

Mt. Greylock
Regional School District
2021-2023
District Improvement Plan



Building for the Future



Photo courtesy of *The Berkshire Eagle*

Mission Statement

At Mount Greylock Regional School District, our mission is to create a community of learners working together in a safe and challenging learning environment that encourages restorative-based processes, respect, inclusive diversity, courtesy, integrity, and responsibility through high expectations and cooperation resulting in life-long learning and personal growth.



Core Beliefs

- **Courtesy:** We are committed to fostering and maintaining an environment free of all types of fear and intimidation. Based on our core belief that individuals are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, it is our policy to prohibit any conduct that constitutes a climate in which individuals feel fear and/or intimidation.
- **Inclusive Diversity:** We recognize that students come to us with diverse experiences, interests, strengths, and needs. It is therefore essential that all students have access to challenging and personally meaningful curriculum and instruction.
- **Integrity:** We believe in the integrity of all members of the school community and the commitment to academic honesty and support of our quest for authentic learning. By adhering to ethical principles, acting honorably, and assuring that there is consistency between beliefs, words, and actions, we individually demonstrate integrity and high moral character.
- **Respect:** We nurture the whole child and ensure that each student receives a new opportunity every day to perform at his/her best. We believe that developing caring and supportive relationships between and among educators, students, and parents lead to higher levels of student achievement.
- **Responsibility:** We recognize the responsibility of the entire school community to ensure the success of all students. All students learn when their passions and talents are coupled with high expectations and academic rigor in a safe and caring environment.
- **Restorative Based Processes:** We are best when students are first. All decisions are centered on the needs of the whole child.

Introduction

A district improvement plan is a requirement of Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and Massachusetts General Law. Far more importantly, however, than fulfilling a bureaucratic mandate or “ticking the box” is the ability of a well-considered district improvement plan to lay out what the district believes about those whom it serves, those who provide that service, and how the district views their work. The district improvement plan, like a school budget, illustrates what we believe, and puts our priorities, ethics, and morals front and center.

This particular plan is student-centered and focuses on a reality that many educators know, but few put into words publicly—the fact that all students need their school and its staff, but for some students, the school, its staff, and the work these bodies do is absolutely vital, and absent our schools, the life-trajectory for some students will be negatively and dramatically altered. This plan recognizes that the work we do as a school system makes a difference in the lives of children, the lives of families, and the lives of the community.

This particular plan is focused on not only helping the young people we serve to be better students, but helping them be better people, more complete people, and more empathetic people. One of our primary desires is to support the work our families do that help students recognize and understand the notion that John Donne offered the world in the 17th century, the notion that no person is an island unto themselves, that we are all part of the main continent of humankind.

This particular plan will seem like too much in too short of a time to some. Folks who see our plan this way are very likely correct. This plan will seem like it’s not enough for some, or that it focuses on the wrong things. Those folks may well be right, too. Working to educate young human beings is not only the most important task a community can undertake, it is among the most complex as well.

While this plan stands for two academic years, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023, it is certain that this plan will extend past those dates. It is likewise certain that events and realities will pull our attention from this plan, as the pandemic has done with all plans everywhere for the past many months. No matter what we will, as educators always endeavor to do, do our very best to serve our students.

Who Are We? What Do We Do? Selected Data

Enrollment

Student Enrollment	District	Lanesborough	Williamstown	Mt. Greylock
2021-2022	1161	209	423	529
2020-2021	1093	189	376	528
2019-2020	1160	198	409	553
2018-2019	1196	208	436	552

Student Characteristics

Student Descriptor	District	Lanesborough	Williamstown	Mt. Greylock
2020-2021 Data				
First Language Not English	1.1%	2.1%	1.6%	.4%
English Language learner	.7%	1.1%	1.3%	.2%
Students with Disabilities	14.2%	16.9%	13.6%	13.1%
High Need Students	28.5%	39.2%	27.4%	25%
Economically Disadvantaged Students	19.8%	28%	20.7%	16.1%

High Needs: Calculated based on the number of high needs students, divided by the adjusted enrollment. A student is high needs if he or she is designated as either low income (prior to School Year 2015), economically disadvantaged (starting in School Year 2015), or ELL, or former ELL, or a student with disabilities. A former ELL student is a student not currently an ELL, but had been at some point in the two previous academic years.

Student Race

Student Self/Family Identified Race	<i>District</i>	<i>Lanesborough</i>	<i>Williamstown</i>	<i>Mt. Greylock</i>
Black/African American 21	2.4%	2.1%	2.1%	2.7%
19	1.4%	2.4%	0	1.6%
Asian 21	1.8%	1.6%	1.1%	2.5%
19	1.1%	.5%	0	2.2%
Hispanic 21	4.8%	4.8%	5.0%	4.2%
19	2.5%	1.9%	5.5%	2.7%
Native American 21	0	0	0	0
19	.2%	0	0	0
White 21	86.2%	88.4%	83.5%	86.2%
19	90%	93.8%	87.8%	89.9%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander 21	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic 21	4.8%	3.2%	7	3.4%
19	4.8%	1.4%	6.7%	3.6%

Student Attendance (District)
(State)

Student Group	Attendance Rate	Average # of Absences	Absent 10 or more days	Chronically Absent (10% or more)	Unexcused > 9 days
All Student	95.6%	7.2	23.1	11.5	2.0
Female	95.7%	7.1	21.5	9.9	1.8
Male	95.6%	7.3	24.6	13.1	2.0
Economically Disadvantaged	92.8%	11.9	44.5	22.7	4.5
High Needs	93.3%	11.0	40.2	20.7	4.1
LEP English language learner	91.3%	13.9	33.3	22.2	11.1
Students with disabilities	92.5%	12.2	39.6	24.9	3.6
African American/Black	94.2%	9.9	11.1	3.7	0.0
Asian	97.3%	4.7	20.0	5.0	5.0
Hispanic or Latino	94.8%	7.9	29.8	17.5	1.8
Multi-race, non-Hispanic, or Latino	94.7%	8.8	32.7	19.2	7.7
White	95.7%	7.0	22.6	11.1	1.7

Student Discipline (District)
(State)

<u>Student Group</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Students Disciplined</u>	<u>% 1 Day</u>	<u>% 2 to 3 Days</u>	<u>% 4 to 7 Days</u>	<u>% 8 to 10 Days</u>	<u>% > 10 Days</u>
All Students	1,186	24	0.9	0.7	0.3	0.1	0.0
English Learner	2						
Economically disadvantaged	243	12	2.5	1.6	0.8	0.0	0.0
Students w/disabilities	183	9	0.0	3.3	1.1	0.5	0.0
High needs	350	16	1.7	2.0	0.6	0.3	0.0
Female	603	10	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.0
Male	583	14	1.0	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.0
Native American							
Asian	16	1					
Afr. Amer./Black	23	0					
Hispanic/Latino	52	0					
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	47	2					
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.							
White	1,048	21	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.1	0.0

Advanced Placement Participation

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Test Takers</u>	<u>Tests Taken</u>	<u>One Test</u>	<u>Two Tests</u>	<u>Three Tests</u>	<u>Four Tests</u>	<u>Five or More Tests</u>
All Subjects	131	261	65	30	15	15	6
Arts	1						
Music Theory	1						
English Language Arts	28	28	28	0	0	0	0
English Lang/Comp	25	25	25	0	0	0	0
English Lit/Comp	3						
Foreign Languages	17	17	17	0	0	0	0
Latin: Vergil	6						
Spanish Lang	11	11	11	0	0	0	0
History and Social Science	98	103	93	5	0	0	0
Art History	1						
Economics: Macro	1						
Economics: Micro	1						
History: European	43	43	43	0	0	0	0
History: U.S.	22	22	22	0	0	0	0
Psychology	35	35	35	0	0	0	0
Math and Computer Science	70	87	54	15	1	0	0
Calculus AB	13	13	13	0	0	0	0
Calculus BC	23	23	23	0	0	0	0
Computer Sci A	1						
Computer Sci Principles	16	16	16	0	0	0	0
Statistics	34	34	34	0	0	0	0
Science and Technology	25	25	25	0	0	0	0
Biology	11	11	11	0	0	0	0
Physics C: E&M	14	14	14	0	0	0	0

Number of students categorized as “students with disabilities” participating in AP coursework (19-20): 2

Number of students categorized as “economically disadvantaged” students participating in AP coursework (19-20): 7

**Fine and Performing Arts Course Taking
(K-6 is 100% in all grade levels)**

Student Group	K %	06 %	07 %	08 %	09 %	10 %	11 %	12 %	All Grades %	Total Students #
All Students	100	100	38	36	86	69	50	74	79	1136
Female	100	100	54	40	96	82	46	80	82	575
Male	100	100	26	32	75	56	55	67	76	561
Economically Disadvantaged	100	100	36	13	70	71	67	82	79	223
High Needs	100	100	29	14	62	60	74	82	78	324
LEP English language learner										2
Students with disabilities	100	100	0	11	29	50	75	73	74	166
White	100	100	36	36	86	73	49	71	78	1008
Hispanic or Latino	100	100	0	0	100	0	60	100	84	50
Asian	100	100		67	80	100	0	100	80	15
African American/Black	100	100	100	50	100		100		96	22
Multi-race, non-Hispanic, or Latino	100	100	67	0	0	33	43	100	78	41

Building on Excellence



It has been my honor and privilege to serve our community and our educational community for nearly a full year now. The plan that follows comes as a result of much work, many conversations, direct observation, and simply listening. Our district administration is grateful to all who informed this plan and its component parts.

The working metaphor for this plan is that of “building.” As educators, our work is to help build happy, healthy, ethical, responsible, productive human beings. We work with families and our community to do this all-important work. We work with our students to construct meaning from experience and subject matter every day.

Being a part of the construction of a new comprehensive vocational and non-vocational high school in Pittsfield was a transformative learning experience for me. Thinking about construction--the art, craft, and science of actually building—provides a wonderful way to consider a community’s work of educating its children. Construction of a building requires careful planning, excellent organization, and a finely tuned team effort. Construction of a building requires careful consideration of materials and resources used. Construction of a building requires deep thought about what aspects are necessary now, and what the building needs to do and needs to be long into the future.

Our work as educators is much the same. Our work requires personal and individual excellence and dedication, and likewise requires communal excellence and dedication. Building on the excellence that our schools and district represent historically is the construction project before us. We are grateful to undertake the project.

Building Block

Community

Driving Questions:

- How do we eliminate incidents of hate, mistrust and bullying—and build a greater sense of true belonging in our schools?
- How do we build a greater sense of empathy and being a responsible, respectful neighbor?
- How do we create introspective, reflective practitioners who are constantly on self-guard against entrenched, recognized and unrecognized biases of all kinds?
- How do we become a more anti-racist community?

Objectives: Build a better sense of belonging for all students, families, and staff through work to become more culturally aware, more culturally competent, and be more responsive to challenges and events of hate speech and bullying. Primary, alongside this training, is the development of a structure and a response plan that spans the incident from reporting, to immediate response and care, to administrative actions and communications.

Activity 1: Work with Dr. Khyati Joshi into 2024 to have the majority of faculty and staff complete the course “Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice.”

Measurement: Number of personnel completing the course over the three year span

Activity 2: Along with the above ongoing activity, the administration will have group and individual consultations with Dr. Joshi to address challenges in real time, and work to build a reporting and response structure that keeps children and the negative impact of these events at the center.

Measurement: Structure and response built and made active by December of 2021.

Activity 3: Work to recruit and retain a more racially and culturally diverse workforce across all positions, with a focus on licensed educators, including further consideration of a Director of Equity and Belonging. Included in this work are pursuing grant opportunities to this end, and working with the community and MGEA representatives to explore means of incentivizing teachers who represent a variety of diverse communities to consider working for the MGRSD.

Measurement: Educator demographic data.

Activity 4: Continue to examine curricular material, classroom, and library collections to ensure that all students are represented in true, meaningful ways in the materials we use to teach.

Measurement: Continued audits of collections, curricula, and materials.

Building Block

Community

Objectives: Build and implement a real and working system of restorative practices in grades pre-k through grade 12 so that students are required to move beyond personal actions and consequences and consider and make restitution as their actions create consequences for others in their community.

Activity 1: Identify key staff for deeper training and development so we have expertise in each building. Consider training trainers so that we can better serve students and staff through these practices through wider spread expertise in each building.

Measurement: Trained staff in each of our three schools.

Activity 2: Revisit policies and practices relative to restorative practices.

Measurement: Work completed from school committee level through to school level to ensure equitable practices across the district.

Activity 3: Consider with staff in each building the need and staffing of a student support center in each building so that students can be given directed processing time and facilitation in real time in each school.

Measurement: Staffing, space, and use data for student support work in each of the three schools.

Building Block
Wellness

Driving Questions:

- How do we help students be happier, healthier, and more productive in emotional life and mind?
- How do we help students balance what they feel they need to do and what they want to do, and still have time to be kids?
- How do we serve students who deeply need us in ways beyond academics and teaching of subject matter?

Objectives: Social and emotional wellness is the foundation on which physical and academic wellness and opportunity are built. The district will run processes to examine the potential for moving the start time of MGRS to a later time, and the implications of this on pre-k to grade 6 families, the community and our child care partners, and after school activities including the fine and performing arts and athletics.

Activity 1: Work with the MGRS student council and school council, other school districts, and national organizations (such as [Let's Sleep](#)) to identify the need and consider possibilities for a change in school start time for upper school students.

Measurement: Bringing forward the case in January of 2022 that this change is necessary, healthy, and may lead to better health and academic outcomes for students.

Activity 2: Convene working groups to identify issues and opportunities in:

- Before school programming for middle, high, and elementary students
- Impact on after school hours
- Collective bargaining needs relative to the time of day changes

Measurement: Working groups up and meeting by end of January 2022.

Measurement: Structure and response built and made active by December of 2021.

Building Block

Wellness

Objectives: As the stressors of life for students in all grades appear to be increasing, so do the learning differences that children present. The district must pay careful attention to the number, the type, and the availability of mental health professionals and services available to students, including behavioral supports. All staff from the superintendent through the organization chart must be better positioned to understand trauma-informed work and practices, the challenges that economic difficulty presents within a school setting, and be better equipped to deliver better services and supports across the district and within each classroom. A crucial piece of this work lies in the realm of “belonging,” a major piece of which will be addressed in “Building Block: Information.”

Activity 1: Professional development for all staff in trauma-informed practices and in the nuances of delivering instruction and services to students experiencing economic difficulty at home.

Measurement: Number of staff participating in PD, resource development and direction toward the ends of mental health services, and outcomes for students identified as “economically disadvantaged,” and/or “high needs.”

Activity 2: Identify the behavioral and emotional staff support needs in each of the three school buildings to ensure that we are offering the right support in the right amounts to students as early as possible. This will include examinations of staffing with Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCAs) where appropriate (as opposed to treating these positions as occasional consultants) and other types of positions that allow for powerful early intervention for students with this need.

Measurement: Behavioral data for individual students, classroom, and school wide data on discipline and academic performance.

Building Block
Opportunity

Driving Questions:

- Does the district distribute opportunities equally among all students?
- What opportunities are our students missing out on altogether?
- Can we expand opportunities in new ways that are affordable, and also create a better sense of celebrating the countless talents and interests our students walk into school with every day?

Objectives: Decrease several participation and performance gaps that exist between students identified as having disabilities and their non-disabled peers, and students identified as having high needs and those who are not identified in that way.

Activity 1: Work to identify professional development and scheduling practices that will help schools and the district better and more fully collect and act on formative data and provide interventions and instruction that help close persistent achievement gaps between and among students, particularly special education students and their non-special education peers.

Measurement: MCAS data, grade data, formative assessment data, teacher impressions and generated data.

Activity 2: Work with educators and non-district experts to consider what supports would allow for greater success for specific subgroups of high school students to attempt higher level coursework such as college coursework or advanced placement classes. Work to identify budgetary implications that may be associated with this effort.

Measurement: Subgroup participation in accelerated academic and arts activities, and overall participation rates in these pursuits.

Building Block

Opportunity

Objectives: Undertake work to better ensure that academic, fine arts, and interest-based learning opportunities are available, advertised, and where possible, facilitated by the school and school district.

Activity 1: Explore options for more students to experience more diverse and perhaps more challenging and enriching academic and artistic opportunities through community arts partners, neighboring higher education institutions, leveraging technological means of pursuing coursework through cooperating school districts, colleges or non-profits. In addition, the district and schools will examine the value and appropriateness of wider spread acceleration opportunities at our elementary school for students who would benefit from this, and how this impacts middle and high school programming.

Measurement: Documenting the actual opportunities that we are able to generate, facilitate, and help make happen for students.

Building Block
Information

Driving Questions:

- How do we best listen to the members of the school community to gauge and measure the effectiveness of our work in the realm of belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- How do we best gather input from the students and families we serve and from the building-based staff that our central office serves in order to have more meaningful and data-informed conversations with our larger communities?

Objectives: The district will work to identify and execute a tool (or tools) to more effectively gather data relative to a strong sense of belonging in our school and district communities. This tool will allow the district to be better informed beyond conversation, and allow the district to be more responsive to the social, emotional, and safety needs and wants of our students, families, and staff.

Activity 1: District and building administration will explore and work to identify vendors who can provide the tools we want and need. Presentations will be made to staff to gather feedback on the ease of use and effectiveness of data gathering tools.

Measurement: A tool will be identified, budgeted for, and purchased by the summer of 2022, ready for use by the fall of 2022.

Approved by School Committee 10.14.21