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BEVERLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## **SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**2009-2011**

**Hannah Elementary School**

**Signature Page**

Principal Susan Snyder\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Co-Chair Carlin Bird\_\_\_\_\_

Parents Jeanne Chan\_\_\_\_\_

Catherine Barrett\_\_\_\_\_

Staff Sue Capodilupo\_\_\_\_\_

Judy LaChance\_\_\_\_\_

Steve Sutherland\_\_\_\_\_

Community Representatives Eleanor Huston\_\_\_\_\_

Carrie Kimball-Monahan\_\_\_\_\_

## **Executive Summary 2007-2009**

District-wide Goal: To implement procedures to ensure safe and drug free schools.

School Council Goal: To create a sense of community within each classroom to maximize learning and minimize disruptions.

Over the past two years, Hannah School has had monthly school gatherings to recognize positive character traits. The theme the first year was “Pawsome students.” Students who demonstrated traits such as caring, responsibility, self-control, and respect were nominated by their teacher to receive a ‘Pawsome’ student award. This year, the school theme has been Coach John Wooden’s “Pyramid of Success.” Classes were recognized for demonstrating traits such as: hard work, enthusiasm, loyalty, friendship, cooperation, alertness, action, determination, fitness, skill, confidence, and poise. Pyramid of Success materials were also included in student agenda books for grades 2-5. Each year, a bulletin board was prominently displayed to remind students of the values and achievement. Student and class names were listed to encourage participation. Grade level bulletin boards were also displayed in the front lobby each month to display student work and continue to build the sense of community. At lunchtime, students changed their seats every other month as part of “mix it up at lunchtime.” In this way, students were able to get to know others with whom they may not have otherwise chosen to sit. We found this to be a way to lessen the possibility of hurt feelings and exclusion at lunch tables.

Additionally, many Responsive Classroom strategies have been implemented. Teachers participated in a daylong training provided by Responsive Classroom trainers. Through grant funding, we purchased “The Morning Meeting Book,” and other resources for all teachers. At staff meeting time, teachers were able to view some additional Responsive Classroom training DVD’s. Morning Meeting has been scheduled in many classrooms and teachers report that it provides a special time each day when students can greet one another, share news and announcements, and begin their day on a shared positive note.

Equity referrals were named as the measure of progress in the previous School Improvement Plan, but upon further review, it appears they may not be the best measure of the sense of community within the school. The goal from the previous SIP was to achieve a 20% decrease in Equity referrals over two years. This was not realized. We found that the number of referrals for complaints of harassment or bullying remained essentially the same. In 2007, 20 referrals were processed; in 2008, 23 referrals were processed, and so far this year, we have close to the same number of referrals. This could be due to the fact that students and teachers are aware of the procedures in place to process such incidences and are comfortable that it is a venue to resolve issues. It could also be that we will experience an increase this year due to changes in student population as a result of the recent re-districting and a larger school population. With this in mind, the School Council decided to send a parent survey home to assess, among other things, parents perceptions about the sense of community and their feelings about safety and respect at Hannah. The results showed that 99.5% of parents felt welcome at the school and that 98.7% felt their children were safe at school. 92.8% reported that they felt students treated one another with respect and 99.2% reported that teachers treat students with respect. 97.1% of parents reported

that there was a feeling of mutual respect among staff, students, and parents at the school. Overwhelmingly positive comments were repeated about the sense of community that exists at Hannah.

The Words of Wisdom continued to be read to students on a daily basis. Two students are chosen each day to lead the school in the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the pledge, students recite the school motto, "Be kind. Be responsible. Be the best you can be. The choice is yours." The Hannah PTO also supports our efforts to reinforce positive character traits by choosing enrichment programs for the school that send this message. Over the past two years, the school had programs from Molly Sliney, an Olympic fencer who overcame learning disabilities to achieve her dreams, Harlem Rockets basketball players who worked hard and persevered academically and physically to achieve success, a Jump-rope program that mixed physical fitness with hard work and enthusiasm, and Bach to Rock, a musical program that reinforced the notion of overcoming obstacles to achieve creative dreams.

NCLB Goal: All students will be proficient in Mathematics and ELA by 2014.

District-wide Goal: To increase the number of Special Education and Low Income students who score at a proficient level on the ELA and math MCAS test by 10% each year from 2007-2009.

School Council Goal: Increase percentage of students scoring Proficient (P) or Advanced (A)

\*To increase the percentage of grade 4 students who score in the Proficient/Advanced category in Math from 48% to 50%.

\*To increase the percentage of grade 4 students who score in the Needs Improvement High category in Math from 38% to 40% and to decrease the percentage of students who score in the Needs Improvement Low category in Math from 10% to 6% in math.

\*To increase the percentage of grade 4 students who score in the Proficient/Advanced category in ELA from 48% to 51%.

\*To increase the percentage of grade 4 students who score in the Needs Improvement High category in ELA from 29% to 31% and to decrease the percentage of students who score in the Needs Improvement Low category in ELA from 19% to 14%.

The Hannah School made AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Education. 68% of Hannah 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored in the Proficient/Advanced categories in Math and 68% of Hannah 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored in the Proficient/Advanced categories in ELA. Midway through the 2-year cycle of this previous School Improvement Plan, the Hannah School Council decided that since our students were meeting our goals, there was no need to continue the goal of moving students from the Needs Improvement Low category to the Needs Improvement High category. This original goal was chosen to help us make AYP, but was deemed unnecessary. Measures were taken in the aggregate because Hannah School does not have enough students in these sub-groups to report. However, Hannah staff continues to review and analyze data including data from sub-groups; specifically the Free and Reduced Lunch subgroup and the Special Needs sub-group. Through item analysis, it became clear to us that our sub-groups' performance tends to mirror that of the aggregate group, but with slightly greater performance dips on difficult items.

We were pleased to note increases in the number of students scoring the advanced category on the fourth grade MCAS. As teachers have become more familiar with the Everyday Math program and Rigby Literacy programs, they have been able to provide more differentiated instruction. Specifically, in the area of reading instruction, teachers are able to provide interventions targeted to student's learning needs. Hannah has utilized fluency interventions, phonics interventions, and small group reading instruction with a focus on vocabulary development. By scheduling literacy and math blocks for each grade level, we have been able to provide staffing to support interventions for students who need them right in their classroom.

This three-tier model has proven successful in addressing student needs. Additionally, Hannah School has begun to utilize DIBELS assessments in grades 4 and 5, as well as grades K-3. This continuity of assessments provides us with meaningful data to analyze and use for instructional planning purposes. Grade level teams have met three times each year to review student assessment data and make collaborative decisions about instructional groupings and strategies. Since open response test items were found to be difficult for our students, teachers have given students opportunities to practice OR (Open Response) prompts as well as other MCAS practice tests throughout the school year. Teachers have implemented a system to assess Open Response practice questions that students complete three times a year. Strategies were utilized to help students organize their writing using graphic organizers and looking back to questions and reading passages for information. Study Island, a web-based program targeting essential reading and math skills, has also been utilized in grades 3-5. This year, we are piloting an after school "Study Island Club." Students receive usernames and passwords and may access the program both at school and at home with Internet access. Recent upgrades to our book room include non-fiction titles aligned with our science curriculum so that teachers and students have access to leveled texts that may be above or below grade level depending on individual students' learning needs.

In addition to reporting on School Improvement Plan goals, the Hannah School is pleased to report that the kindergarten programs have earned accreditation from NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). Hannah also maintains its accreditation earned from NEASC by maintaining high standards and submitting progress reports as required by NEASC.

## **Needs Assessment & Goals 2009-2011**

During the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years, Hannah teachers were involved in a systematic analysis of MCAS data. Improvements were noted in the number of students who moved from Proficient to Advanced in grade 4 Math. In 2006, 10% of Hannah fourth graders scored in the Advanced category, while 25% scored Advanced in 2007 and 38% scored Advanced in 2008. The implementation of the Everyday Math program is likely a contributing factor in this achievement, but we will continue to refine the instructional delivery to include the assurance of specific instruction of topics prior to testing. For example, we found that Unit 12 in the grade 5 Everyday Math book contains important information that is needed to be successful on the fifth grade MCAS test. This unit would ordinarily be taught last, after MCAS tests are administered. We plan to be sure to introduce students to unit 12 concepts, which include proportional relationships, prior to the May MCAS testing. We also found that unit 10 in the grade 3 Everyday Math book (Coordinate Grids) should be introduced before MCAS testing as well. We hope to maintain these impressive increases. Fourth grade scores were chosen because they also include a writing assessment. Since Open Response questions continue to be challenging for our students and they contain a writing component, this is an important area to examine. On the fourth grade MCAS, Hannah students earned an average of 26.8 points out of a possible 40 on ELA open response questions and an average of 25.7 points out of a possible 40 in Math.

This analysis process took place during staff meeting time and involved teachers at all grade levels. Our findings supported the plan to continue to work to improve students' ability to respond effectively to Open Response questions. On the district Open Response prompts that were administered three times this year, scores showed little improvement. Perhaps this is due to the isolated nature of the prompts in relation to the instruction that is delivered in the classroom. During the next two years, open response prompts that are embedded in the Rigby Literacy by Design program will be used instead of released open response questions from previous MCAS tests. Teachers will need professional development and time to score this student work collaboratively. It is hoped that questions that are more connected to instruction will help improve student performance on the prompts and in turn, on open response questions in general.

In addition to the continued focus on Open Response question practice, the Hannah School will continue to refine the schedule for literacy blocks and math blocks. The schedule will facilitate the three-tier model for literacy interventions for students identified as "at risk" through our assessments. In addition to the phonics and systematic fluency interventions already implemented, we plan to explore the possibility of implementing systematic vocabulary interventions for use with struggling readers.

When analyzing the fourth grade MCAS essays, it was noted that Hannah students performed well when measured by standard conventions of English, averaging 7 of a possible 8 points on the writing rubrics. However, topic development scores showed room for improvement with Hannah students averaging 7.3 of a possible 12 points. We plan to explore more systematic ways to improve writing instruction at all grades. The use of specific writing rubrics for each grade

level will assist us in identifying the skills needed at each grade in order to develop sequential instructional strategies.

At Hannah School, continuous improvement is important to us. The School Council administered a survey to parents with overwhelming positive feedback. As in any school, while we were pleased with the results, there is still room for improvement. 92.8% of parents reported that they felt students treated other students with respect. While a very high percentage, this figure is somewhat lower than other responses. We will administer a survey again and hope to increase this percentage to 95%. As a school, we place a high priority on respectful interactions and personal responsibility. It seems that perhaps survey results are a better measure of school climate than the number of suspensions or Equity referrals. At Hannah, we have also done a needs assessment and formed a lunch/recess improvement committee. We feel that although lunchtime is not an academic part of the day, it is nonetheless important for students to feel comfortable and relaxed as they have lunch and a break from academics in their day. We plan to continue to utilize strategies to streamline cafeteria procedures and improve the quality of recess play. The lunch/recess committee will work with the lunchroom staff to improve conflict resolution skills as well as management strategies that facilitate appropriate and enjoyable play and physical activity. So far, we have successfully implemented “Mix it up at lunchtime” seating, music in the cafeteria, and “traveling rules” to reinforce the fact that classroom rules apply in all parts of the school day.

We plan to continue to focus on school climate and hold monthly school gatherings around a school-wide theme. These school gatherings can also be a venue for students to share accomplishments in the classroom with the school community. While many upper grade classes are currently paired with primary grade classes as ‘reading buddies,’ we hope to expand this practice and provide each class with an older ‘positive peer leader’ class. By pairing classes, we will promote leadership qualities in older students and provide younger students with positive role models and assistance in school.