



# HANSCOM

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

School Improvement Plan

2015-2016

Year End Report

Erich Ledebuhr, Principal

## Rubric for School Improvement Plan Level of Achievement (Status)

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
NOT YET	Strategies in this category are not yet initiated.
INITIATED	Strategies in this goal are in the beginning stages of implementation. This may include some completed professional development, pilot initiatives planned, plans for next steps in process.
DEVELOPING	Strategies in this category are in the developing stages. This may include basic professional development, continuing professional development planned, initial data collected, pilot projects initiated, teams functioning effectively.
ESTABLISHED	Strategies in the category have been established. This may include an on-going professional development plan, completed cycle of data collection, documented growth in areas of academic achievement.
REFINING	Strategies in this category are in the refining stage. This may include completed School Improvement Plan goal, expansion of successful practices to other grade levels or subjects, more comprehensive or advanced professional development.

## District Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives			
<b>Educator Growth:</b> Build educator expertise and a shared vision of effective teaching through the new educator evaluation system, professional collaboration, and professional development	<b>Curriculum and Instruction:</b> Refine curriculum and instruction to strengthen the engagement and achievement of all students	<b>Assessment and Data:</b> Use assessment and data to effectively promote and monitor student growth	<b>Responding to Student Needs:</b> Respond skillfully to the academic, social emotional, and physical needs of all students

## Section 1: School Improvement Goals Outline

<b>Goal 1:</b>	<b>Educator Growth:</b> Faculty will develop a shared understanding of high-quality, school-based collaborative practices.
<b>Goal 2:</b>	<b>Instruction:</b> Faculty will develop a shared vision of how we will utilize the 21st Century design of our new facility to enhance the educational experience of our students.

## Section 2: Goal Detail

### Goal 1: Educator Growth

**School Based Goal No. 1:** Faculty will develop a shared understanding of high-quality, school-based collaborative practices.

#### **What's been done?**

Teachers and administrators participated in the district wide Collaborative Practice Module led by Dr. McFall. Additionally, teacher leaders and administration also participated in SRI training led by Gene Thompson-Grove.

Some teams also took advantage of scheduling extra time with Gene Thompson-Grove to work on topics and challenges specific to their teams.

- The 6th/7th grade team worked with Gene Thompson-Grove to develop a protocol to assist during Student Support Team (SST) meetings to effectively and efficiently cycle through weekly student discussions.
- The Specialist team is scheduled to work with Gene Thompson-Grove to develop protocols for difficult conversations and work with scheduling.

The knowledge gained from these trainings allowed our educators to apply their professional learning to their practice in the following ways:

- New team norms were developed
  - Some teams developed norms for individual situations that might be challenging for the team, i.e., parent conferences
- All administrators and teacher leaders used protocols to address difficult conversations and situations in meetings.
  - Protocols were designed and used by both Hanscom Primary and Middle School for an Instructional Support Team (IST) pilot

While updating norms and learning to use protocols are important, norms and protocols are only a means to an end. They are tools to help us stay focused on student learning. When we use them effectively, it allows us, as teachers, to think about and plan for all of our students to create an environment and lessons that promote instruction that is engaging, authentic, exciting, and

appropriate for our students. The foundation has been poured, and teachers and teams through their collaborations are starting to build this kind of school environment.

A direct outcome of this goal is that every team in the school successfully collaborated to plan and incorporate aspects of our new shared vision (Goal 2) into an instructional unit to be delivered after we moved into the new building before the end of the school year. This will be further discussed as an outcome of Goal 2. Examples are attached to the end of this report.

### **What's next?**

We will have some tangible, collaborative experiences to reflect on as we begin our planning for next year. Some teams have scheduled summer work to refine their units of instruction or ways they can improve their collaborative planning. We will also have survey results of student feedback about their experiences with the instructional units the teachers are delivering this year.

As we plan our on-going professional development, we hope to learn from our experience this year to help develop meaningful ways to deepen our understanding and application of high-quality, school-based collaborative practices

## **Goal 1 Action Plan**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Possible Next Steps</b>
Educators will participate in a three-session district module, <i>Collaborative Practice</i>	Established	Educators and administrators all participated in the three-session district module	Expand knowledge and implementation of collaborative practices by improving current PLCs
Principal and Teacher leaders will participate in SRI training	Established	Administrators and Teacher Leaders participated in multi session SRI trainings with Gene Thompson-Grove  The 6th/7th grade team and the specialist team did additional training with Gene Thompson-Grove to delve deeper into their training and to collaborate on planning upcoming units of study	Expand the use of SRI training to improve conversations about students, student work and adult collaboration

## Goal 1 Action Plan, Continued

Action	Status	Outcomes	Possible Next Steps
Educators will apply their professional learning to practice.	Established	New Team norms have been established  Protocols have regularly been used  Protocols were created and used for a pilot IST program  Educators have collaborated to create new units of study	Continue to apply professional learning particularly around collaborating as a team to improve student learning and engagement

## Goal 2: Instruction

**School Based Goal No. 2:** Faculty will develop a shared vision of how we will utilize the 21st Century design of our new facility to enhance the educational experience of our students.

### **What's been done?**

The beginning of each school year is a re-birth. We have a chance to reflect and the opportunity to change our practice to better meet the needs of our students. We can grow professionally and incorporate new aspects into our planning and instruction. At the beginning of this year, we had the added incentive of moving into a new building.

Moving into a new building and having the opportunity to redefine your vision is an opportunity that does not happen very often, and we wanted to make sure we took full advantage of it. At the beginning of the school year, I introduced the idea of the new Hanscom Middle School being a blank canvas in regards to our vision of what we want the school experience to be like for our students, faculty and community.

My opening day message for the faculty was, "What will you add to the canvas?" We have spent the year adding to that canvas by creating a new shared vision for our school to compliment and effectively use our new state-of-the art facility. It was also important to us to honor how the building itself was designed as a teaching tool.

To fill our canvas, faculty went through multi-meeting professional development to develop a shared vision.

Meeting dates were:

- November 23, 2015
- December 14, 2015
- January 19, 2016 (Institute Day)
- February 29, 2016

In order to develop the shared vision, we used the *Back to the Future* protocol and also developed and answered the following essential questions:

- What does engagement look like in our school?
- What does a high level of cognitive demand look like?
- What does parent involvement look like?
- What does the social emotional piece look like for our students?
- What do assessments look like?
- What does instruction look like?
- How do students feel like they belong?
- How do staff feel like they belong?
- What does it feel like to be a student? A parent? A community member?
- What do you want to add to the canvas?

Creating a new shared vision was hard but rewarding work. We created a vision that will add to the solid foundation of our new school. We are pleased to present a copy of our new shared vision along with this report.

It is not enough just to create a vision, we knew that we needed to act and implement the vision as soon as we moved into the new building. Each team was asked to work collaboratively to plan and implement an aspect of our new shared vision into their instruction before the end of the school year.

As a result, from the very first day we entered the building, teachers, both individually and as teams, have been implementing our shared vision and using the building as it was designed, particularly with their creativity in using the many flexible teaching spaces the building offers.

Students and teachers have had the opportunity to share and experience our new shared vision in a variety of ways including differentiated instruction through the use of space, flexible groupings, team teaching, authentic hands-on group projects and full interdisciplinary units of study.

We also worked collaboratively as an entire school community to define our *Hopes and Dreams* for our new building and educational environment. We created posters for students and faculty to write their hopes and dreams on. These posters were then displayed in each of the team's' common areas so that students would be greeted by and reminded of their hopes and dreams as they entered the new building (examples attached). This was a key component to our opening day celebration and helped to connect all of us to our new school.

### **What's next?**

As a faculty we still have one more step to complete in the *Back to the Future* protocol. That step is to look back to where we started on our journey of transitioning to our new shared vision. This will be an interesting discussion since we will have already had a taste of what the new vision can look like. We will also have some feedback to reflect on from our experience. This will allow us to refine our shared vision.

There is a strong community component of our shared vision. Due to timing this year, we were not able to communicate our shared vision to our entire community. We look forward to discussing what this process will look like and sharing our new vision with our community.

A logical next step for us will also be to look at our overall school schedule. We need to make sure our schedule works to support our shared vision rather than drive what we can or cannot do because of time restraints.

The collaborative work for this goal has strong connections with all three key district priorities for the 2015-2016 school year. I am extremely proud of the work that we have done with this goal. Not only did we create a shared vision we also acted on the “enhancing the educational experience of our students” part of the goal by each team implementing parts of the shared vision through the units of study they created. This was a true collaborative effort. I am grateful to the faculty for their commitment and stamina to our goals all while dealing with the disruptive logistics of moving into a new building.

Due to our collaborative efforts, our students benefited by new instructional experiences, and we look forward to creating more rich educational experiences for them that align with our new shared vision as we continue our journey *Back to the Future*.

## Goal 2 Action Plan

Action	Status	Outcomes	Possible Next Steps
Participate in a three-session district module, <i>Collaborative Practices</i> .	Refining	Educators and administrators all participated in the three-session district module	Expand knowledge and implementation of collaborative practices by improving current PLCs
Faculty will participate in reflective study of our current practices as they relate to space, identify where we would like to make changes in our practice, and develop a shared vision of how our innovations will enhance the educational experience of our students in our new facility.	Refining	Principal led faculty through the Back to the Future protocol to create a vision for where we want our school to be five years from now as we've settled into the our new facility.  Guiding questions were developed, discussed and answered in a way that allowed us to collaborate on defining a new shared vision for our school	Refine and develop a way to effectively communicate our new shared vision to all stakeholders.
Faculty will begin collaborative work to implement the practices defined in the shared vision (in the existing facility).	Refining	Once we moved into the new building each team implemented at least one new practice into their instruction to align with our new shared vision	Refine and expand on instructional practices that were developed through this goal.
Move into the new facility and begin to communicate and implement the practices defined in the shared vision	Established	All teams have designed units of instruction to implement aspects of the new shared vision	Refine and expand the units of instruction



# Hanscom Middle School

## Shared Vision

### ***What does instruction look like and how will we connect our expectations to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks?***

- Engaging and authentic learning experiences where classrooms connect to the outside world
  - This will include hands-on learning and project-based instruction.
- Interdisciplinary collaborations across content areas and grade levels
- Use of flexible groupings both within the classroom and through utilization of academic extension time
  - In grades six through eight, flexible grouping will also be used to deliver special education services.
  - Academic extension periods will serve as remediation and extension opportunities around reading, writing, math, and other specifically designed instructional goals.

### ***What do assessments look like?***

- Flexible and variable
  - Both formative and summative assessments are given on a regular basis and results are shared with colleagues and students.
- Purposeful and lead to a targeted end goal
- Useful to teachers as a platform for informed instruction
- Useful to students with opportunities for feedback, student reflection and demonstration of growth

### ***What does the social emotional piece look like for our students?***

- Includes programs/curricula that foster independence and teach problem solving and decision making
- Availability of both emotional and behavior supports for students based on individual need
- Incorporates programs/curricula that include cultural integration and reflect cultural awareness and respect

### ***What does engagement look like in our school?***

- Student involvement in some decision making and opportunities for choice
- Range of hands-on and engaging curriculum activities for students to participate in
  - Teachers are empowered to provide these types of activities with opportunities for team and grade-level planning time.



- Authentic and purposeful classroom activities
- Shared ownership and responsibility between the teacher, student, and parent
- Extracurricular programs that extend classroom concepts
  - Ideally this would be a consistent position led by a parent volunteer (or stipended position) which will offer some stability in developing a stable extracurricular program.

#### ***What does a high level of cognitive demand look like?***

- Daily classwork and assessments across disciplines that challenge students to analyze, synthesize, justify, explain, compare and contrast, evaluate, describe, infer, and examine
- Multi-step collaborative projects that are hands-on and spiral within curriculum and content
  - These projects will be interdisciplinary and will build across grade-levels, including collaboration with specialists.
- Continuous development of projects that will serve as teaching tools for authentic audiences

#### ***How do students feel like they belong?***

- Shared ownership of the school between faculty and students
  - Students will be educated on the importance of respecting our facility and will be responsible for simple upkeep, such as putting away materials and keeping furniture free from writing or marks.
  - Students and staff will work together to plan assemblies and write newsletters communicating with our community.
- Strong efforts to build community partnerships
- Relevant topics connected to student interest
- Increased opportunities for student choice

#### ***How do staff feel like they belong?***

- Foster feelings of trust and appreciation
- Share responsibility and collaborate across teams and grade-levels through planning, designing, and correcting processes
- Adjust scheduling to meet the needs of students

#### ***What does parent involvement look like?***

- Open invitations to parents and community members for school events
- Continued technology exploration to further support parents
  - This would include consistent grade-level expectations around information parents can access.
  - Parents would receive further education on standards based scoring.
- Streamlined technology use across contents and grade-levels for easy parent access
- Up-to-date student information so that correct contact information will always be located



- This would require information and training sessions for parents so they are familiar with online documents and platforms.

***What does it look and feel like to be a student? Parent? A community member?***

*Student*

- Opportunities for community service
- Shared responsibility and ownership of the school
- Ability to make choices within the classroom
- Learning about topics of interest and relevance
- Learning to become a responsible member of the community and better citizens

*Parent*

- Ability to use the school for after-school activities
- Opportunities to lead extra-curricular programs after hours
- Opportunities to host events at the school for community involvement or fundraising

*Community*

- Opportunities provided for school-wide community meetings
- Ability to provide modules or professional development for faculty and/or students

***What questions do we still need to consider?***

- Is there a timeline of how and when we will meet markers moving towards these goals?
- If not, should there be a set timeline?
- How will district/school meeting time support this initiative?

The 7/8 team at Hanscom Middle School is currently developing an extensive collaborative unit titled, "Faces of Inequality." The unit opened the first week we entered our new school and will end on May 31st with a community event. Using our module training regarding collaboration, differentiation, and technology, we as a team put together a month-long unit centered on ways inequality has been exhibited and remains exhibited not only in our subject areas, but in the United States. We have decided as a team to center a portion of our studies around Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*. This allowed us to explore more nonfiction and to work on nonfiction reading techniques as well as have some statistical basis from which to build our unit's application to daily life in America.

The unit centered around six main themes of inequality: income, health care access, education, geography, cultural background and nutrition. In addition, students explored inequalities regarding access to entertainment, finding housing, and transportation. In math and science, students studied such topics as mathematical inequalities and how health is impacted by economic differences, often leading to poor nutrition and diseases in certain communities. In Spanish, students read a collection of poetry about growing up Latino in the United States and investigated discrimination in the Latino community. In English, students centered their nonfiction reading and skill building on Ehrenreich's text as well as read additional fiction and nonfiction pieces. Finally, in social studies, students explored the Jim Crow period that followed Reconstruction eventually leading to the 20th century Civil Rights Movement. Students analyzed their ability as citizens to overcome these inequalities.

One day each week eighth grade teachers used flexible groups and scheduling, small and whole group discussions, and simulations in order to increase student engagement and provide an opportunity for more authentic learning. In week one, teachers introduced the unit with a movie, *A Place at the Table*, which examines the issue of hunger in America by focusing on the plight of three individuals from different parts of the country who struggle to find adequate nutrition. Students then worked in small groups to brainstorm other areas of inequality within the United States and examine which areas have the greatest impact on Americans. In week two, students participated in a simulation where they were randomly assigned a role as a member of the upper class, middle class, and working poor. Students ate a breakfast and worked at jobs for two hours based on their role. Afterwards students reflected in journals and participated in a full class discussion. In the third week, students participated in a second simulation where they worked together in cooperative groups to manage daily life by creating a monthly budget that included buying groceries, finding housing, purchasing health insurance, and determining transportation to work. In the final week, students worked in small groups to answer the question, do some people begin their life on third base? Students went out to a baseball field and drew a number telling them that they would begin a race from either first, second, or third base. Students stood on each base and raced around the bases to home plate. Afterwards, students engaged in small and whole group discussions about what it means to begin life on third base, who is likely to begin life on each base, and discuss

whether it is possible for someone to “make it home” if he or she begins life on first base.

Throughout the unit the team worked collectively to differentiate the skill building that goes along with this unit to individual student needs. Teachers worked on formulaic representations, creating and interpreting graphs and charts, analyzing nutritional data, utilizing nonfiction reading strategies, comparing and contrasting, structuring persuasive essays, creating digital and visual displays of findings, and verbal presentations. To culminate the unit, students worked in teams to address some means of overcoming inequality in a particular area related to their personal interests. Due to flexible scheduling, students were not limited to just working with students in a particular class, but were able to work with any student in the eighth grade. All students worked together on teams, including students who have pull-outs from some classes through their IEP. A facet of this unit was also to encourage students to take more ownership over their own success and often students will have to plan out meeting times, make individual and group choices, organize research, and collaborate in the formation of their final product and presentation.

At the end of our unit, Ms. Martus’s and Mr. Peledge’s advisory groups will serve as leaders of a Student-Parent gathering on May 31st from 6:00pm-8:00pm during which families will be invited to the school to observe and listen to student presentations regarding this inequality unit. We plan to provide dinner and have the evening serve as a community building event, utilizing the physical space of our new building. Students will use the large common area with the stage to set up

presentations and deliver their findings verbally. School committee members and administration are invited to attend our gathering as well to observe the fruits of the students' labor. We appreciate the time and attention the district has afforded our staff, in particular our team, to collaborate and develop this unit.

# Eighth Grade

## Faces of Inequality

The eighth grade team is working collaboratively with students on a three-week interdisciplinary unit, Faces of Inequality. Through non-fiction works, movies, teacher-directed lessons and class discussions, our goal is to present students with a variety of forms of inequality and then ask students to work with a partner or small group to determine an area they feel is unjust. We encourage students to choose an area in which they have a passion, an inequality in which they feel a need to address. As a culminating project, students will work together to create a practical solution as to how to solve their chosen area of inequality. Potential areas of inequality are income, healthcare, education, nutrition, housing, transportation, geography, access to entertainment, and cultural background. **On May 31st, from 6:00-8:00 the eighth grade team invites all parents, teachers, and members of the Hanscom Middle School community to a student-led gathering where students will reflect and share what they learned about inequality and present their solutions to the issue of inequality.**

One day each week, teachers created an open schedule that allowed students to work in flexible groups. In the first week the eighth grade team introduced the unit to students with the movie, A Place at the Table, which examines the issue of hunger in America by focusing on the plight of three individuals from different parts of the country who struggle to find adequate nutrition. In the second week, students participated in a simulation where they were randomly assigned a role as a member of the upper class, middle class, and lower class. Students ate breakfast and performed tasks in two classes based on their assigned role. Afterwards, students reflected in journals and participated in a full group discussion. In the third week, students participated in a second simulation where they worked together in cooperative groups to manage daily life by creating a monthly budget that includes buying groceries, finding housing, purchasing health insurance, determining transportation, and establishing some savings.

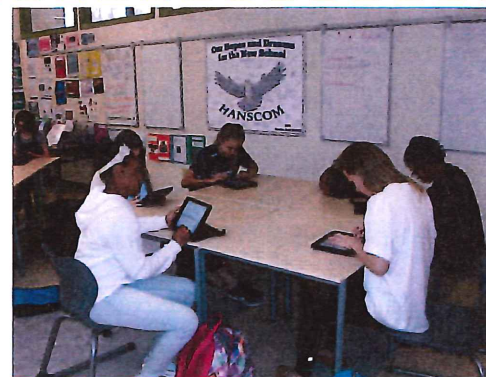




Throughout the unit students had the opportunity to explore inequality more deeply in each of subject area classes. In math, students examined a variety of inequalities, leading to formula problem solving and graphing. In science, students learned about the impact of food inequality on nutrition and health. In English, students read Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*. Ehrenreich goes undercover as an investigative journalist to examine the challenges of earning a living as a low wage worker. At the end of the novel it becomes apparent that no matter what tax bracket you are in, you have a stake in the issues raised by

Ehrenreich. In art, students will examine how artists raise awareness about issues related to culture and how stereotypes affect people of different cultures. In Spanish students are reading *Cool Salsa* which is a collection of poetry about growing up Latino in the United States.

In social studies students examined Jim Crow through the Civil Rights period and civic responsibilities. Instruction to students varied including whole group, small group, and one to one teaching. In all subject areas students were required to analyze data, make a claim, and support those claims with evidence that included facts, data, and quotes. In addition, students debated, reflected in journals, and gave presentations. **We look forward to seeing you all the night of the 31st.**





# Hanscom Middle School

## Institute Day

1.19.15

### Collaboration Time

As you spend time collaborating with your team today. You will be brainstorming about possible ways to utilize the new building as a teaching tool. One of our school based goals for this year's school improvement plan is:

*Faculty will develop a shared vision of how we will utilize the 21st Century design of our new facility to enhance the educational experience of our students.*

We continue to create this shared vision through our Back to the Future work. One of the outcomes for this goal is for teams to incorporate aspects of our new shared vision into our instruction. I am asking each team to take a chance and "try something new on" once we get into the new building.

For some of you, this could mean taking advantage of the new space with increased flexible groupings or perhaps collaborating in a different way to do a unit that is more project based. Whatever your ideas may be, I am excited to see the different kinds of possibilities that you all come up with.

As you plan I would like you to keep both the 5 Key Questions for Learning and the Dufour PLC 4 Essential Questions in mind when you are planning. Both sets of questions are listed below for you to reference and answer while you plan.

We will continue this work after Institute Day during some of our building based time. As you go through this work I'd like each team to actually answer these questions so we can report out on what we have accomplished at the end of the year.

#### PLC 4 Essential Questions:

1. What do we want students to learn?
2. How do we know students have learned it?
3. What do we do when students don't learn it?
4. What do we do when students learned it/already know it?

#### 5 Key Questions for Learning:

1. What evidence demonstrates that students know the objective and/or learning target?
2. In what ways does the lesson engage students in authentic learning?
3. What evidence is there of meaningful exchanges between teacher and individual students and between students?
4. In what ways does the teacher assess student understanding related to the objective and/or learning target?
5. Did the teacher differentiate the instruction and learning experiences to meet the range of learners in the class?

## **6th/7th grade Team**

### **PLC 4 Essential Questions:**

#### **1. What do we want students to learn?**

We want our students to learn the power of collaboration and shared experiences. Additionally, we are showcasing student's mastery of our curriculum standards. Each project displayed will also include a rubric outlining the standards met.

#### **2. How do we know students have learned it?**

The students will meet or exceed standards outlined in the rubrics and will be able to teach others about their work and process.

#### **3. What do we do when students don't learn it?**

Students who have not met the standards will have the ability to choose which projects they excelled on and want to showcase to their peers and community. Students will also have an opportunity to edit and refine work they would like to present. Students will have ample opportunities to put their best foot forward.

#### **4. What do we do when students learned it/already know it?**

These students will be able to share their opportunity to go above and beyond the learning expectations for the projects which they are presenting. In addition, students, who have gone above and beyond, may be asked to share their presentations with the group.

### **5 Key Questions for Learning:**

#### **1. What evidence demonstrates that students know the objective and/or learning target?**

Each project will be displayed with the scoring rubric (blank for each project). Parents and community members will be able to see how each target and standard was met through the projects both within and across curriculums.

#### **2. In what ways does the lesson engage students in authentic learning?**

Projects will represent a variety of activities ranging from hands on group work to individual research. There will be student choice and involvement in creating rubrics. Students will reflect on work from all classes and share what they learned with others while thinking about their areas of strength and challenges which is a key component of being lifelong learners, critical thinkers and problem solvers.

#### **3. What evidence is there of meaningful exchanges between teacher and individual students and between students?**

Teachers, students and parents will be able to take the opportunity to reflect on the entire school year by revisiting past projects and forming connections among the topics covered, content learned, idea of improvement during the project and from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. Students will be able to discuss moments of which they are most proud and moments of failure where they were able to learn or understand a concept more clearly or where they were able to learn how to improve next time.

#### **4. In what ways does the teacher assess student understanding related to the objective and/or learning target?**

Teachers will have previously assessed student work displayed. Students will have had an opportunity to review their scores and refine their work before presenting it to their peers and community. Each project will be scored on a rubric that clearly outlines the standards assessed.

**5. Did the teacher differentiate the instruction and learning experiences to meet the range of learners in the class?**

Each project demonstrates a wide range of differentiation strategies. Some projects allowed for student choice; some allowed for varied texts based on reading levels. Teachers may have chosen to modify or enhance assignments for students working at different levels of readiness. Because students will have a choice in which projects are displayed- students will get to showcase their best work.

# HANSCOM MIDDLE SCHOOL

