

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



*Winthrop Public Schools
Winthrop, Massachusetts
June 2017*

**WPG FORT BANKS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017-2018
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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 2016-2017 School Site Council:

Ilene Pearson, Principal/Co-Chair
 Norah Grimes, Assistant Principal
 Danielle Vecchio, Teacher Rep.
 Kelly Robertie, Teacher Rep.*

Kelly Lounsbury, Parent/Co-Chair
 Richard Honan, Community Rep.
 Jennifer Dobbins, Parent Rep
 Lisa Schad, Parent Rep.

*teacher resigned in November 2016 and Council was unable to fill this seat

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 2016-2017
DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN AND ENROLLMENT DATA

The following information is provided based on SIMS (student information management system) data dated May 1, 2017:

Enrollment by Gender

| | | |
|---------|-----|----------------|
| Males | 256 | 53 % of school |
| Females | 227 | 47 % of school |
| Total | 483 | |

Enrollment by Grade

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| Pre-K | 48 |
| Kindergarten | 148 |
| Grade 1 | 138 |
| Grade 2 | 149 |

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|--|------------------|
| White | 79.84% of school |
| Black or African American | 1.63% of school |
| Asian | 0 % of school |
| White & Black or African American | .81% of school |
| White & Asian | 1.22 % of school |
| White & Hispanic | 13.85% of school |
| White & Black or African American & Hispanic | .61% |

Selected Populations

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Limited English Proficiency | 6.9% of school |
| Low Income-Free/Reduced Lunch | 2.6% of school |
| Students Receiving Title I Services | 4.5% of school |
| Students on IEP | 19% of school |

SUMMARY/STATUS OF 2016-2017 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This year the Gorman Fort Banks School resumed their PK-2 grade level configuration. As a result the physical plant was able to afford teachers and students optimal learning environments in every way; smaller rooms that were designed to be for small group instruction and/or testing were used as such and all teaching staff enjoy distinct and designated classrooms for instruction.

Despite their absence, the impact and inspiration of our third grade colleagues continued to influence our practice and in some ways even district initiatives. Listed below is a summary of our most notable accomplishments, revisions, and discoveries:

Assessment programs and practices, particularly for reading acquisition, continue to be a valuable resource that is consistently put to good use. Parents/caregivers are becoming familiar with the protocols and language of these assessments and we are pleased that they are extending the utility of these programs by encouraging use at home. In particular Lexia Core5 and DIBELS, both of which are used K-2, are standard talking points during parent conferences that serve to strengthen the home school partnership. Scholastic Reading Inventory, although exclusive to second grade, generates important data on student comprehension skill development. The student growth reports generated by this tool have maximized the utility of the Scholastic Reading Counts program and garnered impressive buy-in by students. With solid practices in place for assessing reading, it was time to see what improvements could be made to assessing student performance in math. The Scholastic Math Inventory, also recommended by our third grade colleagues, was administered in the fall to establish a base line skill set for students. Unfortunately the format of the results did not yield information that assisted us with isolating deficient skills so that we could level students into smaller instructional groups. As a result teachers would need to identify the specific strands and then create assessments to track student achievement. This is a time consuming arduous task. Thus this program does not enhance or make more efficient our assessment practices and will not be used next year.

In an effort to prepare our second grade students for third grade practices, we were eager to try other initiatives at the recommendation of our third grade colleagues. The third grade teachers were optimistic that

Ten Marks, a supplemental math enhancement program which has been so successful with the district's third grade students, would be equally helpful to our first and second grade students. Unfortunately, the program is extremely language based and therefore could not be put to good use in first grade. Because second grade teachers had planned to integrate the use of this program on chrome books, this tool has also not been utilized to its fullest extent.

We began the year with optimism around the promise that technology would play a more prominent role in student learning however the availability of ipads to first grade and kindergarten students did not occur until winter. Complicating the roll-out of this equipment was a lack of assistance in setting up the ipads which included incompatibility issues associated with accounts from desk tops being transferred to ipads. As a result programs that we had hoped would be successful and could be independently navigated by students weren't. The utility of these devices was also compromised by chargers that were not working when received.

Ten Marks and SMI were expected to afford our second grade students greater depth and coverage in math. Unfortunately district challenges around successful operation and performance of chrome books compromised the usefulness of these programs. As disappointing the chrome books never enhanced whole group or individual enrichment/instruction for our students as many of the chrome books were broken, log-ins/passwords require teacher assistance and head phones are not available.

With a strong teaching staff characterized by energy, vision, and commitment, improvements to curriculum and student learning are among our biggest successes this year. Our K-2 writing curriculum development committee continued working and expanded our writing curriculum. Mini lessons, grade level assessments with writing prompts, rubrics, and a detailed scope and sequence for K-2 learning have led to truly impressive gains in student performance. Teachers have put these elements to good use: they start the year with a classroom profile of skills, isolate targeted skills to improve, and then set individual student goals for achievement. This is an ideal approach to providing individualized instruction and support.

Our SMART Plan is the first step to addressing standards in the domains of social-emotional development as called for by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). While there are a large number of commercial programs designed to address the social emotional learning indicators, we are hoping to capitalize on the expertise of staff and resources available from DESE in order to create our own social emotional curriculum tailored to the unique needs of our students and building culture. In a recent survey staff reported that they believe the SMART Plan is having a positive school-wide impact. Overwhelmingly staff have responded that with more development and perfection, the SMART Plan could serve as a foundation for developing our school's future social emotional curriculum. We look forward to tackling the challenge of creating a curriculum that will give students the tools they need to be confident in themselves and successful in life.

Perhaps the biggest programmatic change this year was the expansion of our kindergarten program hours. This year kindergarten students were afforded the same number of instructional minutes as our first and second grade students. As a result kindergarten students enjoyed learning in all specials (art, music, computers, physical education, academic support). Next year all elementary students will attend school for an additional 20 minutes per day. 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.

The status of this year's goals is summarized below. We acknowledge with gratitude the support of the school's Parent Teacher Organization, Superintendent, School Committee and Town officials.

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

| Activity | Result/Evidence | Comments |
|--|--|--|
| finalize and implement K-2 writing curriculum so as to include all elements: scope and sequence, mini lessons, rubrics, assessments, | 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. Minutes dedicated exclusively 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. |
| implement SMART* Plan building-wide *SMART is an acronym that represents school-wide values | This goal was accomplished. The Plan establishes common vocabulary, behavioral expectations and increases ownership by all children. Mentor texts and mini lessons have been created at all grade levels for all elements of the SMART Plan. | This goal is ongoing as we continue to refine the Plan to reflect needed improvements. Additionally a social emotional curriculum will be developed using the SMART Plan as a foundation. |
| 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. |
| revise current class placement by having teachers place students in successive grade | This goal was accomplished. | A recent staff survey indicated teachers would like this practice to continue. |
| examine/revise current OT push in model | This goal was accomplished. | The OT push in model was eliminated after input from OT staff and teachers suggested it was not an effective way to address student needs. |

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| increase number of and approach to assessments in math | This goal was not accomplished. | As the narrative indicates, we were hopeful that SMI would be well tailored to second grade students and equally hopeful that Ten Marks would assist us in creating assessments. Neither of these programs were suitable for our population due to both technology and program suitability issues. This goal will be pursued with a different approach next year. |
| implement Ten Marks math support program | This goal was not accomplished. | As the narrative indicates, we were hopeful that SMI would be well tailored to second grade students and equally hopeful that Ten Marks would assist us in creating assessments. Neither of these programs were suitable for our population due to both technology and program suitability issues. This goal will be pursued with a different approach next year. |

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

| Activity | Result/Evidence | Comments |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| revise fob schedule for staff | This goal was accomplished. | Staff needs have been accommodated. |
| increase attention to building cosmetic needs, cleanliness and appearance of bathrooms (paint, attention to fixtures) | This goal was accomplished in part. | Significant structural damage to the school occurred due to a burst pipe. In addition custodian staff was reduced due to an extended medical leave. As a result, the appearance of the building has suffered. |
| erect fence surrounding upper grade playground | This goal was not accomplished. | District budget concerns prevented this goal from being accomplished. |

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

| Activity | Result/Evidence | Comments |
|---|---------------------------------|--|
| establish reliable internet connectivity | This goal was not accomplished. | This concern is outside the scope of our school's staff and has been brought to the attention of all relevant parties and departments numerous times. |
| provide updated technology (desk tops, lap tops) for teachers and student use | This goal was accomplished. | Teachers have received new lap tops and desk tops have been replaced in the computer room. A cart of chrome books has been purchased for second grade. Ipads have been provided to kindergarten and first grade. Limitations to the impact of these upgrades is compromised by |

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|---|-----------------------------|--|
| | | internet reliability. Please see above. Technology accessories (chargers, head phones) have significantly reduced the utility of these upgrades. |
| re-program copy machines in order to store/access materials for longer window of time | This goal was accomplished. | Staff needs have been accommodated. |

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

| Activity | Result/Evidence | Comments |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| create and distribute quarterly newsletter to ELL families | This goal was accomplished in part. | The Principal generates a monthly report for all families which includes verbiage inviting families to request translation if needed. |

DISTRICT GOAL #5: TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| Activity | Result/Evidence | Comments |
|--|---|--|
| provide professional development opportunities that include credit and/or PDP value | This goal was accomplished. | A summer course offered by Looney Consulting in math that provided graduate credit at a reduced rate was offered to staff however lack of sufficient interest caused this to cancel. |
| utilize common planning time, in part, to roll out SMART Plan in a coordinated fashion | This goal was accomplished. Teacher common planning time notes reference this topic consistently. | Teachers have created mini-lessons with extensions that are kept in a binder and used by all teachers at the specific grade level. |
| provide professional development in math instruction | This goal was accomplished. | Looney Consulting has provided regular professional development that has been deemed useful and enjoyable by staff. |

2016-2017 SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL SURVEY

A staff survey was distributed to teachers, specialists, and ESPs and a parent survey was distributed to all parents. The survey(s) solicited specific feedback about a variety of aspects important to our school practices, student learning, and family involvement. Survey responses were received and broken down by grade level and stakeholder responses (parents, teachers, ESPs). Based on a careful review of survey responses and the Council members' knowledge of school affairs, the following goals are submitted as part of the 2017-2018 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.

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

| Activity | Person(s) Responsible | Resources | Timeline | Result | Evaluation/ Evidence |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| continue building the school's writing curriculum with revisions to assessments and regular analysis of student work | Principal Teachers | none needed | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | improved student learning and performance | writing curriculum, common planning time notes |
| research and identify a social emotional learning curriculum and begin staff development for implementation | Principal Assistant Principal ABC Team | none needed | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | curriculum that will promote building wide culture of respect and align behavioral expectations and consequences among all staff | social-emotional curriculum |
| research, identify and sample a minimum of two K-2 science curriculums | Principal Curriculum Coordinator Selected Staff | funds for purchasing | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | selection of science curriculum for 2018 implementation in K-2 | science curriculum |
| establish a committee to examine and revise report cards to align with CCSS and school curriculum | Principal Selected Staff | funds for report card revisions | Sept.-Nov., 2017 | improved communication of student performance | revised report cards |
| research, identify and pilot math assessment for grade 2 and if appropriate grade 1 | Principal Curriculum Coordinator Math Consultant Teachers | funds for math consultant, funds to purchase assessment | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | enhance teacher/instructional effectiveness, improved data collection | assessment instrument |

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

| Activity | Person(s) Responsible | Resources | Timeline | Result | Evaluation/ Evidence |
|---|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| increase attention to building cleanliness and appearance of bathrooms (paint, attention to | Principal Assistant Principal Facilities Manager Custodians | funds in part specific plan regarding establishing and maintaining | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | improved appearance | improved appearance; staff and family survey responses |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| fixtures) | | bathroom appearance and cleanliness | | | |
| erect fence surrounding upper grade playground | Superintendent Principal Facilities Manager | funds\ capital improvement allocation | Sept.-Dec., 2017 | improved student safety | fence |

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

| Activity | Person(s) Responsible | Resources | Timeline | Result | Evaluation/ Evidence |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| revise school website to consolidate information and simplify navigation | Principal Mrs. Sullivan Director of Tech. | none needed | Sept.-Dec., 2017 | improved accessibility to school related matters/materials | parent survey responses |
| work with technology dept. to identify instructional apps and provide tech. support that enables teachers to access relevant apps. | Principal Director of Tech. | professional development funds, funds to purchase needed apps | Sept., 2017- Jan., 2018 | improve instructional support | staff survey responses |

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

| Activity | Person(s) Responsible | Resources | Timeline | Result | Evaluation/ Evidence |
|---|---|------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| eliminate October 1 deadline for CORI forms to be processed | Superintendent | none needed | Sept., 2017 | improve ability for family members to actively participate in school affairs during school hours | increase in parent involvement |
| increase parent feedback by adapting survey and outreach efforts to include technology/mobile app options and in various translations | Principal Mrs. Sullivan Director of Tech. | none needed | Sept., 2017- April, 2018 | improved accessibility of school related information for families, more cost efficient format of communication | use of technology to distribute survey, expanded translations of documents |

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|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|-------|
| schedule welcome night that is dedicated to communicating important school information in multiple languages where translators are available | Principal ELL Coordinator | funds for translators | Sept.-Oct., 2017 | improved accessibility of school related information for families for whom English is a second language | event |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|-------|

DISTRICT GOAL #5: TO PROVIDE MEANINGFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| Activity | Person(s) Responsible | Resources | Timeline | Result | Evaluation/Evidence |
|--|--|--------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| provide professional development opportunities in math instruction and assessment development, science standards, behavior management, teacher recertification requirements, technology applications/utilization | Principal Director Curriculum Special Educator Coordinator | funds for trainers | Sept., 2017- June, 2018 | improved knowledge/skills of staff in addressing challenging behaviors, satisfy PD request from staff | list of PD |

This William P. Gorman Fort Banks Elementary School Improvement Plan dated June 2017 has been approved by the Site Council members. A hard copy with Council Member signatures is on file.