



**MASCONOMET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
2023-2028**



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## LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT & SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

Dear Masconomet Community,

This is an exciting time to be a learner! Over the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we've seen some amazing changes in science, technology, communications and mass media. Entire new industries have been developed, along with a myriad of new jobs to support them. In the last 25 years, we've seen major changes in how and where we work, how we consume information about what's happening in the world, how we obtain the things we need, and how we learn new skills. These and many other changes to our world have occurred as a result of the “fourth industrial revolution:” the rise of connectivity and data, analytics and intelligence, human-machine interaction and advanced engineering. (*Enno de Boer, McKinsey and Co*)

As educators, our challenge is to design educational programming that best prepares our students for success in this rapidly changing future. While the schools of the past did well producing students to work in an industrial economy, today they need to adapt to a new knowledge-based economy. The nature of information has changed from scarcity to abundance. Anyone with a smartphone can instantly find out the answer to any question, or find an online video to learn a new skill. Educators are now preparing current students for jobs that haven't been created, using technologies that haven't been invented yet.

This Strategic Plan is an opportunity for us to reimagine Masconomet. It will guide our decisions around improvement initiatives and resource allocations from today until 2028. The plan maps out each of the essential elements for moving forward together: from developing a “Portrait of a Learner” that identifies the essential competencies all students need to master, to using data to inform how our students are learning, to collaborating with and seeking feedback from our students, parents and faculty on how we can be stronger partners in advocating for student learning. Completing the Strategic Objectives and associated Strategic Initiatives included in this plan will ensure that the Masconomet Regional School District continues to hire world-class educators to provide our students with a world-class preparation for success. While the plan spells out Strategic Objectives, our goal is to become more agile where specific initiatives may change as we learn about new practices that better serve our students.

We would like to thank the members of our Strategic Planning Working Team for their dedication to guiding this process over the past year. This document is the result of their commitment to envisioning what Masconomet can be in the future. We would also like to thank the students, parents, faculty, and community members who took the time to respond to our surveys and provided meaningful insights.

This Strategic Plan is the beginning of a new phase in Masconomet's history. We are excited about the possibilities that working towards the Objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan will open for us!

Sincerely,

Michael Manuel Harvey, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Melissa Ogden, Chair  
Masconomet School Committee



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Masconomet Strategic Plan is the result of a twelve month journey of exploration of the question, “What type of schools do we need to ensure our students will be best prepared for future success?”

During this process, a Working Team representing administration, faculty, parents and community members surveyed the larger Masconomet Community around their perceptions of our schools and learning environments. Through this effort, the Working Team was able to gather feedback regarding the strengths and areas for growth of our schools. After reviewing and analyzing this information, the Working Team crafted a new Mission, Vision and Values Statement for the District and developed a five-year Strategic Plan to guide efforts towards achieving the aspirations stated in the Mission, Vision and Values.

The resulting Strategic Plan is organized into four Strategic Objectives, or main themes: *Curriculum, Instruction, Culture and Wellbeing, and Community* that were identified by the Working Team in the survey results. Strategic Objectives are statements of the *outcomes*, or changes in knowledge and behavior that are desired. Each Strategic Objective contains one or more Strategic Initiatives, which describe the *outputs* or activities that will be completed in order to achieve the Strategic Objective.

An abbreviated Visual Overview of the Strategic Plan is available [HERE](#).

### Overview

**Strategic Objective I: Curriculum** envisions a reorientation of Masconomet’s curriculum towards real-world readiness and 21st Century competencies. The Strategic Initiative under this objective is the creation of a curriculum development and review process. Activities under this initiative include the creation of a Masconomet Portrait of a Learner to define expected student outcomes, alignment of current curriculum to these defined outcomes, and the development of assessments and reporting systems to measure student mastery of student learning objectives.

**Strategic Objective II: Instruction** seeks to strengthen student learning through strengthening teachers’ capacity to implement practices that support the achievement of curriculum objectives, meet individual student learning goals and enhance teaching practices through collaboration. Strategic Initiatives under this objective include reviewing student service practices and programming, strengthening our systems for teacher collaboration and professional learning, and

establishing systems to highlight successes and to identify areas for improvement in student learning.

**Strategic Objective III: Culture and Wellbeing** envisions a safe, joyful and trusting school culture where students and adults are able to thrive and grow. The Strategic Initiative for this objective is the creation of a comprehensive system to support the development of social-emotional competencies in all students and to support the positive mental health of all members of our community.

**Strategic Objective IV: Community** seeks to build both internal and external relationships at Masconomet through communications, data management and partnership. Strategic Initiatives included in this objective are the development of mentoring/advisory programs to support both adults and students in the school and the implementation of a capital plan to ensure Masconomet has the facilities to support the type of learning envisioned in our Vision and Values.



### Implementation

Achieving the Objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan will be the focus of our District and School Improvement Plans over the next five years. Progress towards completing the Strategic Objectives will be reported in targeted communications from school and district leaders as part of a comprehensive communications plan. The support of community partners, including Towns of Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield, the Tri-Town School Union (TTU), Tri-Town Council (TTC), Parents Activities Committee (PAC), Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC), and Masconomet Education Foundation (MEF) will be integral to the success of the Strategic Plan.



## BACKGROUND & TIMELINE

In 2022-2023, the Masconomet Regional School District engaged in an aspirational community conversation to redefine what success should look like for our students and schools and to embrace the practices that could enable the district to realize that vision.

With excellent educators and tremendous community support, Masconomet has a tradition of high performance. We strive to honor that tradition and also prepare our students for a rapidly changing world. Post-covid, we must embrace the idea that schools may need to look different than we remember, programs must become increasingly nimble, and the mental health and resiliency of both children *and* adults are essential.

During this engagement, we asked many questions, reviewed our vision, and crafted a shared plan for how Masconomet might balance personnel, programming, and policy decisions over the next three to five years (2023-2028).

A Working Team of faculty, school leadership, and community members served as the organizers, data collectors, authors and co-leaders of this work. We are grateful to them and the many community members who shared their perspectives and suggestions throughout this process.

August 2022	Hire Facilitator, CR Bohne, LLC
October/November 2022	Interview Community Leaders & Partners
December 2022	Build Working Team
February 2023	Survey Community
January - June, Fall 2023	Working Team Meetings, Draft Plan
June 2023	Draft Plan Distributed to Community for Feedback
Summer 2023	Leadership Team Synthesizes Strategic Plan
October /November 2023	Working Team Reviews Feedback and Makes Revisions
December 2023	School Committee Approval of Plan





# DISTRICT SNAPSHOT DATA & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In January and February of 2023, the Strategic Planning Working Team developed a community survey to collect feedback from all stakeholders on their perceptions of the Masconomet schools, culture, and programs. This survey allowed community members to lean in on their priorities for what all students should know and be able to demonstrate during their years at the middle and high school.

Through survey feedback, individual interviews and data analysis some common themes arose: Curriculum, Instruction, Culture, Wellbeing, Community Spirit, Communications and Collaboration. The following is a summary of this feedback and data. Not all responses are captured here, but the Strategic Plan responds to these themes and what we know based on current data on the learning needs of our 7-12th grade students. A full copy of the Survey Summary is available online.<sup>1</sup>

## Curriculum Feedback

Our academic program is highly praised for its quality and the offering of challenging coursework at all levels. Masconomet personalizes its programming through global diplomas, pathways, and provides a broad and robust selection of electives and extracurriculars. Business, law, STEM, and computing classes are favorites. The performing and visual arts are top notch, and there are many opportunities for student leadership. Interscholastic athletics and clubs are recognized as great experiences for teamwork, equity and social

### Survey Responses by Respondent Group

What should our students know and be able to demonstrate during grades 7-12?

Educators & Community: Analytic Reasoning & Problem Solving, Communication Competence, Teamwork and Collaboration

Students: Communication Competence, College Preparedness, Financial Literacy, and Teamwork and Collaboration

What is essential for an ideal professional culture?

- #1 Professional Culture of Mutual Respect
- #2 Robust Communications
- #3 Safety and Health

What is essential for an ideal school culture?

- #1 Focus on Personalized Academic Achievement & Personal Growth
- #2 Growth Mindset
- #3 Safety and Health

<sup>1</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VneYiSMkN7tlei774rlDvA5PZ-4UfNri/view>

belonging. Students requested additional coursework in SAT/ACT prep, physical education (not sports), and classes in financial literacy and career exploration.

The school was applauded for its “ability to prepare students for college,” and less so for real-world trades or alternative paths. While students care most about getting into a good college, the adults reported “growth mindset” and “real world problem-solving” as more important competencies for students. There were a number of concerns shared about Special

Education students accessing all programming and also being properly and sustainably supported in “challenging” coursework.

Adult respondents requested that 21st century skills be elevated as essential, asking for more opportunities for analytical reasoning, communications and teamwork. Students, on the other hand, prioritized college preparedness, community service, financial literacy and creative expression. Most believe that schools do and should continue to provide opportunities that foster resilience, kindness, ethics, social and emotional growth, teamwork and collaboration.

District Profile by the Numbers		
Enrollment '23		1,549
Subgroups		
Low Income		8.3%
High Needs		26.1%
Student with Disabilities		20.1%
Teachers (FTE) '22		128
Student/Teacher Ratio '22		12.8 to 1
In District Expenditures/Pupil '21		\$20,542.86
Total Expenditures/Pupil '21		\$22,151.29
Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations (MCAS) '23		
Grade 8	ELA	62%
Grade 8	Math	54%
Grade 8	Science/Tech/Eng	64%
Grade 10	ELA	78%
Grade 10	Math	77%
Grade 10	Science/Tech/Eng	71%
Source: DESE - <a href="https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&amp;orgcode=07050000&amp;orgtypecode=5&amp;">https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&amp;orgcode=07050000&amp;orgtypecode=5&amp;</a>		

## Instruction Feedback

Teachers are Masconomet’s greatest assets. The foundation of the Strategic Plan as it relates specifically to teaching and learning rests with their expertise and direct connection with students. Teachers at Masconomet tend to remain in the district for the duration of their career and, as a result, investments in educator professional

development have long term returns in the district. Innovation in pedagogy and research-based strategies in the classroom sometimes remain isolated within individual classrooms and only slowly percolate into other classrooms. The challenge for administrators is to scale up these innovative practices and to continue to support teachers in their growth, both individually and collectively.

The survey results suggested that faculty is seeking more time to explore and develop innovative practices that support student learning and their social and emotional well being. They requested opportunities in the workday be allowed for collaboration - on curriculum development, SEL, community building, Professional Learning Communities (PLC), interdisciplinary offerings, and

especially, any new initiatives. The survey results also suggested that Masconomet seeks to utilize existing talent within the faculty to support teachers, and to activate department heads, master teachers, and other teacher leaders in fostering teacher-driven innovations and growth.

Growing initiatives is a bottom up exercise in public education. To successfully enact change within the school community, it's essential that educator voice and input be included and considered. Teachers are passionate about their work and feel strongly that their focus should constantly be on student learning and well being. Too many initiatives or poorly timed initiatives are a distraction to the good work that teachers do on a daily basis. Teachers ask that administrators actively collaborate with them on creating positive change.

Continued professional development and training to best serve students was requested by teachers. Our top priority is to remain student-centered in our practice. Recent district objectives and initiatives have asked students to take risks and become independent learners and also asked teachers to have data informing their practice, move toward standards based grading, and support students in their social emotional well being. These objectives and initiatives are laudable, however, teachers are asking for support in carrying them out and are feeling squeezed for time.

## Culture & Wellbeing Feedback

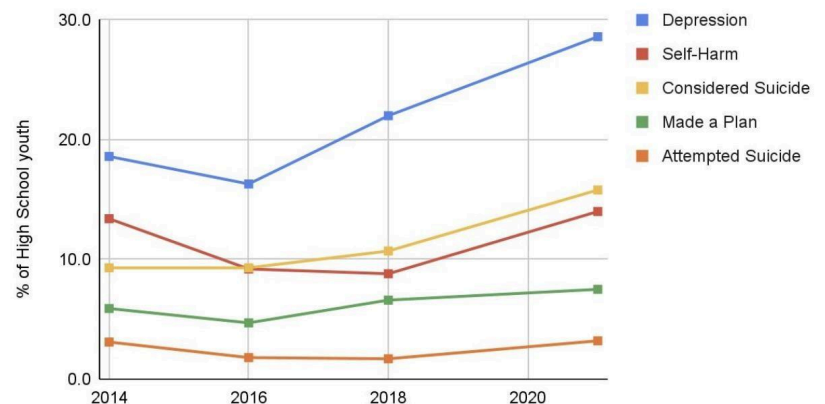
Post-pandemic there have been alarming trends of depression and anxiety in both children and adults in the buildings. Student support services are available and additional resources continue to be added to address this mounting issue. Administrators and counselors have worked to create awareness and responses to student mental health. Work is still to be done to make students aware of the resources available to them.

Most students and educators articulated feeling a strong sense of safety in the schools. Although few, there are isolated incidents of antisemitism, racism and bullying. Administrators and staff respond appropriately and find opportunities to support the entire school community. Despite these efforts, training in best practices on how to have difficult conversations would be beneficial.

Building relationships with students is foundational to effective teaching and learning. Many would like to see an advisory program be formally reconsidered. The M-Block and new schedule were praised by most staff and students as being responsive to what students need and want, especially when it came to finding additional extra help and being able to manage homework and after school activities. During this time, students seek out teachers and try to make connections with adults other than counselors in the building. Teachers are feeling that M-Block, despite its benefits, has cut into their class time and they are forced to significantly adapt their curriculum.

**Mental Health Trends, 2014-2021 (HS)**

*Depression, Self-Harm & Suicide*



Staff in the building are also seeking social and emotional support. Post pandemic, educators are experiencing increased stress levels, burn-out and are absorbing increased aggression from the outside community. Teachers are seeking community and support within our schools from one another and from administration. Suggestions included creating more spaces for teachers to come together in professional and social settings that could build relationships and support networks. Formally creating structures to bind different elements of the school community together should be considered.

Students generally feel welcome and connected to their peers at Mascoment and they feel that teachers are caring and supportive. Overall, students and staff would like to see the school culture and school spirit revived post pandemic. Opportunities continue to thrive for students to socialize and connect to their peers at the Middle and High Schools as teachers and administrators have prioritized the social and emotional well being of students.

### **Community - Collaboration & Communication Feedback**

Communication and collaboration are central to a well functioning school district. The school community and the greater community prioritized a robust community engagement plan so that all stakeholders are well informed of both initiatives and progress toward our district strategic goals. Measuring school and district progress beyond state quantitative data such as MCAS is a goal of the strategic plan. Developing methods to measure strategic plan initiatives is a priority and sharing the results in a transparent and thoughtful way regularly with the community will prevent misinformation and misunderstanding.

Masconomet benefits from a wealth of support from the community and critical resources from its partners, especially Tri-Town Council (TTC) the Masconomet Education Foundation (MEF) and Parent Activities Committee (PAC). Parents generally are supportive of educators and demonstrate a strong willingness to partner with the district as advocates for our schools and students. There have been few well-attended opportunities for stakeholders to come together and resolve disagreements respectfully. However, building and sustaining collaborative efforts, defining roles and responsibilities of all parties, and regular outflow of information from the District should support resolutions to this conflict.

Although most felt safe on campus and found the facilities are well maintained, there were requests to update infrastructure, including aging athletic facilities, HVAC system issues, and constant internet connectivity troubles and slow speeds. Beyond basic upkeep, there is a desire to ensure that spaces are best designed and utilized to reflect instruction and learning priorities. (i.e. If teamwork is a priority, create spaces that better promote small group engagement.)



## STRATEGIC PLAN MISSION, VISION & VALUES

The Working Team reviewed and borrowed language where appropriate from the Masconomet Vision 2025 document to inform and update strategic planning mission, vision and values. Masconomet Vision 2025 is available on the [Masconomet Website](#).

### Mission

Our mission is to prepare all students with the skills, knowledge, and competencies essential to becoming lifelong learners, responsible problem solvers, and contributing citizens by providing challenging and compassionate learning experiences that cultivate teamwork, community, respect, innovation, perseverance and critical thinking.

### Vision... & Values

**Masconomet fosters a safe, trusting and joyful school culture where students and adults thrive and grow as they develop socially, emotionally, academically, and professionally.**

*Because...* We believe that when students and adults feel physically safe, emotionally secure, and happy, they are in the best position to benefit from opportunities for intellectual growth and learning, development of character, self-discovery, and to find their unique place in the community.

**All students can fully access a challenging curriculum and demonstrate improved mastery of specific skills, knowledge and competencies during their academic career.**

*Because...* We believe that all school-based activities, especially teaching, must ultimately be aligned with and prioritize student learning goals.

**Students and teachers are encouraged to take academic risks and challenge themselves appropriately in classrooms that promote teamwork, innovation, resilience and growth mindset.**

*Because...* We value failure as an integral part of growth and the learning process.

**Student learning is highly interdisciplinary, inclusive, team-based and connected to solving real-world problems, fostering individuals who are culturally sensitive, aware of global interdependence, and act confidently with understanding of their impact on the world.**

*Because...* We believe that by fostering cultural competence, social responsibility, and global awareness, we can help our students to become compassionate leaders who are committed to creating a better future for themselves and for others. We believe that the success of our graduates is dependent upon their ability to embrace and thoughtfully act within our world that is racially, culturally, economically and environmentally diverse.

**Research-based, best instructional practices are learner-centered, where curricula and programs are differentiated, based on student needs, and students have multiple means to demonstrate learning.**

*Because...* We believe that when teaching and learning is personalized to the extent that it honors each individual's unique needs, strengths, interests, and learning styles, that each student will have opportunities to achieve their potential.

**Masconomet's professional culture is one of mutual respect and learning where administrators and faculty work collaboratively to advance student outcomes.**

*Because...* We believe that by communicating and collaborating with faculty, leadership, students, families, and the community at large, we can remain agile and responsive, growing to meet the challenges of an ever-changing and dynamic world.

**Teachers and staff seek to know and value each student as an individual with unique background, life situation, and unique talents and interests.**

*Because...* We value the education of the Whole Child, developing "initiative, integrity, imagination, an inquiring mind, self-knowledge, interpersonal skills, and the ability to feel and recognize each individual's truth." We believe diversity should be valued as a critical component of teamwork and aim to ensure every student is known, supported, and challenged to reach their full potential.



# STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

Strategic Objectives are the coherent group of overarching goals and key levers for improvement that will allow Masconomet to achieve our future vision. Strategic Objectives articulate not only the “what” of the plan, but also the “why.”

Strategic Initiatives are the projects and activities that support and will achieve the Strategic Objectives. Strategic Initiatives are the “how.”

The following Strategic Objectives and Initiatives were developed from the themes that surfaced during the community interviews, data review, and surveys at the beginning of the planning process. A timeline of activities is included in the Implementation section at the end of this document, as is a list of Terminology.





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I: CURRICULUM

Leveraging our academic excellence and breadth of electives, Masconomet will advance a reorientation of curriculum design towards real-world readiness with a focus on 21st Century Competencies, including critical thinking/problem solving, communications, collaboration/teamwork, perseverance, and social and emotional learning. Student learning will be highly interdisciplinary and ALL will have access to a challenging curriculum in the least restrictive environment. We are committed to continuing our work to close achievement and opportunity gaps for students with disabilities and recognize that this important work will take not just the efforts of district staff, but also families and community.

### Strategic Initiative A: Curriculum Development and Review Process

In order to advance our curriculum, Masconomet will develop a document – *Portrait of a Learner* - that specifies the spectrum of cognitive, personal, and interpersonal competencies that each student should progress along as they are attending both Masconomet Middle and High Schools.

Once completed, this document will inform the establishment of strategies to regularly measure student progress towards mastering the skills, knowledge and competencies identified in the POL document. Finally, educators will collaborate to map out content and skills across schools, disciplines and grades, with connections for diverse and personal learning pathways. It will be the expectation that all students will be provided opportunities to master the five competencies. How each student gets there and what the outcome looks like will vary.

### Current Status

Currently every student knows that to graduate they need to complete a certain number of credits in different subjects and to complete 40 hours of community service. Every department has Massachusetts Framework and Standards. During the 2022-2023 school year, every department reviewed and updated their course descriptions listing course objectives.

### Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- Mixed groups of teachers develop district-wide competencies in which all Masconomet learners will demonstrate progress. Individual departments develop department-specific competencies. **Year 1 - 2023-24** Departments align competencies to curriculum. **Year 2 - 2024-2025**



- Department Heads lead the creation of SMART goals for each competency and a rubric for demonstrating development. Administration develops ways for students to demonstrate mastery through non-class educational experiences and work with adults associated (i.e. coaches, counselors, advisors, para professionals, others). **Year 3 - 2025-26** Assessment implementation. **Year 4 - 2026-27**
- Hire a Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL) - an executive-leadership team position to oversee, manage and monitor all curriculum programs, assessments, professional development, educator evaluation, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), and district data collection with regular updates to inform the work of the Executive Leadership Team, Department Heads, Social Emotional Learning Leadership Team, and Professional Development Advisory Team. **Year 1 - 2023-24**

### Director of Teaching and Learning - Roles & Responsibilities





## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE II: INSTRUCTION

All educators will work collaboratively and utilize instructional best practices and research to support curriculum objectives (including *Portrait of a Learner* objectives), meet individual student learning goals, and continually enhance overall teaching and learning development. Over the next five years, Masconomet will better partner with its faculty for continuous professional mastery, engagement and support.

### Strategic Initiative B: Meeting the Needs of All Learners

We recognize that not all student groups experience the same level of success and achievement. Based on our review of district data, our students with disabilities are underperforming on MCAS outcomes and attendance rates. Student subgroups including those who are socio-economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, or students of marginalized groups are not participating in advanced coursework at the same rate as their peers.

We are committed to closing achievement and opportunity gaps for all students in a financially sustainable manner; ensuring the students identified as high needs students are taught by the same highly qualified professionals as their peers, utilizing research-based strategies that demonstrate meaningful impact and improvement. This may require rethinking and revisiting inclusion practices, policies and/or barriers to allow access to advanced coursework, and providing in-district services to reduce costs on out-of-district placements.

### Current Status

Over the last few years, the Masconomet Regional School District has begun to adopt and deepen strategies that focus on meeting the needs of our students with disabilities. Beginning four years ago, the District invested in Professional Development and brought in a consultant to train 10 teacher partners to participate in the Co-Teaching Model. Over the past 3 years, Masconomet Regional Middle School (MRMS) has increased the number of co teaching classrooms. Last year 17 and 11 sections were co-taught at the high school and middle school, respectively. At the same time, the content for co-taught classes has expanded from English and Math, to include Science and History at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels.

### Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- Masconomet's Special Education team will work to review and analyze data and use the information to develop programming which aligns with identified student needs. This includes reviewing IEPs, out-of-district (OOD) placements and co-taught classrooms. **Year 2 - 2024-25.** Develop SMART Goals. **Year 3 - 2025-26.** Provide necessary PD and program implementation as a result of recommendations and data discovery. **Year 4 - 2026-27**

## Strategic Initiative C: Strengthening Professional Practice

Masconomet will utilize the Professional Learning Community Model (PLC) already in place and provide Professional Development opportunities to boost collaboration, share innovations and best practices, and enhance engagement, risk-taking and creativity in program design. The cornerstone of this effort will be focusing the operation of the PLC model at Masconomet to one that: 1) promotes a collaborative culture, 2) ensures that students learn, and 3) focuses on results and research-based practices.

Secondly, educators will have a meaningful voice in advising on Professional Development programming through PLCs and the Professional Development Advisory Team, and balance individual professional growth with district-wide objectives. Finally, all educators including leadership will be asked to report back and share progress on their pathway to mastery through efficacious educator evaluation tools.

### **Current Status**

The current model of the PLC is one where teachers of common subjects and classes meet together on a weekly basis to discuss plans, curriculum and student needs. The model occasionally includes discussing student work and data. The PLCs promote collaboration and communication by bringing teachers together. This results in horizontal alignment between teachers of the same course/grade level. Professional development is not delivered through PLCs.

Professional Development is provided through several modes. Teachers are also encouraged to develop their skills through graduate coursework, which leads to greater financial compensation as teachers progress through the columns on the Teachers Salary Table.

In 2022-2023, the adoption of a new daily schedule allowed for the inclusion of one hour per week of contracted Professional Development time. This initiative has increased Professional Development time from 16 to over 30 hours per year. Teachers work in three, ten-week sessions through the course of the school year so they may earn professional development points towards re-licensure.

In 2022-2023, all teachers participated in “Curriculum Review and Revision,” “Social-Emotional Learning” and “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” professional development sessions. Sessions that allow for more teacher choice are planned for 2023-2024. The new Professional Development offerings have recently been designed and delivered by the Administration and outside experts with the District’s Professional Development Committee providing input on content based on faculty needs.

Educator evaluation is currently seen as a compliance activity that does not necessarily add to the professional growth and development of staff members. Current Masconomet Teachers Association Contract language does not allow for frequent, short observations of teacher practice that are described in DESE’s Educator Evaluation System. This prevents building principals from having a meaningful role in enhancing teaching and learning in their buildings.

## Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- Expand the role of a PLC to be more than common planning time. Specifically focus on DuFours four questions for PLCs (What do we want all students to know and be able to do? How will we know if they learn it? How will we respond when some students do not learn? How will we extend the learning for students who are already proficient?) to refocus PLCs on improving the quality of student learning. **Year 2 - 2024-25** Explore methods employed by effective PLCs, such as lesson study, reviewing student work and professional protocols with the goal of developing a Collaborative Inquiry model. Education Commonwealth Project teacher surveys will be used as one measure of effectiveness. **Year 3 - 2025-26**
- Work with Professional Development Advisory Team, District Data Team, Department Heads and Administration to develop a 3-year process for designing professional development programs that further the Objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan and state requirements. Conduct a Professional Development Survey/Audit. **Year 3 - 2025-26**
- Begin process for establishing recommendations to the negotiations team prior to scheduled 2027-2028 contract negotiations. Build a representative team to explore how best to capture instructional quality and student progress towards mastery of identified learning goals. **Year 3 - 2026-2027**

## Strategic Initiative D: District Data Management & Collection

If regular assessments and research-based instructional practices and programs are core to school quality and improving student learning, then the collection, analysis and use of necessary data is critical to Masconomet achieving its mission. We recognize that our prime responsibility and purpose is to provide education of the highest possible quality for the children of secondary school age of the Masconomet District. We must therefore focus on the most effective and prudent uses of the tax monies expended for that purpose. Good morale and effective use of ideas and experience of the professional educators on the staff is both essential and fundamental.

Developing school-based teams where educators and leadership collaborate to incorporate data-driven decision-making as a core professional practice is our priority, but requires additional capacity-building through new leadership and professional development. Where possible free resources, such as Education Commonwealth Project and the DESE Toolkit should be used to help establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use that can inform decisions that impact teaching and learning, facility and resource management, and ultimately improve the achievement of all students.

The Education Commonwealth Project (also known as Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment) is a partnership of public school districts and their local teacher unions, joined together to create a fair and effective accountability system that offers a more dynamic picture of student learning and school quality than a single standardized test. The Education Commonwealth Project seeks to increase achievement for all students, close prevailing opportunity gaps among subgroups, and prepare a

diversity of students for college, career, and life. Their tools are free and provide almost immediate performance data.

### Current Status

The superintendent and department heads currently are responsible for all data collection and reporting out to the larger community, school committee and in-school faculty and staff. Current devices used include: MCAS, AP assessments, DESE Community profiles, Youth Risk Behavior Survey(YRBS), and educator evaluations.

We don't have any data on faculty satisfaction, progress or mastery, or evaluation systems that allow for 360 degree feedback for administration.

### Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- DTL provides training to all necessary parties in analyzing student data by subject and content. Department Heads in first year, ongoing for others. **Year 2 - 2024-25**
- Develop District Data teams with school-based representatives utilizing current data team and direction from the DESE toolkit for District Data. Establish a **dashboard** for the data team to use to analyze the data as it gets input. Input data annually **Year 3 - 2025-26**
- Audit existing research-based instructional and educational practices. DTL and Department Heads summarize and constantly provide updates to teams on best practices as needs evolve to highlight, celebrate and inspire mastery of instruction and leadership. **Year 4 - 2026-2027**
- Collaborate with Masconomet Teachers Association (MTA) to utilize Education Commonwealth Project survey devices to capture immediate assessments on school culture, teachers and leadership, resources, academic learning, and community and wellbeing. **Year 2 - 2024-25.**

## Strategic Objective III: Culture & Wellbeing

Through a culture of mutual respect and learning, Masconomet will foster a safe, trusting and joyful school culture where students and adults thrive and grow as they develop socially, emotionally, and academically. Students and adults of all cultures and identities may safely and confidently bring their whole selves to learning and to exploring, as diverse backgrounds, experiences, and thoughts promote a sense of belonging and fairness for all.

### Strategic Initiative E - Social Emotional Learning & Mental Health

Masconomet is in year three of a 5-year effort to create a comprehensive Student Mental Health System. Students will acquire skills to manage the social, emotional, and academic challenges to successfully engage in their education. By providing trauma-informed

instruction, learning environments become a place where students will develop self-awareness, resiliency, emotional regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, self-advocacy, and responsible decision making. Objectives will be fully integrated into the course of studies and aligned with District Curriculum documents.

Students who participate in evidence-based social emotional learning (SEL) programs showed

significant gains in academic achievement, improved classroom behavior, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school.

#### Current Masconomet SHAPE Scores (scale is 1.0 - 6.0)

<b>Mastery</b>	<b>None identified</b>
<b>Progressing</b>	<b>3.3 Teaming</b>
	<b>4.1 Early Identification and Treatment Services and Supports</b>
<b>Emerging</b>	<b>3.9 Funding / Sustainability</b>
	<b>2.3 Needs Assessment/Resource Mapping</b>
	<b>2.6 Mental Health Promotion Services and Supports</b>
	<b>2.5 Impact on Frequency of referrals, Duration and Intensity of Services</b>
	<b>2.8 District Implementation Support Quality</b>
	<b>1.0 Impact District-Level Documenting and Reporting</b>
<b>Other Performance Domains</b>	<b>20% of Student Body Screening</b>

#### Current Status

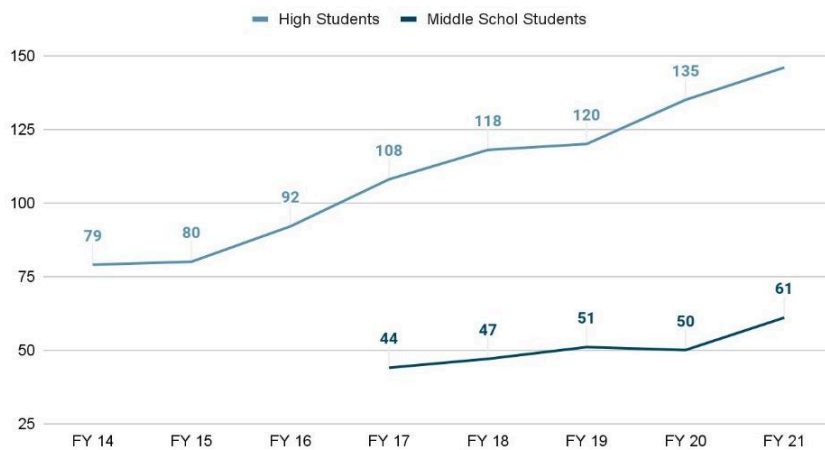
The Social Emotional Learning Leadership Team (SELLT) was created to oversee the implementation of the plan to implement a comprehensive student mental health system. Through their leadership, interventions have been implemented at the Tier 1 (Least restrictive) through Tier 3 (Most restrictive) levels.

At the Tier 1 Level, Masconomet has enhanced its preventative services, including school counseling, and nursing staffing. Additionally, the District has instituted the Signs of Suicide, and Screening, Brief, Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) programs at the Middle and High Schools. The District has implemented Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) Training for faculty at both schools. The High School Student Support Team (HSST), and Middle School Student Support Team (MSST), also meet regularly to review individual student cases.

At the Tier 2 level, the District has implemented an Academic Success Center (ASC) to assist students who are transitioning back into school. Positions in the ASC are currently funded through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Federal Grant and will need to be added to the District budget if the program is to continue.

At Tier 3 level, the District is providing intensive individual interventions for identified students through Student Support Centers (SSC) and the eligibility process for special education.

Total Students Who Received Services in the SSC



Student Support Centers (SSC) -

Recognizing the growing need for support for adolescents with mental health needs, we have committed to focusing on the social emotional needs of our students. In response to the growing number of students suffering from anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions, Masconomet has built and expanded upon two Student Support Centers, one at the middle school and one at the high school. Our middle school SSC is staffed with two school adjustment counselors, and one academic teacher. Our high school SSC is staffed with three school adjustment counselors, and one paraprofessional.

Many of our students suffering with mental health issues experience difficulty attending individual classes, overall attendance, and completing the full school day. The SSCs provide opportunities for students to establish goals and strategies to decrease the emotional barriers to their full engagement in the classroom. An example of supports include: brief counseling sessions, skill development in the area of anxiety management, class avoidance and attendance. The SSC provides an opportunity for students to identify additional paths with work completion, increases their self advocating skills and collaboration with teachers.

Through the development of the *Comprehensive Mental Health System*, and increased staffing with highly qualified mental health practitioners, we have expanded the capacity

to serve more students via counseling, developed Cognitive Behavioral Intervention groups, and articulated the mental health response to student crisis.

This increase helps lessen the burden of waiting for community-based mental health services that have an average 3-4 month wait list. Additionally, through initial reporting from Learnwell (education service provider for inpatient school aged students), Masconomet has decreased the number of students requiring education programming during hospitalization, reduced the number of hospitalizations, and shortened the duration in stays. As a result, students are returning to learning more quickly often through the SSC for a patient and thoughtful process.

The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) System is utilized for measuring progress in school mental health programming. SHAPE is the portal by which comprehensive school mental health systems can access the census and performance measures, as well as obtain customized school and district level progress reports and useful resources to improve system quality and sustainability.

### **Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline**

- **Tier 1** - Continue to provide General Preventative services to Masconomet students. Implement universal mental health screening **Year 1 - 2023-24**. PD for faculty and staff. 100% staff trained by **Year 3 - 2025-2026**. **Tier 2** - Enhance short term small group support to provide increased targeted instruction in the area of psychological health. **Year 2 - 2024-25**. Fully implement Student Support Centers to provide intensive treatment services for students in crisis and targeted Cognitive Behavioral Therapy groups.
- Continue work with Tri-Town Council on Risk Behavior Survey and collecting and understanding data and trends in youth mental health, wellbeing, sense of safety, and harmful behaviors such as substance use. Use YRBS data to view patterns of mental health over time particularly before and after the plan is fully implemented- **ONGOING**
- Utilize SHAPE Assessment and maintain self assessment on implementation of the Comprehensive Mental Health System and use data to view patterns of mental health over time particularly before and after the plan was fully implemented. **Year 3 - 2025-2026**





## Strategic Objective IV: Community

Masconomet will support the development of a community that champions the District in realizing its mission through communications, engagement, and partnership. Decision making will be data-driven and all parties will be provided with meaningful opportunities for feedback and consistent updates on progress towards outcomes. The Masconomet facilities will be maintained to provide a safe space with appropriate spaces to promote learning objectives.

### Strategic Initiative F: Community & Advisories

Masconomet strives to fuel opportunities to enhance school spirit and engagement among all students, teachers and district leaders, to create a sense of belonging and a unified community, and to celebrate student and faculty differences, and unique interests and talents. Staff are encouraged to participate in all school spirit activities.

Masconomet will explore instituting a Student/Teacher Advisory Program to ensure all students are known and valued, regularly checked-in with by an adult in the building, and have access to resources that support their general wellbeing. Students will acquire goals in multiple domains including Social Emotional Learning and academics while creating a safe space among a consistent group of staff and students.

Faculty and school leaders will consider extending the current new teacher induction to create ongoing support for more experienced teachers. Continuing our mentoring program through multiple years will allow new teachers to be supported by other staff members as well as creating relationships that they can rely on throughout their time at Masconomet.

### Current Status

Students at Masconomet are highly engaged in clubs and extracurricular activities including athletics, performing arts, band/chorus, and peer leading/tutoring. Additionally, progress is being made in the student-led initiatives. Each year there are a number of new proposals for activities that are vetted through the administration, for example this year Masconomet High School has started a Portuguese Club and Peer Tutoring. In addition, the display board outside of the school library is continuously changing to celebrate our students' different cultures.

Some students are reaching out and developing connections with adults during the M Block, and many are developing meaningful connections made in sports, clubs, and Excels. Extra help 2x/week allows additional opportunities for students to interact on a more personal level with staff.

Staff collaboration opportunities are more limited. Beyond the new teacher induction program and PLCs, faculty members have limited opportunities or time to partner

with others beyond their departments. Masconomet does offer extensive Professional Development opportunities and encourages the staff to go observe others in the building by providing coverage to do so. Administration is starting a staff “*Tell me something good*” document so staff can celebrate each other's accomplishments inside and outside the classroom.

New hires for the first year of teaching are assigned a veteran teacher. This involves observations, coaching, and discussions on best practices. PLC time allows grade-level, subject area teachers to meet with each other. In the Middle School, team meetings allow teachers in different subject areas to meet. A District Culture and Camaraderie committee has formed, but struggles to find time when teachers can connect in informal, social ways. Leadership outside the building also is limited in the time and opportunities to partner with faculty on teaching, learning and issues of culture.

### Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- Principals work together with faculty to determine strategies for enhancing school spirit among students and staff. **Year 1 - 2023-24.** Use Education Commonwealth Project surveys to monitor the number of students/teachers becoming involved or starting new initiatives, feeling unsafe or bullied in the building, or finding a community of friends. Surveys will also inform the percentage of students in both schools who feel they have a connection with a trusted adult in the buildings as measured by the Education Commonwealth Project. **Year 2 - 2024-2025**
- Explore the development and potential design of a formal teacher/student advisory program. Engage in conversation with the SELLT around how to deliver SEL curriculum and how assessments may incorporate Faculty Advisor reporting. Draft advisory program/s for MS/HS (possibly different) with input from all stakeholders. **Year 3 - 2025-26**
- Examine what the current Mentorship Program is already accomplishing. Consider expanding the program past first year teachers with recommendations for a plan of action with ongoing monitoring to ensure this is a meaningful value add for both parties. **Year 4 - 2026-27**

### Strategic Initiative G: Facilities Management

The primary objective of this initiative is to address the necessary repairs, upgrades, and equipment needed to improve the overall physical condition of our buildings and grounds, enhance the student, staff and community experience while on campus, and extend the useful life of our facilities. Identify the needs of the major systems in the building, such as building envelope, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, safety and security elements and other systems that are necessary for the facility to operate. A comprehensive educational facilities plan will also help inform school designs that are responsive to current teaching and learning practices, while providing flexibility to accommodate future changes in learning environments and educational delivery methods during the useful life of a school facility.

## Current Status

A Five Year Capital Plan was presented to the School Committee on February 1, 2023. Planning summary included a current status of the following categories: Grounds Athletics, Grounds General, Facilities General, Facilities Roof & HVAC, IT, Audio, Visual & Communications – Equipment, WasteWater Treatment Facility (WWTF), and Food Services. Additional areas still to be evaluated include: interior and exterior painting, replacement of stairway risers & treads, replacement of window shades & blinds in classrooms, offices, etc., replacement of bathroom partitions, and replacement of exterior doors, hardware, and frames.

The Capital Plan was further refined to identify a list of items that are considered to be in critical need of repair/replacement. This Critical Needs list prioritized addressing the replacement/upgrade of the building's boilers, building environmental control systems (BMS), rooftop units and other HVAC elements as well as replacing the building's roof. The Critical Needs Summary is available.<sup>2</sup>

A full copy of the approved Capital Plan is available.<sup>3</sup>

## Activities, Benchmarks and Timeline

- Seek funding for Owner's Project Manager and Design and Engineering Study to replace building roof, BMS, and HVAC systems, including rooftop units and boilers at Annual Town Meetings in May of 2024. Review other Capital Plan items and establish priorities regarding sequencing of projects for all other items. **Year 1 - 2023-24** Engage OPM and select designer for BMS/HVAC/roof project. Continue to update and refine the Capital Project list with information on additional areas for evaluation. **Year 2 - 2024-25** Complete design work on BMS/HVAC/roof project and seek funding for construction at Town Meetings. Begin BMS/HVAC/roof construction in early 2026. Seek funding for other Capital Items, including Education Facilities Plan at Annual Town Meeting in May of 2026. **Year 3 - 2025-26**
- The District will engage in an educational facilities design and planning process towards the end of the 5-year timeline. However, insights about education facilities may be used to inform any significant capital improvements beforehand. Once developed, the comprehensive educational program outlined in *Portrait of a Learner* will inform school designs to be responsive to current teaching and learning practices. Masconomet will prepare educational program reports to best utilize local and state funding for school design improvements, including MSBA resources and external design professionals. **Year 2 - 2024-25**

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<sup>2</sup><https://www.masconomet.org/cms/lib/MA01907648/Centricity/Domain/25/CapitalPlanCriticalNeedsSummary030123.pdf>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.masconomet.org/cms/lib/MA01907648/Centricity/Domain/25/Capital%20Plan%20Presentation%20020123.pdf>



## INITIATIVE IMPLEMENTATION

### Communications

Each Objective and Initiative requires the collective good work of many members of the Masconomet Community, administration and faculty and staff, and also demands time focused on regular and timely communications to all interested parties. This dual responsibility can be overwhelming especially for new leaders.

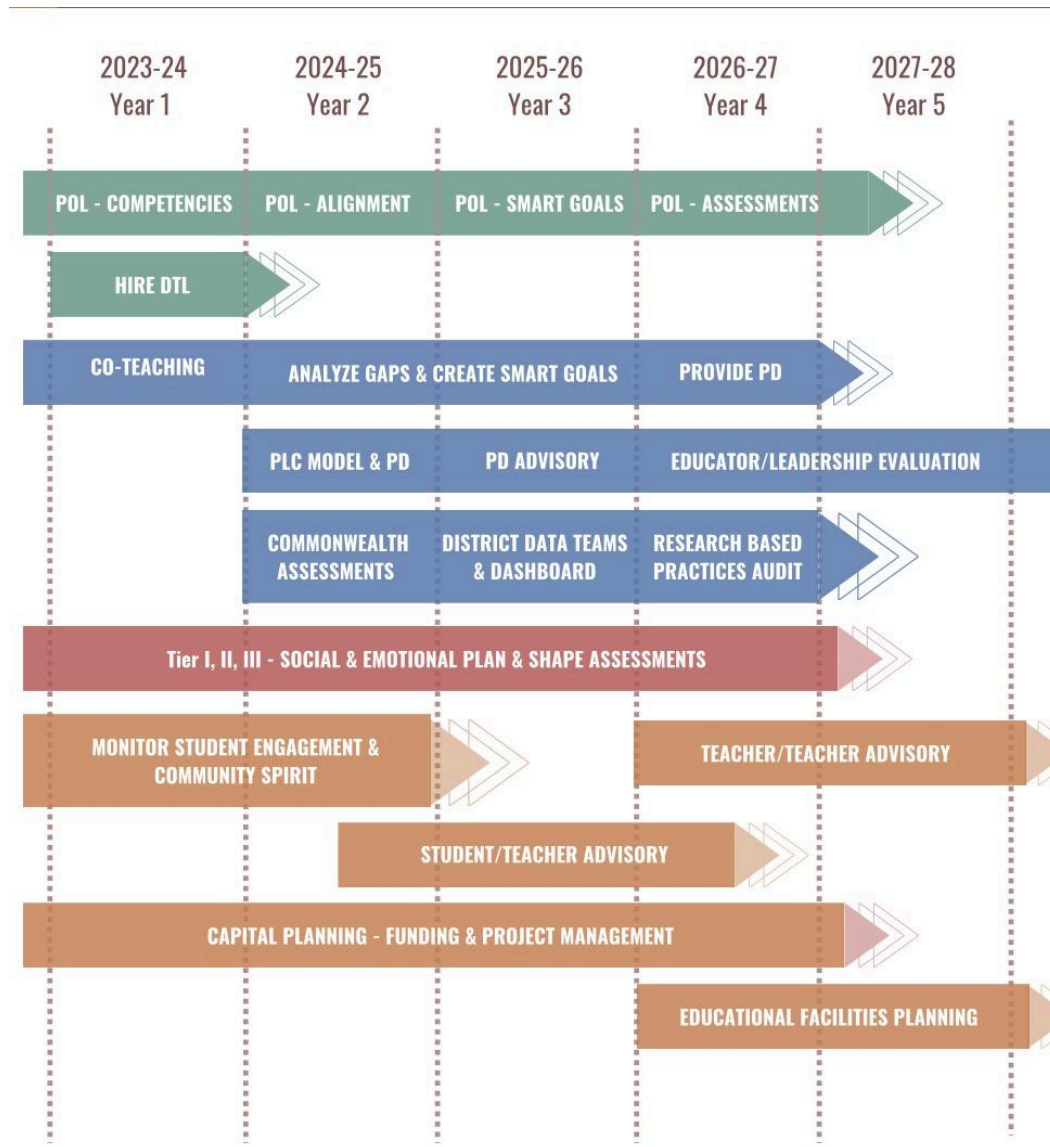
In order to successfully meet the progress benchmarks first, an assigned member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will be tasked with crafting a communications plan for each of the seven (7) Strategic Initiatives. The Superintendent will serve as the point of contact for all general strategic planning questions, concerns, and presentations.

- A - **Portrait of a Learner** - Superintendent to New Director of Teaching and Learning
- B - **Meeting the Needs of Learners** - Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, Director of Teaching and Learning
- C - **Strengthen PLCs and Professional Practice** - Superintendent to New Director of Teaching and Learning, Department Heads
- D - **District Data Collection & Management** - Superintendent, Department Heads
- E - **SEL and Mental Health** - Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
- F - **Community & Advisories** - Building Principals
- G - **Facilities** - Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

Hire a new Director of Communications or outside consultant to provide communications and messaging training and support and coordinate the master communication activities for all initiative expectations and SMART goals.

### Initiative Timeline

The horizon for completing the Strategic Objectives and Initiatives described in the plan will be the end of the 2027-2028 school year. Many initiatives have already been started and are captured in the plan timeline. The start date of some other initiatives will be dependent on the completion of prerequisites. Ultimately, the initiatives undertaken each year will be captured in the District and Schools' Annual Improvement Plans. These plans will be shared with the Masconomet Community at the beginning of each school year and will inform annual educator evaluation goals. Progress towards completing Strategic Initiatives will be monitored throughout the school year by members of the leadership team and will be reported to the community in a timely manner.



## Working With Our Community Partners

Masconomet is fortunate to benefit from the generous support of the Towns of Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield. The District also works closely with its elementary counterpart, the Tri-Town School Union. Finally, Masconomet enjoys the support of community and school-based organizations, such as Tri-Town Council (TTC), Parents Activities Committee (PAC), Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC), and Masconomet Education Foundation (MEF). An Umbrella Group, linking Masconomet with all tri-town support organizations, meets regularly to increase engagement and awareness and prevent redundancy in programs.

TTC is a vital partner with Masconomet on supporting youth mental health, voice, safety and wellbeing and collecting and understanding data and trends. Together with Masconomet they create, collect and analyze the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and embed youth programs at the middle and

high schools, such as YAAB (Youth Action Advisory Board) club, youth mentoring, PhotoVoice youth group, 7th-grade Welcome, Tag-It Tuesdays (lunch-time questions based on the 40 Developmental Assets), the All-Night Grad Party, and winter Open Gym nights. TTC also provides numerous opportunities for youth to volunteer for community service--a valuable asset for their engagement, sense of purpose, and wellbeing. Students in the District also benefit from TTC's work with families and community members through speakers, workshops and training programs - Youth Mental Health First Aid, the *Digital Well-being Playbook*, *Hidden In Plain Sight*, and the *Chasing Childhood* documentary are just a few.

We see our Tri-Town Council and parent associations as key to creating a culture of mutual learning and respect. Where possible, Masconomet will seek out their guidance and programs to improve dialogue and engagement with the larger Masconomet Community. (For example TTC's work on "calling people in vs. calling people out").

Before the end of this year, we will leverage these partnerships and align the Strategic Initiatives and overarching Strategic Objectives with their programming. This will include developing and implementing a schedule of regular communications and meetings, and coordinating to schedule a joint presentation of the Strategic Plan to their members. We strive to ensure a continuum of K-12 learning and to collaborate on constituent communications and engagement.

## Terminology

Term	Definition
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Competencies	21st century skills refer to the knowledge, life skills, career skills, habits, and traits that are critically important to student success in today's world, particularly as students move on to college, the workforce, and adult life.
40 Developmental Assets	The 40 Developmental Assets Framework asks the question, "What skills, experiences, relationships, values and behaviors do youth need in their lives in order to THRIVE?"
CPI	Crisis Prevention Institute - Nonviolent Crisis Prevention & Intervention Training (CPI) focuses on prevention and equips individuals with proven strategies for safely diffusing anxious, hostile, or violent behavior at the earliest possible stage.
Culture of Mutual Learning and Respect	John D'Auria - A mutual learning approach requires an individual to look inward rather than outward to own part of the problem. (vs A Culture of Blame)
DECA	Distributed Leadership Club. Functions like a future business leaders club with local, state and national competitions. Students have really responded well to this club. The Masconomet Chapter currently has more than 100 members.
Education Commonwealth Project	The Education Commonwealth Project (also known as The Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment) works to challenge and expand the way student learning and school quality are assessed, advancing an approach to measurement and accountability that is valid, democratic, and equitable.
Equity	The term equity refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.
ESSER	Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. Federal Grant program for COVID recovery programming.

Excels	Excels are after school clubs at the middle school. They are run by teachers.
HSST	High School Student Support Team
Inclusive	Inclusive education means neurotypical and neurodiverse students learning side by side in the same classroom and participating in all educational opportunities together with equal access.
Least-restrictive Environment	Least restrictive environment, or LRE, means a child who gets special education should learn alongside general education peers as much as possible.
MSSST	Middle School Student Support Team
MTA	Masconomet Teachers Association
Neurodiversity	A word used to explain the unique ways people's brains work. While everyone's brain develops similarly, no two brains function just alike. Being neurodivergent means having a brain that works differently from the average or “neurotypical” person.
Problem of Practice	A problem of practice is an area that a school or school district identifies that focuses on the instructional core, is directly observable, is actionable, and connects to a broader strategy of improvement.
Professional Learning Community (PLC)	A professional learning community, or PLC, is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. The term is also applied to schools or teaching faculties that use small-group collaboration as a form of <a href="#">professional development</a> .
SBIRT	Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
SELLT	Social Emotional Learning Leadership Team - Members include: Lynne Bennett, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Katie DiNardo, Principal MRHS Brad Denton, Assistant Director of Special Education



Irene Duros, Director of Counseling & Health Services  
 Kristin Duffy, Lead School Adjustment Counselor  
 Alexis Kostas, Lead School Adjustment Counselor  
 Phil McManus, Principal MRMS  
 Sandra Moynihan, HS Nurse  
 Alyssa Schatzel, Assistant Principal MRHS

SMART goals Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely goals

Special Education Special education is the practice of educating students in a way that accommodates their individual differences, disabilities, and special needs. This involves the individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, and accessible settings

Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is largely based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, which monitors six categories of health-related behaviors which includes mental health, sexual behaviors, alcohol and drug use, tobacco use, dietary behaviors, and physical activity. It is administered biennially at Masconomet MS and HS by Tri-Town Council, in conjunction with the School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) and Masconomet staff. The anonymous and self-reported results of YRBS are utilized by community leaders, school district leaders and community agencies to plan and evaluate their policies and programming while developing and enhancing effective ways to support young people.