Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District

Parent Guide
to
Grade Two Curriculum

HWRSD MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to be one community of learners committed to educating productive and responsible world citizens within a safe, healthful environment.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District has a rich and rigorous core curriculum, as evidenced by students' excellent accomplishments. The curriculum renewal process is ongoing and ensures continuity and consistency in grades PreK-12. The allocation of grant and local funds has allowed the District to establish equity in access to high quality curriculum materials and resources in every classroom. All teachers use these assets to design powerful, standards-based learning opportunities that actively engage students in the learning process. The narrative below highlights current elementary and middle school programs in technology integration, reading, mathematics, and science.

Strengthening the integration of technology into instruction to improve learning is a high priority. The Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School Committee recently approved a plan to improve staffing, infrastructure, equipment, reliability, and professional development so that all students have suitable access to technology. Research tells us that technology makes learning more interactive, enjoyable, and customizable, and this improves students' attitudes toward the subject and their interest in learning. Our goal is to ensure that students maximize their learning while developing the technology competencies they need for the 21st century.

Through sound planning, incremental investment, and creative allocation of staffing, information centers are the learning hub of every school with grades 2 and higher. Each school's information center is considered a "dynamic agent of learning." These centers feature a library with a collection of both fiction and non-fiction, a research section with traditional print media and a bank of computers for internet searches, a computer lab with at least twenty five computers and publishing media tools for the development of presentations or productions. The level of technology integration and professional development across the curriculum has intensified with full-time information specialists and paraprofessionals to support assimilation efforts.

Our current elementary reading program incorporates National Reading Panel recommendations for curriculum, instruction, and assessment which address the five components of literacy learning: vocabulary/oral language comprehension, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension. The core program, based upon the Houghton-Mifflin *Invitations to Literacy* (1997) balanced literacy series, is supplemented by classroom libraries and a steadily increasing number of leveled books for guided reading at the primary grades. *Accelerated Reader* is also accessed to encourage children to focus attention on careful reading of books, which improves students' critical-thinking skills and builds an intrinsic love of reading. Finally, to complete the language arts program, Collins Writing is consistently used in grades PreK-8 to support writing to learn across the curriculum.

Given the National Reading Panel recommendations, there is a need to find the right tools and use them with the right children. HWRSD supplemental regular education, Title 1, and/or Special Education reading interventions for students who are experiencing difficulty include: *Reading Recovery*, *Early Reading Intervention*, and small literacy groups for first graders who are performing at the lowest 20%

of their class, *Soar to Success* and *Story Grammar Marker* for students in grades 3-6 who need support in developing habits of mind for improving comprehension, *Lindamood-Bell* sensory-cognitive learning processes, and *Phonographix,* for students who need explicit phonics instruction.

The HWRSD mathematics curriculum is designed to develop understanding of mathematics concepts through student-centered activities while developing skills through meaningful practice. Rich, rigorous, in-depth units of study are balanced by direct instruction, selected textbook activities, and varied opportunities to review and practice skills. *Investigations* and *Mathematics* published by Addison-Wesley Scott-Foresman are used as the primary resources at the elementary level, while *Connected Mathematics* is the primary resource for students in grades six to eight.

Though the general curriculum is designed to invite inquiry by diverse learners, there is often a need to provide extra support or challenge to meet student needs. The District has adopted *Accelerated Math*, a technology based resource to address this problem. *Accelerated Math*

- Supplements the core curriculum;
- Meets NCLB definition for scientifically based research;
- Is a vehicle for individualized instruction;
- Generates unlimited practice assignments tailored to each student;
- Gives immediate, individualized feedback;
- Lets teachers and students know that all objectives are being mastered;
- Automatically scores all assignments and tasks;
- Helps students practice the skills needed to move ahead at their own pace.

Accelerated Math incorporates an assessment instrument called STAR Math. It is a helpful resource for Title 1 support programs, Academic Support Services, Special Education, after school and summer programs, and enrichment, but is also used within the regular classroom. The STAR Math assessment component provides norm-referenced achievement information, a good complement to the criterion referenced MCAS information.

The elementary science program is designed to help students develop scientific reasoning as they investigate and solve complex real-world problems using the tools they need. Standards-based science units are studied in the classroom and are enriched through a weekly science lab with a specialist.

HWRSD Academic Performance

Since its inception in 1998, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) has increasingly become a major source of information with regard to student achievement, curriculum evaluation, and diagnosis of individual student strengths and weaknesses.

The chart below displays a summary of MCAS performance data for 2002 – 2005.

Grade/Subject Tested	Percent of Students Scoring *Advanced/Proficient*					Percent of Students Scoring *Warning/Failing*			
	2002	2003	2004	2005		2002	2003	2004	2005
Grade 3 Reading	85%	87%	77%	80%		2%	0%	3%	2%
Grade 4 English Lang. Arts	71%	64%	75%	62%		4%	3%	2%	4%
Grade 4 Mathematics	50%	56%	58%	50%		10%	5%	5%	7%
Grade 5 Science/Engineering	N/A	70%	76%	72%		N/A	4%	3%	4%
Grade 6 Mathematics	60%	65%	59%	61%		8%	9%	9%	8%
Grade 7 English Lang. Arts	77%	77%	83%	77%		2%	2%	3%	1%
Grade 8 Mathematics	39%	56%	54%	65%		18%	13%	14%	11%
Grade 8 Science/Engineering	N/A	62%	51%	59%		N/A	10%	14%	6%
Grade 10 English Lang. Arts	77%	77%	75%	86%		4%	2%	2%	2%
Grade 10 Mathematics	66%	65%	70%	78%		10%	7%	3%	3%

Members of the graduating class of Minnechaug are required to pass both the grade 10 English Language Arts and the grade 10 Mathematics MCAS tests as one condition for receiving a high school diploma. Students starting with the graduating class of 2010 shall, in addition, need to pass a Biology test in order to satisfy State regulations.

The District is proud to announce that each year for the last two years, 90 or more students were eligible to accept the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. Students qualified for this award by scoring in the Advanced category in English Language Arts or Mathematics and Advanced or Proficient in the other subject area on the grade 10 MCAS assessments. If they accepted the award, students received a tuition waiver to state colleges and universities that is in effect for 8 consecutive traditional semesters or 4 years.

It is important to note that the percentage of 10th grade students who scored at the Failing level in English Language Arts has decreased from 23% to 2% since spring of 2000, while the percentage of 10th grade students who scored at the Failing level in Mathematics has decreased from 36% to 3% since spring of 2000. These improvements are attributed to ongoing refinements of programs and the relentless pursuit of excellence throughout all levels of the educational system.

The state testing system has been evolving continuously for the last eight years. In 2006, the MCAS program tested all third through eighth grade children in reading and mathematics every year. This change is required by the No Child Left Behind Act, which was signed by President George W. Bush in January 2002. Other subjects will continue to be tested in the targeted grades.

In addition to MCAS performance, HWRSD educators use a range of information to monitor student achievement. One example of the data considered to be relevant is SAT scores. The table below provides longitudinal SAT results for students graduating from Minnechaug Regional High School.

MRHS	1995	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Verbal Mean	531	534	512	517	506	519	518	529	529	531
Math Mean	535	536	519	523	515	527	530	517	550	550

Consistent with other achievement tests, these results are well above the State average.

In order for students to be appropriately prepared for high stakes tests as well as for multiple career and educational options in the 21st century, it is essential that teachers, administrators, parents, community, and students work together knowledgeably over the long-term. Fortunately, the necessary partnerships in the District are vigorous and effective, with a shared commitment to continuous improvement at all levels.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Students in the Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District write a great deal across the curriculum areas. Writing is critical to language development, learning content thoroughly, and developing thinking skills. In grades K-8, the Collins Writing Program is utilized. One feature of this program is the designation of Five Types of Writing.

Type One writing is the type used just to get ideas down on paper. It is not a composition, but rather a "quick-write" to generate ideas, express an opinion, make a prediction, or reflect on an event. Type One writing is not graded for spelling or writing conventions. Type One writing is done frequently in all subject areas because it contributes significantly to each child's learning and language development.

Students also do a great deal of *Type Two* writing, which is also a quick-write. With Type Two writing, your child will be answering a specific question about content that is being studied. In evaluating Type Two writing, teachers judge only the content of the writing – not the conventions. Type Two also contributes significantly to each child's writing fluency.

Type Three and *Type Four* writing are compositions done to produce ideas and develop specific writing skills. With Type Three and Four writing, teachers use a strategy called focus correcting. Focus correcting is based on the belief that writing improves more quickly when students work to improve a few skills at a time. You will know what the focus correction areas (FCAs) are on any writing project your child does because they will be listed at the top of the paper. On Type Three and Four writing, teachers evaluate only the focus correction areas. This strategy keeps students focused on key aspects of writing and avoids giving too much negative feedback.

Students also do some *Type Five* writing. This is the most difficult type for all writers, especially young, developing writers. Type Five writing is writing that is revised and edited to be as free as possible of all types of errors. This kind of "publishable" writing requires multiple drafts. Most of the Type Five writing students do will start as Type Three or Four. Then over time, students will polish it so that it becomes a publishable Type Five piece of writing

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Primary Curriculum Resources: *Invitations to Literacy* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1997), leveled books, Collins Writing

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ☆ Know all letter and sound correspondences and use them to decode and use words in context.
- ☆ Restate main ideas. Make predictions about the content of a text.
- ☆ Identify differences among the common forms of literature.
- ☆ Identify the elements of plot, character, and setting in a favorite story.
- ☆ Recognize that the names of things can also be the names of actions.
- ☆ Identify appropriate end marks.
- ☆ Write stories that have a beginning, middle, and end.
- ☆ Write short poems.
- ☆ Write letters, directions, or short accounts of personal experiences that follow a logical order.
- ☆ Arrange ideas in a way that makes sense.
- ☆ Write or dictate research questions.
- ☆ Print legibly.
- ☆ Use standard spelling for the majority of commonly used words. Recognize irregularly spelled words by sight.
- ☆ With teacher help, edit writing for basic mechanics and standard spelling.

MATHEMATICS

Primary Curriculum Resources

The second grade mathematics curriculum is anchored by four units of study from *Investigations in Number, Data, and Space* (Scott-Foresman Addison-Wesley, 2002), which are designed to develop understanding of mathematics concepts through student-centered activities. The units are: *Mathematical Thinking at Grade 2; Coins, Coupons, and Combinations; Putting Together and Taking Apart; Shapes, Halves, and Symmetry.* Some content is addressed through *Math* (Scott-Foresman Addison-Wesley, 2002, teacher-developed activities, and children's literature. Classroom routines include: Today's Number, How Many Pockets, and Time and Time Again.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ☆ Gather, organize, classify, represent, and interpret data using tallies, charts, tables, bar graphs, pictographs, and Venn diagrams; interpret the representations.
- ☆ Identify the value of all U.S. coins, and $1, $5, $10, and $20 bills.
- ☆ Demonstrate an understanding of various meanings of addition and subtraction. Know addition facts (addends to ten) and related subtraction facts, and use them to solve problems.
- ☆ Estimate, calculate, and solve problems involving addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers.
- ☆ Skip count by twos, fives, and tens up to at least 50, starting at any number.
- ☆ Write number sentences using +, −, <, = , and/or > to represent mathematical relationships in everyday situations.
- ☆ Name, write, and order whole numbers to 1000.
- ☆ Demonstrate in the classroom an understanding of and the ability to use the conventional algorithms for addition and subtraction.
- ☆ Describe and create addition and subtraction number patterns, e.g. 1, 4, 7, 10…; or 25, 23, 21…
- ☆ Identify parts of the day, days of the week, and months of the year. Identify dates using a calendar. Tell time at quarter-hour intervals.
- ☆ Measure and compare common objects.
- ☆ Identify and represent common fractions (1 /2, 1 /3, 1 /4).
- ☆ Describe attributes and parts of two- and three-dimensional shapes and identify, describe, draw, and compare two-dimensional shapes. Predict the results of putting shapes together and taking them apart.
- ☆ Identify symmetry in two-dimensional shapes.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING

The science program is designed to help students develop scientific reasoning as they investigate and solve complex real-world problems using the tools they need. The following units are studied in the classroom and are enriched through a weekly science lab: Interactions of Living Things; Solids, Liquids, and Gases; Weather and Seasons; and Sun, Moon, and Earth.

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Massachusetts Curriculum Framework calls for second grade students to study "E Pluribus Unum: From Many, One." Units of study include: Calendar, Map Skills, Rights and Responsibilities, Good Leaders, Good Citizens, Then and Now, Customs and Traditions, and Producers and Consumers. Topics are integrated with reading, writing, and speaking, and coordinated with teachers in other grades.

MUSIC AND VISUAL ARTS

For all children at all ability levels, the arts play a central role in human development. Cognitive, language, and social- emotional development are positively impacted by participation in the arts. Much research substantiates that good arts programs in elementary and middle schools not only build skills needed to learn math, reading, and writing, but motivate students, particularly those who are at risk of failure. In a weekly music class, students develop proficiency in singing; reading and notation; playing instruments; improvisation and composition; and critical response. In a weekly art class, students develop proficiency in methods, materials, and techniques; elements and principles of design; observation, abstraction, invention, and expression; exhibiting; and critical response.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

As an integral part of the total educational process, health and physical education will create opportunities to develop a lifelong physically active lifestyle as well as respect for self and others, through a safe learning environment. Through health literacy, self-management skills (Second Step), and health promotion, comprehensive health education teaches fundamental health concepts, promotes habits and conduct that enhance health and wellness, and guides efforts to build healthy families, relationships, schools, and communities (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1999). Students experience health/physical education class twice weekly.

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