School Improvement Plan
2010-2012

Needham High School
609 Webster Street
Needham, MA 02494
Introduction

Development of the Needham High School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2010-2012 has been a collaborative effort among all school constituencies, including the School Council; the Social Emotional Learning Committee; members of the Standards-Based Education Committee; the Principal’s Cabinet; and the entire instructional staff. Several data points were utilized in selecting each area for improvement and its corresponding goals. Sources included the NEASC Self-Study and Evaluation Visit Reports; the NPS District Goals; the NHS SIP for 2007-2009; the 2009 Metro West Adolescent Health Survey; the 2009 NHS Parent Survey; and the bodies of professional research surrounding adolescent resiliency, professional learning communities, and standards-based practices. The professional staff at Needham High strongly believes that this plan readily reflects and supports the school’s three core values: To Think – To Respect - To Communicate and that the work outlined herein will aid the entire school community in realizing its stated mission.

The purpose of the plan is to set the instructional agenda for school over the next two years. The overarching objectives of this plan are to foster and support the academic achievement and social-emotional growth of Needham High’s racially, ethnically, and socially diverse student community. It is with these objectives in mind that the NHS professional community will review this plan in its entirety in the spring of 2011 to assess the school’s performance in each area for improvement and to modify the plan for SY 2012 as necessary. This SIP is comprised of three “Improvement Areas” that are directly linked to the NPS District Goals. For example, Improvement Area 1 – Ensuring the High Academic Achievement of All Students, and its associated goals, is closely aligned with the first district goal, “Advancing Standards-Based Learning”. Likewise, Improvement Area 2 – Developing the Social and Emotional Resiliency of All Students, reflects NPS Goal #2 – Developing the Social and Emotional Skills of All Students. Finally, NHS Improvement Area 3 – Practicing Operational Excellence in Support of High Quality Instruction, and its associated goals coincides with district Goal #4 – Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals.

To be sure, the NHS Areas for Improvement outlined herein are broad in nature. However, the goals under each area represent specific bodies of work toward which the entire professional staff (and in some cases parents and students) is committed to work.
NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL
MISSION

Needham High School draws from the strengths of the community to create teaching and learning partnerships between faculty, parents, and students, both on an individual level and in groups, in order to provide a high quality education.

The school offers students a variety of opportunities to excel and a diversity of perspectives from which to learn in an environment that is both nurturing and challenging.

The balanced student is able to participate actively in school and society, be creative, and self-advocate while determining his or her unique path to fulfillment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Area 1 – Ensuring the High Academic Achievement of All Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Alignment of Curriculum &amp; Learning Goals</td>
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<td>1.2 Improving Differentiated Instructional Strategies</td>
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<td>1.3 Student Assessment</td>
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<td>1.4 Building Capacity for Instructional Leadership</td>
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<td>GOAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Preparation for Resiliency Work</td>
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<td>2.2 Understanding the Tenets of Social-Emotional Resiliency</td>
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<td>2.3 Focus on Anti-Bullying</td>
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### Improvement Area 3 – Practicing Operational Excellence in Support of High Quality Instruction

<table>
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<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Utilize Technology to Promote Instructional &amp; Managerial Efficiency</td>
<td>School and district technology staff will work to maximize student information management systems to incorporate student discipline and co-curricular activity information.</td>
<td>Designing concept maps and information flow charts according to needs; development of modules</td>
<td>Principal, Assistant Principals, and NHS &amp; NPS technology staff</td>
<td>Winter 2010 – Winter 2011</td>
<td>In progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Ensure a Sustainable and Effective Administrative Support Model</td>
<td>Review efficiency and efficacy of 2009-2010 administrative support model. Reorganize and implement model to maximize the skills and talents of the support staff.</td>
<td>Training and professional development as needed for support staff.</td>
<td>Principal, support staff, central office team</td>
<td>Ongoing through June 2010</td>
<td>In progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.3 Communicate, Implement, &amp; Support Uniform Operational Policies, Procedures, &amp; Expectations</td>
<td>The faculty, staff, and administration will work to articulate and align operational practices and that support high quality instruction. These include: - Use of common field trip forms - Creation of an NHS Assessment Calendar - Continued alignment of business and financial practices - Use of “School Dude” to support physical-plant needs - Regular communication and practice of safety and security policies and procedures</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Faculty, staff &amp; administration</td>
<td>Ongoing through June 2010</td>
<td>In preparation</td>
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<td><strong>School Council SY 2009-2010</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June Atkind</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ted Baker</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma Castiglia</td>
<td>Class of 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Doisineau</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhiannon Ecsedy</td>
<td>Class of 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Jackson</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tema Katz</td>
<td>Class of 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Koup</td>
<td>English Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drew Lawrence</td>
<td>Math Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Molly McCleary</td>
<td>Class of 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Neckes</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rick Olin</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Piltch</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jonathan Pizzi</td>
<td>Principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Price</td>
<td>Community Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arial Sherry</td>
<td>Class of 2011</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Principal’s Cabinet</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanne Allen Willoughby, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamatha Bibbo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda Conneely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Denton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Duncan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fran Fleming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micah Hauben</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Heller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leo Hogan, Ed.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Lockhart</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Neves, Ed.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kathy Pinkham, Ed.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan D. Pizzi, Ph.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Shea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mimi Stamer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debbie Watters</td>
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## The Tenets of Student Resiliency at Needham High School*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element:</th>
<th>Social Competence</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Autonomy</th>
<th>Sense of Purpose &amp; Future</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>Ability to elicit positive responses from others, thus establishing positive relationships with both adults and peers.</td>
<td>Planning that facilitates seeing oneself in control and resourcefulness in seeking help from others.</td>
<td>A sense of one’s own identity and an ability to act independently and exert some control over one’s environment.</td>
<td>Goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Indicators:** | • Responsiveness  
  • Communication  
  • Empathy  
  • Caring  
  • Compassion  
  • Altruism  
  • Forgiveness | • Planning  
  • Flexibility  
  • Resourcefulness  
  • Critical thinking  
  • Insight | • Positive identity  
  • Internal locus of control  
  • Initiative  
  • Self-efficacy  
  • Mastery  
  • Adaptive distancing  
  • Resistance  
  • Self-awareness  
  • Mindfulness  
  • Humor | • Goal & Achievement orientation  
  • Motivation  
  • Educational aspirations  
  • Special interests  
  • Creativity  
  • Imagination  
  • Hope  
  • Optimism  
  • Sense of meaning |

*Adapted from Fostering Resilience: Expecting All Students to Use Their Hearts & Minds Well (Krovetz, 2007)
**Elements of a School Climate that Fosters Student Resiliency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Focus Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Indicators</strong></th>
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</table>
| **Relationships** between and among teachers, students and parents. | • Caring  
• Encouraging  
• Participatory. |
| **Curriculum and Instruction** | • Mission-driven, integrated, experience-based/service learning.  
• Cultures of all students reflected;  
• Rigorous instruction available to all;  
• Broad variety of courses and activities;  
• Broad range of learning styles accommodated;  
• Constructivist, inquiry-based instruction that supports critical thinking. |
| **Educator Beliefs and Practices** | • Asset-based instruction  
• Recognize and utilize the instructional strengths of each student |
| **Grouping of Students** | • Heterogeneous  
• Cooperative groups  
• Integrated programs  
• Class sizes that maximize learning |
| **Physical Environment** | • Clean and fresh; no graffiti  
• Plant well maintained  
• Student work on display with accompanying rubric(s)  
• Varied examples of student achievement |
| **Assessment of Student Learning** | • Authentic  
• Multiple measures  
• Range of intelligences measured Focus on fostering self-assessment and reflection. |
| **Motivation to Learn** | • Collaborative  
• Intrinsic rewards  
• Active student engagement  
• Connecting learning to interests, strengths, and real world |
| **School & Classroom Discipline** | • Democratic, consensual norms and rules  
• Restorative, active student participation in decision-making. |

*Adapted from Resilience: What We Have Learned (Bernard, 2004)*