

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Teresa Buono, Chair	Term expires 2009
Deirdre Donarumo, Vice Chair	Term expires 2009
Richard Harris, Jr.	Term expires 2011
Rock Mastrangelo	Term expires 2010
James Pearl	Term expires 2009

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATION

The Middleton School Committee holds regular monthly meetings generally twice per month throughout the school year. Meetings are usually held on the second Thursday and fourth Monday of the month at the Fuller Meadow School. Additional sessions and meetings for special purposes such as budget and policy development are also scheduled. Interested citizens should check notices at Town Hall, which are posted two days or more in advance of any scheduled meeting. Meetings are open to the public and citizens are encouraged to attend. Individuals or groups may suggest an item to be placed on the agenda by forwarding a written request to the Superintendent of Schools or to the Chairperson of the School Committee.

Milestones

The Middleton School Building Committee (MSBC) completed the Feasibility Study Phase of the New School Building Project as directed by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). A draft Project Scope and Budget Agreement was submitted to the MSBA in January 2009. This document outlines the total time and cost for the New School Building Project at the Howe Manning School Site. The MSBC, together with our Owner's Project Manager and Designer, is working with the MSBA to finalize the agreement for submission to the MSBA Board for funding approval. The MSBA anticipates MSBA Board approval of the project in March 2009. If approved by the MSBA Board, the Town of Middleton will have 120 days to accept the state funding (anticipated at 49.7% of the total cost) and appropriate the remaining funds for the project. If the New School Project is approved, the anticipated opening for the new school will be during the 2011/2012 school year. This project was also submitted to the Lt. Governor's office as a shovel-ready project for potential federal stimulus funding. The new school has been our highest priority as it will alleviate years of overcrowding in our two elementary schools.

Mission Statement

The missions of the Middleton Elementary Schools, in cooperation with family and community, are to instill a joy of learning in all students, to promote academic excellence, to be supportive of children's social and emotional needs, and to constantly strive for improvement in these areas.

Core Values of the Middleton Elementary Schools

All children can be successful if they are provided with opportunities to learn, are active in their own education, and are exposed to a variety of enriching experiences at school and at home.

A strong climate of respect between children and the entire school community is necessary for children to reach their potential as productive students and citizens.

Effective education must be a partnership between school, home and community.

District Goals 2005-2008

The School Committee establishes district goals every three years. District goals are reviewed and implementation actions established on an annual basis. The district goals and implementation actions for the 2009-2012 academic years were reviewed and approved in November 2008. The implementation actions established are designed to support the twelve major goal areas for the school district. Of the goals listed below, the primary goal for the Committee is to ensure that solutions to the issues of current school space shortages and long-term school space needs are determined.

Three Year Goal #1—Academic Excellence through Student Achievement: All of our students will achieve their academic and personal potential. All students will achieve their academic and personal potential in Mathematics and English Language Arts as measured by local assessment measures and the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). We will have achieved this goal when 100% of our students perform at the Proficient or Advanced Level as measured by the MCAS in all grades tested.

Three Year Goal #2—Learning Needs of Children: We will better serve learners of all abilities, including those who are academically able and/or academically challenged. Our children learn in different ways and at different rates. Our instructional program offerings should reflect this continuum. All of our children will have the opportunity to learn in ways that match their abilities and needs. All children, staff, and parents will experience a supportive learning community that recognizes, respects, plans for and rewards personal integrity and hard work.

Three Year Goal #3—Home/School and Community Communication: We will develop the strongest internal and external resources to communicate clearly to our school community the need to improve our educational program during challenging fiscal times.

Three Year Goal #4—Welcoming Environment: All children, staff, parents and community members will experience a friendly, supportive and respectful environment in both of our elementary schools.

Three Year Goal #5—Staff Recruitment and Retention: We will develop and implement new plans to address future needs regarding the recruitment, development and retention of excellent teaching and leadership personnel.

Three Year Goal #6—Technology Integration: We will continue to develop the internal and external resources and financial capacity to integrate technology into our educational program and use technology as a communications resource.

Three Year Goal #7—Permanent New Space: We will work to provide sufficient school space to meet academic and other program needs of the Middleton Elementary Schools through at least the year 2027.

Three Year Goal #8—Physical Plant: We will continue to provide proper maintenance of physical plant facilities, outdoor space and equipment in a proactive manner that maintains and enhances the Town's investment in our school buildings and equipment.

Three Year Goal #9—Tri-Town Union Shared Priorities for 2009-2012 and Superintendent's Goals: We will continue to work in a collaborative manner with member towns to maximize the effective delivery of agreed upon services to member towns.

Three Year Goal #10—Professional Development: The Middleton Elementary School Committee will proactively engage in ongoing and continued Professional Development opportunities, constantly striving to improve its performance on behalf of the elementary school community.

Three Year Goal #11 – Health and Wellness: We will work to ensure that school curriculum, programs, procedures, and policies incorporate aspects of physical and emotional health and wellness of the school community.

Three Year Goal #12 – Global Culture and Civics: We will encourage and support an educational curriculum that provides students with the opportunity to learn, experience and appreciate the differences and similarities between the United States and other foreign countries and cultures and to understand the need for global civic responsibility.

School Management, Governance Structure and School Committee Priorities

The Superintendent is appointed by the Tri-Town School Union Committee (Superintendency Union 58). The School Union Committee jointly employs the Superintendent (PK-6), School Business Manager, Administrator of Special Education, and Director of Facilities and Operations as well as the secretarial and bookkeeping staff of the Central Office. The Superintendent acts as the Chief Executive Officer of the School Committee in the operation of the schools.

The 2008-2009 school year marks the sixteenth year of Middleton's membership in the Tri-Town School Union with Boxford and Topsfield. The three towns maintain their

commitment to working together, particularly in the new era of school accountability. In this regard, the Tri-Town School Union recently applied for and received a state grant to study the potential benefit in cost efficiencies by regionalization. In the judgment of the School Committee, Middleton's membership in the Tri-Town Union continues to benefit students, teachers and the community.

The major function of the School Committee continues to be the provision of the highest quality educational program within available funding resources. Curriculum development and alignment continues to be a priority in the school committee's planning effort, which addresses each major curriculum area on a regular cycle.

**SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 1, 2008
(District Total = 880)**

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Fuller Meadow School (PK-3)	67	105	109	117	114				512
Howe Manning School (4-6)						126	134	108	368
Total K-6									813
Total PK-6									880

Enrollment Trends 1992- 2009

Year	K-6	Increase	% Increase
1992-93	427	+1	0.0%
1993-94	475	+48	11.2%
1994-95	530	+55	10.4%
1995-96	582	+52	9.8%
1996-97	625	+43	6.9%
1997-98	672	+47	7.5%
1998-99	692	+20	3.0%
1999-00	710	+18	2.6%
2000-01	703	-7	(1.0%)
2001-02	709	6	1.0%
2002-03	696	-13	(1.8%)
2003-04	723	+27	+3.8%
2004-05	768	+45	+6.2%
2005-06	784	+16	+2.0%
2006-07	792	+8	+1.0%
2007-08	808	+16	+2.0%
2008-09	813	+5	+0.6%

The above figures indicate an increase in enrollment in the Middleton Elementary Schools of 386 students over a seventeen year period. This represents a **90% increase** in the student population over this time period.

Fiscal Operation

The budget development process is an extensive and involved task during which the Committee must make difficult decisions to bring into balance both the financial concerns of the community and elements of appropriate high quality educational services. Increasing costs associated with increased enrollment, school transportation, special education, building maintenance, modular expansion and contracted salary increases must be addressed within the context of limited state and federal funding. This year's budgeting process was particularly difficult due to the country's financial crisis and recession. We implemented a budget freeze in November 2008 and instituted additional energy cost savings measures. We have voted to eliminate \$35,000.00 from the approved FY 2009 budget and we are presenting a level-funded (0% increase) FY2010 budget. Warrant articles for the May 2009 Town Meeting reflect items the School Committee believes are vital to the continued maintenance of our curriculum programs and school buildings.

The School Department operating budgets for FY2007, FY2008 and FY2009 are summarized below:

Middleton Elementary Schools Budget Expense Summary

	FY07 Approved Budget	FY08 Approved Budget	FY09 Approved Budget
Total Salaries	4,449,929	4,820,764	5,409,824
Total Supplies	224,793	242,631	252,998
Total Equipment	30,334	30,339	44,715
Total Prof. Dev.	54,697	64,245	65,586
Total Special Education	490,508	727,793	813,485
Total Transportation	424,523	526,824	539,397
Insurance	919,760	970,531	1,044,503
Utilities	233,633	196,643	220,562
Facilities	117,442	167,770	162,652
Total Operating Budget	\$6,945,619	\$7,747,542	\$8,553,722

MCAS Annual Comparisons for Middleton 2004-2008

As Educational Reform in Massachusetts heads into its sixteenth year, school district accountability continues to be at the forefront of the reform effort. The Middleton School Committee goal is to increase the number and percentage of our students achieving at the Advanced and Proficient Levels in each grade and in each subject tested. The Department of Education has rated each school district and school in terms of its performance and improvement. Detailed information about the School District Accountability System Cycle III ratings including determinations regarding the requirement to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law can be found on the Massachusetts Department of Education web site, which can be reached through a link on our school district website.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) now includes the following areas and grades:

- Grade Three: Reading, Mathematics
- Grade Four: English Language Arts, Mathematics
- Grade Five: Science and Technology, English Language Arts, Mathematics
- Grade Six: English Language Arts, Mathematics

Third Grade students participated for the eighth time in the Reading examination in March of 2008. This was also the third year third grade students participated in the Mathematics examination. Results for the past five years for our students by levels of performance are presented in the tables below:

GRADE 3 MATHEMATICS			
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	5	28	33
PROFICIENT	51	50	38
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	38	17	19
WARNING	6	5	10

GRADE 3 READING					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	0	0	23	31	24
PROFICIENT	86	76	47	50	45
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	12	21	20	14	27
WARNING	2	3	11	6	4

Fourth Grade students participated in the eleventh administration of the required Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in May 2008. Students were tested in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Results for the past five years for our students by levels of performance are presented in the tables below:

GRADE 4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	18	10	15	15	15
PROFICIENT	61	58	57	50	58
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	14	30	26	31	23
WARNING	7	1	2	4	5

GRADE 4 MATHEMATICS					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	19	23	22	22	35
PROFICIENT	42	40	35	38	39
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	37	37	40	34	23
WARNING	2	0	3	6	3

Fifth Grade students participated in Science and Technology examination for the sixth year. This was the third year fifth grade students participated in the English Language Arts and Mathematics examinations. Results for the past five years for our students by levels of performance are presented in the tables below:

GRADE 5 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS			
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	16	17	12
PROFICIENT	64	62	54
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	20	14	28
WARNING	0	7	6

GRADE 5 MATHEMATICS			
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	25	33	35
PROFICIENT	38	45	37
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	32	18	17
WARNING	5	5	10

GRADE 5 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	37	9	25	30	27
PROFICIENT	37	52	49	46	50
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	20	31	24	18	18
WARNING	6	8	2	6	5

Sixth Grade students participated in the Mathematics examination for the seventh year. Students were asked to respond to both multiple choice and open-ended performance questions designed to measure mastery of learning standards contained in the State Curriculum Frameworks. This was the third year the sixth grade students participated in the English Language Arts examinations. Results for the past five years for our students by levels of performance are presented in the tables below:

GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS			
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	13	8	17
PROFICIENT	67	75	65
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	18	16	17
WARNING	3	1	2

GRADE 6 MATHEMATICS					
PERFORMANCE LEVEL	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ADVANCED	44	28	29	34	44
PROFICIENT	30	39	41	41	43
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	20	23	23	23	11
WARNING	6	11	7	2	2

Curriculum and Program Development

The Middleton Elementary Schools maintain web sites which contain detailed information about our ongoing initiatives in curriculum, instruction and professional development. School Committee information can be found at www.tritownschoolunion.com and elementary school information is maintained on www.middletonps.org as well.

We recently implemented the Standards-Based Report Card at both elementary schools. The Standards-Based Report Card is being used by many school districts across the United States and is considered a more enhanced measurement of student performance and achievement. From the Standards-Based Report Card, we can more readily identify for students areas of concentration in their curriculum.

At this time, population growth has not abated and is predicted to continue to climb. Our special education population currently exceeds both Boxford and Topsfield. Of the Tri-Town communities, we are second for total student population. We anticipate being first in total student population within the next three years. We continue to hire new grade school teachers, special education staff, and additional support services to better serve our elementary school children.

The Middleton School Committee, through representatives on the Tri-Town School Union Committee, continues a collaborative relationship with the Masconomet Regional School Committee and Superintendent. The Committees meet on at least an annual basis to review district goals, discuss curriculum alignment to ensure a positive transition experience from Grade 6 to Grade 7, and coordinate school calendars. Meeting

discussion also includes a review of Social Studies programs, MCAS performance goals, and strategies to promote student well-being and success.

Professional Development

The Fuller Meadow School Council Improvement Plan, the Howe Manning School Council Improvement Plan and the District Strategic Plan each place a strong emphasis on professional development and training for staff and focus upon identified curriculum and organizational priorities as well as the diverse learning needs of children. The primary areas of focus for this year included instruction on differentiated learning needs of students, refinement of the standards-based report card model, guided reading training, health and wellness issue identification, and leadership team development.

Models for conducting professional development continue to include a combination of full day professional development days, after school and weekend workshops, summer institutes, locally sponsored graduate courses, study groups, teacher-to-teacher projects and mentoring, curriculum committees and a limited number of early release day offerings.

The School Committee continues to provide incentives through tuition reimbursement programs beyond the school day and school district. In addition, the application of available grant funds from the State Department of Education continues to be instrumental in creating opportunities for teachers and other staff to maintain and update their professional skills. The School Committee continues to believe that professional development for staff is an important investment that will result in improved learning opportunities for our school children.

Special Education

All public school districts are mandated by state and federal laws to provide special education services to those students with one or more disabilities that interfere with the child's ability to make effective progress within the general education curriculum. School districts are required to do so for children beginning at age three. We are also required to provide any special education and related services, such as Speech/ Language therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Counseling, in the least restrictive environment and without consideration of the costs associated with providing identified services in a child's Individual Education Program (IEP.) In addition to meeting the many regulatory obligations associated with special education, we also are required to ensure every child makes adequate progress towards achieving his/her own personal learning goals, we also have to ensure the child can achieve Proficient on our state assessments by 2014.

As of October 1, 2008, there were 168 special needs students; 69 at Fuller Meadow, 76 at Howe Manning, 11 out-of-district placements, 6 preschoolers enrolled in the Middleton Integrated Pre-School Program and 6 preschoolers receiving therapy only. The population percentage of Middleton students (K-6) receiving special education services is

approximately 19.0%, which is above the state and national average. This is a 55% increase in the number of special education students (108) since October 1, 2001. Our special education evaluation teams are highly trained in the assessment of children and are able to identify students with disabilities with a high degree of accuracy. Our special education staff work collaboratively with general education colleagues and parents to ensure all students make steady progress.

The District is deeply committed to an inclusion philosophy pursuing effective ways to integrate all our children into regular education settings. Middleton has affiliations with the Greater Lawrence Educational Collaborative and Northshore Education Consortium to provide specialized support services to low incident special needs students and serve as a resource to address special education issues, as well as for professional development.

Closing Statement

Middleton's elementary schools continue to provide a high level of education to the children of Middleton. Middleton children consistently achieve results in the top third of all districts in the state on the many state tests administered through the MCAS program. Through careful budgetary management, Middleton schools provide a great value to the taxpayers of our town and our children graduate fully prepared for the academic challenges ahead.

The School Committee recognizes that quality education must occur in facilities designed to meet the educational needs of an academic program. We maximized all available building space at both schools in the 2006-2007 academic year. This means that non-educational space, such as offices, work stations, and storage closets, is currently being used for academic instruction. For the 2006-2007 academic year, two modular classrooms were installed at the Howe Manning School. Three modular classrooms were installed at the Fuller Meadow School in the Spring of 2007 for the 2007-2008 academic year. These modular buildings have been added to provide a temporary solution to the overcrowding occurring at both school buildings due to increased enrollment. Our schools have been over-capacity since 2005 and continue to remain strained. As enrollment increases, we anticipate further modularity will be needed to accommodate the increased student population. In the future, it is also possible that core space, such as the gymnasium and cafeteria, would be sectioned to provide for instructional space.

Use of portable classrooms and non-educational space are not a solution to the academic needs of our school children now or in the future. The School Committee affirms its commitment to provide a new school for the school children as a permanent, long-term solution to the school space needs. The Middleton School Building Committee has made excellent progress in bringing the New School Building Project forward and working within the MSBA's regulatory framework. Through the MSBC's effort, we are well-positioned to receive funding from the state to construct a new school. Understanding the difficult economic time we are now facing, the MSBC also submitted this project to the Lt. Governor's office as a shovel-ready project for potential federal stimulus funding.

The Elementary School Committee appreciates the financial and strategic support and encouragement received from the community and other town boards as we continue our efforts to improve student achievement and plan for a new school to provide quality instructional space for teaching and learning that will last us for the next half-century.

Respectfully Submitted,

Teresa Buono, Chairperson
Deirdre Donarumo, Vice Chairperson
Richard Harris, Jr.
Rock Mastrangelo
James Pearl