

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS HOLLISTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015



**FEBRUARY 2010**

**Table of Contents**

**Superintendent’s Letter..... 2**

**Strategic Planning Committee..... 3**

**Introduction ..... 4**

**Mission-Vision-Values Statements..... 5**

**Strategic Framework..... 6**

**Action Plan..... 10**

**Appendix List..... 21**

- **Appendix A – Strategic Plan Glossary..... 22**
- **Appendix B – Strategic Plan Survey..... 23**
- **Appendix C – Strategic Plan Survey Data.....28**

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



**HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**Office of the Superintendent**  
**370 Hollis Street • Holliston, Massachusetts 01746**  
**Telephone (508)429-0654 • FAX (508)429-0653**

*Bradford L. Jackson, Ed.D.*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

February 2010

To the Holliston Community:

The enclosed Strategic Plan was developed by a group of dedicated volunteers who represented many of the major entities within the Town of Holliston. Comprised of parents, teachers, administrators, Town Officials, and representatives from the Business community, the Strategic Plan Task Force met every other week from September 2009 through February 2010 developing this Plan. Moreover, a community-wide survey with over 450 responses helped assure that a Plan was developed that represented the broad needs and opinions of the whole community. This Plan was presented to the Holliston School Committee and received their approval on February 25, 2010.

The goals and objectives outlined in this Strategic Plan will serve to provide direction to your school leadership team over the next five years. It will shape school policy, focus the school budget process and provide annual goals to assure accountability. However, like the development of this Plan, the responsibility for achieving these goals does not lie solely with school personnel. The involvement and commitment of staff, parents and citizens working together to implement this Strategic Plan is an integral part of our future success. The level of excellence that the community expects for the students of Holliston will remain our main focus as we work through the Strategic Plan.

Sincerely,

Bradford L. Jackson, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

**Strategic Plan Steering Committee**

Michael Benadon, Parent (co-facilitator)  
Bradford L. Jackson, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools (co-facilitator)

Keith Buday, Business Manager  
Michael Cassidy, Fire Chief  
Tim Cornely, Assistant Superintendent  
Michael Cournoyer, Principal, Holliston High School  
Sandra Einsel, Ph.D., Director of Student Services  
Julie Elkan, Teacher  
Lisa M. Galeaz, Chairperson, Holliston School Committee  
Donald Gray, Member, Holliston School Committee  
Robert Groce, Teacher  
Susan Gillis Franco, Parent  
Paul LeBeau, Town Administrator  
Allison Lindstrom, Teacher  
Melissa Mager, Parent  
Jay Marsden, Parent  
Pam McColl, Parent  
Matthew McGuinness, President, Holliston Federation of Teachers  
Erica Plunkett, Vice-Chairperson, Holliston School Committee  
Andy Porter, Chairman, Holliston Board of Selectmen  
Peter Savas, Parent  
Heather Scaringella, Parent

## Introduction

During the 2009-2010 school year, the Holliston Public Schools Strategic Plan Steering Committee reviewed the previous strategic plans in order to revitalize the school district's philosophy and practices, which have always been, and will continue to be, centered around student learning and excellence in education.

The Steering Committee consisted of 22 members representing teachers, parents, school administrators, town officials and School Committee members from the Holliston community. The minutes of the bimonthly meetings were posted on the district's interactive web site. The Steering Committee reviewed the school district's current mission, vision, and beliefs and made only minor changes in those areas. The majority of the Committee's work centered around the development of critical issues and strategies to address those issues in seven major goal areas described later in this document. The committee developed a brief online website survey to gather community input regarding the challenges currently facing the Holliston Public Schools. Approximately 110 survey responses were collected in September 2009 from parents, teachers, school administrators, students, town officials, community members and others. The final response totals by subgroup can be found in the full analysis of the survey responses in Appendix B.

Strategic planning in education is a particularly complex and ongoing process of organizational change. In this context, planning requires an understanding of data, assumptions, and future trends. This Strategic Plan provides for substantial flexibility and continual improvement through the Action Plan format. This flexibility allows the school district to modify the critical issues and respond to emerging trends, events, challenges and opportunities, within the framework of its mission and values. Additionally, the Strategic Plan allows the District to respond to current and projected requirements of both federal and state education standards. The success of the Strategic Plan depends upon the continual and consistent review of both qualitative and quantitative data.

Holliston's Strategic Plan provides direction and accountability. Through the action planning format, committee members have identified the critical issues, strategies to address these issues, timelines, necessary resources, and the leadership staff who are primarily responsible for achieving the defined goals. The Strategic Plan is intended to share with the Holliston community the direction and efforts of the school district and its individual schools as they commit themselves to student learning.

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## MISSION

The Holliston Public Schools are committed to providing the resources and opportunities that will enable each student to develop and maximize individual potential in a positive and collaborative environment that encourages and affirms academic achievement and personal excellence.

## VISION

Our goal is to graduate confident, critical thinkers, productive and creative lifelong learners, and socially responsible, engaged citizens who are capable of adapting to change in a technologically advanced and multicultural society. We will:

- Create a challenging and desirable learning environment for students and staff
- Ensure instructional innovation
- Establish and fulfill high expectations of scholarship
- Meet all federal and state accountability measures for student achievement
- Expand educational partnerships within the community and region
- Prepare students for success in a dynamic, multi-faceted world

## BELIEFS

We Believe In:

- An emotionally and physically safe school environment
- Instruction that is responsive to student needs and learning styles
- Class sizes and resources that best support instruction and the curriculum
- Recruitment and retention of high quality teachers, administrators and support staff
- Relevant student assessments to measure individual growth, identify individual needs and inform individual instruction
- Expanded use of technology to enhance teaching and learning, and support the efficient management of district resources
- Educating the whole child by offering, among other things, a robust fine and performing arts program and a well-respected program of interscholastic athletics
- Collaboration in learning which engages family and community
- Effective interactive communication among all stakeholders
- The importance of being recognized as a community with superior schools
- Diverse extracurricular and cultural enrichment offerings available to all students
- Promotion of tolerance and respect by understanding and appreciating individual differences

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Framework

Prior to developing the strategic initiatives included in this Plan, a framework was developed that illustrates, both visually and in narrative form, nine critical areas where focus should be provided and the interrelationship among and between those various areas. The ultimate outcome that drives this Plan is the goal that *each student will achieve at their own individual, best level of performance in a physically and emotionally safe school environment*. Using this framework, this Strategic Plan will offer goals and objectives for the following nine areas:

- Guaranteed and Viable curriculum;
- Innovative, State-of-the-Art instruction;
- Common, Formative Assessments;
- Collaborative School Climate (Professional Learning Communities);
- Professional Development;
- Technology;
- Resources;
- Communication; and
- Holliston’s Expectations for Excellence.

The strategic framework that guides and drives this Strategic Plan is illustrated in Figure 1 on page 9 and described below.

### Students – Our Focus

At the center of everything the Holliston Public Schools undertakes is the student. This is a purposeful statement that reminds all stakeholders (administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, community members and/or taxpayers) that their central focus and *raison d’être* (“reason for being”) is the student. Furthermore, we view students as individuals and recognize that each and every student has their own potential, their own gifts, and their own challenges. Finally, we recognize that all students need to feel physically and emotionally safe before they can begin to learn. For this reason, we state that our central focus is on “*each student achieving at their own, individual best level of performance in a physically and emotionally safe school environment.*”

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *Teachers – Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*

Supporting the central layer is the critical work of Holliston’s teachers. Effective teachers provide rigorous and relevant content (curriculum) by delivering varied and innovative lessons (instruction) until each student is able to demonstrate (formative assessments) a deep understanding of the material. Like the legs of a three-legged stool, without all three areas working together and supporting each other, our central goal of “each student achieving at their own, individual best level of performance” will collapse.

## *School Climate – Professional Learning Communities*

Supporting the work of our teachers is a work environment (school climate) that supports, values and encourages collaboration among educators. In this instance, we are able to build on the work already begun here in Holliston to develop our schools into Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs are defined as “educators committed to working collaboratively in ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional Learning Communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators.”<sup>1</sup> In essence, in order for teachers to be successful, it is imperative that they collaborate, using data from, among other things, their common formative assessments, to adjust and improve both their curriculum and their instructional repertoire.

## *Internal and External Supports*

The next layer of our visual statement represents both the internal and external supports that schools require in order to successfully achieve the core goal of our district. First is the need to provide high-quality and timely training (Professional Development) to our staff. Effective teaching and leadership require a constant commitment on the part of both the individual and the district to remain conversant with the most up-to-date techniques and practices as scientific and educational research continues to improve our knowledge of the brain and how learning occurs. Furthermore, it is fundamental in the year 2010 and beyond that our classrooms mirror the technologically advanced society that exists outside the four walls of the school. Accordingly, our schools must be equipped with, and our teachers comfortable in the utilization of, the technology that our students use everyday outside of schools.

In terms of external support, our core focus (“*Each student achieving at their own, individual best level of performance in a physically and emotionally safe school environment*”) will not be achieved without adequate resources to support the areas outlined above. While the term “resources” does refer to the need for

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<sup>1</sup> DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., & Many, T. (2006) *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree

## HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

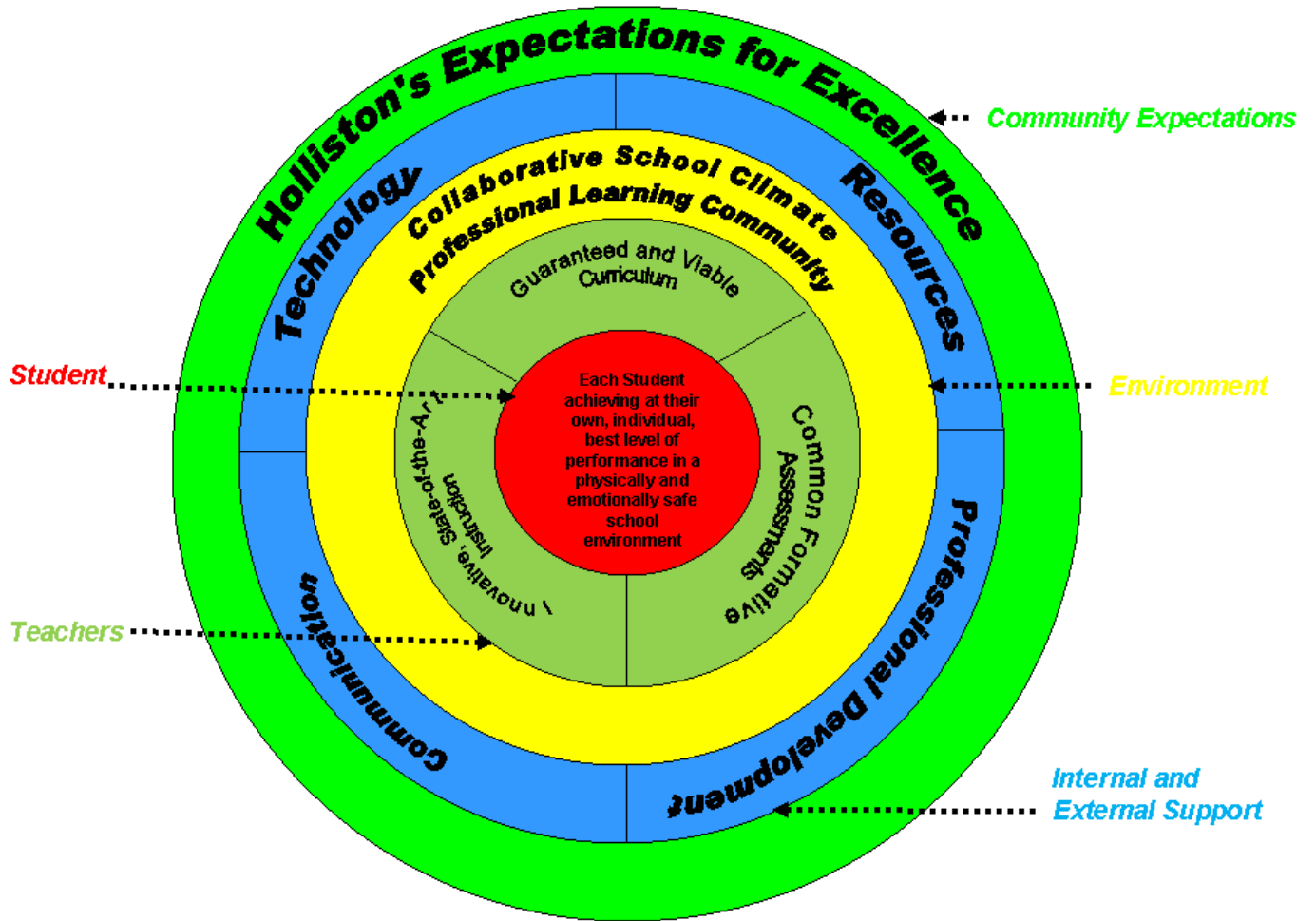
our community to provide adequate financial support of our schools, it is not limited to that narrow view. Among other things, resources also refers to supportive and engaged parents working in cooperation with their child's teacher(s); knowledgeable community members volunteering their expertise to support our efforts; and active and vibrant parent organizations which provide the supplementary resources and desperately-needed moral support to educators. It is essential that the communication link between the school and community be open and bi-directional. Schools must work hard to inform parents and the community as a whole, not only about the needs of the schools, but of the successes and future goals we wish to attain. At the same time, the community must articulate its needs to the schools and suggest areas where we are not meeting the community's expectations.

### **Holliston's Expectations for Excellence**

Finally, the outer layer of this visual is the principle that drives it all – Holliston's expectations for excellence. The community must "tell" the schools (via our communication layer) what level of quality it expects from its schools and then support those efforts by providing the required level of resources to achieve that goal. We recognize that it is not enough to demand excellence in education –true excellence comes at a cost. Similarly, if Holliston is unable or unwilling to provide the required resources, the community must re-adjust its expectations of its schools and its teachers.

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Figure  
1



## HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Strategic Focus Area: All Students Achieving at their own individual best level of performance

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Provide and maintain a physically and emotionally safe school environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide on-going parent information programs on the social and emotional health issues facing today's students.</li> <li>• Continue our active and pro-active anti-bullying campaign targeting both "traditional" and cyber-bullying.</li> <li>• Ensure that each student has a "trusted adult" in their school who can be a source of assistance and support when needed.</li> <li>• Continue efforts to establish a school culture where all individual differences are respected and valued.</li> </ul>			
Provide and maintain an emotionally and academically safe instructional environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide differentiated instruction to students of differing abilities, ensuring that all students, whatever their ability, are academically challenged.</li> <li>• Continue to encourage educators and students to be academic risk-takers when teaching or learning.</li> <li>• Actively pursue on-going efforts to re-define instructional objectives in terms of Essential Understandings or Power Standards.</li> </ul>			
Focus on expanding the definition of academic achievement beyond test-scores.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define a set of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills that all students should possess by graduation; design instruction and assessments that will nurture and grow those skills.</li> <li>• Define a set of character traits that all students should possess by graduation and design programs to model, nurture and develop those traits.</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Continue the definition and documentation of all curriculum at all levels using a backwards-design model where students are expected to develop deep understandings of “big ideas” by focusing on the “essential questions” of a lesson, unit or course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement and execute an ongoing improvement process for the refinement and development of curriculum with consistency and continuity</li> <li>• Establish mandated state curriculum standards as the school district’s minimum baseline</li> <li>• Research and leverage best practices</li> <li>• Utilize student data to inform curriculum design</li> <li>• Set expectations that the published local curriculum should be followed by all</li> <li>• Focus desired outcomes on developing students’ ability to apply knowledge through the expanded use of experienced based learning</li> </ul>			
Provide tools to facilitate the development and sharing of curriculum units, assessments and best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand use of <i>Atlas Rubicon</i> software as a curriculum development tool and repository</li> <li>• Collaborate and share curriculum among other communities</li> <li>• Monitor state efforts to provide state-wide learning and curriculum tools through the <i>Race to the Top</i> federal initiative</li> </ul>			
Communicate the shift in curriculum development to ensure alignment of teachers, students and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue practice of presenting the results of curriculum review efforts to the community via School Committee meetings and other media outlets illustrating the importance of continuous curriculum revision and development</li> <li>• Provide timely and relevant Professional Development to all teachers on the latest techniques in curriculum development</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: State of the Art Instruction

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Design instruction that meets the needs of multiple learning styles and various abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and expand the district’s repertoire of Differentiated Instruction strategies in order to meet the needs of all students</li> <li>• Develop and expand the district’s collection of Response to Intervention instructional tools and strategies in order to meet the needs of all students</li> <li>• Foster and encourage developmentally appropriate discovery-based learning and expand the use of a coaching instructional model</li> </ul>			
Foster an environment that encourages teachers to take risks and seek peer feedback on performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a feedback culture and mechanism that fosters peer observation</li> <li>• Recognize, acknowledge and encourage “acts of bravery” among staff and students</li> <li>• Restructure the evaluation process to make the feedback loop a critical part of performance evaluation.</li> </ul>			
Leverage technology to maximize access to instructional materials both in the classroom and outside of class for all learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the use of <i>Web 2.0</i> and other digital tools to increase the availability of content for students outside the school day to increase the effectiveness of face-to-face classroom time</li> <li>• Create an instructional culture where technology is an integral and necessary component of instruction</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Student Assessment

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Utilize diverse assessment practices to evaluate and inform teaching and learning for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a blend of unbiased formative and summative assessments that demonstrates and measures students' learning over time</li> <li>• Use common formative assessments to influence continuous improvement which will be measured and reflected in authentic summative assessments</li> <li>• Increase teachers' use of technology to improve the timeliness and effectiveness of data collection and assessment</li> </ul>			
Plan for and integrate the role of standardized testing in the overall assessment strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize standardized testing results to evaluate the effectiveness of our local curriculum and instruction</li> <li>• Monitor and plan for Massachusetts and federal efforts to link standardized testing results to teacher accountability and performance</li> </ul>			
Focus on best practices and methods for communicating assessment analyses to students and parents in order to improve learning while maintaining the integrity of the assessment instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize a variety of methods for communicating timely and detailed information about individualized student performance in order to engage parents as partners in improving learning</li> <li>• Continue ongoing efforts to educate students and parents on the value and meaning of standards-based reporting</li> <li>• Explore technology as a means for improving the timeliness and effectiveness of home-school communication regarding student performance</li> </ul>			

**HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Strategic Focus Area: Collaborative School Climate**

## HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Strengthen and build upon strong collaborative culture to impact more of the routine or operational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to build off of the community’s ability to come together in times of crisis for more operational needs                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Document community response processes from previous crises</li> <li>○ Leverage processes in more routine activities such as fostering community volunteers, participation in governance and committees</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure at the center of all collaborative efforts are the needs of the students                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Start each interaction with a reminder / statement of student learning being at the center</li> <li>○ Add the statement to planning documents and agendas</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
Student learning must be at the core of all decisions and interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define decision structure                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Document roles and responsibilities of members of committees, schools and administration</li> <li>○ Define decision tree / structure for clarity (what decisions are non-negotiable and which ones are open to broader input)</li> <li>○ Involve parents and community in decision process utilizing this framework to ensure alignment of expectations for involvement</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Utilize data in decision process                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Leverage existing data from various sources including assessments, external sources and best practices</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
Encourage and build upon a professional learning community for teachers and administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for risk taking for the sake of improving schools and better learning for students                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage peer reviews</li> <li>○ Establish recurring forums for providing feedback on improving processes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Partner with parents through communication channels to encourage them to provide feedback and raise concerns without fear of “retaliation”</li> </ul>			

## HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Strategic Focus Area: Collaborative School Climate (continued)

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
<p>Encourage a climate in which students feel confident and safe in driving activities important to the school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways for students to participate in the governance and decision processes of the schools and district (set clear expectations so they are not disenchanted with level of participation)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School committees, school improvement councils</li> <li>○ Feedback processes to administration with clear guidance around potential outcomes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure the schools provide a physically and emotionally safe environment                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Build upon current practice by educating students at each level about physical and emotionally safe practices</li> <li>○ Provide consistency across the schools on addressing safety concerns (tailored to level of students)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<p>Identify and define the interaction model for collaboration across the district with the needs of the students always at the center of all collaborative efforts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and document the processes by which the groups work together to identify opportunities for improvement                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set clear expectations for group dynamics and roles</li> <li>○ Publish key information in forum to share across interested stakeholder groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Technology

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Effectively and appropriately expand the use of technology as an instructional tool to meet the needs of all learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a Task Force of teachers and technology experts to, at a minimum:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Establish a base-line</li> <li>○ Examine our blocking practices</li> <li>○ Discuss the implications of teachers using social networking sites (e.g. <i>Facebook</i>)</li> <li>○ Address needed Professional Development</li> <li>○ Recommend appropriate hardware</li> <li>○ Consider “requiring” using technology</li> <li>○ Establish measurable goals.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Explore the creation of a 1:1 portable computing environment at HHS</li> </ul>			
All students need a defined base-line level of technology skills in order to succeed, including product knowledge, the ability to use technology appropriately and critically evaluate information gathered from the Internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an agreed-upon list of software products that students should be able to use and the grade by which that will be accomplished</li> <li>• Research and implement an effective program(s) that discourages on-line harassment and cyber-bullying and supports on-line safety.</li> <li>• Integrate the skill of critically evaluating the reliability of information found on the internet into classroom assignments.</li> </ul>			
Effectively and appropriately expand the use of technology as a communication tool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the use of blogs and podcasts when communicating essential information to the public.</li> </ul>			
Expand/Extend the school community so learning can occur at any time or in any place, reflecting the world in which students live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the use of on-line courses for Holliston credit.</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Resources

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Align the community expectations for excellence with community's willingness to financially support the schools' mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold face-to-face and on-line community-wide forums to discuss the role of the schools in the community and establish community expectations for school performance.</li> <li>• Have an independent audit of the school budget conducted that establishes an impartial opinion regarding the effective allocation of financial resources within the district.</li> <li>• Develop and publish a Financial Adequacy Study that documents the cost of meeting the community's expectations for school performance.</li> <li>• Report any gap between expectations and adequate costs to the community for further action.</li> </ul>			
Engage the community and expand individuals' personal commitment to participate in the work of the Holliston Public Schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a community-wide marketing campaign using the theme "Holliston's Schools – They belong to all of us!"</li> <li>• Expand the communication of school-information beyond parents into the broader community.</li> <li>• Develop and maintain an up-to-date list of volunteer opportunities within the District and other ways for community members to engage in the work of the schools.</li> <li>• Explore the use of <i>Web 2.0</i> tools as methods of engaging the public in the work of the schools.</li> </ul>			
Attract, motivate, retain and effectively allocate the highest quality school staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate and honor the teaching profession and individual and group accomplishments</li> <li>• Research, develop, and implement strategies for the recruitment and retention of a culturally diverse workforce.</li> <li>• Monitor wage and benefit package for competitiveness</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Professional Development

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Provide information to both the community and school staff about professional development and why it is critically important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate through established and new channels what Holliston provides for professional development</li> <li>• Continue to build upon a culture that embraces professional development                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Staff leveraging available resources</li> <li>○ Encourage staff ownership of their own continued development</li> <li>○ Allow for forums and opportunities to share practices and knowledge</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
Define a professional development focus and approach and execute against the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create professional development plans for all staff based on agreed upon needs                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Build in allocated time for development directives from state and federal agencies</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continue to leverage cross-district professional development opportunities to allow for scale and efficiency</li> <li>• Communicate to the community what the overall Professional Development plan and approach is and share progress towards achieving plans</li> </ul>			
Create professional development committees to drive best practices and ongoing improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a district level committee that provides a forum for professional development discussions and action planning which feeds into School (building) based committees</li> <li>• Focus on leveraging technology where applicable to demonstrate the staff's commitment to technology usage</li> <li>• Evaluate how to allocate training dollars equitably across staff</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Communication

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
Streamline and improve effectiveness of communication from Holliston Schools to Holliston Community to foster greater engagement from community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research best practices utilized by other school systems</li> <li>• Build and implement a comprehensive communication strategy.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Define key messages for reinforcement</li> <li>○ Define and streamline channels including the evaluation of Web 2.0 tools and social networking</li> <li>○ Identify target audiences</li> <li>○ Document channel usage for each content type</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Educate community-members on new communication approach</li> <li>• Provide consistency and continuity across schools on usage of communication channels</li> </ul>			
Encourage the Holliston Community to communicate more effectively with schools through improved processes and technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research best practices utilized by other school systems</li> <li>• Educate community on methods available and importance of communicating with the schools</li> <li>• Ensure internal processes for escalation of issues communicated by parents are documented and understood within the schools (understanding of chain of command)</li> <li>• Encourage feedback from the community through various channels (<i>Web 2.0</i>, school committee email, coffee talks, etc.)</li> </ul>			
Improve communication within schools to enable best practice sharing and ongoing improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ways to share best practices among staff and across district (leverage some methods identified in Professional Development)</li> <li>• Foster a community of sharing of information so everyone can learn</li> </ul>			

# HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Strategic Focus Area: Holliston’s Commitment to Excellence

CRITICAL ISSUES	STRATEGIES/ INITIATIVES	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMING	RESOURCES
<p>All components of the Holliston community do not universally agree on the need to continuously improve the quality of the Holliston Public Schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a community-wide program to educate the community on:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The competitive nature of public education today and the need to maintain our excellence</li> <li>• The relationship between the quality of the local education system and real estate values</li> <li>• The importance of maintaining our reputation as an excellent school system.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
<p>Holliston’s Senior Citizen community represents a largely untapped opportunity to improve the quality of the Holliston Public Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus schools community service efforts on areas that will serve Holliston’s Senior Citizen community.</li> <li>• Encourage teachers to invite members of Holliston’s Senior Citizen community into our classrooms to share their knowledge and experience where it can enhance instruction.</li> <li>• Work with Town Officials to expand opportunities for property-tax reduction options for Holliston’s Senior population.</li> </ul>			

## **APPENDIX**

***Appendix A. Strategic Plan Glossary***

***Appendix B. Strategic Plan Survey Results***

***Appendix C. Strategic Plan Survey Comments***

## **Appendix A**

### **Glossary of Terms**

<b><u>action plans:</u></b>	specific, detailed actions, activities, accountability designations, resource allocations and timelines based upon data analysis which address a critical issue within a goal statement
<b><u>core principles:</u></b>	an essential element or quality that produces a specific effect
<b><u>core values:</u></b>	the underlying beliefs that shape decisions and choices of the districts
<b><u>critical issue:</u></b>	an especially important matter which will have an immediate impact on the mission/vision statements and goals of the school districts
<b><u>focus group:</u></b>	committed stakeholders working together to review or develop specific plans or elements of plans; generally meeting only once
<b><u>goals:</u></b>	outline in broad terms how the mission will be fulfilled
<b><u>mission:</u></b>	a clear concise statement of the district's purpose and intentions; it defines why an organization exists and provides the rationale for goal setting; it serves as a standard by which all plan components are judged
<b><u>stakeholders:</u></b>	those individuals or groups who have a stake or interest in the education of children in the community
<b><u>strategic plan:</u></b>	a long range guide detailing specific steps that an organization will take to achieve its mission
<b><u>strategic planning:</u></b>	a complex and ongoing learning process of organizational change oriented towards the anticipated future; it is based upon the analysis of internal and external data and it intends to focus effort and resources to reach its purposes
<b><u>strategy:</u></b>	a statement as to how the school districts will accomplish their goals
<b><u>timeline:</u></b>	the period of time expected to complete the strategy; short term equals 1-2 years and long term equals 3-5 years
<b><u>vision:</u></b>	describes the future attributes we expect to see in the school district

**HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**