

COLONIAL PARK SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2008 BUILDING SUMMARY

Colonial Park School opened its doors to three hundred and twenty students from Pre School through Grade 5 for the 2007/2008 school year. There were two classes at each grade level except grade one where the enrollment necessitated the addition of a new class. The Kindergarten included a full day classroom and two sessions of the two and a half day regular program. The average class size for the year was twenty students. In addition, the school continues to house the JARI Program for hearing impaired students.

At Colonial Park School, Music and Art was taught in the Science Room since fine arts rooms were used as pre school classrooms for fifty six children. The Science Room became the multi purpose room for special programs and scout meetings several days a week after school. The After School Program saw a large increase in the number of students registered for each day. The school cafeteria, gym, library, computer room, and outdoor recess and play areas were busy with after school activities. In the evening, the school hosted community sports teams, meetings, and special events.

This year, the students at Colonial Park School returned to the previous practice of waiting before school in the playground area like other elementary schools in Stoneham. Morning exercises were read over the PA system.

Several dedicated, enthusiastic new staff members joined the Colonial Park School community for the 2007/2008 school year. Their skills and abilities have benefited the school and the students. Also, our school community grew to include Ms. Lori Sinagoga's husband and Mrs. Allen's new son.

SCHOOL PROJECTS

Students at Colonial Park School continued to participate in the Department of Education, *Walk to School Project*. In October, families completed the National Walk To School Day and they celebrated the warm weather in May by walking to school each Wednesday. Certificates and small incentives were distributed to encourage walking, biking, and carpooling to school. For the first time in October, volunteer parents lead small groups of children through the neighborhood as part of the grade 2 safety program. These parents attended a workshop to identify designated safety areas and learn safety rules which they taught the students. Surveys were completed by the teachers and students to help obtain a grant to expand this program for the 2008/2009 school year.

Community service is an important component of the curriculum at Colonial Park as our students become members of their local and global communities. This year, school projects involved collecting Coats for Kids, Pennies for Patients, holiday gifts for needy families, and supplies to be sent to soldiers. Two fifth grade students saw a need and took the initiative to develop activities for the entire school. A child with San Filippo Syndrome was helped by school donations. After a workshop about Africa, presented by

a volunteer parent, a Hat Day was held to collect money to be sent to the Daniel Orijiako Foundation which develops projects in Sub Saharan Africa. Colonial Park School also helped the Stoneham Beautification Committee.

Twice during the year, Colonial Park School hosted a program through which teachers and parents emphasized the importance of developing students with good reading skills. Parents prepared a Family Literacy-Build a Book Night in which families wrote and illustrated books with art materials for colorful illustrations. Volunteer teachers and the Principal organized an MCAS Parent Night to introduce parents to MCAS tests and questions. Families cycled through several stations to see the link between MCAS and the classroom. Literacy continued to be the primary focus during the year as students and staff worked to achieve AYP status which Colonial Park School did not achieve on the NCLB report card (included).

Throughout the year, Colonial Park parents and students enjoyed individual grade level activities such as a Multi Genre Fair, Math Centers Day, a Wax Museum, Readers' Tea, and an Author's Breakfast.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Colonial Park School provides many opportunities for family members and community representatives to get involved in the education of students. Parents and grandparents have shared their time, energy, and expertise in the classrooms. PTO sponsored field trips, at all levels, helped students connect the curriculum in a visual way. This year, Beethoven, Abigail Adams, and Jedli visited Colonial Park to the delight of the children. Top Secret Science presentations at every grade level provided hands on science activities with a take home component. Each year dedicated parents organize a six week Read-A-Thon to encourage students to get excited about reading. Parents also volunteered in the library, in classrooms, organized school book fairs, and social activities such as Pizza Night, Bingo Night, Ice Cream Night, and the Holiday Breakfast. For the first time, Colonial Park School held a variety show that was enjoyed by parents and students alike. The Colonial Park PTO welcomes new families to the group and recognizes the need for increased parent participation and involvement to help this organization accomplish its goals.

The Colonial Park School council, consisting of the Principal, Teachers, Parents, and a Community Representative met periodically to discuss school issues. The council researched and worked together to develop a survey which was available on line to parents through the Colonial Park website. Copies of the survey were also available in the office. Survey results were available on line to parents and information was used to identify school goals for 2008/2009. The school council also worked to identify new funding sources for Colonial Park School.

SCHOOL SAFETY

After practicing a “lockdown” with staff during the 2006/2007 school year, Colonial Park School students and staff participated in a “mock lockdown” on June 17, 2008 following procedures outlined in the school Crisis Plan. Members of the Stoneham Police Department observed and evaluated the drill. Parents were informed by mail, but students were not informed until staff presented the new drill in the morning to eliminate any anxiety.

Traffic regulations during drop off and pick up continued to be a concern. Cars stopped in the drop lane prevent a smooth flow of traffic in the morning and the afternoon. Signs have been placed along designated areas of the driveway to prevent parking or standing. These areas have been the focus of several near miss accidents. The Principal has repeatedly reminded parents to observe laws regarding parking in the fire lane during the day. This will continue to be a focus for the future.

TECHNOLOGY VISION

This year, the Colonial Park website, which is connected to the Stoneham Schools server, was updated regularly with important information and student work samples. The school survey, survey results, and PTO information was posted and the web became a useful tool for families.

Students using the computer lab were restricted for a time from using the Internet while procedures were put in place to insure student safety. As the year ends, the computer technician is researching and presenting many different web sites for students to use to develop or expand on their curriculum assignments.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The staff at Colonial Park School continued to attend workshops, seminars, and graduate courses to keep current in the field of education. Many hours of professional development this year were devoted to building based initiatives:

Diabetes in School
Differentiated Instruction
Restraint Training
Training
The role of the Nurse in the Classroom
Using Data to Inform Instruction
Autism Workshops
Accommodations for Learning Disabilities
Foundations Training
DIBELS Instruction
Technology for Teachers
Integrating Computers in the Classroom

Early Literacy
Mathematics
First Aid/CPR/Restraint
Guided Reading
Phonemic Awareness

The Colonial Park School Council reviewed and reflected upon the goals established for the 2007-2008 school year. We are pleased to report progress in all areas.

2007-2008 GOALS REVIEW AND UPDATE

MCAS

Teachers studied and evaluated previous MCAS test results and developed curriculum strategies to address specific needs. Previous MCAS tests with current vocabulary and format were incorporated into curriculum areas throughout the year. Grade level tests reflected practice in open ended questions, and teachers modeled and expected higher level thinking in class.

A team of volunteer teachers worked with the building principal to plan and present an MCAS Night for parents. The evening began with a short panel presentation of important information. Parents then circulated to several teacher directed stations to discuss specific tests, practice test items, and ask relevant questions.

MCAS practice sessions for at risk third grade students continued before school in Reading. An extended Math program serviced students at grades three, four, and five after school.

This goal has been achieved.

CURRICULUM

Early Literacy

Lunch schedules were adjusted to provide expanded time for literacy blocks.

Data meetings were held between grade level staff at grade meetings and some staff meetings included sharing information across grade levels.

Teachers in kindergarten and grade one planned and presented differentiated group activities across their grade level.

At this time, Reading Support Teams have not been established due to insufficient staffing at the primary level. This goal will be ongoing for the 2008-2009 school year.

Math

Two Colonial Park School teachers worked on the Math Committee to identify a new math program for K-5 students. In the classroom, teachers shared materials and new resources to supplement the limited Investigations Program at Colonial Park. Staff continued to review past and present MCAS tests for curriculum alignment. MCAS workbooks were used at the intermediate level for computation practice.

Writing

A Colonial Park School Newspaper was written and published by fifth grade students for the first time. The paper was distributed four times this year with the goal of making it a monthly paper for the 2008/2009 school year. This newspaper was a student initiative.

Most of the curriculum goals were achieved with two items ongoing.

BULLYING PROGRAM

The bullying program in place at Colonial Park School continues. Students sign contracts that are displayed in each classroom. Jedli the Clown returned to present a new enrichment for students with the theme of co-operation, respect, and friendship. Bullying videos were used as reinforcement and discussion starters.

A speaker will present information to parents in the fall of 2008.

This goal has been achieved.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The Outdoor Classroom committee is in a period of reorganization. Interested parents are working to develop a two year program for the school. Parent guided field trips to Whip Hill and student planting continued on a much smaller scale. A small group of dedicated parents continues to make this project a priority hoping to bring new parents to the group to expand and continue school programs. A section of the Library now contains materials and curriculum developed by the Outdoor Classroom committee for teachers. There has been progress in the area of recycling. Students and staff now recycle plastic as well as paper. A recycle paper bin provided by Abitibi collects neighborhood and school paper. This will provide a small stipend for the school to be used for Outdoor Classroom activities.

This goal has been partially achieved.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Colonial Park School Site Based Council developed and distributed a survey to school families. The survey was available on the school website and also in the office. Eighty eight families (38%) responded to the survey. Results were tallied by Survey

Monkey and members of the Council reviewed parent responses and concerns. Several items were chosen to become goals for the Improvement Plan for the 2008/2009 school year. Some items that the Council felt needed clarification were explained and distributed to parents. Parent concerns about three items that were budget dependent were forwarded to Dr. Olson, Superintendent of Schools. This goal was achieved.

FUNDRAISING

Parents from the PTO and the Council worked together to find creative ways to support the school budget. Grants were written to fund SRA Reading kits. Over one hundred people wrote supporting comments for a Hamburger Helper Grant. Parents signed for Target reimbursement and the school still collects Box Tops for Education. The Outdoor Classroom Program offered to fund professional development for staff. The Abitibi bin will generate a small amount of funds for the school.

The goal was partially completed and is still a priority.

GOALS FOR THE 2008/2009 SCHOOL YEAR

MCAS

Three week MCAS Prep sessions have been expanded to include grades three and five in Math. It is the goal for the 2008/2009 school year to begin these programs earlier in the year providing ongoing support for at risk students outside the school day. Additional funding will need to be identified to expand the program.

CURRICULUM

Early Literacy

Teachers need planning time to develop reading activities across the grade and between grade levels. There will be one forty five minute planning period per week for each primary grade team.

Writing

The Colonial Park Newspaper will be expanded to be completed monthly. There will be a writing festival in the spring of 2009 to display and celebrate student work.

Math

A new math series will be piloted in selected classrooms.
Re opening the school store will be reviewed.

Outdoor Classroom

The committee will work toward developing a two year plan for school activities. Staff will pursue professional development opportunities offered through the Stone Zoo.

BULLYING

A speaker will present to parents in the fall of 2008.

Plans will continue to begin Open Circle training for staff at Colonial Park School.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

School Challenge

The staff at Colonial Park School takes great pride in making sure that all students are challenged and that individual needs are met.

In order to maintain a challenging environment, staff attends numerous workshops, seminars, and graduate courses to keep current with the standards of the Massachusetts Frameworks. The school system offers professional development to all staff. Instruction, for our students, then reflects the latest trends and initiatives.

Curriculum has been put in place this year to focus on English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

There is a mentor program in Stoneham. This provides new teachers with guidance and support from veteran staff so that communication of curriculum flows from one grade to another.

In addition, during the 2008/2009 school year, the teachers at Colonial Park School will create a school wide resource area containing materials that provide challenging/enrichment activities in Language Arts. These materials will be available to teachers across all grade levels. They will provide an additional set of resources for professionals striving to promote challenge and excellence for their students.

Communication

Seventy three families responded to the parent survey that their preferred method of receiving information from school was email. Another thirteen percent preferred searching the web. In response, Colonial Park School administration, working with staff, will develop and implement a newsletter system that can be emailed to parents and also available on the school website.

This communication tool will keep parents informed of class activities and program development to link the home and the classroom.

Parents will be given the opportunity to select this option at the beginning of the school year. Families that prefer to continue to receive hard copies of newsletters will be accommodated.

Fundraising

A committee will be formed to investigate creative ways to fund special programs for Colonial Park School. The committee will be composed of volunteer representatives from staff, parents, PTO, and the Council. Meetings will be announced and open to the public.

CONCLUSION

Colonial Park School has a safe, supportive, learning environment where students are encouraged to strive for excellence. This environment facilitates taking risks and provides opportunities for exploration as students learn and grow. Our Colonial Park Teaching Community is comprised of caring and dedicated administrators, educators, and support staff who work with parents and students to see that no child is ever left behind. The state of the art facility, and current academic programs, combined with excellent classroom instruction offers an environment where good things happen for children and their families.

The Colonial Park Council reviewed and reflected upon the goals established for the 2006-2007 school year. We are pleased to report progress in all areas.

2006-2007 GOALS REVIEW AND UPDATE

MCAS

At Colonial Park School, there is a three part approach to helping students develop the skills and abilities that can be demonstrated on MCAS tests. All students practiced open ended questions as a regular part of assessment in all subject areas beginning in Kindergarten. Through the use of the Massachusetts Curriculum Resource Database, teachers were able to design and use test questions from all previous MCAS exams. During MCAS test practice lessons, students are encouraged to explain their thinking and teachers use questioning strategies to elicit higher level thinking. There is also a school focus on Reading at home and at school, including a school wide Read-A-Thon. Since MCAS success requires the ability to explain thinking, teachers also connected subject area information to writing activities within the classroom.

This year, all students in grade 3 used instructional materials that modeled reading strategies and vocabulary particular to the MCAS test. Teachers included word walls in the classroom and they incorporated practice in areas that were targeted in item analysis of the previous testing. Students identified as at risk continued to attend a three day a week before school Reading Project for 5 weeks before the MCAS Reading test. Students met each morning with the building principal and volunteer teachers to work in small groups to develop reading skills.

Fourth grade students used an MCAS Math Prep book as part of their weekly math program. Open ended questions were used and discussed in all subject areas. Students

scored open responses and used rubrics to identify scoring criteria. At risk students continued to attend study sessions after school for three weeks to review and practice questions that were used in previous tests. Fourth grade students also participated in a practice session to write a complete essay in a testing situation. Students received in class prep sessions from the building principal who also corrected and commented on each essay providing encouragement and suggestions for students to review before the test.

Fifth grade students continued to use essay and open ended practice questions in class. Science topics were reviewed by a consultant who worked to review basic topics covered by Massachusetts Frameworks. This hands-on practice reinforced skills previously learned in grades 3-5. The goal at Colonial Park is that all students approach the MCAS tests with confidence and perseverance.

The MCAS parent session which was held this year was very poorly attended (eight parents). Some consideration will be given to changing the format to be a family night for the next school year.

CURRICULUM

EARLY LITERACY PROJECT (ongoing)

The work completed this year extends the Literacy Project to include teachers in grades K-2 with some movement into grade three. Primary teachers met with consultant Sally Grimes over several workshop sessions to establish basic literacy components of a strong school program. Additional work was done to assist teachers with administering and analyzing the DIBELS test instrument. Working as a team, teachers and the principal planned strategies to incorporate data meetings, and daily sessions for reading teams to develop centers for students at each grade level. Scheduling problems will need to be addressed at the building and system level.

Students continued to use Foundations phonics and John Collins writing programs as part of the Literacy program.

MATH

There is consensus at Colonial Park that the Investigations Math Program is incomplete and cannot be used as a stand alone Math program. This year, teachers continued to research, develop, and purchase supplementary materials to meet the needs of the students. The use of hands-on activities, manipulatives, and oral and written open response questions explaining math reasoning continued to be stressed.

WRITING

Goals in this area were only partially met. A school newspaper was not accomplished, although student work was displayed on the new school website. The student generated newspaper continues to be a goal for next year. The poetry contest and family curriculum night, which was connected to the Bullying Program was cancelled due to the teachers

work to rule decision. Plans are underway to meet this goal during the 2007/2008 school year. The plan to showcase student work in the Lobby was accomplished.

BULLYING PROGRAM

The Colonial Park Community continued a commitment to providing a “Bully Free” environment for all students. All program components continued to be in place. A new comprehensive program was developed with most aspects of the program accomplished. Several activities were completed in which students were actively involved in discussions about bullying. Newly purchased classroom videos were used to supplement discussions on this topic. Spring projects including a Family Night and Writing Festival were cancelled due to the staff inability to participate.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

This long standing Colonial Park School initiative continues to be an important part of curriculum projects involving teachers, students, and volunteer leaders and guides. The Outdoor Classroom Committee at Colonial Park School is in transition as parents move on and new parents begin the training process to help keep this initiative alive. All goals outlined in the Improvement Plan for 2006 were completed. Parent volunteers trained new parents who then helped teachers as they took students on the Whip Hill Reserve as part of their Science program. Members of the committee facilitated plantings at several grade levels during the early spring. A new plan for upcoming years has yet to be developed.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

In the classrooms at Colonial Park this year, quality work was defined, celebrated, and published. The Lobby and corridor areas were decorated with student work. This year in addition to Attendance and Physical Fitness awards fifth grade students were given scholastic awards in all five major curriculum areas. The goal to develop parent workshops to discuss this issue was not accomplished. After discussions with staff, it was determined that forums including teachers would be most effective so plans were moved to next year.

The school council continued to discuss the effect of budget cuts on the educational experience at Colonial Park. Lack of reading support for primary students continued to be a grave concern. A sub committee to investigate creative funding options was not pursued due to the Town budget problems and also a decrease in PTO funds from fundraising. The council will address these issues next year.

COMMUNITY

Colonial Park School reached out to all members of the community to pursue the Adopt A School program. At this time, we have not received support. Additional networking was done through the web site to seek partners in business to help defray some of the

building costs. Students continued to benefit from community volunteers who shared their skills as Dentists and Nurses. Fourth and Fifth grade students were invited to the State House to meet with Legislators. Several members of the Library and the Historical Society participated in the Read-A-Thon project. Colonial Park School welcomed members of the community to provide innovative educational opportunities for students. Students continued to participate in many service projects this year.

FACILITY

Changes in drop off procedures due to reassigned classroom spaces did not pose a problem this year. Custodial hours were also not changed so there was no problem with evening building activities. All goals for this area were accomplished.

GOALS FOR 2007/2008 SCHOOL YEAR

MCAS

Teachers will continue to analyze and evaluate MCAS reports to identify information relevant to instructional practice. Classroom evaluations will include open response questions with student rubrics and classroom discussions will incorporate higher level thinking opportunities for all students.

MCAS Family Night will be planned to provide an opportunity to share information, practice test questions, and emphasize ways that families can help students succeed.

MCAS practice sessions for at risk students will continue with funding identified.

CURRICULUM

Early Literacy Project (ongoing)

Primary teachers will work with the administration to begin the process to develop a comprehensive Literacy plan for the building. The plan would begin to address the following issues:

- *Scheduling for Literacy Blocks
- *Establishing Data meetings
- *Identifying Reading Support Teams for individualized Reading instruction

Math

Classroom teachers will work on a newly established Math Committee to address the needs of the Colonial Park teachers for comprehensive math instruction. The system will begin to survey new programs for implementation. New funding sources will be established to fund the cost of MCAS Prep Books and Practice sessions.

In the classrooms, teachers will continue to share ideas, materials, and supplies in areas where there is a need. All staff will evaluate and analyze MCAS tests for problem areas to realign instruction.

Writing

A Colonial Park Newspaper written and published by students and distributed to all members of the school community is a goal for the 2007/2008 school year.

A Family Night program to highlight student writing that connects with the Bullying Initiative will take place.

BULLYING PROGRAM

Plans for the 2007/2008 school year are to continue with what has been put in place, and also to complete aspects of the 2006/2007 plan that were not accomplished.

A speaker will be invited to come address parents regarding parenting, and bullying issues.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

The goals for the Outdoor Classroom project are to establish a new committee including teachers, several parents and interested community volunteers, and to outline a two year plan for activities using the 2004/2006 plan as a model.

Yearly classroom activities involving outdoor field trips to Whip Hill and class plantings will continue.

COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Colonial Park School Council will complete and distribute a survey on Excellence in Education to all families. Results will be shared and discussed with all members of the school community.

In each classroom, quality work will continue to be defined, modeled, and celebrated.

FUNDRAISING

In a quest for excellence, The Colonial Park School community will continue to build on past success looking for innovative educational opportunities.

A committee will be established to identify creative funding sources to meet building needs. Suggestions to be considered include a Mini Grant Program, Business matching funds, and web networking.

CONCLUSION

Colonial Park School has a safe, supportive, learning environment where students are encouraged to strive for excellence. This environment facilitates taking risks and provides opportunities for exploration as students learn and grow. Our Colonial Park Community is comprised of caring and dedicated administrators, educators, and support staff who work with parents and students to see that no child is ever left behind.

The state of the art facility, superb academic program combined with excellent classroom instruction offers an environment where good things happen for children and their families.

BULLYING PROTOCOL

A BULLYING SITUATION MUST BE CLEAR AND
IT MUST BE OBSERVED

1. Definition-repeated intentional acts toward a person or a group of people with the intention of hurting someone.
2. Student Contract- an agreement signed by the student which is Reviewed by a parent/guardian
3. Teacher/Adult response- clarify the situation. Listen to all parties. Restate the definition of bullying. If bullying occurs state clearly, **THIS IS BULLYING AND IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.** Remind all parties of the contract.
4. Predictable Consequences. Parents will be notified for each offense.

First Offense- Child is given a warning. Restate the definition

Second Offense- Child admits bullying behaviors and writes an Apology

Third Offense- A note is sent home and a meeting is required with the child, parent/guardian, and the building principal

Fourth Offense- 1 day in house suspension

This will be posted in classrooms so children are aware of the policy and the consequences for bullying behaviors. Also posted in each classroom will be examples of **WHAT BULLYING LOOKS LIKE**. These charts will be developed by teachers and students each fall at each grade level.

Protocol written by Colonial Park Staff

***COLONIAL PARK SCHOOL
COUNCIL MEMBERS***

Margaret Burke, Principal, Executive Officer, Co-Chair

***Mrs. Carol Fontana, Community Member
20 Cherry Avenue***

***Mrs. Lisa Theriault, Parent
6 Harrison Street***

Marlene Cohen, Teacher

***Mr. Chris Varney, Parent
1 Avalon Road***

Barbara Surabian, Teacher

***Mr. Scott Levine, Parent
21 Fieldstone Drive***

Kerri Allen, Teacher, Co-Chair

COLONIAL PARK SCHOOL

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2008-2009

MISSION AND CORE VALUES

The Mission of Colonial Park School is to develop students who:

- Are independent learners and thinkers who display leadership and integrity
- Embrace challenges, take risks, and use critical and creative thinking to make decisions and solve problems
- Communicate effectively
- Contribute to society as well rounded citizens who demonstrate an appreciation for the arts
- Display respect, courtesy, kindness, and sensitivity to others celebrating the diversity of the community and the uniqueness of each individual.

The council, staff, and community believe that we must:

- Strive for Academic Excellence
- Set high standards and goals helping children reach their potential
- Develop differentiated instruction to respect and teach to all learning styles fostering student independence and self esteem
- Create curriculum opportunities within and across grade levels where students work together toward a common goal
- Expand the use of technology in the classroom
- Model respect, co-operation, trust and honest communication to create a school culture with a sense of family and community responsibility where each person can make a difference
- Provide encouragement and opportunities for parent and community participation at Colonial Park School by establishing a warm, friendly, welcoming atmosphere in the building
- Maintain strong home/ school connection through regular communication with all members of the school community
- Support families so that parents and children are prepared and ready to learn.
- Value and model a commitment to a love of lifetime learning

COLONIAL PARK SCHOOL

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

JUNE 2007