



# David Mindess School

## School Improvement Plan 2021/2022



### District Vision

The Ashland Public Schools is a forward thinking district that cultivates the academic and social-emotional growth of each student through a supportive, collaborative, innovative and challenging environment. Students will develop into self-motivated, resilient, life-long learners, who embrace their role as responsible contributors to a global community.

### Improvement Priorities

The four improvement priorities that guide our work at the district and school level:

**IP CW: Cultivate Well-Being of All:** We will ensure student, faculty, and staff well-being by teaching strategies, skills, and competencies necessary to maintain and support social-emotional health.

**IP PA: Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student.

**IP ES: Engage Students, Families and Community as Partners in Learning:** We will continuously model a district environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with students, caregivers, community members, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions.

**IP CE: Champion Educator Excellence:** We will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified, passionate educators who are committed to the vision of the Ashland Public Schools.

### David Mindess Elementary School Goals

The following school goals aim to further and support the district improvement priorities through focused work that accounts for the strengths and needs of the individual school community:

Goal 1	By June of 2022, all students identified with social-emotional concerns will have a plan that has been implemented to support their needs.	IP: CW, PA
Goal 2	By June, 2023, Mindess will develop a unified, progressive, student-centered, rigorous, relationship rich vision and school learning model.	IP: CW, PA, ES
Goal 3	By June of 2022, Mindess will have developed additional structures to increase engagement with families whose first language is not English.	IP: CW, PA, ES, CE
Goal 4	By June 2022, all Mindess School teaching staff will effectively utilize the workshop model within their literacy instructional block.	IP: PA, CE

**Goal #1: By June of 2022, all students identified with social-emotional concerns will have a plan that has been implemented to support their needs.**

**District Alignment:**

**Cultivate Well-Being of All:** We will ensure student, faculty, and staff well-being by teaching strategies, skills, and competencies necessary to maintain and support social-emotional health.

**Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student.

**Stage:**

- ✓ Planning
- In Progress

Start Date: (Sep. 2021)  
End Date: (June 2022)

**Action Items:**

- By October 15, 2021: All students will be surveyed regarding their social-emotional health using the [Devereux Student Strengths Assessment- Mini \(DSSA-Mini\)](#) and their connections to at least one adult in school.
- By October 31, 2021: Based on specific criteria identified by the DSSA-Mini, targeted students will be further assessed using the full Devereux Student Strengths Assessment. Intervention plans will be developed for students based upon the deficit skill(s) identified.
- By October 31, 2021: The clinical team will identify students who are struggling with making an adult connection, and create a plan for each student to identify a trusted adult.
- By end of January of 2022: Facilitate mid-year assessment to progress monitor student SEL competencies and to identify students who are still struggling with identifying a trusted adult.
- Ongoing: The clinical team will have weekly meetings to discuss the progress of students on plans.
- By June, 2022: Facilitate end of year assessment to progress monitor student SEL competencies and plan for summer and Fall 2022 interventions.

**Indicators of Success:**

1. By June of 2022, all students who were targeted after the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment- Mini (DSSA-Mini) will show growth in the target skill area(s).
2. By June of 2022, all students will be able to name a trusted adult.

**Narrative:**

This goal was developed in accordance with the District's commitment to social emotional health. Our clinical team through the leadership of our school counselors and our Director of Counseling & Social-Emotional Learning continue to explore ways to measure student wellbeing and support at risk students.

**Goal #2: By June, 2023, Mindess will develop a unified, progressive, student-centered, rigorous, relationship rich vision and school learning model.**

**District Alignment:**

**Cultivate Well-Being of All:** We will ensure student, faculty, and staff well-being by teaching strategies, skills, and competencies necessary to maintain and support social-emotional health.

**Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student.

**Engage Students, Families and Community as Partners in Learning:** We will continuously model a district environment based on collaboration, respect, and open lines of communication through partnerships with students, caregivers, community members, businesses, community-based organizations, and educational institutions.

Stage:

- ✓ Planning
- In Progress

Start Date: (Sep. 2019)  
End Date: (June 2023)

Action Items:

- By October 1, 2021: Initiate an advisory committee that is representative of all Mindess teams and stakeholders to review school wide programming.
- Throughout 2021-2022: Engage advisory committee in on-going learning and exploration of most current and evidence based intermediate elementary school models of learning.
- Throughout 2021-2022: Provide discussion opportunities among advisory committee members and their respective grade level/collaborative teams.
- By October 31, 2021, schedule and plan three school-wide, multi-grade project days.
- By June 2022: The committee will make recommendations to administration regarding exploratory pilots to engage in during the 2022-2023 school year. Such recommendations may include schedule changes, the creation of student mentoring opportunities, and/or an advisory program.

Indicators of Success:

1. The submission of recommendations by the committee for Mindess to pilots to take place during the 2022-2023 school year.
2. In May/June 2022 a brief satisfaction survey of all stakeholders regarding the school-wide multi-grade project days to determine successes and weaknesses of these events.
3. Outcomes of the pilots will be reviewed in May/June 2023 in preparation of the new Mindess School opening in fall of 2023.

Narrative:

The David Mindess School is in the midst of changes that will shape its educational experience going forward. As Mindess strives to provide greater equity in its educational programming, it also readies itself for a building that will have the physical design to better support that goal. This goal continues the work begun with the Mindess Program review and the school building project.

**Goal #3: By June of 2022, Mindess will have developed additional structures to increase engagement with families whose first language is not English.**

**District Alignment:**

**Cultivate Well-Being of All:** We will ensure student, faculty, and staff well-being by teaching strategies, skills, and competencies necessary to maintain and support social-emotional health.

**Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student.

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**IP CE: Champion Educator Excellence:** We will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified, passionate educators who are committed to the vision of the Ashland Public Schools.

Stage:

- Planning
- ✓ In Progress

Start Date: (Sep. 2021)  
End Date: (June 2022)

Action Items:

- By the end of September, 2021: Creation of a reference document for families whose first language is not English.
- By October 1, 2021: Update iPass to ensure most current knowledge of families' home languages.
- By October 31, 2021: Host an open house for families whose first language is not English.
- By December 15, 2021: Assess several communication tools to determine which are the most effective in communicating with families.
- By October 31, 2021: Survey families whose primary language is not English to gain a better understanding of their needs.
- On-going: Attend diversity employment fairs and join diversity in education networks to enhance representation in our faculty and staff.
- On-going: Review student attendance history monthly with a lens on school attendance rates of students from families whose primary language is not English.
- Spring, 2022: Conduct a gap analysis on the 2020-2021 attendance.

Indicators of Success:

1. Reference document created and distributed.
2. iPass continually updated throughout the school year.
3. By June 1, 2022, families will be surveyed to determine if needs were met and suggested improvements for moving forward.

Narrative:

Educating our students in the midst of a pandemic has provided greater insight into the many challenges faced by our families whose first language is not English. The intent of this goal is to better serve these families and their students with tools that ultimately increases the equity of their educational experience.

**Goal #4: By June 2022, all Mindess School teaching staff will effectively utilize the workshop model within their literacy instructional block.**

**District Alignment:**

**Promote Academic Excellence:** We will improve achievement for all students by providing individualized, equitable, and challenging opportunities in an environment that fosters growth and skill acquisition for each student.

**IP CE: Champion Educator Excellence:** We will attract, develop, and retain highly qualified, passionate educators who are committed to the vision of the Ashland Public Schools.

Stage:

- Planning
- ✓ In Progress

Start Date: (Sep. 2019)

End Date: (June 2022)

Action Items:

- On-going: Continued professional development, modeling, and collaboration work with Clare Landrigan.
- Beginning September, 2021: Scheduled common planning time to meet in teams to collaborate and reflect on best practice.
- By September 1, 2021: Leverage the support of newly hired K-5 Literacy Coach for ongoing professional development and implementation of the Units of Study in both Reading and Writing.

Indicators of Success:

1. By June 1, 2022, rollout of the Lucy Calkins Units of Study with our consultant will be completed.
2. K-5 Literacy Coach hired.
3. Survey of teachers regarding the common planning time shows its effectiveness.
4. By June 1st of 2022: 100% of all staff who teach literacy will have implemented mini lessons and small group conferencing into their weekly instruction.
5. By June 2022, grades 4 & 5 will have completed one full year of their Units of Study curriculum.

Narrative:

Mindess continues its work in the implementation of the K-5 literacy initiative.

## Accomplishments

The following are goals which have been met successfully during the previous 3 years.

Goal	District Alignment	Date Completed
Implementation of Responsive Classroom	DSO #1, #2, #3	June 2020
Integrated opportunities between students and staff members in the single-graded program and multi-graded program at the Mindess school will increase for social and academic purposes.	DSO #1, #2, #3	Ongoing
EnVisions Math Implementation	DSO #1	June 2016
RTI Process	DSO #1, #2	June 2016
Library Science Integration	DSO #1, #2	June 2016

## Glossary of Terms

**Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (Mini):** Screens students and provides one score, the Social-Emotional Total, which summarizes a student's overall social-emotional competence.

**Devereux Student Strengths Assessment:** Measures eight key social-emotional competencies identified in the research literature as essential to a child's success in school and life.

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### Social-emotional Competencies and Descriptors

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- **Self-awareness:** A child's realistic understanding of his/her strengths and limitations, and consistent desire for self-improvement.
- **Social awareness:** A child's capacity to interact with others in ways that show respect, tolerance, and cooperation.
- **Self-management:** A child's success in controlling his/her emotions and behaviors, especially in new and challenging situations.
- **Relationship skills:** A child's skill at promoting and maintaining positive connections with others.
- **Goal-directed behavior:** A child's initiation of, and persistence in completing, difficult tasks.
- **Personal responsibility:** A child's tendency to be careful and reliable in his/her actions and to contribute to group efforts.
- **Decision making:** A child's approach to problem-solving, learning from experience, using values to guide behavior and accepting responsibility
- **Optimistic thinking:** A child's attitude of confidence, hopefulness, and positive thinking.

**ELL:** English Language Learner

**Mindess Clinical Team:** Principal, Assistant Principal, School Psychologists, School Counselors

**Responsive Classroom:** An evidence-based approach to teaching and discipline that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective management and developmental awareness.

**Units of Study:** Lucy Calkins ELA program is implemented within K-5 schools. It is a workshop model that focuses on units to study to teaching reading and writing.

**Literacy Coach:** An expert in literacy education and in training teachers to implement programs and instructional practices to best support students. A coach uses knowledge and skills to create plans, inspire, lead, and educate teachers in how to most effectively help their students.

### David Mindess Elementary School

90 Concord St.

Ashland, MA 01721

Site Council Members

2020/2021

Claudia M. Bennett: Principal

Kiera Garretson: Teacher

Meghan McGuire: Counselor

Gabby Abrams: Parent

Lynnel Bienkowski: Parent

Shamala Reddy: Parent

Lauren Perry: Teacher

Barbara Girardi: Teacher

**Ex Officio Member:** Todd Kittelson: Assistant Principal