

DEER HILL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2019-2020



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Deer Hill School Vision

At the Deer Hill School, we strive to prepare our students for success in the 21st century. We work to ensure students succeed socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Throughout our instructional program we emphasize critical and analytical thinking, creativity, and technological skills. We incorporate lessons of collaboration and communication across all curricular areas. We are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and academically challenging environment with clearly defined goals and expectations. We strive to develop responsible citizens with an appreciation of diversity, an understanding of global connections, and a passion for lifelong learning.

School Council Mission Statement

Our mission as the School Council is to responsibly assess all factors affecting the educational needs of the children in Deer Hill School. Based upon this assessment, the Deer Hill School Council will review and develop goals annually that address our educational policies that maximize students' academic performance, encourage the talents and creativity of educators, and provide consistency throughout the Cohasset School System. In addition, the School Council assists the principal in the following:

1. Reviewing the annual school budget;
2. Identifying the education, social, and emotional needs of the students;
3. Adopting educational goals for the school;
4. Promoting an awareness of state and local initiatives
5. Developing and formulating a school improvement plan for Deer Hill School.

Alignment to Cohasset Public Schools Vision & District Goals

Our school improvement plan goals are aligned to the Cohasset Public Schools Strategic Plan district goals and are based upon current performance levels, data analysis, and feedback from staff and parents.

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools

“Nine Characteristics of High-Performing Schools: A Research-Based Resource for Schools and Districts to Assist with Improving Student Learning. Second Edition” (Shannon & Bylsma, 2007), identifies common characteristics among high performing schools, also known as professional learning communities.

1. **Clear and Shared Focus:** Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.
2. **High Standards and Expectations for All Students:** Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.
3. **Effective School Leadership:** Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders proactively seek needed help. They nurture an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. Effective leaders have different styles and roles – teachers and other staff, including those in the district office, often have a leadership role.
4. **High Levels of Collaboration and Communication:** There is strong teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everybody is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions.
5. **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards:** The planned and actual curriculum are aligned with the essential academic learning requirements. Research-based teaching strategies and materials are used. Staff understand the role of classroom and state assessments, what the assessments measure, and how student work is evaluated.
6. **Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching:** A steady cycle of different assessments identify students who need help. More support and instructional time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.

7. **Focused Professional Development:** A strong emphasis is placed on training staff in areas of most need. Feedback from learning and teaching focuses extensive and ongoing professional development. The support is also aligned with the school or district vision and objectives.
8. **Supportive Learning Environment:** The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.
9. **High Levels of Family and Community Involvement:** There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just teachers and school staff. Families, businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

21st Century Learning

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has joined the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a national advocacy organization, which provides a framework for preparing students for the future. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) publication, *School Reform in the New Millennium: Preparing All Children for 21st Century Success*, offers a vision for our students:

21st century students will learn to think both critically and creatively, be skilled at working collaboratively, and understand how to take risks constructively. They will learn and understand their connection to the world around them, use technology to do research and communicate with others, be comfortable working in teams and develop the strength and skill to assume leadership responsibilities. 21st century students will receive support and encouragement throughout their education to think about and plan for their future.

The DESE publication also provides the following from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills to guide us in school improvement initiatives:

- **Core Academic Subjects** include English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, math, economics, science, geography, history, government and civics.
- **Interdisciplinary Themes** to be woven into each subject include global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy and health literacy.
- **Learning and Innovation Skills** to be woven into each subject include creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration
- **Information, Media and Technology Skills** required of today's students include information literacy, media literacy, communications and technology literacy.
- **Life and Career Skills** are the so-called "soft-skills" needed to navigate in today's fast-paced, high-technology world. They include flexibility, adaptability, initiative and self direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity, accountability, leadership and responsibility.

Expectations for Student Learning

The Cohasset student will communicate effectively.

All students will:

- Read and listen critically for information, understanding, and enjoyment.
- Write and speak clearly, factually, persuasively, and critically in Standard English.

The Cohasset student will be a critical and creative thinker and problem solver.

All students will:

- Define, analyze, and solve complex problems.
- Distinguish fact from opinion, identify stereotyping, and recognize bias.
- Refine research skills by using a variety of media and by evaluating the quality of the information obtained.
- Make reasoned inferences and construct logical arguments.
- Develop, test, and evaluate possible solutions.
- Present conclusions through written, spoken and artistic means of expression.
- Understand and apply scientific, mathematical and technological concepts.
- Explore the creative process through visual arts, music, drama, or technology.

The Cohasset student will understand the responsibilities of citizenship and community membership.

All students will:

- Develop a strong sense of honor and integrity, behave ethically, and act responsibly.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the rights, responsibilities, and roles of individuals, the community, the nation, and the world.
- Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the traditions, practices, and perspectives of other cultures.
- Demonstrate respect and tolerance for self, peers, parents and guardians, and staff.

The Cohasset student will understand the importance of being healthy and physically active.

All students will:

- Make informed and responsible judgments regarding physical, mental, and emotional well-being.
- Develop skills and participate in physical activities for personal growth, fitness, and enjoyment.

2019-2020 Deer Hill School Improvement Plan SMART Goals

SMART Goals are:

S: Specific and Strategic

M: Measurable

A: Action Oriented

R: Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused

T: Timed and Tracked

<p>SMART Goal #1: During the 2019-20 school year Deer Hill School will promote diversity and inclusion through the implementation of at least six practices to include professional development, curriculum, and social emotional supports.</p>		
<p>CPS Strategic Plan Alignment: This goal aligns with goal 3: Promote the social and emotional well-being of students.</p>	<p>Responsible Parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Superintendent • Principal • METCO Director • Adjustment counselors • Deer Hill Faculty & Staff 	<p>Timeline: July 2019 - June 2020</p>
<p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for teachers to complete Responsive Classroom Training. • Complete a review of curriculum/literature at each grade level to ensure that texts represent diverse and inclusive authors, characters, settings, and situations. • Implement professional development on cultural competence, diversity, and inclusion that underscores the belief that “ALL students are all OUR students.” • Implement co-teaching models to build inclusive classroom environments. • Establish a lunch group for METCO students attended by the METCO director, adjustment counselor, and principal in addition to other staff on a voluntary basis. This group will meet each trimester to connect and build supportive student/staff relationships. • Establish an ongoing partnership with Cohasset High School’s Diversity Club and Asian Culture Club to provide interactive presentations to Deer Hill students. 		

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<p>SMART Goal #2: During the 2019-20 school year Deer Hill School will implement a MTSS intervention block (WIN Time) a minimum of two times a week for 45 minutes each session across all grade levels.</p>		
<p>CPS Strategic Plan Alignment: This goal aligns with goal 2: Ensure that all students are able to achieve appropriate growth in learning.</p>	<p>Responsible Parties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal • Classroom teachers • SPED teachers and ESP staff • Literacy and math specialists 	<p>Timeline: July 2019 - June 2020</p>
<p>Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a (What I Need) WIN Time steering committee that meets a minimum of each trimester to refine expectations and implementation of the DESE Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) intervention block. • Provide opportunities for representatives from Deer Hill to observe a minimum of two schools in other districts that are successfully implementing MTSS intervention blocks. • Provide release time at each grade level for analysis of student data to include, but not limited to, MCAS and Stanford/OLSAT results • Develop and implement ongoing informal assessment procedures to create student groupings and inform targeted, standards-based instruction. • Incorporate the SAMR model when integrating technology within the MTSS intervention block. 		

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SMART Goal #3: During the 2019-20 school year Deer Hill School will evaluate and calibrate its assessment and grading practices in order to emphasize student mastery and align them to our standards-based progress report.		
CPS Strategic Plan Alignment: This goal aligns with goal 2: Ensure that all students are able to achieve appropriate growth in learning.	Responsible Parties: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal• Classroom teachers• Specialist teachers• SPED teachers• Literacy and math specialists	Timeline: July 2019 - June 2020
Action Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a summer curriculum work opportunity for our literacy specialist to work collaboratively with Osgood's literacy specialist on an assessment protocol and timeline.• Develop expectations for a rubric grading system that aligns with our standards-based progress report and emphasizes student mastery.• Establish procedures for a rubric-based writing assessment to include the development of vertically articulated writing rubrics.• Provide professional development time to calibrate grading practices across classrooms and grade levels.		