

**Acton Public Schools
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District**

Merriam School

School Improvement Plan Report 2008-2009
School Improvement Plan 2009-2010

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Merriam School

Part One: Background and Rationale

Members of the Merriam School Council

Ed Kaufman	Principal	
Maryann Ayers	Teacher	1st of 3-year-term
Colm McDermott	Teacher	1st of 3-year-term
Linda McMullon	Teacher	3rd of 3-year-term
Beth Davis	Parent	1st of 3-year-term
Jenny Patterson	Parent	1st of 3-year-term
Trish Underwood	Parent	2nd of 3-year-term
Luke Zhang	Parent	3rd of 3-year-term

Merriam School Council Meeting Dates 2008-2009

October 14, 2008	February 10, 2009
November 18, 2008	March 10, 2009
December 9, 2008	April 14, 2009
	May 12, 2009

After introducing new members to the role of the School Council, the Merriam School Council began the 2008-2009 school year organizing the plans/strategies for the School Improvement Plan and developing global plans for the school year. The teachers, parent representatives and principal on the School Council reported progress on the work toward meeting the goals at each meeting. Along with ongoing work on School Improvement Goals, the School Council worked to maintain a strong connection with the PTO and discussed long-range goals for Merriam School.

This spring, the School Council reviewed, reflected on and discussed the 2008-2009 goals.

Part Two: Evaluation of Current School Improvement Plan 2008-2009

Goal One: Continue our work encouraging parent participation that is more fully representative of our diverse community

Strategies:

- 1) Develop a homework guide to enable parents to support their children more with student assignments at home. This will be distributed at Open House in September.
- 2) Homework will be a focus of grade level presentations to parents at Open House
- 3) Parent Resource area in the library will be highlighted in the community newsletter throughout the year
- 4) The Curriculum Unit Development for language learners will be piloted
- 5) The ELL Assessment Summary Document will be piloted during the school year 2008-2009 as a guide to language development, and at the end of the year to assess the progress of ELL students

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: Increased participation in student learning activities and school events by a full spectrum of families in the community.

Target Date: May 2009

Assessment: The homework guide was completed during the summer and was distributed to parents at the fall Open House. Teachers discussed the guide and homework expectations at the Open House. In addition, at one of the PTO meetings, a group of teachers led a discussion about the challenges that students, teachers, and parents face related to homework. Scenarios were presented in a case study format for discussion. An article about the Parent Resource area in the library was included in the monthly newsletter, and specific titles of interest were mentioned. Finally, the Curriculum Units for language learners and the ELL Assessment Summary Documents were piloted, but more data over time will be needed to assess their impact.

Goal Two: Pilot Everyday Math as new math program at Merriam

Strategies:

- 1) Participate in professional development to enhance understanding of program
- 2) Faculty meetings will be opportunities for grade level sharing and consultation about the program
- 3) Increase parent awareness of the new math program

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: All teachers will understand the new program and their role in the scope and sequence of math at Merriam

Target Date: May 2009

Assessment: Over the summer a group of teachers prepared presentations for their colleagues related to the *Everyday Math* program, and then later delivered them at faculty meetings during the year. In addition, an *Everyday Math* consultant came and presented three full-day workshops to the Merriam faculty at various points during the year. **At the final workshop, the presenter organized the material to fit the needs of the individual grade levels.** Teachers discussed the program with parents at conferences. Finally, in April, the staff sponsored a “Math Games Night” for Merriam families, as another way to familiarize parents with the program. It was a tremendously successful evening, with approximately 250 students attending.

Goal Three: To have teachers increase skills with the new laptop computers and increase the opportunities for integrated use of technology

Strategies:

- 1) Study Group meetings will be dedicated to learning about multimedia classrooms
- 2) Classroom teacher meetings will be dedicated to learning how to maximize the use of integrated technology in the curriculum
- 3) Teacher sharing of technology practices will begin every faculty meeting
- 4) Increase parent awareness of new technology

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: All classroom teachers will be more proficient in the use of multimedia technology in the classroom

Target Date: May 2009

Assessment: A summer planning group inventoried and organized the technology equipment. The Technology Study Group met on a monthly basis throughout the year, to plan technology presentations for faculty meetings and to discuss ongoing technology issues. This group also considered technology needs for the future, which were presented to the entire staff. At the fall Professional Day, faculty attended district-wide workshops related to the use of their laptops in the morning, and then attended a portaportal workshop at Merriam in the afternoon, which was presented by Merriam colleagues. Over the course of the year, staff shared their knowledge with one another about laptop use, Smartboards, digital cameras, and in-focus projectors at meetings and on informal bases. Teachers shared in-focus projectors and digital cameras with partners, thus providing access in all classrooms. Information about technology was presented to parents in an article in the final newsletter and at the last PTO meeting of the year.

Part Three: School Improvement Plan 2009-2010

Goal One: Continue to help teachers become more comfortable and skilled with the new technology, providing opportunities for integrated instruction.

Strategies:

- 1) Teachers will set individual goals in technology (ITIP) for the school year. *These will be individually based and dependent on where the teachers are in their learning, and on the grade level in which they teach.*
- 2) Teachers on grade levels will work with the technology specialist on specific skills and projects. This instruction will permit teachers to integrate technology instruction with already existing curriculum.
- 3) Depending on needs at different grade levels, teachers will become familiar with and will utilize appropriate technology such as: digital cameras, LCD Projectors, Smartboards, notebook software, teacher laptops, student laptops, and Alphasmarts.
- 4) Periodic demonstrations and technology discussions will take place at staff meetings.
- 5) Teachers/students will demonstrate use of technology for Merriam parents, either at Open House, classroom or grade level presentations or school-wide evening events.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: All teachers will become more proficient at using and integrating multimedia technology in the classroom.

Target Date: May, 2010

Goal Two: Revise the Merriam “End of Year Assessment Summary Documents”.

Strategies:

- 1) A study group of Merriam faculty will meet monthly to organize and conduct research for the revision process. Feedback from Merriam parents will be requested early on in the process.
- 2) Faculty meetings and grade level time will be devoted to this process.
- 3) Parents will be updated about the revision process via written correspondence and discussions.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: Outlines (at least) of the new “End of Year Assessment Summary Documents” will be completed by the end of the year.

Target Date: May, 2010

Goal Three: Examine and share staff strategies for increasing students’ social skills and decreasing bullying behavior.

Strategies:

- 1) At several staff meetings, staff will share exercises and philosophy of social skills programs that are being utilized.
- 2) At several staff meetings, staff will share proactive and reactive strategies for dealing with bullying behavior.
- 3) If possible, we will pilot a new “Bullyproof” program provided by the Open Circle organization.
- 4) A “Community Conversation” will be devoted to this topic, where strategies will be shared and discussed with parents.
- 5) An article will be written in the Merriam newsletter to convey additional information to parents about this topic.

Responsible parties: Principal, Merriam Faculty, School Council

Outcome: Merriam staff will increase their knowledge about how to promote students’ social skills and decrease bullying behavior.

Target Date: May, 2010

