

Charlotte A. Dunning Elementary School School Improvement Plan 2009-2012



Kimberly A. Taylor
Principal

Goal 1: Charlotte Dunning School aims to support all students as needed toward proficiency in Reading and Language Arts by ensuring that all students make acceptable growth as measured against the Massachusetts curriculum standards.

Learning Objective #1—Understanding text through increased vocabulary and comprehension skills

Learning Objective #2—Developing pre-reading and reading skills (phonics, concepts about print, phonemic awareness, etc.)

Learning Objective #3—Increasing student writing skills for all types of writing including open response and long composition samples.

Learning Objective	Action Items	Responsible person(s)	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1	Gather Beginning of the Year Assessment Data for student comprehension levels through the use of the DRA2	Teachers Literacy Specialist	September 2009 2010 2011	Students appropriately grouped for consistent guided reading instruction
1	Administer Literacy Survey to all classroom teachers and special educators	Literacy Specialist Principal	September 2009	Information gathered from survey is used to plan future PD, study groups, staff meeting topics
1	Develop in-house professional development meetings for review of comprehension guide and strategies	Literacy Specialist Principal	On-going	Increased use of District Comprehension Guide in all classrooms
1	Determine specific areas of need in both intervention and acceleration for targeted comprehension instruction at grades 3-5	Literacy Specialist Teachers grades 3-5 Principal SAGE teacher	On-going	Student benchmark scores increase on DRA2

1	Plan and implement Parent Workshop on “Comprehension Questioning Techniques”.	PTO School Council Literacy Specialist Staff	School Year 2010-1011	Increased opportunities for home-school literacy connection
1	Implement at-home Reading Motivation Program	Parents Dunning Staff	To begin in January 2010	Increased opportunities for home-school literacy connection
1	Revisit “Retelling Buddies” in order to meet needs of at-risk students.	Volunteer Staff Members Literacy Specialist Principal	2010-2012	Increased Comprehension Assessment Scores
1	SAGE teacher will provide WordMasters Challenge program, a national competition, to students in grades -5 to encourage growth in vocabulary and verbal reasoning skills	SAGE teacher Grade 3-5 students	December February April	Students will demonstrate increased vocabulary usage and metaphorical thinking by using words they have studied. Performance will improve throughout each meet.
1&2	Use of Scholastic Text-Talk Program in order to increase student vocabulary knowledge as it relates to story understanding.	Literacy Specialist Select Classroom Teachers (Grades K-3).	On-going	Increased vocabulary use in reading, writing, and speaking
2	Gather Beginning of the Year Assessment Data for all phonetic and phonemic awareness concepts.	Teachers Kindergarten Aides Literacy Specialist	September 2009 2010 2011	Whole group and center based instruction based on assessment data and highlighted needs of students.
2	Increase opportunities for in-class and pullout small group instruction	Literacy Specialist Classroom Teachers Jewish Literacy Volunteers McKinney-Vinto Tutor	On-going	Guided Reading groups occurring in all K-5 classrooms on a regular basis. Targeted Pullout Intervention Groups occurring in grades K-2.

2	Exploration of Words Their Way Spelling and Word Study Program in grades 3-5	3-5 classroom teachers Literacy Specialist Special Education Staff Principal	2009-2010 School Year (To be continued if formally adopted by the District)	Flexible student groupings for spelling and word study instruction becomes apparent as viewed during Principal walk throughs, observations, and grade-level meetings. Increased scores on the BEAR Spelling Inventory.
2	Full implementation of Fountas and Pinnell Phonics program	K-2 classroom teachers Principal Literacy Specialist	On-going	Increased mid-year and end-of-year benchmark scores on Hearing and Recording Sounds, Letter ID, Ekwall-Shankar Phonemic Awareness Test, and DRA2
2	Implementation of center-based instruction for literacy centers focused around phonemic awareness, phonics skills, and concepts about print	K-2	On-going	Students consistently engaged in center-based instruction and activities versus whole group instruction for phonetic skills and reading instruction.
1 and 3	Schedule MCAS Analysis Grade Level Meeting for teachers in grades 3-5 to analyze scores as a team in order to make decisions related to teaching and instruction	Principal Literacy Specialist Teachers, Grades 3-5 Special Educators	October-December 2010 2011	Increased collaboration and discussion around how to drive instruction and make goals for particular grade levels.

3	Continue Lucy Calkins Writing Program	Classroom Teachers Special Education Staff ELA Teacher Leader	On-going	Rising scores on Gr. 4 MCAS Long Composition Increased student writing output for personal narratives in grades 1-5. Increased Writer's Workshop opportunities for Primary Grades.
3	Arrange professional development opportunities for "Looking at Student Work" with the use of scoring rubrics and past MCAS open response and long composition questions.	Literacy Specialist ELA Curriculum Specialist Asst. Superintendent Professional Development Committee	On-going	MCAS long composition scores and open response question scores will increase closer to given benchmark expectations.
3	In-class modeling and teacher consultation for answering MCAS open response questions Opportunities for at-home practice of MCAS open-response questions.	Literacy Specialist 3-5 Classroom Teachers Parents	On-going **Teachers need to begin these practice questions earlier in the year.	Open response question scores will increase closer to given benchmark expectations.
all	Increase opportunities for the integration of technology during ELA instruction through the use of Moodles, newly developed Literacy website, Interactive Whiteboards, Think Central website, and High-Tech/High Touch demonstration classroom.	Principal Technology Aide Classroom Teachers	On-going	Lesson plans will include multiple opportunities for the integration of technology during language arts instructional blocks

Goal 2: Charlotte Dunning School aims to support all students as needed toward proficiency in Mathematics by ensuring that all students make acceptable growth as measured against the Massachusetts curriculum standards.

Learning Objective #1: Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 will increase their ability to answer open response questions by using varied problem solving strategies.

Learning Objective #2: All students will increase their ability to express mathematical thinking verbally and in written form.

Learning Objective #3: All students will demonstrate an increased understanding of Number Sense with a focus on computation and operations.

Learning Objective	Action Items	Responsible person(s)	Timeline	Evidence of Success
all	Schedule MCAS analysis grade level meetings for teachers in grades 3-5 to analyze scores as a team in order to make decisions related to teaching and instructional practices. Additional assessment data (end of unit tests, district math benchmark assessments) will be used to monitor student growth and guide instruction.	Principal Math Teacher Leader Math Curriculum Specialist Teachers, grades 3-5	October- November 2010 2011	Increased collaboration and discussion around how to drive instruction using assessment data. Individual grade level goals and action plans developed for addressing weaknesses
all	Increase opportunities for the integration of technology during math instruction through the use of Moodles, Interactive Whiteboards, Think Central website, document cameras, and High-Tech, High Touch demonstration classroom.	Principal Math Teacher Leader Technology Aide Classroom Teachers Math Curriculum Specialist	On-going	Lesson plans will include multiple opportunities for the integration of technology during math instructional blocks.

1	Plan and implement professional development opportunities for staff regarding the “how to” for teaching problem solving strategies.	Principal Math Teacher Leader Math Curriculum Specialist Teachers, grades 3-5	Begin 2010 school year	Particular grade level meetings and faculty meetings will be devoted to this PD. Staff will increase opportunities to teach problem solving strategies with students.
all	Continue to hold “Think Math Thursdays” as a method of school-wide collaboration regarding the “Think Math” program	Math Teacher Leader Teaching Staff	On-going	Increased collaboration, problem solving, and staff discussion regarding the implementation of “Think Math!”.
1	In class modeling and teacher consultation for answering MCAS open response math questions. Opportunities for at-home practice of MCAS open-response questions.	Math Curriculum Specialist Math Teacher Leader Teachers, grades 3-5	2009-2012	Increased scores on open-response MCAS questions
2	Hold Parent Math Night for introduction of “Think Math!” program in implementation year.	Math Teacher Leader Math Curriculum Specialist PTO Executive Board	September 2009	Average to above average parent attendance at Parent Information Night.
2	Full implementation of “Think Math” program at all grade levels.	Principal Asst. Superintendent Math Curriculum Specialist Math Teacher Leader Teaching Staff	September 2009-2012	All classrooms are actively engaged in using all parts of the new math program.
2	Teachers will offer consistent opportunities for students to explain their thinking, share strategies, and solve mathematical problems using varied methods and ideas.	Teaching staff	On-going	Classroom assessments show evidence of children’s ability to explain answers with pictures, numbers, and/or words, as well as express verbally how they arrived at a particular answer.

3	Increase opportunities to highlight “Think Math” SPRs and computation practice through Community Meetings, Morning Announcements, etc.	Principal Math Teacher Leader Math Curriculum Specialist Teaching Staff	On-going	MCAS questions focused on Number Sense in relation to computation and operations will become a strength for Dunning students over time.
3	Continue to emphasize the use of center-based instruction which includes games and activities to support and strengthen children’s number sense skills.	Principal Teaching Staff	ongoing	Lesson plans which reflect small group center instruction for further development of number sense concepts of computation and operations.
all	Plan and implement Family Math Nights which include games and activities related to mathematical thinking, computation, and operations.	Principal PTO Math Teacher Leader Grade Level Teams Math Curriculum Specialist	School Years 2011- 2012	Increased parent involvement and understanding of Think Math! philosophy and methods of instruction.

Goal 3: Charlotte Dunning School will work to build a solid community of students, teachers, and parents whose goal is to make every student feel like a valued and supported member of the school community.

Learning Objective #1: Students, staff and parents will plan and implement events and activities that promote an increased sense of community and belonging.

Learning Objective #2: All community members will work to foster mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation for cross-cultural differences that exist within our school community.

In communities, writes Thomas Sergiovanni in Building Community in Schools, "we become connected for reason of commitment rather than compliance" (p. 58). "People are bonded to each other as a result of their mutual bindings to shared values, traditions, ideas, and ideals" (p. 61). His thesis: that we might better understand, design, and run schools as social rather than formal organizations and, in particular, as communities. His reasoning: the universal need for a sense of belonging, of being connected to others and to ideas and values too often goes unfulfilled in schools as they are currently conceived. His prescription: reformers and theoreticians alike should recognize that schooling is first and foremost about relationships between and among students and teachers, and that community building must be the basis for school reform efforts that seek to improve teaching and learning; all else will come more naturally when authentic communities flourish."

Learning Objective	Action Items	Responsible person(s)	Timeline	Evidence of Success
1	Monthly “Community Meetings” will be established for staff and students to gather as a group to share information and learning.	Principal Students Staff	Begin September 2009 (ongoing)	Students have opportunities to share learning and experiences. Monthly events calendar reflects consistent “Community Meetings”. File of “Community Meeting” Powerpoints.
1	Fifth grade student council will be established to increase opportunities for student voices and opinions to be heard on particular school topics.	Principal Grade 5 Teachers Grade 5 Students Social Worker Guidance Counselor	September 2009 (ongoing)	Monthly Student Council Meetings Student Council Presentations at Community Meetings Student generated activities and events
1	Establish building “Leadership Team” which includes representatives from all areas of the staff population in order to provide vehicle for open and honest communication and collaboration	Principal Designated Staff Members	Begin September 2009 (ongoing)	Increased opportunities for collaboration around building-wide decisions and ideas.
1	Establish Monthly “Principal’s Coffees” where parents have the opportunity to meet informally with the principal in order to ask questions, discuss events/issues, and be informed	Principal	Begin October 2009 (monthly ongoing)	Increase in attendance at Principal’s Coffee each month

1	Implement consistent discipline policy based upon positive reinforcement and feedback for such common areas as buses, cafeteria, recess, classrooms, etc.	Principal Guidance Counselor Social Worker Student Council Leadership Team Staff	Begin School Year 2009-2010 (ongoing)	Decrease in behavioral referrals from recess, cafeteria, and buses.
1	Continue collaboration with PTO around building-wide events such as Kindergarten Meet and Greet, Bingo for Books, and Spring Auction	PTO Executive Board Principal	On-going	Increase in community-building events over time. Positive parent, staff, and student feedback regarding community events.
1	Begin discussion around additional community building events such as a talent show, school rummage sale, clean-up days, etc.	PTO School Council Student Council Principal	To begin January 2009	Increase in community building events
1	Plan and Implement “Dunning Reads Together” which could include such activities as an all-school read, Bedtime Stories with the Principal, an author visit, etc.	PTO Executive Board School Council Leadership Team Principal	School Year 2010- 2011	Occurrence of “Dunning Reads Together” Program
1	Brainstorm ways to extend opportunities for parents to be provided with additional specifics about learning and curriculum topics	School Council PTO Principal Classroom teachers	ongoing	Increase in opportunities for parents to become actively engaged and involved in curriculum activities

1	Establish common set of Core Values for the Dunning School Community. These Core Values will be used to develop common expectations within our community	Principal Leadership Team School Council PTO Student Council	Begin January 2010	Consistent behavioral expectations across school community including buses, cafeteria, recess, and classrooms.
2	Administer Family Origin Survey to gain information about the many countries that are represented in our school community	School Council Principal	January 2010	Data from surveys is collected and tabulated for use with other activities and building initiatives
2	Purchase Flags for display in main entry way or cafeteria to celebrate diversity of school population	School Council Principal	by September 2010	Display of flags in prominent common area of building
2	Arrange for “Student Language Hosts” for school-wide events such as PTO meetings and Open House	Student Council School Council Leadership Team Principal	School Years 2010-2012	Students share school information and translation in low incidence languages for those family members in attendance at school wide events. Increased attendance at PTO meetings where “Language Hosts” will be available.
2	Plan and implement an International Celebration Evening to occur on an annual basis	School Council PTO Principal	2009-2012	Families feel sense of pride in the country/language which they represent at given events.

2	Plan and implement “International Center” in common area of school in order to highlight and celebrate various cultures.	School Council PTO Students Staff Principal	2009-2012	Consistent and updated representations of various cultures in display case or on display board.
2	Increase opportunities for integration of K-2 ELL students with standard curriculum classrooms during various times of the school day.	Principal Scheduling Committee Teachers, grades K-2	Begin 2010 School Year	Schedule reflects integration of K-2 ELL students with standard students for specialists.