

STONY BROOK SCHOOL

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008-2009



Pride Respect Integrity Dedication Excellence

STONY BROOK

School Advisory Council Members

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Mission Statement

Every student at Stony Brook has unique abilities and the right to learn in a secure nurturing environment where the student has a sense of belonging and ownership and views learning as an integral part of life. Stony Brook is committed to providing a wide continuum of opportunities which values the individual student, produces life long learners and is responsible to needs of student, parent, staff and community populations.

At Stony Brook we believe:

- Every student can achieve success with expectations that are high and attainable.
- Every student will be given the strategies for becoming life long learners.
- Every student is responsible for his/her own actions and decisions.
- Every student will have the opportunity to connect with at least one significant adult in a supportive setting beyond the classroom.

Massachusetts Education Reform Act (MERA) -- School Improvement Goals -- 2008 State of the School Report

1. The climate's conducive to high expectations and performance

Now in its third year, the transitional skills class for 6th graders continues to be successful. Students are identified and selected for this program using test scores and feedback from 5th grade teachers and guidance counselors. Additionally students were recommended for this program after being identified by the 6th grade team teachers based on a difficult start to the year. The program has expanded during the 2008-2009 school year, as more students are now able to take part in the program. In the 2007-2008 school improvement plan we set a goal of providing more support services for students. This was accomplished due to the budget allowing for the increase in hours for the academic coach to full time. Additionally, we are developing clearer guidelines and criteria for the developmental reading program and using MCAS data to assist in identifying students that could benefit from additional reading assistance. Finally, the Title I math program for 6th graders continues to be a success. During the 2007-2008 school year, every student who participated in the Title I program saw their scores rise on the post-test compared with the scores on the pre-test.

2. An assessment of student/teacher ratios

In the 2007-2008 school improvement plan, we set a goal of lower class sizes in the integrated arts classes. In order to accomplish this, we requested that the general music position be increased to full time, the family & consumer science position be increased to full time, and an additional physical education teacher be hired. The general music position was increased to full time, however, the family & consumer science position and program was eliminated. An additional physical education teacher was not hired. As a result of these factors, class size in the integrated arts classes continues to be higher than ideal. During the 2008-2009 school year, we currently have fourteen sections of integrated arts classes with 25 students. Our goal is to keep class size at or below 25. There is currently only one section of art that has 26 students. Stony Brook is proud to meet the goal of keeping class sizes in the core academic classrooms at or below 25.

3. Professional development plan to meet the school's goals

During the 2007-2008 school year, professional development was focused on creating effective teams. This is an ongoing goal. During the 2008-2009 school year the focus will be on collaboration. See goals section.

4. Enhancement of parental involvement

Stony Brook continues to work hard to improve communication between school and home. Our school web site at <http://sb.westfordk12.us> is the primary source for information for students, parents, and the community. The web site contains regularly updated team web sites and individual teacher web sites. We now post homework assignments daily. We have a goal to significantly cut down on paper use at Stony Brook. We no longer distribute paper handouts to students. Our web site and parent email distribution list allow us to communicate electronically. An ongoing goal is to post some teacher handouts and worksheets online.

5. Health, safety, and discipline

We continue to emphasize health, wellness and safety more than ever. The cafeteria is serving healthier foods as per the district nutrition committee guidelines. We have eliminated candy as a reward in classrooms as well as the snack bar that sold salty and sugary snacks. Through the efforts of Janet Dubner, a Westford Public Schools' school psychologist, we are working on providing teachers with more information and training on issues of student mental health. Mrs. Dubner has received grant money and is working with a committee to increase teacher awareness of mental health issues. This year the focus will be to work with the guidance staff as well as health and physical education teachers at both middle schools.

6. Welcoming school environment characterized by tolerance and respect

During the 2007-2008 school year we successfully reached our school improvement plan goal of restructuring the advisor/advisee program into what is now known as PRIDE Time. Stony Brook now has over 50 student-designed and painted murals around the school illustrating the theme "do the right thing" and our core values (P.R.I.D.E: pride, respect, integrity, dedication, excellence). The mural project has had a positive impact both on the welcoming environment here at Stony Brook and also has led to students to feel a sense of some ownership in their school.

7. Extracurricular activities and academic support

We continue to offer many after school clubs, music and athletic opportunities for students. We reached the school improvement plan goal of establishing an after school homework club, now known as PRIDE in Homework. Participation in this program has grown. The program offers school assistance to students who struggle to complete their homework assignments on a regular basis. This program has Stony Brook teachers and Westford Academy students working with the middle school students.

8. Means for meeting diverse learning needs

As always, differentiated instruction continues to be a focus at Stony Brook. Many teachers have completed coursework on this as well as the required Skillful Teacher course. The school improvement plan goal of expanding the use of technology was reached and is an ongoing effort. The use of the Technology Integration Plans has been successful in having teachers work with the Instruction Technology Specialist to incorporate technology into their curriculum. Technology often allows students with a variety of learning needs, greater access to the curriculum.

Massachusetts Education Reform Act School Improvement Goal:
Professional Development Plan to meet the school's goals

Westford Public Schools Vision and Core Values:
Pursuing excellence in a learning community

School Improvement Plan Goal:
Utilize collaborative practices and increase the time for collaboration in order to improve student achievement. Achieve consensus among faculty in: identifying problems of practice and areas of improvement and the development of solutions.

Action(s) for Accomplishing Goal	Funding or Resources Needed	Fiscal Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development on utilization of collaborative protocols and utilization of data to guide continuous improvement. • Training for teachers to become facilitators/coaches in Critical Friends Group (CFG) protocols • Explore meeting times to create time for the CFG work • Pilot one CFG at Stony Brook 2008-2009 • Faculty-wide study group will read <u>The Collaborative Teacher</u> by C. Erkens, et al. 	<p>One CFG group at each middle school is 6-10 teachers per group. Sub coverage is \$70/day x 10 substitutes = \$700</p> <p>Summer training costs up to \$1000 per person.</p> <p>Explore stipends for after school work (funds in lieu of substitute coverage)</p>	<p>FY2009 and beyond</p>
Indicators of Accomplishment Qualitative and Quantitative Data	Additional Information	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Examine student work</p> <p>Track number of teachers trained to be facilitators</p> <p>Track number of teachers participating in CFG</p> <p>Faculty reads <u>The Collaborative Teacher</u> by the January Professional Development day.</p>	<p>Work started on 11/4/08 PD Day. Gene Thompson Grove and other CFG coaches brought in to work with SB & Blanchard faculties.</p> <p>Explore options for training on/off site. Inquire about hosting training in Westford to offset cost.</p>	<p>Teachers Administration (building and central office)</p>

Massachusetts Education Reform Act School Improvement Goal:
Welcoming school environment characterized by tolerance and respect

Westford Public Schools Vision and Core Values:
Fostering connections with local and global communities

School Improvement Plan Goal:
Expand outreach community service

Action(s) for Accomplishing Goal	Funding or Resources Needed	Fiscal Year
<p>Shift focus of PRIDE program (advisor/advisee) to outreach community service.</p> <p>Establish partnership with America Heart Association and the Hoops for Heart program</p> <p>Expand internal Best Buddies program for general education students to work with special education students with severe special needs.</p> <p>Expand Peer Mediation program</p>	<p>PRIDE Groups will need to fundraise or solicit donations of goods to cover costs of community service projects.</p> <p>Peer Mediation program is funded through grant money</p>	<p>FY2009</p>
Indicators of Accomplishment Qualitative and Quantitative Data	Additional Information	Person(s) Responsible
<p>PRIDE groups will present their accomplishments to classmates in June.</p> <p>Number of students involved in Best Buddies program will increase.</p> <p>Number of trained student peer mediators will increase.</p>		<p>Faculty PRIDE group advisors Students</p>

<p>Massachusetts Education Reform Act School Improvement Goal: The climate is conducive to high expectations and performance Means for meeting diverse learning needs</p>		
<p>Westford Public Schools Vision and Core Values: Ensuring safety and well being Promoting individual growth and development</p>		
<p>School Improvement Plan Goal: To develop a systematic response to intervention for at risk students prior to referral for special education testing</p>		
Action(s) for Accomplishing Goal	Funding or Resources Needed	Fiscal Year
<p>Research successful Response to Intervention (RTI) models.</p> <p>Research Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DOES) recommendations for Instruction Support Teams.</p> <p>Conduct self-assessment of current intervention strategies to develop an action plan for improvement.</p> <p>Develop an Instruction Support Team (IST) to replace our Student Assistance Team (SAT) model and move towards a Response To Intervention (RTI) model.</p> <p>Develop a clear, data-driven referral process for Developmental Reading</p> <p>Implement Mental Health Initiative: Provide training for all guidance, PE, and Wellness staff and implementation of strategies to improve response to student mental health issues.</p>	<p>Mental Health grant secured by Janet Dubner funds training for Mental Health Initiative.</p>	<p>FY2010</p>
Indicators of Accomplishment Qualitative and Quantitative Data	Additional Information	Person(s) Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of IST at Stony Brook • Number of students referred by school for special education testing will decrease • Number of students referred to Developmental Reading 		<p>Assistant Principal Principal General education Teachers Special Education teachers</p>

and/or Academic coach will increase.		
Massachusetts Education Reform Act School Improvement Goal: An assessment of student/teacher ratios Health, safety, and discipline		
Westford Public Schools Vision and Core Values: Pursuing excellence in a learning community Ensuring safety and well-being		
School Improvement Plan Goal: Provide one guidance counselor per grade level. Create additional opportunities for students to get physical activity during the school week		
Action(s) for Accomplishing Goal	Funding or Resources Needed	Fiscal Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire at least 1.0 FTE Physical Education teachers so that we have at least one male and one female teacher. Create schedule to allow students to have physical education twice per week. Develop a system whereby there would be one guidance counselor per grade level at the middle school. Each guidance counselor would then stay with their students throughout their three years in middle school. 	<p>Increase in budget of at least 1.0 FTE for PE teacher(s)</p> <p>Hire 1.0 FTE guidance counselor</p>	<p>FY2011</p> <p>NOTE: Given the tough financial picture for FY10, this goal is deferred for one year.</p>
Indicators of Accomplishment Qualitative and Quantitative Data	Additional Information	Person(s) Responsible
<p>The schedule will indicate that each student has physical education more frequently.</p> <p>When more students are scheduled for physical education, fewer students are in the other integrated arts classes at that time, thus keeping class sizes down.</p> <p>More students would have access and time with guidance counselors</p>	<p>An additional physical education teachers would allow for use of locker rooms allowing students to change for PE.</p> <p>Currently guidance counselors' caseload is approximately 335 students per counselor.</p> <p>Counselors attend at least four team meetings per week. With an additional counselor, each counselor would have a maximum of three team meetings per week and a caseload of approximately 225 students.</p>	<p>Principal</p> <p>PE Teachers</p> <p>Guidance Counselors</p>

Massachusetts Education Reform Act School Improvement Goal:
 Welcoming school environment characterized by tolerance and respect

Westford Public Schools Vision and Core Values:
 Fostering connections with local and global communities

School Improvement Plan Goal:
 Expand awareness of global community

Action(s) for Accomplishing Goal	Funding or Resources Needed	Fiscal Year
<p>Research ways to make connections with schools in another country.</p> <p>Develop International Day, Holiday Sharing experiences, Cultural Heritage Day or like events to expand student awareness of global societies outside of Westford.</p>		FY2010
Indicators of Accomplishment Qualitative and Quantitative Data	Additional Information	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Creation of event(s) to educate students about customs and facts about other countries.</p>		<p>Teachers Administration Parents</p>