

*William P. Gorman Fort Banks
Elementary School
Improvement Plan*



*Winthrop Public Schools
Winthrop, Massachusetts
June 2016*

**WPG FORT BANKS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016-2017
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(Please note the page numbers above refer to the hard copy.)

Because these items have been posted throughout the year on our school website, the following addendum items are available upon request but have not been attached to this document.

- Gorman Fort Bank School Site Council Calendar of Meeting Dates
- Site Council Meeting Agendas
- Site Council Meeting Minutes

MISSION STATEMENT

With perseverance and a commitment to learn and grow, the Gorman Fort Banks School staff, students, and families will work together to make a positive contribution to the school and community. Our core values include: celebrating the diversity and uniqueness among us, fostering respect for one another and our school, encouraging a curiosity for learning that will allow each member to maximize his or her own potential, and cultivating independent life-long learners.

BACKGROUND OF COUNCIL AND ITS OPERATIONS

The Gorman Fort Banks Elementary School Council was formed in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Section 59C of the Education Reform Act of 1993, which states that:

At each public elementary, secondary and independent vocational school in the commonwealth there shall be a school council consisting of the school principal, who shall co-chair the council; parents of students attending such school, who will be chosen in elections held by the recognized parent-teacher organization under the direction of the principal. Teachers who shall be selected by the teachers in the school, other persons, not parents or teachers of students in the school.

The school council shall meet regularly with the principal of the school and assist in adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards, the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, review of the annual school building budget, and in the formulation of a school improvement plan.

The following individuals comprised the Gorman Fort Banks School 2015-2016 School Site Council:

Ilene Pearson, Principal/Co-Chair
 Norah Grimes, Assistant Principal
 Meredith Condon, Teacher Rep.
 Holly Goncalves, Teacher Rep.
 Karen Wyson, Teacher Rep.

Simone Lynch, Parent/Co-Chair
 Karin Chavis, Community Rep.
 Christie Fucile, Parent Rep
 Dean Romano, Parent
 *parent elected and accepted/failed to participate

The Site Council met on a regular pre-determined monthly schedule. In the spirit of communication and with the intention of keeping our school community informed, our school’s website has a designated link to our School Site Council. The link includes all agendas and meeting minutes.

The School Improvement Plan, as described in the legislation, is to include the following:

- an assessment of the impact of class size on student performance, student-to-teacher ratios, ratios of students to other supportive adult resources
- a scheduled plan for reducing class size if deemed necessary
- professional development for the school’s staff and the allocation of any professional development funds in the school budget
- enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school
- school safety and discipline
- establishment of a school environment characterized by tolerance and respect for all groups
- extra curricular activities
- means for meeting, with the regular education programs at the school, the diverse learning needs of as many children as possible, including children with special needs currently assigned to separate programs
- any further subjects the principal, in consultation with the school council shall consider appropriate

The School Improvement Plan submitted will include these elements within the School District’s Goals and Objectives.

GORMAN FORT BANKS SCHOOL 2015-2016
DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN AND ENROLLMENT DATA

The following information is provided based on SIMS (student information management system) data dated May 1, 2016:

Enrollment by Gender

Males	338	53% of school
Females	297	47% of school
Total	635	

Enrollment by Grade

Pre-K	53
Kindergarten	131
Grade 1	156
Grade 2	150
Grade 3	145

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

White	521	81% of school
Black or African American	13	2 % of school
Asian	2	.31% of school
White & Black or African American	7	1.09% of school
White & Asian	5	.78% of school
White & Hispanic	77	12% of school
White & Black or African American & Hispanic	5	.78%

Selected Populations

Limited English Proficiency	76	12% of school
Low Income-Free/Reduced Lunch	218/20	34% of school/.03%
Students Receiving Title I Services	26	4% of school
Students on IEP	106	17% of school

SUMMARY/STATUS OF 2015-2016 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This year will see the completion of the Winthrop High School building project and therefore is the final year for third grade and staff to be part of our Gorman Fort Banks School family. To be sure we will miss our third grade colleagues and treasure the camaraderie and personal attachments we have so easily developed. Their expertise and generosity of knowledge have made an enormously positive impact on our practices.

With the logistical and physical plant changes that characterized so much of the 2014-2015 school-year behind us, our focus for this 2015-2016 year was on aligning and coordinating curriculum, instruction and assessment practices between our school and the Arthur T. Cummings School. Listed below is a summary of some of our most notable accomplishments, revisions, and improvements:

Revisions to assessments: Identifying a reading comprehension assessment that accurately measures student growth, is efficient to administer, and is meaningful to successive grades has been on the docket of both our reading department and second grade teachers. Ideal assessment instruments not only provide an overview of student performance, but as importantly they monitor student growth which in turn drives differentiated instruction. Third grade teachers have embraced Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) College & Career to assess and monitor reading progress, differentiate instruction, and match students to books. Indeed this is a program that has it all. With the support of our reading department, the expertise of third grade staff, and determination of our second grade team SRI has been successfully launched this year. It has had a far reaching impact on instruction, too, as SRI scores establish lexile levels, the optimal level at which a student should be reading for meaningful comprehension. A complimentary program, Scholastic Reading Counts! (SRC!), embraced by third grade teachers, was also implemented. SRC! is a powerful program that assesses student proficiency in reading by genre, motivates students to read, and monitors their reading progress. This technology based program is notable for matching students with appropriate texts. It assists student in becoming independent readers by ensuring they select books matched to their reading level. Gone are the days of students choosing books that do not appeal to their interest or are too challenging and/or easy to lead to meaningful gains.

Revisions to instructional supports: Of course ensuring that appropriate texts are available to students is critical to making good use of the SRC! program. In order for students to be able to independently select texts and to make good use of the SRC! program, a classroom library that is appealing and leveled must be created. After learning the lexile leveling app, the second grade team have put it to good use and established classroom libraries that are tailored for lexile use. This is characterized by bins of books leveled by length, literacy features genre, plot structure, etc. And best of all, students can independently select texts that are appropriate to their skill and therefore meaningful to their learning and likely to improve student performance.

The second grade team built their student learning goal around improving student comprehension scores and their professional practice goal around establishing lexile leveled libraries. This is the ultimate testament to their enthusiasm. We are excited to have developed a reading program with supports and assessment practices that are common to second and third grade. With incoming third graders already familiar with these programs, we have every reason to be optimistic about improved achievement in our third grade students.

Revision to curriculum/instruction/assessment: In the absence of a current, progressive commercial writing program our staff was motivated to create a writing curriculum that would be uniquely tailored to our needs, improve student performance and increase the capacity of our pedagogy. With the expert guidance of a writing consultant, a K-2 writing curriculum development committee worked tirelessly to create and implement a K-2 writing curriculum. The curriculum is comprehensive and characterized by mini-lessons, rubrics, targeted vocabulary, grade level common core language, instructional strategies, and focus areas within content skills. The program includes mentor texts, assessment prompts, and procedural components such as dedicated time for specific skill development and writing in general. All K-2 grade level teachers have had an active role in developing this curriculum and are therefore very invested. Kindergarten and first grade teachers both established their student learning and professional practice goals around improved student performance and enhanced staff resources in writing respectively. Student work product is already noticeably improved and we are collectively motivated to continue our hyper focus on developing the capacity for writing in our students.

District initiatives have also resulted in activities worth noting. The implementation of fobs has reduced and improved building access and security. As importantly, specific attention to safety practices such as lock downs has increased the preparedness of students and staff in the face of unanticipated danger. As Winthrop begins to ready for the opening of its flagship high school, technology infrastructure in all schools is being examined. State of the art equipment in the high school will change the technology landscape of all schools as the district invests in aligning technology supports. Connectivity, hardware, and software needs have all been inventoried with an eye toward upgrades in the coming academic year.

Next year holds lots of promise for students and staff. The challenge of accommodating third grade students and staff will be behind us allowing us to make optimal use of our classroom spaces and reduce the number of staggered start and dismissal times. And among the most exciting changes will be the expansion of our kindergarten program hours which will mirror the number of instructional minutes afforded our first and second grade students. We look forward to rolling out new academic initiatives and building on recently established practices and programs all with an eye towards increasing student learning and performance.

Our ability to achieve our goals and objectives has been supported by the school's Parent Teacher Organization, Superintendent, School Committee and Town officials. We acknowledge their support with gratitude.

DISTRICT GOAL #1: TO IMPROVE AND INCREASE CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT.

Activity	Result/Evidence	Comments
retain the services of consultant to assist writing curriculum development committee with development of writing curriculum	This goal was accomplished. A consultant and writing curriculum committee worked together to create a K-2 writing curriculum that includes mini lessons, extensions, assessments, rubrics and a scope and sequence. Professional development focused on this has occurred. Several grade levels established student learning and/or professional learning goals associated with this initiative.	Staff feedback on the usefulness of this effort has been extremely positive. Minimum minutes dedicated to writing have been established and are reflected in lesson plans. Staff are comfortable that the work is aligned to the CCSS and progresses appropriately and leads nicely into the writers workshop model being used in grade 3.
research and/or develop social-emotional curriculum	This goal was accomplished. The ABC Team has worked to develop a program (a/k/a SMART Plan) that speaks to many elements typically found in a social-emotional curriculum. The Plan is intended to establish common vocabulary, behavioral expectations, improve school culture, and increase ownership of all children.	This goal is ongoing as next year the expectation is that all components of this plan will be implemented building-wide.
examine feasibility of establishing common planning time for special education and related service providers	This goal was accomplished in part. Common planning time for some special education staff has been established. However logistical challenges continue to make common planning time for related service providers challenging.	An email to related service providers was sent asking that they work to establish a schedule that the administrators could help them accomplish. No schedule has been proposed.

DISTRICT GOAL #2: TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS.

Activity	Result/Evidence	Comments
examine need for and/or usefulness of fence around grade 1 and 2 playground equipment	This goal was accomplished. The PTO and Site Council agree that a fence would be an improvement in safety. Funding was unavailable.	Due to district budget limitations, the Superintendent instructed that this expense be included in the FY2017 budget. Given recent cuts to the proposed budget amounts, this item was removed.
increase attention to building cosmetic needs, cleanliness and grounds	This goal was accomplished in part. While there has been some improvement to the outside grounds, the school and particularly bathrooms need more attention.	Staff survey results indicate that bathrooms need painting and more regular attention to cleanliness. This matter has been discussed with the senior custodian and this concern will remain a goal for the 2015-2016 year.

DISTRICT GOAL #3: TO IMPROVE AND INCREASE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Activity	Result/Evidence	Comments
replace and or revise contract for copy machines	This goal was not accomplished.	Although no changes to the copy machine contract has occurred, support has been adequate. Staff complaints about working condition have significantly decreased.
examine and revise school webpage to make navigation and access of materials clear and easy for parent use	This goal was accomplished.	Although a parent survey was not distributed this year, no parent concerns regarding ease of access to and/or navigation of our school website has been received. Lexia use has been monitored and is significantly increased suggesting that ease of navigation has improved
provide extensive training and establish building based technical support schedule to support the integration of MOBIs in classrooms	This goal was not accomplished.	This concern was brought to the attention of the technology assistant and the most recent communication (from Nov., 2015) did not yield any contact information.

DISTRICT GOAL #4: TO IMPROVE PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Activity	Result/Evidence	Comments
repair/replace mass telephone communication system	This goal was not accomplished. The telephone system has not been replaced however some repairs and improvements have occurred	Staff extensions are established however the main menu is still not current and other needs remain. Hardware (i.e. updated phones) ae needed as the quality of service and standard features (# display) are not working. [Note: Most of

		the phone hardware has not been replaced since the school's opening.]
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DISTRICT GOAL #5: TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Activity	Result/Evidence	Comments
schedule professional development opportunities in conjunction with the evaluation tool	This goal was accomplished. The Director of Curriculum has provided clarification on teacher evaluation artifacts as well as optional training on uploading data	No concerns or requests for follow up training have been communicated.
survey teaching and ESP staff to assess desired district and school based PD	This goal was accomplished.	Professional development responsive to the survey results was held and included math, writing, and new reading assessment programs.

2015-2016 SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL SURVEY

This year the School Site Council decided not to survey families. Council members felt that with the district being in a transition year, families would be providing feedback based on a district configuration that was only temporary and as a result much of the feedback either could not be implemented or would not be relevant going forward.

A staff survey was distributed to teachers, specialist, and ESPs was administered. The survey solicited specific feedback about practices, materials and training within each of the four district goals. To maximize return rates, the survey was distributed at a staff meeting where ample time for completing the survey was provided.

Based on these responses, the Council members' knowledge of school affairs, and in consideration of the district's return to the permanent elementary grade level structure, the following goals are submitted as part of the 2016-2017 Gorman Fort Banks School Improvement Plan and are in addition to the Site Council's commitment to maintaining the completed goals of this past school year.

GOALS FOR 2016-2017

DISTRICT GOAL #1: TO IMPROVE AND INCREASE CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Result	Evaluation/Evidence
finalize and implement K-2 writing curriculum so as to include all elements: scope and sequence,	Principal	funds/stipend	Sept., 2016- January, 2017	writing curriculum that aligns with that being used at ATC	writing curriculum

mini lessons, rubrics, assessments,					
implement SMART* Plan building-wide *SMART is an acronym that represents school-wide values	Principal Assistant Principal	none needed	Sept., 2016- June, 2017	curriculum that will promote building wide culture of respect and align behavioral expectations and consequences among all staff	social-emotional curriculum
examine feasibility of establishing common planning time for special education and related service providers	Principal Assistant Principal CET Sp.ed.and related service providers	proposed schedule from sp.ed. and related service providers	October, 2016- June, 2017	better alignment in instructional and student management practices between professionals	grid of common planning time dates/times
revise current class placement by having teachers place students in successive grade	Principal	none needed	June, 2016- September, 2016 and potentially June, 2017	enhance teacher/instructional effectiveness	teacher feedback
examine/revise current OT push in model	Principal CET OTs	none needed	September, 2016-January, 2017	enhance the utility of OTs in supporting student needs	teacher/OT feedback
increase number of and approach to assessments in math	Principal Curriculum Coordinator	district funds	September, 2016-June, 2017	Improve ability to monitor student progress and advance student learning	assessments
implement TenMarks math support program	Principal 1 st , 2 nd grade staff	district/building funds	September, 2016-June, 2017	improve ability to monitor student progress and advance student learning	teacher feedback

DISTRICT GOAL #2: TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS.

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Result	Evaluation/Evidence
revise fob schedule for staff	Principal Assistant Principal	none needed	Sept.-Oct., 2016	improved accessibility and ease of planning for staff	staff feedback

increase attention to building cosmetic needs, cleanliness and appearance of bathrooms (paint, attention to fixtures)	Principal Assistant Principal Facilities Manager Custodians	funds in part specific plan regarding establishing and maintaining bathroom appearance and cleanliness	Sept., 2016- June, 2017	improved appearance	improved appearance; staff and family survey responses
erect fence surrounding upper grade playground	Superintendent Principal Facilities Manager	funds\ capital improvement allocation	Sept.-Dec., 2016	improved student safety	fence

DISTRICT GOAL #3: TO IMPROVE AND INCREASE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Result	Evaluation/ Evidence
establish reliable internet connectivity	Superintendent Tech. Support	funds	Sept., 2015- October, 2016	improved ability to deliver instruction, conduct assessments, provide student support	staff survey responses
provide updated technology (desk tops, lap tops) for teachers and student use	Superintendent Tech. Support	funds	Sept., 2016- January, 2017	improved ability to research best practices, deliver instruction, conduct assessments, provide student support	staff survey responses
re-program copy machines in order to store/access materials for longer window of time	Superintendent Director of Tech.	none	Sept., 2016- Nov., 2016	improved ability to meet needs of staff and students	staff survey responses

DISTRICT GOAL #4: TO IMPROVE PARENT/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Result	Evaluation/ Evidence
create and distribute quarterly newsletter	Principal Director of	translation services	Sept., 2016- June, 2017	improved communication	newsletters

to ELL families	Curriculum			and involvement with/from families	
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DISTRICT GOAL #5: TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Result	Evaluation/Evidence
provide professional development opportunities that include credit and/or PDP value	Superintendent Principal Director Curriculum Special Educator Coordinator	funds	Sept., 2016- June,, 2017	improve professional value of professional development	list of PD with associated credit and/or PDP value
utilize common planning time, in part, to roll out SMART Plan in a coordinated fashion	Principal Assistant Principal GFB Staff	none needed	Sept., 2016- June, 2017	improved student behaviors, collective ownership of students	classroom observations, staff feedback
provide professional development in math instruction	Principal Looney Consulting	funds	Sept., 2016- May, 2017	enhanced capacity of teachers to deliver math instruction, improved student performance	staff feedback, student assessment data

This William P. Gorman Fort Banks Elementary School Improvement Plan dated June, 2016 has been approved by the Site Council members. A hard copy with Council Member signatures is on file.