

## APS Blueprint for Continuous Student Improvement

### Vision:

The Ashland Public Schools is a forward-thinking district that cultivates the academic and social-emotional growth of each student through a supportive, collaborative, innovative and challenging environment. Students will develop into self-motivated, resilient, life-long learners, who embrace their role as responsible contributors to a global community.

**Mission:** *We are committed every minute, every hour, every day, to every student.*

The four strategic objectives that guide our work at the district and school level:

**Cultivate Well-Being of All:** We will ensure student, faculty, and staff well-being by teaching strategies, skills, and competencies necessary to maintain and support social-emotional health.

**Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student

**Engage Students, Families and Community as Partners in Learning:** We will continuously model a district environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with students, caregivers, community members, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions.

**Champion Educator Excellence:** We will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified, passionate educators who are committed to the mission and vision of the Ashland Public Schools.

Goal 1	We will ensure AHS student, faculty, and staff success by developing strategies, skills, and tools necessary to maintain and to encourage health and well-being.	
Goal 2	We will prepare all students for college and career readiness by providing equitable and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth, innovation and skill acquisition.	
Goal 3	We will create a school environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with caregivers, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions.	
Goal 4	We will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified passionate educators who are committed to equity and enhancing a positive and challenging learning environment.	

**Goal #1** We will ensure AHS student, faculty, and staff success by developing strategies, skills, and tools necessary to maintain and to encourage health and well-being.

**District Alignment:** Cultivate Well-Being for All

NEASC Alignment: 1. Learning Culture, 2. Student Learning, 3. Professional Practices, 4. Learning Support

**Strategic Actions:**

Start Date: September, 2019  
End Date: June, 2022

- During the 2019-2020 school year AHS administration and faculty will create and participate in a cross-departmental committee to review habits and expectations of workload, grade reporting and other issues that impact students across disciplines. *Principle 1.3, 1.4, 2.4*
- AHS administration and faculty will develop a targeted, tiered and individualized approach to SEL for students and staff that enhances the strong focus on SEL culture. *Principle 2.5, 3.5, 4.1*
- During the 2020-2021 AHS administration will develop a process to make sure students can identify one trusted adult in the building *Principle 1.3*
- During the 2019-2020 school year and beyond AHS administration will work with faculty to create varied learning environments (outdoor classroom spaces, flexible seating in rooms, reading areas, etc.) that offer different educational experiences. *Principle 4.1, 5.1*
- AHS administration and faculty will increase faculty/staff community building activities throughout the year to include at least 4 team building events per year.
- All staff will engage in social-emotional wellness PD during the 2019-2022 school years, to include staff that work with students outside of school hours. *Principle 5.1, 5.2*

Indicators of Success: (List measures of success towards attaining the goal.)

- Increase team building/collaborative activities throughout the course of the school day to improve and encourage well-being of all with the goal of incorporating regularly scheduled activities into x-block.
- Provide self-selected student wellness activity sessions at the high school level to foster healthy development of all.
- Include teaching of coping skills and resilience (SEL strategies) across all disciplines
- Education around the concept of growth mindset versus grades, direct instruction of failure and risk, as well as strategies to grow/improve.

- Develop a system of identification and support so that all students can identify at least one trusted adult using surveys and student focus groups.
- Offer book clubs and other activities for faculty that increase community building
- Integrate coaches and other adult role models into trainings so they have a better understanding of well-balanced approach to well-being (youth sports, EDP, etc.) and an increased knowledge of school values

Narrative:

**Improvement Priority #2 :** We will prepare all AHS students for college and career readiness by providing equitable and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth, innovation and skill acquisition.

**District Alignment:** Promote Academic Excellence

NEASC Alignment: 1. Learning Culture, 2. Student Learning, 3. Professional Practices, 4. Learning Support

**Strategic Action:**

Start Date: September, 2019
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End Date: June, 2022
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- During the 2019-2020 school years AHS faculty and staff will develop a system for all teachers to regularly acknowledge student achievement. *Principle 3.5*
- By March, 2020 AHS faculty will develop and approve a Vision of the Graduate that is reflective of the vision and mission of APS. *Principle 2.1*
- During the 2019-2020 school year AHS administration and faculty will work to pilot and evaluate a schedule with a focus on curriculum, instruction, assessment for rigor and equity through an addition of a x-block period. *Principle 2.2, 2.4*
- During the 2019-2020 school years AHS faculty and staff will explore multiple opportunities for real world learning (internships, senior projects, etc.) including exploring schedule options that promote outside opportunities. *Principle 2.2, 2.4*
- During the 2019-2020 school year AHS departments will evaluate common quarterly assessments and protocols that utilize targeted content instruction for all students in the school years 2020-2022. *Principle 1.4, 3.2, 3.4*
- By June, 2020 (and beyond) current programs and services for students who need support for their learning, especially ELL students, will be evaluated for effectiveness, examples of best practices will be reviewed, and a proposal for service delivery will be provided . *Principle 3.5, 4.5.*
- By June, 2020 high school administration will work to develop common planning time for Instructional Support Personnel (special education, guidance, ELL, academic foundations, school psychologist, and school adjustment counselor) to work with regular education teachers.
- By May, 2020 each high school department will continue to move forward with the goal of revision and development of curriculum with a goal of 100% of curriculum mapped using the Backward Design Model. Observation of adopted curriculum use will be through the teacher

evaluation system. (partially completed -June, 2017) *Principle 2.2/FE 2.2*

- By June, 2020 (and ongoing) high school faculty will be provided with focused professional development opportunities offered by administration, special education staff, and English Language Learner staff regarding students in targeted low-incidence groups. *Principle 1.4, 4.1, 5.2*
- By June, 2020 the school will evaluate the availability of student support services through regular education teachers as well as library resources and determine if appropriate time is allotted for student access. *Principle 4.4*
- During the 2018-2019 school year (and beyond) departments will continue or begin work on stage 2 of curriculum development to focus on assessments and the creation of unit-based common assessments. *Principle 2.2/FE 2.2a*

Indicators of Success: (List measures of success towards attaining the goal.)

- Visit effective ELL and Special education programs and revise current programming based on best practices.
- Increase participation in and variety of dual enrollment courses as well as other educational opportunities through area colleges.
- Improve upon and implement new practices related to our RtI procedures to ensure appropriate and targeted interventions are being suggested, promoted, and utilized for Tier 2 students across all schools.
- Develop a class placement team for grades 6-12 to review placement and course level procedures with clear alignment and communication of high school course requirements where procedures are clearly shared with all constituents.
- Assess the math and science tracking process for equity of opportunities.
- Explore and expand options for career readiness pathways.
- Explore opportunities to include graduates and other interested community members in

Narrative:

**Improvement Priority #3 :** We will continuously model a district environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with students, caregivers, community members, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions.

**District Alignment:** Engage Students, Families and Community as Partners in Learning

NEASC Alignment: 1. Learning Culture, 2. Student Learning, 3. Professional Practices, 4. Learning Support

Start Date: September, 2019

End Date: June, 2022

**Strategic Action:**

- By June, 2020 AHS administration and faculty will explore options to build community support for real-life instruction to prepare graduates for next steps and grow collaboration with local community organizations to provide internship and other professional opportunities for students. *Principle 1.7, 3.6*
- During the 2019-2020 school year AHS administration and department leaders will develop opportunities to showcase student learning and growth in all areas in a format that is open to families and the public at least yearly. *Principle 3.2, 3.3*
- During the 2019- 2020 year AHS administration and faculty will create and participate in a cross-departmental committee to review habits and expectations of communication with families and consistency of reporting.
- AHS administration and counseling will work with central office to pursue longitudinal study and communication opportunities with AHS alumni to increase awareness of successes of alumni and review areas for improvement in preparation for next steps.

Indicators of Success: (List measures of success towards attaining the goal.)

- Invite guest speakers from across the community to speak to students in classes, seminars, during x-block, etc.
- Work with parents to develop a consistent format for providing information in iPass (consider coordination with with AMS)
- Increase opportunities for internships in the business community
- Provide multimodal communication of curricula and school events for all community members.
- Encourage/invite parents of ELL students to participate in a Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Narrative:

**Improvement Priority #4** AHS will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified, passionate educators who are committed to the mission and vision of the Ashland Public Schools and Ashland High School.

**District Alignment:** Champion Educator Excellence

NEASC Alignment: 1. Learning Culture, 2. Student Learning, 3. Professional Practices, 4. Learning Support

Start Date: September, 2019

End Date: June, 2022

**Strategic Action:**

- During the 2019-2020 year AHS administration and faculty will continue to evaluate establishing common planning time for teachers who teach a common course, co-teach, or wish to teach across disciplines. *Principle 5.2*
- During the 2019- 2020 year AHS administration will work with department leaders and teachers to determine own content-specific professional development. *Principle 5.2*

- During the 2019- 2022 school years AHS administration will support offering PD that is directly related to Curriculum Self Study Action Plans that relates to teachers' best practices, involves active participation, and collaboration amongst colleagues. *Principle 5.2*
- AHS administration will continue to provide departments the opportunity to participate in the hiring of highly qualified diverse candidates that reflect the changing demographics of Ashland.
- During the 2019- 2022 school years AHS administration will offer opportunities to discuss and explore teaching careers with students. *Principle 3.6*

Indicators of Success: (List measures of success towards attaining the goal.)

- Teachers within departments and across disciplines have time to plan together
- Teachers participate in and present as experts in their curricular area
- Vertical meeting opportunities are presented to all departments with time and resources to evaluate programs and expand opportunities
- Teachers develop courses of interest to students using their areas of expertise and interest
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Narrative:

## Accomplishments

The following goals have been fulfilled within the past 3 years, and are currently in place.

Goal	District Alignment	Date Completed

## Glossary of Terms

(Identify acronyms and include definition if necessary for clarifying or further understanding.)

**504's:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the precursor of ADA) protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities, including schools, that receive federal funds. Section 504 provides that: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance . . ."

**Backward Design Model:** Backward design is a process that educators use to design learning experiences and instructional techniques to achieve specific learning goals. Backward design begins with the objectives of a unit or course—what students are expected to learn and be able to do—and then proceeds “backward” to create lessons that achieve those desired goals.

**BCAP:** The purpose of the Building Curriculum Accommodation Plan (BCAP) is to describe the strategies and resources available to classroom teachers and others to address the diverse learning needs of students. A BCAP is a focused document of accommodations from the DCAP that are developmentally appropriate.

**BYOD:** Bring your own device, references technology for use in the classroom.

**Common Core Standards:** “ a set of high quality academic expectations in English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics that define the knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each grade level in order to be on track for success in college and career” [www.ccss.org](http://www.ccss.org)

**DCAP:** The purpose of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is to describe the strategies and resources available to classroom teachers and others to address the diverse learning needs of students.

**DDM's:** District-determined measures (DDMs) are measures of student learning, growth, or achievement. They play a key role in the MA Educator Evaluation Framework by providing feedback to educators about student learning across the full range of content areas and educator roles. By identifying comparable measures in all grade levels and subject areas, districts have created groundbreaking opportunities to better understand student knowledge and learning patterns across their schools. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/>

**ELL:** English Language Learners, students are learning English as a second language  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/>

**IEP's:** Individualized Education Program, a written plan for students with an identified disability who are in need of services to access the curriculum. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/iep/>

**Learning Walks:** A brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what students are learning, learning strategies, student interaction with the content, and student engagement. APS administration is using this process to help calibrate observation feedback.

**MA Curriculum Frameworks:** “The Curriculum Frameworks are of high quality, results driven, and focus on world class standards. What is important to remember is that each of the curriculum frameworks will always be considered as works in progress, and we will continue to refine them to strengthen them and to keep them current. Local communities will use the frameworks to develop more specific curriculum. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will base the new student assessment program on the frameworks.” [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

**MTSS:** Massachusetts’s Tiered System of Supports <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/mtss/>

**Next Generation MCAS:**The new test will build upon the best aspects of the MCAS assessments that have served the Commonwealth well for the past two decades. The test will include innovative items developed by [PARCC](http://www.parcc.org), along with new items specifically created to assess the Massachusetts learning standards.

**PBIS:** Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

**Rti:** Response to Intervention is “a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs.” [www.rtinetwork.org](http://www.rtinetwork.org)

## Site Council Members

### 2019-2020 AHS School Council Members

- Kelley St. Coeur, Principal, Co-Chair
- Heidi Kaufman (parent), Co-Chair
- Charlotte Beaton (student)
- Aleisha Egan (faculty)
- Marybeth Gallant (faculty)
- Josie Kaufman (student)
- Carrie Marchetti (parent)
- Alison Mawrey (parent)
- Elizabeth Mawrey (student)
- Lily Mihnos (student)
- MaryJane Pecze (parent)
- Jennifer Shiels (faculty)
- EJ Smither (student)
- Teri Spielberger (parent)
- Janet Twomey (faculty)
- Lynn Zayac (parent)
- Brian Cote (Dean- non-voting member)
- Erin Lachapelle (Dean- non-voting member)
- Laurie Tosti (School Committee liaison)



## Approvals

Approved by Site Council on \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by School Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_