



To: Newton School Committee
From: Dr. Anna Nolin, Superintendent
Re: District 1–Year Goals–Mid-Year update
Date: December 4, 2023

Below please find a status update on the district one-year bridge goals. The items are color-coded for completion status. **Red**: delayed for this year due to contract negotiations or other unforeseen circumstances; **Yellow**: partially completed at this time but on track for end-of-year completion; **Green**: already completed. Linked material constitutes documentation of completed success measures OR memos from department heads indicating level of progress and updates. Items without color coding have not been started, but are slated for start in the second half of this school year.

Thank you for your support of our work for Newton’s students.

Newton Public Schools Bridge Year (2023-2024) District Goals

Goal 1: Foster Joyful and Supportive Learning Environments

Desired Outcome: Create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued, connected, nourished, and prepared to learn.

Strategic Objectives:

1.1 Conduct a comprehensive audit and mapping of all departments' existing resources, experiences, practices, and programs promoting students' physical and mental health and wellness in safe spaces.

Success Measure(s):

- Completed Audit of resources, experiences, practices and programs, including documentation and publication of assessments, curriculum, affinity groups.
- Parent and Caregiver Curriculum Page to include parent-friendly curriculum documents for Preschool-Age 22, assessment calendars or guaranteed routines and description of affinity groups available to students by school and district. Overview of programs and clubs available at all schools.
- Conference agenda for social emotional day of learning hosted by the district for staff, reflections on the efficacy of the conference
- Identification of data sets the district will seek to monitor changes to student mental health and wellbeing in

future years.

- Sown to Grow program implemented at all middle schools
- No cell phone during classes pilot at Day and North
- Implementation of common Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) screeners K-5 and 6-8.
 - Implementation of Panorama Screener fall benchmark

1.2 Establish collaborative partnerships with students and families by enhancing modes of communication and opportunities to engage in processes such as the Portrait of a Graduate, ambassador programming (training parent “super users” to train other parents on resources for parenting as an NPS parent) and initiatives related to the ongoing efforts of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Success Measure(s):

- Completion of the Portrait of a Graduate process and creation of a profile for the district.
- Map/diary of community meetings and community engagement experiences for the district for the 23-24 school year.
- Development of a Parent Ambassador program through the METCO program.
- Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion annual report.
- Outcomes from parent ambassador METCO grant report.
- Identification of a community survey for use in documenting progress in this area over time.

1.3 Expand the work of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion office to address issues of anti-semitism, anti-ableism, and LGBTQ+ affirming instruction and practice in collaboration with other offices and stakeholders (superintendent, elementary and secondary education, student services and teaching and learning).

Success Measure(s):

- Creation of a committee inclusive of SEPAC representatives and educators who will:
 - [Develop anti-ableism curriculum](#), Peer leader programs at MS and HS, and instructional practice and community engagement guidance.
- Creation of a committee inclusive of educators and community members to:
 - Create a plan to address our obligation under Safe and Supportive Schools, Office of Civil Rights and MA Transgender Regulations and our values of creating safe and affirming learning for LGBTQ+ students and caregivers.
- A parent/caregiver resource website to share social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum, anti-racism and LGBTQ+ affirming curriculum in an easy to locate and understandable format.
- A community education forum calendar on key issues facing the district and themes emergent from the superintendent's entry planning process.
 - 11/1/23 Safety Forum Completed
 - 12/6/23 METCO Forum Scheduled and Moving Forward
 - Postponed, EL Literacy program overview
 - Postponed, Family Math Forum
- Staff, student and parent advisory groups to advise the superintendent of schools that meet regularly to address needs of the community.

1.4 Build trust, understanding and engagement with community groups and organizations.

Success Measures:

- A centralized communication portal that will allow families, and the larger Newton community, to stay informed, connected and engaged with the district.
- Pilot results (surveys, analytics tracking and interviews with parents) using Parent Ambassador Program representatives to advise the district on a long-term communication strategy and set of tools.
- Community education forum calendar on key issues facing the district and themes emergent from the superintendent's entry planning process. (see above, partially completed)
- Thoughtexchange satisfaction survey results, other survey results. Focus group themes.

1.5 Explore the restructuring/expansion of the communication and engagement office to enhance community involvement and collaboration.

Success Measures:

- Budget developed and strategic plan created from the communication office and submitted as part of the budget process as an independent department. [Update memo link](#)
- Proposal for a Family & Community Engagement Office to support and serve families/caregivers needs.

Goal 2: Provide Culturally Responsive, High Quality, Rigorous Instruction for All

Desired Outcome: Ensure all students engage in grade-level work that is culturally relevant, real-world connected, interactive, and guided by high expectations.

Strategic Objectives:

2.1 Implement instructional rounds and joint instructional walks to align leaders with high-quality, culturally responsive instruction.

Baseline visit schedule (round 1)

Success Measures:

- Record/Calendar of instructional rounds conducted at all schools.
- Use of agreed-upon rounds tool among administrators.
- Training and professional development for all principals, central office and curriculum coordinators, directors of student services on culturally responsive instruction and supervision and tuning the team to align high expectations for instructional practice in the district.
 - Update for MS principals: multiple visits thus far this school year to share observations
 - Summer CRI Training to elementary and middle school principals; ongoing consultation for principals and building equity teams

2.2 Continue to develop and communicate district-aligned academic curriculum with connections to students' lives, cultures, and commensurate learning outcomes.

Success Measures:

- Curriculum pilot long-range calendar developed and published
- Curriculum audit structure and calendar developed and published
- Curriculum page for families completed and published

- Completion of a community Forum on Mathematics Education
- Documentation of existing common curriculum assessments and benchmark assessments to determine student progress and curriculum alignment grades PK-12.

2.3 Develop a plan for a Tiered System of Support and intervention system K-4. ([memo detailing MTSS steering committee work](#))

Success Measures:

- Development of possible scenarios for inclusion in FY 25 budget
- Staffing recommendations for FY 25 budget.
- The establishment of the district steering committee with agendas/minutes of meeting as evidence.
- Work artifacts detailing expectations, timelines, and support plans (including map of existing interventions, etc.)
- Staffing recommendations for FY 25 budget.
- Individual school audits of MTSS readiness—revised to be a district MTSS assessment
- Identification of universal screening and assessment tools for academics and mental health/social emotional capacity of students. (Panorama benchmarking assessment 1 given)

2.4 Implement new elementary literacy curriculum, train staff, and prepare a next phase curriculum deployment for grades 3-5. ([Memo detailing EL Implementation](#))

2.4a: Implement new statewide early literacy screening and parental notification requirements. (letters sent in November to all families).

Success Measures:

- Presentation to the community on the new EL elementary literacy curriculum implementation.
- Presentation to the school committee of teacher training executed during the year and reflections from staff on the efficacy of the training, next steps for elementary literacy instruction and training.
- Process documentation for early literacy screening/parent communication on parent information website—website completed by staff for December 4, and will be live January 5, 2023.

2.5 Implement technology mapping research study to enhance technology practices and student wellbeing in collaboration with Boston College's INTASC, technology department.

Success Measures:

- Completed report and public presentation of results

2.6 Develop and host district-wide professional development for leaders and teacher leaders (train-the-trainer) to support culturally responsive instruction.

Success Measures:

- Professional Development Agenda and participant reflections on impact and effectiveness.

2.7 Develop and communicate the routine and accountable work of the Data and Research Office.

Success measure(s):

- Agreed upon metrics for tracking student achievement trends and student progress in social emotional learning

and mental health.

- [Creation data dashboards for use by school staff and leadership to drive improvement inclusive of but not limited to the agreed upon metrics noted above.](#)
- Annual performance report detailing the progress of the district and reporting on agreed-upon success measures shared with all stakeholders.

Goal 3: Ensure Equitable Access to Effective Educators

Desired Outcome: Develop and maintain a diverse, culturally responsive, well-prepared educator workforce committed to continuous improvement.

Strategic Objectives:

3.1 Establish a human resources entry plan and district vision to increase and support a diverse pipeline of educators and leaders.

Success Measures:

- [Entry plan and recommendations from new Human Resources Director.](#)

3.2 Interview staff to determine conditions and plans for retaining diverse staff, particularly those from alternative pathways as well as our experienced and effective staff.

Success Measures:

- Shared results of Thoughtexchange, AI Stay Interviews, and meetings with 200 educators regarding experiences in the Newton Schools. (Entry plan)
- Educator participation in strategic plan development process and Portrait of a Graduate creation and reflections on the process (in writing, focus groups or public meetings).
- Educators of color participate in opportunities of mentoring/coaching by administrators and supervisors of color and access to professional development particularly geared to support the dynamics of retention for this community (documented through attendance logs and reflections on professional development offered).
- Expansion and maintenance of staff affinity spaces as documented by summary of meetings, record of number of participants and impact reflections from participants.
- Coaching supervisors and administrators in culturally-responsive supervision practices to support and develop staff of color for leadership positions as documented by “look for document” and instructional rounds schedules.

3.3 Build internal communications capacity to unite the district behind a common vision and mission and increase educator connectedness and commitment to the workplace. (HR Entry plan)

Success Measures:

- Aligned district external communications plan supported by principals and central office. (October SC meeting presentation)
- Implement an internal newsletter with thought leadership and workplace values content. (Weekly)
- Publish staff accomplishments in public forums and on social media for community knowledge of teacher / staff excellence. (Podcast, social media daily and monthly)

Goal 4: Optimize District Planning and Budgeting Ecosystem

Desired Outcome: Develop strategic, financial, operational, and data models that support the school district within the City of Newton's municipal processes and ecosystem.

Strategic Objectives:

4.1 Execute a district portrait of a graduate process to guide decision-making and funding use.

Success Measure:

- Completed Portrait and Accompanying Public Stakeholder Process

4.2 Execute a district strategic planning report to guide district goals and spending for the next 5 years.

Success Measures:

- Strategic Planning Engagement Meetings Completed by June 2024 so plan can be finalized Summer 2024.
- Completion of long-range facilities and planning report to assist school committee in decision making on elementary philosophy, feeder patterns, enrollment planning and facilities planning.

4.3 Map staffing and outcomes for facilities, custodial services, and IT infrastructure to determine financial and staffing models for the future.

Success Measures:

- Presentation on current state of facilities custodial and IT as part of budget process.
- Proposal for staffing, replacement, technology sustainability, and maintenance, in a long-range planning report.

4.4 Evaluate and enhance food service offerings for cultural and wellness-appropriate options.

[update on food service changes to current program](#)

Success Measures:

- Successful new food service contract and accountability structure for customer service.

4.5 Execute identified building projects in designated phases.

Success Measure(s):

- Lincoln-Eliot Project: Selective demolition complete, foundations, poured, steel erected, and the envelope substantially complete. Interior renovations 25% complete.
- Countryside: ~50% complete with construction documents and starting to plan for construction which could start as soon as the winter of 2025.
- Franklin: ~50% complete with construction documents and starting to plan for construction which could start as soon as the winter of 2025.
- Horace Mann: ~60% complete with construction documents and starting to plan for construction which could start as soon as the winter of 2025.
- Phase 3 Solar: Construction and interconnection complete.
- Maintenance: Continuing to meet the maintenance demands and address more than 4000 work orders annually.

4.6 Negotiate affordable, fair and attractive contracts for all of our unions.

Success Measures:

- Agreement to address elementary student and staff needs through a joint management-labor collaborative process.
- Settled contracts.

4.7 Develop strategies for elementary enrollment and facility conditions with an eye toward MS impacts.

Success measure:

- Long-range facilities and elementary vision report and vote by school committee.

4.8 Implement cybersecurity training and initiatives to ensure IT and data security.

Success Measures:

- Reports from the MA Cybersecurity Awareness Grant Program indicating a high-rate of training completion and strong performance of employees on simulated email phishing campaigns. [Cybersecurity Awareness Training Info for NPS Users; Newton, Public Schools 2023-11-21 Training Summary.pdf](#).
- Completion and impact report to school committee on planned and implemented cybersecurity initiatives.

4.9 Excel in creation of systems and policies to guide exceptional legal management and governance.

Success Measure(s):

- Revised school district policies for timely updates. Majority of revised policies have been presented to the School Committee for adoption. The remaining few are scheduled to be presented for adoption in early winter 2024.

- Established legal settlements system aligned with the City's process.
- Training with participant-impact feedback on student and staff investigations, including discrimination and Title IX.
- Training with participant-impact feedback on student discipline, including recent legal updates.
- Settled collective bargaining agreements.
- District school records retention and destruction process designed and communicated to staff and stakeholders.
 - Process designed, November 2023, with rolling execution beginning in December 2023

Areas chosen by Newton School Committee for Superintendent's Evaluation:

Selected areas from the superintendent rubric below:

<p><i>Standard I: Instructional Leadership</i></p> <p><i>B: Instruction Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Student Engagement</i> 2. <i>Quality of Effort and Work</i> 3. <i>Meeting Diverse Needs</i> <p><i>E. Data-Informed Decision-Making Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Data-Informed Decision Making</i> 2. <i>Plans and Goals</i> 	<p><i>Standard II: Management and Operations</i></p> <p><i>A. Environment</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Plans, Procedures, and Routines</i> 2. <i>Operational Systems</i> 3. <i>Social and Emotional Well-Being</i> 4. <i>Student Health and Safety</i> <p><i>B. Human Resources Management and Development Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Recruitment and Hiring Strategies</i> 2. <i>Induction, Professional Development, and Career Growth Strategies</i>
<p><i>Standard III: Family and Community Engagement</i></p> <p><i>A. Engagement Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Family Engagement</i> 2. <i>Community and Stakeholder Engagement</i> <p><i>C. Communication Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Culturally Proficient Communication</i> 	<p><i>Standard IV: Professional Culture</i></p> <p><i>A. Commitment to High Standards Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Commitment to High Standards</i> 2. <i>Mission and Core Values</i> 3. <i>Meetings</i> <p><i>E. Shared Vision Indicator</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Shared Vision Development</i>

The Role of the Superintendent:

- Develop guidance, policy, and procedures for education laws, effective teaching, and administrative practices.
- Promote quality, compliance, assessment, and accountability.
- Provide funding, professional learning, technical assistance, and partnerships.
- Communicate with stakeholders and engage in statewide collaboration.

Goals Chosen by Dr. Nolin for her evaluation

- Student Learning Goal
Shadow 4 students within the school system and interview them about their experiences in the Newton Schools.
Outcome: Summary of experiences and interview to inform strategic planning process.
- Professional Practice Goal (I'd like this to be at least a 2-year goal)
Develop a Newton Profile of an Educator Process and Aligned Hiring Expectations
 - To learn the Newton District's vision for culturally responsive instruction I will attend (4) focused coaching lessons from the office of DEI.
 - To learn about Newton's most successful teachers, I will examine student growth data and interview the teachers who have consistently demonstrated the capacity to move student growth.

Success Measures:

Year 1: Creation or identification of a high-quality instructional walk through evaluation tool for use in training leaders to identify high quality instruction expected in Newton Schools.

Year 1: A set of interview questions developed to be used in next year’s hiring season–designed to find staff with the qualities most like those interviewed who are experiencing success in student growth.

Year 2: Design and execute a Profile of a Newton Educator Process and align interview questions to it for all future hiring.

Link to School Improvement Plans

School Name
Angier Elementary School
Bowen Elementary School
Burr Elementary School
Cabot Elementary School
Countryside Elementary School
Franklin Elementary School

[Horace-Mann Elementary School](#)

[Lincoln-Eliot Elementary School](#)

[Mason-Rice Elementary School](#)

[Memorial Spaulding Elementary School](#)

[Peirce Elementary School](#)

[Underwood Elementary School](#)

[Ward Elementary School](#)

[Williams Elementary School](#)

[Zervas Elementary School](#)

[Bigelow Middle School](#)

[Brown Middle School](#)

[Day Middle School](#)

[Oak Hill Middle School](#)

[Newton North High School](#)

[Newton South High School](#)