



YARMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

VISION 2020: Planning for Student Success



STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 - 2020

VISION 2020: Planning for Student Success 2015-2020

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PLANNING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Dear Friend of the Yarmouth Schools,

I am pleased to present the Yarmouth School Department's five-year strategic plan, "Vision 2020." This plan provides a framework for ensuring that our schools maintain the excellent reputation that has been developed over decades of effort, investment, and engagement by Yarmouth's educators, community members, and students.

On our district website, the introduction to Yarmouth Schools states that, "Highly qualified staff, motivated students, and engaged parents are our greatest resources." That statement is proven true time and time again as we consider the excellence that we find in our schools. In 2014, Yarmouth High School and Harrison Middle School were once again named Apple Distinguished Schools, and visitors from Maryland, Finland, and Sweden visited the schools to see our teachers and students putting instructional technology to work. Yarmouth High School received recognition from the College Board, being named to its Honor Roll for increasing the number of students participating in the rigorous Advanced Placement program while also increasing the median performance on AP exams. Yarmouth Elementary School joined the Middle School and High School in being recognized for academic excellence by Maine's Department of Education, and it can easily be assumed that Rowe School would also be on that list if the state had measures that were taken at the kindergarten or first grade level.

Yarmouth students continue to excel in areas outside of the classroom, as well. Approximately 80% of Yarmouth High School students participate in co-curricular activities and athletics, and in the past year alone our athletic programs have garnered state championships in Girls' Lacrosse, Girls' Volleyball, Girls' Skiing, Boys' Soccer, and Softball with many other teams demonstrating a similarly impressive balance of competitiveness and sportsmanship. Meanwhile, the theater and performing arts program continued its impressive run of state championships in the One Act Play competition and thrilled audiences, as usual, with impressive dramatic and musical performances.



Yarmouth students serve their neighbors, too, with thousands of hours of community service work being completed by individual students and many school clubs. Clearly, the Yarmouth Schools are comprised of people who care about the present and the future, and we are fortunate to have many talented and dedicated educators, community members, and students in our midst.

The Yarmouth School Committee is steadfast in its commitment to excellence in our schools. The realities of increased local responsibility for funding schools will continue to challenge that fine balance between improving educational experiences for students and minimizing the cost to taxpayers. This plan recognizes that tension and encourages creative problem-solving to provide solutions that work for our schools and our community.

I am thankful for the opportunity to work in a community that is recognized for its commitment to excellence. This plan is designed to provide us with the focus and flexibility to further that commitment, along with mechanisms for reporting our progress and improvement on a defined set of indicators. I look forward to implementing this plan with our administrative team and bringing to reality continued improvement in our outstanding schools.

Andrew R. Dolloff, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the fall of 2014, the Yarmouth School Committee directed our new Superintendent of Schools, Andrew Dolloff, to propose a process for creating a five-year strategic plan. A Strategic Planning Team was formed in October and met throughout the school year to create a vision for where the Yarmouth Schools should be in the year 2020. Community input was sought through two rounds of public forums, while staff members throughout the district participated in two phases of feedback loops at each school. Through those sessions, the Planning Team received a great deal of data and suggestions, which led to the final document presented herein.

This plan was developed with dedicated input from members of the teaching and administrative staff, the School Committee, the Town Council, and several parents and community members. Specifically, we would like to recognize the members of the Strategic Planning Committee who quickly melded into a focused, collegial, and engaged group and forged through reams of data and terminology to develop this concise plan:

Joan Adler, Harrison Middle School Assistant Principal

Anne Ball, Parent

Randall Bates, Yarmouth Town Councilor and Parent

Andrew Dolloff, Superintendent of Schools

Laura Elder, Rowe School Teacher and Parent

Kimberly Grover, Harrison Middle School Instructor of Music

Leah Guay, Yarmouth School Committee Member and Parent

Josh Ottow, Yarmouth High School Assistant Principal

Tim Wheaton, Yarmouth School Committee Member and Parent

Michael Wilbur, Parent



The administrative team will now develop annual work plans that address the Focus Areas created through this plan. The superintendent will annually present a report to the School Committee on the district's progress toward meeting the targeted performance indicators and completing the Action Strategies presented in this five-year plan. In this way, Vision 2020 will not be a document that is simply placed on a shelf, never to be seen again. Instead, it will be an overarching framework that will direct the work of our educational leaders for the next five years.

We recognize that each year will bring new challenges that we did not attempt to predict here. New legislation, updated educational research, and unpredictable changes in the economy, local demographics, and technology are just a few examples of topics with which our educators and policy-makers will wrestle each year. Although those changes will shift our focus from time to time, we believe the principles of this plan will remain firm, and we are committed to seeing the plan through to completion.



YARMOUTH SCHOOLS – BY THE NUMBERS

The Yarmouth School Department is comprised of four schools:

William H. Rowe School serves students in Kindergarten and Grade 1

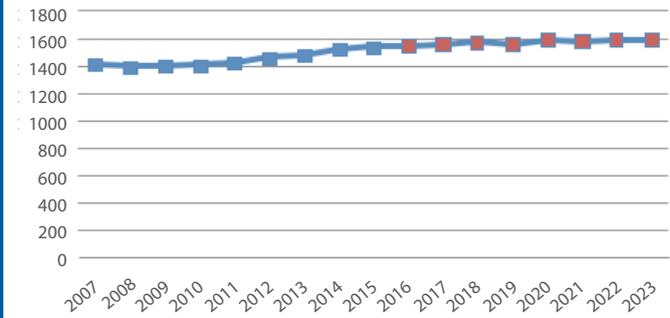
Yarmouth Elementary School serves students in Grades 2 through 4

Frank H. Harrison Middle School serves students in Grades 5 through 8

Yarmouth High School serves students in Grades 9 through 12

Enrollment: Our schools enrolled 1,520 students in 2014-2015; this was the first time we have had more than 1,500 students in twelve years, and the upward trend is projected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Yarmouth Schools Historical and Projected Enrollment



Staff: In 2013-2014, we employed 125 teachers, 108 other instructional personnel, and 8 instructional administrators. Much like the rest of Maine, the average years of experience for our teaching staff has been rising steadily for the past ten years. In 2014, 72% of our instructional staff had a minimum of a master's degree, as opposed to a statewide average of approximately 45%.

2014-15 Performance:

- Yarmouth High School Graduation rate of 96%
- 91% of students in YHS class of 2014 attended two- or four-year college or university
- Yarmouth High School ranked #1 high school in Maine by U.S. News and World Report in 2015
- State championships in Girls' Volleyball, Boys' Soccer, Girls' Skiing, Girls' Lacrosse, Softball, and the One-Act Drama Festival
- Yarmouth High School and Harrison Middle School named Apple Distinguished Schools
- Yarmouth High School, Harrison Middle School, and Yarmouth Elementary School designated as "A" schools by the Maine Department of Education



OUR MISSION, VALUES, BELIEFS & PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

OUR MISSION

Empowering all students to create fulfilling lives in a changing world

OUR CORE VALUES

Integrity	People with integrity are honest, sincere, trustworthy, ethical, loyal and fair.
Responsibility	Responsible people know, understand, consider and accept the impact and consequences of their personal actions and decisions.
Perseverance	People who persevere are able to work toward their goals in spite of difficulties, obstacles, or discouragement.
Respect	Respectful people recognize and appreciate diversity in ideas and people.
Compassion	Compassionate people show concern for the well-being of themselves, others and the environment.
The Pursuit of Excellence	People who pursue excellence seek to improve and give their best effort consistently.



OUR BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

The best learning occurs . . .

- When positive relationships form the foundation for learning;
- When students engage in high-level learning and access appropriate support;
- When students have an active role in their learning and in the school community;
- In a culture of collaboration;
- When students and teachers extend their learning beyond the school;
- In an environment of critical thinking, creativity, and innovation; and
- When students and staff are emotionally and physically safe.

PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE

Yarmouth High School graduates will:

- Communicate effectively;
- Exhibit personal responsibility, civic engagement, and global awareness;
- Work independently and collaboratively;
- Demonstrate critical, creative, and innovative thinking; and
- Develop understanding through inquiry, research, and synthesis.



AREAS OF FOCUS

FOCUS AREA 1 – TEACHING AND LEARNING:

The curriculum will be meaningful and engaging for all learners. The instruction will be delivered through the best possible age-appropriate methods.

Rationale: As our community and the world continue to change rapidly, so do expectations for what students should know and be able to do. The rich content taught in all classes must be cutting edge and prepare Yarmouth students to pursue excellence throughout and after their K-12 education. Educators will ensure that critical skill development is consistent within and across content and grade levels.

Key Objectives:

- o Ensure that student growth is measured and reported in meaningful ways.
- o Articulate and administer a K-12 curriculum that will ensure clear and cohesive scope and sequence of content and an evolving and expanding curriculum that motivates students to be lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.
- o Provide alternative programming so that all students may access multiple pathways to a high school diploma.
- o Make use of current scholarly research to identify, adopt and implement instructional strategies and programs that are in the best interest of our students.



Action Strategies:

- 1.1 Implement and evaluate a comprehensive system to monitor and track student growth.
- 1.2 Commit to the K-12 curriculum review cycle that provides for ongoing evaluation and adjustment.
- 1.3 Research the costs and benefits of providing foreign language instruction in elementary school and, if appropriate, develop a plan for implementation.
- 1.4 Conduct research and explore options for adjusting the school-day start times across the district to maximize student performance.
- 1.5 Expand alternative education options for those students who are at risk of dropping out or who struggle to succeed in the traditional school setting. Options could include increasing enrollment at Portland Arts and Technology High School, expanding work-study and apprenticeship opportunities, and collaborating with neighboring districts to offer alternative education in an off-site setting.
- 1.6 Reach out to colleges, universities, and community colleges to develop dual enrollment opportunities for students.
- 1.7 Consider hiring a district-level director of curriculum and instruction, possibly working with another local school district to maximize efficiency.



AREAS OF FOCUS

FOCUS AREA 2 – PROFESSIONAL CULTURE:

Yarmouth School Department employees will be highly skilled, collaborative, and engaged in all aspects of their work.

Rationale: The Yarmouth School Department believes that engaged and empowered employees are vital to our continued success. We recognize the benefits of creating a healthy and high-functioning professional culture where employee growth, development, and sense of well-being is encouraged and supported.

Key Objectives:

- o Formalize our recruitment and hiring process, focusing on Yarmouth's rich history of excellence in education, and its unique, fulfilling work environment, in order to attract staff members of the highest caliber.
- o Strengthen and align Yarmouth's mentoring program system-wide to promote and ensure best practices, ongoing guidance, and tailored support to new staff.
- o Empower and enable employees to work at their highest potential by providing compelling and innovative opportunities for professional development.
- o Foster collaboration among educators across and within grade levels to continually improve instruction and the tools used to deliver it.
- o Continue to enrich Yarmouth's work environment by generating a sense of community, positive energy, and well-being for its employees.
- o Ensure professional practices that will meet the needs of all learners.



Action Strategies:

- 2.1 Review current hiring practices. Ensure consistency across the district and develop strategies for attracting highest caliber candidates.
- 2.2 Develop ongoing staff wellness opportunities, within and outside of the school day.
- 2.3 Increase funding for professional development opportunities, with identified priority areas clearly articulated.
- 2.4 Implement peer mentoring programs that are meaningful, focused on improvement of instruction, and consistent across the district.
- 2.5 Finalize and implement teacher and administrator evaluation systems.
- 2.6 Conduct an annual work environment survey of all staff to gain insight into employee engagement and satisfaction.

FOCUS AREA 3 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Connections between the schools and the community will be frequent and meaningful.

Rationale: The community of Yarmouth has purposefully established and continues to support a high-performing school system. Students who see themselves as knowledgeable life-long learners ultimately become community members who foster the same commitment to the next generation. They understand that giving back to a community is not a one-time project, but instead a way of living.

AREAS OF FOCUS

FOCUS AREA 3 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT *continued*

Key Objectives:

- o Engage the community in programming that will encourage support for the schools.
- o Instill in students the importance of serving the local and global community.
- o Implement programming that fosters a global perspective.
- o Look to the community for talents and skills that can be used to introduce or reinforce lessons for students.

Action Strategies:

- 3.1 Work with local agencies to develop a database that will assist in matching students to community service opportunities.
- 3.2 Explore options for older students, including graduates, to serve as mentors for younger students across the district.
- 3.3 Develop a recognition program to honor students for community service.
- 3.4 Identify opportunities for engaging community members with the schools.



FOCUS AREA 4 – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Practices and protocols will be in place to ensure the efficient use of resources consistent with the community's expectation of a high performing school district.

Rationale: Education is a priority of the Yarmouth community, which invests significant public resources in a high-performing school district. It costs money to deliver a high quality educational experience with talented staff, appropriate class sizes, suitable facilities, and curriculum for the 21st century. The Yarmouth School Department must be an astute manager of resources and balance its responsibility to students and taxpayers while delivering on the community's expectations for its schools.

Key Objectives:

- o Follow an annual budget process that provides a thorough and rigorous analysis of expenditures, aligns resources with educational priorities, and capitalizes on appropriate cost-saving opportunities.
- o Employ a forward-looking budgeting approach that supports both immediate and long-term financial planning.
- o Continually seek opportunities to collaborate with organizations such as the Town of Yarmouth, other school districts, local businesses and non-profit organizations to provide programs, services, and infrastructure.
- o Compare ongoing and expanding programs and services with other high-performing schools throughout the region.
- o Pursue thoughtful and proactive steps to educate and engage the community and municipal officials in the budget development process.
- o Ensure wages and benefits are market appropriate and attract and retain quality employees.



Action Strategies:

- 4.1 Develop a five-year master plan for facilities, technology and transportation.
- 4.2 Examine opportunities to provide transportation, food service, and facilities maintenance through regional collaboration and/or private contracts.
- 4.3 Expand on fiscal data provided to the public, making use of the district website and electronic communications system to share detailed explanations.
- 4.4 Develop an annual comparison of financial performance with selected school districts in the region.

PERFORMANCE GOALS

		2020 TARGET	BASELINE
GRADE 1	Benchmark Assessment System	92% of students will reach reading benchmark.	89%
	Math Universal Screen	Cohort Mean Spring Score will meet or exceed 89.	82
GRADE 3	NWEA - MAP reading	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 162 or greater.	152
	NWEA - MAP mathematics	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 172 or greater.	167
GRADE 5	NWEA - MAP reading	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 158 or greater.	148
	NWEA - MAP mathematics	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 164 or greater.	154
GRADE 8	NWEA - MAP reading	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 150 or greater.	140
	NWEA - MAP mathematics	Combined percentage of students reaching benchmark and students meeting target growth will be 159 or greater.	149
GRADE 11	Maine High School Assessment	85% of students will meet or exceed reading standard.	77%
		85% of students will meet or exceed mathematics standard.	79%
GRADE 12	School-wide and Learning Area Expectations	100% of students will demonstrate proficiency in school-wide and learning area expectations.	N/A
	Post-Secondary Planning	100% of graduates will leave YHS with a plan for post-secondary schooling or training.	96%
	AP/Early College/Apprenticeships	85% of graduates will have successfully completed at least one AP/early college or apprenticeship/training experience.	79%

CLIMATE GOALS: Based on responses to School Quality Survey

ROWE SCHOOL

"My teacher expects me to do my best."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	97%
"I like Rowe School."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	97%

YARMOUTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"My teacher expects me to do my best."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	97%
"I like Yarmouth Elementary School."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	98%

HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

"At least one adult in my school really cares and gives me help and support when I need it."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	84%
"I feel safe at my school."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree. (Maine average on 2013 MIYH Survey: 85%)	89%

YARMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

"At least one adult in my school really cares and gives me help and support when I need it."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	79%
"Adults in my school address conflict, negative language, and bullying in positive ways to help students."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree. (Maine average on 2013 MIYH Survey: 36%)	68%
"The school promotes, supports, and models creative and innovative thinking and inventiveness."	100% of students will agree or strongly agree.	72%

It is understood that these goals are aspirational in nature. Although reaching them is desirable, the Yarmouth School Committee recognizes that lofty goals such as this are seldom attainable. With that in mind, it is important to note that continual improvement is the real goal, with year over year advancement the measure of success.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

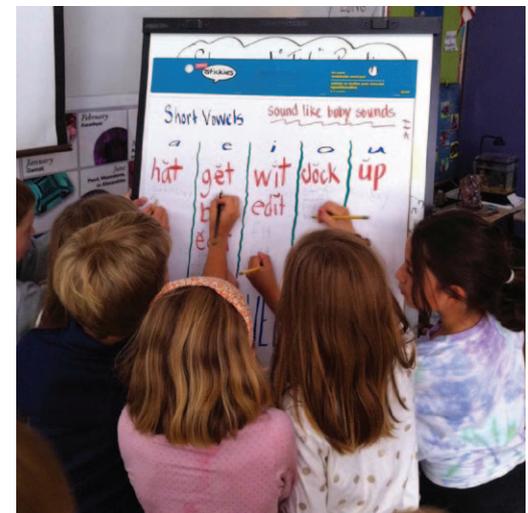
Benchmark Assessment System (BAS): The Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) is a standardized reading assessment. The student reads aloud and talks about a benchmark book during a one-on-one assessment conference with the teacher. Using established scoring conventions and procedures for analysis, valuable information is gathered about each individual's reading processing, fluency and comprehension.

Math Universal Screener (MUS): Our Math Universal Screener at the kindergarten and grade one level is a tool designed to help identify and monitor growth of students who are in need of math support to help close conceptual gaps. The screeners focus largely on number concept and number sense as students build toward numeration.

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP): This assessment is administered to students each fall and spring, providing data on student growth in the areas of English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Although this assessment is nationally normed, the decision to use this test to measure student performance is made at the local level.

Maine High School Assessment: For the past decade, Maine high schools have administered the SAT exam to all third-year students (juniors) as part of federally- and state-mandated testing. In 2015, the Maine Department of Education mandated assessment using Smarter Balanced exams. It is unknown what future state-mandated assessments will consist of, so this document is non-specific in identifying the performance indicator to be used for juniors.

Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS): The Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) was first administered in 2009 and is offered in February of odd-numbered years. The MIYHS is the result of collaboration between the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (Maine Center for Disease Control and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services) and the Maine Department of Education. Its purpose is to quantify the health of Kindergarten and Grade 3 students through parent interviews, and the health-related behaviors and attitudes of 5th through 12th graders by direct student survey.



Empowering all students to create fulfilling lives in a changing world

