



## **WEYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Educational Program**

**VISION: A 21<sup>st</sup> century middle school that embraces inclusive, equitable, personalized and interdisciplinary instruction in a neighborhood atmosphere that fosters exploration and growth.**

**Dr. Jennifer Curtis Whipple  
Mary Ann Bryan  
Alpha Sanford  
Melanie Curtin  
Matthew Meehan  
Paul Duprey  
Dr. Terri Marculitis  
Dr. Katheryn Shannon**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.2 GRADE CONFIGURATION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2.3 CLASS SIZE POLICIES</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.4 SCHOOL SCHEDULING METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.5 TEACHING METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.6 TEACHER PLANNING &amp; ROOM ASSIGNMENT POLICIES</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.7 PRE-KINDERGARTEN</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.8 KINDERGARTEN</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.9 LUNCH PROGRAMS</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.10 TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION POLICIES &amp; PROGRAM</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>2.11 MEDIA/CENTER/LIBRARY</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>2.12 VISUAL ART PROGRAMS</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.13 MUSIC/PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.14 PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>2.15 SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>2.16 VOCATIONS &amp; TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>2.17 TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>2.18 FUNCTIONAL AND SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2.19 KEY PROGRAMMATIC ADJACENCIES</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2.20 SECURITY &amp; VISUAL ACCESS REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>2.21 ADAMS REVISED PLAN AS ASSOCIATED WITH OPTION D</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>2.22 WRAP-AROUND SERVICES</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2.22 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>49</b>

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Weymouth believes that a strong educational system is the foundation for a strong community. Our core guiding principles are that we strive to provide an education that is equitable, personalized, inclusive, and interdisciplinary for all students.

We came together as a community during three visioning sessions to identify top goals for a new middle school in areas of education, community, facility and sustainability. After many hours of rich conversations and brainstorming, we were able to establish a list of priorities that we felt represented our collective wants and needs. At the top of the list was the importance of our students having continuity with adult supervision by reducing transitions. Next, the committee expressed desire for this building to be welcoming to our entire community and be built with flexibility for future needs. Following that was deep concern that this new middle school will be built for all of our students and not only for some neighborhoods, and that this school exemplifies our district's educational vision. And lastly among the top five concerns was the desire to move fifth grade back to the primary schools.

It is our hopes that an approved plan for a new middle school will support our work towards equitable, personalized, inclusive and interdisciplinary education for all our students. Currently, the Maria Weston Chapman building presents many roadblocks in achieving this educational experience for our students. The most significant concerns are the physical condition of the building, the inability to use technological advancements in learning spaces, and an environment that is not conducive to personalized, inclusive or interdisciplinary learning. Weymouth Public Schools leadership has put forth focus and effort to root out academic inequities and promote inclusivity throughout the district. At the primary level, where there are eight schools, we have implemented core curriculum resources and supportive technology for mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) to avoid discrepancies in educational experiences. Our Walk to Read and Walk to Compute models support inclusion and create equity for students by offering tiered systems of support based on student data. District leadership continues to work with school administrators, parent councils and student organizations to promote inclusivity and equality among all schools.

In order to support and develop high achieving, lifelong learners who are actively engaged in society, we must work to personalize learning experiences through blended learning environments. In these environments, students have opportunities to learn in multiple styles and are guided by teachers in completing self-directed inquiry and investigation through research and hands-on activities. Teachers are being asked to expand their roles beyond a "sage on the stage" to become facilitators of learning and to encourage students to be self-motivated investigators who can problem-solve in the 21st Century in jobs that likely have not even been created.

## **Weymouth Public Schools Mission and Vision Statement and Strategic Goals**

The mission of Weymouth Public Schools (WPS), in partnership with parents and community, is to create a supportive learning community that results in high achieving, lifelong learners who actively contribute to society. The vision of WPS is to provide educational excellence for every Weymouth student: Students graduate from WPS with the academic knowledge, social and emotional skills, and growth mindsets necessary to succeed in college and career and are prepared to tackle and solve the most important problems in our local and global community.

WPS has an exceptional history of student performance and committed teachers and staff who work diligently to create the best education possible for Weymouth students. Weymouth students are the beneficiaries of a school-community dedicated to providing outstanding teachers, maintaining optimal class sizes, and providing academic supports to meet the needs of all students.

WPS has established four goals as part of its Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP):

1. Improve student growth and achievement for all students
2. Engage in collaborative, data-informed problem solving with colleagues
3. Create safe and positive learning environments for all students, staff, and families
4. Establish meaningful family and community partnerships

The development of these goals recognizes the need to prepare our students for a complex and changing world where they will need to think creatively and critically, analyze and evaluate information, solve complex problems, and collaborate and communicate effectively. WPS believes that family and community are vital components in achieving our goals. The Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP) can be found in the Appendix.

## **Town History**

The Town of Weymouth is the second oldest township in the Commonwealth, dating to 1622 when it was founded as “Wessagusset.” Renamed Weymouth in 1635, the town was boosted in that year by the arrival of one hundred settlers from its namesake in England. The early settlement was incorporated into the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and slowly grew as a fishing and agricultural community.

By the time of the American Revolution, colonial Weymouth had a population of approximately 1,400. The town was graced by simple houses and churches that were wooden replicas of the brick and stone architecture of European origin. A simple network of paths and roads, tracing the most convenient routes through the varied upland terrain, linked Weymouth to nearby communities. The skeletal remnants of these early roads can be traced in some of the town’s existing streets and ways. In fact, Commercial Street has been identified as an original Native American trail.

The American Revolution was shortly followed by the Industrial Revolution, of which Weymouth was an active participant. Its impact on the town was made clear in 1837 when

enough natural bog iron was discovered to support a local factory, the Weymouth Iron Works Company. The remnants of this era can be seen in a number of industrial buildings scattered throughout the town, many of which have been converted to other commercial and residential uses. During this time, Weymouth's maritime and agricultural society transformed into a culture of manufacturing and trade. The demand for labor rose to support the new economy, and new businesses blossomed to supply the goods and services that the community required. A new style of commercial architecture emerged, as well, one of simple box-like buildings which featured pleasant facades and sufficient space inside for storage and trade. Again, the remnants of this era can be seen in several locations throughout the town, particularly in the village centers.

By the mid-1800s, Weymouth was experiencing a period of economic stability thanks to the expansion of the railroad and local financial institutions. As wealth expanded, so too did the population and the trend towards stylish homes. The number of residents grew to approximately 6,100, and new ideas about residential architecture were imported from Europe. Many of the surviving homes from this era are counted among the town's most distinctive buildings. When Weymouth's iron industry declined in the face of competition from Pennsylvania steel mills, the shoe industry rose to the economic forefront. Shoe manufacturing employed about 75 percent of community residents, and along with some other manufacturing ventures, it supported Weymouth's economy through World War II. Immigration helped supply the workforce for the new businesses, and arriving cultures helped populate the town (along with the rest of the Great Boston region). Although Weymouth was linked by streetcars and railroads to surrounding communities, most of the local retail and service businesses were in close proximity to one another and within walking distance of many homes. This was an era when local corner stores thrived on foot traffic.

After World War II, changes in local demographics and regional economies had a profound effect on Weymouth. Rising incomes led to a boom in automobile ownership, and the federal and state governments responded with aggressive highway improvement programs. The general population also grew rapidly, and families moved away from urban centers like Boston in great numbers. Weymouth proved to be ideally located as a bedroom community within the greater metropolitan region. As a result, the town's population exploded. Some 21,000 new residents were added in just the fifteen years between 1945 and 1960.

Bisecting the town in 1956, the opening of Route 3, combined with the elimination of commuter rail services, had further impacts on Weymouth. Better paying jobs in the city and a good road system to get there made it possible for more people to pursue the dream of earning more and living better. The majority of residents began using the expressway and other newly constructed roads to commute elsewhere for work. One by one all the shoe factories closed their doors, and the local economy shifted dramatically to small service retail businesses and some wholesale operations. By the late 20th century, Weymouth had transformed into a mature suburb of the Greater Boston region.

This information was quoted from <http://www.weymouth.ma.us/history>

## **Future of Weymouth and the Weymouth Public Schools**

In 2015, Robert Hedlund was elected as mayor of Weymouth. Mayor Hedlund is dedicated to ensuring the quality of Weymouth Public schools and is a voting member of the Weymouth School Committee. He advocates for the investment of funds for capital improvements to all Weymouth schools. Under his leadership, Weymouth created Osprey Overlook Park, a plan to replace Tufts library with a thirty three million dollar facility, a new condominium complex at Weymouth Neck, three field and playground projects including the Lovell field and playground, Libbey Field and Weston park. Currently there is ongoing research for improving business in Columbian Square, and a feasibility study to determine whether Chapman Middle School needs to be renovated or replaced with a new building.

WPS is fortunate to be under the leadership of Dr. Jennifer Curtis-Whipple. Dr. Curtis-Whipple is in her second year as the superintendent and has been with the district for over twenty years as a teacher, a principal, and the Assistant Superintendent. In her first year as superintendent, the district established the “Big Three” initiatives to meet its established goals:

1. Data Driven Decision Making
2. Academic Discourse
3. Social Emotional Learning

With the support of the Weymouth School Committee, Dr. Curtis-Whipple has made significant progress in improving the technology infrastructure and the number of devices that teachers and students have access to on a daily basis. The district has increased bandwidth from 100Mbps to 1,000Mbps and we have upgraded our network with 10GB fiber and switches. We have purchased over three thousand devices and continue to increase that number as wireless capabilities increase. Our wireless coverage has increased to eighty percent in the district and our goal is one hundred percent by September 2018, but the structure of Chapman may keep us from achieving one hundred percent. The ultimate goal is for technology to enhance our students’ learning experiences and to promote the implementation of 21st century skills to prepare students for college and career. Dr. Curtis-Whipple has also promoted the need for curriculum oversight and received the vote of School Committee in 2017 to add two curriculum directors, Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics (STEM) and Humanities, and four assistant curriculum directors for Math, Science, English Language Arts (ELA), and History. These steps, in addition to many other improvements, are moving Weymouth toward its goal of educational excellence for all students.

The WPS system services six thousand three hundred students from pre-Kindergarten to twelfth grade and is the twenty-sixth largest district in the state of Massachusetts. Beyond the academic school day, students are able to access multiple opportunities in academics, social clubs, activities, visual and performing arts, and extended year support services and programs. Before and after school care is offered at the preschool, each primary school, and the grade five and six middle school. Summer programming opportunities are available for students needing credit recovery as well as various enrichment opportunities in the areas of athletics, performing arts and academics..

The district offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards. The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential. The structure consists of four levels: Early Childhood, Primary, Middle, and Secondary. The Secondary level includes post-secondary opportunities to ensure that WPS meets the educational needs of students requiring special education services until the age of twenty-one. At the Elden Johnson Early Childhood Center, students can access full or half day program opportunities. The Primary School level includes eight schools encompassing kindergarten through grade four. Full day, tuition-based, kindergarten is offered, but due to space limitations, enrollment is sometimes contingent upon a lottery for spaces at each school. Title I educational opportunities are available to schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families. Weymouth considers the Middle School level as one school that includes two campuses, one serving grades five and six, and the other serving grades seven and eight. The Secondary level includes one comprehensive high school with grades nine through twelve. Weymouth High School (WHS) provides opportunities for students to complete a variety of academic pathways as well as ten career and technical pathway opportunities.

## 2.2 Grade Configuration

### Current Grade Configuration:

Weymouth Public Schools provides educational programs for students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. There are currently six thousand three hundred students enrolled across WPS which has increased slightly since the data below was recorded. Weymouth has one Middle School split into two campuses. The Abigail Adams (Adams) campus serves grades five and six and the Maria Weston Chapman (Chapman) serves grades seven and eight. Weymouth High School (WHS) enrolls students in grades nine through twelve.

The current enrollment of Chapman is eight hundred eighty two students. Chapman employs a team approach to all core subjects. Students are placed on teams of ninety to one hundred students and have a teacher for each core subject: Math, Science, ELA and History. All core teams have a common planning time and limited departmental planning time.

Enrollment by Grade (2017-18)																
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SP	Total
<a href="#">Abigail Adams Middle School</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0	437	469	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	906
<a href="#">Academy Avenue</a>	0	52	67	49	60	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	307
<a href="#">Frederick C. Murphy</a>	0	43	45	50	48	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	246
<a href="#">Johnson Early Childhood Center</a>	193	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	193
<a href="#">Lawrence W. Pingree</a>	0	37	36	44	41	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	193
<a href="#">Maria Weston Chapman Middle School</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	419	458	0	0	0	0	0	882
<a href="#">Ralph Talbot</a>	0	38	50	56	58	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	248
<a href="#">Thomas V. Nash</a>	0	27	35	47	41	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	203
<a href="#">Thomas W. Hamilton Primary School</a>	0	72	64	76	61	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	351
<a href="#">Wessagusset</a>	0	57	54	52	62	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	279
<a href="#">Weymouth High School</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	495	476	456	469	4	1,900
<a href="#">William Seach</a>	0	57	70	61	65	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	318
<b>District</b>	193	383	421	435	436	470	439	472	419	458	495	476	456	469	4	6,026

**Needs:**

One of our biggest challenges as a district is supporting the transitions from primary to Adams to Chapman and then the HS. Over the course of five years, students are required to make three significant school transitions. During the open forum the community expressed the desire to limit those transitions and support our students to move from a self contained primary school to a cluster or neighborhood designed middle school and finally to the HS. Another top concern of the open forum was to move fifth grade back to primary schools.

**Proposed:**

One of the most effective strategies employed by middle schools is team teaching. Team teaching aims to foster greater social connectivity and facilitate cooperative planning among teachers. Research suggests that “as a result of improved self-concept and sense of school membership, students show increases in academic achievement, conduct, and peer relationships,” (Hanover Research, 2017). Experts recommend team teaching as an effective strategy for building this atmosphere of support and facilitating a sense of connection to school, teachers, and peers among young adolescents. Teaming can benefit teachers as well as students, as it can contribute to a positive and rewarding work climate, thereby increasing job satisfaction. According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) survey of 1,400 middle school principals, 84 percent of middle schools serving students in grades six through eight implement teaming. A more recent study comparing a sample of highly effective middle schools to a random sample of middle schools found that the highly effective schools were more likely to use some form of interdisciplinary teaming (ninety percent versus seventy two percent), and were more likely to provide common planning periods for interdisciplinary teacher teams (ninety four percent versus seventy seven percent), (Hanover Research, 2018).

In April of 2016, WPS submitted a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Association (MSBA) for a renovated or new Chapman Middle School. WPS in conjunction with MSBA developed a timeline for the Project which spans over seven years. The feasibility study WPS created looked at several potential grade configurations.

- **Option A** maintains the current configuration of fifth and sixth grade at Adams servicing 975 students and seventh and eighth grade at Chapman servicing 985 students. This option does not reduce transitions for students which was one of the primary concerns during the open forum. This option also does not move fifth grade back to primaries or allow for the district to move forward in providing universal full day K.
- **Option B** looks at the configuration of two middle schools, each containing sixth-eighth grade servicing 715 and 745 students (at Adams and Chapman respectively), with fifth grade being relocated to the primary schools. Option B is not feasible as our current primary schools do not have capacity to absorb the fifth grade. We would require another building to support this shift and also universal full day K, and this building does not exist.



- **Option C** would also have two middle schools, each containing fifth-eighth grade, with Adams servicing 715 students and Chapman servicing 1230 students. This option creates significant inequities for students attending the “old” middle school vs. the new middle school which was a major concern at the open forum. It creates a very different educational experience for students based on which school they attend. Option C also does not move fifth grade back to the primaries or allow space for universal full day K.
- **Option D** looks at the configuration of one, sixth-eighth grade middle school, servicing 1470 students. Adams would become a primary school and all primary schools would serve students in K-fifth grades. Option D is the most ideal option as it has the potential for having the most positive educational impact. This option would minimize student transitions to two between the primary, middle, and high schools. This option will present the least amount of redistricting to achieve universal full-day kindergarten, and it allows for fifth to be moved back to primaries.

Weymouth believes that Option D will remove current and avoid future inequities, decrease student transitions, improve resources, align curriculum, support middle school teaming practices, and foster cross-curriculum collaborative work. In line with our vision, the school has to be inclusive, equitable, personalized, and interdisciplinary.

A list of the advantages we see for a six-eight middle school, Option D:

- Increased vertical alignment for K-five and six-eight:  
Moving fifth grade to the primaries would support the elementary model and curriculum articulation recommended by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Placing sixth grade with seventh and eighth also supports DESE curriculum articulation for six to eight and allows for more rigorous content instruction at the sixth grade level within a middle school structure. One of the biggest areas of inequity that Weymouth intends to alleviate is the ability to offer full day kindergarten to a very small portion of the population. The National Education Association found that full day kindergartners have higher achievement gains than those in half day, and full day programs supported their social-emotional needs more by providing increased time to transition between activities and reflect on activities, (NCES, 2004; NEA, 2006 ).
- Reduction of student transitions from school to school:  
Eliminating the transition from sixth to seventh grade will allow for stronger teacher/student relationships and increased family involvement in both the primaries and middle school. The number of transitions students make between schools was an area of highest concern at our open forum and visioning meetings. Currently students transition from their primary school to Adams to Chapman and then to the high school which the community would like to see reduced (Krauss, F.M., 2015).

- Enhanced educator collegiality and improved communication/collaboration between staff and families. In the new building, space would be allocated for teachers to more easily meet and plan across disciplines and through departments. The visioning team also recommended that there be spaces for community use, allowing families and staff varied opportunities for collaboration (Marzano, R., 2003).
- Improved technology infrastructure to support the implementation of digital literacy for all students and provide equitable access to wireless internet and online resources. Improve infrastructure and increase wifi to flexibly support identified wants and needs

Option B is not feasible based on our current school building's capacity. We conducted a room inventory of all primary schools and concluded we would require another building to support this shift. The information below is current and does not represent any additional Special Education classroom needs that have been requested in the 2018-19 Budget. Currently, we do not have space to keep grade 5 in primaries without utilizing Abigail Adams as an additional primary school.

#### Current Primary School Capacity

<b>Primary School</b>	<b>Rooms Available</b>	<b>Rooms Currently Used K-4</b>	<b>Total Enrollment as of 1/2/18</b>	<b>Current Shortage / Excess</b>	<b>Min. Rooms Needed for Grade 5</b>	<b>Space Totals with 5th Gr</b>
<i>Academy</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16 (15+library)</i>	<i>314</i>	<i>-1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Short 4 rm</i>
<i>Hamilton</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>364</i>	<i>+ 2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Short 2 rm</i>
<i>Murphy</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>252</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Short 2 rm</i>
<i>Nash</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>+ 1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Even</i>
<i>Pingree</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>189</i>	<i>+ 4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Plus 2 rm</i>
<i>Seach</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>330</i>	<i>+ 5</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Plus 2 rm</i>
<i>Talbot</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>242</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Short 2 rm</i>
<i>Wessagusset</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>281</i>	<i>+ 2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Short 1 rm</i>
					<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>Short 7 rm</i></b>

Under proposed Options A and C, there would be no teacher licensure considerations as the grade configuration would keep the same grade structures that currently exist.

Option D will impact less than ten teachers as far as need for licensure to teach fifth grade at the primary level.

### **2.3 Class Size Policies**

#### **Current:**

Weymouth currently strives to keep class sizes at or lower than 25 students.

#### **2016-17 Weymouth Class Size Report**

<b>Selected Populations</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>State</b>
Total # of Classes	2,529	448,895
Average Class Size	18.9	18.1
Number of Students	6,360	958,339
Female %	48.8	48.7
Male %	51.2	51.3
English Language Learner %	3.7	10.0
Students with Disabilities %	16.6	17.4
Economically Disadvantaged %	26.2	29.6

#### **Needs:**

Research studies recommend middle school class sizes that are fewer than twenty students. This size contributes to slightly better academic performance, increased student engagement, long term socio-economic success, and increased teacher retention. These benefits are particularly pronounced in younger students, high needs students, and students with disabilities, (Hanover Research, pg. 32).

#### **Proposed:**

Weymouth is striving to meet the state average of 18.1 students per class. Forty one percent of WPS students are in the high needs category. Due to this percentage, we feel that meeting the state average for class size would better support the needs of our students.

### **2.4 School Scheduling Methodology**

#### **Current:**

Both Adams and Chapmans schedules are revisited annually and adjustments are made in consideration of student needs, enrollment, budgeting and contractual agreements. At Adams, grades five and six, the student day begins at 8:10 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. The student schedule rotates on a six day basis and consists of three 55-minute periods, one 75-minute period, one 25 minute lunch period and two 50-minute periods. Academic Program periods occur every other day for a quarter during different times in the rotating schedule therefore have varying period lengths. All core teachers are granted flex time within their

schedule to expand or adapt core instructional time to better meet the curriculum needs of their students. This flex time is generated and influenced by interdisciplinary units, student projects and presentations, guest speakers, community connections, and school-wide events. Flex time also allows for a teacher to incorporate additional time for more in depth exploration or re-teaching opportunities in any core subject area. When scheduling, priority is given to students in Special Education or English Language Learners(ELL) programs. We strive to have all classes heterogeneously assigned by using of an algorithm of data points generated by common testing and student demographics.

In grades seven and eight, the student day goes from 7:40 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. The student schedule rotates on a six day cycle and consists of six 57-minute periods(Figure 1.a.) The students have a 25 minute lunch built into the period rotation. Students meet in their core subjects everyday of the six day cycle, this represents four of the periods. Enrichment programs occur every other day for a quarter during different times in the rotating schedule, these periods are also 57 minutes long.

Teachers also benefit from the interaction and collaboration that takes place among educators during the student support period. Staff is scheduled to have nine total preparation periods per six day cycle. Two periods are collaborative and allow for Professional Learning Communities(PLC) meeting time, guidance common planning time and administrative common planning time. Common planning time is designed for teachers to work with their grade level colleagues as well as to meet vertically by subject area in order to develop or enhance the curriculum. Well-planned instruction and assessment is a priority of the Adams and Chapman staff, and all stakeholders benefit from the time to meet and develop the differentiated learning criteria needed to present the highest quality of education to all students in our classrooms, in all grades.

Figure 1.a

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
1st Block	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F
2nd Block	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block A
3rd Block	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block A	Block B
4th Block	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block A	Block B	Block C
5th Block	Block E	Block F	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
6th Block	Block F	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E

#### Schedule Advantages

- Exploratory program exposes students to a variety of non core academic opportunities
- Schedule allows for flexible planning
- Schedule allows for common planning opportunities for teams and departments
- Schedule allows for enrichment and elective classes that exposes students to a variety of non-core academic opportunities

If the structure of the master schedule remains the same, the proposed educational plan may translate into a form of a six (6) day seven (7) period rotating schedule (see figure 1.2) Each student engages in five (5) core academic classes and two (2) exploratory classes each day. Core classes include ELA, Math Science, Social Studies and a World Language (French, Spanish or World Cultures for grade 6). Exploratory classes vary by quarter or trimester and include: PE, Fitness, Health, STEAM 1, STEAM 2 (aforementioned in response 4e) PBL, Art , Music, Band, Choirs, Theater Arts ( see figures 1.3 and 1.4 below). Each quarter or trimester, the students are placed in a two different exploratory classes (see figure 1.5 for possible student schedule example). Variances of the master schedule shouldn't vary too much from the existing schedule. Fundamentals of the master schedule, in whatever form it takes, will consistently have an exploratory and/or elective model in which students rotate off core academics to explore varying interest based courses.

### **Needs:**

While the schedule is cascading and in blocks, as is recommended for middle schools, there are some deficiencies that do not support the equity, interdisciplinary, and inclusion practices of Weymouth's vision. Teachers have little planning time with special educators and they have limited common planning time. In order for teachers to have common planning time, there needs to be enough exploratory courses to allow for students to be off team so that teachers have co-planning opportunities. Inclusion is not fully implemented in many areas due to the lack of co-planning time for educators. Cross-teaming, another best practice for middle school students, is also limited under the current schedule. Resources cannot easily be shared or accessed and interdisciplinary opportunities are limited.

### **Adams Schedule Disadvantages:**

- Some days in the rotation could have multiple transitions for students
- Period length is not inline with research, maximum length is 55 minutes whereas research states ELA should be between 75 and 120 minutes per day.
- Currently, there are space and instructional constraints by having up to eighty students in the gymnasium at a time.
- Most of the exploratory classes are in a separate section of the school away from core instruction.
- Presently, exploratory classes have no connection to the core curriculum and lack connections with each other.
- Classroom spaces are not designed for team teaching and in some cases spaces are distant from team area.

### **Chapman Schedule Disadvantages**

- Schedule does not currently allow for strong cross teaming opportunities
- Presently, exploratory classes have no connection to the core curriculum and lack connections with each other.
- Classroom spaces are not designed for team teaching and in some cases spaces are distant from team area.

- Most of the exploratory classes are in a separate section of the school away from core instruction.

### **Proposed:**

In Options A-D, there is the same proposed change to the middle school schedule. The proposed scheduling would provide equity, interdisciplinary opportunities and focus on inclusionary practices. A proposed schedule of seven periods a day would create the ability for students to engage in more exploratories, allow flexibility to support student needs, such as extension or intervention activities and also increase co-planning time. A seven period schedule will also align with the high school, supporting an easier transition from middle school to high school.

The open forum meeting and the visioning team voiced a priority for the new middle school to expand the fine and performing arts, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) feeder program for the HS. A seven period schedule will allow for more of these feeder programs. During the first year students will choose from several exploratory classes. In subsequent years students can select electives associated with these exploratory options. World languages will become part of their core curriculum in grades seven and eight which will support student success in world languages at the high school. The schedules below (see figure 1.1 & 1.2) is a sample of how a seven period, six day rotating cycle could accommodate five core subjects with opportunities for exploratories. Such changes in the schedule would require contractual agreements.

**Figure 1.1 Possible Proposed Schedule**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
1st period	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F
2nd period	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block G
3rd period	Block C	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block G	Block A
4th period	Block D	Block E	Block F	Block G	Block A	Block B
5th period	Block E	Block F	Block G	Block A	Block B	Block C
6th period	Block F	Block G	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
7th Period	Block G	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D	Block E

**Figure 1.2 Possible Student Schedule Term 1**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
1st period	STEAM 1	Acad Support	ELA	Math	History	Science
2nd period	PE	ELA	Math	History	Science	World Lang
3rd period	ELA	Math	History	Science	World Lang	Acad Support
4th period	Math	History	Science	World Lang	STEAM 1	Theater
5th period	History	Science	World Lang	Acad Support	PE	ELA
6th period	Science	World Lang	STEAM 1	Theater	ELA	Math
7th Period	World Lang	Theater	PE	ELA	Math	History

**Figure 1.3 Exploratory Schedule**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Days 1,3,6	STEAM 1	PBL	Art	Music
Days 2,4,6	Theater Arts or Music	STEAM 2	Broadcast	Art

**Figure 1.4: Exploratory Schedule with Band or Chorus**

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Days 1,3,6	STEAM 1	PBL	Art	Music
Days 2,4,6	Band/Choirs	Band/Choirs	Band/Choirs	Band/Choirs

One third of the school, most likely by grade, will be in an exploratory class during any given part of the day. Example: Grade 6 students are in exploratory classes during periods 1 and 2 while seventh and eighth graders are in core academics. Each exploratory classroom will be utilized six (6) out of seven (7) periods a day or 86% of the school day. Neighborhood core areas would be utilized five (6) out of (7) periods a day or 86% of the day.

## 2.5 Teaching Methodology and Structure

### Current:

Weymouth Public Schools has articulated specific instructional time allotments for both of its middle schools. Adams and Chapman Middle Schools' core subjects include Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts(ELA.) Academic Classrooms are supported

and enhanced by Exploratory(non-core) programs. These Exploratory Program offerings also provide contractual preparation time and team planning for our Academic Classroom Teachers. The weekly time allotments for the core and non-core subjects can be found in the charts below.

**Current Academic Classrooms - Adams Middle School - Grades 5 and 6**

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Time on Learning per week (6 day cycle)</b>	<b># of Staff</b>	<b>Teaching Methodology</b>
ELA	5 and 6	56 minutes per day (Average) 444 minutes per 6 day cycle or 370 minutes per week	18 ELA/SS staff	Whole class and small group instruction; desks or tables used for writing, conferencing, and editing. Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Math	5 and 6	56 minutes per day 340 minutes per 6 day cycle or 283 minutes per week	18 Math Teachers	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Science	5 and 6	56 minutes per day 340 minutes per 6 day cycle or 283 minutes per week	18	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Social Studies	5 and 6	59 minutes per 4/6 cycle 236 minutes per week	18	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Exploratories	5 and 6	87 minutes per day 520 minutes per 6 day cycle	14	Labs, fitness rooms gymnasium. Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning;



		433 minutes per week		Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
--	--	----------------------	--	--

**Current Academic Classrooms - Chapman Middle School - Grades 7 and 8**

<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Time on Learning per week</b>	<b># of Staff</b>	<b>Teaching Methodology</b>
ELA	7 and 8	342 minutes per 6 day cycle	10	Whole class and small group instruction; desks or tables used for writing, conferencing, and editing. Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Math	7 and 8	342 minutes per cycle	10	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Science	7 and 8	342 minutes per cycle	10	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Social Studies	7 and 8	342 minutes per cycle	10	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
World Language	7 and 8	7th grade - 171 minutes per cycle	6	Whole class and collaborative groups; desks or tables for research and

		8th grade - 342 minutes per cycle		project planning; Chromebooks and computer labs for research and writing
Exploratories	7 and 8	Multiple times	25	

### **Core Content Areas Current:**

#### **ELA/Literacy**

The ELA/Literacy curriculum is based on the standards outlined in the MA Curriculum Frameworks for ELA and Literacy, updated in 2017. Both system-wide and site-based professional development focuses on the skills and concepts for reading fluency, comprehension, and the analysis of complex text. Abigail Adams and Maria Chapman Middle School teachers use Reading Street, novels, trade books, anthologies, periodicals, and online sources (NewsELA, ReadWriteThink, etc.) for instructional purposes. Text selections range from a common novel, poem, passage, or short story to teacher selected nonfiction articles, author studies, and independent reading. Teachers also use Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) which is an instructional approach designed to help students learn, use, and adopt the strategies used by skilled writers. It is an approach that adds the element of self-regulation to strategy instruction for writing. Teachers assess comprehension and fluency through tests and quizzes, book reports, and performance based activities (like text-based essays, narrative and informative writing, opinion and/or argument writing, comprehension questions, and presentations). Literacy standards for writing, grammar, and vocabulary are also directly aligned to the 2017 MA Curriculum Frameworks for ELA and Literacy. Language Arts and Reading teachers plan instruction around common themes related to adolescent development, providing students with a strong connection between themselves and what they are reading and writing about in class. The writing and language standards from the Frameworks as well as student and school data drive the planning of instruction, assignments, and assessments.

#### **Mathematics**

The curriculum is based on the current Mathematics standards outlined in the 2017 MA Curriculum Frameworks which integrate the Mathematical Standards for Practice with math content standards. In grades five and six, students develop fluency with operations including fractions, decimals, and whole numbers. Further students connect ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division to problem-solve. Rational numbers and statistical thinking are introduced. Measurement and geometry utilize the coordinate plane to make sense of real world problems. Finally students begin writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations in grade six. In grades seven and eight, students continue to develop an understanding of and apply proportional relationships, expressions and linear equations associated with bivariate data, functions, and statistical thinking regarding samples from populations. Curricular materials to support students' mathematics learning include enVision

Math (2012) texts and associated digital and print-based resources for grades five and six. Big Ideas Math (2010) texts and associated resources are utilized in grades seven and eight. Teachers have also collaboratively developed supplemental activities and materials to address standards at grade level. Some teachers utilize hands-on and virtual manipulatives and project-based lessons to support mathematics instruction in the middle grades. Teachers are also encouraged to use performance task assessments included with text resources. Ongoing iReady testing is conducted three times each year for progress monitoring purposes for math in grades one through ten.

## **Science**

The curriculum is transitioning to the current Science standards outlined in the 2016 MA Curriculum Frameworks which integrate the Science and Engineering Practices with science content standards. Science content standards in grades five-eight integrate Earth and space, physical, life, and engineering and technology sciences. In grades five and six students focus on two themes, connections and relationships in systems and structure and function. Grade five students learn that objects and organisms do not exist in isolation and that animals, plants and their environments are connected to, interact with, and are influenced by each other.

An intended outcome of this curriculum supports student ability to describe, analyze, and model connections and relationships of observable components of different systems as key to understanding the natural and designed world. Grade six students endeavor in relevant and engaging opportunities to explore natural phenomena and design problems that highlight the relationship of structure and function in the world around them. Students use models and provide evidence to make claims and explanations about structure-function relationships in different Science, Technology, Engineering (STE) domains. In grades seven and eight, students explore systems, cycles, and cause and effect. A focus on systems requires students to apply concepts and skills across disciplines, since most natural and designed systems and cycles are complex and interactive. Through grade seven, students begin a process of moving from a more concrete to an abstract perspective, since many of the systems and cycles studied are not directly observable or experienced.

In grade eight, students further develop their abstract reasoning ability to examine cause and effect relationships. Being able to analyze phenomena for evidence of causes and processes that often cannot be seen, and being able to conceptualize and describe those, is a significant outcome for grade eight student. Curricular materials to support students' science learning include Harcourt's Science (2008) texts for grades five and six and Prentice Hall's Science Explorer Series (2000) texts for grades seven and eight. Teachers have also collaboratively developed supplemental activities and materials to address standards at grade level. At the fifth grade level teachers have developed kits to teach science lessons. New standards were adopted in 2016. These new standards are quite different from previous standards and require a re-evaluation of the resources currently being utilized to teach science. In order to meet the new standards, some teachers are engaged in curriculum writing activities and share lessons and resources with peers.

## **Social Studies and History**

The curriculum is based on the current History and Social Science standards outlined in the 2003 MA Curriculum Frameworks. Ancient Civilization, United States History, Geography, Economics, and Government are major themes highlighted throughout Grades five - eight. Primary sources, periodicals, field trips, web-based research, and teacher created lessons all contribute to the design and implementation of the social studies curriculum. Many historical fiction novels, biographies, and memoirs are used in both social Studies and ELA units. Students develop research skills as well as informative and argument writing in middle school social studies. Technology is used to enhance research and instruction, as well as for performance based assessments. In both system and site-based professional development, teachers share best practice and supplemental resources. Massachusetts is currently updating the frameworks which will provide the district with an opportunity to review and adjust the current curriculum both vertically and horizontally.

## **World Languages:**

In seventh and eighth grade, students take a world language. Currently Introduction to Spanish or French are taken in the seventh grade and meets every other day all year. Spanish I or French I are offered in the grade eight year. Cultural awareness, conversational skills, vocabulary, basic grammar, and writing skills drive the instructional focus for the year. The student learning outcomes are aligned to the current MA Curriculum Framework for Foreign Language as well as the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards.

English Language Learners(ELL) receive consistent English as a Second Language(ESL) instruction in addition to the state academic standards. ESL includes social and academic language in all four domains including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. ESL instruction provides systematic, explicit, and sustained language instruction, and prepares students for general education by focusing on academic language.

## **Core Content Needs:**

One of the biggest challenges faced by the WPS is the state of facilities at the Chapman Middle School. The school was built as a comprehensive high school in 1961 and though improvements have been made over time, due to budget cuts and constraints, many needed improvements/updates have been difficult to support. While the technology department is working to improve the infrastructure, wireless internet access is limited in many areas of the building. The lack of wireless accessibility has limited curriculum offerings such as career and technology exploratories, maker space availability and overall inconsistencies among teams. The library, which should be an integrated part of the middle school community, is separated from many classrooms and on the second floor allowing limited access for teachers and students during the day. There is ample space but the space is not conducive to middle school needs or best practices. Classrooms are spread all over the building and though every effort is made to keep teams as close as possible, special education classrooms are not always close to the teams

they serve. While both Adams and Chapman offer team structures, the design of the Chapman building often makes it more challenging to meet the needs of middle school students.

During the educational visioning sessions, the educators reviewed the physical (spatial) challenges of delivering a project-based or hands-on curriculum that supports self-directed investigation. These challenges include the limitations typically associated with a “traditional classroom”; a space which was conceived during the industrial revolution and assumes that its primary function is to physically accommodate the appropriate number of student desks and provide a “delivery area” for content and instruction from the teacher. This particular notion of a classroom fails to recognize the spatial requirements of hands-on student inquiry, investigation, and application. As a group of students begin to collaborate to design a building, an automobile, or a new computer application, the spatial limitations of the traditional classroom immediately impose restrictions on their ability to design, fabricate, create, explore, and document their ideas.

During the educational visioning sessions, the educators reviewed the physical (spatial) challenges of delivering their curriculum in ways that promote student growth and foster independence and transferral of 21st Century skills. Faculty noted that they would like to be closer in proximity to core content teachers, citing difficulty for students in travel time as well as in communication between teachers about curriculum and students. The spaces for music, band and chorus at both Adams and Chapman present challenges in developing a strong music program, noting that there is outdated spaces and lack of technology. Many of the exploratory/elective educators cite limited technology, minimal opportunities for co-planning with other teachers, and space that does not meet their student or curriculum needs.

The Chapman building obstructs the district in realizing our educational goals of providing an equitable, personalized, inclusive, and interdisciplinary experience for all students.

*Equity* - There are inconsistent resources available throughout departments, grade levels, and buildings at the middle school level. Shared resources needs to be a regular practice but is very difficult with two campuses and limited co-planning time.

*Interdisciplinary* - The Chapman building was not built with neighborhoods in mind so the proximity of teachers makes interdisciplinary work very challenging. Teams do not meet regularly to make content and instructional practice decisions. Connections across courses are not always authentic and deliberate.

*Personalized* - The physical construct of the Chapman building significantly limits the district in making technological advancements in the educational setting, which in return hinders our students personalized learning experience. These ideal environments are enhanced by technology and have students learning through multiple styles. They are guided by teachers in completing self-directed inquiry and investigation through research and hands-on activities. Such learning settings include small work spaces, STEAM labs, career and technology shops, music recording and television studios, media centers and makerspaces.

*Inclusion* - Inclusion classes currently have large numbers of special education students. The distribution of special needs students is concentrated in a few classes at Chapman. Educators have received training to support co-teaching in these classes, however, co-teaching is not a well developed practice. There are still several substantially separate programs in place at both Chapman and Adams. The creation of neighborhoods with academic support spaces, small work spaces and adjoining classrooms will strengthen our inclusion practices.

### **Proposed Enhancements to Current Content Areas:**

The new facility will allow us to transition our current programs to be more personalized, student directed and interdisciplinary. We would do this by creating a new middle school consisting of neighborhoods that would support a team structure. Below are possible neighborhood configurations based on options:

Weymouth Chapman School Study											
Grade	# Students	Teams							#Classrms	Standard	Science
OPT A:	985										
7	492.5	4	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	22	17	5
8	492.5	4	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	22	17	5
									44	34	10
OPT B:	745										
6	248.3	6	teams of	2					12	6	6
7	248.3	2	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	12	9	3
8	248.3	2	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	12	9	3
									36	24	12
OPT C:	1230										
5	307.5	7	teams of	2					14	7	7
6	307.5	7	teams of	2					14	7	7
7	307.5	3	teams of	5					15	12	3
8	307.5	3	teams of	5					15	12	3
									58	38	20
OPT D:	1470										
6	490.0	11	teams of	2					22	11	11
7	490.0	4	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	22	17	5
8	490.0	4	teams of	5	+	1	team of	2	22	17	5
									66	45	21

In options that include sixth grade teams consisting of two teachers, ELA/History and Math/Science we will require each team to have a science classroom as well as a standard classroom. In all options, the five teacher teams include Math, Science, ELA, History and World Languages. Each of the teams will have academic support spaces integrated within their neighborhood. In Option D, grades seven and eight each have one team of two. These teams of two will be staffed with dual certified teachers and will be designed to provide added support for our students with trauma based backgrounds.

The neighborhoods will have adjoining classrooms to allow for interdisciplinary teaching as well as flexibility of space in the form of common space, small group rooms, and outdoor space. The small group rooms could be used for independent learners, focus groups, and also

offer space for our tiered system of support model. These neighborhoods would promote inclusionary practices, sharing of resources, interdisciplinary units, and co-teaching models.

Each academic neighborhood offers an extension of the classroom that provides the spatial and functional amenities necessary to develop and present projects. These **Neighborhood Collaborative Areas(NCA)** are common spaces shared by all teachers and students within the neighborhood and support presentations, project planning, as well as, display student/group learning artifacts. The use of this space is flexible within the neighborhood core academic classes and is not a scheduled exploratory or elective space. Neighborhood Collaborative Areas will promote social interactions, academic investigation, and problem solving, which are all components embedded in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework.

**STEAM Labs** - (5 spaces) The new building will also have 5 specialized STEAM lab spaces to support CTE feeder programs and enhanced Project-Based Learning(PBL) opportunities. The goal of these spaces is to develop students who are self-motivated learners/explorers and therefore, such spaces should include provisions for project-based student inquiry including building, multi-media, research, presentation, and arts integration. They will allow learners the ability to develop large physical projects in an environment where it is critical to have appropriate space to spread out without the need to break down and store projects each period. These 5 STEAM Labs will need to be accessible by all grade levels and situated as close to academic neighborhoods as is practical and feasible. A goal for the use of these specialized spaces will be to support students to engage in and design projects which support them to “develop employability skills” and explore a variety of potential career paths (ACTE, 2017).

- **Fabrication Lab (Fab Lab):** A fabrication maker space would immerse students in using tools, measuring, and creating objects from materials such as wood, steel, plastics (aka, dirty space). Students would design, measure and assemble projects.
- **Makerspace (MSpace):** A lab space dedicated to designing and producing electronic interface devices, robotics and programming. (aka, clean space). Student will be posed with a problem and need to design and build a device to solve it. Students will work with circuitry, electronic interface design, and robotics. The engineering design process will be at the core of this course.
- **Film, Media and Broadcast Center(Broadcast):** A lab space dedicated to pre and post productions of media such as short films, documentaries and studio productions. Students will edit film, record and mix sound, compose music, design and engage in cinematographic skills. Student will also produce live and recorded studio productions.
- **Expeditionary Learning Lab(EL Lab):** A space dedicated to project based learning where students are immersed in a realworld, locally connected projects. Students will gain technological, presentation and collaboration skills while

gaining valuable problem solving abilities. This space is would resemble a ‘think-tank’ environment where students are creating displays, working on critical writing assignments and designing public relations materials.

- **Wellness, Nutrition and Culinary Lab (Culinary):** A lab space dedicated to food science, dietetics, and nutrition. Students will be exposed to how varying cultures influence foods and nutrition. The students will learn how to use cooking materials, food safety and prepare a full course meal from concept to plate.

Science Labs in each of the neighborhoods will be scheduled spaces where students engage in inquiry based learning activities aligned with the MA STE Framework and addressing three MA Science domains of Life, Physical and Earth Sciences and Technology/Engineering as a core academic content class. These spaces are scheduled as a core academic class, not an exploratory or elective. Please see previous responses in sections 4e and 15a for scheduling for and utilization of these areas. These labs will be staffed by licensed educators in their content area.

Laboratory Space	Class	Licensure required	Other Licensure meeting criteria to be approved by Principal
Fabrication Lab ( <b>Fab Lab</b> )	STEAM 1 (Dirty)	Technology/ Engineering	General Science Math/Science
Makerspace ( <b>MSpace</b> )	STEAM 2 (Clean)	Technology/ Engineering	General Science Math/Science
Expeditionary Learning Lab ( <b>EL Lab</b> )	Project Based Learning	Humanities	ELA, History, Library Science, Instructional Technology
Film, Media, Broadcast Lab ( <b>Broadcast</b> )	Broadcasting	Humanities	ELA, History, Library Science, Instructional Technology
Wellness, Nutrition & Culinary ( <b>Culinary</b> )	Family & Consumer Science	Health	Special Education

### Supporting Evidence:

- **School districts should emphasize common spaces to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration among teachers and other school staff.**  
District leaders may consider having multiple teachers share individual classrooms and clustering classrooms around common areas by interdisciplinary team. Common office spaces for interdisciplinary teams can also reduce barriers to communication and enable teachers to collaborate in their planning. Such design components can help teachers



explore the connections between their content areas through informal conversations and formal strategy sessions (Hanover Research citation)

- **Instructional spaces should be designed for maximum flexibility and to encourage student collaboration.** Ideally, classrooms will provide "break-out" areas where students can work independently or in groups. The integration of movable walls and screens in classroom construction can also help teachers and students create breakout spaces as needed. Furthermore, furnishing classrooms with mobile, reconfigurable desks, chairs, and tables allows occupants to rearrange the space to accommodate various student grouping arrangements and instructional activities. (Hanover Research citation; David, 2008)
- **Designed to support a variety of small learning community activities.** Each learning neighborhood will consist of 100-120 students and are organized to support co-teaching within and across core content. That is within the optimal range of academic neighborhood size (Hirsch, 2017). Flexibility in design supports groups of students and teachers to meet in different configurations and to change group size and space utilized based on instructional needs. For example math/science classes may be combine to complete a data collection activity together and then move back to single class groupings (Bernstein, Millsap, Schimmenti, & Page, 2008; Cotton, 2001; David, 2008)
- **Space and Design to support Project Based Inquiry (PBL) and Interdisciplinary Learning (IDL)** The aim of the project-based inquiry approach is to provide the opportunity for students to engage in what Newmann, Bryk, and Nagaoka (2001) described as authentic, intellectual work. They described the distinctive characteristics of authentic intellectual work as “construction of knowledge through disciplined inquiry in order to produce products that have value beyond school” (p. 14). Project-based, hands-on learning activities require space to conduct investigations, maintain work-in-progress areas, access and utilize media production or specialized technologies, provide opportunities for interdisciplinary connection, and support sharing and displaying student products and artifacts (Newmann, Carmichael, & King, 2016).

Option D is most ideal as it has the potential for having the most positive educational impact while minimizing student transitions, moving fifth grade back to primaries, and avoiding inequities.

Option A would continue to be challenging in vertically aligning curriculum in the DESE recommended grade bands. This model does not allow for a reduction in transitions which was a high priority with the visioning team and at the open forum.

Option C creates inequities for students attending the “old” middle school vs. the new middle school which was a large concern of the visioning team and the community.

## **Student Guidance & Support Services**

There are three full-time adjustment counselors as well as one counselor who split the time between the Therapeutic Learning Center and mainstream homerooms. Two counselors each serve twelve homerooms. One counselor is assigned to ten homerooms and is in charge of all the 504 plans. The other counselor is assigned to the Therapeutic Learning Center and six homerooms. In addition, the counselors continue to serve students they service in grade five when those students move to grade six. Counselors attend one common planning time per cycle with each of the teacher teams. The counselors act as a conduit to administration for student issues that rise to the level of administrative involvement. The counselors meet formally once a cycle with the administrative as well as on an as needed basis. The school adjustment counselors have their own PLC and common planning time. The counselors service students on IEP's, 504 plans, Counseling Plans, students referred by teachers or administration, and meet with students as needed. The Chapman school has three school counselors and three adjustment counselors. Each house is assigned a specific counselor and adjustment counselor to work on developing relationships with students and families. It is the goal of the Chapman to support these counselors in working with students and families over their two years at Chapman. The house configuration provides this opportunity for both guidance staff and the administrative team.

The guidance counselors at Chapman work with Administration in the review and writing of students' 504s. The counselors act as a conduit to administration for student issues that rise to the level of administrative involvement. The counselors meet formally once a cycle with the administrative team as well as on an as needed basis. School Adjustment Counselors also work with students within the house configuration. Their primary responsibility is to deliver the counseling services of students with IEPs and 504 plans. They also work with students who may have more in-depth needs associated with more prevalent counseling needs and those in crisis. Throughout the school year guidance counselors push into seventh grade classrooms to conduct and interpret career inventories (MassCIS). Guidance staff deliver the Break Free From Depression Program (Children's Hospital) to eighth grade students. Guidance supports transition from 6th to 7th grades and course selection and enrollment for rising 9th graders.

### **Needs:**

The current proximity of counselors to the educational spaces is not conducive for frequent check-ins, classroom support and an overall neighborhood feel. The open forum also expressed reducing transitions from school to school to allow for more lasting and meaningful relationships with the students and families.

### **Proposed:**

Options C and D both reduce transitions and therefore support development of long term relationships between counselors, students and families. Option D however eliminates inequities and allows for all students to experience the same educational experiences.

## **Administrative Structure**

### **Current:**

At Adams, the administrative team is led by the principal. There are two assistant principals, each is in charge of one grade of approximately 500 students. The Principal at Adams designs the Master Schedule, designates human resources, creates an educational vision for the school and manages tier 3 cases with guidance counselors and assistant principals. The assistants are assigned a class of students and loop with those students as they move up from fifth to sixth grade. Assistant principals tend to the needs of discipline, student services and placement, as well as staff evaluations and district policy.

At Chapman, the administrative team is lead by the principal. There are three assistant principals, each is in charge of a house of students. These houses consist of both seventh and eighth grade students. The house break down is 354 students, 268 students, and 253 students. Assistant principals, along with the principal, are in charge of school culture, discipline, attendance, student services, policy implementation and legal matters, student intervention team, transportation, student placement, and grade transitions. Each of the assistant principals share in the responsibilities of instructional leadership, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), educational testing, along with the daily business of their house. The assistant principals share evaluations of staff with the principal, and assistant curriculum directors.

In addition to the varying student affair roles, assistant principals also lead school initiatives. Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) team and the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) team. The administrative team works closely with the school adjustment counselors to meet the social-emotional and academic needs of all the students

### **Needs:**

The middle school needs a leadership team that will continue to provide the necessary supports and structures that create a positive culture and climate for middle school students and faculty. Administrators would benefit from the opportunity to spend longer amounts of time with students before they transition to another school.

### **Proposed:**

In Option D: the proposed structure would be grades six-eight with a principal, an associate principal, and three deans of student affairs who loop with students. Option D would allow adults to create longer lasting connections with students by reducing the amount of transitions.

## **Professional Development Spaces**

### **Current:**

Professional Development is a valued part of the Weymouth Educational Philosophy. Our district vision includes a strategic lever that promotes professional learning focused on the instructional core. The Weymouth School District believes that professional learning is

necessary to promote teacher growth and improve student outcomes and learning experiences. Effective professional development can create interdisciplinary units, develop inclusive practices, and limit inequities across our district. At Adams, professional development is conducted primarily in the Library and breakout sessions in the classrooms. Larger venues typically utilize the auditorium or cafeteria. There is one professional learning center on the third floor for teams of teachers to use for planning and data analysis. At Chapman, small to mid-sized professional development workshops are currently held in Chapman in a room designated for professional development workshops.

**Needs:**

Weymouth needs a large, yet flexible space that would support adult learning. In Option A, Option B, and Option C, the professional development space could be transformed in the new building but would remain the same in the existing building. In Option D, there is the potential for having the most positive educational impact. Grade five teachers would be in buildings with other elementary teachers, allowing for collaboration on elementary curriculum. Likewise, grade six would be able to work with their colleagues at the middle school. The professional development space could be built to support the needs of all of the teachers in the district.

**Proposed:**

To ensure long-term commitment to PBL and effective delivery of instruction, districts should actively address both approaches in its PD programs. Any PD program must possess clear value for teachers to encourage their active attention and commitment to using target skills. Over the course of a PD program, teachers should receive a recap of relevant theory, view exemplary demonstrations of strategies, practice new skills, and reflect upon effectiveness. Sustained coaching or additional work within a professional learning community (PLC) should follow workshops and presentations to support teachers in developing their proficiency with PBL and establishing collaborative working relationships with colleagues (Shannon, K. & Cate, J., 2015). In our proposed space, there would be flexible professional development spaces to foster collaboration and build effective partnerships between administrators and faculty. Such flexible spaces may include the project spaces and the media center.

## **2.6 Teacher Planning & Room Assignment Policies**

**Current:**

At the Chapman, room assignments are based on proximity to the team. Generally three of the four core content area teachers are in proximity to each other. Science classrooms are all in the same area as the original configuration was a high school setting. This means that the Science classroom is not in the area of the team classrooms. Teacher work and planning space is limited and common planning is generally done in classrooms. There are limited collaboration areas for teachers and staff. There is one common lunch area that is small and underutilized.

**Needs:** While the focus is on student needs, faculty does need common, updated workspaces with the appropriate technology and materials to support their curriculum and instruction.

**Proposed:**

The goal for the new middle school would be to provide a common team setting of classrooms with collaborative workspaces for teachers. Team classrooms would surround a common area for student group work and cross-curricular activities. Teachers would be in close proximity to each other and have ample student collaborative work spaces. The neighborhood model would also have a planning/collaboration center for teachers to use as a resource and meeting space.

**2.7 Pre-Kindergarten****Current:**

The Johnson Early Childhood Center provides nationally accredited, developmentally appropriate education to all students. The concept of the whole, healthy child is at the forefront of the school community, driving the experience for students while providing academic, social-emotional and physical growth. Currently, Weymouth has seen a rise in students' social-emotional needs and medically fragile students, therefore, we recognize the need for community based health and wellness services. Early Intervention screening and evaluation provides students with special needs the additional support needed during developmental years.

**2.8 Kindergarten****Current:**

Weymouth Public Schools provides both full day (tuition-based) and half-day (free) programs for students entering kindergarten.

**Needs:**

Offering universal full day kindergarten is a priority need for the Weymouth Public Schools. The National Education Association found that full day kindergartners has higher achievement gains than those in half day and full day programs supported their social-emotional needs, as they had more time to transition between activities and reflect on activities, (NCES, 2004; NEA, 2006 ).

**Proposed:**

The district of Weymouth recognizes the importance of offering full day kindergarten to its community to support the social and emotional needs, as well as the academic needs, of our students. In Options A - C, the current kindergarten offerings would continue. Option D provides space to allow us to offer full day, universal K at their home primary schools.

## **2.9 Lunch Programs**

Weymouth Public schools works with Chartwells School Dining Services to ensure that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Chartwells provides an attractive and fun dining environment with nutritious, popular menu choices, and education programs that promote healthy eating habits in a way that appeals to each age group.

Both schools have full kitchens that serve breakfast and lunch. We have seven staff and one manager at each site. Chapman (seven and eight) serves 3 lunches while Adams (five and six) serves 4 lunches.

### **Needs:**

The middle school needs to accommodate a large number of students during three lunch blocks. The lunch area should provide quick options for students in a stress free setting. This space should have noise-reducing technology as well as appropriate lighting. It was also identified by the visioning team that the new middle school is a place that is welcoming to the community. With this in mind the cafeteria should be a flexible space that can accommodate various audiences and functions.

### **Proposed:**

There are no proposed changes in food preparation. In a new middle school, we would want to include a full service kitchen and design that accommodates enough students to reduce the number of lunch services to three. The space should also be flexible to support various community audiences and functions.

The new Chapman Middle School will have a minimum of three (3) seatings, optimally four (4) reducing the number of students from 735 per seating to 490 per seating for three (3) seatings or 368 for four (4) seatings. Currently, Abigail Adams seats four (4) lunches and Chapman Middle School has three (3) seatings. These lunch seatings will be over two blocks or one long block.

## **2.10 Technology Instruction Policies and Program Requirement. Description of Existing Educational Technology**

### **Current:**

Technology in Weymouth will be undergoing many improvements over the next five years. Both Adams and Chapman have their own integration specialists on site. At this time, there is limited wifi infrastructure in both buildings. Currently Chapman has Promethean boards in many of the classrooms and at least one flat panel digital display. Adams has projectors that they use with dry erase boards and one flat panel digital display. These devices are used by teachers to include technology into their daily lessons. There is limited student interaction with these devices. There are Chromebooks for student use at both schools. Chapman currently has 282 Chromebooks for 883 students, and that number of chromebooks will increase significantly by March 2018 to support online testing of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS.) Adams has 644 Chromebooks for 907 students.

**Needs:**

Weymouth recognizes that technology plays an integral role in creating our vision of equity, inclusion, and interdisciplinary learning for all students. Students need to have access to technology in and beyond the classroom to succeed in this digital age. The faculty should also have access to the most innovative technology to support their instruction and curriculum. The school has to have strong infrastructure that can support large numbers of students accessing wifi at the same time to allow for online testing as well as the use of online resources. Technology should be present throughout the school and in all classrooms. In Options A - C, inequities in technology access and resources would continue in the older middle school, while it would be updated in the new building. In Option D, middle school students would have the same access to technology resources and improved infrastructure.

**Proposed:**

The new middle school would offer one to one portable access for teachers and students. This would be most likely in the form of Chromebooks. There would be improved infrastructure and increased wifi to support identified wants and needs of the students and staff. Ideally, the number of technology integration specialists would be increased to support utilizing technology to address the National Education Technology Standards for students as well as the new Digital Literacy and Computer Science Frameworks. More technology integrationists will also create the potential for enhanced interactivity that also addresses access and saves time for teacher. The new building should provide adaptive resources where needed for any and all students to access the curriculum and instruction.

**2.11 Media Center/Library****Current:**

Both middle school libraries serve as a school-wide computer lab in addition to providing traditional resources, like books and reference materials. Both libraries are staffed by part-time paraprofessionals. There have not been librarian/media specialists at the middle schools since 2008 when there was restructuring due to budgetary issues. Resources are plentiful but need updating. The Abigail Adams library is centrally located, making it accessible for the school community. The Chapman library is a welcoming space somewhat removed from many classrooms and regular foot traffic because it is on the second floor. This area serves as a research area for Chapman students with additional computers and study spaces provided. Teachers utilize this space on a regular basis for group activities and projects. The technology area is limited but does provide student access to additional text based research materials.

**Needs:**

The middle school library needs to provide flexible and ample space that operates as both a resource center, an educational and technology hub, and a gathering space. In Option D, the new library would be designed to meet the technology and resource needs of all middle school students. This option supports Weymouth's vision for a 21st century middle school that

embraces inclusive, equitable, personalized, and interdisciplinary opportunities that will help prepare our students to become critical global thinkers and researchers. Option A-C would include this design at Chapman while keeping the current library at Adams.

**Proposed:**

Flexible and significant space is needed for the library to appropriately serve as a teaching area as well as a resources center for all students and staff. Furniture should also be lightweight and flexible to allow for multiple uses and configurations. Ideally, there would be a work room with a sink. Certified library teacher or library/media specialist would be necessary to support the library as a learning commons capable of delivering curriculum to support the needs of students, teachers and community. The library should be the educational and technical hub of the building and provide a connection to and support of instructional technology. A licensed library/media professional is necessary for the district to have access to state operated databases, an important information source for students and faculty. This specialist would also provide instructional technology support for students and teachers. The library should be centrally located near classrooms so the school community can easily access the space and the resources.

## **2.12 Visual Art Programs**

**Current:**

The visual arts curriculum is anchored to the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework standards and guided by the principals and elements of art. Adams Visual Arts program supports fifth and sixth graders to have art during both years. The visual arts program at Chapman is comprised of two large classrooms that were constructed to house the old high school art department. The rooms are spacious, with large windows, and plenty of storage space. Chapman has one art teacher, he instructs regular and special education students in grades seven and eight. He instructs all seventh grade students in a 22 day exploratory block and about one quarter of eighth grade students as an elective. He has many spaces to post student work and provide space for works-in-progress within his classroom, but no designated spaces within the building to share student work. He uses abandoned cork boards throughout the building to post student work throughout the school.

**Needs:**

In Options A-C, the current art rooms at Adams would remain. In Option D, the new art room would be designed to meet the spatial, technology, and resource needs of the middle school. This option supports Weymouth's vision for a neighborhood 21st century middle school that encompasses inclusive, equitable, and interdisciplinary opportunities that will help prepare our students become globally-competent citizens and critical thinkers and researchers.

**Proposed:**

The new facility should include well appointed spaces with storage and plenty of room for a variety of media to be used and ongoing work accommodated. The spaces should be



equipped and furnished to support exploration of a variety of media and modes for creating artwork. Full technological capabilities shall be provided to support digital photography, graphic arts, and possible 3D printing. The goal of the middle grades program would be to support students interested in art to begin focusing in this content area with a variety of experiences before moving up to the high school. Another goal is to increase offerings of art courses for all students in grades five-eight.

### **2.13 Music/Performing Arts Program**

#### **Current:**

The current music program at Abigail Adams is based on a quarterly exploratory model. There are four courses taught by four separate full time teachers: Ukulele Classroom - One term, every other day for 55 mins on average; Music and Performing Arts - One term, every other day for 55 mins on average; Theatre Arts - One term, every other day for 55 mins on average; Band - Full year, one to two meetings per week either by instrument type or by class schedule; and two after school performing ensembles: Piano Club - 20 students, once a week for one hour, one staff member and Musical Club (chorus and drama) - 175 students, twice a week for one hour, two staff members.

Chorus occurs only as a half year program after school. Theatre Arts classes are conducted in the Auditorium, which presents several problems with space use. Band, Ukulele Classroom, and Music and Performing Arts each have a dedicated teaching space with some access to technology. Practice room spaces are currently used as staff offices. Students are provided a classroom set of ukuleles, a classroom set of keyboards, and the opportunity to rent a band instrument if they so choose. Band is an elective course, while the other three are required and scheduled to all students in a homeroom. Some homerooms will not be scheduled for all three music/theatre exploratories.

The auditorium is largely out of date and is beginning to fall into disrepair. Of 560 seats, 190 are in need of repair. Seventy percent of stage lighting is not functional and front and rear curtains are deteriorated. Side panels are no longer hanging. The stage is not large enough to accommodate all our student performers, so the gym has been used as an alternate performance space although it is not acoustically appropriate for these types of events. The space, which is also used as a classroom, cannot be effectively secured in case of emergency. The stage is not handicapped accessible, and no handicapped seating is provided in the space.

The current Chapman configuration has two full time employees to support the music program. One teacher is dedicated to Chorus, Piano and Guitar, General Music and Garage Band and the other is responsible for Band, General Music and some instrumental music. The program utilizes out-dated band and chorus space for their classrooms. There is some use of technology for some classes. These classes are offered as exploratory classes that meet on a quarterly basis. The band students are currently pulled from their Academic Support Block for their band classroom.

The Chapman auditorium is a spacious auditorium with approximately 950 wooden seats, yet it is very outdated with an inadequate sound and lighting board. The stage space is limited with undersized wing and fly space, eliminating opportunities to host competitions and

community productions. The acoustics and sound system are limited as is the lighting. The stage is not compliant with the American Disabilities Act, and although the auditorium space is handicap accessible, it has limitations in overall accessibility.

**Needs:**

Our new middle school building needs an auditorium with appropriate acoustics that will hold close to a thousand people to support school and community events. There is an increasing need to find appropriate spacing for municipality meetings and town forums as the Adams auditorium is in disrepair and not handicap accessible. The community also needs a space to support significant theatrical productions, musical performances, recitals, and camps.

The wooden stage floor should be large enough to fit two hundred musicians and appropriate equipment. The curtains, lighting, sound, recording, and video equipment should be suitable for school and community musical performances and theatrical productions. This space should provide adequate wing and fly space to support the growing theater arts program at the middle school level. This space should be entirely handicapped accessible and attached to appropriate dressing spaces for theatrical performers. In Options A - C, the current auditorium at Adams would remain while the new building would support the above identified needs. This would create large inequities between the middle schools and the educational experiences of our students.

**Proposed:**

The Weymouth Public schools is dedicated to the fine and performing arts. The need for this auditorium space comes from an understanding that student involvement in the fine and performing arts has a profound impact on schools and their communities. Students see improved academic performance, improved attendance, an increase in reading comprehension and mathematics, and growth in self-esteem. This leads to support and development of the whole child. The auditorium space would be used on a regular basis during the school day to support larger gathering of the theater arts program, for regular rehearsal of the larger band and chorus groups. The full auditorium would also support regular programs that are brought to the school to support the student's social-emotional development, arts and cultural awareness, and larger school assemblies. Weymouth Middle School Chapman and Adams Campuses also have very active drama programs. The auditorium at both schools is utilized on a daily basis from September to June for larger scale drama productions. The limitation of this space to a cafetorium or gymnasium would reduce the other opportunities that exist in the after-school programs. Multiple groups utilize the current cafeteria and gymnasium for student programs and athletics. At current the auditorium at the Maria Weston Chapman Middle School is used daily. It is possible that during a six period day this space is used three to four periods for activities associated with music, arts and other programs. At Abigail Adams, the Auditorium is also used on a daily basis for Theater Arts, Performing Arts, Band and Instrumental Music. This space also serves a large community need. The facility is utilized on a regular basis for community events and programs and would serve to support our district's growing involvement in statewide theater competitions.

In all domains of the Massachusetts Frameworks, there are performance standards. Performance is a critical component in the development of the 21st century skills of communication and collaboration. The Performing Arts Program at Weymouth Middle School will be at the center of our school's vision and will be deeply embedded into our school culture. All students will have access to a wide variety of musical/theatrical learning experiences both in the form of performance ensembles such as Band and Chorus as part of the school day, and through a variety of exploratory electives. Students will have the opportunity to choose Performing Arts electives for their schedules. Both instrumental and vocal ensembles will be held in high esteem and valued as part of our school community.

All Music and Theatre Arts classes will take place in a dedicated teaching space. The proposed neighborhood model would include an auditorium that would serve as a performance center with ample space, modern lighting and acoustics, as well as seating for classes and large groups. Performance ensemble classrooms should be located in close proximity to the auditorium. Soundproof practice room space should be available. Classroom music space(s) should be located throughout the building among other academic classrooms. This will facilitate interdisciplinary study. Teaching spaces will be furnished with access to cutting edge technology, be adequately soundproofed and acoustically sound, have sufficient secure storage areas for expensive/delicate equipment, and be furnished with classroom furniture that supports the type of work taking place in each space (ex: band risers in the band classroom, choral risers in the choir room, Wenger musician's seating in performance ensemble rehearsal spaces, collaborative tables in classroom music spaces, etc). Theatre Arts courses will take place in a space that is functional both as a learning space and a performance space, such as a black box theatre.

Curriculum for Music and Theatre Arts classes will be based on the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards for Music and Theatre. Texts and method books will be available where appropriate. Music and Theatre Arts staff will work collaboratively both within the department as well as with other teaching teams throughout the school in order to provide diverse, rich, and rigorous learning experiences with interdisciplinary connections. A department office/common planning space would best facilitate this need.

## **2.14 Physical Education and Wellness Programs:**

### **Current:**

Our physical education and wellness program includes content that will allow students to experience progressive levels of achievement toward standards. Not only will students achieve competence in a variety of movement activities, but they also will understand the conceptual basis and principles that contribute to effective movement and fitness. Our goal is to insure that students fully recognize and understand the significance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They also should have developed the skills, knowledge, interest and desire to participate in meaningful activity for a lifetime. We create activity experiences that develop personal and social behaviors consistent with responsible behavior in sport and in society. This includes an understanding of conflict resolution, the importance of rules and ethical behavior, and the positive social interaction required in physical activity settings. Thirty blocks of

approximately 60 minutes are taught within the PE program by four full-time Physical Education Teachers. Each block consists of three homerooms, averaging 75 students per block.

As the gymnasium and locker room areas are antiquated, attention to these important areas is critical. The existing Adams Middle School building provides insufficient space for the delivery of appropriate physical education programs during the winter months. The building includes a single gymnasium and a small fitness room. The main space can be subdivided but the machinery is old and does not work consistently. The lack of physical education space requires that many classes be configured to hold over 50 students in the main gym with 30 more in the fitness room. Programs within the gym are greatly limited by its small size and the inability to divide available space into two distinct areas. There are locker rooms on each side of the gymnasium; girls have changing stalls and boys have an open area. This area is circa 1970s, and does not represent current standards and practices.

The Chapman gymnasium provides a large gym space with additional smaller rooms for group break out. The main gymnasium along with the locker rooms is antiquated and many areas are unusable. Much of the space was originally designed for a high school setting and is not currently in use. Much of the space has areas that need excessive repairs. The current gymnasium space is of adequate size and does allow for smaller group activities in break out rooms and larger activities in the main gymnasium.

Currently, students engage in fitness and physical education in the same spaces. A fitness studio space and gymnasium will provide for cardio sport instruction, fitness training and traditional physical education to occur simultaneously. Current facilities do not allow for these sessions to occur concurrently. It is either traditional PE or Cardio Sport/Fitness.

The PE classes are considered exploratories and occur opposite of an academic support (or an intervention block). (see figure 1.6 below). Three fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the year is physical education and one fourth ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of the year is health.

Figure 1.2 Physical Education/Fitness Schedule

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Days 1,3,6	PE/Fitness/Cardio	PE/Fitness/Cardio	PE/Fitness/Cardio	Health
Days 2,4,6	Support	Support	Support	Support

### **Needs:**

Weymouth Middle School needs a gymnasium that is designed to educate all students. This space should be entirely handicapped accessible. In Options A - C, the current gymnasium at Adams would remain while the new building would support the above identified needs. This would create inequities between the two middle schools. Option D would support Weymouth's education vision and provide consistent experiences for all students.

**Proposed:**

Physical education is a component of the curriculum that is designed to educate all students, with a range of abilities both cognitively and physically. A developmentally and instructionally appropriate physical education program promotes a physically active lifestyle. It accommodates a variety of individual differences, such as: cultural identity; previous movement experiences; fitness and skill levels; and intellectual, physical and social/emotional maturity. Appropriate instruction in physical education incorporates best practices derived from both research and experience for teaching in ways that facilitate success for all students. Providing a safe and inclusive learning environment allows all students to experience positive, challenging, and enjoyable physical activities while learning skills and developing an understanding of the benefits and importance of physical activity. In conjunction with these activity experiences, students develop a positive self-image and social skills that will provide personal competence in work and leisure situations.

Our vision is to provide students with physical education every day for a full year alternating between lifelong sports and personal fitness curriculum every other day. In order to accommodate this, a full size gymnasium which can be subdivided into multiple teaching spaces will be required as well as a separate fitness studio and weight room. The proposed program offerings would place approximately 150-200 students in various PE stations each period requiring additional staff members. If possible, an indoor track would be added on an upper level to provide walking/jogging areas in the gym for students during school and community members outside of school hours. In addition, outdoor facilities will include physical education stations around the campus including team building elements and fitness stations. This allows multiple teaching opportunities to all students that run concurrently indoors and outside.

The current Adaptive Physical Education Program teaches a small group of students in the main gymnasium utilizing existing regular education equipment. There is no adaptive PE space or specialized equipment. Current physical education teachers team with Physical and Occupational Therapist and modify, adapt existing lesson plans to adapt to the populations that require physical assists, limited stimuli and explicit direction. The PE staff are challenged with keeping students on task and motivated with numerous elements of distraction. The large gymnasium space is loud, and filled with stimulus which can inhibit focus in certain populations. Shared space and inadequate equipment are just some of the challenges that interfere with successful movement and exercise in small groups.

The proposed Fitness Studio space will be a smaller gym with preferred lighting and sound system that would be calming and controlled. The space would be designed and equipped to meet sensory, gross and fine motor behaviors and specialized needs. The equipment and physical space of the gym will be centered on the needs of our physically challenged students. Additionally, this space would include walls, elevated floors and interactive stations along the perimeter of the room to promote flexible practices and movement.

## **2.15 Special Education Programs**

### **Current:**

#### *Inclusive Practices*

##### *Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

Inclusion is a belief that everyone belongs and everyone benefits. This educational model challenges schools to meet the needs of all students by educating learners with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers. It is based on a belief that all children can learn together in the same schools and classrooms with appropriate supports. The environment necessary to nurture and foster inclusion is built upon a shared belief system between general and special education, and a willingness to merge the talents and resources of teachers.

WPS inclusion philosophy is consistent with federal and state special education laws, maintains the rights of the child to an education in the least restrictive environment, maximizes the educational potential of the child, and maintains the integrity of the regular and special education environments.

Inclusion practices and policies based on insufficient resources or the absence of special education services, or on staffing inadequacies or other needs of the agency are educationally unsound and out of compliance with state and federal law.

Currently, both the Adams and Chapman Middle Schools employ both the full and partial inclusion models. About 140 students with disabilities are in the inclusion model at Adams and about 126 students with disabilities are in the inclusion model at Chapman. At each of the middle schools there are small group classes that are designed for students who require appropriate interventions to ensure a meaningful educational experience. A critical component of small group classes is to provide students with disabilities access to the curriculum, regardless of the level. Students learn skills best in the natural classroom environment where opportunities for diverse experiences are available for all students. All programming is individualized to meet the student's unique needs. Curriculum in these small group classes are created by modifying the Weymouth Public Schools grade level curriculum as called for by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

#### *Related Services*

Currently, most related services (OTs, PTs, etc.) and speech/language pathologists (SLPs) are provided away from the class setting and more in the pull-out model. In support of our inclusion philosophy, we are striving to provide related services within the general education classroom when appropriate.

#### *Programs*

##### *Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC)*

##### *Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

This program is designed for students who have been determined by the Team as meeting the eligibility criteria for an educational disability of Emotional Impairments/Serious

Emotional Disturbance (SED). In addition, these students have a long standing documented history of exhibiting significant emotional dysregulation that has been disruptive to their learning and/or the learning of others despite having received intensive behavioral interventions and therapeutic support in a less restrictive environment. An individualized behavioral intervention plan for each student and a systematic behavioral management program for the classroom are integral components of the program. The difficulties displayed must be the direct result of the emotional disturbance and not the result of a social maladjustment, intellectual, communication, developmental or neurological disorder. A District behavior specialist and a counselor consult with the program regularly. Students also receive direct counseling services.

#### *Language Based Learning Disabilities Program Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

This program is designed for students who have been determined by the Team as meeting the eligibility criteria for an educational disability of a Language Based Learning Disability. In other words, these students would have a cognitive profile in which scores on the Verbal subtests, a test of cognition are significantly lower than scores on non-verbal/performance subtests. In addition, these students demonstrate a history of significant language and/or reading disorders despite having received intensive special education services in the neighborhood school or in another District-wide program. Due to the significant impairments displayed in acquisition of language and reading skills, these students require systematic instruction in an alternate method of reading such as Orton-Gillingham, Wilson or other multi-sensory based approach such as Project Read, Lindamood-Bell or Telian. In addition, as a direct result of the language based learning disability, students must require extensive modifications in the other content areas such as Science and Social Studies. Although students in the program may exhibit some attentional and social-emotional issues, these factors are secondary to the primary educational disability of Language Based Learning Disability. This is not a program for students who are primarily having difficulty due to ELL issues. A speech and language pathologist consults to the program and provides direct service as recommended by the Team.

#### *Life Skills Program Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

This Program is designed for students who have been determined by the Team to exhibit the following:

- significantly deficient intellectual functioning; an IQ below 70 on an individually administered IQ test
- concurrent deficits or significant impairments in the deficient range as evidenced on a scale of adaptive behaviors in at least two (2) of the following areas: communication; self-care; home living; social/interpersonal skills; use of community resources; self-direction; functional academic skills; work; leisure; health and safety

In addition, the student must require intensive, direct systematic and alternative instruction/programs in order to learn and acquire new skills. The focus of instruction is primarily on functional academics and access/entry level skills as delineated in the

Massachusetts curriculum frameworks utilizing a multisensory, language based instructional approach. A speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist consult to the program regularly and provide direct service as recommended by the Team.

*Communication Enhancement Program (CEP):*

*Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

This program is designed for students who have been determined by the Team as meeting the eligibility criteria for an educational disability of Autism. In addition students exhibit significant impairment in the following areas:

- verbal communication
- social interaction and pragmatic skills
- comprehension
- behavioral and emotional regulation
- adaptive daily living skills
- ability to acquire new skills

The program utilizes a multi-disciplinary approach to enhance communication, socialization and sensory integration. Visual symbols are used throughout the classroom to assist students understanding of classroom activities, schedules and rules. Emphasis on ABA behavioral based principles and methodologies (i.e. discrete trial, behavioral analysis etc) are an integral component of the program and utilized throughout the school day. Low student to teacher ratio maximizes the learning of new skills and reinforces appropriate behaviors. Students are integrated into the general education setting on an individual basis as determined by the Team. A district behavioral specialist consults to the program as determined through the Team process.

*Intensive Resource Center (IRC):*

*Middle School (Adams/Chapman)*

Students in this program require direct, individualized and explicit instruction to make effective progress due to severe language and/or communication impairments. In addition, there are usually deficits in memory, fine and gross motor abilities. Although the students may have cognitive skills that scatter in the lower end of the low average range, the overall level of cognitive functioning generally falls in the borderline range. (Low 70's to Mid 70's) The students are noted to face significant challenges in a general education classroom due to their disabilities and resultant need for high levels of specialized instruction. Language processing, lowered cognitive abilities and pragmatic deficits in conjunction with social skill deficits are observed as the primary impediments to learning. These students require a multi-sensory; language based instructional approach to learning and step by step instruction that is sequential with frequent repetition and re-teaching. In addition, they require extensive modifications rather than accommodations to gain consistent access to the curriculum and have not been successful despite having received extensive services in a less restrictive environment. A speech and



language pathologist consults to the program and provides direct service as recommended by the Team.

**Needs:**

The current Adams facility limits the ability to provide pre-vocational activities and personal hygiene activities which are essential for students with this disability. Classrooms in the CEP and IRC will necessitate a full kitchen/laundry area for foundational skills to prepare students for the vocational program they will participate in at the high school level. Classrooms in the LBLD will require up-to-date technology that emphasizes visual learning and multi-modal form of instruction. Classrooms in the TLC will require de-escalation areas and a separate room for regrouping activities. Students who are integrated into the general education program also attend and assist the class in these classrooms to help reduce the anxiety they feel from the social and academic pressures they experience from the demands of the general education setting. These students need a specially designed space where they can get organized and decompress away from the other students in the classroom. All students in this program need an area specially designed as a place to take a sensory break.

The current Chapman facility limits the ability to provide language-based rich classrooms, cooperative learning and transitional activities for students with disabilities. Classrooms in the LBLD Program require visual supports, technology and equipment that will encourage learners to learn better. Classrooms in CEP need to be overhauled with the students' needs in mind. In this classroom, sensory integrated materials and equipment are part of the design. It must be tailored to be a soothing environment away from the activity of a busy classroom and comprises facilities such as aquatic bubble tube, an undulated wavy wall, color changing LEDs, wheel projector, and other items. Another component that must be considered is the flexibility of the space. Students should have the option to rearrange and subdivide spaces. When offered flexible furnishings and open-ended materials, children engage in a range of activities that foster their development and learning, become more competent in their physical abilities, and develop self-confidence and independence (Curtis & Cramer, 2003). Rolling shelving units and furniture pieces that are easy to move and can serve multiple purposes are helpful. Include shelving units that can act as storage spaces, blackboards, and screen partitions. Teachers and students can both benefit from the flexibility and spatial variety that portable screens or dividers offer, instantly creating smaller spaces within larger ones for group or individual work. Include risers or movable platforms that also allow children to create new arrangements.

Two other components that a CEP classroom should have are non-threatening and non-distracting. For a classroom to be non-threatening the layout should feel welcoming and foster encounters, communication, and relationships. Settings should provide restful, restorative places and offer a sense of security. One way to do so is to provide high perching spots (child balconies) and low, enclosed spaces (child caves) above and at floor level, shallow enough so a teacher can monitor children. Consider providing larger spaces for older children so groups can gather. Other recommendations to create a non-threatening space is by adding softer lighting. Colors suited for homes (warmer hues, skin tones and pastels), soft furnishings, interesting

textures, thoughtfully placed works of art, and plants and objects from the natural world can turn a conventional classroom into a cozy, welcoming gathering place. If a time-out center is needed, think of alternative environments such as a small tent or fort rather than a sterile office setting. Essentially, a non-institutional school embraces a non-threatening design.

A non-distracting room will be free of clutter, relatively odor-free, and visually and aurally restorative. In other words, the room will decrease sensory overload. The classroom arrangement should contribute to the child's grasp of order and space. A clean and distinct environment helps the child with autism focus his attention on learning instead of irrelevant stimuli. There should be no nonessential visual materials such as posters and disorderly signage, and block out temporary distractions with screens and window shades. A class space should develop storage space outside and inside that doubles as some other architectural feature or furniture element (Curtis & Carter, 2003).

The current instructional programs for inclusion at both the Adams and Chapman Middle Schools limit the participation of students with disabilities in a true and authentic model of a meaningful and full inclusion experience for all these students in every aspect of their educational experiences. The following are the needs for a more effective implementation of inclusive practices:

- a. **Instructional setting** - Special education instructional settings (when located outside of the general education classroom) are placed throughout the school building within age, grade, or department appropriate areas.
- b. **Instruction and Curriculum** - Instructional staff should use a variety of highly effective instructional strategies (multi-level instruction, activity-based instruction, cooperative learning, etc.). Lecture-based instruction must be replaced by differentiated instruction as the predominant instructional methodology in use in our classrooms. A school-wide behavioral support system is in place, resulting in a positive, proactive learning environment for all students should also be in place. Lastly, all staff members should explicitly discuss the expectation for collaboration, equity, and mutual respect among all faculty members.
- c. **Facilities** - The facilities used by special populations students (when specialized services are required) are comparable to the facilities available for general education students. It is recommended to create and design classroom spaces that are universally accepted in particular paying attention to the furniture, equipment, presence of technology and the overall layout of each inclusive classroom.
- d. **Special Education Teacher Staffing** - In a more inclusive school setting, there is an emphasis on increasing the amount and quality of in-class support options for special needs students including co-teaching, support facilitation, and use of peers. Thus, it is critical that Weymouth Public Schools employ the appropriate special education teacher ratio to students with disabilities who are in the inclusive setting. It is recommended that a ratio of 15 students to 1 SPED teacher is ideal to achieve quality in-class support and instructional facilitation.

- e. **Special Education Related Services Staffing** - Related services personnel (OTs, PTs, etc.) and speech/language pathologists (SLPs) provide their services within the general education classroom when appropriate. In order to ensure an inclusive provision of related services, Weymouth Public Schools will need to provide additional related services particularly in the areas of social emotional learning.
- f. **Planning and Staff Scheduling** - It is highly recommended that instructional supports such as co-planning and department scheduling are aligned with specific team at each schools. There should be systems in place, such as sufficient planning time and strong administrative support to facilitate the success of in-class models of support. Ideally, general education and special education teachers should regularly plan together. Scheduling strategies should also be taken into consideration in order to have educational outcomes that will support the optimal learning of students with disabilities.

**Proposed:**

Ideally, the Special Education classrooms will be equipped with classroom technology, moveable furniture for flexible grouping, and a teacher area with securable file storage for student records. These classrooms, both inclusion and substantially separate, must have access to smart boards and other visually-stimulating and language-based rich settings. Assistive technology plays a critical role in supporting engagement and learning for students with special needs. Different devices for different purposes need to be available with supports for quick set-up and secure storage.

Some of the related service providers such as the Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, and Physical Therapist do not have dedicated space. When these related service providers schedule their students, they also need to identify a space for that specific time. This presents a significant issue around confidentiality as well as a considerable hardship as they have to carry their materials from room to room. Occupational and Physical Therapy services are related educational services that are provided for students requiring intervention in order to access the curriculum and the life of the school due to a disability. Occupational Therapists work with children to improve fine motor and sensory functioning, while Physical Therapists focus on gross motor needs of students. Occupational and Physical Therapists often work collaboratively in a co-treatment model. Although these students often require specialized space which is independent of the primary physical education space, it is the goal of the program to utilize the mainstream educational space such as gymnasium and fitness room for all activities deemed applicable. This requires that these spaces not be so heavily scheduled that they are unavailable for appropriate occupational and physical therapy activities. There is very limited space for these service providers to test and provide services. Some of the space utilized is in loud areas that compromise the validity of the test results.

To support the vision of inclusion among all students with disabilities, the following are needed:

- Gym and Fitness Space to be easily accessible by all students and maintain visible connection between each for natural supervision
- Art, Science and Technology adjacent to each other and tangent to academic classrooms for potential STEM or STEAM configurations
- Bathrooms will need to be added in areas closest to the CEP, Life Skills and IRC programs
- Sensory Rooms and De-escalation areas will need to be closest to the offices of the social workers/school adjustment counselors
- Student Center/Academic Support Centers will be created to welcome all students who will require extended time on learning

## **2.16 Vocations & Technology Programs**

### **Current:**

Currently we do not offer any feeder courses at Chapman for the HS Career and Technical Education(CTE) Program.

### **Needs:**

The visioning team expressed a desire for a new middle school to offer exposure to career and technical classes. Option A and D would offer all students this opportunity.

### **Proposed:**

The proposed middle school would consist of lab spaces that are conducive to project based learning. These labs could support audio/visual technology, skills trades and technical sciences. We are currently designating them as a STEM Lab, a multi-media recording and production center and also a Career and Technical Shop. The exact nature of the Career and Technical shop is still under discussion with the High School Principal and CTE Director. These lab spaces will need to be accessible by all grade levels and situated as close to academic neighborhoods as is practical and feasible.

## **2.17 Transportation**

### **Current:**

WPS currently has four tiers of runs that our transportation is responsible for. The runs consist of the High School, Chapman, Adams and all primary. WPS provides students in grades K through six free transportation to their home school provided they reside outside a two mile radius. Students inside the two mile radius are offered the fee-based pay rider program. All measurements are made along the shortest commonly traveled routes from a point perpendicular to the school entrance to a point on the public road perpendicular to the front door of the residence.

Transportation is provided to eligible special needs students as indicated by their Individualized Education Plan, 504 Plans, and also any student that qualifies under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act or Title I. English Language Learners are also

provided transportation if they are attending one of our magnet primary schools that is not their home school.

There is no transportation offered to students in grade seven through twelve beyond the pay rider program. Pay riders are accommodated if sufficient space remains on the bus for them, priority being given to younger children who live farthest from the school.

**Needs:**

Currently we have four tiers of runs that HS, Chapman, Adams and primary that we would like to streamline to three. Having this many runs makes it very difficult to schedule transportation for our special education and 504 students that require alternative transportation. We are also researching the transportation feasibility of adjusting starting times to provide the optimal learning environment for our students while reducing the amount of runs would support this work.

**Proposed:**

Option D would offer the ideal situation as far as transportation by reducing our tiers of runs from four to three through the elimination of two middle schools. This elimination of a run would allow for more flexibility in scheduling transportation for our special education students. Option D would also support families with children in multiple grades by reducing the amount of locations they may have to pick up and drop off at.

Options A-C would continue to present challenges with scheduling special education transportation around four tiers of runs.

## **2.18 and 2.19 Functional and Spatial Relationship and Adjacencies**

**Current:**

The existing Adams building is a 46-year-old facility, built in 1971, originally designed as a junior high school. It includes small classrooms strewn along unwelcoming, artificially lit, narrow hallways and lacks all of the functional, spatial, and adjacency relationships necessary to promote a 21st Century learning environment. Many program areas are isolated and do not have the necessary adjacencies to other key programs. Special education and student support services have been shoehorned into available storage, balcony, classroom, and closet areas; and lack the necessary integration with remaining academic programs as well as appropriate space for student utilization. The guidance office includes 4 separate offices but lacks student privacy.

The existing Chapman building is a 56 year old building built in 1961. The building was originally a comprehensive high school with large vocational shops. Chapman also includes classrooms that are multi-sized but below today's classroom standards. The design of the building incorporates four distinct courtyards. The interior of the building has multiple levels with limitations in ADA compliance. As with the Adams building, the Chapman also lacks all of the functional, spacial and adjacency relationships that work to promote a strong and successful learning environment for a middle school. The building design is not conducive to the technology standards necessary for a successful middle school and severely limits the ability to incorporate cross-curricular learning. Multiple storage areas and small offices have been transformed into undersized classroom space for Special Education and MTSS Intervention.

**Needs:**

Although we have worked to provide proximity of team classrooms, there are limitations in the location of the science rooms and other labs that limit the team configuration. As this building was originally designed as a high school in the 1960s, the team and project based learning environment is limited.

**Proposed:**

With the proposed building, we hope to create neighborhoods consisting of teams where students and staff collaboration can happen freely. Team classrooms should be close to each other and to a common team area. The team area would be similar to a makerspace area that allows for collaboration among students on project based learning. The goal is to provide an area that encourages collaboration and supports cross-curricular projects. Classroom and common space should provide strong use of technology and interactive learning opportunities. At the very least, it would be ideal that all core content teachers be in the same area with access to enrichment/exploratory classrooms. The goal of collaboration should exist for both students and staff and the design and layout of the classrooms and makerspaces should enhance that goal.

**2.20 Security and Visual Access Requirements****Current:**

Chapman has forty one doors and additional “bay door” access (a part of the former Vocational Program classrooms.) Of the forty one doors, four have access “fobs” for staff entry. There is one entry camera at the main entrance that provides a very poor view of the entry area. Currently, there are no surveillance cameras at the Chapman building. The “security desk” is located at the main entrance but has only the entry camera. There are multiple areas in the building that are accessible from inside and outside the building that are poorly lit and where no security surveillance is available.

**Needs:**

In today’s environment it is the goal to provide a safe and supportive school. Chapman should be equipped with security cameras that are accessible to administration and the school Resource Officer. All common areas and outside areas of the building should be equipped to support this goal.

**Proposed:**

The proposed building will include security systems to provide a secure, safe environment for students, protecting them from outside and inside dangers. Such measures could include secured access and remote access via keyless entries to all doors. There should be multiple security cameras on the interior and exterior of the building. The new building design should have appropriately secured openings and should provide means for isolating areas of the building off from one another

### **2.21 Proposed Adams Reuse Plan as Associated with Option D**

In Option D, Adams would be composed of Kindergarten through grade five. Adams would need some renovations to bathrooms and classroom spaces. The placement of whiteboards, to meet the needs of primary students along with furniture replacement for K - four classrooms would be needed. Specialist classrooms, small group rooms, project spaces, auditorium, and cafeteria would be on the first floor, along with occupational therapy and physical therapy. Building administration and guidance would also be housed on the first floor. The second floor would house additional classrooms, small group spaces, special education rooms (based on programmatic needs), and project spaces. Both floors would have student bathrooms.

#### *Grade Configuration*

In Option D, the grade configuration at Adams Middle School would change from grades five and six to grades K through five. Classrooms would be housed on the first and second floors.

#### *Class Size*

The class sizes would be approximately 18.5 students housed in twenty-four classrooms. This size is approximately equal to the state average of 18.1 as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

#### *School Scheduling Methodology*

The schedule at Adams would be consistent with other WPS primary schedules. Teachers will have time built into their schedule for meeting by grade level teams. There will be small learning centers on both floors.

#### **Total Instructional Time**

Subject/Topic	Grades K-2	Grades 3-4	Grade 5
English Language Arts (ELA)	25-30% Intervention included  81-98 minutes per day  406-488 minutes per week	20 – 25% Intervention al included  65-81 minutes per day  325-406 minutes per week	22.5% Intervention included  88 minutes per day  439 minutes per week
Mathematics	25-30% Intervention included  81-98 minutes per day  406-488 minutes per week	20 – 25% Intervention al included  65-81 minutes per day  325-406 minutes per week	22.5% Intervention included  88 minutes per day  439 minutes per week

Science	10%  33 minutes per day  163 minutes per week	15%  49 minutes per day  245 minutes per week	17.5%  69 minutes per day  341 minutes per week
Social Studies	10%  33 minutes per day  163 minutes per week	15%  49 minutes per day  245 minutes per week	17.5%  69 minutes per day  341 minutes per week

### *Teaching Methodology and Structure*

Core Content is based on the Massachusetts Frameworks for Math, Science, ELA, and Social Studies. Classrooms will be grouped by grade level, allowing for interdisciplinary units, equity, and inclusive practices. Students receive art, music, physical education and wellness as specials throughout the week. Instruction for these classes will be delivered by specialists and allow time for content teachers to collaborate with colleagues on curriculum and instruction.

### *Lunch Programs*

Adams has existing kitchen and lunchroom facilities, which would support both breakfast and lunch programs. The projected enrollment would provide for three lunch sessions within this space. This area is large and may be used flexibly during the day with minimal renovations.

### *Technology Instruction Policies and Programs*

The Adams plan has interdisciplinary project space which can be used for hands on and digital student project creation. The technology plan would include improved infrastructure to support internet access and digital learning as well as the administration of universal diagnostic assessments.

### *Media Center/Library*

The library would remain on the first floor and would be updated to include resources for primary students, as well as a redistribution of materials. The library could be an additional space for technology instruction and presentations. As the library has ample space, it could also be used for teacher professional development.

### *Special Education Program*

Special education student needs will be addressed in the least restrictive educational environment through inclusive instructional practices. Special education teachers' rooms will be spread throughout the identified classroom areas. Distributing classrooms in this way will support collaboration, inclusive practices, and easy access to support all students. The spatial needs for district substantially separate programs will be considered and program needs will be reviewed each year.



### *Transportation*

Transportation would align with the information presented in section 2.17 of this document.

### *Functional and Spatial Relationship*

Classrooms and common spaces would provide strong use of technology and interactive learning opportunities. Classrooms would be organized by grades to allow for collaboration.

## **2.22 Wrap-Around Services**

### **Current:**

Weymouth Public Schools currently works with many local and state service providers to assist students, families and staff. We are recognizing a growing population experiencing difficulty in accessing services because of transportation, work hours, insurance coverage, and other obstacles. Despite efforts by our staff to make connections for these families we find families are just not able to utilize the services.

### **Needs:**

The district would like to offer a convenient space for local service providers to come and support students and families. The new middle school will be centrally located in town, thus providing the community an optimal location for such services.

### **Proposed:**

The proposed Middle School would have a flexible space that will allow for outside service providers to support our students and families. This space would need to have a separate entrance from the school but also be accessed from within the school, possibly adjacent to the nursing office. This space could be utilized by medical staff for school physicals, flu shots, oral health screenings, etc. It could also be used for counseling, DCF or Court appointed meetings with families as well.

## **2.23 Educational Program Conclusion**

Weymouth strives to strengthen the community's educational system through the realization of the provided educational plan. Our work is guided by the core principles of equitable, inclusive, personalized and interdisciplinary learning for students in our middle grades. We have identified areas of excellence and improvement and through this plan we have offered our vision for designing learning experiences to support our students to be successful in their lives beyond their PreK-12 education. We recognize that a school of over one thousand students is large and through the design process we seek to find ways to create the feel of a smaller neighborhood organized school and enhance their sense of belonging. We believe that the addition of this building will remove current and avoid future inequities, decrease student transitions, improve resources, align curriculum, support middle school teaming practices, and foster cross-curriculum collaborative work. Benefits we seek to realize include: a) the ability to

offer universal full day kindergarten; b) reduce student transitions from school to school and organize grades according to developmental grade bands; c) improved communication and collaboration between staff and families; d) improved technology infrastructure and resources to address digital literacy standards; e) expand opportunities and access to electives and feeder CTE programs for Weymouth High School. We look forward to working with the Massachusetts School Building Association to realize this plan.

## References

Association for Career and Technical Education. (2017). Career exploration in middle school: Setting students on the path success. Retrieved:

<https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=12066>

Bernstein, L., Millsap, M., Schimmenti, J., & Page, L. (2008). Implementation study of smaller learning communities: Final report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Cotton, K. (2001). New small learning communities: Findings from recent literature. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Curtis, M. & Curtis, D. (2003). Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Childhood Spaces. Redleaf Press, 1st Ed.

David, J. L. (2008). Reshaping high schools. Educational Leadership. 65(8). 84-85.

Hanover Research. (2017). Best practices in middle school instructional time allocation.

Retrieved: <http://www.hanoverresearch.com/>

Hirsch, J. (2017). Teams and the magic number 150. Retrieved:

<https://joehirsch.me/2017/03/19/teams/>

Krauss, F.M. (2015). Frequent school moves hurt low-income students' scores. Retrieved:

<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2015/10/frequent-school-moves.aspx>

Marzano, R. (2003). What works in schools: Translating research into action. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2016). Digital Literacy and Computer Science Curriculum Framework .

National Education Association (2006)

National Center for Education Statistics. (2004). Full day and half day kindergarten in the United States: Findings from the early childhood longitudinal study, Kindergarten class of 1998-1999. U.S. Department of Education.

Newmann, F M., Bryk, A. S., & Nagaoka, J. K. (2001). Authentic intellectual work and standardized tests: Conflict or coexistence? Improving Chicago's Schools (pp. 47). Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Newmann, F. M., Carmichael, D. L., & King, jM. B. (2016). Authentic intellectual work: Improving teaching for rigorous learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Shannon, K. & Cate, J. (2015). Democratic Instructional Practice for Technology Integration. Edited by Penny Tenuto in *Renewed Accountability for Access and Excellence*. Lanham MD: Lexington Books.

Town of Weymouth. (n.d.). History Retrieved: <http://www.weymouth.ma.us/history>

# **Weymouth Accelerated Improvement Plan**

**2016-2021**



## **Weymouth Accelerated Improvement Plan**

### **2016-2021**

#### **Summary of key challenges**

After careful analysis of student MCAS and PARCC achievement data, Student Growth Percentile data, Composite Performance Index data (CPI), and problems identified by the Superintendent and members of the Administrative Leadership team and community stakeholders, the following key challenges were identified that need to be addressed in our district's improvement plan:

1. Students growth and performance on 2015 state testing in grade 3-8 in Mathematics, grade 10 Mathematics and grade 5, 8 and 10 Science are below state averages in the district aggregate
2. Professional development and curricula opportunities for students and staff addressing the social and emotional learning needs
3. Opportunities and supports for collaborative professional learning focused on instructional improvement
4. Clear and consistent definition of rigorous teaching needs to be more widely communicated and incorporated into practice via research based pedagogical practices related to academic discourse and inclusive practices
5. Stronger PreK-12 curriculum needs in terms of vertical alignment to support transitions from grade to grade and most importantly, school to school
6. Use of data and a process of inquiry to measure progress, target interventions and adjust instructional practice
7. Engagement level of parents/guardians and community support of students and school communities

Upon review of the key issues impacting student performance, we have identified three strategic levers to ensure that all of our students reach their full potential. These strategic levers provide a clear and targeted focus on high quality teaching and learning, teacher development through embedded professional learning, student support through targeted interventions, related to data, accountability, and thoughtful engagement of families and the community.

#### **Theory of Action that will drive the development of the Accelerated Improvement Plan.**

***If*** the district increases collaborative problem solving among all educators; uses data as part of an aligned system of curriculum, accountability and inquiry; and engages parents/guardians and community members as partners, ***then*** we will elevate instructional practice across all schools, better personalize instruction and supports for students; and produce students that meet high standards and are prepared to succeed in college and career.

#### **Specific, measurable, final outcomes the district aims to achieve by implementing the Plan.**

Each Weymouth Public School will achieve moderate to high growth, on state assessments, in both ELA and Mathematics by fall 2021 neediest grade levels → be specific = more realistic

By fall 2021 the Weymouth Public Schools 4-year graduation rate for all students will exceed 90%

Each Weymouth Public School will be a Level 1 or Level 2 School

Weymouth students persist in post-secondary education at a rate that exceeds state average of 87.8 %. This data is based on 2014 data due to the need for graduates to be in a second year of post high school learning opportunities. Weymouth is currently persisting at 86.9%. This will be updated when new data is available from DESE.

### **Strategic Levers and Initiatives upon which the Plan will focus.**

#### **Strategic Lever 1: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUSED ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE:**

Provide professional learning and opportunities for collaboration that improve educator practice by focusing on the instructional core.

**Initiative 1:** Focus on the improvement of teaching and learning through the provision of professional development for educators on highly effective research-based instructional strategies, through the development of a district-wide definition for rigorous practice, and through ensuring consistent classroom implementation to improve outcomes for all students.

**Initiative 2:** Provide support for student success through the planning and implementation of a Social-Emotional Learning Program and other support strategies.

**Strategic Lever 2: EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA:** Implement aligned system of curriculum, accountability and inquiry that uses multiple sources of data.

**Initiative 1:** Ensure a rigorous curriculum PreK-12 and provide clear and consistent student learning expectations at every grade level and department.

**Initiative 2:** Enhance evaluation and data systems that provide continual information for the improvement of student learning.

**Strategic Lever 3: PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** Engage and partner with parents/guardians and community members in supporting excellence in academic skills, knowledge and mindsets.

**Initiative 1:** Develop college and career readiness beginning at early grades with higher education, business and community partners.

**Initiative 2:** Enhance family and community engagement strategies that support district priorities and student physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.

**Assessment Plan: Progress will be assessed biannually in January and June of each year. This AIP is coordinated with individual School Improvement Plans (SIP) and will follow the following review process schedule:**

Draft SIP Plan Date: Four year plan cycle	Final SIP Plan Date: Share at School Committee	Mid-Year Check In: Shared at Academic Leadership	End of Year Check In: Shared via written communication to Superintendent	AIP: Five year plan cycle
8/2017	10/2017 and 11/2017	1/2018	6/2018	Share AIP January 2017 on School Committee Blog and WPS website
8/2018	10/2018 and 11/2018	1/2019	6/2019	
8/2019	10/2019 and 11/2019	1/2020	6/2020	
8/2020	10/2020 and 11/2020	1/2021	6/2021	

### Initiative Strategic Benchmarks and Activities

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 1:</b>  <b>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUSED ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE:</b> Provide professional learning and opportunities for collaboration that improve educator practice by focusing on the instructional core.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b>  Dr. Curtis-Whipple		
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b>  <b>Initiative 1:</b> Focus on the improvement of teaching and learning through the provision of professional development for educators on highly effective research-based instructional strategies, to promote rigorous practices through the development of a district-wide definition for rigorous practice, and through ensuring consistent classroom implementation to improve outcomes for all students.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b>  Mary Ann Bryan		
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> <b>P:</b> Work in progress <b>C:</b> Completed
Analyze root cause analysis of attendance issues in order to decrease teacher absences to improve student learning	Susan Kustka & Principals	Sept. 2017	

Develop exemplars of rigorous practices aligned with the priority elements of the educator evaluation system	Susan Kustka	Sept. 2017	
Provide professional development aligned with strategic levers on elements of rigor and research-based instructional strategies e.g. differentiation, inclusion practices, use of data, etc.	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes	Sept. 2016	P
Ensure all primary, STEM and content teachers are trained in Mathematical Practices and use of tools needed for mastery of Massachusetts Mathematics Standards preK-12	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Kate Shannon Mathematic Coaches	June 2017	P
Provide opportunities for teachers to observe model teaching practices through instructional rounds and voluntary peer observations	Evaluators	Oct. 2016	P
Support educators and mentors through district wide coaching mentoring and induction program	Mary Ann Bryan	Aug. 2016	P
Develop and utilize a walk-through protocol that assesses classroom implementation of rigorous, effective teaching practices	Principals	Dec. 2017	
Target use of actionable feedback and calibration of evaluation feedback during Academic Leadership and School Based Leadership Meetings (unit B)	Jennifer Curtis-Whipple and Administrators	Aug. 2016	P
Calibrate professional learning communities at school level with a focus on effective use of data and the instructional core	Administrators DSAC at some schools	Jan. 2018	
Plan, develop and implement curriculum maps for content areas for PK – 12 based on standards	Terri Marculitis Kate Shannon VAT's Asst. Curriculum Directors	Aug. 2017	P
Providing professional development and coaching support in effective instructional strategies	Math and Literacy Coaches	Sept. 2017	
Analyze the continuous change in Administration which leads to lack of consistency in the district for potential solutions	District Staff and Consultation Support	Nov. 2017	

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 1:</b> <b>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUSED ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE:</b> Provide professional learning and opportunities for collaboration that improve educator practice by focusing on the instructional core.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b> Dr. Curtis-Whipple
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b> <b>Initiative 2:</b> Provide support for student success through the planning and implementation of a Social-Emotional Learning Program and other support strategies.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b> Melanie Curtin



--	--

<b>Strategic Lever 1: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOCUSED ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL CORE:</b> Provide professional learning and opportunities for collaboration that improve educator practice by focusing on the instructional core.			
<b>Initiative 2:</b> Provide support for student success through the planning and implementation of a Social-Emotional Learning Program and other support strategies.			
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> P: Work in progress C: Completed
Identify multiple strategies effective in addressing social-emotional needs of students and provide professional development for educators on those strategies	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes	Sept. 2016	P
Oversee implementation of identified strategies including but not limited to the program “Mind Up”, PBIS and other district identified research based programs	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin	Sept. 2017	P
Assess effectiveness of strategies using SWIS, EWIS, and/or Aspen data for supporting students and adjust accordingly	Principals	Dec. 2017	
Analyze the root cause of student attendance to develop effective strategies to improve overall attendance	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Principals	Sept. 2017	P
Implementation of a comprehensive MTSS program that supports students’ academic performance, SEL, attendance, and successful completion of all milestones for graduation (college/career)	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Terri Marculitis Principals	Sept. 2016	P
PLC Meetings are scheduled, implemented, and effective for all content areas (WHS/Chapman), checks and balances through oversight and support from admin	Principals	Sept. 2016	P

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 2:</b> <b>EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA:</b> Continually align systems of curriculum, accountability and inquiry using multiple sources of data.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b> Dr. Curtis-Whipple
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b> <b>Initiative 1:</b> Ensure a rigorous PreK-12 curriculum and provide clear and consistent student learning expectations at every grade level and department.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b> Mary Ann Bryan

<b>Strategic Lever 2: EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA:</b> Implement aligned system of curriculum, accountability and inquiry that uses multiple sources of data.			
<b>Initiative 1:</b> Ensure a rigorous PreK-12 curriculum and provide clear and consistent student learning expectations at every grade level and department.			
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> P: Work in progress C: Completed

Continue to revise horizontally and vertically aligned curriculum documents	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes Curriculum Directors	Sept. 2016	P
Complete gap analysis with MA Curriculum Frameworks and ensure alignment in all curriculum areas, adjust resources	Administrators Curriculum Directors	Sept. 2016	P
Integrate new science standards and practices into curriculum in all grades	Kate Shannon Administrators	Jan. 2018	
Complete a resource analysis based on results of gap analysis using curriculum maps	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes	June 2017	P
Refine curriculum maps for all content areas to include Power Standards and Skills Based Learning Rubrics	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes	June 2017	P
Provide additional support for PreK to 12 teachers for implementing Massachusetts standards and practices.	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes Administrators Instructional Coaches	Sept. 2016	P
Develop and utilize a rigorous instruction classroom observation protocols to assess implementation of curriculum standards and Power Standards at all levels	Administrators	August 2017	P
Develop a plan to ensure all aligned curriculum undergoes a process for continual review and evaluation	Terri Marculitis Kate Shannon	Feb. 2017	P
Develop and continue a plan to ensure that data is shared between schools to enhance vertical articulation	Pam Stazesky Alpha Sanford Patti Hayes Melanie Curtin	Sept. 2016	P

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 2:</b> <b>EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA:</b> Implement aligned systems of curriculum, accountability and inquiry using multiple sources of data.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b> Dr. Curtis-Whipple
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b> <b>Initiative 2:</b> Enhance integration of evaluation and data systems that provide continual information for the improvement of student learning.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b> Dr. Pamela Stazesky

<b>Strategic Lever 2: EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA:</b> Implement aligned system of curriculum, accountability and inquiry that uses multiple sources of data.			
<b>Initiative 2:</b> Enhance evaluation and data systems that provide continual information for the improvement of student learning.			
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> P: Work in progress C: Completed

Continue to look towards ways to leverage state funding and grant opportunities	Administrators	Sept. 2016	P
Ensure budget planning is proactive and addresses projected staffing needs	Susan Kustka Mickey McGonagle Principals	Oct. 2017	
Continue with data meetings at regular intervals vertically and horizontally	Administrators Data Coaches	Sept. 2016	P
Provide opportunities for all educators to learn how to interpret and analyze data using data coaches and DSAC	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes Administrators	Sept. 2016	P
Provide opportunities for all educators to review specific student data to plan instruction and intervention	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes Administrators	Sept. 2016	P
Utilize PLC time and other available time for educators to collaborate around data analysis and develop data driven instructional strategies	Data Coaches Administrators	Sept. 2016	P
Create cycle of review for effective use of data to improve student learning	Pamela Stazesky	June 2017	P
Assess the impact of data to improve instruction 3 times a year	Administrators	June 2017	P
Use assessments and data protocols in coaching conversations of educator practice and improvement	Administrators Coaches	Sept. 2016	P
Implement, calibrate and assess educator evaluation system at all levels	Susan Kustka Administrators	Jan. 2018	P
Develop data analysis approach to direct/determine interventions for student groups	Patricia Hayes Alpha Sanford Coaches Administrators Assist. Directors	Sept. 2016	P
Implement a system of targeted interventions based on individual student data	Alpha Sanford Patricia Hayes Administrators Curriculum Directors & Assist. Directors Math and Literacy Coaches	Sept. 2016	P
Using multiple sources of student performance data, individual schools will develop School Improvement Plans based on district vision, mission, and aligned with strategic levers	Principals	Aug. 2017	P
Revisit and revise School Improvement Plans to align with AIP timeline and on a bi-annual basis	Principals	Aug. 2017	P
Assess administrators' use of data from observations and student assessments to provide appropriate supervision as assessed by the Superintendent or designee. Inform dissemination of practices to staff and families.	Jennifer Curtis-Whipple	Sept. 2017	P

Develop common data usage within content areas and grade levels. This is in addition to iReady, MCAS, etc.	Pamela Stazesky Administrators	Sept. 2016	P
--	-----------------------------------	------------	---

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 3:</b> <b>PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engage and partner with parents/guardians and community members in supporting excellence in academic skills, knowledge and mindsets.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b> Susan Kustka
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b> <b>Initiative 1:</b> Develop college and career readiness beginning at early grades with higher education, business and community partners.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b> Pat Costello

<b>Strategic Lever 3: PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engage and partner with parents/guardians and community members in supporting excellence in academic skills, knowledge and mindsets.			
<b>Initiative 1:</b> Develop college and career readiness beginning at early grades with higher education, business and community partners.			
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> P: Work in progress C: Completed
Expand and enhance partnerships with colleges/universities that provide experiences for students regarding college life and access	Mary Ann Bryan	May 2017	
Implement college awareness experiences for early and middle grades that promote understanding of opportunities	Administrators Susan Kustka	Nov. 2016	P
Sustain events that involve the community in helping students understand opportunities, e.g. local authors night, career days involving families and community members, student/ teacher music/art performances, campus visits, career exploration internships	Principals Family and Community Engagement Team (FACE) STEM TBD	Nov. 2016	P
Develop and implement parental supports that provide strategies parent can use to promote college and career success K-12	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin CCR VAT	Jan. 2018	

<b>A. District Strategic Lever 3:</b> <b>PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engage and partner with parents/guardians and community members in supporting excellence in academic skills, knowledge and mindsets.	<b>B. Overall Lead for this Lever (one person):</b> Susan Kustka
<b>C. Initiative Number and Description:</b> <b>Initiative 2:</b> Enhance family and community engagement strategies that support district priorities and student physical, social and emotional well-being.	<b>D. Lead for this Initiative (one person):</b> Melanie Curtin

<b>Strategic Lever 3: PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Engage and partner with parents/guardians and community members in supporting excellence in academic skills, knowledge and mindsets.			
<b>Initiative 2:</b> Enhance family and community engagement strategies that support district priorities and student physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.			
<b>Activities to Achieve the Outcomes for the Initiative</b>	<b>Who will Lead?</b>	<b>Target start date?</b>	<b>Status:</b> P: Work in progress C: Completed
Survey parents and guardians for interests and needs and conduct an assessment of current family engagement practice; analyze results of assessment and share	Pat Costello Pamela Stazesky	May 2017	C
Sustain Family Engagement Action Team who will continue implementation of the district plan	Susan Kustka	Nov. 2016	P
Promote technology use by staff to support parent engagement and other innovative engagement models; support technology-based communication and other innovative engagement models to inform community about WPS and support programs in a timely manner (email, phone, Aspen, etc.) plans and successes	Brett Lindholm, Tech. Director	Sept. 2017	P
Plan and implement events and supports for students and families around social media, substance abuse, digital addiction, and living in trauma.	Susan Kustka Principals Mary Ann Bryan School Resource Officers	Nov. 2016	P
Sustain South Shore STEM Compact with partners	Mary Ann Bryan Kate Shannon	Nov. 2016	P
Expand partnerships with businesses that provide experiences for students regarding career opportunities	Mary Ann Bryan Betsy Harris	June 2017	P
Develop a plan to improve academic and social emotional programs, market and promote WPS offerings in order to keep students in-district from Charter Schools or Special Education placements.	Jennifer Curtis-Whipple Alpha Sanford Mary Ann Bryan	Oct. 2017	
Sustain and expand community events that highlight student accomplishments e.g. music/theatre performances, academic honors, athletics, presentations at town events (Rotary, Council meetings, etc.)	District and Building Based Administration	Nov. 2016	P
Improved communication practices between sending and receiving schools to enhance transition practices.	Alpha Sanford Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin	Jan. 2018	
Analyze current data dissemination to families prek-12.	Pamela Stazesky Mary Ann Bryan	Nov. 2017	
Increase school level and classroom level communication with families pre-k-12.	Mary Ann Bryan Principals	Sept. 2017	P
Create a calibrated system of data dissemination to families with all schools.	Mary Ann Bryan Melanie Curtin Principals	Nov. 2017	

