

# Joyce Middle School

## School Improvement Plan

### Executive Summary

2007-2008 & 2008-2009

#### **District Blueprint Goal #1: to implement and assess curriculum and instruction by....**

The results of the 2007 MCAS indicate that the Joyce Middle School made Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate. However, one sub-group, Low Income is a concern for the 2008 and 2009 MCAS tests in Mathematics. Therefore, the following have been identified as goals that will help students in all groups improve in Mathematics at all grade levels. The addition of the late bus has helped us immensely to insure that students would be able to attend the programs intended for after school remediation.

#### **Mathematics Goals: Improve student achievement by improving open response answers, reduce the number of zeros (by 10%), improve multi-step problem solving techniques.**

- Re-enforce mathematics vocabulary at each grade level.
- Develop problem-solving steps to be used in all mathematics classrooms.
- Mathematics teachers will utilize their John Collins training by integrating open response questions on tests and quizzes. Their training has continued during 2007-2008 school year. This year's training focused on open response writing, developing rubrics, etc.
- Study Island Math on-line tutorial continues during Activity Periods for students at-risk in grade 8.
- Math tutorials for ELL, Special Education, free and reduced students and students at risk on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning in January, 2008 until MCAS testing in May, 2008.
- Small groups of math support are conducted during SSR periods and Activity Periods for Special Education students.
- Teachers will refer at risk students to the Homework Club for additional assistance with homework in math.

#### **District Blueprint Goal #1: to implement and assess curriculum and instruction by...**

Our ELA scores in 2007 remain strong. However our Special Education sub-group did not demonstrate sufficient growth to make AYP. Our grade 7 students have scored well for the last 4 years; this year was no different. Only 2 students failed. In order to address the needs of our Special Education group and all students at the Joyce, the following goals have been identified to help student improve in ELA.

#### **English Language Arts Goals: Improve student achievement in writing by improving open response answers, reduce the number of zeros (by 10%), and improve writing skills on the long composition.**

- All teachers continue their professional development in the John Collins method of writing instruction. Core subject teachers were trained in 2007-2008.
- Math and science teachers are expected to integrate writing in homework, projects and tests to improve open response answers.
- Continue with the Writer of the Month awards (utilizing MCAS rubrics for writing assessment) to acknowledge excellence in writing across the disciplines.

- Offer tutoring and homework support in English Language Arts for at-risk, ELL, and Special Education students after school focusing on grade 7 students in preparation for the Long Composition.

### **District Blueprint Goal #1: to implement and assess curriculum and instruction by...**

Our 2007 Science results in grade 8 were not as strong as we would have liked. Because 8 students more fell into the warning category, we have made a concerted effort this year (2007-2008) to focus on open response questions. Our Science teachers have begun including MCAS test items from the last three years on homework, quizzes, and tests. This year, Science teachers developed and administered a mid-year exam that covered all materials for the first half of the year. In order to keep topics fresh in the minds of their students, teachers have reviewed the following: the human body, the cell and its parts, the kingdom of organisms, and evolution.

**Science Goals: Improve student achievement by conducting reviews of science topics taught to students in grades 6 and 7 as a preparation for the test. To improve open response answers, reduce the number of zeros (by 10%), and improve writing skills on a school standardized lab report format. All 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in the inquiry-based Science Fair. Each selection is aligned with one of the science standards.**

- Teachers will have students conduct inquiry-based experiments monthly utilizing the Scientific Method.
- For the second year, 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers have conducted a Science Fair for all students in grade 8.
- Teachers will review and realign the scope and sequence of the science curriculum to insure that all pertinent topics are taught to mastery.
- Teachers will integrate open response and short answer questions on homework, class assignments, quizzes, projects, and tests.
- Science teachers, trained in the John Collins writing program will integrate this method in all science open response questions.
- Teachers also focused more on the technology standard such as the design process, communication systems and applied technology process.

### **District Blueprint Goal #3: to support the effective integration of technology through our curriculum and management practices by.....**

**Technology Goals: Our goal is to continue integrating technology in each classroom at the Joyce. Over the last 4 years, we have purchased approximately 20 DLP projectors for use in the classroom. The long-range plan is to purchase 4 to 6 each school year.**

- The Assistant Principal will train new staff members in Grade Quick.
- We will continue to purchase technology for classroom use when the budget allows.
- We will continue to utilize such programs as Study Island to further support teacher efforts in Mathematics.

**District Blueprint Goal #4: to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all students by:**

**Safety goals: this year and next, the development of several safety programs has met with much success. The Joyce Middle School Guidance department working in conjunction with our School Resource Officer have developed and implemented anti-bullying programs, good decision making classes, and safety drills.**

- **Our sixth grade guidance counselor and SRO officer have developed and implemented the Anti-Bullying Program**
- **Anti-Bullying classes are mandated for offenders.**
- **A lock-down drill was conducted on February 8, 2008 and more are being planned for next year.**
- **The Guidance Department and our SRO also work together to insure that students attend school. They also work closely with parents and serve as liaisons to the legal system.**
- **Our School Resource Officer developed and taught a course for all seventh graders which focused on anti-bullying, drug and alcohol awareness prevention, and court and legal issues.**
- **Our full time counselor conducted mediation with various peer groups.**
- **Our full time counselor also conducted boys and girls social skills groups.**
- **The Friday Night Drop-off continues to be a huge success every Friday night through May. This will continue during the 2008-2009 school year.**
- **The SRO Officer also sponsored special assemblies such as “Rachel’s Challenge”. Next year, the School Resource Officer will sponsor a “Rachel’s Challenge Club” entailing students recognizing acts of kindness among their peers.**

**District Blueprint Goal #5: to strengthen family and community participation in meeting our educational goal by....**

**Community and Business Partnership Goals: Our goal is to continue to develop community and business partnerships allowing the school to offer after school tutoring program and homework support programs for all students with a focus on ELL students, special education students and at risk students.**

**At the present time the Joyce Middle School has received commitments and /or donations from the following:**

**The Woburn Police Patrolman’s Union  
The Woburn Police SRO Program  
Mobil Corporation**

- **After School Tutoring Programs in:**
  - **Grade 6 Math Support**
  - **Grade 7 Math Support**
  - **Grade 7 English Support**
  - **Grade 8 Math Support**
- **After School Homework Club**

- **Open from 2:15 until 3:00**
- **Tuesday and Thursday**

**Each year, students are given many opportunities to give back to their community. This year and next, students at the Joyce Middle School have participated in the following and more:**

- **Food Drives for the Woburn Council of Social Concern**
- **Winter Coat Drives**
- **Made and donated quilts to the Infant and Day care facility of the WCSC**
- **Will conduct school clean up in the fall and spring**
- **Made lanterns and participated in the Memorial Lantern Community Walk**
- **Created the Best Buddies Club matching regular education students with the multiply handicapped.**

**District Blueprint Goal # 6: to assess and plan for school facility improvements in order to support the implementation of our educational goals by...**

**Facilities Improvement Goal: Our goal is to upgrade and refresh the physical plant considering the fiscal constraints of the school district budget.**

- **Each year our 8<sup>th</sup> graders design of new 8<sup>th</sup> grade mural. A design contest is held and the winning mural is painted in the cafeteria.**
- **The Joyce Middle School Art Gallery is slated to open next year. Our Art Department has selected student works of art that have been framed and will be hung once the center corridor is painted.**
- **A major renovation of the Main Office was completed during the summer of 2007. In addition, renovated space was converted into a teacher's workroom.**
- **Sound panels have been priced out for the cafeteria.**
- **Each year classrooms are identified for repainting.**
- **In the science classrooms, double desks have been removed and replaced with student desks.**
- **Thanks to a capital improvement project, the auditorium at the Joyce was completely renovated with new seating and a fresh coat of paint.**

## **Amendment to the School Improvement Plan for 2008-2009 School year**

### **Improvement Goals**

**Target Goal # 1 – To improve the Low Income subgroup's Mathematics CPI by 6 points.**

**To successfully attain this goal the Joyce Middle School must:**

**Decrease the number of low income students scoring in the warning category by 10 students**

**Decrease the number of low income students scoring in the Needs Improvement 220 – 228 range by 3 students.**

**Decrease the number of low income students scoring in the Needs Improvement 230 – 238 range by 3 students.**

**Increase the number of low income students scoring proficient and advanced by 16 students.**

**Target Goal # 2 – To improve the Special Education subgroup's Mathematics CPI by 7 points.**

**To successfully attain this goal the Joyce Middle School must:**

Decrease the number of Special Education students scoring in the warning category by 8 students.  
Decrease the number of Special Education students scoring in the Needs Improvement 220 – 228 range 4 students.  
Decrease the number of Special Education students scoring in the Needs Improvement 230 – 238 range by 3 students.  
Increase the number of Special Education students scoring proficient and advanced by 15 students.

**Possible Reasons the Joyce Middle School did not make AYP for the Special Education & Low Income Subgroups in Mathematics.**

Last year we had an after school MCAS tutorial program directed towards the Low Income students. Only about 50 % of these students attended the program. I believe possible reasons for the low participation rate were transportation issues and lack of parental support for the program.

When analyzing students in the Special Education sub groups I realized that last year we had 4 students removed from the subgroup who scored in the 230 – 238 Needs Improvement or proficient range while we added 3 students to the Special Education subgroup who scored in the 210 – 218 warning range. Our target performance improvement range is based on the students last year (06/07) and does not incorporate prior performance of the students entering and exiting the subgroup. This negatively skewed our actual improvement. Had none of those student additions occurred we would have easily made AYP in the Special Education subgroup.

**Improvement Strategies**

The Joyce Middle School will begin a Mathematics MCAS tutorial program for students who are in the Special Education and Low Income Subgroups and who have scored in the Warning and Needs Improvement categories. This program will be taught during the normal school day by teachers and meet twice a week for 25 weeks. Because of scheduling issues we will only be able to service the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade with this program.

The Joyce Middle School will also provide an after school homework club for all students and MCAS tutorials for select students based on last years MCAS scores.

The Joyce Middle School will formulate an MCAS improvement Committee comprised of teachers to study methods to improve test scores.

The Special Education Staff has analyzed and updated the current Mathematics reference sheet utilized by students with Accommodation #20.

**High-quality professional development needed to implement the school's improvement objectives;**

The teachers will continue to be offered professional development in the John Collins writing program which will improve the students writing of open response questions.

The teachers will have a professional development day to assess curriculum.

Special Education teachers will attend MCAS Alternate Assessment Portfolio training.

**Parental involvement tied to the school's improvement objectives;**

Parents will be tied to the new improvement plan through the school council, which will be involved in overseeing the new plan. Parents in the PTO will also be informed of the plan

**Extended time programs, as necessary, to meet the school's improvement objectives;**

The Joyce Middle School will be offering after school homework club and MCAS tutoring, which will help the students improve their MCAS scores. Students will also have the ability to access Study Island during school and after school at home.

**Identification of resources needed to implement the school's improvement plan;**

The district will provide a budget for ordering MCAS remediation workbooks, provide a tutoring wage to teachers providing the MCAS help after school, and provide funds to pay for professional development opportunities.

**Incorporation of a teacher mentoring program;**

The Woburn Public School District currently utilizes a 3-year teacher mentoring program for all new staff members.

**Timeline**

The plan will be implemented according to the following timeline:

- September & October – MCAS scores analyzed and target groups formed.
- Start of quarter 2 (November 10, 2008) In school MCAS remediation program will begin for all students in SPED and Low Income subgroups
- December 1, 2008 – after school homework club will begin
- February 2, 2009 – after school MCAS tutoring will begin
- May 21, 2009 – After school MCAS tutoring programs and Homework Club will end

**Identification of the responsibilities of the school, school district and the state for supporting the implementation of the plan.**

Responsibilities of the School District will be:

- To provide funding to purchase MCAS remediation program staffing & materials.
- To provide professional development opportunities for staff members.

Responsibilities of the Joyce Middle School will be:

- To analyze the MCAS data and formulate the target groups.
- To coordinate the Mathematics MCAS remediation program.
- Arrange for the John Collins Writing Program professional development.

Responsibilities of the State Department of Education will be:

- To provide support through their online MCAS question database