promote excellence and innovation in educational practice. The mission and purpose of ACCEPT is to leverage the collective power and resources of member school districts to provide excellent, cost-effective regional programs and services to unlock the potential of students, their families, educators and

communities. ACCEPT currently offers a wide range of programs and services whose focus is to minimize the impact of student disabilities or weakness and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence and participation in the community.

To carry out the mission and purpose of the Collaborative, ACCEPT, acting through its Board of Directors, (hereinafter the Board or Collaborative Board) may contract with corporations, individuals, associations, agencies, and/or any other entities in order to obtain and provide services for a member district. In addition, the Collaborative, with the approval of the Board, will continue to increase and expand its level of service in general and special education, occupational-vocational education, professional development and training, home based and consultative services, research and development of innovative programs, and in any such area determined to be a need of member districts if such new programs are in alignment with ACCEPT's mission, vision and core values.

**Objectives of ACCEPT Education Collaborative are to:**

- Deliver efficient, cost-effective and high quality programs and services that minimize the impact of student disabilities and maximize student outcomes including achievement, independence and participation in the community
- Develop and implement programs and an array of services that increase educational opportunities for students, families, educators and districts when it is determined that such programs and services can most effectively, efficiently and economically be provided on a Collaborative basis and complement, strengthen and meet the evolving needs of the member districts
- Expand program options in alignment with the mission and purpose of the Collaborative to help districts maximize cost-efficiency and program effectiveness through a Collaborative effort
- Provide safe, reliable and efficient transportation services for students with disabilities
- Offer quality professional development opportunities to general and special education teachers, administrators, and related service providers, focused on closing the achievement gap, preventing unnecessary referrals to special education and personalizing learning for students

**SECTION III: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

ACCEPT will offer cost-effective programs and services deemed appropriate by the Board that complement and supplement the educational programs and services of the member districts. ACCEPT currently provides the following services and programs:

- I. Special education programs, particularly for low incidence populations
2. Special education transportation
3. Home-based parent training
4. Behavioral and educational consultation and assessment services
5. Professional development
6. Support of initiatives from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
7. Grant writing and implementation on behalf of school districts
8. Exploration and pursuit of grants and other funding to support identified needs of the member districts
9. Education technology
10. Medicaid reimbursement services

The programs/services listed above are not all-inclusive; the Board, acting at the request of the Executive Director and/or member districts, may consider and approve other programs and services to be provided

by the Collaborative so long as such programs/services are in the best interest of the member districts and are not inconsistent with this agreement and MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00, et seq., as amended from time to time.

#### **SECTION IV: GOVERNANCE**

Each member district executing this Collaborative Agreement shall annually appoint the superintendent of schools or charter school board member to serve as its representative (hereinafter referred to as appointed representatives) on the ACCEPT Education Collaborative Board. The Board shall provide overall management and supervision of ACCEPT. No employee, including the Executive Director, Treasurer, and Business Manager, of the Collaborative may serve on the Board. All appointed representatives and employees shall be public employees subject to MGL c 268A, which requires compliance with the conflict-of-interest law.

It is the function and responsibility of the Board to formulate policy for ACCEPT and to oversee the operation of ACCEPT to the end that the educational needs of students enrolled in its programs are met in an effective and economical way, and that the needs of the member districts for efficient, joint programs and services are addressed.

Each appointed representative shall be entitled to one vote. A quorum for conducting business shall consist of a simple majority of the appointed representatives. A quorum is not needed to close the meeting. In order to pass any motion, a majority vote of the appointed representatives present shall be required, except that a vote to terminate the Collaborative shall require a 2/3 vote of the Board and be approved in accordance with Section XII of this Agreement. The Executive Director, or designee, will act as executive secretary to the Board. The Executive Director shall attend all Board meetings, but shall not be entitled to a vote.

The Board shall hold at least six (6) meetings each fiscal year. The schedule for the meetings will be determined by the Board Chairperson in collaboration with the Executive Director at the last meeting of the year in preparation for the new fiscal year. The Executive Director may call special meetings for special purposes with consent of the Board Chairperson or by the Board Chairperson him/herself. Meetings will be posted in accordance with MGL c 30A §§ 18-25.

At the last Board Meeting of the year, the Board will elect a Chairperson and vice-Chairperson by a majority vote of the appointed representatives present. The Chairperson, by vote of the Board, may appoint such subcommittees or advisory or operating committees of the Board as will facilitate the work of the Board.

Each appointed representative shall be responsible for providing the following information to the representative's member district in accordance with the provisions of MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00, et seq.

- Quarterly information and updates to the member district, at an open meeting, on the programs and services provided by the Collaborative
- A copy of the Collaborative Agreement and any amendments
- A copy of the annual budget and tuition rate
- A copy of the annual report and financial audit
- Notification of applications for real estate mortgages
- A copy of any capital plan approved by the Board
- Any additional information as may be requested by a vote of the member district or required in MGL c 40 § 4E, 603 CMR 50.00, et seq. and any amendments thereto

## **SECTION V: CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. Each appointed representative shall be entitled to a vote, which cannot be delegated to any other individual. No appointed representative shall delegate his/her powers or send a representative in his/her place as a voting appointed representative and no member district shall delegate the rights, responsibilities, or duties of its appointed representative to any other individual, unless the member district is replacing the appointed representative with that individual.
2. Each appointed representative is expected to attend each Board meeting. If a representative has missed one half of the meetings within a fiscal year, the Board Chair or Vice Chair will meet with the representative to discuss the representative's attendance and determine a plan for attending Board meetings regularly.

A representative who misses two-thirds of the Board's meetings in a fiscal year will have a letter sent from the Chair or Vice Chair to the School Committee which appointed the representative detailing the lack of attendance, the need for active and regular participation in the business of the Board, and a notice that the representative's participation in the Board will become inactive. An inactive representative will not count toward a quorum and will not have voting rights on the Board but will continue to have other rights and obligations of membership. The Chair, in consultation with the representative, Vice Chair and Executive Director, will determine when an inactive member can resume regular participation on the Board.

3. Each appointed representative must complete the training required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department), as outlined in MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.05. Should an appointed representative fail to complete the required training within the timelines set in law and regulations, their member district shall not have voting rights on the Board, but shall continue to have all other rights and obligations of membership. The member district shall become an active member and voting rights shall be reinstated once the appointed representative completes the training.
4. No appointed representative shall be eligible to serve in the positions of Executive Director, Treasurer, Business Manager or a person with responsibilities similar to those of a town accountant, or on the Board of Directors as an officer or employee of any related for-profit or non-profit organization. No employee of the Collaborative may serve on the Board of ACCEPT (603 CMR 50.06 (2) (c)).
5. No appointed representative shall receive an additional salary or stipend for his/her service as a Board member.
6. Each member district will pay a yearly membership fee established by the Board in accordance with Section VII.

## **SECTION VI: POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD**

The Board shall have all the powers and duties conferred and imposed upon educational Collaborative boards by law and conferred and imposed upon it by this Agreement and such other additional powers and duties as are specified in MGL c 40, §4E, 603 CMR 50.00 and any amendments thereof, or as may be specified in any other applicable general or special law. The Board is responsible for providing fiduciary and organizational oversight and accountability over the operation of the educational Collaborative including but not limited to what follows:

The Board shall:

- Be vested with the authority to enter into agreements with member and non-member districts or other Collaboratives to establish mutually beneficial programs and services or pricing arrangements.
- Ensure adherence to this Agreement and progress toward achieving the purpose and objectives set forth in the Agreement; determine the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of any borrowing, loans or mortgages,

consistent with Section VII C; approve all expenditures, including contracts, borrowing, and the purchase and sale of real estate; and ensure an annual report and independent financial audit for the previous fiscal year be completed annually and upon approval of the Board be submitted to the Commissioner the State Auditor and Chair of each member district no later than January 1 of each year.

- Ensure the audit report is completed annually and made available on the Collaborative’s website and provided upon request.
- Ensure that the Collaborative makes the annual report available on the Collaborative’s website and that the Collaborative must provide a printed hard copy of the most recent annual report to members of the public upon request.
- Establish policies to support the operation of ACCEPT, and shall, from time to time, review the policies for their effectiveness and appropriateness.
- Develop/ amend policies on personnel, students, finance and internal controls, and health and nursing.
- Determine the amount of cumulative surplus revenue that may be held by ACCEPT at the end of a fiscal year consistent with the requirements of law and Section VII E of this Agreement; how and under what conditions surplus funds may be returned to member districts or credited to support Collaborative programs and services offered to member districts.
- Appoint the Executive Director, Business Manager, and Treasurer and ensure there is segregation of duties among the Executive Director, Business Manager, and Treasurer. The Board will evaluate the Executive Director and Treasurer annually.
  - o **The Executive Director** shall serve under the general direction of the Board and have the day to day responsibility for all activities of the Collaborative, and shall be responsible for development and implementation and oversight of all of its programs. The Executive Director is responsible for recruitment, retention, supervision and discipline of personnel, with the exception of the Treasurer, and shall be responsible for implementing Board policies and procedures consistent with the policies of the Board. In addition, the Executive Director shall have the authority granted by MGL c 40, §4E and any amendments thereto. The Executive Director shall maintain a website in accordance with MGL c 40 § 4E that shall include the list of appointed representatives serving on the Collaborative Board, copies of the approved Board meeting minutes, a copy of the Collaborative Agreement and any amendments, a copy of the annual report and annual independent audit, and key contact information for the key educational Collaborative staff members. The Executive Director will give public notice of the date, time, location, and agenda items of all Board meetings in accordance with the MGL c 30A, §§ 18-25 pertaining to the open meetings of state governmental bodies. Detailed, accurate records of every meeting will be kept in accordance with the law pertaining to the open meetings and made available on the Collaborative website.
  - o **The Business Manager** shall be subject to MGL c 41, Sec 52 and have the powers and responsibilities, similar to those of a town accountant and consistent with 603 CMR 50.00 and the Board approved job description. The Business Manager may not be the Treasurer of the Collaborative. The Board shall ensure an annual evaluation of such employee's performance and effectiveness.
  - o **The Treasurer**, appointed by the Board, need not necessarily be a Treasurer of a member town, or regional school district. The Treasurer is authorized, subject to the direction of the Board, to receive and disburse all monies of the ACCEPT fund without further appropriation. At the discretion of the Board, the Treasurer may make appropriate investments of ACCEPT's funds when such funds are not immediately necessary for operations, consistent with MGL c 44, § 55B. The Treasurer is also responsible for other tasks as determined by the Board and as stipulated in the Board approved job description, consistent with 603 CMR 50.00. No Collaborative employee or appointed representative to the Board may be the Treasurer. The Treasurer shall report directly to the Board. The Treasurer must give bond annually for the faithful performance of duties as Collaborative Treasurer in a form approved by the department of revenue and in a sum not less than the amount established by the Department as shall be fixed by the Board. The Collaborative Board of Directors shall annually evaluate the treasurer’s performance and effectiveness.



- Oversee the operation of the Collaborative to the end that the educational needs of students enrolled in Collaborative programs, as well as the goals of any cooperative program of the Collaborative, are met in an effective and economical way.
- Employ teachers, at least one registered nurse and other professional personnel, and shall enter into contracts for the services of persons who are necessary for the operation of ACCEPT programs and services.
- Ensure that the Collaborative shall annually prepare financial statements, including a statement of net assets (government-wide); statement of activities (government-wide); governmental funds balance sheet; governmental funds statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balance; general fund statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance, budget and actual; statement of fiduciary net assets; statement of changes in fiduciary fund net assets; and capital plan identifying current capital obligations or future planned capital projects.
- The Collaborative, acting through its Board of Directors, may subject to chapter 30B, enter into contracts for the purchase of supplies, materials and services and for the purchase or leasing of land, buildings, and equipment as considered necessary by the Board of Directors and which the Board has found to be cost-effective and in the best interests of ACCEPT, the member districts and consistent with Section VII C of this Agreement (Subject to MGL c 30B).
- Create, amend, and repeal all by-laws, policies, and rules for the management and operation of ACCEPT. The Board has all other powers and duties consistent with MGL c 40 §4E.
- Borrow money for any purpose consistent with the terms of this Agreement, including, but not limited to, to meet ongoing payroll obligations, to finance the purchase and/or lease of any real or personal property, including equipment, land, and/or a building(s) (including portables), and/or to finance any renovation, reconstruction and/or construction of any real property.

No employee of the Collaborative may serve on the Board or shall be eligible to serve concurrently in the positions of Executive Director, Treasurer, or Business Manager or person with responsibilities similar to those of a town accountant.

## **SECTION VII: FINANCE**

### **A. Financial Terms**

1. Membership fees shall be assessed to each member district on July 1 of each year. Membership fees are to be used to offset the cost for administration and overhead. Each member district shall be charged membership dues based on a flat rate that offsets some of the administrative and overhead costs of the Collaborative determined annually by the Board as part of the budget process. Capital costs will be included in program fees and tuitions.
2. The remaining administrative costs of the Collaborative will be distributed across all programs operated by the Collaborative through an administration allocation expense proportionate to the operating budget for each program. The proportional share of administrative costs will be added to the operating budget of each program operated by the Collaborative.
3. The Board will set the fees, tuitions, and rates to be charged to districts for all Collaborative services annually based on the cost of providing the program or service. These include tuitions for specialized programs for students, hourly rates for therapy, evaluative, consultative, and the like services, and overhead calculations. Fees, tuitions, and rates will be calculated through the annual budgeting process for each program, including the administrative cost allocation noted in 2 above, with projections based on past usage.
4. Districts will be charged per unit of usage, e.g. per student enrolled, per hour of service delivery, per mile per student on transportation route, per participant enrolled in courses or workshops, or per district for multi-district initiatives. Each type of service may require a different schedule of billing, e.g. 3-4 times per year

for program tuitions, per use for courses/PD, monthly for transportation, etc. Non-member districts will be charged a 20% surcharge on all services to help offset the cost of Collaborative operations.

5. The Board may enter into Agreements with member and non-member districts or other Collaboratives to establish mutually beneficial pricing arrangements.
6. The Collaborative Board may apply, by an appropriate majority vote, for state, federal, corporate, or foundation grants, and may enter into contracts to obtain the funds necessary to carry out the purpose for which the Collaborative was established; and, the Board may accept gifts, grants, or contributions from governmental and private sources, whether in cash or in kind.
7. The Board may enter into contracts to obtain the funds necessary to carry out the purpose for which the Collaborative was established.
8. The Collaborative is subject to MGL c 30B for the procurement of goods and services. Procurement awards require Board approval.

#### **B. Collaborative Fund**

The Board shall establish and manage a fund to be known as the *ACCEPT Educational Collaborative Fund* (herein, "the ACCEPT fund"). The ACCEPT fund shall be the depository of all monies paid by the member districts and non-member districts and all grants, gifts, or contracts from the federal government, state government, charitable foundations, private corporations, or any other source; all such monies shall be paid directly to the Collaborative and deposited in the fund.

#### **C. Borrowing**

At public meetings of the Board, the Board may authorize the borrowing of funds or enter into short- or long-term agreements or mortgages to acquire or improve real property and/or equipment to support Collaborative operations. The Board shall investigate options related to borrowing, loans, and mortgages in order to determine that the terms are the most favorable available at the time of the application. Through a majority vote, the Board will determine that the terms related to borrowing, loans, or mortgages are cost-effective and are the most favorable available at the time of the application; and shall determine, through a majority vote, that the borrowing, loans, and mortgages are necessary to carry out the purposes for which the Collaborative is established, in the best interest of the Collaborative and its member districts and consistent with the terms of the Collaborative Agreement.

In the event that such borrowing, loan or mortgage is for the acquisition or improvement of real property the Board shall provide notice to each member district within 30 calendar days of applying for real estate mortgages; and discuss its intent to apply for a real estate mortgage at a public meeting of the Board prior to the meeting of the Collaborative Board at which the final vote is taken; see 603 CMR 50.07(8).

#### **D. Capital Reserve Fund**

ACCEPT may create a capital reserve fund to support costs associated with the acquisition, maintenance, and/or improvement of fixed assets, including real property, pursuant to a capital plan. Funds in a capital reserve fund may be used only for the project or purpose for which the account was established. The establishment of a capital reserve shall be subject to the approval of two-thirds of the member districts.

The request for approval must state the reason for the reserve and a limit on the balance that may be held in the reserve. Deposits into the capital reserve shall be proposed and approved through the budget process.

In the event that the purpose for which the capital reserve was created requires modification, the Collaborative Board shall revise its capital plan and provide notice to all member districts. If the member district does not vote to disapprove the revised capital plan within a 45-day period, that member district shall be deemed to have approved the revised capital plan. Two-thirds (2/3) approval of the member districts is required to revise the capital plan.

## **E. Surplus Funds**

Unexpended general funds, as defined in 603 CMR 50.00, at the end of the fiscal year plus any previous year's surplus funds, as determined through the financial statements, will be considered cumulative surplus. The determination of cumulative surplus shall not include funds deposited in a capital reserve as provided for in 603 CMR 50.07(10), funds deposited in trust in accordance with MGL c 32B, § 20, and any amounts prepaid for tuition or services in accordance with MGL c 40, § 4E.

The Board will retain no more than 25 percent in cumulative surplus, in accordance with 603 CMR 50.03(5)(b) 10. On an annual basis, after the Board has discussed the audit results of the previous fiscal year, the Board shall approve, by majority vote, the final dollar amount of the cumulative surplus. The Board shall determine whether such final dollar amount of surplus funds is within the established 25 percent limit, and whether the funds will be retained by the Collaborative or whether all or some portion will be refunded to the member districts or credited to support programs and services offered to member districts by the Collaborative.

In the event an amount is to be refunded to the member districts, each member district share will be apportioned in accordance with the percentage of usage in the program/service area that generated the surplus for the previous fiscal year, as determined by the annual financial audit.

## **F. Annual Budget Preparation and Assessment of Costs**

The Board shall annually determine the Collaborative budget consistent with the timelines, terms, and requirements in MGL c 40, § 4E and 603 CMR 50.00. The Board shall identify the programs or services to be offered by Collaborative in the upcoming fiscal year and the corresponding costs. In the fall of each year, the Executive Director will consult with staff, look at trends and examine the prior year profit and loss statements to formulate and project expenses for the next fiscal year to run each program. The budget assumptions are based on the mission and core values of the Collaborative. The proposed budget shall contain all planned financial activity for all programs offered by the Collaborative for the upcoming fiscal year classified into line item categories.

The line item projections include but are not limited to needed staff, supplies, rent, materials and equipment to run the program. Fees for service are determined by computing the expenses vs. the projected participation in each program for the next fiscal year. Forecasting of students that will be enrolled in special education and transportation programs in the next fiscal year is based on past history and ongoing discussions with key constituent leaders from member districts.

The projected budget and fee structure is presented to the Finance and Budget Subcommittee, a subset of the appointed representatives, for feedback and review prior to presentation to the full Board. The Board shall hold a public meeting on the proposed budget prior to its adoption and shall adopt the final budget by an affirmative majority vote at a subsequent meeting no earlier than ten (10) working days after the Board meeting at which the Collaborative budget was first proposed but no later than May 30 of the preceding fiscal year. The Treasurer shall certify and transmit the budget and the tuition rates, membership dues and fees-for-service for the upcoming fiscal year to each member district not later than June 30 of the preceding fiscal year. Adoption of the budget shall require a majority vote of the appointed representatives to the Board.

## **G. Budget Amendments**

The Collaborative Board must approve all budget amendments including but not limited to those that decrease the budget and move those funds across line items. Any amendment to the budget that results in an increase in the tuition rates, membership dues or fees for services shall adhere to the following procedures:

- a. All appointed representatives shall, within ten (10) working days of the public meeting at which the amendment was first proposed, report to their member districts the content of the proposed

amendment

- b. The Board at a second public meeting of the Board next following the Board meeting at which the amendment was first proposed shall vote on all amendments; adoption shall require a majority vote
- c. The Treasurer shall certify and transmit the amended tuition rates, membership dues and fees for services to each member district not later than ten (10) working days following the affirmative vote of the Board

#### **H. Payment Terms**

ACCEPT shall submit invoices to member and non-member districts for program tuitions on a quarterly basis. Fees for services to member and non-member districts will be billed on a monthly basis. Membership fees will be invoiced quarterly and paid within thirty (30) days of receipt of the ACCEPT invoice. Districts will pay for programs and services within thirty (30) days of receipt of ACCEPT's invoice.

#### **I. Financial Accounting System**

The Collaborative shall adopt and maintain a financial accounting system, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as prescribed by the governmental accounting standards board and any supplemental requirements prescribed jointly by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education and the commissioner of revenue, in consultation with the state auditor. At a minimum, the financial accounting system shall delineate: administration and overhead; rental of real property; program costs; capital expenditures, including fixed assets, real property or the improvement of real property; debt payments; deposits into a capital reserve; and all additional disclosures required in 50.08(2).

### **SECTION VIII: PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT**

Any member district, any appointed representative, or the Executive Director, may initiate a proposal for amendment of this Agreement. The proposed amendment shall be presented in writing to the Executive Director of the Board no less than ten (10) days prior to a meeting of the Board at which it shall first be read. The proposed amendment shall be read a second time at the regular meeting next subsequent to its first majority reading, at which time it may be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board. If approved by the Board, the proposed amendment shall then be submitted to member districts. If approved by a simple majority of member districts the proposed amendment shall be submitted for approval to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; following approval the proposed amendment shall become effective.

### **SECTION IX: PROCEDURE FOR ADMITTING NEW MEMBER DISTRICTS**

A new School Committee or Charter School Board may be added to ACCEPT consistent with approval of the Board and subsequent to amendment of the ACCEPT Collaborative Agreement, consistent with the provisions of Section VIII, MGL c 40, § 4E, and 603 CMR 50.03 and Department guidelines, to reflect such membership. The applicant School Committee or Charter School Board shall apply in writing for admission to ACCEPT no later than December 31 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the applicant School Committee or Charter School Board seeks membership. A School Committee or Charter School Board may be admitted to the Collaborative as of July 1<sup>st</sup> provided that all required approvals, including that of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, are obtained by the preceding April 30th prior to the fiscal year in which the new member School Committee or Charter School Board is to be admitted to the Collaborative. If the process for amendment of the ACCEPT Agreement has not been finalized by April 30<sup>th</sup>, the new member district may appoint a non-voting representative to the ACCEPT Board for the subsequent fiscal year. During the first year of membership, a newly admitted district will pay a 10% surcharge for all programs and services. During the second year of membership, the surcharge will be reduced to 5%; in the following years, member district rates will apply.

## **SECTION X: PROCEDURE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBER DISTRICT**

Any member district may withdraw from ACCEPT at the end of any fiscal year, provided that all necessary approvals have been obtained consistent with 603 CMR 50.00 et seq. subject to the following terms:

- A. At least 180 days prior to the end of the current fiscal year, the withdrawing member district shall provide written notice to every other member district that is party to this Agreement as well as to the Executive Director of the Collaborative and the Collaborative Board of intent to withdraw.
- B. Written notification of a member district's intent to withdraw from the Collaborative at the end of a fiscal year shall include the following:
  1. Notification addressed to the Chair of the Board and the Executive Director that the member district has voted to withdraw from the Collaborative with the effective date of withdrawal; and
  2. A copy of the minutes from the School Committee meeting in which the member district voted to withdraw from the Collaborative.
- C. Within thirty (30) days of notification of a member district's intent to withdraw from the Collaborative, an amendment shall be prepared to reflect changes in the Agreement caused as a result of the change in membership of the Collaborative.
- D. Upon a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Board, the Collaborative Agreement will be amended to withdraw the exiting member district. The Collaborative Agreement shall be amended consistent with Section VIII of this Agreement. The withdrawal is not in effect until and unless the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the withdrawal by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the fiscal year in which the withdrawal is to occur.
- E. Upon withdrawal from the Collaborative, a former member district shall not be entitled to any assets or a portion of any assets of the ACCEPT Collaborative, including any surplus funds that may have been carried over from prior years and any capital reserve fund that may have been established by the Board.
- F. Any member district who has voluntarily withdrawn from the Collaborative will continue to be liable to the Collaborative for its share of any debts, claims, demands, or judgment incurred, including obligations for post-employment benefits incurred during the district's membership in the Collaborative, against the Collaborative based on the member district's average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years.
- G. A withdrawing member district will be charged a one-time exit fee, equal in amount to the annual membership fee established by the Board. This fee will be due prior to the end of the fiscal year that would mark the withdrawing district's final year as a member of the Collaborative.
- H. Following the final audit of that fiscal year's financial records, the withdrawing district will be reimbursed any funds that remain on balance at the Collaborative as a result of prepayments to the Collaborative by the member district for tuition or services under MGL c 40, § 4E.
- I. The withdrawal of any member district(s) at any time shall not affect the status of the Collaborative Agreement and the same shall remain in full force and effect until amended and approved by a 2/3 majority of the Board and subsequently approved by the majority of the member districts and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Board.
- J. Any School Committee or Charter School Board who has voluntarily withdrawn from the Collaborative may re-apply for admission to the Collaborative in accordance with Article IX of this Agreement.

## SECTION XI: PROCEDURE FOR TERMINATION OF A MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Board may vote to initiate the termination of the membership of any member district by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire voting membership of the Board. The only reasons for such action shall be:

1. The non-payment of certain obligations such as the non-payment of fees or assessments owed to the Collaborative; or
2. Any other action that would seriously jeopardize the financial stability of the Collaborative

Procedure for such termination:

1. The Executive Director of the Collaborative, with the authorization of the chairperson of the Board, must provide written notice to the member district of the facts on which any possible termination action may be based. This notice must give the member district thirty (30) days to correct the situation.
2. The member district may work with the Executive Director and the Board Chair to develop a plan to address the situation.
3. If the member district does not correct the situation within thirty (30) days, then the Board shall schedule the vote to terminate that district's membership at the next Board meeting, which is scheduled sixty (60) days after the expiration of the thirty (30) day period referenced in Paragraph 1.
4. The Executive Director shall provide written notice to the chairperson of the member district's school committee and to the superintendent of that member school district of the date and time for the meeting at which the Board will consider initiation of termination of that member district's participation in the Collaborative. The notice will include a copy of the proposed amendment to this Agreement reflecting the termination of the member district. Such written notice shall be sent by certified mail or by overnight mail, both of which require acknowledgement of receipt of the written notice. In the written notice, the Board shall invite the member district to present any and all reasons why the Board should not terminate membership.
5. Whether or not the member district appears at the Board meeting at which the initiation of termination of membership is to be discussed, the Board shall vote on the motion to initiate the termination the member district's participation in the Collaborative and on the amendment to the Agreement reflecting such termination. In order to initiate the termination of the membership, the Board must vote by two-thirds majority to do so and an amendment shall be prepared in accordance with Section VIII and submitted to the member districts and to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval. . Termination of the member district shall not be effective until the Collaborative has fully complied with Article VIII of this Agreement, the member districts have approved the amendment and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the amendment to the Agreement.
6. The effective date of a member district's termination from the Collaborative shall take effect on the next July 1 provided that the procedure outlined in paragraphs 1-5 has been completed by April 30.
7. Upon termination from the Collaborative, a former member district shall not be entitled to any assets or a portion of any assets of the ACCEPT Collaborative, including any surplus funds that may have been carried over from prior years and any capital reserve fund that may have been established by the Board.
8. Any member district of which membership has been terminated will continue to be liable to the Collaborative for its share of any debts, claims, demands, or judgment incurred, including obligations for post-employment benefits incurred during the district's membership in the Collaborative, against the Collaborative based on the member district's

average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years.

## **SECTION XII: TERMINATION OF THE COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT**

The Executive Director, any appointed representative of the Board, or a member district may propose the termination of the Collaborative by submitting such a proposal in writing to the Chairperson of the Board and, by giving notice to all other member districts and the Executive Director at least twelve (12) months before the end of the current fiscal year.

Within thirty (30) days of a request that the Board initiate termination proceedings, the Board shall discuss the request to terminate the Collaborative and determine next steps. The Collaborative may only be terminated at the end of any fiscal year (June 30) by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the entire Board, subject to compliance with this section of this Agreement and compliance with the closing guidelines of the Department.

Should the Board vote to initiate termination proceedings, notice must be provided to all member districts within ten (10) working days of such vote. Any Board vote to terminate the Collaborative must be confirmed by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the member districts. Following the affirmative votes to terminate this Collaborative Agreement, the Executive Director shall inform the member and non-member districts who are served by the Collaborative and the Department in writing 180 days prior to the effective date of any termination along with the information required to be submitted to the Department pursuant to 603 CMR 50.11.

Prior to ACCEPT's termination, the ACCEPT Board shall arrange for a final fiscal audit of ACCEPT Collaborative. Such audit will be completed within ninety (90) days of the date of termination of ACCEPT. A copy of such audit report shall be sent to each member district and to the Department. Such audit must be completed before any assets (or liabilities) are disbursed.

By January 31 of the fiscal year in which the termination shall occur, the ACCEPT Board will:

1. Determine the appropriate disposition of the ACCEPT Collaborative funds, equipment and supplies
2. Determine the fair market value of all assets for the Collaborative, including, but not limited to, real estate, capital property, equipment and supplies owned by the Collaborative;
3. Determine the process for the appropriate disposition of federal/state funds.
4. Identify the member district responsible for maintaining all fiscal, employee and program records.
5. Identify the member and non-member district(s) responsible for maintaining student records.
6. Determine the means of meeting all liabilities (debts and obligations) of the Collaborative, including obligations for post-employment benefits. All liabilities must be met before any monies are distributed to member districts.
7. Ensure the appropriate disposition of all assets of the Collaborative, including any unencumbered funds held by the Collaborative, and any capital property and real estate owned by the Collaborative. Unless the Board determines otherwise, all assets shall be sold and the monies shall be distributed to the member districts based on the member district's average per pupil enrollment in the Collaborative, in any Collaborative service, over the prior ten (10) fiscal years, ensuring fairness and equity for all members.
8. Determine the plans for member districts to address the needs of students that were being addressed by the Collaborative.

No part of the net earnings of the Collaborative shall inure to the benefit of any appointed representative, Executive Director, or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the Collaborative by a private individual who is not a member, director or

officer of the Collaborative), and no appointed representative or officer shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the assets upon dissolution of the Collaborative.

Following the affirmative vote of the member districts to terminate the Collaborative Agreement the Board shall notify the Department of the official termination date of the Collaborative, and shall submit the documentation required by 603 CMR 50.11 to the Department.

If the Collaborative receives a notice of intent to revoke approval of its Agreement, it shall immediately begin planning for termination of the Collaborative by providing notice to member districts and non-member districts and by following the procedures of 603 CMR 50.11.

### **SECTION XIII: INDEMNIFICATION**

Neither the Executive Director nor any member of the Board shall be liable to the Collaborative or to any member district hereof for any act or omission of the Executive Director or any member of the Board or be held personally liable in connection with the affairs of the Collaborative except only liability arising out of his own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of duty to the Collaborative or its member districts.

Neither the Executive Director nor any member of the Board shall be personally liable for any debt, claim, demand, judgment, decree, liability or obligation of any kind of, against, or with respect to the Collaborative or arising out of any action taken or omitted for or on behalf of the Collaborative and the Collaborative shall be solely liable therefore and resort shall be had exclusively to the Collaborative property for the payment or performance thereof and each member of the Board and any Executive Director shall be entitled to full indemnity and full reimbursement out of Collaborative property, including, without limitation, fees and disbursements of counsel, if, contrary to the provisions hereof, such Board member or Executive Director shall be held personally liable. Any person dealing with the Collaborative shall be informed of the indemnification contained herein and, where the Board deems it appropriate, documents or instruments executed by or by authority of the Board shall contain reference hereto.

The Executive Director and his/her legal representatives and each Board member and his/her legal representatives shall be indemnified by the Collaborative against all liabilities and expenses, exclusive of amounts paid to the Collaborative, including judgments, fines, penalties, amounts paid in settlement and counsel fees, incurred in reasonable settlement of any action, suit or proceeding to which such member of the Board or Executive Officer or his/its legal representatives may be made a party or otherwise involved by reason of his/its capacity as member of the Board or Executive Officer, except only liabilities and expenses arising out of his/its own willful misfeasance, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of duty to the Collaborative as final adjudged in such action or, in the event of settlement or termination of such action without final adjudication, as determined by independent counsel for the Collaborative. Said right of indemnification shall be in addition to any other rights to which such member of the Board or Executive Officer may be entitled as a matter of law or which may be lawfully granted to him/it.

The costs of such liabilities or expenses which are not borne by the ACCEPT's insurance carriers shall be apportioned among, assessed to and paid by the member districts that were members of ACCEPT at the time of the occurrences giving rise to the liability or expenses, whether or not any such member district has thereafter withdrawn from ACCEPT, in accordance with the provisions concerning the apportionment, assessment and payment of operating costs applicable at the time of the occurrences giving rise to the liability or expense.



**SECTION XIV: COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 501(c)(3) STATUS**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the ACCEPT Education Collaborative, while a public entity, is organized exclusively for educational purposes, as specified in Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by any entity exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

No substantial part of the activities of the Collaborative shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Collaborative shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publication or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

**SECTIONXIV: NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The ACCEPT Education Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation and ensures that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study. The Board's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business.

The ACCEPT Education Collaborative is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**This Agreement shall take effect on July 1, 2024**, and subsequent to the of approval of the member school districts and by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, as previously outlined in this Agreement and shall continue indefinitely. This Agreement has been approved by duly authorized votes at public meetings held by the individual School Committees and Charter School Boards whose Chairpersons have signed below.

**Date of first reading:**                              12/13/2023          

**Date of second reading:**                      3/6/2024          

**Date approved by Collaborative Board of Directors:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates approved by member School Committees/Charter School Boards:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Ashland

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Dover

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Dover/Sherborn  
Regional School District

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Framingham

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Franklin

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Holliston

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Hopkinton

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Medfield

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Medway

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Millis

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Natick

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Needham

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of South Middlesex Regional

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Sudbury

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Sherborn

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Date of Vote

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Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Wellesley

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, School Committee of Town of Westborough

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Vote

**Approved on behalf of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education by:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Commissioner**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Effective Date