

**Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School  
Palmer Massachusetts**

**School Improvement Plan  
June 2008**

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## **School Improvement Planning Committee**

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School Improvement Council

### **Core Beliefs**

The School Improvement Planning Committee resolved to provide a dynamic and rigorous curriculum for Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School. Guiding principals or core beliefs would characterize this strategic process. These beliefs are as follows:

- Continued understanding of external trends and mandates
- Greater use of scientific based data driven decisions
- Quality improvement through use of evaluative and assessment techniques
- Better use of organizational capacity to change and improve
- Improvement of internal and external communication

## **School Philosophy**

The Pathfinder Regional Vocational-Technical High School District is designed to offer vocational-technical training in conjunction with a sound academic program to the eight communities that comprise the district -- Belchertown, Monson, New Braintree, Palmer, Ware, Granby, Hardwick, and Warren.

The primary purpose of the Pathfinder Regional Vocational-Technical High School is to enable students to become productive and responsible members of the community. We provide our students with the knowledge and learning experiences that give them the options of securing gainful employment upon graduation, continuing formal studies at the post secondary level, or pursuing a combination of both.

Pathfinder provides diverse academic and technical programs that recognize that students are unique in learning style, potential, motivation and interests. We offer students hands-on experiences that employ current technologies in their fields to meet the employment needs of our communities and to prepare them to participate in the global economy. The common objective of all staff is to instill in our students a desire to learn and an appreciation for the learning process as well as provide opportunities for them to enhance the abilities and thinking skills that will allow them to achieve their personal, professional, and educational goals. At Pathfinder, all participants in the educational process are treated with dignity and respect at all times. The responsibility of the participants is to contribute to the best of their abilities in accomplishing mutual educational goals.

## **Statement of Objectives**

The objectives of the Pathfinder Regional Vocational-Technical High School are to:

- Ensure that all students regardless of race, physical and/or learning disability, language, culture, economic status, gender or sexual orientation are given equal opportunity in all vocational-technical and academic programs.
- Provide each student opportunities to develop his/her full potential to cope with everyday decision-making, problem solving, and communication in today's complex world.
- Maintain ongoing counseling services to provide for personal, career, substance abuse, adjustment, and vocational counseling, as well as other services necessary to the individual's immediate and developmental needs and growth.
- Provide a system of vocational-technical and academic assessment, including monitoring and evaluation of student performance, potential, and ability.

- Implement the Individual Educational Plan process as outlined in Federal Regulations of the revised IDEA and Massachusetts Comprehensive Special Education Law 603 CMR, Section 28.
- Encourage incoming students to consider various occupational areas, including non-traditional placements, and to pursue a vocation based on the individual's potential, interests, and awareness of the requirements of that occupation.
- Prepare all students to meet current state and federal academic assessment requirements and vocational-technical competencies.
- Provide related instruction in the essential theoretical background in specific occupational areas.
- Provide instruction and supervised work experiences within the school and community that enable students to develop the competence necessary to secure employment in their chosen vocational fields.
- Foster a sound work ethic by requiring students to be punctual, to attend school regularly, and to assume responsibility for gaining skills and proficiency in their vocations.
- Provide cooperative education programs as a practical application of student training and a realistic introduction to the working world.
- Offer extra curricular activities that provide students with the opportunity to develop a sense of self-worth, leadership potential, teamwork, and to exercise personal talents and interests.
- Provide an environment for all staff members and employees that fosters the development of innovative programs, participation in open communication with administration, and cooperation in developing and implementing curriculum changes in both academic and vocational areas which reflect student's needs and current technologies.
- Recruit and sustain a responsible, committed, and certified or approved teaching staff who will provide quality education to each student and who will continue their professional improvement.
- Provide for extensive outreach in area towns to describe educational opportunities that will offer an informed educational choice for students and parents.
- Elicit community support by involving local citizens on school advisory boards, encouraging use of the school facility by area residents, and coordinating programs that allow students to showcase their skills by performing appropriate community service projects.
- Offer library-media facilities and technology that support academic and technical learning.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN GOALS

### GOAL 1: STUDENT LEARNING

*We will insure all educational programming will accommodate student needs in a changing global society*

Assignment / Project	Assignment Number	Responsible	Performance Indicator	Due Date
<b>Increase Academic &amp; Vocational Performance scores</b>	1.1	Principal	Fully implement <i>Reading across curriculum</i> Fully implement <i>Math across curriculum</i> Fully implement <i>Reading in content areas</i> Fully promote <i>grade appropriate vocabulary</i> use in Math & English	S.Y. 2008-09
<b>Increase Integration of Technology into curriculum</b>	1.2	Principal	Meet or exceed Massachusetts DOE technology performance standards	June 2009
<b>Improve student job and post-secondary placement</b>	1.3	Guidance Dir/ Co-op Director	Meet or exceed local and national indicators Create and report adequate measures	Ongoing
<b>Revise curriculum to meet mandates</b>	1.4	Principal/Dept. Heads	Insure compliance with Industry and other National standards for <i>Trade certifications, Certificates of Occupational Proficiency</i> and <i>MCAS</i>	May 2009
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	1.5	Principal/Tech coordinator	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009
<b>Revise grading and attendance Policy</b>	1.6	Grading/attendance committee	Move to trimester schedule, increase passing grade to 65, institute attendance review committee	Sept 2006 <b>Completed</b>
<b>Institute career planner and student achievement portfolio</b>	1.7	Guidance Director/ Admin team	Continue implementation of career planner and subsequent student portfolio for Certificate of Occupational Proficiency	Ongoing
<b>Begin preparation for science course adjustments to meet 2007 MCAS requirements</b>	1.8	Principal/Science Dept. Head	Revise course and sequence of Biology courses and institute Science and Technology course for grade 10 class of 2010.	Sept 2007 <b>Completed</b>

**GOAL 2: SCHOOL CLIMATE**

*We will foster a school climate which encompasses the total well-being of the Pathfinder Community*

<b>Assignment / Project</b>	<b>Assignment Number</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>Assess current climate and beliefs</b>	2.1	School Council	Devise and distribute School and Community Assessment Survey	May 2007 <b>Completed</b>
<b>Promote Professionalism</b>	2.2	Administrative team	Theme school year for “Respect and responsibility”	Ongoing
<b>Promote a climate that supports equity, diversity, and collaborative behaviors</b>	2.3	Principal/AsstPrincipal /Director Of Guidance	“Characters Counts” program	Ongoing
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	2.4	Principal/Dept. Heads	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009
<b>Finalize addition of 8<sup>th</sup> town to Pathfinder district (Warren)</b>	2.5	Superintendent/ Principal/Guid. Dir.	Presentations to local finance committees, school committees, and other local authorities to finalize endorsement	June 2006 <b>Completed</b>

### GOAL 3: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

*We will develop and implement an ongoing program to train teachers in the use of relevant teaching methods and resources*

<b>Assignment / Project</b>	<b>Assignment Number</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>Create a team for staff development</b>	3.1	Principal	Cross section representation	Dec. 2009
<b>Create mandated plan</b>	3.2	Staff dev. Team	Create a completed plan subject to regular review	Jan. 2010
<b>Institutionalize development and training process</b>	3.3	Principal/team	Implement the staff development plan	Sept 2010
<b>Design evaluations and measures for training process</b>	3.4	Principal/team	Assess if plan is meeting stated benchmarks, mandates and goals	Aug. 2010
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	3.5	Principal/team	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009

**GOAL 4: TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION**

*We will provide and maintain a program to integrate technology into all new and existing curricula and support services*

Assignment / Project	Assignment Number	Responsible	Performance Indicator	Due Date
<b>Achieve MA DOE benchmarks by end of school year 2006 - 2007</b>	4.1	Technology Coordinator	Annual report by technology coordinator	July 2007 <b>Completed</b>
<b>Local Technology Plan guided by MA StaR Chart (School Technology &amp; Readiness)</b>	4.2	Technology Coordinator	Annual review of Technology Plan	Ongoing
<b>Staff skill levels base-lined via completion of Technology Self-Assessment Tool</b>	4.3	Technology Coordinator	Survey completion rate	May 2008 <b>Remove</b>
<b>Electronic data warehouse created and implemented to facilitate data mining</b>	4.4	Technology Coordinator	Development and implementation of PathfinderTechlink	S.Y. 2009
<b>Budget allocation for technology linked to MA StaR Chart benchmarks</b>	4.5	Technology Coordinator	Annual figure determined after budget hearings with FinCom and School Committee	Ongoing

**GOAL 5: DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY**

*We will develop and implement a long-range plan to meet or exceed standards for District accountability*

Assignment / Project	Assignment Number	Responsible	Performance Indicator	Due Date
<b>Educational Quality &amp; Accountability Report</b>	5.1	Principal	Gather data, revise and update consistent with Tier II Documentation Checklist	Oct. 2007 <b>Completed</b>
<b>School Committee Policy Manual</b>	5.2	Superintendent	Revise manual to include 100% update	May 2009
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	5.3	Principal/Tech coordinator	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009

**GOAL 6: FACILITIES**

*We will develop and implement a building plan to improve facilities and to sustain an environment conducive for student learning*

Assignment / Project	Assignment Number	Responsible	Performance Indicator	Due Date
<b>Create District Safety Plan</b>	6.1	Asst. Principal/ School Resource Officer	Implement, revise, and coordinate video and security systems	Ongoing
<b>Create Preventive Maintenance Plan</b>	6.2	Director maint.	Implement process of examining impact to all building, equipment, and technical infrastructure	Ongoing
<b>Revise and implement Capital Improvement Plan</b>	6.3	Superintendent/ School committee/ School Council	Create and utilize process and plan	June 2008
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	6.4	Principal/Dir. of Maintenance	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009

**GOAL 7: PUBLIC RELATIONS / COMMUNICATIONS**

*We will develop and implement a public relations program to improve public perception, communication and involvement in our school District*

Assignment / Project	Assignment Number	Responsible	Performance Indicator	Due Date
<b>Promote effective and timely sharing of information within the Pathfinder Community</b>	7.1	Guidance Dir.	Create processes for internal sharing Create processes for external sharing	Ongoing
<b>Develop marketing strategies and plans</b>	7.2	Administrative team	Update promotional brochure and recruitment video. Continue revision of school web site	Ongoing
<b>Create and utilize data driven strategies to forecast need</b>	7.3	Administrative team	Completion of electronic data mining and warehousing system	S.Y. 2009