

Metuchen Public Schools: 2024-2025

“Better Every Day”

April 2025 update



Metuchen Public Schools

“Quality schools...

...employ rigorous, engaging, and coherent curriculum; offer effective instruction that yields high quality work; and use curricula-aligned assessments that inform instruction.”

...have a clear philosophy and intentional structures for a positive, equitable school culture; and support a culture of learning that includes high expectations.”

...show clear alignment and intention between resource allocation and mission, vision, and goals.”

...have effective systems to attract, develop, and evaluate staff; and leverage professional collaborations to improve outcomes.”

...have effective structures to evaluate decisions and to monitor and accelerate student growth.”

District Goals: Focus Area #1

Quality schools employ rigorous, engaging, and coherent curriculum; offer effective instruction that yields high quality work; and use curricula-aligned assessments that inform instruction.

Goal: Implement rigorous curriculum, effective pedagogy, and assessments that drive adjustments and supports to maximize student learning.

Key actions for 2024-2025:

- a) Collaboration around the implementation of revised curriculum guides with a focus on interdisciplinary connections (SEL, Climate change, PBL, STEM), additional curricular mandates and common resources
- b) Review new AI policy, create a district AI Plan and provide age-appropriate lessons on acceptable use
- c) Facilitating student discourse and maximizing instructional time to ensure high levels of student engagement

Mean score = 3.58 (range = 3 to 4)

Evidence

- **Moss: Community Kindness Project - positive messages on coffee sleeves for Metuchen downtown - SEL, writing, art, and community service**
- **Campbell: Artificial Intelligence: K-5 ELA team leads have had PD on using different AI tools to enhance our curriculum/lessons/resources**
- **Edgar: Revising benchmarks and common writing assessments in grades 6-8**
- **MHS: Implementation of *Lifelines* program, infused in Health curriculum during MP3, after much collaboration around the lesson design and implementation plan.**

District Goals: Focus Area #2

Quality schools have a clear philosophy and intentional structures for a positive, equitable school culture; and support a culture of learning that includes high expectations.

Goal: Create a positive learning environment that supports high expectations.

Key actions for 2024-2025:

- a) Select and implement recommendations from the Parents as Partners Forum to foster collaboration and increase engagement between parents and school personnel
- b) Enhance systems to communicate progress on school and student achievement
- c) Mobilize students by leveraging co- and extracurricular experiences to foster kindness and connectedness
- d) Emphasize character education through structures for coordination of SEL and supports.

Mean score = 3.81, highest (range = 3 to 4)

Evidence

- **Moss: "Dreams" quilt - students engaged in self awareness, self reflection, and goal setting as they imagined their role in future Metuchen**
- **Campbell: Monthly Bulldog Buddy initiative**
- **Edgar: Active social media presence sharing activities at Edgar (as a result of Parents as Partners Forum)**
- **MHS: "MHS Trusted Adult" pins that they wear on their lanyards to help students recognize individuals with whom they can talk.**

District Goals: Focus Area #3

Quality schools show clear alignment and intention between resource allocation and mission, vision, and goals for school improvement.

Goal: Dedicate time, resources and expertise, combined with stakeholder input, to analyze indicators of success.

Key actions for 2024-2025:

- a) Boost achievement in tested areas, with a particular focus on early ELA, upper elementary/middle math, and entry-level AP courses, through focused PD, supplemental programming, and vertical articulation
- b) Review accountability data and make shared decisions about grows and glows
- c) Align instructional approaches and establish common focus areas through department collaboration
- d) Involve community stakeholders in school improvement initiatives by eliciting feedback
 - i. Rutgers Collaborative Survey for staff
 - ii. School surveys for staff, parents, students
 - iii. NJSCI survey
 - iv. Client surveys as part of staff evaluation process

Mean score = 3.75, biggest increase (range = 3 to 4)

Evidence

- **Moss: *The Paw Print* monthly community newsletter focus on the impact of absenteeism with article entitled "Attendance Matters"**
- **Campbell: NJSLA and benchmark data reflect pre-COVID levels**
- **Edgar: 8th grade math teachers met with the 9th grade math teachers for articulation.**
- **MHS: Teacher AP training has been offered to staff to reinforce the need to stay current on the AP Course Content and expectations for teachers/students.**

District Goals: Focus Area #4

Quality schools have effective systems to attract, develop, and evaluate staff; and leverage professional collaborations to improve outcomes.

Goal: Enhance teacher support, use collaborative structures, and encourage distributed leadership to further develop district priorities.

Key actions for 2024-2025:

- a) School Leadership Teams will address clearly identified initiatives that impact school outcomes and celebrate their achievements
- b) Train administrators on equitable hiring practices and incorporating these best practices into hiring routines
- c) Develop a statement of a commitment aligned to a high performing inclusive organization
- d) Formalize and communicate current district priorities
- e) Update the New Teacher Orientation program and the 3-year New Teacher Academy series to align with current district priorities

Mean score = 2.95, lowest (range = 1 to 4)

Evidence

- **Moss: Implemented information learned from Equitable Hiring PD in the hiring of new K teachers and counselor**
- **Campbell: Collaboration around a more defined NJTSS model as well as building usage occurs through SLT sub-committees**
- **Edgar: SLT continues to reflect on the character education program and how to improve them.**
- **MHS: SLT next - academic integrity and intellectual property; assist students in learning about how to ensure that they are giving credit**

District Goals: Focus Area #5

Quality schools have effective structures to evaluate decisions and to monitor and accelerate student growth.

Goal: Support student mental health and wellness by enhancing tiered systems of support to remove barriers to student achievement

Key actions for 2024-2025:

- a) Implement *Lifelines Trilogy* as a comprehensive suicide prevention program
- b) Educate staff and students on wellness and the impact of social media
- c) Include parent representation on district mental health leadership team
- d) Provide professional development for multidisciplinary teams (I&RS, 504) on tiered interventions aligned to common areas of need
- e) Coordinate and communicate steps towards prevention, intervention, and efforts to modify behavior when responding to instances of HIB

Mean score = 3.20 (range = 1 to 4)

Evidence

- **Moss: Staff Training**-Understanding the impact of trauma and mental health concerns on children and strategies for supporting them
- **Campbell: Morning Meeting** content that helps students identify strategies for managing emotions and social situations.
- **Edgar: Prevention** - *No Place for Hate* lessons are developed in collaboration with the student support services team.
- **MHS: Staff book discussion** on *Digital Madness: How Social Media is Driving Our Mental Health Crisis and How to Restore Our Sanity*.

District Goals Focus Areas & Alignment to ASCD's Whole Child Tenets

Focus Area #	Healthy – indicator #s	Safe – indicator #s	Engaged – indicator #s	Supported – indicator #s	Challenged – indicator #s	Sustainability – indicator #s
1			1, 6, 7, 9, 10	6	1, 2, 4, 8	
2		3, 4, 6, 7		3, 4, 6, 10		
3		9				4, 9, 10
4				9		1, 2, 8
5	1, 2, 6, 7	10		4		

How will we measure our progress in 2024-2025?

5	Did it well	with significant evidence of impact at student level
4	Did it well	and some evidence of impact at student level
3	Good progress	but not completed or limited evidence of student impact
2	Some progress	that was minimal or not at the student level
1	Didn't do it	or circumstances prevented us from doing it