

ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Andover, Massachusetts

Shawsheen Elementary School
FY 2014-2015



Council Members:

Moira O'Brien	Principal	Jennifer Srivastava	Parent
Kelly Dougherty	Learning Specialist	Jennessa Durrani	Parent
Krista Galligani	Teacher	Pat McGovern	Community Member
Mary Jo Gustus	Instructional Assistant		

Shawsheen Elementary School Improvement Plan 2013-2014

Introduction

The 2012-2013 Shawsheen Elementary School Council worked collaboratively to develop a School Improvement Plan that will serve as a primary driving force in the school decision making process.

The School Improvement Plan spans four categories: Teaching & Learning, Transition & Support Programming, Social Emotional Learning & Programming and Growth Needs, Service & Safety. Each category is aligned with one or more of the District Goals.

At Shawsheen, we are proud of the progress we have made in developing a culture and community that reflects our school values of Learning, Self-Discovery & Caring for Others. We will continue to focus on improving curriculum and instruction, adapting to the Common Core, articulating transition programming and moving toward innovation and improvement through the use of technology.

We wish to share a grateful acknowledgement to the members of the Shawsheen Elementary School Council for their vision, efforts and commitment to Shawsheen. It is through their leadership we proudly present the 2013-2014 Shawsheen Elementary School Improvement Plan.

Andover Vision

The Andover Public Schools are committed to providing a world-class education in an innovative, inclusive, student-focused and fiscally-stable educational system. We are committed to the children and community it serves through our focus on high expectations, academic achievement, and education of the whole child which we believe is the shared responsibility of the family, the school district, and the community. We support individuality, foster resiliency and collaboration, and the development of globally-engaged learners.

The Andover Schools provide for children all of the services of a quality school district: nurturing, innovative, and qualified teachers and support staff; reflective, responsive, and effective school leaders, and a challenging curriculum that prepares students for the future. Students do their best work, independently and together. They acquire the skills necessary to think and communicate clearly. Teachers provide students with instructional experiences that are challenging and personalized. Students completing their education in Andover demonstrate the intellectual, interpersonal and reflective skills needed to thrive as productive and responsible citizens in our increasingly complex and diverse global society.

The school district is welcoming, respectful and inclusive. It supports open dialogue and seeks feedback regarding the effectiveness of its work from its stakeholders. All members of the school district are committed to continuous improvement, questioning the status quo, and seeking ongoing renewal of the organization.

The Andover Public Schools are committed to strong community relations efforts to meet the needs of its students today and in the future. The District develops and participates in partnerships with community groups including business and civic organizations. An understanding exists between the town government and the District of the need for educational funding and other resources required to meet the high expectations of our community which includes staffing, training, facilities, materials and equipment. Key to the success of this partnership is our ability to recognize opportunities and fulfill responsibilities to one another on behalf of Andover students.

Mission

The mission of the Andover Public Schools, in partnership with the entire Andover community, is to educate by engaging and inspiring, students to develop as self-reliant, responsible citizens who are thinkers, problem solvers, and contributors prepared to participate in an evolving global society.

History of Shawsheen Elementary School

Shawsheen School opened on October 7, 1924. Six rooms were occupied with a total enrollment of 203 pupils. There were seven grades in the 1924 with a projected increase of eight grades in September 1925 with 250 pupils all total. Today, Shawsheen is a choice school for PreK-2 and houses all but one of the district’s preschool classes. There are currently 7 preschool, 4 kindergarten, 3 first grade, and 3 second grade classrooms at Shawsheen with an enrollment of 275 children.

Enrollment Data

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2012-13)			
Race	% of School	% of District	% of State
African American	2.5	1.8	8.6
Asian	12.0	13.2	5.9
Hispanic	5.8	4.6	16.4
Native American	0.0	0.2	0.2
White	73.8	77.6	66.0
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	5.8	2.4	2.7

Enrollment by Gender (2012-13)			
	School	District	State
Male	155	3,142	489,289
Female	120	3,083	465,484
Total	275	6,225	954,773

Enrollment by Grade (2012-13)																	
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP	CT	Total
<u>District</u>	73	370	441	503	469	528	512	514	479	537	466	433	440	453	7	-	6,225
Shawsheen School	70	74	62	69	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	275

Accomplishments

As the only Choice school in Andover and its classrooms including preschool are integrated with different specialists and therapists; thus making Shawsheen a truly primary community. Our community is expanding and partnering with other communities. We will continue our Graduate Fellows Program with Merrimack College. Like last year, four Graduate Fellows will work in designated classrooms for the entire school year. We will continue having Student Teachers from surrounding colleges complete their practicums under the guidance of our classroom teachers. The volunteers from our Senior Citizens and the Jewish Literacy Coalition have been and will continue to be a great asset to our children and to the success of our school. We look forward to expanding our partnership with Andover High School by hosting students doing community service throughout the school year and inviting the “Warrior Way” program to visit our school again this year.

MCAS Results

Though our students do not take the MCAS at Shawsheen, we have consulted with West Elementary about our students who have matriculated at West and taken the MCAS in third grade. With the assistance of the administration at West Elementary, we were able to identify how our students performed. On the Math MCAS, 85% of our students fell in the Advanced or Proficient categories. This is higher than the District at 84% and the State at 75%. Open response questions and measurement were areas of weakness. There was no noticeable difference in the Gender or Low Income subgroups. The Special Needs subgroup performed higher than the state consistently.

On the ELA MCAS, 80% of our students fell in the Advanced or Proficient categories. The District had 83% and the State had 75% of their students in Advanced or Proficient. Open response questions, grammar and inference were areas of weakness. Girls scored higher than boys. The Special

Needs Subgroup performed higher than the district in language, structure/origins of modern language, and understanding text. However, this subgroup performed less than the district in fiction and genre.

Concerns

We are pleased with our early childhood outcomes as shown below.

Indicator 7 - Early Childhood Outcomes

Cohort Completion Year 2010-11			
The percent of preschoolers who substantially increased their rate of growth by the time they exited preschool			
	A. Positive emotional skills	B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills	C. Use of appropriate behavior to meet their needs
District Rate	92.3%	92.3%	100.0%
State Rate	76.9%	76.6%	78.9%
State Target	82%	83%	84.5%
The percent of preschoolers who were functioning within age expectations by the time they exited preschool			
	A. Positive emotional skills	B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills	C. Use of appropriate behavior to meet their needs
District Rate	57.6%	63.6%	78.8%
State Rate	53.3%	56.8%	65.2%
State Target	75%	75%	75%

For districts which have data in the table above, this is the first full 3-year cohort completion cycle. As districts continue to participate in Indicator 7 data collection cycles, it is to be expected that data reliability will increase. Therefore, these data should be interpreted with caution.

Despite the early childhood outcomes as shown above, we are experiencing more challenges in our preschool population. The preschool has seen an increase in population of children who are experiencing social emotional issues. Due to the population Shawsheen School services, it is evident that a behaviorist is needed to support teachers in their classrooms and also act as a liaison to our parent community. We previously requested more counseling time, but now feel that more family intervention is needed.

Preschool students attend from all over the district and early intervention services, other preschools, daycares and physicians refer many. At this age, all children, not just those identified as needing services, benefit from a structured and consistent environment. When young students become frustrated, for whatever reason, many have tantrums and lash out physically. Without immediate follow-up, this behavior escalates and becomes problematic as they get older. A behaviorist would be available to counsel, step in with support and make home visits; working with parents on behavior plans and strategies that work in a more socially appropriate way.

A lot of very anxious parents enlist advocates and lawyers; getting outside evaluations even before the 3-year-old steps into our school. Over the past few years, the district has incurred expenses with this population. It is not surprising to read in an outside report that ABA is recommended so many hours at school and at home, even during the summer. A behaviorist on site would help significantly: behavior plans and consultations would be implemented early, focusing on skills that are developmentally appropriate for this population.

Increasing the behaviorist to a full time position allows for intense intervention using individual behavior plans tailored for referred preschool students and their families. Offering this assistance at preschool age allows the focus to be on safety and acquisition of pre social skills and parenting assistance in preschool, hopefully preventing bad habits from forming.

More importantly, the goal would be to fade out the BCBA support as the child transitions to elementary school grades. The behaviorist would also be able to intervene with ABA and discrete trials when appropriate, encouraging more expected social behavior and strategies to use when necessary.

As the enrollment of the preschool continues to grow, and taking into account the physical size of the classrooms, the result is that Shawsheen is overcrowded. Although we could put a cap on grade K-2, we cannot at the preschool level as the preschool is mandated by the DESE. Children attending the preschool tend to stay at Shawsheen rather than move to their home school; thus the increased size of classes. We also do not want to turn away families that have had other children attending Shawsheen.

Conclusion

The Shawsheen Community School Improvement Plan reflects the input from parents, staff, and community members at meetings held throughout the year. It also reflects the responses from parents in our Needs Assessment Survey conducted this year and our MCAS analysis. In addition, Shawsheen's open door policy allows for anyone to share their thoughts and make suggestions in person or through other means of correspondence. The following Improvement Plan shows through our Community Partnership with Parents, volunteers, high school students, and Merrimack College, we will continue to deliver effective differentiated instruction and nurture a community of life-long learners. In that nurturing, we will continue to support the balance between social-emotional resilience and academic achievement.