

MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS: STRATEGY OVERVIEW – FY15 FINAL

Vision			
<p>We engage all students in learning, raising the aspirations of all students by embracing them in a learning environment designed to meet the needs of all learners. We provide a comprehensive curriculum aligned with state and national standards that challenges and prepares all learners from Pre K to 12 and beyond. The curriculum is research-based and consistently integrates best practices to provide a focus that is aligned horizontally and vertically across all grades and addresses the needs of all students. The Melrose Public Schools employs highly-qualified teachers and administrators who engage students in a positive and dynamic manner, are student-focused, and work individually and collaboratively to effectively deliver instruction and assessment and advance student performance in all areas of learning. <i>(excerpt: Melrose Public Schools Strategic Plan 2010-2015)</i></p>			
Theory of Action			
<p>If teachers plan instruction with clear learning objectives, build content expertise that is supported with a current and well-articulated curriculum, understand culturally proficient pedagogy and apply the best instructional practices, and frequently use assessment to monitor student progress, then teaching and learning will continuously advance and realize high levels of student performance for all learners.</p>			
Strategic Objectives			
<p>Planning: Employ purposeful and deliberate planning that is designed to enable all students to achieve a high level of content mastery and skill development.</p>	<p>Content and Curriculum: Provide rich, high-quality, and current content that foster the use of higher-level thinking skills and help all students to attain college and career readiness.</p>	<p>Instruction: Provide advanced learning that is student-centered and engaging through instruction that provides opportunities for enrichment and challenge and that is focused on student learning, growth, and achievement.</p>	<p>Assessment and Data: Create dynamic assessments that provide reliable and valid data that informs teaching and learning in order to advance student performance.</p>
Strategic Priorities			
<p>Consistently employ a common language and approach for planning and instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The district has adopted the Understanding by Design (backwards planning) model. Administrators use a common template and language in guiding the development of curriculum maps for all grades and content areas. -Through district professional development, common planning times and the curriculum, teachers and staff are using common language. Evidence of this is noted during principal observations and principal walkthroughs. Grade level teams are aligned and students are using the same learning strategies school-wide (turn and talk, hand signals, objectives posted in each classroom, small group work in each classroom) -Teachers and administrators assess and review each other unit plans to determine alignment to principals of UbD. -The elementary schools will introduce goal-setting for all students K-12 to give students a voice and a sense of control for their own learning. 	<p>Integrate common core standards for literacy and math into all content areas Pre K to 12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All grades required and completed a research project based on the literacy standards for research, writing, and presentation. Rubrics have been developed for each grade. -Directors in Science, Math, History, and ELA continue to develop cross-disciplinary topics and projects that would reinforce the literacy and math skills across content areas. -Teachers K-5 are including nonfiction reading across all areas. Students are responding to readings through text-based questions and writing to sources. Writing is observed in writer's workshop, social studies and science. -Grade 6-12 math teachers have had training in integrating more writing opportunities into math instruction. Teachers have also received in class modeling of how to support writing instruction into the classroom. -Grades 1-5 teachers who teach social studies only have been trained how to use the Library of Congress resources for primary and secondary sources in social studies and English language arts during the August and November professional development days. Model social studies lessons 	<p>Set annual goals for each educator that reflect individual professional practice and student data and which will result in improved student outcomes for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -This is the third year for the Educator Evaluation System and the second year in which all staff are participating. As a result, all staff has now developed plans that are based on previous feedback, district and school goals, and identified professional practice and student outcome goals. -In ELA 6-12, educators have developed SMART goals that focus on developing content and instructional strategies that increase expectations for all students. Student data was used in setting goals. -New teachers and administrators have been trained in the educator evaluation system. -A committee of K-5 educators and a second committee of 6-12 educators developed sample surveys to be used to gather student feedback. Surveys were administered this spring. Teachers will use the student surveys in their self-assessment and goal setting next fall. A committee of administrators developed a survey for their staff that was also administered this spring. Administrators will use the data in their self-assessments in the fall. -Global Language teachers entered the third year of intentional DCAP integration in all classes, identified 	<p>Determine student growth parameters for identified District Determined Measures (DDMs) by grade and content area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curriculum directors met with DESE staff member to facilitate remaining questions on DDM growth parameters. -Initial data collection for setting growth parameters has been completed. -We have requested that the MEA meet with the district to set benchmarks and parameters as this is required to be negotiated. -DESE recently revised requirement for DDMs and collecting data for educators' student impact ratings. Districts may choose among three alternative pathways for collecting data and setting parameters. Melrose Public Schools has decided to continue with its original pilot. Data collection will be completed and analyzed for some educators by the end of the 2016-17 year and for all educators by

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	<p>that use primary sources have been developed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Summer institutes focused on the use of primary sources from the Library of Congress in grades 2-12 are planned. -Science 6-12 has participated in cross curriculum planning, including applying the same writing expectations as in the literary standards. Students are annotating and responding to science articles at least three times a year with a writing rubric. -Science department is participating in the cross-district curriculum mapping of the draft science standards. Sixty-five teachers from sixteen districts are developing UBD units for K-12. We have met multiple times during the year and will meet for a week this summer. -Core instructional practices for science instruction have been developed for grades K-5. Science notebooks in grades K-5 require students to observe, predict, collect data, and draw conclusions. -PreK teachers received professional development on incorporating writing instruction into an early childhood setting. A draft curriculum was developed. Teachers are collecting writing samples on a monthly basis. As a school, teachers have looked at the writing develop through the year every two months. During the summer institute, PreK teachers will review and create draft progress monitoring tools for literacy. -PreK teachers this summer will also receive training on the standards for mathematical practice and their implications for the early childhood setting. -Creation of a middle school program of studies clearly articulates course descriptions that align with the Massachusetts Frameworks standards and outline sequencing developed through curriculum mapping. -Grade 6-12 math sequence revised in accordance with Massachusetts Math Frameworks 2011. -ELA curriculum materials for grades K-5 were reviewed and piloted this winter into the spring. New core reading program chosen to be implemented next year. Professional 	<p>strengths and areas for growth, and used their colleagues as resources to support areas of growth through collegial conversations and classroom observations.</p>	<p>the end of the 2017-18 year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Global Language assessments continue to be refined for vertical and horizontal consistency as well to incorporate next generation testing skills. -As a result of revising the ELA curriculum map for grades 6-12, the ELA department created skills based common assessments to use as DDMs. -In grades 6-12, school counseling educators have developed and are implementing common measures and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) that evaluate students' college and career readiness and explore how to improve student decision making skills. The Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is a student-directed, multi-year, dynamic tool that maps academic plans, personal/social growth, and career development activities while taking into account the student's unique, self-defined interests, needs, and goals for the attainment of post-secondary success.
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	<p>development will begin this summer and continue into next year.</p> <p>-Global Language 6-12 has made use of the LMS/ITS resource to re-imagine traditional country projects using the inquiry model and screen-casting technology for presentations.</p>		
<p>Develop effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that support collaborative planning and data work.</p> <p>-Teachers used the early release Wednesdays to work together on a common goal, including planning lessons, writing assessments, and looking at student work.</p> <p>-Approximately 85% of general elementary teachers have completed one round of lesson studies. In a lessons study, teachers plan a lesson together, observe one teacher implement the lesson, debrief the lesson, and determine how to improve the lesson.</p>	<p>Improve teachers' capacity to integrate proficiency skills and content knowledge when designing curricular units.</p> <p>-Full day professional development day in November for grades 6-12 focused on analysis of curriculum units for rigor with alignment to the PARCC assessment and inclusion of issues of diversity.</p> <p>-All curriculum areas are developing and piloting performance assessments based on the skills outlined in the standards, such as problem solving, close reading, and using text based evidence.</p> <p>-In Global Languages, all assessments are proficiency based.</p> <p>-PreK teachers outlined phonemic and phonological awareness curriculum map during the summer of 2014. A draft writing curriculum was also shared.</p> <p>-Full day PD in January focused on to what extent does our curriculum reflect higher order thinking and engage a diversity of learners in a culturally proficient learning community.</p>	<p>Develop district's capacity through participation in RETELL to improve instruction and outcomes for ESL students.</p> <p>-The second of three cohorts of core curriculum educators required to be SEI (sheltered English immersion) endorsed are currently enrolled in RETELL. Plans are underway for a RETELL course in Melrose this fall.</p> <p>-Implementation of SEI strategies acquired through RETELL training is evident at the ESL schools, Roosevelt, Lincoln, the middle school, and the high school as observed through observations and Learning Walkthroughs.</p> <p>-PreK teachers received a one-day training on the WIDA standards to help develop their curriculum to meet the needs of English language learners.</p> <p>-By the end of SY 2014-2015 every teacher at Lincoln will have taken the RETELL course or have become ESL certified.</p> <p>-All of the district administrators will have completed the requirement for SEI endorsement.</p> <p>-Summer institute will provide offerings focused on meeting the needs of English language learners.</p> <p>-In collaboration with SEEM districts, this summer ESL teachers will participate in curriculum mapping.</p> <p>-In collaboration with DSAC, a team of 5 staff will engage in training on the inclusion of English language learner standards into existing curriculum maps.</p> <p>-Through a DSAC grant, the high school will develop a community supports resource booklet for all staff.</p>	<p>Administer DDMs, collect assessment data, and make appropriate revisions for alignment to curriculum.</p> <p>-The DDMs as identified and submitted last year to DESE are now being administered. Initial fall data has been collected. Final data will be collected at the end of the year.</p> <p>-All schools are engaged in data analysis either through grade levels or content areas and are using identified DDMs in conjunction with other assessment data to measure our progress in deepening the curriculum and raising expectations.</p> <p>-Beginning of year and midyear exams have been administered at the secondary level. Finals are in process and will be completed by end of year. Data has been collected and analyzed. Analysis of finals will occur over the summer by administration and include teachers this fall. This data will be part of the data team training at the secondary level.</p> <p>-Most staff have analyzed and collected data on at least two assessments in each set of DDMs to date.</p> <p>-Data meetings to analyze end of year data have been completed and goals for next year have been established. Data analysis supports school improvement goals and supports</p>

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<p>Provide professional development in the use of Understanding by Design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Professional development in curriculum mapping occurred both in summer sessions and during department meetings. Most departments in grades 6-12 have completed 75% of curriculum maps focused on stages 1 and 2. Curriculum map writing will continue into the summer and fall. -All K-12 visual and performing arts teachers have had two days of training on Understanding by Design principles with a consultant. Early releases were used for curriculum maps to be developed further. -Full day professional development day in November for grades 6-12 focused on analysis of curriculum units for rigor with alignment to the PARCC assessment and inclusion of issues of diversity. -Social studies curriculum mapping in grades K-5 is continuing. A group of K-5 teachers from SEEM districts met January through May to outline the curriculum maps. All of the curriculum maps in grades K-5 stages 1 and 2 will be completed by the end June. Continued revision will occur including the development of rubrics and stage 3 of units. -A rubric for the analysis of curriculum units was developed. The rubric was shared with multiple stakeholders for feedback and used for the evaluation of curriculum maps. 	<p>Update and deepen existing curriculum maps in all content areas to include reading and writing across the curriculum, 21st century skills, and common core expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grades 6-12 continued working on curriculum mapping using principles of Understanding by Design. The November professional development day was used to focus on review of stage two, i.e. assessment practices. January professional development day used to review units for rigor and alignment to PARCC expectation in addition to review of the inclusion of issues of diversity -Vertical and horizontal meetings at grade level and by departments provided opportunities to collaborate on content specific UbDs that increase rigor and academic expectations and incorporate both content and skills-based learning. -The K-12 Program Review for Social Studies has completed and will be presented to the school committee. -Global language program review completed first of two year process to evaluate instruction, curriculum, assessment, and programs. An update on their progress will be presented to the school committee. -Grades K-5 curriculum maps and pacing charts in social studies are drafted for stage 1 and 2. Draft assessments have been developed. Rubrics and stage 3 of units is now needed. Mapping will continue into the summer. -Grades K-5 writing curriculum being revised to add additional lessons to meet students' needs and is expected to be completed by the end of the summer. -A core group of Grades K-5 teachers received first day of two days of training on the use of technology to enhance the curriculum at the elementary level with a focus on the use of Google Apps for Education. Staff in attendance will be asked to share some of their learning with their colleagues. Training opportunities to continue into the summer including 2-day 	<p>Develop structures and consistency of practice in the implementation of the district's Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) procedures and protocols, including the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), so that we provide intervention, challenge, and enrichment for all learners at all levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All teachers are familiar with the DCAP and are using the strategies in response to individual need. DCAP strategies are also discussed at IEP and 504 meetings. -All schools have establishes an IST (Instructional Support Team) process to address both academic and behavioral concerns. The IST teams have developed standardized referral and tracking forms and meet on a regular basis to address individual student needs. -Instructional plans in literacy and math were developed for all grades K-5 students and include interventions for struggling students and strategies for challenging advanced students. -The high school has piloted a critical case management protocol to identify and support at-risk students. -Advanced tasks in math and differentiated sets of math problems were collected for grades K-5 and shared with teachers. -Data meetings were held 3 times a year (beginning of the year; middle of the year and end of the year) as part of the district tiered level of support. Consistent, research based interventions have been implemented for both literacy and math to support intervention, challenge and enrichment for all learners at all levels. These interventions could include repeated readings for fluency; reciprocal teaching for comprehension; minute math of mathematics; differentiated DICE problems; literacy circles, and math tasks. -Math teachers in grades 6-12 received professional development on instructional strategies and differentiation from a consultant who provided coaching, modeling, and feedback in the classroom setting. The professional development resulted in improved student centered practices for all participants. -The Horace Mann piloted having a second set of data 	<p style="color: green;">teacher goal setting for next year.</p> <p>Train data teams at every level and content areas to analyze, disaggregate, and apply data to improve instruction and student outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Elementary grades K-5 held fall, winter, and spring data meetings to review literacy and math data. -Elementary schools are disaggregating data and have set up separate special education data teams to address concerns about special education students receiving standards based instruction. -The Franklin Early Childhood holds monthly data meetings to discuss formative assessment data in ELA and math. -Every other month at their staff meeting, the ECC staff reviews students' writing samples. -Secondary level assessments have incorporated higher level/dynamic questions and projects to enhance students understanding and knowledge. -Plans for training secondary staff in data collection and analysis have been set. Labor-Management have a preliminary agreement regarding the piloting of data teams at the secondary level.
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	<p>overview for elementary teachers.</p> <p>-One day Googlerama conference will be held in the district on June 24th.</p>	<p>team meetings to focus on high needs students. Early data indicated the protocol has been successful in targeting and supporting students. Other elementary schools will determine if each has a similar need.</p>	
<p>Sustain a two-year teacher induction program that develops skills and knowledge in best practices and content.</p> <p>-First year mentoring program focused on best practices that support student needs and are culturally sensitive.</p> <p>First year teachers successfully presented present a lesson plan to a small group for feedback as their end of year task.</p> <p>-Department directors and instructional coaches provided Year 2 educators with professional development.</p> <p>All second year new teachers developed a curriculum unit using Understanding by Design principles and successfully presented at the end of the year meeting</p>	<p>Extend vertical and horizontal integration in all content areas.</p> <p>-All content areas 6 to 12 met vertically in order to map curriculum and develop scope and sequencing for content.</p> <p>-Physical Education/Health, Art, and Music K-12 met vertically with their respective directors to help them with curriculum mapping and developing district determined measures.</p> <p>-Grades K-2 and grades 3-5 met vertically and horizontally six times throughout the year. The meetings are used for use of looking at student work including review of math performance tasks, science notebooks, reading and math journals.</p> <p>-Two vertical and cross curriculum meetings have been conducted for the History/Social Studies and English Language Arts departments, Grade 6-12. One focused on cross-curricular projects and the other one Prose Constructed Responses.</p> <p>-MS/HS Computer and Business teachers have been collaborating on early release days in designing curricular units.</p> <p>-Science teachers modeled instructional strategies at vertical meetings and other PD experiences. For example, one high school teacher led the entire department in an inquiry lab that she learned at Mass Bio Teach. As a result of this, middle school teachers incorporated aspects of it in their classrooms.</p>	<p>Actualize instructional supports for teachers such as demonstration or lab classrooms, lesson study, peer observation, instructional rounds, and the growth of professional learning communities.</p> <p>-Learning Walkthroughs were expanded with additional staff trained and participating in walkthroughs. A second group of 25 teachers were training in learning walk-throughs. All schools have held a learning walk-through that included teachers and administrators. A statement of the findings of the team was developed and shared with all staff in the school. A second set of walk-throughs was conducted this spring in all schools. These teams consisted of educators from across schools including high school staff, who visited the elementary schools.</p> <p>-Peer observation is in place at the elementary level with staff observing both in their own buildings as well as at other elementary schools.</p> <p>-Action Research was added as a professional development option for this year. Additional facilitators for learning walk-throughs were also trained and led walkthroughs. Eighteen teachers engaged in year-long research projects in which small groups are working on self-identified problems of practice. A mini-conference for the participants to share their research was held in May.</p> <p>-Protocols for “Looking at Student Work (LASW)” have been introduced across grades and content areas and are the basis for data analysis.</p> <p>-Rounds of lesson study are beginning in grades K-5. Eighty five percent of teachers in grades K-5 participated in a round of lesson study by the end of the year.</p> <p>-Eighty-five percent of general education teachers have completed their lesson study. The goal is to have all teachers complete a round by the end of the year.</p> <p>-First round of lesson study planned for the Franklin to begin in January.</p>	<p>Expand the use of Aspen as the district’s database for all student information, assessment data, and parent communication at all levels.</p> <p>-The Labor Management Committee set Aspen priorities for the elementary and secondary levels.</p> <p>-Elementary priorities are attendance, communication with families via Pages, and report cards. All elementary teachers received 4 hours of training on the use of Aspen Pages. Aspen parent pages were completed by mid-year.</p> <p>-Aspen mentor teachers for the elementary grades will support teachers in using features of Aspen.</p> <p>-Secondary priorities are grade book, communication with students and families via Pages, and attendance. Teacher led trainings in the Pages feature have been provided to support communication with students and families.</p> <p>-High School teachers are entering grades in Aspen for public view. We have encountered some glitches with the public v. private function. We have requested an Aspen technician to meet with staff and help problem solve.</p> <p>-Aspen mentors at the high school and middle school supported staff.</p> <p>-Aspen mentors received training directly from an Aspen technician so that they may better support staff in the use of the program’s functions.</p> <p>-The District’s data specialist has confirmed that 95% of all educators</p>

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		<p>-Elementary coaches modeled lessons, providing support to teachers in class and through professional development after school.</p> <p>-High School established a protocol for peer observations and a schedule for the first round of observation was implemented and completed.</p>	<p>have created Aspen pages.</p>
		<p>Continue to collaborate with staff to provide options and opportunities for professional development that meet the needs of teachers, individual buildings, and the district.</p> <p>-The Professional Development Committee presented to the school committee in the spring a review of PD and to identify needs for this year. Recommendations include expanding the options for professional development beyond the Institute and providing more supports for implementing successfully the content and instructional strategies from previous trainings.</p> <p>-District professional development offerings in literacy, math, and science continue were offered to all elementary teachers during after school.</p> <p>Paraprofessionals were encouraged to attend these trainings as well.</p> <p>-Related service providers, such as occupational therapists and speech therapists provided professional development to their colleagues.</p> <p>-DESE completed a case study of the professional development offered by the district to be shared with other districts as a model.</p>	<p>Use multiple means of communication, including Aspen to communicate student progress with students and families.</p> <p>-The Pages feature of Aspen has been agreed up as the means for communication to students and families. Some staff use Pages to link to a separate teacher created website.</p> <p>-The curriculum office is continuing a second year of monthly parent newsletters for grades K-5 parents on instruction, assessment, and curriculum.</p> <p>-Both the middle school and high school issue midterm progress reports.</p> <p>-Parent/teacher conferences and face to face meetings are used to communicate progress along with emails and phone calls when appropriate.</p> <p>-Negotiations with MEA are considering other options for secondary level parent-teacher conferences.</p>
		<p>Utilize the science and engineering practices to support the student learning of STE content.</p> <p>-A new Introduction to Engineering class at the high school provides student-centered learning through hands-on project based curriculum.</p> <p>-Students in all classes at all levels of Biology are designing and implementing lab experiments to test student-generated questions. Students also use the data to draw conclusions and to write a lab report (science practices).</p> <p>-Grades K-5 teachers were trained during the full day professional development day on a Museum of</p>	

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		<p>Science engineering unit, which will be implemented this spring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-All students are expected to write about science either in science journals or lab reports.-Core instructional practices for science instruction have been developed for grades K-5. For example, science notebooks in grades K-5 require students to observe, predict, collect data, and draw conclusions. <p>All students in grades K-5 completed a research project in science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-The Technology Audit and Plan have been completed and presented to the School Committee. <p>Implementation of the plan will begin this summer. Purchases for new equipment and training will coincide with the anticipated Board of Alderman approval of a bond for \$1.5 million.</p>	