

**School Improvement Plan  
Acton-Boxborough Regional High School  
2009-2010**

The timeline for each of these goals is the 2009-2010 school year. We expect to revisit and revise this plan in spring 2010. The School Council will oversee progress towards the goals.

**Goal 1: We will complete a study of our entire academic program in preparation for our re-accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).**

*Background and Rationale:* We are required to renew our accreditation with NEASC every ten years. Maintaining our accreditation is critical because it indicates to colleges and universities that our school's academic offerings, facilities and practices have been assessed and found to meet their standards of good practice. The self-study is a significant undertaking, requiring the input of every faculty member, as well as a number of community members. Each faculty member and community volunteer has been assigned to one of eight committees: School and Community Profile; Curriculum; Instruction; Assessment; Mission; Leadership; School Resources and Community Resources. Each of those committees will complete a thorough report detailing the school's practices in that particular area. The faculty must then vote to adopt each committee's report.

*Strategies:*

- Divide faculty onto committees, assign chairs for each committee.
- Conduct survey of school community – students, parents, and faculty/staff.
- Collect, disaggregate, report and analyze data related to student achievement.
- Collect and examine student work related to our academic learning expectations.
- Examine practices and produce reports.
- Discuss reports and recommendations with faculty and community.
- Identify future goals based on self-study findings.

**Goal 2: We will continue to take steps to understand and address issues of stress among members of the high school community.**

*Background and Rationale:* Over the past decade, stress among suburban adolescents has become an increasingly prevalent problem. Evidence suggests that we are experiencing a similar increase among Acton-Boxborough's adolescents. During the 2008-2009 school year, the ABRHS community took significant steps to

address this issue –including continued research by the Faculty Stress Committee (formed in spring 2008), the formation of both a parent book group focused on the issue and a sub-committee of Student Council – each dedicated to better understanding this issue, and the creation of a stress relief room in the ABRHS Nurses’ Office.

*Strategies:*

- The Faculty Stress Committee (formed in spring 2008) will continue to research the issue of adolescent stress. After looking at data derived locally, in combination with more far-reaching research, they will propose changes to the school’s practices and policies that will help students to build strong stress management skills and to live balanced, healthy lives.
- The parent book group focusing on the issue of adolescent stress that was formed during 2008-2009 will continue to meet bi-monthly throughout 2009-2010.
- The school will implement a new mid-terms exam schedule intended to alleviate some of the stress that has been associated with this period in the past.
- Information regarding effective stress management will continue to be provided to students and their parents throughout the year via a variety of sources (forums, Back-to-School-Night, the PTSO newsletter, etc.). This will include information related to the link between healthy stress levels and higher academic achievement.
- The physical education department will continue to offer students opportunities to enroll in courses that emphasize stress management practices (e.g. yoga and meditation).
- Using our year-end surveys and other evaluation tools, we will continue to assess our efforts before, during and after interventions are employed.
- We will encourage conversations about student stress amongst our larger school community.

**Goal 3: We will work with the school community to ensure that it is aware of the school’s new mission statement.**

*Background and Rationale:* Our accrediting agency (the New England Association of Schools and Colleges – NEASC) requires that we revisit our school’s mission prior to our self-study and accrediting visit (scheduled for October 2010). Accordingly, during the 2008-2009 school year, the NEASC co-chairs (in collaboration with the principal) convened a number of meetings to gather input from the school community’s various stakeholders. A separate committee then synthesized the input from those constituencies and drafted a mission statement. After collecting feedback

on that draft, the statement was revised accordingly and then voted upon by the faculty, the school council, the student council, and the school committee during the spring of 2009. The next task is to ensure that the community is familiar with the new statement. Following that, we need to identify ways that our school and school community can better reflect our mission statement.

*Strategies:*

- We will encourage teachers to incorporate the mission in their classroom procedures and practices.
- We will incorporate the mission statement into our disciplinary practices.
- We will gather student leaders to discuss the mission in order that they can be helpful in its implementation.
- We will include information about our mission on our website, allowing people researching our school to understand our values.
- We will communicate our mission to existing community groups.
- We will reach out to the larger community to share the mission by sending out a press release in the fall.
- We will post our mission statement in various places around the school, including the cafeteria, on bulletin boards, in classrooms, and in the lobby.
- We will revise our letterhead to include the mission statement.