

Norwood Public Schools
Norwood, Massachusetts

Balch Elementary School
School Improvement Plan
ONE-YEAR UPDATE
SY 2023-2024



Principal:
Diane Ferreira

Balch School Mission Statement:

Our mission is to ensure that all students achieve at high levels and are well-prepared as they further pursue their education.

Through the cooperation of parents and educators, the Balch School strives to provide our children a quality education that will foster a lifetime desire and ability for learning along with the confidence and skills to succeed in an ever-changing world.

We believe this mission must be pursued with compassion and caring for the strengths, weaknesses, and uniqueness of each child. Learning should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience. We hope that all students will leave the Balch School with a deep appreciation of the value of education.

In pursuit of this mission, the Balch School endeavors to help all students achieve the following educational and personal development goals:

- Develop the intellectual abilities of logical, critical, and creative thinking.
- Become proficient in the basic communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Acquire a broad range of knowledge through the directed study of all core disciplines.
- Promote self-confidence, the desire and ability to achieve and the pride of good workmanship.
- Promote good citizenship and character through respect for self and others, safety in work and play, and responsible behavior.

School Data Snapshot

Selected Populations %

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
First Language not English	49.7	52	49.8	51.3
English Language Learner	35.4	35.7	34.6	37.8
Students with Disabilities	20.9	18.4	17.8	18.3
High Needs	70.3	67.3	73.8	77.6
Economically Disadvantaged	46.5	49	61.2	61.9

Average Class Size

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
All Grades	20	18	19	19.5

Mobility Rate

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
All Grades (Aggregate)	91.8	92.9	93.9	
Limited English Proficient	91.1	94.3	91.6	
Students with Disabilities	88.5	89.2	94.2	
Economically Disadvantaged	91.5	93.4	93.4	

Accountability Measures

Student Group Percentile

Student group percentiles are used to identify schools with low performing student groups. The student group percentile is calculated using the same methodology used to calculate the accountability percentile and measures a group's overall performance relative to the performance of the same student group statewide in schools in the same gradespan (e.g., comparing the low income student group in one high school to all other low income student groups in high schools statewide). Any group with a percentile of 5 or lower is identified as low performing. Student group percentiles are not calculated for districts, or for any group without sufficient achievement and growth data in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

Group	2022 percentile
High needs	31
Low-income	23
English learner (EL) and Former EL	47
Students with disabilities	56
American Indian or Alaskan Native	-
Asian	-
African American/Black	-
Hispanic or Latino	45
Multi-race, non-Hispanic or Latino	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-
White	42

ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

Students in grades 3 through 8 and 10 take the Next Generation MCAS assessments in ELA, mathematics, and science, and achievement on these assessments is measured separately using the average composite scaled score.

English Language Arts Achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score (score range= 440-560)			
Group	2019 Achievement	2022 Achievement	N
All Students	497.7	487.7	195
High needs	491.5	482.4	148

Low income	491.6	481.3	126
EL and Former EL	488.4	479.5	88
Students w/ disabilities	484.7	477.6	48
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	10
Afr. Amer./Black	-	486.1	27
Hispanic/Latino	490.1	479.2	73
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	-	-	2
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	2
White	504.7	495.1	81

Mathematics Achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score <i>(score range= 440-560)</i>			
Group	2019 Achievement	2022 Achievement	N
All Students	495.5	487.9	195
High needs	488.8	482.8	148
Low income	488.1	481.5	126
EL and Former EL	487.7	483.1	88
Students w/ disabilities	481.5	474.5	48

Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	10
Afr. Amer./Black	-	482.0	27
Hispanic/Latino	488.4	481.4	73
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	-	-	2
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-

Science Achievement - MCAS average composite scaled score <i>(score range= 440-560)</i>			
Group	2019 Achievement	2022 Achievement	N
All Students	499.5	493.1	71
High needs	489.2	485.6	51
Low income	-	482.7	40
EL and Former EL	-	482.5	26
Students w/ disabilities	-	476.4	22
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	2
Afr. Amer./Black	-	-	12

Hispanic/Latino	-	485.3	26
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	-	-	1
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-
White	508.0	501.8	

GROWTH SCORES

All groups (districts, schools, and student groups) are expected to demonstrate annual growth in student performance. Massachusetts uses Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) to measure how a group of students' achievement has grown or changed over time. SGPs are reported separately for ELA and mathematics at the district, school, and student group level.

English Language Arts Growth			
Group	2019 Mean SGP	2022 Mean SGP	N
All Students	47.7	50.2	130
High needs	42.7	47.7	94
Low income	43.2	44.5	78
EL and Former EL	44.7	44.2	53
Students w/ disabilities	40.4	48.6	34
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	5
Afr. Amer./Black	-	-	19
Hispanic/Latino	50.0	43.0	49

Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	-	-	2
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-
White	48.9	54.9	55

Mathematics Growth			
Group	2019 Mean SGP	2022 Mean SGP	N
All Students	50.1	50.3	131
High needs	48.8	50.8	95
Low income	45.6	48.9	79
EL and Former EL	47.6	52.8	53
Students w/ disabilities	56.3	45.3	34
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-
Asian	-	-	5
Afr. Amer./Black	-	-	19
Hispanic/Latino	48.3	57.5	50
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	-	-	2
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-
White	52.0	46.9	55

NORWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Balch Elementary School
PRIORITY AREAS UPDATE FORM
SY 2023-2024

Priority Area #1: MTSS Tiered Literacy Academy (Strategic Plan 3.1, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7)

Goal: Continue the Balch School's work with the MTSS Tiered Literacy Academy. In Year 2 we plan to add 20-50% more of the staff onto our Tiered Literacy Team and invite them in as "early adopters" of our literacy plan.

Provide an update on the progress to date in this priority area. Be sure to include the following (200 words max):

- Successes and challenges of implementation (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Proposed changes to implementation plan to increase progress towards intended outcomes

- Courtney Cavanaugh, newly hired Reading Specialist, became the point person for this initiative
- Courtney attended several workshops and brought back the work done there in CPT meetings with staff as well as staff meetings
- Full day remote PD for Diane, Courtney and Stefanie West on Sept. 19, 2022- Understanding MTSS and UDL- Kristin Osborne and Katie Novak were presenters- information brought back to the staff at the next staff meeting
- Kristin Osborne from DESE, met with the Balch Staff on January 10, 2023- Each grade level had a 1 hour session with Kristin around supporting students in small groups and curating resources for Tier 2A intervention
- Regularly scheduled remote sessions with Kristin and other Literacy Academy districts
- All classes utilizing a block schedule with small group instruction built in this school year
- All grades utilizing a WIN block for intervention and enrichment this school year

Next Steps:

- Continue our partnership and involvement with the DESE's "MTSS Tiered Literacy Academy" for the third and final year.
- Continue to look at scheduling, instructional practices, and resources to improve literacy outcomes for all students at the Balch.
- Develop a shared vision and goal around literacy instruction, progress monitoring, and data analysis

Priority Area #2: Implementation of Science Curriculum (Strategic Plan 3.4)

Allow teachers to gain proficiency in the new Science-Technology-Engineering program as adopted by the district wide STE Committee through effective professional development and common implementation expectations.

Provide an update on the progress to date in this priority area. Be sure to include the following (200 words max):

- Successes and challenges of implementation (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Proposed changes to implementation plan to increase progress towards intended outcomes

- Teachers attended all PD provided by StemScopes and Science Coordinator Elizabeth Warren
- Elizabeth Warren met throughout the school year with grade level teams during CPT to answer questions and support
- Grades 1 and 2 using Mystery Science, grades 3-5 using StemScopes with fidelity
- Decision made to keep grades 1 and 2 in Mystery Science moving forward

Next Steps:

- Continue to work with the Science Coordinator to support classroom teachers' effective implementation of the science curriculums
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- Organize the materials provided with StemScopes and coordinate the procurement of additional items needed in a more consistent and cohesive way
- Explore whether or not to departmentalize some of the content areas, including Science in grades 3-5

Priority Area #3: Student Experience Survey Analysis (Strategic Plan 5.1, 5.2)

Use the analysis of the Highlander Student Experience Surveys and other data to develop a stronger school-wide behavioral program and positive school culture at the Balch School.

Provide an update on the progress to date in this priority area. Be sure to include the following (200 words max):

- Successes and challenges of implementation (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Proposed changes to implementation plan to increase progress towards intended outcomes

- **SES administered to grades 3-5 in October 2022**
- **Results shared and reviewed at a staff meeting**
- **Grade level teachers followed up during CPT to brainstorm ways to address areas of concern**
- **Intentional use of CRSP strategies to reach all learners**

Next Steps:

- **Second administration in June 2023**
- **Analysis of results, look for positive changes in challenging areas**
- **Identify areas of concern and work towards positive changes in culture and learning environments**

Priority Area #4: Creation and implementation of Data Teams (Strategic Plan 3.3)

Utilize the expertise of our Curriculum Coordinators, Interventionist, and Reading Specialist the Balch School teachers and principal to develop strong data teams that meet regularly to discuss student progress and achievement.

Provide an update on the progress to date in this priority area. Be sure to include the following (200 words max):

- Successes and challenges of implementation (both quantitative and qualitative)
- Proposed changes to implementation plan to increase progress towards intended outcomes

- **Data leaders in the building established as Courtney Cavanaugh, Reading Specialist and Kelly Tynan, Interventionist focused on Math**
- **Teachers participate in weekly data sessions with Courtney (Week A) and Kelly (Week B) during CPT**
- **Criteria established for small groups and which students will participate in Tier 2 and 2A (gen. Ed intervention) and who will participate in Tier 3 (Reading Specialist and Math Interventionist)**
- **Progress monitoring periods established, with data collected into shared spreadsheets**
- **Data PD and analysis held on data PD days in January and March**

Next Steps:

- **Continue the work of data teams, growing in our understanding of the Data Wise processes**
- **Grow the data leadership team from Reading Specialist and Interventionist to adding key teachers at each grade level**
- **Develop better systems for analyzing non-academic data such as attendance, behavior, and engagement**

