



Conackamack Middle School

Strategic Plan 2014-2015

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For additional information, please visit the:
[Conackamack School Website](#)

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Piscataway Middle School Community believes that youth in the middle grades are capable of learning and achieving at high levels. Therefore we dedicate our efforts to creating exemplary middle schools that provide equal access to quality education that is responsive to the developmental needs, talents, and interests of all students.

Strategic Plan Profile: 2014-2015

Piscataway Township Schools

Conackamack Middle School

Conackamack Middle School's current enrollment is 483 in grades 6, 7 and 8. We have a diverse student population, and Conackamack is a welcoming and vibrant learning community with a reputation for excellence that reflects the cultural diversity of our town.

At Conackamack, we encourage students to "Dream Big," while guiding them as they make the transition from elementary school to high school. As adolescents, our students imagine their futures as college students and professionals, while they simultaneously experience physical, emotional, intellectual and social development at an amazing pace. It is our responsibility to provide our students with the opportunity, and the setting, that addresses their growing need for freedom. This helps them envision the exponential opportunities and possibilities that lay before them. To that end, Conackamack, along with Schor and Quibbletown Middle Schools, continues the work of our learning communities in addressing the needs of our adolescents.

Commensurate with current best practices, we provide one hour of daily instruction in mathematics, language arts literacy, science, and social studies for all students. The teachers of the academic core areas of Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies offer students a dynamic view of the nature of knowledge and the experience of learning. These teachers support their students' efforts to construct life-affirming meaning from the world around them. They promote and encourage substantial student commitment to reading, writing, enquiry, and focused discussion in order to secure the factual knowledge and conceptual structures essential for intellectual competence. Paralleling this endeavor, these core content area teachers provide structured preparation for PARCC Assessment. Students are provided with multiple opportunities to read and comprehend a range of grade-level complex texts, including texts from all domains. Highly qualified teachers provide their students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate the interrelated literacy activities of reading, gathering evidence about what is read, as well as analyzing and presenting that evidence in writing. These innovative teachers are striving to develop a community of inquiry in which they collectively and individually question, reason, connect, deliberate, challenge, and problem-solve toward the purpose of their students becoming the conscientious leaders and agents of change for the next generation.

Additionally, all students receive 30 minutes of instruction in Spanish every other day, following the A-B schedule. For interested and selected students in 7th and 8th grade, we offer the Pathways World Language program. (Omit five days a week.) We continue our balanced approach to education by maintaining exploratory rotations in music, art, media literacy, and computer technology for students in all three grades. Band, Chorus, and Orchestra are available for interested and selected students along with Jazz Band for interested and selected 8th grade students.

Physical Education and Health Education are now presented as a blended course. The department sponsors school-wide events such as the Turkey Trot, Volleyball Assembly, and Health Fair, the Flag project and Track Meet to emphasis the concept of "life-long" fitness and community. The Flag and map project highlights the ninety-six different countries which help comprise our very diverse student/faculty population. The Turkey Trot is a Community Service endeavor that supplies thousands of cans of food to local food banks. Inter-campus initiatives with the adjacent intermediate school provide tangible connections for students to make a successful transition to middle school. The goal of the course is to improve fitness and foster a life-long appreciation for physical activity, nutrition, and enhanced decision making to positively impact students' current and future health status.

We maintain high expectations for setting a productive learning environment. Our students exhibit pride in their learning environment, displaying “Conackamack Pride.” Using Project Wisdom as a framework, we focus on one positive character attribute daily, providing clear guidance to our students. Our Code of Conduct and Expectations defines how everyone in our learning community must work together to maintain an environment that is supportive of our vision and mission. We offer positive reinforcement to our students through recognition and celebration of academic, athletic, and artistic achievements. Additionally, when necessary, our highly skilled counselors conduct conflict resolution sessions to guide students in specific strategies to promote responsible actions.

Our counseling department has a comprehensive approach that is designed to support our students as they face the social, emotional and academic challenges of these transition years. Additionally, they provide services to our students using a multi-pronged approach that includes classroom lessons, small group and individual counseling sessions. We utilize a team comprised of teachers, the school nurse, administrators, and members of the child study team to develop collaborative problem solving strategies to address students’ needs and communicate with parents.

We are committed to communicating effectively with students and parents, and we appreciate the opportunity to work in tandem with families. Teachers maintain content-related websites with homework calendars so that students can continue to access and review course material outside the school day. The Parent Module of Genesis allows parents to view the academic progress of their children, and the school website allows teachers to share information about their classrooms and team activities. Together, the homework calendar and Parent Module of Genesis provide a thorough picture of students’ activities and progress. We also provide a choice for conferences so that parents and students can make an optimal selection based on their needs. Parents select either traditional conferences or Student-Led Conferences in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. Regardless of the format, we strive to engage parents/guardians and their children in meaningful conversation, reflection and goal-setting centered on learning.

Additionally, we understand the importance of mutually beneficial partnerships. We appreciate our partnership with the parents/guardians of our students and have a variety of ways to stay connected and mutually supportive. Our Parent Teacher Organization funds educational clubs, field trips, and assemblies that are aligned with our curricula.

Another partnership that benefits our students is our Professional Development School partnership with Kean University. Each semester, we host eight to ten junior and senior practicum students, and an equal number of sophomores for their initial field experience. Through this partnership, we have a Clinical Supervisor who works with our pre-service and cooperating teachers to provide a rich learning experience for our students, our teachers, and the Kean students. The learning and growing experience contributes to the work of our small learning communities. The PDS partnership, coupled with our District mentoring program and our teaming structures have been successful in helping to retain teachers in the profession.

Selected 8th grade students benefit from yet a third partnership that provides them with the opportunity to participate in the Health Links program, a community effort that provides students with authentic experiences related to various careers in the health care industry.

Our strategic action plan, developed in conjunction with our district strategic plan, seeks to expand upon our successes as we move forward as a school and a district. It is a point of pride that our students come from a wide variety of cultural experiences and family backgrounds. We work together to provide all of the students who walk through our doors with the opportunity to begin to dream and set goals to achieve their aspirations. In order to achieve our goals, Conackamack sets ambitious objectives, identifies steps to help us achieve them, and moves forward with energy, focus, and enthusiasm.

<p>Create and implement a consistent vehicle to reinforce specific skills such as studying and note-taking, processes for completing make-up work, etc. during WIN period, in communication with parents and counselors.</p>	<p>Structure and format for students to create Student Personal Improvement Plans (PIPs), Ensure consistent use of Student Planning devices such as agendas and I-Pad Applications</p> <p>State Test, Quarterly & Teacher-made Exams, Homework Checks, Perception Survey</p>	<p>Students, Administrators, Homeroom teachers, Advisors/Counselors</p> <p>Counselors, Parents, Students, Teaching Team</p>	<p>None (existing cost of student planners)</p> <p>Stipend (If Applicable)</p>	<p>Assess student attainment of goals through progress monitoring of Pupil Improvement Plans and Individualized Learning Plans. Measure increase in homework completion, project completion, goal attainment, and the amount of lost planners. Increase in assessment scores and homework completion.</p> <p>5% improvement in performance on open-notes examinations, improved perception survey.</p>	
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Strategic Objective: Successfully infuse technology in the classroom to support academic growth and 21st Century learning.

Measure: Utilize technology to maximize opportunities to learn in the classroom and beyond the school day

Project	Benchmarks	Persons Responsible	Costs (estimate \$)	Measures of Success/ Student Output	Data Feb/March June
<p>I-PAD training and exploration for teachers and students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers participating in upcoming phases of the I-PAD implementation will benefit from advance training and familiarization that allows them to prepare for instruction the following year. Students will also benefit from I-PAD training and exploration in order to afford them the opportunity to maximize the potential of this tool. <p>Identify applications and programs that will support the Strategic Planning Goal noted above of improving academic achievement. Create a resource bank of current uses of technology in the classroom based on content area and grade level.</p> <p>Growth in lesson design to include pedagogy in effective implantation of technology in the content areas.</p>	<p>Media Technology Assessment- (comprehension and use) -Teacher Survey -Student Survey -Application in classroom by teachers and students</p> <p>Resource bank (available on the shared drive)</p> <p>Teacher Lesson Plans and Unit Plans</p>	<p>Tech Department, Administration, Teachers</p> <p>Teachers, Administration</p> <p>Supervisor of Instructional Technology, Principal, Media Specialist, Grades 6-8 Teachers</p>	<p>Cost for training.</p> <p>None (if staff share existing knowledge) -time to research (if needed)</p> <p>None</p>	<p>80% Competent IPAD usage skills, positive surveys. Sixth grade students assessed in media technology class (on preparedness for the use of IPADs) List of creative applications in the classroom.</p> <p>Staff survey (use of IPADs for class, use of resource bank, comfort level)</p> <p>Increase in number of approaches in lesson design; increase to supervisor's rating of application to 5+</p>	

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Strategic Objective: Increase opportunities for enrichment.

Measure: Utilize resources to provide increased and enhanced opportunities for student enrichment.

Project	Benchmarks	Persons Responsible	Costs (estimate \$)	Measures of Success/ Student Output	
<p>Utilize the WIN structure and Common Planning meetings to continue to identify and provide subject-specific enrichment as indicated by PIPs and assessments above. Create a regular opportunity for a “school wide” WIN with 100% of student participation in WIN.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize delayed opening schedule to allow for school-wide WIN on a regular schedule. Develop Individualized WIN Plans, to include academic, life skills, social choices WINS 	Plan for implementation	Administration, Committee of Teachers,	Plans for Remediation and Powering Up -Budget for materials	Decrease of 2% per grade level in Marking Period failures MP 1 failures: Gr. 6 = 0 students Gr. 7 = 2 students Gr. 8 = 20 students	

Strategic Objective: Promote teacher achievement.

Measure: Increase the opportunities for teachers to share and build upon their professional development and achievements

Project	Benchmarks	Persons Responsible	Costs (estimate \$)	Measures of Success/ Student Output	Data Feb/March June
Maximize opportunities during learning conferences and professional development days to emphasize content-specific training for all teachers.	Professional Development sessions, Teacher Survey for suggested topics, Staff Post-Surveys	Teachers, Supervisors, Administrators	Substitute fees if necessary and applicable;	Teacher and Administrator Survey; 85% of teachers will show evidence of PD application; incorporation of PD into instruction through review of Lesson Plans and observations	
Utilize the Danielson Framework and Teachscape in Team, Department, and Faculty meetings to familiarize staff and maximize opportunities for instruction in the classroom. Effectively examine instruction, planning, and presentation of curriculum.	Danielson/ Teachscape Professional Development, Professional Development survey.	Administrators	None	95% of teachers will have an overall effective "3" rating.	
Create opportunities to recognize and	Staff Survey	Administrators, staff,	None	Feedback via staff	

<p>share teacher professional accomplishments throughout the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition for innovation in teaching, service to school by nomination of administrators and staff 		<p>students</p>		<p>surveys; observations and lesson plans indicating shared ideas</p>	
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Strategic Objective: Create and maintain a positive school climate.

Measure: Ensure continued positive school climate

Project	Benchmarks	Persons Responsible	Costs (estimate \$)	Measures of Success/ Student Output	Data Feb/March June
<p>Strengthen and reinforce and the existing HIB education program through the use of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -posters -lesson plans (counselor) -adult support -Anti-bullying t-shirt contest (Student Government) <p>Create student-of-the-month program.</p> <p>Create student recognition program (example “Bucket Brigade” or “Helping Hands”)</p>	<p>HIB and Climate Survey, Participation in poster and t-shirt contest</p>	<p>Counselors, Teachers, Administration</p>	<p>\$100 Counseling Supplies; posters, prizes</p>	<p>5% increase in student perception of safety/ 5 % Decrease in HIB reports and unsafe events</p>	

Strategic Objective: Improve inter- and intra-school communication among stakeholders.

Measure: Enhance communication to ensure academic success and continuity for all students

Project	Benchmarks	Persons Responsible	Costs (estimate \$)	Measures of Success/ Student Output	Data Feb/March June
<p>Create a streamlined procedure for an articulation meeting with the intermediate schools and Piscataway High School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule and hold meetings between grade levels for articulation of content between the elementary, middle and high school. <p>Schedule meetings with previous grade level teachers; enhancing articulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule and hold meetings between at least representatives of the grade levels from 5th grade and within the building-if not all grade level teachers- for increased of knowledge of incoming students. 	<p>Completed Articulation Meetings, Teacher Survey, Articulation information on needs and strengths of students</p>	<p>Department Chairs (PHS), Supervisors, Administrators, Teachers, Counselors</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>5% decrease in initial I&RS Referrals, Completed articulation meetings, Positive teacher survey results on feeling of preparedness for incoming students</p>	
<p>Increase cross-content collaboration.</p>	<p>Meeting time designated for cross-content collaboration, One (1) completed cross-content initiative per grade level</p>	<p>Administrators, Teachers</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Reconfigure and/or increase amount of meeting time, Increase number of completed cross-content initiatives by one 1.5 hour meeting.</p>	

Develop and maintain protocols for improved communication with parents regarding placement in advanced classes (Math/LAL/Pathways/Jazz Band classes.)	Protocols (evidence of parent contact and feedback)	Math, LAL, World Language, Band Teachers, Administrators, Counselors	None	2% increase in students who are able to participate in enrichment opportunities	