

**MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

Columbus Elementary School

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
SY 2009-2010**

**Joan Yaeger
Principal
2008-2009**

COLUMBUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
SCHOOL YEAR 2009-2010

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SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING DATES

Principal/Chairperson:	Mrs. Joan M. Yaeger
Community Representative:	Ms. Astrid Baehrecke
Teachers:	Mrs. Patricia Kilbride Ms. Stephanie Ogonosky Mr. Joseph Plati Ms. Amanda Roberto
Parents:	Ms. Sonia Jorge Ms. Elissa Carreras Mrs. Kathy Dakermanji Ms. Sharon Guzik Mrs. Jenn Intoppa (PTO rep)
Meeting Dates:	
October 22, 2008	
November 19, 2008	Guests: Columbus School Enrichment Committee
January 26, 2009	
February 11, 2009	
March 11, 2009	Guest: Chief of Police Leo Sacco
May 20, 2009	Scheduled to plan School Council needs for SY 09-10

All meetings were held at the Columbus Elementary School. Meetings were advertised as being open to other interested members of the school community.

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MISSION STATEMENTS

MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The Medford Public Schools is a caring educational partnership of school, family and community designed to ensure that all students are afforded a safe and healthy learning environment in which they develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to reach their full academic and personal potential. This partnership is dedicated to providing all students with a 21st century education that will enable them to be life-long learners and contributors to a diverse and rapidly changing world.

COLUMBUS SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Columbus Elementary School is to provide every child with an education based on respect for self and others. The Columbus is a diverse school community that includes an English language support program and a K-5 Adaptive Learning Program. The instructional focus of the Columbus promotes the ability to think clearly and creatively, to communicate effectively, and to develop a lifelong curiosity and love of learning. It is our hope that with the development of these skills our children will become happy, productive, responsible citizens of the 21st century.

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NARRATIVE

Diversity and dedication define the Columbus Elementary School. The population of the Columbus is as interesting as it is diverse. We are 45% minority and approximately 47% low income. There are currently four kindergarten classes, four first grade classes, three second grade classes, four third grade classes, three fourth grade classes and three fifth grade classes. In September 2007 Grade 5 teachers successfully planned and implemented a team teaching model of instruction. During the 2008-09 school year three grade five teachers expanded on the model. Each teacher had a 'homeroom' class to whom she taught English/Language Arts and guided for specials. One teacher then taught Science to each of the three classes; another taught Math, and another taught Social Studies. The program has been very well received and is truly successful. The Columbus is also home to the five classrooms that make up the Grade K-5 Adaptive Special Education Program. The Columbus School also houses two self-contained special education classes that are part of Shore Collaborative. The children in these classes are not counted in our official numbers, but are embraced by all at the school as a part of the 'Columbus School Family'.

The devotion and dedication of the Columbus Staff is second to none! In the words of one teacher, "We work small miracles here everyday". I continue to be amazed and impressed by this exemplary group of professionals. Teachers can be found on duty between 6:30 AM and 5:00 PM nearly every day. Before and after school support is a common practice. The Action Plans in this document clearly outline some of the support offered at the Columbus Elementary School.

Many additional programs contribute to the uniqueness of the Columbus and add an extra dimension to the education in the K-5 classrooms.

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UNIVERSAL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The Universal Breakfast Program began at the Columbus School on February 2, 2009. In November and December meetings were held with Mrs. Yaeger, Ms. Brenner, Ms. Jeanne Irwin from Medford Food Services and Ms. Justine Kahn from Project Bread to plan a smooth implementation. The program is funded by Project Bread and has been phenomenally successful at the school.

The Universal Breakfast Program provides a free nutritious breakfast to each and every child at the Columbus School regardless of family income.

Research documents a child's need for a healthy breakfast in order to learn and be successful in school. Data has shown that many children are not eating breakfast. This is true for many reasons including but not limited to the poor economy. Prior to the Universal Breakfast Program children who are eligible for free and reduced lunch were also eligible for free or reduced breakfast. This breakfast was provided to children from 8:15 until 8:30 each morning in the cafeteria. Only a small percentage of children who were eligible for the program actually ate breakfast at school. Research by Project Bread suggested that children hesitate to participate in such a model because the breakfast is not part of the 'mainstream' school day and it requires that children leave their peers in the playground before school.

In the Universal Breakfast Program breakfast (always a grain, a fruit, and a dairy) is waiting for the children when they enter their classroom. The children eat as a classroom family while they settle into their morning routine.

The program is voluntary; no child is required to participate. However, almost 80% of the children at school participate on a daily basis. Custodians, cafeteria staff, and teachers work diligently to make the program a success. The results are clear:

- Teachers report no disruption to the school day.
- Fewer children are late for school.
- Children appear to be happier, more alert and attentive.
- Fewer children visit the nurses' office in the morning because they are hungry.

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HOW WE START OUR DAY

Each day at the Columbus School starts with an inspirational character education message as part of the morning announcements. Most messages are from PROJECT WISDOM. Frequently Mrs. Yaeger writes a timely message. Occasionally children submit messages to be read. Children's birthdays are announced along with special school news. A different child reads the Pledge of Allegiance each day. This is followed by a moment of silent reflection.

MORE ABOUT US

The Columbus School is also home to many after school activities. A very active PTO organizes and facilitates many exciting after school clubs. A copy of the Spring Offerings of Clubs is attached to his plan as an example of what is offered. Tuition for the classes is structured to keep the program self-sustaining. A generous anonymous donation to the Columbus School Student Activity Account helps to fund scholarships for children who want to attend after school clubs but cannot afford the cost.

An after school day care program provides a valuable service to working families. This program is under the direction of the Medford Early Childhood Program. During the summers 2007 and 2008 hundreds of children participated in a wonderful summer program held at the school sponsored by Medford Community Schools.

The **ELL** Program services more than 50 students whose first language is not English. These programs help students acquire listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as provide academic support. Over 25 different languages are spoken in the homes of Columbus School students.

The **Adaptive Learning Program** is a curriculum based behavior management program that services children in grades K-5. This program addresses the needs of students both socially and academically in a small, structured classroom setting. This small structured setting allows students to learn how to self regulate and monitor their behavior. Students are mainstreamed with adult support for all non-academic subjects. Many of the students are mainstreamed for academic subjects depending on their ability to sustain behavior in a larger classroom environment.

The **School Psychologist** is an integral part of the school community. Although her primary role is testing, the school psychologist works with small groups of students to improve social and emotional behaviors. In addition, the counselor meets, as often as possible, with teachers and parents for consultation regarding students. She also works with families as a liaison to resources and agencies.

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The **School Adjustment Counselor** is a new position at the Columbus for the 2008-09 school year. Her role is a mainstay of the success of the Adaptive Learning Program as well as to the Crisis Prevention Intervention Team (CPI). Additionally, she facilitates 'lunch bunch' social skills groups and works very closely with children, teachers, and families.

Two **School Nurses** contribute actively to the positive atmosphere of the Columbus School by being involved with both the education and physical well being of the students. Our nurses teach health lessons at all grade levels and work with children's doctors to monitor and report on medication and other treatment issues. The nurses conduct staff training in the use of epi-pens and in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI). The CPI training has been helpful not only in dealing with the adaptive program population but keeping the entire school on a calmer course. The nurses also conduct the **Walking Club**, which meets twice a week at 8:00 AM through most of the school year. The school nurses have organized many programs at school during the 08-09 school year that reflect the Wellness Policy of the district and seriously address the topic of childhood obesity. In addition, the following clubs and programs have been ongoing during the school year: Smile Club, PALS (protect a life), Child Care Weather Watch, NuWave Program, Tar Wars, Asthma Class, Anti-Bullying, and sponsored a bicycle helmet sale with Mr. Ben Averbroom, Medford Saving Lives Program. During the 2008-09 school year Senator Pat Jehlen visited the Columbus School for an in depth presentation by the nurses and students about the many programs provided by the nurses.

Occupational therapy (OT) is provided for 40-45 students at the Columbus Elementary School five days per week. Occupational therapy in the Medford Public Schools is provided to help students more fully participate in and benefit from the educational program.

Speech and Language Therapy is currently provided for over 40 students at the Columbus to assist children in accessing the curriculum and to treat a variety of disorders. Therapy is provided in and out of class, individually and in small groups according to student need.

The Columbus Elementary School offers services for children with learning disabilities within a small group setting. Two **moderate special needs** teachers provide specialized instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics. These teachers consult regularly with classroom teachers to help support accommodations and to support the classroom curriculum.

During the 2008-09 school year an Action Research team from the Columbus School collaborated with teams from other elementary schools in the district to study how a more inclusionary model of Special Education service delivery may improve achievement of children with special needs. Further work and future staffing will guide actual implementation.

Title I services are federally funded and are designed to help children who are experiencing difficulty in reading and writing. Children work in small groups for about forty minutes four days per week with a reading specialist. Three Title I teachers are key to the ongoing success of

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the Columbus School. One English Language Arts Support teacher works three days per week to assist children with reading and writing skills.

Tufts University provides a variety of support programs. The **Tufts Literacy Corps (TLC)** tutors under the direction of Dr. Cindy Krug, provide extra reading, writing, and math assistance after school for students in grades 2-5. The Columbus School has also benefited from Science Elementary Education Partnerships (SEEP). This program matches Tufts undergraduates with classroom teachers to develop activities and enrich the science curriculum in the classroom. International Ambassadors from Tufts University have further enriched our students' global understanding. The Columbus School was also privileged during the 2008-09 school year to have a **BookMatch** team facilitated by University students.

Medford Family Network (MFN) adds a new dimension to the Columbus Elementary School. Playgroups for children ages 0-4 years and their caregivers meet at the school. The MFN also offers a variety of support groups and parenting classes several of which meet at the Columbus Elementary School.

The Columbus continues to use *Second Step*, a violence prevention curriculum.

The Columbus School welcomes and encourages former students as well as other middle and high school age student to participate in community service opportunities by helping at various events.

This plan only partially outlines programs and opportunities at the **Columbus Elementary School**.

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Enrollment Data

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2008-09)			
Race	% of School	% of District	% of State
African American	15.7	15.1	8.2
Asian	7.7	7.0	5.1
Hispanic	16.3	10.2	14.3
Native American	0.0	0.1	0.3
White	54.8	65.4	69.9
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	5.4	2.2	2.0

Enrollment by Gender (2008-09)			
	School	District	State
Male	245	2,460	492,805
Female	233	2,362	466,105
Total	478	4,822	958,910

Enrollment by Grade (2008-09)							
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5
District	86	358	366	384	397	339	354
Christopher Columbus	0	82	84	82	87	66	77

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Selected Populations (2008-09)

Title	% of School	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	28.0	19.0	15.4
Limited English Proficient	12.3	5.7	5.9
Low-income	44.8	29.2	30.7
Special Education	16.9	19.0	17.1
Free Lunch	40.6	25.1	25.2
Reduced Lunch	4.2	4.1	5.5

MCAS Tests of Spring 2008
Percent of Students at Each Performance Level for Christopher Columbus

*

Grade and Subject	Advanced/ Above Proficient		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Warning/ Failing		Students Included
	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	
GRADE 03 - READING	15	15	35	41	32	33	18	11	66
GRADE 03 - MATHEMATICS	17	25	29	36	29	25	26	14	66
GRADE 04 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	7	8	38	41	39	39	17	13	72
GRADE 04 - MATHEMATICS	14	20	32	29	39	38	15	13	72
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	13	13	42	48	38	30	6	8	52
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS	18	22	41	30	29	30	12	17	51
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	14	17	47	33	29	38	10	12	51

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Average Class Size Data
April 15, 2009

K	1	2	3	4	5	Resource Rooms
20.5	19.25	25.33	19.75	19.33	23	441 total regular education students
+5	+7	+6	+6	+4	+7	35 Number of students added at each grade level to mainstream with regular education classes.
4	4	3	4	3	3	Number of regular classroom teachers at each grade level
.5	.5	1	1	<u>1</u>	1	Number of special education classroom teachers at each grade level

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Support personnel listed by category and full time equivalent

Art – 0.8
School Adjustment Counselor-1.0 (new position in 2008-09)
School Psychologist – 1.0
English Language Learner Teacher – 1.0
English Language Learner Para.1.0 (.5 increase from 08-09)
Computer – 1.0
Title I – 3 (1.0 increase from 08-09)
Learning Disabilities – 2.0
Nurse - 1.8
Kindergarten Aides – 3.0
Librarian – 1.00
Special Ed. Paraprofessionals – 8.0 (1.0 decrease from 08-09)
Music – 0.7
Phys. Ed. – 1.5
Language Arts Support .60 (1.0 decrease from 08-09)
Speech & Lang. – 1.2
O.T. - 0.7
Italian Paraprofessional - 0.44

Class Size Statement

The School Improvement Council is painfully aware of expected budgetary shortfalls in the district and the state. With that in mind it is critical to consider strategies that will minimize the impact of possible larger class sizes.

Students in the self-contained classes that make up the Adaptive Learning Program mainstream with regular ed. students. All students are together for art, computer, phys. ed., and lunch. A number of students mainstream for academic subjects. It takes a great deal of effort and self control on the part of these children to go from a group of 8 - 10 to a class of 22 or even 26 as is the case in a couple of situations. Even with some assistance from a paraprofessional, it is difficult for the teacher to make sure that all of the children receive the attention they need to meet with success.

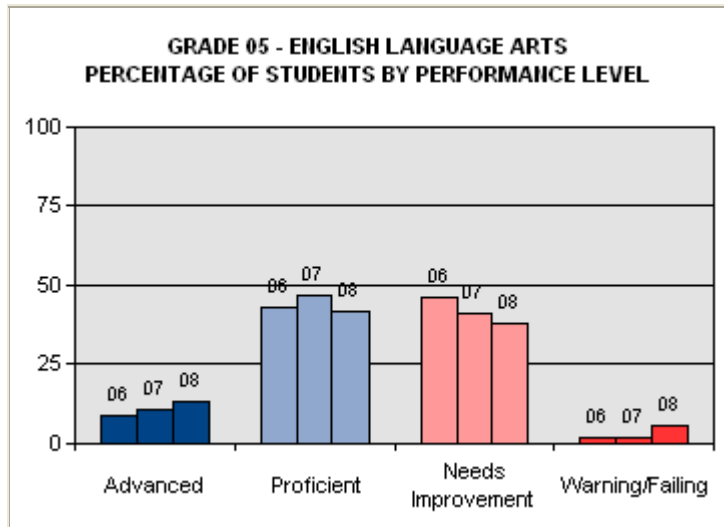
Approximately 125 limited English-speaking children and/or children whose first language is not English are currently enrolled at the Columbus School. All of these students, with the support of the staff and the encouragement of their peers, are doing well. Low class numbers promote opportunities for individual attention and a greater chance of success for all students.

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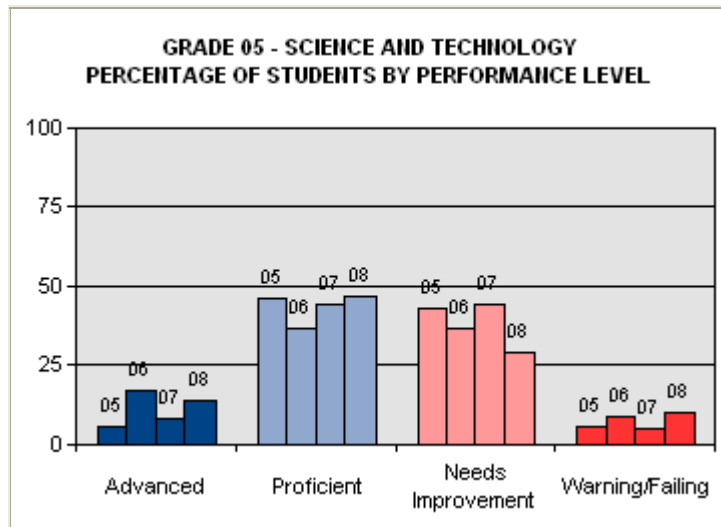
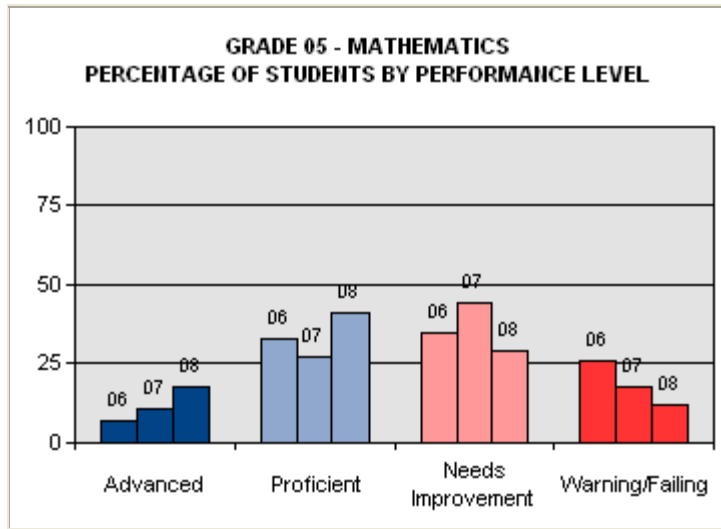
MCAS RESULTS SUMMARY

MCAS ANNUAL COMPARISONS

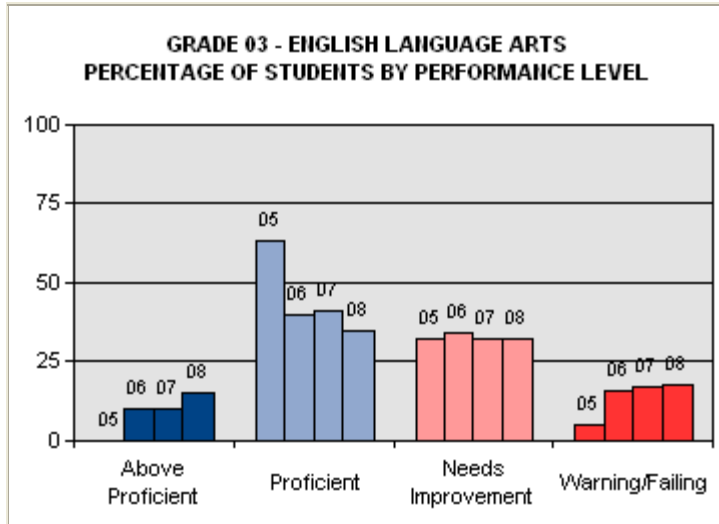
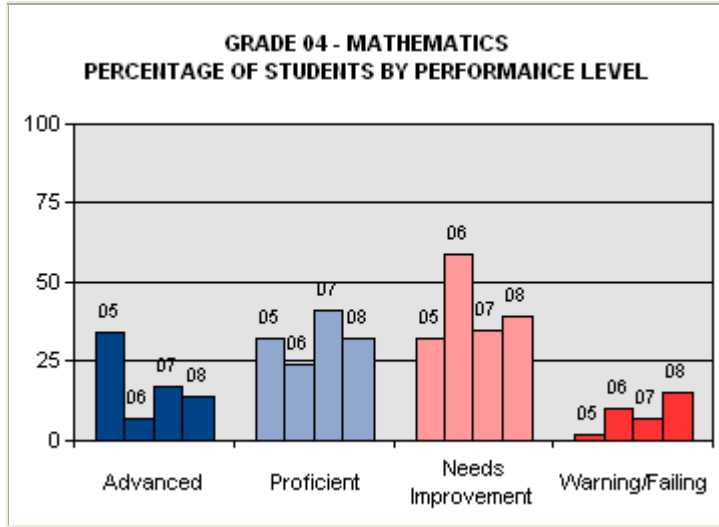
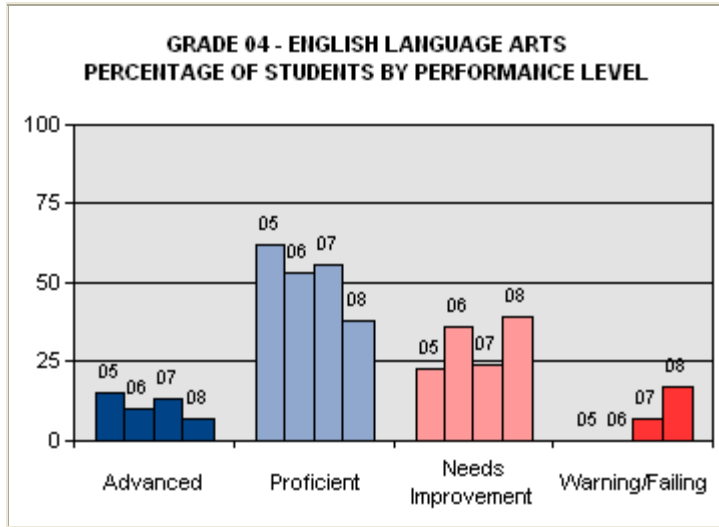
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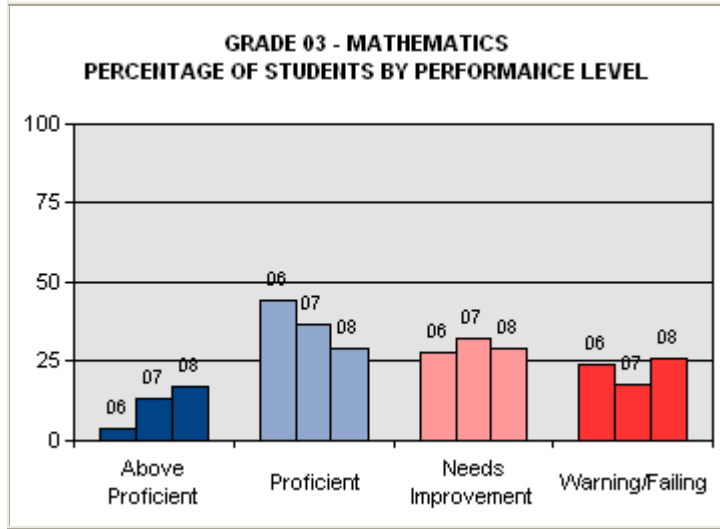
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AYP STATUS

- The school received an NCLB Accountability Status of NO STATUS in both ELA and Math.
- The Columbus Elementary School achieved AYP for 2008 in the aggregate for Math. The students **exceeded** the state performance target of 76.5 with a score of **77.1**.
- Grade 5 students performed especially well in the Math MCAS test. 59% of these students scored in the Proficient or Above Proficient categories, exceeding the state average of 52%.

MINORITY STUDENTS

- Columbus School MCAS scores are consistent with the statewide trend in scores. This is particularly true relative to the improved achievement of African American and Hispanic children as reflected in the following statements.
- In all tests combined there were 203 scores of Proficient or Above Proficient. African American children achieved 21% of these scores. African American children represent 15.5% of the school population.

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- In the same 203 scores of proficient or above proficient, Hispanic or Latino children achieved 24% of the scores. This group of children represents 15.3% of the school population.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

- In spite of the improvement of some minority students the school did not achieve AYP in ELA (aggregate, special education, low-income) and Math (special education, low income). Students with disabilities and low-income students struggled considerably. When evaluating the scores of these subgroups it is important to consider that many children identified as students with disabilities also fall into the category of low income so their scores are reflected in the overall performance and improvement of both sub groups. This fact significantly impacts AYP of subgroup populations.
- The most significant achievement gap is evident for children with special needs. These children represent 19.5% of the 2007-2008 school population. Only 3% of these children scored in Proficient or Above Proficient on any test. This is a marked decrease from the 2007 scores. Clearly there is a significant group of children who, if allowed under the regulations, would have performed better using an alternate assessment rather than a standard administration of the test. Children with learning disabilities or with unique emotional disabilities often struggle with time sensitive testing. As the state performance target gets higher the challenge of helping children with disabilities becomes more intense.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

- Nine of the children scoring in the Warning range in any test moved to the Columbus School within one year of taking MCAS. Three of these children moved in just prior to the test in spring, 2008. The majority of these children are children with disabilities.

SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

GRADE 3 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

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- 50% of Columbus School students scored in either Proficient or Above Proficient. This percentage has remained constant for three years. It is 6% less than the state average for 2008.
- 18% percent scored in the Warning range. While this is higher than the state average for 2008, it is an increase of only 1% in this category as opposed to 2% increase in this category statewide. Of these children 50% are children with significant special needs.

GRADE 3 MATHEMATICS

- 46% scored in Proficient or Above Proficient, down slightly from previous years and lower than the state average.
- 26% scored in the warning range, higher than the state average. 50% of these are children with significant special needs.

GRADE 4 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

- 45% scored in Proficient or Above Proficient categories. This is a decrease from 2007, but is only slightly lower than the state average.
- 17% scored in the warning range, higher than the state average. Of these children 67% are children with significant special needs.

GRADE 4 MATHEMATICS

- 46% scored in Proficient or Above Proficient categories, just short of the state average. Only 40% of this same student group scored in proficient or above proficient in 2007.
- 15% scored in the warning range. 78% of these children are children with significant special needs.

GRADE 5 ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS

- 55% scored in the Proficient or Above Proficient categories. This is consistent with 2007 scores.
- One child scored in the warning range on this test. This one child has significant special needs.

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GRADE 5 MATHEMATICS

- 59% scored in the proficient or above proficient category. This exceeds the state average of 52%.
- Six children (12%) scored in the warning range. This is fewer than the state average of 17%. All six children have significant special needs. One of these children moved in just prior to the test.

GRADE 5 SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

- 61% of Columbus School students scored in the Proficient or Above Proficient category. This far exceeds the state average of 50%.
- 3 children scored in the warning range. Two of these are children with significant special needs.

ACTION PLAN

NOTE: Many of the goals stated in this action plan are a direct response to a NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY administered and analyzed in spring, 2008.

ACTION PLAN

Goal #1: Continue to work on fostering an environment that is a community of students, teachers, parents, and administrators who work together to achieve the school's mission. Continue to improve communication and promote family involvement within the Columbus School Community. Continue to develop a sense of community. Continue to foster a school environment where students and teachers are engaged and excited about learning and experiencing school. All students and staff will continue to become more accepting of themselves and the varied cultures of an increasingly diverse student population. This will be accomplished by participating in enrichment and other special event programs during the school day and by attending family events held beyond of the school day. The number of families participating in certain events has declined while new ventures for evening activities (Family Art Night for example) has welcomed excellent family participation. The School Improvement

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Council 2008/2009 recognizes this as an essential goal of the Columbus School and is in direct response to the needs assessment survey.

Assessments: Feedback from teachers, students, and parents. High participation rate in PTO sponsored Family events. Increased participation of minority families at school sponsored events. Improved academic progress as a result of a stronger home-school connection.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL (S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Personal invitations to school events via phone calls and face to face invitation; Connect-Ed. Phone calls prior to each event.	Principal, staff, parents, children Parent liaisons to non-English speaking families will volunteer to extend personal invitations.	School Community	Ongoing	Increase of number of families that attend school events
2. Evening event featuring art exhibits and ice cream social	Principal/Staff/Art Teachers/Students and Families	PTO/minimal fee for ice cream	Third Annual Event, Spring 2009	Number of families that attend
3. July/August new family play groups	First and second grade parent Welcoming Committee members	PTO	Summer, 2009	Number of families in attendance
4. Welcome Open House	Principal and PTO	PTO volunteers & supply of stickers/snacks	August, 2009	Number of families in attendance
5. Young	Principal, teachers, and	PTO funds;	2009-2010	Teacher assessment

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Audiences of Massachusetts multi-cultural presentation	parents	grant will be written for possible MLK presentation in Jan. 2010		of class appreciation of performance and carry over to social studies. A feedback tool will be developed for teachers to complete at the end of each performance.
6. Family Ice Cream Social	PTO, Staff, and Principal	PTO funds	Fall, 2009	All above
7. Classroom lessons that extend the cultural enrichment begun at performances.	Classroom teachers and support staff.	MPS Curriculum	ONGOING	All above
8. Evening Family Socials that will help families become acquainted.	Teachers/Children/Families	Parent fundraising activities	ONGOING through SY 2009-10	All above Student/Family Participation
9. <i>Second Step</i> , violence prevention program, to continue in all classrooms	Staff and students	School Resources	SY 2009-10	Improved student interaction
10. Columbus Community Pride Day (Clean grounds)	Parents/Families/Students	“Sweat Equity”/Donated supplies	Fall 2009/Spring 2010	More student and family ‘ownership’ of school grounds

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<p>11. Monthly theme days that promote school spirit and family support.</p>	<p>Principal/Teachers/Students</p>	<p>Self sustaining for ice cream</p>	<p>Monthly</p>	<p>Increased School Pride</p>
<p>12. Enrichment programs</p>	<p>Principal/Teachers/Parents</p>	<p>Research to learn more about free and low cost/Grant writing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>13. Parent Student Directory/Parent Resource Directory</p>	<p>Parents to research and publish</p>		<p>Ongoing – information is being collected for directory. This is an ongoing process that hopefully will be completed in 2009-2010 and become a permanent resource that will be updated annually.</p>	<p>Number of families who express interest and give permission to have information published in directory that will be given to all families.</p> <p>Family response and participation</p>
<p>14. Alternative to expensive out of school field trips. Continue to apply for scholarships for school traveling programs.</p>	<p>Principal/Teachers/Families</p>	<p>During the 2008-09 school year children and teachers responded in an overwhelmingly positive way to the Museum of Science “In School Field Trip” Programs. Research potential of</p>	<p>This somewhat controversial goal is a response to the economy and time in learning and will be ongoing through 2009-2010 depending</p>	<p>Success will be measured by scholarships received and programs scheduled. Teachers will provide feedback via an assessment tool to be developed.</p>

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		<p>purchasing museum passes on a rotating basis that will be available to Columbus School Families to promote family cultural outings and decrease expenditure on out of school field trips.</p>	<p>on the economy and available resources.</p>	
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ACTION PLAN

Goal #2: To continue to address and improve student attendance issues –**ONGOING AND CONTINUED THROUGH 09-10**

Assessments: Attendance records continue to indicate some cases of chronic tardiness. While tardiness and absenteeism continues to be a concern, it has improved and appears to effect children of families who are experiencing other challenges including but not limited to the poor economy or a language barrier. Attendance records for the previous school year will continue to be used as a baseline.

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Specific Objectives: The number of students with excessive tardiness and absenteeism will continue to decrease. Increased outreach to families in need will be a priority relative to attendance concerns.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Any child arriving after 8:40 A.M. must be signed in by a parent.	Parent/Administration/Office Staff	School community	SY 09/10	Fewer tardies
2. After five recorded cases of tardiness and/or absences, a letter will be sent to the child's home in the family's native language. This will be followed up by a phone call in the family's native language.	Teacher and Administration	School staff	SY 09/10	Review of attendance records
3. Individual plans will be written and implemented on an as needed Follow-up letters will be sent.	Parents, students, teachers, and principal.	School staff	Monthly and renewable as determined by the Team	Review of Attendance records
4. Home/School contract will be drawn up and signed by student, parent, teacher, assistant principal, and principal.	Principal/Assistant Principal	Team	Ongoing	Attendance records and input from Team
5. Outreach to Local youth Sports Organizations and Clubs to schedule activities (tournaments etc..) so that there is no conflict with school days.	Principal	School staff, Parents, and Community		Community Response, Improved Attendance

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ACTION PLAN

Goal #3: All students in grades K-5 will improve writing skills.

Assessments: MCAS Open Response average scores will improve.

Specific Objectives: The students' editing and writing skills will improve based on teacher evaluation and Open Response scores on MCAS Results at all tested grades. Children in K-2 will demonstrate increased enthusiasm about writing and continue to share their writing with peers and other members of the school community.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Organize KidPics, LINKS and Houghton-Mifflin graphic organizers.	Classroom teachers, computer teacher, and support staff	ONGOING	Lesson packets
2. Purchase stationary supplies (folders, highlighters...) to implement plan.	Principal/Teachers/Parents	Ongoing	Student Work Samples
3. Teachers work individually and in grade level teams to reorganize and refine materials for students.	Classroom teachers and support staff	ONGOING	Student application of skills

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4. Independent computer use by students to develop assignments.	All staff	ONGOING	Staff discussions and samples of students' improved writing
5. Teach and reinforce skills to/with students.	Principal, ELA Director, Teachers	ONGOING	Evaluation of test data
6. Ongoing professional development to keep staff skills current.	Principal/Teachers	ONGOING	Staff discussions and samples of students' improved writing
7. ELA Director will attend some grade level meetings to work with teachers to conduct informal assessments.	Principal/ELA Director/Teachers	Quarterly 09-10	Same as above. Evaluation of student writing project
8. Teachers work individually and in grade level teams to reorganize and refine materials for students.		Ongoing	Student Work Samples

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ACTION PLAN

Goal #4: All students in grades K-5 will improve reading skills.

Assessments: Columbus's average MCAS Reading scores will increase

Specific Objectives: During 09-10 Columbus students will continue to read more books. The frequent practice will lead to more confidence and a clearer understanding of the written word.

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ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL (S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Continue to Align Scholastic <i>Reading Counts</i> program with library inventory.	Teachers/Librarian/Tech	Existing Library resources	Ongoing through 09/10	Records of student progress
2. Continuing using <i>Reading Counts</i> Program at all grade levels	All teachers and staff	Staff time/Parent Support <i>Reading Counts</i> software	ONGOING	Student participation and improved reading levels
3. Foster a love of reading by encouraging student reading clubs such as the BookMatch program started in 08/09 with the help of Tufts Students	Principal/Teachers/Parents/Students	Tufts University Students as facilitators		Student Improvement. Feedback from staff. Marked increase in the number of books checked out of library.

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ACTION PLAN

Goal #5: All students in grades K-5 will improve math skills.

Assessments: Columbus school students' average MCAS Math scores will increase.

Specific Objectives: In SY 2009/2010, more students and their families will enjoy practicing math skills through use of *Everyday Math* take home game packets. Grades 3-5 will continue MCAS practice packets with emphasis on Open Response questions. The frequent practice will lead to a clearer understanding and application of skills.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Review games used to reinforce math concepts.	Classroom teachers, and support staff	Every Day Math Teacher Resource Kit	ONGOING	List of games
2. Game packets go home with students for family practice.	Parents and classroom teachers	Grade level game packets	ONGOING	Use of game packets
3. Ongoing professional development to keep staff skills current.	Classroom teachers/Principal	District curriculum, Math Framework/ School budget	ONGOING	Staff discussions and samples of students' work, parent feedback
4. Teachers work individually and in grade level teams to reorganize and refine materials for students.	Teachers, students, and parents	Above and game packets	2009/2010	Staff discussions and samples of students' work, parent comments
5. Family Math Night for grades	Teachers, students, and	Game packets, teacher		Workshop attendance,

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K, 1, 2. 6. Organize Family MCAS Information Meeting for gr. 3, 4, and 5. Focus on increased attendance by parents.	parents Principal/Teachers	modifications, <i>Everyday Math Resource Kit</i>		application of skills Student improvement Attendance and better parent understanding Improved test scores
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ACTION PLAN

Goal #6: All students in grades K-5 will strengthen and improve science skills.

Assessments: Increased participation during class lessons and discussions. Improved open response type answers in grades 3-5. Improved MCAS scores on grade 5 Science/Technology Test. Student participation in school wide science fair.

Specific Objectives: Students will develop and demonstrate a love of science.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Each grade level team will review major science themes to be covered during the	Principal and teachers	State Frameworks and Medford Science Curriculum	Ongoing	Outline of units of study

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school year.				
2. Teach lessons with emphasis on verbalizing how and why.	Classroom teachers and support staff	All of the above	Ongoing	Teacher observation, student participation and quality of written responses
3. Review effectiveness and appropriateness of science activities.	Tufts support, teachers, and principal	Teachers/Community Resources	Ongoing	

ACTION PLAN

Goal #7: Promote *Healthy Living* and *Student Safety*

Assessments: More healthy food and less junk food will be consumed at snack and lunch times. Increase in the number of students/parents participating in the Walking Club and other healthy activities. Students will demonstrate increased awareness of community and traffic safety.

Specific Objectives: Promote healthier living habits in students and their families. Educate children about community and traffic safety.

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Walking Club	School Nurse/Parents	Columbus Community	09/10	Participation
2. Good Sport Fitness	Enrichment Committee			

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Clubs and Dance Club	of PTO	Minimal fee	09/10	Attendance record
3. Students vs. Teachers athletic events	PE Teachers/Staff/Students	Columbus Community	09/10	Participation
4. Coordinate with <i>Medford Saving Lives</i> program to hold helmet sale at the Columbus.	Principal/ School Nurse	<i>Medford Saving Lives</i> and Nurses	Spring,2010	Number of helmets sold
5. PALS (Protect a Life) grade 4 & 5 student leaders work with K – 3 students to educate about food allergies	School Nurse	School Nurse	ONGOING	Discussions and observations of student knowledge about food allergies
6.SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL/PEDESTRAIN SAFETY TRAINING	Principal/Parent Volunteers	Massachusetts Department of Transportation Grant	Fall,2010	Observation of improved safety awareness/Parent and Teacher input.
7. Improve parents' and children's' awareness of safety concerns in the immediate school area relative to parking, pedestrian safety, and mutual cooperation.	All members of the school community/Medford Police Department	All members of the school community/Medford Police Department	Ongoing through 2009/2010	Improved traffic flow around school

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ACTION PLAN

Goal #8: CHARACTER EDUCATION: As a supplement to the Second Step Curriculum, students will demonstrate improved interpersonal skills and increased awareness of responsible social behavior and decision-making.

Assessments: Observable behavior; increased observations of appropriate student interaction; decreased frequency of negative student behaviors in and out of school; increased pride in the school community

Specific Objectives: As stated in the Columbus School Mission Statement, "...our children will become happy, productive, responsible citizens of the 21st century".

ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL (S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
1. Continue to research programs that have been successful in other schools/districts. <i>PILLARS</i> is currently being reviewed by teachers and nursing staff. Plan activities that help students develop a strong sense of personal responsibility.	Principal, School Improvement Council Members	Student Activity Funds, Professional Development Funds Parents, Teachers,	Ongoing	Evaluation of existing programs Observable behaviors
2. Establish a year long program using strategies and	Students, Parents, School Community	PROJECT WISDOM Entire School	Ongoing through 2009/10	Observable behavior/Community input

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activities that have been demonstrated successful		Community	
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Goal #9: Higher Level Thinking Skills: Encourage higher level thinking skills by promoting increased opportunities for children who demonstrate mastery of grade level curriculum and/or significant curiosity about specific subjects.

Assessments: Observable student behavior and participation in special projects related to while expanding upon the core curriculum.

Specific Objectives: As stated in the Columbus School Mission Statement, "...our children will become happy, productive, responsible citizens of the 21st century".

Activity	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Assessment
Develop activities that will help students acquire skills that allow them to think more deeply about and expand upon the subject matter.	Principal/Teachers/Specialists/Department Heads	School and community resources/Tufts TLC	SY 09/10	Observable behavior and student work samples

NON-BUDGETARY ITEMS

- Whole child initiatives designed to increase student awareness and acceptance of themselves and other cultures represented at the school: day enrichment programs such as evening family events such as Family Ice Cream Social and Math and Computer Nights; September open house; summer play groups; healthy snack

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days; School Spirit Days; Walking, Fitness, and Dance Clubs. Monthly coffees with the Principal have continued through school year 08/09 and are funded with PTO funds.

- Scholastic *Reading Counts* literacy initiative. This collection was significantly expanded during the 08/09 school year using funds from an anonymous donation.
- After school enrichment programs/clubs (self-supporting)
- Family Math Nights
- Family Computer Night

II. BUDGETARY REQUESTS

- **One Math Coach** to help to address math strategies particularly in sub groups as identified in MCAS report
- Standardized test for grade 2 students. This would significantly help teachers identify student strengths and weaknesses and establish a baseline to prepare for MCAS.
- On-going professional development in all academic areas, and character education

Proposed MCAS Program for 2009-2010

During the 2008-2009 school year we had the opportunity to offer MCAS tutorials to children in grades 3, 4, and 5. The program cost \$4000. A similar program in the winter/spring of 2010 will help considerably especially as we anticipate increased class size.

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CLOSING STATEMENT

All members of the School Improvement Council are keenly aware of the dire budget situation nationally, statewide, and more specifically in our own school district. This plan was developed with sensitivity to that issue.

I would like to express sincere appreciation to all who participated in the development of this SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN as well as to those who read this plan and consider the needs of the Christopher Columbus Elementary School.



*Mrs. Joan M. Yaeger
Principal*

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**MEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**columbus
Elementary
School**
ADDITION

to the

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
SY 2009-2010**

**Joan Yaeger
Principal
2008-2009**

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SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND MEETING DATES

Principal/Chairperson:

Mrs. Joan M. Yaeger

Community Representative:

Ms. Astrid Baehrecke

Teachers:

Mrs. Patricia Kilbride

Ms. Stephanie Ogonosky

Mr. Joseph Plati

Ms. Amanda Roberto

Parents:

Ms. Sonia Jorge

Ms. Elissa Carreras

Mrs. Kathy Dakermanji

Ms. Sharon Guzik

Mrs. Jenn Intoppa (PTO rep)

Meeting Dates:

October 22, 2008

November 19, 2008

Guests: Columbus School
Enrichment Committee

January 26, 2009

February 11, 2009

March 11, 2009

Guest: Chief of Police Leo Sacco

May 20, 2009

Scheduled to plan School
Council needs for SY 09-10

All meetings were held at the Columbus Elementary School. Meetings were advertised as being open to other interested members of the school community.

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ADDITION

On Page 36 of the original document, Goal #9 should be replaced with the following and Goal #10 should be added in sequence.

Goal #9: Higher Level Thinking Skills: Encourage higher level critical thinking skills by promoting increased opportunities for children who demonstrate mastery of grade level curriculum and/or significant curiosity about specific subjects.

Assessments: Observable student behavior and participation in special projects related to while expanding upon the core curriculum.

Specific Objectives: As stated in the Columbus School Mission Statement, "...our children will become happy, productive, responsible citizens of the 21st century".

Activity	Individual(s) Responsible	Resources	Timeline	Assessment
Develop activities that will help students acquire skills that allow them to think more deeply about and expand upon the subject matter (e.g., subject matter clubs and/or discussion groups; consider challenging tasks associated with current classroom projects)	Principal/Teachers/Specialists/Department Heads	School and community resources/Tufts TLC	SY 09/10	Observable behavior and student work samples

Goal #10: Promoting an Engaging Learning Environment: Foster a school environment where students and teachers are engaged and excited about learning and experiencing school.

Assessments: Observable outputs from and participation in classroom projects and activities.

Specific Objectives: As stated in the Columbus School Mission Statement, "...our children will become happy, productive, responsible citizens of the 21st century".

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ACTIVITY	INDIVIDUAL (S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	TIMELINE	ASSESSMENT
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and support classroom and/or grade level activities and projects to increase students' engagement with learning material (e.g., field trips, depending on resources, group projects, increasing connection with the environment). 2. Encourage activities that strengthen the home-school connection (revive the Columbus School Clipper Newsletter, invite parents to visit classroom and school to see students work, organize classroom "open houses", promote the use of classroom news) 3. Explore the web as a tool for information dissemination for the school community 	Teachers, School Administration, PTO, Parents	Teachers and grade level colleagues, Professional Development opportunities, Parents.	Ongoing	<p>Observable behaviors and classroom work</p> <p>Student input and participation level</p>

The following note is to be added to Page 25 of the document (after the table and as a note to Activity 14).

NOTE regarding school field trips:

Despite a decision not to conduct field trips in the year 2008-09 due to limited financial resources, the school administration is open to field trip opportunities as resources are available. Should field trips continue to be a difficult activity to fund, the school administration is open to alternative solutions to ensure that students are provided with enriching learning opportunities, such as the ability to walk to local historical sites when appropriate (on a case by case basis and at the discretion of the teachers and school administration).