



**Building great teachers.
Closing the achievement gap.**

TITLE I SCHOOL WIDE PLAN

BASIS FOR ELIGIBILITY

As of September October 1, 2009, 72% of students at Edward Brooke Charter School qualified for free or reduced price school lunch, according to strictly enforced Federal guidelines.

PLAN REVIEW

Following the release of our 2010 MCAS data, the school's executive director led a review of the Schoolwide Plan, in cooperation with the elementary school principal.

OBJECTIVE

The mission of Edward W. Brooke Charter School is to provide an academically rigorous education to students from the city of Boston which will prepare them to succeed in college. As such, the goal of the EWBCS Schoolwide Plan is to help students make significant and measurable gains in academic achievement.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (Means for Measuring Outcomes)

In order to measure gains in student achievement, the school has identified two primary assessment components.

The first and most central assessment mechanisms are the MCAS exams administered annually in each grade. As the only assessments available which are completely aligned with the state curriculum frameworks, MCAS results serve a central function, and are therefore featured prominently in the school's accountability plan (see below).

In addition, the school has relied and will continue to rely heavily on the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (D.R.A.) to assess reading achievement in all grades, K-8, but particularly in the early elementary grades.

ANTICIPATED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

The success of the implementation of the EWBCS Schoolwide Plan will be measured by the extent to which the school has met the annual academic achievement goals identified in the EWBCS Accountability Plan.

PLAN COMPONENTS

A) Increased Time Devoted to Learning

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Results from the school's first baseline administration of the Stanford 9 exams demonstrate that students, on average, enter EWBCS significantly below grade level in both mathematics and reading. Bringing students up to grade level and beyond will require several measures, but all of those will depend on a commitment by students, teachers, and parents alike to work hard.

Consequently, EWBCS has instituted a calendar with a longer school year than required by state law and a daily schedule which includes significantly more academic instructional time. The daily schedule runs from 7:45 to 4:00, except for Wednesdays, when students are dismissed at 12:30 in order to provide a weekly professional development block for teachers.

B) Focus on Data

In the middle school, we rely heavily on the administration of regular internal benchmark tests, aligned with EWBCS standards, Massachusetts state standards, and featuring previously released MCAS items in order to track student progress. Reading and math teachers meet in small teams regularly to analyze those assessment results and to create detailed tutoring plans for all students on the basis of those results.

In both the middle school and the elementary school, teachers track standard mastery through customized spreadsheets delineating the school's "power standards" in every subject at every grade level. Report cards and progress reports are in turn based on the rubric scores in these spreadsheets.

C) Identifying and Supporting Struggling Students

In order to ensure that all students are able to meet the required minimum levels of proficiency, we have designed several means of support for ALL students identified as struggling.

In the elementary school, classroom teachers are responsible for monitoring the individual progress of each of the 15-16 students in his or her class. Elementary teachers create "intervention plans" on the basis of these spreadsheets in order to ensure the improved achievement of our lowest performing students. Those plans are developed, refined, discussed, and monitored during weekly professional development sessions under the guidance of the elementary school principal and math coordinator.

In the middle school, students who are in danger of failing any core academic class or of not meeting basic standards for a given grade level, are required to attend tutoring sessions with their subject area teachers during the daily independent reading block. Subject area teachers provide this tutoring rather than volunteers or part-time employees, because subject-area teachers are the most qualified and able to provide meaningful support to students in their classes.

Students who have chronic problems completing homework assignments are required to stay after school to complete their homework, through the school's "homework completion" program. These students are identified in weekly grade level meetings of the instructional support team.

New students who have been identified as needing further instruction in reading decoding in grades 5 and 6, receive daily small group instruction in both reading decoding (Wilson Reading) and reading

comprehension from the school's reading specialist. All new 5th grade students are assessed each year, before the first day of school, using the DRA. Approximately 20% of our new 5th graders display significant deficiencies in their ability to decode grade level text. Because these skills should have been developed by the end of 3rd grade, we have hired a reading specialist to work with these students individually and in small groups to ensure that they receive the intensive and remedial instruction they need in order to improve their decoding ability within the smallest timeframe possible.

D) Challenging Advanced Students

Because we do not track our classes on the basis of academic ability, it is important that we pay particular attention to challenging our most advanced students. In both the middle school and the elementary school, teachers monitor the reading level of every student and ensure that at all times, students are reading books at the appropriate reading level, and that all students are being challenged to the appropriate extent. In math classes, teachers provide "challenge-work" to our most advanced students (work that is related to the concepts/skills being learned by the class as a whole but which further extends the relevant concept or an application.)

E) Attracting and retaining high-quality and highly-qualified teachers

In order to ensure that all of our teachers are highly qualified in accordance with NCLB legislation, the school has instituted the following policy:

In order to ensure that all of our teachers are highly qualified by the close of the 2008-09 school year, any teacher who is not highly qualified in their subject area will take and pass the relevant MTEL test by the end of the 2008-09 school year.

In order to ensure that the school is able to attract and retain teachers of the highest possible quality, the school is currently carrying out all of the following measures:

- The school pays annual performance bonuses, based on student achievement metrics. Bonuses are made payable in part by a federal Teacher Incentive Fund grant.
- Teachers are provided with extensive administrative support, particularly in the area of classroom and school-wide discipline, such that teachers are able to focus more on teaching and less on managing individual classroom behavior-management systems.
- The school provides an extensive professional development program (details below).

F) Professional Development

Because our school is our district, all of our professional development activities are both building-based and district-based. The school schedules early release days on Wednesdays in order to schedule regular meetings and supplementary professional development activities.

The school conducts 4 regular professional development modules, all school-based, and all taking place on early-release Wednesdays.

- *Video Analysis – each week teachers meet in small groups to view and discuss a teaching video of a colleague.*
- *Lesson Study – our subject area departments engage in two cycles of Japanese “lesson study” each year, meeting to research, plan, teach, and critique a lesson on a pivotal standard within the curriculum.*
- *Peer Observation – our teachers conduct two cycles of peer observations and follow-up discussions.*
- *Benchmark Data Analysis and Standards Mastery Analysis – our teachers engage in a set of procedures surrounding benchmark data and standards mastery analysis and reflection (5-6 times per year).*

G) Plan for Parent Involvement

School policies to facilitate parental involvement and delineating parental rights and responsibilities were developed by school founders in conjunction with school administrators and teachers. These policies are made available to parents in the school’s student and family handbook, which is issued to all families at the beginning of each school year. The EWBCS Schoolwide Plan will also be posted on the school’s website.

Parents are able to make recommendations for improving these through the school’s Parent Involvement Council or alternately by a direct request to the school principal. The EWBCS Schoolwide Plan is presented each year for review to the schoolwide issues committee of the Parent Involvement Council.

Those policies requiring the greatest contributions from parents are also delineated in the school’s Contract of Mutual Responsibilities which all families are required to sign in conjunction with a representative of the school. The contract is reviewed and discussed in depth with parents at the school’s mandatory August orientation sessions which are held prior to the start of each school year. Parents are able to recommend changes to the contract through a subcommittee of the school’s Parent Involvement Council.

Among other things the contract delineates parents’ responsibilities for:

- Providing a quiet place for their child to complete nightly homework assignments
- Checking their child’s homework planner nightly (where students are required to record their nightly assignments) and signing the planner to indicate that their child has completed those assignments
- Reading with their child regularly
- Attending parent conferences regularly
- Maintaining regular communication with their child’s teacher or advisor
- Signing regular progress reports

Parent conferences are held at the close of each of the first 2 marking terms and are available to all parents. Parents of students who failed one or more of their major academic classes in any given term are notified individually that their attendance is requested at the conference session.

The only objective measure of the effectiveness of parent involvement is a measure of student achievement. However, because many other factors also impact student achievement, the school conducts annual year-end surveys to parents asking them to gauge the extent and effectiveness of their own involvement over the previous year. The school principal, in conjunction with teachers, administrators, and the Parent Involvement Council conducts a year-end review of the extent and effectiveness of current parent involvement policies.

In order to promote reading at home and parent-school communication, the Schoolwide Plan Committee has also developed a plan to institute parent/teacher/student book-groups, pending budgetary capacity. Under the plan, the school will select, buy, and distribute books for each grade level to parents, teachers, and students alike. On a given book-group night, teachers will lead book discussion groups consisting of parents, students, and other school staff.

H) Coordination with other federal programs

Federal Nutrition - Edward Brooke Charter School currently provides free and reduced price lunch to students with federal support and under federal guidelines, as well as a school breakfast and afternoon snack program.

Innovative Programs – The school continues to provide a health curriculum to all students, which was funded last year in part by federal contributions through the Innovative Programs Entitlement Grant (Title V: Fund Code 302)

Teacher Quality – In addition to our other efforts to ensure teacher quality (described in Part II – Required Program Information), we continue to operate our “master teacher program”, which was funded in part last year by federal support through the Federal Teacher Quality Entitlement Grant (Title II: Fund Code 140).

Safe and Drug Free Schools – EWBCS does not receive funds under Safe and Drug Free Schools.

Special Education – The school continues to provide extensive special education services, with federal support, as outlined in section 10 of “Part III: Required Program Information” enclosed with this application (Fund Codes 240 and 274)