Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

Turnaround Plan Template

District: Amesbury

School: Amesbury Middle School

Academic Year: 2018 -2021

Date Finalized: June 27, 2019

Section I: Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should summarize the essence of the turnaround plan in a way the average stakeholder would understand. (1-2 pages)

Amesbury Middle School is a 5-8 middle school with 638 students and 60.5 teaching staff members.   In addition, we have 16 support staff, 2 guidance counselors, 1 adjustment counselor and 3 administrators. At each grade level there are two teams consisting of four teachers. Each teacher is responsible for teaching one of the four major content areas; English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. This is the second year of next-generation MCAS assessments for grades 3-8 and the first year of the state's new accountability system, which is designed to measure how a school or district is doing and what kind of support it may need in order to assist students in meeting 21st century standards. Overall, Amesbury Middle School's classification falls in the category of requiring assistance or intervention. The reason for this classification is because we are in need of focused and targeted support for a low subgroup performance within the *High Needs* category. The *High Needs* sub group category is made up of students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English learners. Eleven percent of the students within this sub group population are partially meeting their established target scores for an overall accountability percentile score of 19. The overall performance of the high needs subgroup population relative to the same subgroup population in schools administering the same assessments was 3%.

Tittle	2016 % of School	2017 % of School	2018 % of School	2019 %of School
Students With Disabilities	18	17.7	18.6	20.3
High Needs	31.5	34	35.6	35.7
Economically Disadvantaged	18	22.4	24.8	23

As a result of this decline we have determined that the heart of this plan must establish firm and consistent belief of teachers, support staff, administration, parents/guardians and students that *all* Amesbury Middle School students can and will ACHIEVE. Since 2016 our economically disadvantaged population has grown 5-6%. In addition our special education population has increased by 2% from 18 % in 2016 to 20% in 2019. As a result of these changes we have not responded to these student demographic changes with enough urgency in order to meet their curriculum and social emotional needs. With this plan, we will raise the rigor, improve the instruction and build support services that are necessary in order for all of these students to receive a 21st century education that they will need in order to meet the challenges that await them.   It is essential that we provide students with the skills and tools they need to be successful in school now, and later in college and their careers.

Amesbury Middle School MCAS scores have shown an overall decline in meeting our targets for both achievement and growth in ELA, Math, and Science. In addition, the new accountability system also

looks at chronic absenteeism and as a school we did not meet our improvement target score in this category. Over the past 5 years, we have been seeing a decline in our ELA scores. In 2018, for Grades 6 & 8, half of the students were meeting expectations.   Fifth grade students did not meet expectations relative to fifth graders across the state. In seventh grade ELA, both AMS and the state saw an overall decrease in the number of students meeting expectations. In Math we have seen a decline in achievement and growth in grades 5 & 6 for the past 5-6 years as well. In the fifth grade, the percentage of students meeting expectations declined while the state percentage of students remained flat.

Forty-six percent of 5th graders across the state met expectations in math while only 31% of AMS 5th grade students met expectations. In math, 44% of AMS 7thgrade students met expectations compared to 46% of 7th grade students across the state met expectations. Overall, there was a decline in seventh grade students meeting expectations in mathematics both at AMS and across the state. Fifty-six percent of eighth grade students at AMS met expectations compared to 49% of eighth graders across the state. For 7th & 8th grade math we were above the 50% for growth.

In Science/Technology and Engineering 51% of AMS 5th grade students met expectations compared to 48% for the state. Eighth grade students taking the STE assessment saw a decline in students meeting expectations both at the school level (44%) and state level (51%).

As a school we are committed to reviewing our practices to improve both achievement and growth scores for not only students who fall within the high needs category but also for all students within every subgroup.

Key to the success of our turnaround plan is our ability to build a leadership capacity throughout the school for teachers, support staff, and administration who are all charged with transforming the school from one of requiring assistance and support to one in which student achievement and growth is on consistent trajectory of meeting and exceeding our target scores for all students. First and foremost, school administration needs to   employ an effective teacher in every classroom, as well as provide effective and meaningful feedback through the evaluation system in order to promote educator growth and excellence in instructional practices and curriculum development.

Throughout the plan, we will focus on the following beliefs that need to be supported by critical action steps contained in Amesbury Middle School's turnaround plan:
- Build on what is working and fix what is not working
- Empower staff to make decisions while holding them accountable for results
- Build a Multi-tiered System of Supports for students in order to meet individual academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs
- Engage families as active partners to help support services within and out of school

The Amesbury Middle School will construct and support a challenging learning experience for students to be able to think critically and take risks within a safe, nurturing, culturally relevant environment in which they can learn and grow. The school's efforts will include a special emphasis on engaging disconnected youth, especially those students who continue to struggle coming to school on a consistent basis. Amesbury Middle School will need the support of central office administration in the investment necessary to provide the programs, professional development and

other systems of supports through financial investment, reallocation of funds and/or staff in order to meet school-level decisions that are tailored to meeting the needs of middle level students.

To achieve consistent academic and growth improvement over the next three years we will need to implement action steps that are based on Effective *Practices For School Turnaround.* The guide assists schools with school turnaround practices that have been developed by other schools with support from state leaders, district and school leadership to improve and sustain ongoing and future turnaround efforts.

The Amesbury Middle School turnaround plan Priority Areas include:
- Turnaround Practice 1: Leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration
- Turnaround Practice 2: Intentional practices for improving instruction.
- Turnaround Practice 3: Student-Specific supports and instruction for all students.
- Turnaround Practice 4: School climate and culture.

The strategies in the following pages required considerable planning, discussion, and community participation in order for them to be effective. The plan includes information about how we will measure our progress along the way. The Amesbury Middle School will exit targeted assistance and support once gains are sufficient and positive change has been institutionalized over the next three years resulting in continued growth and sustainable results.

Section II: Stakeholder Engagement

Briefly describe the district and school's process for receiving input from stakeholders throughout all stages of the turnaround process. (1-2 pages)

Accountability data was also shared with all stakeholders in order for them to understand why the school was identified as a school needing focused targeted assistance. Amesbury Middle School provided opportunities to inform and educate members of our school community through the School Site Council and Parent Advisory Group at monthly meetings held in March and April 2019. In addition, on March 15, 2019, Amesbury Middle School teachers also contributed to the process as it pertained to the development of the school turnaround plan. Amesbury Middle School students were asked to participate in a survey in January 2019 that asked students a variety of questions related to attendance, curriculum rigor and various other questions regarding school culture and climate.

The Amesbury Middle School Turnaround Team participated in bi-weekly meetings to develop a vision statement, root cause analysis and four high leverage goals pertaining to the overall school turnaround plan. As a result of the meetings, and using the protocols from the Turnaround Guide, the team created a PowerPoint slide show to share with staff and parents on the site council and parent advisory group. The presentation allowed stakeholders to see the work that was done through the protocols used to develop the vision, root cause analysis, high leverage goals, objectives, strategies and outcomes. Stakeholders were then asked for input through sentence starters that supported further discussion or provided more clarity; they included: "Identify word or phrase that was meaningful to you, We achieve this by, Rigor is, This resonated with me because".

The data that was collected centered on educating the school staff on the importance of defining assessment literacy. Assessment literacy defined as being competent in the ongoing *process* of <u>collecting</u>, <u>analyzing</u>, <u>interpreting</u>, and <u>evaluating data</u> to derive meaningful information to make decisions that enhances student achievement. This was the first time we had actually had a presentation relative to the importance of collecting and using data to help make decisions relative to the information that is needed to be collected in order to build a plan that leads to student success and achievement. The presentation of this information by our Director of Student Services, Lynn Catarius, defined the pieces of data that are necessary for us to collect and review yearly that can help us write our story as to how students are learning and what students and staff need in order to build a culture focused on achievement.

Demographic, Perception, Student Learning and School Process data were the pieces of data shared with staff on February 7, 2019 during a district planned Professional Release Time day for staff and administration. This presentation was also shared with the Amesbury Middle School Site council and Parent Advisory Group. Contained within this presentation was student data that was collected in response to a short 8 question student survey that was completed by all middle school students in grades 5-8 the week of January 28, 2019. This presentation allowed us to have focused conversations and identify the stakeholders we needed to involve in collecting information necessary for the AMS Turnaround Team to consider as we began writing our school turnaround plan. The involvement of students, parents, teachers, school, and district administration has been important for us in arriving at our root cause and creating our vision as to what we want to see for Amesbury Middle School today and well into the future.

As we move forward we will continue to involve all stakeholders in the progress of the turnaround plan strategies that we have identified to be implemented and measured over the course of the three year period. The school administration will provide monthly updates through school bulletins, continued monthly meetings, presentations or a combination of mechanisms mentioned above to inform the middle school community on our successes, challenges, and/or changes that are needed in order to meet our stated vision at the Amesbury Middle School: WE ACHIEVE.

Section III: Envision the Future

Briefly describe the 3-5 year vision for the school as a result of the turnaround process. (1 page)

Vision
At Amesbury Middle School, WE ACHIEVE. Our success is based on the collaborative efforts of our students, staff, parents, and community to create a culture of achievement in a rigorous and exciting learning environment where all students develop the skills to excel academically, socially and emotionally.

Our belief in a culture of achievement means that all of our students will be able to:

- Communicate and share their learning needs.
- Collaborate with teachers and fellow peers.
- Develop the ability to persevere with ideas and information which lends itself to deeper thinking.
- Develop proficient reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in order to construct new knowledge or ideas to successfully solve complex problems.
- Determine the skills necessary to make informed decisions.
- Design their own experiences that demonstrate the use of critical and creative thinking skills.
- Develop a belief that success is attained by developing personal initiative and sustained effort to reach personal academic, social, emotional and behavioral goals.

We believe in our staff, students and community. Therefore, in order for our students to meet expected standards the following actions need to be in place:

- Establish clear performance expectations for students and staff.
- Ensure a system of accountability for staff and students by continuously analyzing fall, winter and spring data points over the course of the school year.
- Provide students and teachers with consistent meaningful feedback throughout the year connected to curriculum and school outcomes.
- Establish conditions to build teacher and student leadership roles to support our efforts of a culture of achievement.
- Continuously provide a school schedule that supports rigorous and supportive opportunities for all students and staff.
- Review our program offerings and monitor teacher effectiveness and student achievement over the course of the school year.
- Allocate resources in an equitable fashion, based on the specific needs of students and staff to support our culture of achievement.
- Foster collaboration opportunities between staff, students, and administration.
- Provide meaningful, rigorous, and aligned professional development opportunities for our teachers that can be transferred to the classroom setting.
- Conduct learning walks that involve teachers and administrators working together to gather information relative to teaching and learning practices.

We understand that students grow and achieve at different rates. As a result of this understanding we will provide the following structures of assistance:

- Build Tiered System of Supports for students and staff that address academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs.
- Strengthen our School based CARE program through the involvement of students, teachers and community members.
- Allocate resources in an equitable fashion, based on the specific needs of students and staff to support our culture of achievement and assistance.
- Invest in establishing community partnerships to support a positive learning environment and the skills needed to meet the challenging and changing issues of the 21st century.
- Engage families as active partners in supporting a rigorous educational environment with the supports needed to meet the needs of all learners.

We are focused on growing this culture of achievement for years to come. For this to be realized we need to:

- Work together as a professional learning community to grow as educators and to successfully implement a rigorous standards based middle level curriculum.
- Make decisions based on what is best for all students.
- Establish partnerships with the home and the community.
- Utilize multiple measures of a data such as demographic, perception, student learning, and school process in order to respond and ensure that all students achieve at high levels.
- Provide students with a variety of learning experiences that are academically challenging, developmentally appropriate, and personally relevant in order for students to make informed educational and personal decisions.
- Provide instructional programs that develop the whole child, intellectually, academically, personally, socially, physically, emotionally, and ethically.

As a school committed to building a culture of achievement for all students and teachers it is our belief that each year we will actively and consistently pursue the best instructional practices, refine curriculum as it pertains to standards alignment, implementation, effective use of data practices to make informed decisions and provide targeted practices that help students when they are struggling as well as when they are exceeding grade level standards.

Section IV: Analysis of Assets and Challenges

Describe the key assets to build upon, and challenges that need to be addressed, that were identified as a result of a thorough root cause analysis. (2-3 pages)

Turnaround Practice #1: Leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration

Amesbury Middle School's overall classification, based on the new accountability system, is requiring assistance or intervention in need of focused/targeted support for our low subgroup performance for students within the *High needs* category.   According to this classification Amesbury Middle School *High needs* subgroup overall performance relative to the performance of the same subgroup in schools administering similar assessments is at 3%. Our *Economically disadvantaged* group within our *High needs* population had a percentile score of 6%, while our *Students with disabilities* population had a percentile score of 13%. Both of these sub group populations make up 43% of our overall student population. MCAS data for 2012-2016 further reflects a difficulty in consistently closing gaps between *All Students* and the performance of our *High needs* subgroup. In 2016, the gap between *All Students* and *High needs* students was 25 percentile points in ELA, and 27 in math and 26 for Science/Technology/Engineering.   In addition, all students and subgroups are struggling to make consistent gains in ELA and math, and science/technology and engineering to meet median growth targets.

Based on these scores and rankings, Amesbury Middle School, with the Statewide System of Supports Coastal region, participated in webinars, zoom meetings, and face-to-face group meetings beginning in January 2019 to learn the process and steps for developing a focused and viable Turnaround Plan for our school. Based on these meetings our school Turnaround team through weekly 1 ½ - 2 hour meetings utilized the resources and protocols such as data analysis, root cause analysis and five why's protocol in order to identify assets and challenges for our school. The following findings describe Amesbury Middle School's current assets and high priority challenges in regards to Turnaround practice 1: Leadership, shared responsibility and professional collaboration.

As a result of our root cause analysis work, we found that the underlying root cause for our school for not demonstrating consistent improvement for our students and staff was due to a lack of vision focused on the importance of building a culture of achievement throughout the entire school community. Our first step was to develop a vision statement involving teachers, students, and parents based on establishing a culture of achievement. Next, we looked at leadership set up based on our ability to build leadership capacity that would help us keep our vision of achievement at the forefront of the work we needed to do in order for us to consistently experience positive growth and improvement for staff and students.

Since 2011 team leader positions had been removed from our school's leadership structure. These positions had assisted in ensuring that curriculum planning times, team meeting times, and implementation of curriculum were at the forefront of the collaborative teaming structures that had been built into the school schedule.   These teaming structures continued to exist within the school scheduling framework over the years but the specific expectations for teaming processes and outcomes in regards to pursuing student achievement relative to instructional practices and the implementation of curriculum was fragmented. For example, the school has an established 3-4 monthly curriculum planning times (CPT) at each grade level in addition to weekly individual team meeting times throughout the school year. However, school leaders have not established clear or effective processes for these teams to impact student achievement since the loss of the grade level leader positions. Specifically,

during these times effective systems for regularly monitoring student progress and looking at data were fragmented and unclear. In addition, for the past 5 years the Middle School administrative team had requested a math coach in order to build collaboration and focus of achievement and consistency in curriculum implementation but has not been able to be supported within the district and school budget.

In March 2019 we took our first step on providing professional development in the area of building and creating a school environment based on a high level of collaboration. We will continue our focus of developing a strong Professional Learning Community (PLC's) for the 2019-2020 school year. Dr. Kevin Hutchinson was hired by the district and on March 15, 2019, worked with the entire middle school for a day on the importance of building and examining the different levels of collaboration, and the manner in which the depth of the collaboration characterizes the level of professional learning community that is established, in order for teachers and administrators to work together to analyze and improve classroom practice. Understanding and operating as an effective PLC will help us to implement and establish consistent systematic processes, protocols, language, expectations and routines that will have an impact both on student learning and teacher instruction.

Another high-priority challenge regarding leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration is a lack of consistent feedback from administrators and the ability to conduct learning walks or classroom visitations to gauge the fidelity as to our commitment towards the implementation of curriculum, the use of resources, and the teaching and learning practices necessary to improve student growth and achievement.   There is a lack of consistent leadership support within the school beyond administration in the areas of instructional leaders and content area coaches that could assist in conducting classroom observations focused on strengthening teachers' instructional practices. In addition, teachers feel they do not get timely, specific and/or actionable feedback. Instead, teachers have felt that some evidence of feedback existed in the school, but at the individual level or in "pockets" rather than as a school-wide practice. Similarly, teachers have felt that school and district administration have conducted walkthrough and pop-in visits on occasion, but teachers rarely receive feedback from administrators, other than a positive verbal comment and not specific to the standards, elements and indicators within the teacher rubric. Therefore, it is important that we establish a consistent school wide approach conducted by administration as well as instructional leaders within the school that allows us to examine our instructional practices and provides meaningful and actionable feedback that teachers can use in order to improve instructional practices and planning.

Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional Practices for improving instruction

Amesbury Middle School *High needs* sub group student population has grown since 2016 from 31% to 35.6 % in 2018. Within this subgroup our economically disadvantaged student population in 2016 was 18.5 % and in 2018 was 24.8 %. With this change in our population it is clear that as a school we need to establish a clear instructional focus and shared expectations for instructional best practices that address the instructional needs of this specific subgroup population which makes up a significant part of our total school population. Therefore in order for us to make improvements our focus must be on ensuring that we have developed a rigorous and aligned curriculum throughout all content areas, developed a system for both informal and formal monitoring of the implementation of the curriculum and teaching practices that occur throughout the school and design an effective tiered system of support for our students that is based on multiple measures of a data such as demographic, perception, student learning, and school process.

Our first challenge is to define and implement high-quality instructional practices throughout the school. Within the middle school schedule administration has established collaborative teaming structures for

the eight teams within grades 5-8. For example, the school has an established grade level Curriculum Planning Time (CPT) 3-4 times per month and grade-level team meeting (two times within the six day rotation) and one preparation period every day for teachers. However, the consistent use of meeting protocols have not been established relative to analysis of data, lesson planning, and student work analysis for these teams to significantly impact student achievement. Therefore, it is necessary for us to identify and implement consistent meeting protocols at all team and grade level meetings in order for us to use a common language when it pertains to data analysis, lesson planning and implementation of instructional practices. The district and school administration need to establish a culture that focuses on a cohesive, singular school-wide approach to significantly raise achievement, including a shared focus on instruction, use of common planning time, shared common language, and the use of assessments and interventions that can have a significant impact on student achievement.

The school does not have an instructional framework to continually assess, modify, and improve its practices for the benefit of greater student achievement. There was not a shared, comprehensive vision of high-quality instructional practice at Amesbury Middle School, nor is there a clear description of what high-quality instruction should look like school-wide. The school does not have a shared understanding of what high quality instruction or rigor looks like, nor are there non-negotiable standards for what every lesson, in every classroom, should include.
For example, in September 2018, school administration instituted a common approach in all classrooms of writing out standards, lesson objectives, itinerary, and Do Now content starters. By December 2018 75% of the classrooms were consistently implementing this approach and sharing this with students. Therefore, this school-wide practice needs to be reinforced in regards to the importance it has towards developing a practice centered on a culture of achievement.

The school uses NWEA MAP assessment fall, winter, spring in order to gather information relative to student growth and achievement. Teacher professional development in the effective use of this assessment tool and the reports that can be utilized to provide feedback both for teachers and students has been sporadic at best. During common planning times when discussions are held relative to trends in student achievement, the school has been inconsistent in its efforts to collect and use student data relative to improving teacher practices and student learning. Therefore, our ability to utilize this resource to its fullest potential has been inadequate.

Since 2016 the district embarked on revising curriculum in every content area throughout the entire district. This was the first revision of curriculum since 2007. During this period of time a number of changes at the district central office level brought about inconsistencies in the revision process until 2016. At this time we are in the third and final year of the curriculum revision process and contained within this work is the development of common assessments that will provide us with important information relative to student achievement beyond just MCAS scores and NWEA MAP data.

Finally, having the right kinds of data and a process for collecting and analyzing this data we will be able to institute an effective and targeted tiered systems of support for students based on the information we have collected. As a school we saw a rise in our absenteeism rate with our *High needs* subgroup population that is composed of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities. Within these two subgroups we saw an increase in absenteeism as well where there was a 6-10% increase in chronic absenteeism rates. In response we formulated a team who has met bi-weekly each month to track and identify these students. In addition, we have sent out information to families in order to identify the cause of the absence as well as develop a support network in order to get these students re-engaged in school.

We need to provide students with a rigorous and engaging curriculum within a flexible schedule that provides targeted assistance and support when needed.   For example within the master schedule administration was able to create six 30 minute blocks known as Curriculum Enrichment blocks (CE) 2-3 times per week. Three out of the six blocks are now focused on providing students tiered interventions relative to data that each grade level has collected. Teachers have designed specific plans based on student needs and thus far according to winter NWEA MAP testing in ELA and math we have seen growth in student learning. We will need to develop a more consistent, unified, comprehensive and targeted plan that includes teacher instructional strategies and resources combined with technological resources as we move forward in order to provide appropriate and effective tiered systems of support for all students.

<p align="center">**Turnaround Practice #3: Student specific supports and instruction for all students**</p>

Amesbury Middle School over the years has inconsistently used data to identify students requiring focused targeted interventions as well as assist in flexible grouping practices within all grade levels.   The NWEA MAP assessment and MCAS data are the two primary data sources that teachers use in order to make decisions relative to identifying individual student needs and targeted focused interventions. However, the data reports utilized from either one of the data systems has not been consistent. In addition, once plans have been put into place for students requiring additional support there has been little data provided that indicates the effectiveness of the interventions that were used. As of now the school struggles with providing students that exceed expectations with opportunities that challenge their academic needs and or interests.

As stated previously, we are in the third year of a three year plan of re-writing curriculum utilizing the UbD process.   As of now, common assessments are not currently used and are in the process of being developed in all content areas. Individual teachers may use their own assessments to identify students' needs, but such assessments are not shared across the school.

The school district developed a District Curriculum and Accommodation Plan (DCAP) that teachers can refer to in order to assist them in providing assistance to students struggling with academic, behavioral, or social/emotional needs. In addition, we have a building based Child Study Team that teachers can refer students for academic, behavioral, social and emotional concerns that consistently arise in order to provide teachers with additional interventions that go beyond the general strategies that the DCAP offers as possible solutions when students are struggling. However, referrals made to the Child Study team are not consistent and the team is not utilized as it should be in order for teachers and students to benefit from possible solutions that could assist in improving student growth in all aspects of their schooling. Amesbury Middle School has a Reading specialist that can provide targeted and focused Tier 3 support for students who have identified reading and comprehension difficulties. Activities are specifically designed to help middle school students with their reading skills. Students increase automatic word recognition by reinforcing phonic elements and sound/symbol relationships. Differentiated activities provide extensive practice in everything from basic phonological awareness to advanced word-attack strategies, as well as vocabulary development, fluency and comprehension. Quarterly assessments using the TOWRE2, alerts the teacher to problem areas where students are struggling. This allows one-on-one intervention addressing weaknesses and charting growth over time to show gains.

Once students have been identified for support within the classroom or during the Curriculum Enrichment period (CE block) we need to identify and implement various strategies and resources that

will help with both use of support practices as well as documentation of effectiveness of those practices. This includes teacher training in the understanding and implementation of tiered systems of support that they can provide students within the general education setting.

Finally, we need to critically analyze our school building schedule to ensure that the schedule we currently have is not a barrier towards providing students with what they need in order to succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Beginning in September 2019 we will formulate a school based scheduling committee that will analyze all aspects of the current schedule and course offerings in order to make improvements as it pertains to instruction, curriculum, social/emotional learning and focused and targeted learning opportunities for those who struggle meeting expectations as well as for those that exceed expectations.

<div align="center">**Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate**</div>
Amesbury Middle School engages parents and promotes family and community engagement throughout year. There is an active Parent Advisory Group (PAG) that hosts monthly meetings and organizes various fundraisers and community events, educational activities, and student social activities throughout the year including our AMS Idol Night, Middle School science fair, Family Trivia Night, Stars on Stage student talent show. In addition, they sponsor Book Fairs twice a year and provide volunteer assistance and support to all grade levels for curriculum related activities and events.

Four years ago, Amesbury Middle School developed its own PBIS program called C.A.R.E. This was developed by a fifth grade teacher along with school administration. C.A.R.E. is an acronym for Character, Attitude/ Accountability, Respect/Responsibility and Empathy. C.A.R.E. tickets are used to hand out to students that demonstrate any one of the characteristics throughout the school year and each ticket received by students are entered into a raffle. Raffle prizes are donated by community organizations and businesses throughout the community. The school was awarded two one year grants from the community Educational Foundation to jump start the program. In addition, students who have earned a C.A.R.E. ticket qualify for our Ascend to the Top hiking experience of Mt. Major in late May. To date, we have over 100 students participate in this hiking experience. Our goal is try and get all 640 students within the school participate in the Ascend to the Top hiking experience. Throughout the school year the entire school gathers for 3-4 assemblies that is student planned and run that focuses on one of the C.A.R.E. characteristics. These assemblies bring students and staff to celebrate and talk about the things that we do within our school community that we need to celebrate. Our goal is to expand this program to support students in other ways based on need such as chronic absenteeism and student discipline.

As a school we need to develop a better tiered system in addressing student discipline in order for all members of the school community to take responsibility in building a more positive school climate. Over the course of the school year we have had 129 students out 640 have a discipline referral which represents 20% of our students. Out of 129 students, 97 had more than one discipline referral which represents 75%.

The school has identified some social-emotional supports to meet the needs of students. In response to these needs, the school has hired a school adjustment counselor and has been awarded a competitive grant that will add an additional .5 adjustment counselor to help students develop skills necessary in regards to social/emotional situations.   The school has purchased the Second Steps program which is a researched based program for each team at each grade level. The challenge of consistent

implementation and teacher training on the use of the program has impeded our ability to consistently implement this program throughout the school year.

The school has established a collegial climate, however we need to establish more consistent school based common approaches across the entire school for us to make substantial progress towards meeting established accountability status targets. Staff report feelings of anxiety and frustration that impact the productivity of meetings and collaboration. Therefore, it is a priority to provide staff training and develop PLC's within our school to effectively improve school culture and climate and build lasting relationships between staff and students.

Section V: Strategic Objectives & Initiatives Aligned to Turnaround Practices

Describe the key strategies the school will implement, the rationale for selecting those strategies, and the plan to support them. If a strategy falls under multiple turnaround practices, list the strategy once, then reference it in subsequent practices. (Use as a general rule: 2-3 strategies, described in up to 3 pages per turnaround practice. Total page length for Section V is approximately 8-12 pages.)

<u>Turnaround Practice #1</u>: **Leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration**
The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility for all students, and professional collaboration.

<u>High Leverage Goal</u>: **Develop a culture of shared leadership with instructional leadership team, grade level and content area teams focused on improving student achievement.**

Amesbury Middle School needs to establish a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration where administrators and teachers are actively monitoring and assessing the implementation and impact of key improvement strategies and classroom instructional practices as it pertains to students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students.

We believe that if teachers and administrators develop and execute a deep understanding of professional learning communities focused on improving instruction, curriculum, and assessment using PLC tools, protocols, and practices to improve instructional practice and student outcomes, then teacher collaboration and use of effective instructional practices in classrooms will increase and lead to improved student achievement for students within our High Needs subgroup population. This is necessary since our Students with disabilities subgroup population represents 20% and our Economically Disadvantaged population represents 24.8% of our school population across our four grade levels. Establishing a high functioning and shared professional learning culture throughout the school will enable us to meet the various needs of these subgroup populations that are spread throughout our school by establishing collective ownership with consistent practices needed to improve student achievement. PLC's are important to the development of professional

relationships between administration and teaching staff that improve professional practice and culture. As indicated in the What Works Clearing House, "PLCs are a form of professional development in which small groups of educators with shared goals work together to expand their knowledge and improve their craft. Typically, a PLC consists of a facilitator leading a team of teachers that meets regularly to learn new topics, share ideas, and problem solve." Professional Learning Communities can improve school practices by:

        a.)   Adding coherence and continuous learning to professional development

        b.)   Fosters teacher learning

        c.)   Improves the professional culture of the school

Lever 1.1 Building levels of collaborative practices that allow teachers and administrators to work together to analyze and improve classroom practices.

Rationale: Currently Amesbury Middle School has Team and Curriculum Planning Times periods:

- Need to establish a school based Instructional Leadership Team consisting of administrators, teachers from each grade level and coaches
- Need to establish consistent school wide protocols, practices, language and expectations in order to have relevant and meaningful conversation on data analysis, curriculum, lesson study, and professional development needs.
- Provide more opportunities for horizontal and vertical conversations relative to meeting the needs of *High Needs* student subgroup through data analysis, instructional practices and curriculum development.

The school needs to develop consistent practices anchored by common practices, language, approaches, and expectations in curriculum, instructional practices and expectations necessary to meet the needs of the *High Needs* student subgroup that are not making achievement and growth expectations. Although the schedule provides 58 minute team meeting times and 3 to 4 Curriculum Planning times per month over the course of the six day schedule some teams/grade levels have not established and executed consistent expectations or protocols to ensure key initiatives and plans are carried through to completion and goals are met. As a school and at the individual grade levels we are not systematically monitoring the effectiveness of improvement initiatives we are implementing.

Actions	Resources
Year 1 • Create and re-launch teaming structures (ILTs, PLCs, PBIS, Data Analysis teams, grade level teams, EAST teams, scheduling team) to identify and solve problems of practice, and support and monitor the implementation of the Turnaround Plan • PLCs during CPT meeting times for activities such as unpacking standards, analyzing student data, looking at student work, and child study team (CST) discussions **Year 2** • Build leadership opportunities for students	• Provide professional development for establishing professional learning community practices (PLCs) within grade level and content area teams utilizing PRT and PD days in school calendar year 2019-2020 • Use National Staff Development Council; School Reform Initiative etc., to implement meeting protocols, common language, and expectations throughout the school (Sept. - Oct 2019) • Restructuring of after school clubs (ie. peer leaders, student council, communication club)

Lever 1.2

Cohesive instruction through frequent feedback on best practices and the identification of rigorous instruction, via administrative and peer observations with formative feedback focused on high quality instruction.

Rationale

Defining the specific practices that teachers are expected to use and providing targeted feedback and support (ie. coaching and peer observations) to teachers on the use of these practices will result in a system that teachers feel is useful and effective in improving their classroom instruction and increases student achievement.

Actions	Resources
Year 1 • Analyze and review UbD curriculum units for rigorous instruction and performance based assessments • Identify and prioritize specific standards, elements and indicators that focus on high quality instruction **Year 2** • Teachers adhere to UbD scope and sequences outlined	**Year 1** • Provide time for UbD unit and common assessment analysis utilizing PRT and PD days in school calendar year 2019-2020 • Common lesson expectations for all teachers (Sept. 2019) **Year 2**

• Develop a system, schedule, expectations, and a template for peer observation and feedback protocols	• Rigorous UbD units and implementation of identified common assessments • Staff meetings will include opportunities to collectively review and discuss high quality instruction in all content areas

Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional practices for improving instruction
The school employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

High Leverage Goal 2: Shared understanding of high quality instruction including content, instructional strategies and pedagogy by all staff and executed in all classrooms and instructional settings.

Lever 2.1: Identify and utilize two indicators from Amesbury Power Ten that focus on high quality instruction as a focal point for the school and a foundation for learning walks while implementing Professional Learning Community (PLC) protocol based curriculum planning time (CPT) meetings that are aligned with those elements.

Rationale: While the school currently has a Power Ten as a focal point, the school needs to be more narrowly focused to address the movement towards high quality instruction with a special focus on improving learning and instructional outcomes for students with high needs while benefiting all students.

The school also has curriculum planning time (CPT) built into the schedule with defined outcomes set by administration. The focus of CPT should be on data, curriculum, and student work analysis, however there is a lack of protocols in place which minimizes the effectiveness of this time.

Actions	Resources
Year 1: ● From Amesbury's Power Ten, identify and prioritize two specific standards, elements and indicators that focus on high quality instruction to be used as a common focus for the school and specifically target improvement for instructional outcomes for students with high needs while benefiting all students. ● Conduct learning walks that evaluate evidence of the two elements and provided feedback to teachers to inform and improve instructional practice. ● Develop and implement PLC protocol based CPT times that allocate time and attention to the two elements including data, curriculum, and student work analysis that moves toward high quality instruction. ● Identify and utilize specific MAP/MCAS data reports for monitoring student growth and achievement and for informing instructional practices that move toward high quality instruction. Discuss data trends and instructional strategies linked to data during CPT times.	● Identify and communicate two indicators for focus. Introduce to school during first PD days. (Sept. 2019) ● Determine learning walk teams, schedules and protocols for evaluation and evidence. (Sept - Oct 2019) ● Use National Staff Development Council; School Reform Initiative etc., to implement meeting protocols, common language, and expectations throughout the school. ● Professional Release Time will be used to allow teachers to learn about MAP reports and tools so that data can be used to identify students strengths and areas for targeted improvement. Measurement of achievement and grow with be tracked. (Aug 2019 & Sept. 2019)

Lever 2.2: Implementation of UBD scope and sequence and Unit Plans in all content areas.

Rational: The school does not have an updated, cohesive and consistently used curriculum. The district has required that a curriculum be developed and has chosen Understanding By Design which is a three-stage "backward planning" curriculum design process anchored by a unit design template. The school will have completed Stage 1 and Stage 2 for all content units by October 2019, however, the school needs to help teachers design, edit, critique, peer-review, share, and improve their lessons and assessments through professional development. Additionally, time to monitor and evaluate the design and effectiveness of the newly designed curriculum, including performance tasks and common assessments must be provided in order to deliver high quality instruction.

Actions	Resources
Year 1: ● By October 2019 all UBD Stage 1 and Stage 2 Units are completed and are used to deliver high quality instruction. ● Scope and sequence and UBD Unit Plans are evaluated for delivery of all standards, and high quality instruction. Feedback is provided to teachers for re-work if necessary. ● Stage 2 Performance Tasks are analyzed against the 2 priority indicators and feedback is provided to teachers for re-work if necessary. ● Walkthroughs, and classroom visits incorporate feedback related to the use of Scope and Sequence and UBD Curriculum. Year 2: ● Develop, use, and monitor common grade levels summative assessments in all content areas as evidence of consistent high quality instruction for all students.	● Unit evaluation protocols that are aligned with the two indicators are developed and used to complete Stage 1 and Stage 2 for all units. (Oct. 2019) ● Expectations for common assessments are developed and communicated. Evidence of common assessments are maintained and analyzed for student learning and mastery. (Sept. 2020)

Lever 2.3: Provide PD for staff in order to design a tiered system of support with resources that can be implemented within the school day.

Rational: The school currently has a curriculum enrichment block built into the six day schedule, however the use of that enrichment time is inconsistently designed and delivered. Going forward CE time will be designed to deliver RTI to students identified through data analysis and results of interventions will be monitored for effectiveness.

Actions	Resources
Year 1: ● Professional development is provided to assist teachers on how to use MAP reports including the Learning Continuum so that targeted high quality instruction (e.g. flexible grouping) can be provided to students based on what they are ready to learn. ● School wide CE RTI block plan is developed, implemented, and monitored. Teachers use MAP, MCAS, and classroom data to determine RTI student placement. Data is gathered as a means to determine effectiveness of RTI and to develop next instructional steps. ● Professional development for Inclusive instructional practices will be provided for teachers Year 2: ● Provide more high quality instructional opportunities centered around student choice.	● Professional Release Time will be used to allow teachers to learn about MAP reports and tools so that data can be used to identify students strengths and areas for targeted improvement. Measurement of achievement and grow with be tracked. (Sept. 2019 - Oct. 2019) ● Use research based approach for using data to differentiate instruction found on the what works clearinghouse. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/wwc_rrti_pg_rec02.pdf ● Use DOE Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice. (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/ (Sept. 2019) ● Revised student offerings ● Late bus

● Create a school scheduling team to re-examine school schedule and course offerings that deliver high quality instruction, including in school and after school opportunities. Year 3: ● School is a "one to one" allowing for customizable high quality instruction for all students and increasing opportunities for full online curriculum where appropriate. ● Maximize instructional time and minimize loss of instructional time due to technological constraints during testing windows.	● Fund-raising efforts over three years.

Turnaround Practice #3: Student-specific supports and instruction to all students
The school is able to provide student-specific and subgroup supports and interventions that is data driven.

High Leverage Goal 3: Effectively use data to make informed decisions and provide targeted tiered systems of support and interventions for students who are struggling, meeting and/or exceeding grade level standards.

Lever 3.1: Build and implement a tiered system of support within the school to address the different subgroups.

Rationale: According to the American Institutes for Research (AIR) September 2016: *How to Succeed in School Turnaround: Strategies that Characterize Successful Turnaround Schools in Massachusetts*, "Improving schools all established, or were in the process of establishing, a multitiered system of supports for struggling students that uses multiple data points to frequently identify and adjust both academic and non-academic student-specific supports."

While the school currently has multiple tiered systems of support in place by name, i.e Child Study Team (CST), Curriculum Enrichment block, Special Education inclusion and pull-out classes, after school curriculum support teacher hours, and the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP); there is no uniformity or accountability, vertically or horizontally, built in to them. The services provided and identifications made from these systems of support are not uniformly monitored by its members for progress nor are plans implemented with fidelity.

The Child Study Team has established the proper documentation to recommend students and has a team comprised of guidance counselors, administrators, and special education teachers. The team has had difficulty establishing meeting times and once students are referred by teachers, having them follow up with data collection. As a result, students that would normally be assisted by the CST before being referred for Special Education are automatically referred because the CST cannot determine how to provide support for the student.

Curriculum Enrichment blocks have been used during the 2018-2019 school year to provide 30-60 minute targeted interventions in language arts and mathematics based on MCAS and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP data. Grade level teams are given the autonomy to create their own interventions groups. However, the interventions provided lack a systemic monitoring system.

Special Education inclusion classes use the co-teaching model where the general education teacher maintains all responsibility for delivering instruction whereas the special educator circulates around the room to monitor student performance. The processes and technical aspects such as developing goals, expectations, and roles, as well as understanding setting demands does not have a deliberate mechanism that communicates with all of the stakeholders involved in supporting the student.

The teachers have a one day per week 45 minute after school duty to meet with students who need assistance. This duty has the ability to offer targeted assistance to students in all tiers.

Actions	Resources
Year 1 ● Use Common Planning Team time and leadership team members to establish a common set of data and reports to be examined. Engage in consistent	● Use National Staff Development Council; School Reform Initiative etc., to implement meeting protocols, common language, and expectations throughout the school.

identification and analysis of assessments for planning and differentiating instruction as part of collaborative planning time.
- Create flexible groupings by grade, subject, and subgroup attentive to the specific skill needs of students in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III.
- Redefine the grading and retention policy that includes a summer school component.
- Create a common language for social emotional learning and/or accountable talk and create student led groups where SEL activities and ideas are planned.
- Feedback from administrators will focus on multiple varied groupings and standards-aligned instruction to monitor implementation of the key instructional levers.
- Provide professional development on the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLC's), protocol use, co-teaching, MAP data usage reports, and multi tiered systems of support.

Year 2
- The school is employing a variety of frequent ongoing assessments (formative, benchmark, and summative) to regularly assess and monitor student needs and inform student-specific instruction.
- The school is using the data gained to establish goals, implement interventions, monitor effectiveness and make changes.

Year 3
- Deploy a well orchestrated and deliberate system of continuous data collection and

- Professional development for special education teachers on effective co-teaching models
- Professional development on the multi tiered system of supports for staff members
- Professional development on PLC's and protocol use.
- NWEA MAP online resources and access to reports
- Instructional technology program to provide tiered interventions in language arts, mathematics and science.
- Use research based approach for using data to differentiate instruction found on the what works clearinghouse. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/wwc_rrti_pg_rec02.pdf
- Mathematics Instructional Coach
- School Psychologist
- Attendance Policy

analysis that directly informs a continuously responsive and adaptive system of tiered instruction.	

Lever 3.2: Develop a progress monitoring system to Plan, Do, Study, Act on subgroup data.

Rationale: AMS has historically used available data to place students in the appropriate special education courses, reading courses, and to academically balance grade level teams. The two main sources of progress monitoring data available are: MCAS and Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) MAP. Although the MCAS has been standard for Massachusetts, the Next Generation Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics have been updated to reflect the most current Massachusetts Frameworks and many stakeholders had not had a chance to unpack them during the 2017-2018 school year. Therefore, the standards addressed on the MCAS have not necessarily been aligned to classroom instruction making it difficult to predict the reliability of results to be used for progress monitoring. The District has had considerable debate on the use of additional assessments like the MAP, making teachers sceptical of its longevity and efficacy.

The Special Education support provided by Special Education teachers and paraprofessionals is dictated through the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). AMS has two grade level Special Education teachers and over 10 paraprofessionals. Although the personnel are in place, there are gaps in accountability and uniformity.

Providing meaningful and consistent feedback to students and their parents/guardians as it pertains to data collection, results, and student learning is needed.

Actions	Resources
Year 1 ● Create a data team that has cross sectional grade and departmental representation. ● Establish a common school-wide system in which data is shared with stakeholders at different tiers. ● Establish MAP as the ongoing source for baseline and interim assessments and use the updated NextGen standards alignment.	● Use National Staff Development Council; School Reform Initiative etc., to implement meeting protocols, common language, and expectations throughout the school. ● Use research based approach for using data to differentiate instruction found on the what works clearinghouse. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/PracticeGuide/wwc_rrti_pg_rec02.pdf ● Use professional practice goal to tie in professional learning communities.

- Create a testing calendar to set testing windows and plan intervention periods. - Create interventions based on the data results - Establish and monitor methods of assessing progress. - Use teacher leaders in facilitating professional development for staff in the relevant and targeted areas of MAP as established by the data or ILT team. **Year 2** - Implement the established system. - Conduct data chats with students to set goals and monitor their own progress. **Year 3** - Create an electronic assessment folder that allows staff members involved in a students progress to track their MCAS and MAP progress from year to year. (Possibly on Google Drive)	Establishing teacher leaders and building capacity.

Lever 3.3: Create a school scheduling team to re-examine the master schedule and course offerings.

Rationale: The school needs to improve upon exploring ways to address students who meet or exceed expectations. In addition, the school needs to improve upon its use of resources and course offerings to assess and monitor student-specific tiered responses and adaptive forms of instruction.

Actions	Resources
Year 1 Recruit a cross section of departments, grade levels and special areas for the	Use National Staff Development Council; School Reform Initiative etc., to implement

scheduling team. ● Establish meeting times and dates using giving professional development time tied to teachers Professional Practice goals. ● Establish goals based on member needs analysis. Year 2 ● Present changes to the stakeholders and ask for feedback. ● Build a scenario on ASPEN. Year 3 ● Implement the changes into a revised master schedule that includes tiered instruction (honors, advanced) and interventions.	meeting protocols, common language, and expectations throughout the school. ● Use professional practice goal to tie in professional learning communities. ● ASPEN

Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate
A safe, orderly, and respectful environment for students and a collegial and collaborative culture among teachers.

High Leverage Goal 4: Create an environment where students excel socially, emotionally, and academically.

Rationale: Based on research by California Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support CalTAC-PBIS, Inc., in order for Amesbury Middle School to reach its high leverage goal, more data needs to be collected regarding discipline actions and practices throughout the building.   This data will be used to address school-wide climate issues and to create individualized student behavior plans. Based on the dialogue in Effective Use of Data for Individual Needs in PBIS by Barbara Kelley, further clarification of Tier 1-3 intervention steps need to be established, implemented and monitored. This will enable Amesbury Middle School to cater its current PBIS program (CARE) to meet student needs more effectively.

Lever 4.1: Strengthen our school CARE program by involving students, teachers and community members in order to support student positive behavioral and social/emotional growth

ACTIONS	RESOURCES
YEAR 1 ● Create a CARE action Team to support PBIS. (Who Cares) - More frequent assemblies put on by students involved in CARE club - Students accrue CARE cards and redeem on a selected day for various rewards i.e. school store, save for HR pizza party, etc. ● Professional development on tiers, giving care cards, and facilitating the program. ● Development of CARE language/discuss with teachers HOW/WHEN CARE cards are distributed/received. ● Develop template for individual teacher discipline practices and require educators and students to fill out as well as teacher collection of data on behavioral issues via ASPEN write-ups. ● Have students develop individual CARE goals within the first month of the school year.	● CARE Action Team (Sept. 2019) ● CARE Instructions for teachers ● Disciplinary reflection forms ● Create a visual of each Tier and expectation sheet for teachers/students. ● CARE Goals form ● Restorative Justice
YEAR 2 ● Establish method of feedback from staff and parents regarding changes/implementation ● More fundraising for CARE program (Budget, Community Organizations, Parent ADvisory Group (PAG))	● Online surveys (Sept. 2020) ● Investigate other Fundraising sources (August 2019-Sept. 2019) ● Get the district and community involved by inviting them to attend CARE School Assemblies (Sept 2020 - June 2021)

Lever 4.2: Strengthen our internal and external communication systems.

ACTIONS	RESOURCES
YEAR 1 ● Seek input via survey from families on preferred system of communication. Once established: 　○ Monthly School Bulletin 　○ School clubs to organize tweets 　○ Involve school newspaper ● Identify communication systems to streamline	● Bulletin Template (Sept. 2019) ● Social media resources ● Staff email/Google (Sept. 2019) ● ASPEN

and share school celebrations/activities. 　○ Weekly newsletter from Admin to all AMS staff regarding summary of the week's events 　○ Develop system for schedule changes/new students (Aspen alerts?) **YEAR 2** ● Provide a feedback mechanism for the community to share thoughts and concerns. ● Establish a mentor/buddy system between 5 & 7 and 6&8 students. Once every two months have lunch together during one class lunch/other's CE. ● More vertical collaboration between subjects ● Establish method of feedback from staff and parents regarding changes/implementation	● WHOCARES? Email with drop down menu ● Vertical collaboration time(s)

Lever 4.3: Intentionally incorporate the five competencies and common language of social/emotional learning

ACTIONS	RESOURCES
YEAR 1 ● Whole school activity that promotes the 5 SEL competencies. ● TPT poster development/hand in building during 1st week. ● Meditation Room off library, "Go Noodle", or mindful moment in the mornings attached to maybe first block? 　● Music 　● Art 　● Meditation 　● Stretching ● Exercise better use of Peer Mediators - use consistently and school wide	● First week(s) of school poster development via a template (Aug 2019)

Section VI: District Systems

Districts describe changes in policies/autonomies, systems to support school-level turnaround plans, and a three-year financial plan for the school, including an analysis of resource inequities. (2-3 pages)

Upon notification that the Amesbury Middle School was identified as a school in need of assistance or intervention due to low subgroup performance in the Fall of 2018, the district leadership in collaboration with the school leadership began the conversation regarding the specific needs for school-level turnaround. The district applied for and received a $10,000 planning grant awarded by DESE in December 2018. In addition to the state provided trainings for developing a school-level turnaround plan, the grant provided funding to support a consultant from Seacoast Education Collaborative with expertise in school improvement at the middle school level. In addition, the district's Director of Student Services has remained a member of the schools turnaround planning team by providing professional learning opportunities and district input into the plan as necessary.

The Amesbury Public School system consists of two elementary schools, 1 middle school, 1 High School and 1 Innovation High School. Due to the small size of the district and the frequent turnover at the district leadership level the last 5 years, schools have had a varying amount of autonomy in terms of creating a building schedule, hiring staff, budget allocation, and professional development topics and opportunities. The Amesbury Middle School will continue to have autonomy in the critical areas of 1) the hiring, retention and removal of school level personnel by prioritizing that teaching and support positions at the middle school are filled with the highest quality teachers and to emphasize and support the implementation of the educator evaluation system when teachers are not meeting expectations; 2) allocation of resources to address the needs of the most challenging students through the implementation of programming and/or curriculum; 3) allocation of resources to review the current course options and develop or expand advanced class offerings for students exceeding expectations; and 4) identification and implementation of professional learning time and opportunities identified in the turnaround plan. In addition, the district leadership will be working with the teachers union and the middle school leadership team to identify and delineate the implementation of a learning walk protocol in classrooms at the Middle School as proposed in the turnaround plan.

As a result of the root cause analysis work, the team hypothesized that the underlying root cause for the school not demonstrating consistent improvement for students and staff was due to a lack of vision focused on the importance of building a culture of achievement throughout the entire school community. The turnaround team further indicates if teachers and administrators develop and execute a deep understanding of professional learning communities focused on improving instruction, curriculum, and assessment using PLC tools, protocols, and practices to improve instructional practice and student outcomes, then teacher

collaboration and use of effective instructional practices in classrooms will increase and lead to improved student achievement for students within our High Needs subgroup population. The school began this work in March 2019, through the support of a consultant with Seaside Educational Consultants funded by the planning grant, this work will continue throughout the 2019-2020 school year as the district has allocated funding for the consultant to provide professional development and job-embedded coaching to continue making progress towards the development of teacher collaboration for school improvement.

The district's Director of Teaching and Learning will have a critical role in the turnaround plan implementation and will allocate at a minimum of one day a week to support the curricular, instructional and data analysis activities in the turnaround plan. In addition, as a result of the turnaround team's data analysis and demonstration for needing a math coach in order to build collaboration and focus of achievement and consistency in curriculum implementation, this position has been funded for the 2019-2020 school year. The coaching position will assist in developing curriculum maps and end of unit assessments, providing resources for teachers, and modeling best teaching practices within the math classes.

Another critical area identified in the turnaround plan was the need for benchmark and formative assessments that can be analyzed quickly and are meaningful for guiding decisions regarding student mastery of standards. The school currently uses the NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment as a benchmark tool to help identify student levels of performance and assess progress.   The district will continue to fund the implementation of the MAP assessment. In addition, over the next two years the district will allocate resources to develop end of unit and cumulative assessments that will better support the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support for all students. At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, all middle school teachers will be provided with longitudinal and current demographic and assessment data for students in their classes. These data will be shared electronically and will be updated mid-year to reflect current level of performance for the purpose of identifying students who need additional remedial or accelerated support.

The turnaround team has also identified the need for social-emotional supports at the middle school. The district applied for and received a grant to support behavior and mental health in the schools. This grant will provide funding for a .5 FTE school social worker. This position will provide direct support to students, with additional consultation to school leadership and staff in implementing systems for struggling students. The district, in collaboration with AMS school leadership and school adjustment counselor will be meeting with representatives from Pettengill House, a paid community mental health / family resource partner, to better align the systems of support for students and families in the Amesbury Middle School. Throughout the

school year many teachers, especially at the Middle School expressed a desire for more training and strategies for students with anxiety and school refusal. In response, the district will be contracting with an expert in working with children and adolescents with anxiety to provide consultation and strategies for middle school teachers and support staff.

The district is committed to providing a high quality education for all students at Amesbury Middle School. Through the thoughtful analysis and planning of the school turnaround team, a 3-year plan has been created to address the root cause for student's underperformance as measured by the state's accountability system. The plan requires the following financial assistance:

Year 1 (2019-2020 School Year):

- Math Coach: Full time position. Candidates will be interviewed by a team of teachers, school administration and district leaders. Responsibilities will include curriculum mapping, job-embedded modeling of best instructional practices / strategies, development of end of unit and cumulative assessments, support for data analysis and identification of students for multi-tiered system of support.
- NWEA MAP assessment. District will continue to fund the MAP assessment for use three times during the school year. Includes access to webinar trainings for teachers.
- 0.5 FTE School Social Worker.   To provide direct service to students and consultation to school personnel and families.
- Consultant Seaside Educational Consultants– Professional Learning Communities. Consultant will provide job-embedded coaching to teacher teams during the school day to implement best practices for unpacking the standards, instructional practices and strategies, data analysis, looking at student work, and progress monitoring. Contract will consist of up to 30 sessions over the course of the school year.
- Consultant – Anxiety Disorders. Expert in working with adolescents with anxiety and school refusal will provide professional learning and support to teachers multiple times during the school year. Contract includes up to 40 hours of consultation and training.
- Professional Learning – Differentiated Instruction/Inclusive Practices. Teachers will participate in professional development related specifically to using data to identify student needs and how to provide instruction specific to meet students needs.

- Professional Learning Opportunity – Positive Behavior Support. Increase teacher knowledge and familiarity with the tiers of behavior; data collection procedures; and nuances of a positive reward system in middle school.

Year 2 (2020-2021 School Year):
- **Math Coach:** Full time position. Candidates will be interviewed by a team of teachers, school administration and district leaders. Responsibilities will include curriculum mapping, job-embedded modeling of best instructional practices / strategies, development of end of unit and cumulative assessments, support for data analysis and identification of students for multi-tiered system of support
- **Curriculum Coach.** Full time position to support content areas with curriculum mapping, job-embedded modeling of best instructional practices / strategies, development of end of unit and cumulative assessments, support for data analysis and identification of students for multi-tiered system of support.
- **NWEA MAP assessment**. District will continue to fund the MAP assessment for use three times during the school year. Includes access to webinar trainings for teachers.
- **1.0 FTE School Social Worker.**   Increase time for the social worker to provide direct service to students and consultation to school personnel and families.
- **Consultant Seaside Educational Consultants– Professional Learning Communities.** Consultant will provide job-embedded coaching to teacher teams during the school day to implement best practices for unpacking the standards, instructional practices and strategies, data analysis, looking at student work, and progress monitoring. Contract will consist of up to 15 sessions over the course of the school year.
- **Consultant – Anxiety Disorders.** Expert in working with adolescents with anxiety and school refusal will provide professional learning and support to teachers multiple times during the school year. Contract includes up to 40 hours of consultation and training.
- **Professional Learning Opportunities – Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS).** Participate in a train the trainer model for implementation of MTSS in the school.

Year 3 (2021-2022 School Year):
- **Math Coach:** Full time position. Candidates will be interviewed by a team of teachers, school administration and district leaders. Responsibilities will include curriculum mapping, job-embedded modeling of best instructional practices / strategies, development of end of unit and cumulative assessments, support for data analysis and identification of students for multi-tiered system of support.
- **Curriculum Coach.** Full time position to support content areas with curriculum mapping, job-embedded modeling of best instructional practices / strategies,

development of end of unit and cumulative assessments, support for data analysis and identification of students for multi-tiered system of support.

- **NWEA MAP assessment**. District will continue to fund the MAP assessment for use three times during the school year. Includes access to webinar trainings for teachers.
- **1.0 FTE School Social Worker.** To provide direct service to students and consultation to school personnel and families.
- **Consultant Seaside Educational Consultants– Professional Learning Communities.** Consultant will provide job-embedded coaching to teacher teams during the school day to implement best practices for unpacking the standards, instructional practices and strategies, data analysis, looking at student work, and progress monitoring. Contract will consist of up to 10 sessions over the course of the school year.
- **Professional Learning Opportunities – Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS).** Continued implementation and refinement of practices.

Changes in Policy and Strategies to Consider under State Law

Districts are required to consider the following changes to policy and strategies for any school designated Underperforming, and are granted statutory flexibilities to enhance their efforts to address them. However all schools, even those without this designation, can benefit from considering these changes. <u>Check all that apply and attach a copy of the revised collective bargaining agreement. Joint Resolution Committee decision, or Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement</u>.

Curriculum and Instruction

☐ **Expand, alter, or replace curriculum**: The Superintendent may expand, alter or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses

☐ **Expand use of time**: The Superintendent may expand the school day or school year or both of the school

☐ **Add Kindergarten or pre-Kindergarten**: The Superintendent may, for an elementary school, add prekindergarten and full day kindergarten classes, if the school does not already have such classes

Financial and Asset Management

☐ **Reallocate school budget**: The Superintendent may reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school

☐ **Reallocated district budget**: The Superintendent may provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district, if the school does not already receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district. (If the school receives funding at least equal to the average per pupil funding, with the approval of the School Committee, the Superintendent can direct additional funds to the school.)

Human Resources

☐ **Attract and retain leaders and teachers:** The Superintendent may provide funds, subject to appropriation and following consultation with applicable local unions, to increase the salary of any administrator, or teacher in the school, to attract or retain highly qualified administrators, or teachers or to reward administrators, or teachers who work in underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan

☐ **Make staffing changes:** The Superintendent may, following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers and staff to reapply for their positions in the school, with full discretion vested in the superintendent regarding his consideration of and decisions on rehiring based on the reapplications

☐ **Implement new systems**: The Superintendent may establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with a common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, professional development, teacher advancement, school culture and organizational structure

☐ **Leadership development:** The Superintendent may establish a plan for professional development for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership

Professional Development and Collaboration

☐ **Embedded professional development**: The Superintendent may include a provision of job embedded professional development for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback

☐ **Expanded teacher planning time:** The Superintendent may provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction

Leadership and Governance

☐ **Change Collective Bargaining and Policies:** The Superintendent may limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided, that the superintendent shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced

☐ **Change District Policies**: The Superintendent may limit, suspend or change 1 or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school

Additional Strategies

☐ **Study best practices:** The Superintendent may develop a strategy to search for and study best practices in areas of demonstrated deficiency in the school

☐ **Address mobility and transiency**: The Superintendent may establish strategies to address mobility and transiency among the student population of the school

☐ **Additional strategies**: The Superintendent may include additional components based on the reasons why the school was designated as underperforming and the recommendations of the local stakeholder group

Section VII: Goals, Benchmarks, and Progress Monitoring

Describe the process the school and district will use to monitor the impact of the strategies as articulated in the benchmarks. (2-3 pages)

Amesbury Middle School has struggled in recent years to develop a clear vision for school improvement, implement structures to support professional collaboration, and cultivate sufficient trust between leadership and teachers to achieve these goals.   Since 2011 district administration has seen a lot of change. We have seen multiple changes of central office administration at both the Superintendent and Director of Student Services positions. In addition, in 2011 the middle school teacher leadership positions were eliminated which has impacted the ability of the school to build any kind of leadership capacity which is important for establishing a focused and clearly articulated vision around teaching and learning practices. The school does not currently have a specific Teacher Leader role nor a Teacher Leader Team. Prior to the budget reduction in these leadership positions, these positions had assisted in ensuring that curriculum planning times, team meeting times, and implementation of curriculum were at the forefront of the collaborative teaming structures that had been built into the school schedule.   These teaming structures continued to exist within the school scheduling framework over the years but the specific expectations for teaming processes and outcomes in regards to pursuing student achievement relative to instructional practices and the implementation of curriculum was fragmented. For example, the school has an established 3-4 monthly curriculum planning times (CPT) at each grade level in addition to weekly individual team meeting times throughout the school year. However, school leaders have not established

clear or effective processes for these teams to impact student achievement since the loss of the grade level leader positions. Specifically, during these times effective systems for regularly monitoring student progress and looking at data were fragmented and unclear. In addition, for the past 5 years the Middle School administrative team had requested a math coach in order to build collaboration and focus of achievement and consistency in curriculum implementation but has not been able to be supported within the district and school budget. In order for the school to establish and maintain a culture of achievement we need to develop different leadership structures starting with establishing an instructional leadership team. It is a priority for the school to re-establish a leadership team in order to ensure that our vision, goals, and our decision making is in-line with making sure that our *High Needs* subgroup population is being provided with the teaching and learning experiences that are necessary for them to meet or exceed both growth and achievement targets. This instructional leadership team will be the first step in being able to bring about a consistent communication of the schools vision as it pertains to the identified goals, strategies and objectives that will be required for the school to meet the needs of our *High Needs* subgroup population over the next three years. The first action towards a shared responsibility for meeting the needs of our *High Needs* subgroup population and all of our students is to provide professional develop for all staff in the area of forming Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) at the team, grade and school wide levels. The PLC professional development will allow us to create a common language, protocols and instructional focus based on the importance of establishing a culture of achievement for all students in a shared manner. This will also help us to build a shared responsibility in developing a data analysis team and a CARE team that will rely on different individuals from across all grade levels and content areas to develop a shared purpose for the improvement of all of our students regardless of the grade level.

Each grade level has on average 3 Curriculum Planning Time meetings per month in which all grade level teachers meet. This brings together ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies teachers along with the grade level Special Education teachers to dedicate themselves to look at a variety of data points such as MCAS data, NWEA data given to all students in September 2019, January 2020 and May/June 2020. The instructional leadership team in collaboration with school administration will need to clearly articulate the action steps, goals, benchmarks and elements of the plan beginning in August 26, 2019. It will be up to the school administration to attend these meetings regularly throughout the school year along with the use of specific protocols to focus conversations in regards to reviewing data collected as indicated by the benchmarks that have been set. Grade level teachers will need to be responsible in collecting this information necessary to discuss the level of success students are having relative to the progress they are making towards the benchmarks. Teachers will need to provide evidence

that they can share with others that indicate their ability in meeting the identified student and staff benchmarks. The use of staff meeting time and Professional Release Time days during the months of October 2019, January 2020, February 2020 and March 2020 will be dedicated towards data analysis and progress monitoring in regards to the Benchmarks that have been set for both students and staff. Our biggest challenge we will face is to get 100% of the staff to understand the sense of urgency and commitment that their efforts in working collaboratively at their respective grade levels, becoming an active member on the Instructional leadership team, CARE team and student analysis team is essential for us to meet the expected targets for our *High Needs* student population.   We will need to be able to articulate clearly the expectations for staff, students, and the community that this is important and everyone needs to be pulling in the same direction in order for our school to see the progress it is capable of making for our students.   School administration will have to consistently make sure that we hold everyone accountable to the goals and benchmarks that have been set. Finally, we will need district leadership support the processes and procedures that we have identified that are necessary in helping our High Needs subgroup meet their growth and achievement targets. If this is done, then we will see gains for all of the students who are a part of our Amesbury Middle School community.

At the district level, in addition to the MA DESE Accountability data released in the Fall of each school year, the impact of the turnaround plan at Amesbury Middle School will be monitored by district leadership formatively by reviewing the following data:
- Results of a Survey of faculty, students, and families in regards to school culture and academic achievement. Survey will be administered in September and May of each school year.
- Results from the MAP data; Fall to Spring and Winter to Winter to assess progress for same students during the school year and across school years. Data include achievement and growth by student subgroups.
- Student Attendance
- Referrals for Special Education
- Discipline data; to include Tier 1 level behaviors within the classroom and referrals to the office for Tier 2 and 3 behaviors.
- Analysis of teacher Student Performance and Professional Practice Goals to include content and evidence towards meeting goals.

Use the tables below to articulate the goals and benchmarks.

Turnaround Practice #1: Leadership, shared responsibility & professional collaboration
The school has established a community of practice through leadership, shared responsibility for all students and professional collaboration.

Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) for Student Achievement	We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and *High Needs* subgroup.
Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners	1. Each faculty meeting will include a review of data (related to benchmarks and annual goals), commitment to next steps, and follow-through on decisions made at previous meetings. 2. Each quarter, a review of all team meeting agendas reveal that 100% incorporate data analysis, student work analysis, and progress monitoring for students, articulate next steps, and follow-through on previous decisions. 3. By October 2019, 100% of teachers will post lesson standards, objectives, essential questions, and agendas in all classrooms as evidenced by classroom observations and walk-throughs. 4. By November 2019, 100% of teachers will incorporate standards based language as identified in UbD units in lessons as evidenced by classroom observations and walk-throughs.
Interim Benchmarks for Students	1. By November 2019, when asked, 100% of students are able to use standards based language to identify what they are learning and why they are learning it. 2. May 2019 student survey identifies an increase in the percentage of students reporting school leadership and staff hold high expectations for their learning, as compared to the results of the fall survey.

Turnaround Practice #2: Intentional practices for improving instruction

The school employs intentional practices for improving teacher-specific and student-responsive instruction.

Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs) for Student Achievement	We will meet or exceed accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group.
Other MAGs 3 required by statute: 　　1. Student acquisition of twenty-first century skills 　　2. Development of college readiness 　　3. Developmentally appropriate child assessments from pre-kindergarten through third grade, if applicable	1.　There will be a 3-5 % increase in students with high needs demonstrating mastery of learning and innovation skills in the area of critical thinking and problem solving as measured through meeting expectations of DOK 3 questions on assessments. 2.　50% of students that are in the category of "not on track" for meeting college and career readiness according the projected proficiency report on MAP will move to "on track" by the end of the year.
Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners	1.　In 75% of walkthroughs completed, evidence of the two indicators was observed. 2.　Each quarter, a review of all team meeting agendas reveal that 100% incorporate data analysis, student work analysis, and progress monitoring for students, articulate next steps, and follow-through on previous decisions. 2.　By October 2019, 100% of teachers will post lesson standards, objectives, essential questions, and agendas in all classrooms as evidenced by classroom observations and walk-throughs. 3.　By November 2019, 100% of teachers will incorporate standards based language as identified in UbD units in lessons as evidenced by classroom observations and walk-throughs. 4. By the end of second quarter, 100% of teachers will administer at least ten, graded, standards based assessments that are analyzed for student progress and next steps.
Interim Benchmarks for Students	1.　Each quarter students will track their progress towards academic, improvement goals they set in consultation with their teacher(s), evidenced by students work, interim assessments or performance assessments. 2.　There will be a 3 -5 % increase in students with high needs in the 50th (or higher) conditional growth percentile from Fall to Spring MAP Achievement Status and Growth Summary Report. 3.　There will be a 3-5% increase in students with high needs

	meeting or exceeding their projected RIT from Fall to Spring MAP Achievement Status and Growth Summary Report. 4. By November 2019, when asked, 100% of students are able to use standards based language to identify what they are learning and why they are learning it.

Turnaround Practice #3: Student-specific supports and instruction to all students

The school is able to provide student-specific supports and interventions informed by data and the identification of student-specific needs.

MAGs for Student Achievement	We will meet or exceed MCAS accountability targets as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group. The target for all students set by DESE for the 2019 MCAS is 498.1 for English Language Arts, 496.3 for Mathematics, and 76.2 for Science. The high needs target set by DESE for the 2019 school year is 484.3 for English Language Arts, 482.3 for Mathematics, and 61.1 for Science.
Other Measurable Annual Goal	Increase the MCAS Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) in Language Arts from 40.4 percent in 2018 to 50 percent in 2019 and from 43 percent in 2018 to 50 percent in 2019 for Mathematics. Increase the percentage of teachers reporting using the results of formative or interim assessments to improve their instruction to meet student needs. Increase the overall attendance rate to 13 days absent for all students and 25.3 for high needs students.
Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners	1. Each month, all of the guidance counselors and assistant principals will review attendance data to identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism, develop action plans, and follow through on established action plans 100% of the time. 2. Once a quarter, during Common Planning Time, 100% of teachers will analyze the most recent common formative assessment data to identify students' academic needs, develop re-teaching plans, identify interventions and report student progress to date. 3. In the fall, winter and spring, teachers will use students MAP growth scores, known as Rasch Unit (RIT), to calculate the probability a student will be proficient on the MCAS.

Interim Benchmarks for Students	1. Each quarter, there will be a 5% decrease in the number of referrals to special education. 2. 50 % of students in Tier II and III will make progress in reading and mathematics as evidenced by MAP RTI Baseline to Winter scores. 3. Each quarter students will track their progress towards academic, improvement goals they set in consultation with their teacher(s),evidenced by students work, interim assessments or performance assessments.

Turnaround Practice #4: School Culture and Climate
Create an environment where students excel socially, emotionally, and academically.

MAGs for Student Achievement	We will meet or exceed accountability targets for our *High Needs* subgroup as set by DESE for all students and the lowest performing students group.

Other MAGs
7 required by statute:
    1. Parent and family engagement
    2. Building a culture of academic success among students
    3. Building a culture of student support and success among school faculty and staff
    4.Student attendance, dismissal rates, and exclusion rates (a measure is needed for each of these three items)
    5. Student safety and discipline
    6. Student promotion and dropout rates
	1. By April 2019, 85% of parents/guardians and/or other family members report an understanding of the school's turnaround efforts, the targets the school is striving for, and their role in contributing to reaching these goals.
	
	2. By May 2019, 85% of students will report that effort and good work are recognized by the school.
	
	3. By December 2019, 100% of teachers use the results of formative or interim assessments to improve their instruction to meet student needs.
	
	4. Student attendance by grade level will meet the minimum of 92% and is recognized on a monthly basis and celebrated at CARE assemblies.
	
	5. By May 2019, 90% of students will report feelings of safety within the school.
	
	6. By January 31 2020 10% drop of students identified as possible students to be retained or assigned for the 2020-2021 school year.

Interim Benchmarks for Teachers/Practitioners	1. Each month grade level teams will review student attendance and develop and implement action plans for those students who have been absent 10% or more of school days to date. 2. Quarterly, the child study team, during CPT time, will identify students who need social, emotional, behavioral and/or academic

	supports. 3. 100 % of faculty and staff will be observed using SEL/CARE language and distributing CARE cards to maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and most behaviors that interfere with student learning are prevented. 4. Monthly, 100% of staff will communicate with parents about student learning and progress via avenues such as teacher websites, Aspen, Google Classroom, Class Dojo, and parent emails. 5. During the 2019-2020 school year, clubs will be re-evaluated to ensure all students have an opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities.
Interim Benchmarks for Students	1. Each month, average student attendance will increase by 1% from the same month in the previous year. 2. Each quarter, students review their CARE goal to assess progress and 75% will report making progress toward goal. 3. 70% of students report successful conflict resolution using school-wide mediation program.