NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

A Caring Community Striving for

Personal Growth and Academic Excellence

TO: Daniel Gutekanst, Superintendent

FROM: Aaron Sicotte, Principal

RE: NHS School Improvement Plan 2016-2019

DATE: 22 February 2017

The following Needham High School Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed during the fall of 2016 and winter of 2017 and was intended to build on the 2013-2016 SIP. As the plan states:

The purpose of this multi-year plan is to set the instructional and operational improvement agenda for the high school through June of 2019. This plan is closely aligned with the 2013-2016 SIP, and represents the next steps in the evolution of achievement for Needham High School. Consequently, the overarching objectives of this plan remain the same as the previous plan, while the action items represent new areas for student and institutional improvement and learning. The unifying aim of this plan is 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 annually review this plan to assess the school’s performance in each area for improvement and to modify the plan as needed.

Attached please find the NHS School Improvement Plan for 2016-2019. I look forward to presenting a status report to the School Committee on February 28 regarding the goals outlined therein.

Thank you once again for your review and support of this document and the core beliefs and hard work that it represents. As always, please contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

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NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL

A Caring Community Striving for

Personal Growth and Academic Excellence



School Improvement Plan

SY 2016-2019

***Needham High School***

***609 Webster Street***

***Needham, MA 02494***

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**Introduction**

Development of the Needham High School Improvement Plan (SIP) for 2016-2019 has been a collaborative effort among all school constituencies, including the NHS School Council, the High School Cabinet, the Technology and Innovation Committee, the Interdisciplinary Learning Team, the Social Emotional Learning Committee, the NEASC Committee, the Faculty Council, and the Student Council. The primary focus of the goals within the SIP was to continue the long-standing efforts the NHS community has made in key areas. The SIP uses the district goals as a guide, adapting the broader goals into specific areas of focus within NHS. The document is meant to steer our work in essential areas over the three-year span, leaving room for the specific details to be developed by the groups directly involved. This plan readily reflects and supports the school’s core values: A Caring Community Striving for Personal Growth and Academic Excellence, and the work outlined herein will guide the entire school community in realizing this core belief.

The purpose of this multi-year plan is to set the instructional and operational improvement agenda for the high school through June of 2019. This plan is closely aligned with the 2013-2016 SIP, and represents the next steps in the evolution of achievement for Needham High School. Consequently, the overarching objectives of this plan remain the same as the previous plan, while the action items represent new areas for student and institutional improvement and learning. The unifying aim of this plan is 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 annually review this plan to assess the school’s performance in each area for improvement and to modify the plan as needed. The three goals in the SIP are consistent with the district goals, ensuring cohesion between the work at Needham High School and that which is done at the district level. The three goals are: Advance Learning For All Students; Develop Social, Emotional, Wellness, and Citizenship Skills; and Ensure Infrastructure Supports District Values and Learning Goals.

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**NEEDHAM HIGH SCHOOL**

**A Caring Community Striving for Personal Growth and Academic Excellence**

**Mission Statement**

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.

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 **Goal 1 – Advance learning for all students** – To refine and continue to put into practice a system of curriculum, instruction,

and assessment that enables each student to be engaged in challenging, creative, and rigorous learning experiences that are

grounded in clearly defined standards.

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| ACTION ITEMS | DESCRIPTION | PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES | PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | IMPLEMENTATION | TARGET |
| * 1. Interdisciplinary

Learning | Learning and instructionthat focuses on skills andcontent that cross alldepartmental areas (example skills includecollaboration, problem solving, creativity, etc.).  | -Identify opportunities to  connect content across subject areas -Identify essential skills that cross departments and  create rubrics for school-wide use | -Interdisciplinary Learning  Specialist-Interdisciplinary Learning  Team-NEASC Committee | Fall 2016 – Spring 2019 | By the spring of 2019, NHS will develop rubrics for identified Interdisciplinary Learning skillsand begin to use the rubrics to provide feedback to students. |
| * 1. Technology

Integration | Using technology as a tool to enhance student learning and teachers’ instructional options, particularly throughbecoming 1 to 1 starting inthe fall of 2017.  | -Provide professional  development on effective integration of technology- Research and visit other schools that are 1 to 1 | -High School Cabinet-Technology and Innovation  Committee-Technology Integration Specialists-Director of Digital Learning | Fall 2016 – Spring 2019 | By the spring of 2019, NHS will implement a 1 to 1 learning environment in everyclass for two grades.  |
| 1.3 Senior Year | Creating a variety of options that meet the range of needs and interests seniorshave, such as internships,projects, and online learning. | -Identify needs/interests of seniors and create options to for seniors to pursue,  beyond the traditional  path | -High School Cabinet-Interdisciplinary Learning  Team-Faculty Council-School Council | Fall 2017 – Fall 2019 | By the fall of 2019, NHS will offer students three alternate options to the traditional senior year experience. |

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 **Goal 2 – Develop social, emotional, wellness and citizenship skills –** To ensure students develop the knowledge and skills that

empower healthy, resilient, engaged and culturally proficient global citizens who act with integrity, respect, and compassion.

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| **ACTION ITEMS** | **DESCRIPTION** | **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES** | **PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE** | **IMPLEMENTATION** | **TARGET** |
| **2.1 Cultural**  **Proficiency** | Honoring the differencesbetween cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups. | -Create resources for staff to embed culturally proficient  practices and strategies into classrooms and exchanges-Provide Cultural Proficiency training for staff and students to empower all to create a strong, respectful school environment | -Culture and Climate  Committee-High School Cabinet-Student Council | Fall 2016-Spring 2019 | Provide resources to staff by the fall of 2017 to helpguide conversations andbuild cultural proficiency into classrooms.By the spring of 2018, createa multi-year plan to guide the focus of work with staffand students.  |
| **2.2 Social Emotional**  **Learning** | Providing all students withthe skills and knowledge to sustain their mental health through resiliency and mindfulness.  | -Pilot a workshop geared to building community and  teaching SEL skills, then  expand it for all 10th graders-Create resources for staff to use to teach SEL skills to – and be able to support - all  students in each classroom | -Social Emotional Learning Committee-High School Cabinet-Wellness Department-Workshop Working Group | Fall 2017-Spring 2018 | In the spring of 2017, pilota workshop for 10th graders.Transform the pilot into a one-day workshop that each10th grade student will participate in. By the spring of 2018, create resources to build SEL skills into all classrooms.  |
| **2.3 Digital Citizenship** | Learning how to interact appropriately and respectfully in an onlineenvironment, while leavinga positive digital footprintonline and in the world.  | -Use the NPS K-12 Digital citizenship Curriculum to teach all 9th grade studentsdigital citizenship skills -Create teacher resources tobe used in classrooms andadapted to content-specificactivities | -Technology Integration  Specialists-Technology and Innovation Committee-Director of Digital  Learning-High School Cabinet | Fall 2016-Spring 2018 | Finalize an online curriculum that will betaught in all freshmenseminars, skills classes andPLC beginning in thefall of 2018.Create resources and guidesfor teachers to use in all classrooms and contentareas.  |

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 **Goal 2 – Develop social, emotional, wellness and citizenship skills –** To ensure students develop the knowledge and skills that

empower healthy, resilient, engaged and culturally proficient global citizens who act with integrity, respect, and compassion.

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| 2.4 RestorativeJustice | Providing meaningfulopportunities to make amends for and learn from mistakes and inappropriate behavior.  | -Review discipline policies in the Student Handbook and propose changes for 2017.-Include students more  directly in the disciplinary process through restorative circles and determining  appropriate restorative justice responses-Communicate the enhanced  practices to NHS community.  | -Assistant Principals-Principal-NHS Student Council-Guidance Department | Fall 2016-Spring 2018 | Update the NHS StudentHandbook in the spring of 2017 to explain restorativejustice practices.In 2017-18, double the number of restorative circles used with students. |

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 **Goal 3 – Ensure infrastructure supports district values and learning goals** – To develop, promote, and implement a sustain-

able plan for financial, building, technological, and human resources that supports learning for all and is responsive to school and

student needs.

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|  3.1 Space Needs to  Address Rising Enrollment  | Defining the scope of the spacechallenges at NHS and explore options to address them.  | -Work with the architects  to identify the space  needs and present to the  town a sustainable plan  to address the identified school and student needs | -NHS Space Working Group-Principal-School Committee | Fall 2016-Spring 2017 | By May of 2017, presentto the town a plan to address the space needsat NHS.  |
| 3.2 Assessing Our  Schedule | Determining NHS priorities and needs for students and programs, and determine a schedule to best address those priorities and needs.  | -Explore schedule options  that meet the identified  needs, get feedback from stake-  holders, and decide on a  schedule that meets our current needs or how to  meet those needs with our current schedule | -Schedule Exploration Committee-High School Cabinet-Student Council-Needham Education  Association-NHS Staff, Students, and Parents | Fall 2016-Fall 2018 | For the fall of 2018,decide on a schedule that best meets ourstudents’ needs and building priorities, and implement it.  |
| 3.3 Safety Protocols | Refining and creating protocols that make NHS as safe as possible and practicing a range of drills to ensure all NHS community members are as prepared as possible. | -Create scenarios that  test varied intruder  situations that could  occur and practice them  bi-annually. | -Assistant Principals-Principal-Needham Police Department | Fall 2016-Spring 2018 | By the spring of 2018, create a schedule of twosafety drills each year, with varied scenarios and police involvement.  |

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| ***NHS School Council 2016-2017*** |
| *Mary Bashir, Faculty* |
| *Scott Butchart, Parent* |
| *Jack Cruickshank, Class of 2018* |
| *Kathleen DeMayo, Parent* |
| *Jen Gould, Faculty* |
| *Michael Hirsh, Faculty* |
| *Jack Jahn, Class of 2020* |
| *Liam Nahill, Class of 2017* |
| *Chidinma Nwodo, Class of 2019* |
| *Matthew Saunders, Parent* |
| *Katherine Shannon, Class of 2019* |
| *Aaron Sicotte, Principal* |
| *Doug Stanczak, Faculty* |
| *Erica Supple, Parent* |
| *Aisha Tipnis, Class of 2019* |
| *Anne Weinstein, Parent* |

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***Needham High School***

***Team Membership***

***2016-2017***

**Needham High School Cabinet**

 **2016-2017**

***Joanne Allen Willoughby****, Ph.D., K-12 Director, Metco*

***Johnny Cole****, NHS Assistant Principal*

***Alison Coubrough-Argentieri****, NHS Assistant Principal*

***Tom Denton****, K-12 Director, Guidance*

***Keith Ford****, NHS Assistant Principal*

***Patrick Gallagher****, Chair, NHS English Department*

***Micah Hauben****, 6-12 Director, Athletics*

***Patricia Mullen****, Director, NHS Student Support Services*

***David Neves****, Ed.D., K-12 Director, Fine & Performing Arts*

***Kathy Pinkham****, Ed.D., K-12 Director, Wellness & P.E.*

***Stephen Plasko****, Chair, NHS Social Studies Department*

***Jennifer Regrut****, Chair, NHS Science Department*

***John Shea****, Chair, NHS Mathematics Department*

***Aaron Sicotte****, NHS Principal*

***Barbara Singer****, K-12 Director, Student Health*

***Jean Tower****, K-12 Director, Digital Media and Learning*

***Elizabeth Zajac****, K-12 Director, World Languages*