



**Dr. Kevin M. Hurley Middle School**

650 Newman Avenue  
Seekonk, Massachusetts 02771

## **Annual Report of the Principal** **2015 - 2016**

The Dr. Kevin M. Hurley Middle School has completed the 2015 – 2016 academic year under the leadership of fourth year Principal, Dr. William V. Whalen III, and Interim Assistant Principal, Ms. Alexis A. Bouchard. The student population at the close of the school year by grade level was as follows:

Grade 6	170
Grade 7	175
Grade 8	182
Total	527

The Dr. Kevin M. Hurley Middle School includes 51 highly qualified faculty members in addition to many extraordinary staff members and support personnel. This year, we were able to add world language to our program studies, including both Portuguese and Spanish for students in all three of the grade levels. Two certified educators were added to our faculty roster to teach those classes. The world language teachers were provided some common planning time with the teachers of the world language department at Seekonk High School during faculty meetings. We also were able to add a full time ELA Lab teacher to provide support to those students that struggle in ELA, allowing our full time Reading teacher to focus solely on specialized reading. The position of Library Aide was also reinstated this school year, in order to provide support for the Library/Media Specialist throughout the day.

A focus of our work included providing a well-rounded education the services the needs of the whole student. This year, teachers took time during Super Core classes to facilitate conversations with students about problems that middle school children may have to work through that are not academic in nature. In order to do this, our school partnered with Jostens Renaissance Education. Through the Jostens company, students were able to watch short videos on a weekly basis. The video series, The Harbor, hosted by Mike Smith, provided students with perspectives from real people aiming to help them to deal with common issues that may come up for students while in middle and high school. This was one of many ways that teachers at Hurley Middle School focused on educating the whole child this year. Many grade-level assemblies in addition to smaller class meetings took place with

teachers and students in order to educate students on decision-making, the importance of having good character, persevering through difficult times, and other topics that are important for students to have an understanding of in order to keep a positive school climate.

At Dr. Kevin Hurley Middle School, we have also begun a focus on shared leadership. This year, we instituted what we call our Educator Leadership Team. This is a team of faculty members and educational leaders that work together to help promote a culture where teachers are empowered to exercise initiative and leadership essential to the improvement of the school and to increase students' engagement in learning. This past year the team conducted research on educator leadership, and worked on some projects. The projects included, but were not limited to, adding a chartered National Junior Honor Society to our school, implementing Unified Basketball, researching what needs to be done for our school to be recognized as a NELMS (New England League of Middle Schools) Spotlight School, and worked on planning a strategy to implement instructional rounds in our school. The purpose of implementing instructional rounds is for teachers to participate in informal peer observation to allow educators to assess what our school-wide strengths and weaknesses are in regard to teaching and learning. This will allow us to better focus our professional development. Additionally, we have formalized our Student Leadership Team. This is a team of 10 students that work with the Principal, Assistant Principal, and members of the Educator Leadership Team on special projects. Some projects included making presentations at the State of the School Address in January. Furthermore, the student leaders participated in Unified Basketball. Students also prepared presentations for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition Assemblies at the Aitken and Martin Elementary Schools, as well as provided guided tours for the fifth graders when they visited HMS in June. Student leaders also spent a morning reading to students at Aitken Elementary School this past February.

This year, educators in our building participated in the statewide educator evaluation system for the third year. Teachers receive frequent unannounced observations. Educators on a one-year plan receive a Formative Assessment halfway through the year, and a Summative Evaluation at the end of the year. Teachers on a two-year plan receive a Formative Evaluation at the end of year one of the plan, and a Summative Evaluation at the end of year two. Teachers are rated on four standards. The standards include Curriculum/Planning/Assessment, Teaching All Students, Family and Community Engagement, and Professional Practice. They also receive feedback on the progress that they are making toward Student Learning Goals and Professional Practice Goals. The faculty of HMS meets twice a month, with the first meeting led by the Principal. The second meeting of the month is held by academic department and is led by a Curriculum Leader. The topics of those meetings include analyzing data, curriculum documents, pedagogy, and budgeting. Sometimes the second meeting of the month is reserved for academic teams to meet. This year, the second meeting of the month was also sometimes planned to include "Breakout Sessions." These are teacher-led sessions, where faculty members can choose from a menu of different professional opportunities led by teachers on our faculty that want to share successful practices with their colleagues. This is another great way for our teachers to lead from the classroom, sharing their expertise in different areas with their colleagues in order to improve teaching and learning at our school.

This document will report out on how the goals of the 2015-2016 School Improvement Plan were met. The 2016-2017 School Improvement Plan takes this information into account, and includes revisions and additions in order to meet the current needs of our school.

School Goal #1: This goal is written around alignment of the curriculum. Members of the middle school and high school social studies, ELA, science, world language, and math departments met this year periodically in order to work on the alignment of the curriculum vertically and horizontally. This is something that will need to continue with again next year. We will also be looking to plan time so that middle school teachers can also meet with

elementary school teachers to work on curriculum. Moving forward, we will continue to work on planning for a schedule that allows all eighth grade students to take Technology/Engineering in 8<sup>th</sup> grade as a core subject. Also, science teachers have been working to plan curriculum around the Next Generation Science Standards, which were approved this school year. Beginning next year, our sixth grade teachers will roll out a new curriculum geared toward addressing the NGSS. Teachers were provided with some professional development during the course of this past school year to work on that curriculum, and that will continue on for next year as well.

School Goal #2: This goal is written to improve teaching and learning via the analysis of student assessment results, and other pertinent data. Students have taken the PARCC test over the last two years. Next year, students will take the next generation of MCAS, called MCAS 2.0. Teachers need to be able to examine item analysis data in order to help drive their classroom instruction. Without an item analysis over the past two years, teachers have been creating and revising common interim and benchmark assessments. In ELA, math, and science, students have been taking the Galileo Assessment in order to provide this data for their teachers. We continue to improve upon teaching and learning through the educator evaluation system, which includes frequent unannounced classroom visits conducted by administrators. Teachers and administrators discuss the lessons after the observations in post observation meetings where feedback is offered. Formative and summative evaluations with teacher ratings and feedback that is offered are also part of the evaluation process.

School Goal #3: This goal is written to create an academically rigorous environment that supports and addresses learning gaps for all students and includes research-based effective classroom practices. Some teachers continued this year with conducting informal peer observations and offering feedback to each other. This was done mostly by new teachers and their mentors, but some seasoned teachers also participated. Teachers continue to focus on strategies such as framing learning, activators and summarizers, posting key terms, meeting diverse needs of students, planning well-structured lessons, and creating a variety of ways to assess students. In addition to educating the needs of the whole child, teachers continue to utilize Super Core classes to enrich high achieving students and offer support for struggling students. We continue as a faculty to work on ways to provide students with consistent rubrics, vocabulary, skills, and processes across the disciplines to promote school-wide literacy skills. This year, the sixth grade teachers set a team goal to research and educate their students on Close Reading as a valuable literacy skill.

School Goal #4: Dr. Kevin M. Hurley Middle School continues to make communication with parents a priority. Every Friday, the weekly Parent Newsletter is published on the Principal's Page of our website. The newsletter includes news from administrators, as well as curriculum updates, news on extracurricular activities, and more. This year, we have begun to include student work samples as part of our newsletter. Teachers and administrators continue to use Twitter as a social media resource to update parents and members of the community in regard to activities that are going on in our school both during the school day, and in the evenings. We continue to focus on improving our involvement when it comes to community outreach. Our Student Council Advisors have been planning their goals around community involvement and making a connection to town government. Moving forward, we also plan on developing a student survey as well as a parent survey in order to gather feedback at the end of each school year.

School Goal #5: This goal is to develop programs that engage students in and recognize them for developing a strong sense of self-concept, personal responsibility, and good decision-making skills. We have continued with our Star of the Month Breakfast Ceremony to recognize students, and plan moving forward to improve upon it by incorporating monthly themes. We continue to reflect upon and improve our State of the School Address that is

presented every January. This past year's State of the School Address included some very engaging strategies to captivate the attention of our students while discussing some very important information with them. Once again, students participated in College and Career Readiness Day, and had the opportunity to hear from local career professionals. Eighth grade students also had a presentation from local colleges on that day. This past spring, we also had a school-wide assembly, which was a presentation from Mr. Ed Gerety. Mr. Gerety is a motivational speaker regarding student leadership, focusing on respect, character, appreciation, attitude, and making a difference.

School Goal #6: This is a goal that focuses on recognizing, developing, and promoting educators. We continue to use faculty meeting time to better enhance teaching and learning as a whole. There has been increased collaboration time between teachers regarding instructional strategies and effective practices through peer observations. A team of teachers have been engaged in researching best discipline practices through Dr. Ross Greene's book *Lost at School*. The work that we've done with our new Educator Leadership this year also supports Goal #6.

School Goal #7: This goal is written to provide quality health service programs for students that allow them to participate in activities that promote physical and social-emotional development. The school has partnered with Chartwells to provide presentations by a chef at lunch from time to time in regard to healthy cooking and eating. We offer intramurals in dodge ball and volleyball. This year, we also held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Veterans Race to students in elementary and middle school.

School Goal #8: We have continued to evaluate our BASE special education program. Next year, will offer a specific section of the program that will service students in multiple grade levels and be able to support their diverse learning needs.

Our School Improvement Plan for 2016-2017 has been streamlined to include five goals, each with action steps that reflect the current needs of our school.

Once again this year, HMS offered students many additional opportunities to learn outside of the walls of the building. The Eighth Grade Class Trip to Washington DC involved 130 students and over twenty adult chaperones. This year's trip included a stop in New York to see the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, as well as a day at Hershey Park, in Hershey, PA.

Extracurricular programs at the middle school continue to flourish with extraordinary participation by students. Students participate in cross country, as well as boys and girls soccer in the fall. The winter season includes basketball for boys and girls, and the spring sports teams include baseball and softball. HMS also has a Student Council, Builders Club (a community service group), Knitting Club, HMS Idol (a talent competition), and more. Students in this year's Drama Club performed *Something Cursed This Way Comes*, an original performance written and produced by students. This year, our newly formed Debate Team was victorious in both competitions that were held this year. All of our athletic and academic teams, such as the Math Team and Debate Team, participate in the Massasoit League of Middle Schools, and organization that is managed by the principals of the schools in the league.

The end of the 2015-2016 school year saw the retirement of two wonderful educators that have served in the Seekonk Public School District for many years. Our retirees include Mrs. Patricia Libby, a social studies teacher, and Dr. Alice Combes, School Psychologist. These individuals were honored at our annual 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotional Ceremony, which took place on the front lawn of our campus on June 16, 2016.

Overall, this was a very successful school year at the Dr. Kevin M. Hurley Middle School.