Robert E. Melican Middle School
School Improvement Plan
2017-2019

Celebrating Educational Excellence for All

**Robert E. Melican Middle School
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School Improvement Plan 2017-2019

Dear Members of the Melican Middle School Community:

We are happy to present our School Improvement Plan for 2017-2019, which aligns with the district's *Vision 2020: Strategically Planning for the Future*. The goals contained in the Plan reflect the district's four areas for strategic focus: Communication, Curriculum, Student Support Services, and Technology. We continue to focus on the district's core values, as well: Respect, Integrity, Communication, and Excellence.

Our goals are stated in the Robert E. Melican Middle School Goals At-A-Glance section, and they are more clearly articulated later in the document, where you will find the following for each goal: Rationale, Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal, Measures, and Responsibility.

We understand the unique challenges of middle school and appreciate the effort that our students bring to these three important years. So much individual growth (emotional, social, academic, intellectual, and physical) takes place during the three middle school years, and we continue to strive to make the three years at Melican the best they can be for our students, encouraging them to continue to develop their strengths, work on their weaknesses, refine their interests, and become lifelong learners in a connected world.

I want to thank the School Council members for their continued commitment to the school and to the work of the Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle T. Karb
Principal

Ten Schools, Three Districts, One Community of Learners

The Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough

Vision Statement

The Vision of the Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough promotes high expectations and excellence for all in a dynamic learning environment that inspires opportunities for thinking critically, solving problems, and engaging intellectual curiosity. We integrate relevant technology and foster innovation to set the stage for success in a global society. Our culture supports diversity, inclusion, discovery, resiliency, and effective communication in a safe environment.

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough is to provide an exceptional educational experience for every student in a safe environment.

Core Values

The Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough believe in:

Respect ~ *Appreciates the diversity, differences, and dignity of all members of the community. Fosters a community that promotes teamwork and collaboration.*

Integrity ~ *Prepares students to become ethical, responsible, and productive members of a global society. Values honesty, integrity, and transparency in all our interactions with the community and with one another.*

Communication ~ *Develops a cohesive school community through effective communication.*

Excellence ~ *Promotes a culture of high expectations and excellence for all. Supports innovation and risk-taking. Provides a comprehensive educational experience to support and nurture all students' intellectual, creative, social and emotional development, and physical well-being.*

Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough Vision 2020:
Strategically Planning for the Future

Four Areas of Strategic Focus:
Communication
Curriculum
Student Support Services
Technology

Robert E. Melican Middle School Mission and Belief Statements

Mission Statement

The mission of the Robert E. Melican Middle School is to pursue the highest level of educational excellence for all students by embracing our district's core values and Strategic Plan. Planning and implementing thoughtful curriculum, grounded in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core State Standards, is the goal of all Melican staff. A professional learning community, with student learning at the forefront of all decision-making, provides the optimal environment for the successful development of students' cognitive, academic, physical, social, and emotional needs as they travel this "in the middle" pathway from elementary school to high school.

Belief Statements

The Robert E. Melican Middle School community is a partnership among teachers, staff, administrators, parents and students. These belief statements guide our work:

1. Melican Middle School is a professional learning community characterized by shared purpose, collaborative activity, continuous improvement and collective responsibility.

2. Students learn best in a safe environment characterized by a positive school culture which values respect, dignity and diversity.

3. A Standards-Based Curriculum model, with differentiated instructional experiences that offer multiple pathways for all learners to reach and exceed the Common Core and Framework Standards, is the foundation for all classrooms.

4. Technological advances will continue to shape twenty-first century living; keeping practices current and understanding the impact on education is integral to our vision and success.

5. Communication between educators and parents must be ongoing and is vital for optimal student achievement.

6. Our ultimate goal is to prepare students to become self-sufficient adults and lifelong learners who will responsibly participate in and contribute to the global community.

Robert E. Melican Middle School Council

Mission Statement

The mission of the Melican Middle School Council is to foster the partnership of parents, school staff, students, and community members. In doing so, the Council will assist the principal in formulating a School Improvement Plan by:

• Identifying the educational needs of our students.
• Promoting educational goals of our school.
• Educating the community as to the needs of our school.
• Reviewing our school's annual budget.

Policy on Term of Office

The Melican Middle School Council is made up of these constituencies whenever possible:
• Principal
• PTO Chairperson
• Grade level and specialist teacher representatives
• Parents
• Community representative

Each newly elected member's term of office runs for two years, from October to October. If a member cannot, or chooses not to fulfill his/her term of office, the Principal may appoint a person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. When a term is over, a member may be considered for another two-year term of service.

2016-2017 Melican Middle School Council Members

Michelle Karb, principal & co-chair
Elise Bradley, teacher
Linda DeFeudis, school nurse, secretary
Jessica Eisenlord, teacher
Jessica Himmelman, behavior specialist
Melissa Jameson, teacher
Dominique LePaul, teacher
Lauren O'Neil, guidance counselor & co-chair
Jeanne Rafferty, parent & PTO member
Leslie Rutan, community representative
Kimberly Senior, teacher

District Strategic Focus Area: Communication

- <u>Goal One</u>: Communicate effectively with parents throughout the year. Communication will be timely, informative, and succinct.
- <u>Goal Two</u>: Work closely with the PTO to keep communication with parents accurate and current.
- <u>Goal Three</u>: Post information on our website so parents and students understand curriculum goals and objectives, where students stand academically, and so everyone has a context for the learning.
- <u>Goal Four</u>: Invite parents and the community into our school throughout the year to showcase what students and teachers are doing.

District Strategic Focus Area: Curriculum

- <u>Goal One</u>: Develop, refine, and publish model curriculum maps.
- <u>Goal Two</u>: Create and administer more computer-based common assessments. Analyze and utilize the data from these assessments to improve instruction.
- <u>Goal Three</u>: Create a new master schedule that will best maximize our resources and foster continuous academic growth in all students.
- <u>Goal Four</u>: Promote in-house professional development opportunities to support the curriculum work of teachers.

District Strategic Focus Area: Student Support Services

- <u>Goal One</u>: Use Jessica Minahan's work to frame the way we respond to student behavior.
- <u>Goal Two</u>: Develop our ELL Program.
- Goal Three: Develop our STEPS (Student Tiered Educational Program for Success) Program.
- <u>Goal Four</u>: Develop our STRIDES (Student Tiered Responsive Interventions Driving Educational Success) Program.
- <u>Goal Five</u>: Develop our Language-Based Program.

District Strategic Focus Area: Technology

- <u>Goal One</u>: Implement our new technology integration model.
- <u>Goal Two:</u> Implement a 1:1 Student:Device model.
- <u>Goal Three</u>: Build on the successes of our in-house Technology Committee.
- <u>Goal Four</u>: Develop our STEM lab and maximize the learning opportunities for students across curriculum areas.
- <u>Goal Five</u>: Hold an annual Technology Information Night for parents and community members.

District Strategic Focus Area: Communication

Goal One: Communicate effectively with parents throughout the year. Communication will be timely, informative, and succinct.

Rationale: Over the years, we have improved the way we communicate with parents. In the spring of 2016, Principal Michelle Karb added a Monday Memo, which is a weekly e-mail communication sent to families, outlining our plans for the week.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Send weekly Monday Memo emails via OneCall to parents, informing them of the weekly events, as well as events coming up later in the month. Be consistent with these Monday Memos so parents come to rely on them for information.	-E-mail -Parent feedback	-Principal
Institute a Twitter feed that updates families in real-time. Update with real-time information.	-Website -Parent feedback	-Principal -Administrative assistants
Send Monthly Melican Calendar to families.	-E-mail -Parent feedback	-Principal -Administrative assistants

Goal Two: Work closely with the PTO to keep communication with parents accurate and current.

Rationale: The PTO partners with the principal in communicating with parents. Sometimes parents communicate directly with the PTO. The relationship between the PTO and the principal has become that much more important, as parents look to the PTO for answers to some of their questions, and for information specific to our school.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Work closely with the PTO Chair to keep the PTO website current. The PTO posts a calendar of events, as well as other important information for parents.	-E-mail communication -Phone calls -PTO meeting notes	-Principal -PTO Chair
Communicate regularly with the PTO Chair about issues and concerns that arise through the PTO Facebook Page.	-E-mail communication -Phone calls	-Principal -PTO Chair

Promote and encourage PTO initiatives throughout the year.	-OneCall emails to parents	-Principal
Work with the PTO Chair to compile a list of Frequently Asked Questions (with answers) to post on the PTO website and on the Melican Middle School website.	-E-mail communication -Phone calls -PTO Meetings	-Principal -PTO Chair

Goal Three: Post information on our website so parents and students understand curriculum goals and objectives, where students stand academically, and so everyone has a context for the learning.

Rationale: Although teachers currently post information, we are hoping to improve the way this is done. We are also looking to streamline the information shared with students and parents regarding student performance to achieve more consistency between teachers and teams. We have never posted detailed curriculum information on the website. We would like to share as much information with parents and the community about curriculum as we can.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Post assignments, class notes, homework, study guides, and extra activities on teacher websites.	-Website -Parent feedback	-Teachers -Principal
Update student grades regularly online. Develop specific expectations for how grades are posted and how often information is updated by teachers.	-Faculty Meeting led by Academic Council to revisit expectations around this -Parent feedback -Student feedback	-Teachers -Academic Council
Post curriculum updates regularly on the school's website.	-Curriculum updates posted at least monthly	-Academic Council -Teachers -Technology Specialist
Celebrate students' learning through the Curriculum Corner, a slide show on our website that showcases student work.	-Website	-Academic Council -Teachers -Technology Specialist

Goal Four: Invite parents and the community into our school throughout the year to showcase what students and teachers are doing.

Rationale: Previously, teachers have invited parents into the school to watch Shakespeare performances (grades 6-8) and CO_2 car races (grade 6) at the end of each school year. We have also invited parents into our school to chaperone field trips, to watch sporting events, etc. We would like to invite parents in more frequently throughout the year to see what their children are doing.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Invite parents into classrooms to experience what students are learning and doing. Create formal invitations, post the information on our website, and include the information in Monday Memos and the school's Twitter feed.	-Academic Council – each curriculum area will invite parents in at least twice during the year	-Academic Council -Teachers -Principal
Invite parents into the school to assist with learning activities (i.e. science labs, demonstrations, Career Fair, etc.).	-Academic Council will plan effective ways to utilize parents' strengths to support student learning.	-Academic Council -Teachers -Principal -Students

District Strategic Focus Area: Curriculum

Goal One: Develop, refine, and publish model curriculum maps.
Rationale: Melican teachers have had curriculum maps for years, mapping their curriculum. Over the past several years, teachers have input their curriculum maps into Atlas, the district's online curriculum mapping tool. Teachers update and refine their maps as curriculum and standards change, and as learning experiences evolve. We are excited about publishing our maps so interested stakeholders can see what students are learning, how they are learning, and the timeline for learning and mastery of content, knowledge, and skills.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Refine and adjust maps at least three times each year.	-Curriculum meetings -Professional development days -Monday meeting times	-District leaders -Atlas Ambassadors -Teachers -Administrators
Provide professional development opportunities to teachers.	-PD days -Monday faculty meetings	-Principal

Goal Two: Create and administer more computer-based common assessments. Analyze and utilize the data from these assessments to improve instruction.
Rationale: All teachers use common assessments to gather data about students' learning. There is room for more common assessments, and we want teachers to analyze data together and to adjust teaching based on data. Additionally, since the MCAS 2.0 assessment is computer-based, it is important

for students and teachers to have meaningful computer-based assessment opportunities throughout the year.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Utilize in-house professional development opportunities. Designate specific times (i.e. content-based half-days) to collaborate.	-Curriculum meetings -Team meetings	-Teachers -Principal -Technology Integration Specialist
Provide formal professional development to train teachers to effectively utilize the common meeting times they have with their content area partners and their teams.	-Team meetings -Weekly content partner meetings -Academic Council meetings	-Teachers -Principal -Assistant Principal -Academic Council

Goal Three: Create a new master schedule that will best maximize our resources and foster continuous academic growth in all students.

Rationale: Teachers are interested in exploring and creating a new master schedule. We have had the same basic master schedule for years, and we would like to consider alternatives to the way we build our schedule. The Academic Council began work on this goal during the 2016-2017 school year.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Establish the Academic Council as the committee to spearhead this initiative.	-Academic Council meetings	-Academic Council -Principal
Consult regularly with all teachers. Ask for specific feedback and suggestions.	-Faculty meetings -Curriculum meetings	Academic Council -Principal
Involve parents in the creation of the new schedule. Use surveys and other means for soliciting feedback and suggestions.	-Meetings with the PTO and the School Council	-Academic Council -Principal
Establish priorities and key focus areas that will drive the creation of our schedule.	-Academic Council meetings	-Academic Council -Principal
Research and visit other middle school schedules.	-Network -Internet -School visits	-Academic Council -Principal
Present options for a new schedule and ask for feedback from teachers, parents, and students.	-Meetings -Feedback forms	-Academic Council -Principal

Goal Four: Promote in-house professional development opportunities to support the curriculum work of teachers.

Rationale: Content area teachers have successfully utilized days when school is in session to work together on writing, designing, and assessing curriculum. Science teachers have used several half-days to rewrite and revise curriculum to align to the new science standards. They have collaborated throughout this multiyear endeavor and continue to utilize half-days to refine and revise their work. English teachers have met once to work together during the school day. There are opportunities for all content areas to do the same, and for cross-curricular planning to take place.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Schedule time for curriculum leaders to work with colleagues to develop and analyze curriculum. Use school time to work together	-Curriculum meetings -Half-days -Faculty meetings	-Principal -Curriculum Leaders
Promote sharing among staff from outside PD experiences.	-Faculty meetings	-Principal -Teachers

District Strategic Focus Area: Student Support Services

Goal One: Use Jessica Minahan's work to frame the way we respond to student behavior.

Rationale: Jessica Minahan is a licensed and board-certified behavior analyst (BCBA), author, special educator, and consultant to schools internationally. Principal Michelle Karb and several teachers attended a full-day training with Jessica Minahan during the 2016-2017 school year. Faculty meetings have been used to share information gleaned from the training. Members of the Student Support Staff and the Leadership Team have copies of The Behavior Code: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Teaching the Most Challenging Students *by Jessica Minahan and Nancy Rappaport, MD, and we have been reading segments of the book together and discussing implementation of practices and strategies.*

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Attend off-site professional development.	-Professional development opportunities	-Principal -Academic Council -Leadership Team
Attend district-supported professional development.	-Professional development opportunities	-District leaders -Principal -Teachers
Share information from trainings with other teachers.	-Faculty meetings -Leadership Team meetings -Student Support	-Leadership Team -Student Support Team -Principal -Assistant Principal

	Team meetings	
Implement Jessica Minahan's strategies when working with students.	-Day-to-day student behavior	-Teachers -Student Support Team -Principal -Assistant Principal

Goal Two: Develop our ELL Program.

Rationale: With a growing and ever-changing ELL population, it is important to assess and adjust constantly. Students need varying levels of support. Teachers need multiple levels of resources.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Constantly evaluate our programming and analyze student data.	-State assessments -School-based assessments -Authentic learning projects	-ELL teachers -Classroom teachers -Administrators -ELL coordinator
Ensure that our master schedule provides the best opportunities for both pull-out and push-in services for our ELL students.	-Data collection -Collaboration	-Principal -ELL teachers
Provide opportunities for ELL teachers and classroom teachers to collaborate regularly to best meet the needs of our students.	-Scheduled meetings -Monday meeting times	-Principal

Goal Three: Develop and implement our STEPS (Student Tiered Educational Program for Success) Program.

Rationale: This will be our first formal therapeutic program. With the increase in mental health needs, there is a need to create something "different" for some of our students. For years we have utilized creative scheduling, customized support systems, and differentiated responses to student needs, but with the development of our therapeutic program, we will be able to better meet he needs of these complex students.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Clearly define staff members' roles.	-Written job descriptions -Professional development	-Principal -Assistant Principal -STEPS staff -District BCBA

Develop treatment plans for each student.	-Weekly progress meetings	-Principal -Assistant Principal -STEPS staff -District BCBA
Analyze student data using baseline data for comparison. Adjust as needed.	-Data collection sheets -Weekly meetings -Student feedback -Parents feedback	-Assistant Principal -Principal -STEPS staff -District BCBA
Incorporate therapy dogs into STEPS to help students with self regulation, help calm anxiety, provide an opportunity for students to have a non-threatening relationship with a living being, etc.	-Data collection sheets -Student feedback -Parent feedback	-Adjustment Counselor -Teachers -Aides
Collaborate with BRYT (Brookline-based *Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition*) to utilize the MetroWest Health grant we received.	-Data collection -Meetings	-STEPS personnel -District BCBA -Assistant Principal -Principal

Goal Four: Develop our STRIDES (Student Tiered Responsive Interventions Driving Educational Success) Program.

Rationale: With the addition of STEPS (our intensive therapeutic program), the behavior specialist's program (STRIDES) will change. Some of the students who received support in the behavior specialist's room in the past will be a better match for the therapeutic program (STEPS). It will be important to distinguish the two programs, provide entrance and exit criteria, and take careful and detailed data.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Clearly define staff members' roles.	-Written job descriptions -Professional development	-Principal -Assistant Principal -STRIDES staff -District BCBA
Develop treatment plans for each student.	-Weekly progress meetings	-Principal -Assistant Principal -STRIDES staff -District BCBA
Analyze student data using baseline data for comparison. Adjust as needed.	-Data collection sheets -Weekly meetings -Student feedback -Parents feedback	-Assistant Principal -Principal -STRIDES staff -District BCBA

Incorporate therapy dogs into STRIDES to help students with self regulation, help calm anxiety, provide an opportunity for students to have a non-threatening relationship with a living being, etc.	-Data collection sheets -Student feedback -Parent feedback	-Behavior Specialist -Teachers -Aides

Goal Five: Develop our Language-Based Program.

Rationale: We have had a Language-Based Program for many years. Students in the Language-Based Program are taught English and reading in a small group, and they receive support in science and social studies through a language-based assistant. For the 2016-2017 school year, we added a co-teaching component (co-taught by our speech language pathologist and social studies teacher) to eighth grade social studies to support our eighth grade language-based students. We recognize the need to support the other grades in social studies, as well as the need to support students in science classes. Additionally, there is a large number of incoming sixth graders requiring intensive language-based services.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Hire an additional special education teacher (at least 50%) to teach in the Language-Based Program.	-Budget	-Principal -Assistant Director of Student Support Services
Develop an effective co-teaching model, where social studies and/or science curriculum is delivered to our language-based students in the general education setting through a co-teaching model.	-Data collection -Co-planning and collaboration -Parent feedback -Teacher feedback	-Language-based teacher(s) -Speech language pathologist -Principal -Assistant Director of Student Support Services
Provide professional development for teachers.	-Outside consultants -Internal collaboration time	Language-based teacher(s) -Speech language pathologist -Principal -Assistant Director of Student Support Services

District Strategic Focus Area: Technology

Goal One: Implement our new technology integration model.
Rationale: We have moved away from a technology integration model where the technology integration specialist teaches specific computer classes AND supports technology integration. For the first time, during the 2016-2017 school year, the technology integration specialist is serving as a full-time coach, consultant, and support to teachers. At times she works behind-the-scenes to prepare technology for teachers and students to use; at times she co-teaches with teachers; at times she teaches skills to students; at times the trains teachers to utilize technology and or/to use innovative apps and websites.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
The Technology Integration Specialist will meet with teaching teams to plan and collaborate. She will co-teach when necessary, coach when needed, and be supportive to teachers.	-Team meetings -Student Support Team meetings	-Technology Integration Specialist -Classroom teachers -Special education teachers
The Technology Integration Specialist will help with computer-based MCAS assessments, providing training to MCAS proctors and building administrators, and organizing the necessary data to support the testing.	-Monday faculty meetings -Meetings with proctors and administrators	-Technology Integration Specialist -Technology Specialists

Goal Two: Implement a 1:1 Student:Device model.
Rationale: We currently have approximately a 2:1 model, with devices being housed on mobile carts. Teachers sign out the carts and utilize the devices. Moving forward, we will have a model where each student has a device at all times, making technology integration seamless for students and teachers.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Provide students with training on the devices to help them utilize them effectively. Include training on cyber-responsibility, the Acceptable Use Policy, and independence.	-Planned class time for training -Student feedback	-Principal -Technology Integration Specialist -In-House Technology Committee -Classroom teachers
Provide teachers with professional development to help them maximize technology integration.	-Professional Development Days -Teacher feedback	-Principal -Technology Integration Specialist -In-House Technology Committee

<u>Goal Three</u>: Build on the successes of our in-house Technology Committee.
Rationale: For several years, we have had an in-house Technology Committee that has met at least monthly, run Technology Mondays, and worked to share new ideas and initiatives. We would like to revive the committee and empower teachers to lead teachers.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Support teachers in technology integration. Encourage them to take risks, try new apps, implement new initiatives, experiment with ideas, etc.	-Technology Committee meetings -Technology Mondays	-Technology Integration Specialist -Principal -Teachers
Support professional development (both in-house and external) to push technology forward.	-Technology Committee meetings -Technology Mondays -Workshops	-Technology Integration Specialist -Principal -Teachers
Promote teacher leadership.	-Teacher-led workshops and initiatives	-Principal -Technology Integration Specialist

<u>Goal Four</u>: Develop our STEM lab and maximize the learning opportunities for students across curriculum areas.
Rationale: We have a new STEM lab housed in our Technology Engineering suite. The lab consists of 3-D printers, a desktop computer, and a lap-top cart. During the 2016-2017 school year, our engineering teachers have incorporated the equipment into many of their traditional engineering projects and challenges, and have implemented new learning activities with the new equipment, making the learning experiences more meaningful, interesting, and relevant for students.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Continue to incorporate the STEM lab into Technology Engineering classes regularly.	-Weekly content area meetings	-Teachers -Administrators -Technology Integration Specialist -Technology Support
Expand the use of the STEM lab into science and math classes, as well as into STEM challenges and projects.	-Monthly in-house STEM Committee meetings	-Teachers -Administrators -Technology Integration Specialist -Technology Support

Provide an afterschool robotics club for students.	-Afterschool Activities List	-Teachers

Goal Five: Hold an annual Technology Information Night for parents and community members.

Rationale: Over the years, we have held two Technology Information Nights and will get back to that model.

Strategic Initiatives for Accomplishing Goal	Measures	Responsibility
Share student work, teacher implementation, and innovative implementation of technology.	-Student feedback -Parent feedback -Teacher feedback	-Teachers -Administrators -Technology Integration Specialist -Technology Support -Students
Plan and organize the Technology Information Night.	-Teacher feedback -Parent feedback	-Teachers -Administrators -Technology Integration Specialist -Technology Support -Students