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ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2011-2012 ANNUAL REPORT

The tradition of excellence in the classroom, performing and visual arts, and athletics continued in the 2011-2012 school year. Motivated students, great teachers, dedicated administrators, involved parents, and a supportive community made this possible. This year continues the focus of building on past successes and moving forward on the three district goals. The results of our efforts include:

Clear expectations for what every child should know and be able to do (standards based education) continues to be refined and integrated into daily life in the classroom. District-wide common assessments in mathematics, English, and writing helped teachers pace their instruction and inform them which students had mastered the skills and content and those who needed further instruction. Work continues to align the English Language Curriculum and the Mathematics Curriculum to the Common Core. The Lucy Calkins writing program was implemented in Grades 4 and 5 to increase experience with non-fiction writing. Engineering units were integrated into the elementary science curriculum. Our intensive reading program, which focuses on early intervention and intensive support for struggling readers, demonstrates continued success in its sixth year of implementation. All K-5 students were assessed during the school year. Data from these assessments determined the level of support provided for students not meeting benchmark standards. This initiative has helped many more students read at grade level. In June, 95% of students in Grade 5 were reading at grade-level benchmarks.

MCAS results indicate that Arlington is a high achieving district with moderate to high student growth. The vast majority of district grade level scores on MCAS are in the top 20% in the state. Students consistently scored well above the state average on all measures of achievement and were recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with a commendation for high MCAS achievement.

At all levels, teachers and administrators focused on incorporating 21st century skills into every classroom. While the content of what we teach remains in place, greater emphasis on team work, working in a multicultural global society, hard work, communication skills, creative problem-solving, and the ability to evaluate and synthesize information was emphasized.

Teachers participated in extensive professional development, including the elementary Mathematics and Reading Mentor Induction Program, the Mentoring Program for all new teachers, out-of-district conferences and programs, and in-district programs to deepen content knowledge, instructional pedagogy and all as-



pects of the bullying legislation. Teachers at all levels benefited from programs and course offerings through our *Primary Source* membership, which was funded through a grant from the Arlington Educational Foundation (AEF). The district continued its participation in the *Teachers As Scholars Program*, which provides teachers with content-rich professional development programs. This program is funded through the federal Title 2A grant.

Grants received by the District supported the expansion of technology, curriculum initiatives and professional development. AEF approved two Development & Expansion Grants, which were implemented this year. With an Educational Technology Investment Grant, AEF provided \$10,000 towards the purchase of LCD projectors, which leveraged district funds allocated for this purpose. The \$1 million 3-year federal *Teaching American History* grant that is in its second year (Arlington as the leader of a collaborative of seven districts participating in the grant) provided very high quality professional development for social studies and history teachers grades K-12 and classroom materials for grades 3-12. AEF funded two additional Development & Expansion Grants to purchase the Museum of Science *Engineering is Elementary* curriculum units for grades 1-3. The second grant was *Integrating Student Response Systems to Tailor Teaching for Effective Student Learning* that allows students to respond anonymously to teacher questions, which informs the teacher's awareness of student understanding and enables him/her to address misconceptions in the classroom in a timely fashion. Through a grant from the US Department of State's Teachers of Critical Languages Program, Arlington High School hosted a teacher from Beijing, China who taught beginning Mandarin Chinese courses. The Mandarin Chinese Language Program was also supported from an anonymous grant from a resident of Arlington.

The Technology Plan was further implemented to increase technology hardware in all schools and wireless access in the common areas of the high school and

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middle school, as well as the Grade 7 and 8 classroom wings. An iPad pilot was implemented in special education classrooms through a grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Special Education Department completed its Coordinated Action Plan (CAP) in response to the Coordinated Program Review (CPR), which is conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) every six years. All of the issues identified in the CPR have been corrected. As part of the on-going process, a mid-cycle review will be conducted by DESE in three years.

To ensure a safe learning and working environment, work was prioritized over the year to address the list of health, safety, and workplace needs. Most notably, the work at the Stratton School to install new windows, roof, and infrastructure systems was completed in the classroom wing by the start of the new school year. The project was expanded due to an award of \$739,000 from the Green Repair Program of the Massachusetts School Building Authority. As a result of the award, the project encompassed the entire envelope of the classroom wing, thereby, greatly increasing energy efficiency and improving the heating system by providing more consistently warm classrooms during the colder months.

The new Thompson School project moved from the schematic drawing stage to the beginning of construction in April. Thompson School will reopen in September 2013.

In an effort to improve communication with parents, staff, and community members, a brochure highlighting key information about the Arlington Public Schools was mailed in the spring to all residents.

The School Committee unanimously approved a redistricting plan for the elementary schools that was recommended by the Redistricting Advisory Committee following an inclusive community dialogue around redistricting that began in November 2011 to address

enrollment imbalances in our elementary schools and to ensure that the Thompson School will achieve its projected enrollment. Implementation guidelines are projected to be approved by the School Committee by November 2012.

Arlington High School received the Gold Medal from US News and World Report's Awards for Best Public High Schools in 2012 and, for the second year in a row, the College Board placed the high school on its Annual AP® Honor Roll for expanding opportunity and improving performance for Advanced Placement students.

The schools continue to work in partnership with the police, Town, and community to insure consistent and coordinated responses to inappropriate student behaviors. The Diversion Program started in 2006, which focuses on restitution and rehabilitation for first time, non-violent behavior, has proven to be an effective model. We partnered again this year with community and nonprofit organizations to provide more options for counseling services. Meeting the social and emotional needs of children is as high a priority as meeting the academic needs of our students. The number of social workers in the district was expanded so that there was at least one social worker in every school. The Parent Forum series continues again this year, free to all parents and community members. These forums included a variety of topics, such as Bullying Prevention, Sexuality, Transitions, Behavior Management, Anxiety, and The College Process.

The Town has made a substantial investment in our school buildings and we continue to improve and streamline the maintenance of these buildings. Efforts are underway to develop a multi-year maintenance plan.

The Arlington Public Schools have a team of talented professionals working together towards our shared vision:



North entry view of upcoming Thompson Elementary School

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APS Mission: All students will achieve at their full social, emotional, creative and academic potential, and will be prepared for higher level academics, workforce success, active citizenship, and life-long learning.

The 2011-2012 District Goals approved by the School Committee are as follows:

1. Ensure all Arlington students are well prepared for academics, social, emotional, and vocational success in the 21st century.

- Increase achievement in Reading K-8.
- Increase student achievement in Mathematics K-8.
- Increase student achievement in Writing K-12.
- Improve student achievement in Science content and process skills and increase student awareness of opportunities in STEM fields K-12.
- Improve student achievement in World Languages.
- Expand common assessments in all subjects Grade 6-12 to provide consistency of instruction and to improve student outcomes.
- Improve the social/emotional climate in all schools.
- Increase Overall Achievement of AHS students.
- The District will implement the DESE approved Corrective Action Plan (CAP in response to the Coordinated Program Review (CPR) for Special Education, English Learner Education, and Civil Rights.
- The elementary school nurses will teach the following lessons from the Great Body Shop curriculum:
 - Illness Prevention
 - Growth and Development
 - Drug and Alcohol

2. Expand systems for increased communication and collaboration across the district.

- Improve communication between the schools and parents.
- Special Education Department will increase the methods and frequency of communication to parents through SEPAC, PTO, and building-based meetings.
- Improve communication between the district and the community.
- Improve internal professional communication among schools, departments, and other groups.

3. Provide the tools, infrastructure and systems to support district initiatives and learning environments.

- Expand and implement technology tools for 21st century teaching and learning and continue to implement the Technology Plan.
- Develop systems to improve administrative systems that are more efficient, clear and timely.
- Complete construction drawings and bid documents for new Thompson Elementary School to begin construction in spring 2012.
- Develop redistricting plan for implementation in the 2013-2014 school year.
- Research, develop, and staff a Leadership Model for Special Education.
- Improve efficiency and develop capacity in Central Office functions.
- Hire a new High School Principal to begin by July 1, 2013.
- Develop a long-term capital maintenance plan for school buildings.
- Develop a plan for the improvement of secondary education facilities.





MINUTEMAN
A REVOLUTION IN LEARNING

MINUTEMAN REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

About Minuteman

Minuteman is a four-year public high school in Lexington, Massachusetts founded in the Career and Technical Education tradition. Minuteman serves the member towns of: Acton, Arlington, Belmont, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Concord, Dover, Lancaster, Lexington, Lincoln, Needham, Stow, Sudbury, Wayland, and Weston and teaches more than 700 diverse young men and women from local communities across eastern Massachusetts. Minuteman is a Revolution in Learning, preparing every student for success in college, industry and life.

Arlington Enrollment

As of October 1, 2012, one hundred twenty five (125) high school students and fourteen (14) post graduate students were enrolled at Minuteman providing a full time equivalent (FTE) of one hundred thirty nine (139) residents of Arlington. While attending Minuteman, these students receive a number of benefits:

Experience the Modern American High School

Minuteman offers a distinctly modern learning experience where students venture beyond a traditional high school curriculum to explore their interests and discover their passion, whether that's Bio-technology, Robotics, Environmental Technology, or something else entirely from among our twenty majors.

Believe in Yourself

Students graduate from Minuteman with an enduring self-confidence that they can achieve anything they set out to do, no matter how high the hurdle, how long the road, how loud the skeptics.

Prepare for College and Life

Minuteman equips students with the academic foundation and study skills to succeed in college *and* the industry certifications and acumen to succeed in business, affording every student a unique flexibility upon graduation to pursue their dreams.

Learn from Experts

Minuteman's teachers are demonstrated experts in their respective fields, injecting a depth of knowledge and experience into their classes that is rarely found in

public or private schools.

Be More Than Just Another Student

There is no such thing as "just another student" at Minuteman – instead, teachers and staff personally invest themselves in truly knowing each student and working closely with them to realize their full, individual potential.

Make a Fresh Start

From their very first day of school, Minuteman students are given the opportunity to make a fresh start among new friends and new teachers who will see them as they are and not as who they once were.

Arlington High School and Minuteman Half Day Program

Minuteman offers a unique program allowing juniors and seniors, who have passed the MCAS, enrollment on a half day-every day basis in a career major. This allows a student to graduate from Arlington High School *and* receive a competency certificate from Minuteman. Currently, no Arlington students participate.

Minuteman offers technical training programs to adults who are looking for rewarding jobs in high demand careers. Adults may apply to the Minuteman Technical Institute programs to hone skills in a technical area, retrain for new employment, or learn new technical skills for the first time.

2012 Arlington Graduates and Awards

Heather Azar, Health Assisting
Veronica Jacques, Early Education and Care
Dakota Bates, Plumbing
Nicholas Jones, Graphic Communications
Daniel Bianchi, Graphic Communications
Peter Kelly, Biotechnology
Amanda Brady, Culinary Arts/Baking
Joseph Munsey, Electrical Wiring
Kavanaugh Bucci, Engineering Technology
Drew Pawl, Environmental Science
Shannon Cain, Health Assisting
William Pessotti, Carpentry
Cameron Campbell, Graphic Communications
Stephen Pisano, HVAC & Refrigeration
Rachel Chasteen, Programming & Web
Micaela Reilly, Cosmetology
Christopher Conroy, Plumbing

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Dimitrios Reissis, Engineering Technology
Edward Donovan, Plumbing
Wyatt Rojo, Drafting
Ashley Fitzgerald, Health Assisting
Stephen Spencer, Engineering Technology
William Gelinas, Plumbing

At the 2012 graduation, Daniel Bianchi received the Jed Dowd Memorial Scholarship. Shannon Cain received the Bonnie J. Hilla Memorial Award, the Massachusetts AFL-CIO Scholarship and the Walter J. Markham Award. Joseph Munsey received the Arlington Rotary Club Award. Micaela Reilly received the Renzo A. Ricciuti Memorial Scholarship. Wyatt Rojo received the Felicia M. DeLorenzo Scholarship Foundation award and the Roger S. Eleftherakis Memorial Scholarship.

These awards are given to students of superior academic achievement and significant participation in school or community activities.

SkillsUSA Awards

Michael Dasaro, Biotechnology, Bronze Medalist
Patrick Boisvert, Plumbing, Gold Medalist PG, 6th Place
Peter Kelly, Biotechnology, Gold Medalist, 5th Place
Ian Smith, Environmental Science, 2nd Place
Shannon Cain, Health Assisting, National Voting Delegate
Lisa Willms, Culinary Arts/Baking, Mass. State Officer
Anthony Senesi, Environmental Science,
Mass SkillsUSA State Officer

Class of 2012 Graduate Achievement Highlights

- 66% college bound or advanced Technical Training, 27% career bound and 3% military.
- 100% of Dental graduates passed the National Dental Board examination.
- 100% of Early Education and Care Infant/Toddler and Preschool graduates achieved Teacher Certification.
- 100% of Cosmetology graduates passed State Board examinations.
- 100% of Health Occupation graduates achieved college acceptance or career placement.
- 100% of Environmental Technology graduates were certified in OSHA 40-Hour HAZ-WOPER training, and confined-space entry training. 62% passed either the Massachusetts Grade II Municipal Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator License exam, and the Massachusetts Drinking-Water Treatment Plant Grade 1 Operator License Exam.
- Valedictorian James Cardillo, Electrical Wiring graduate from Peabody attending Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton Fl. Salutatorian Daniel Dangora, Robotics graduate from Medford attending UMass, Lowell to

pursue electrical engineering.

Capital Projects

MSBA Update: Minuteman moves forward in the “pipeline” of the MSBA Vocational School Repair and Renew program announced by the State Treasurer’s office in 2010. On December 3, 2012 Minuteman was approved by MSBA to hire SKANSKA as the Owner’s Project Manager (OPM) for the Feasibility Study. The OPM and School Building Committee will work together to review various models of enrollment as stated in the Request For Service for the OPM. In January of 2013 a link to the School Building Project will keep all towns informed of our progress.

Curriculum and Instruction

Since 2008 all 9th grade students to have English and Math every day, rather than a “week-on-week-off” schedule, thus providing more consistent and concentrated instruction as well as project-based learning. Minuteman is rated a Level 1 school by the DESE. The first-time pass rates on MCAS remain high across all disciplines including a 100% passing rate in ELA in 2012.

As part of our Revolution in Learning, we want every Minuteman student to fully explore their interests and discover their passion. Minuteman offers more than twenty different majors categorized into three clusters: Bio-Science/Engineering, Human & Commercial Services, and Trades & Transportation. The Educational Program planning process has identified potential new programs that offer students increased choices in career majors, including Criminal Justice/Bio-Security, Animal Science, Entertainment Engineering, Advanced Computer Manufacturing, and Medical Equipment Repair.

Each student graduates with the OSHA 10 Safety Certification. In addition, during the CTE week, juniors and seniors participate in an Entrepreneur Class. Prior to commencement, seniors are required to produce a comprehensive Business Plan related to their career major.

Professional Development

Minuteman teachers continue to control much of the context for their professional development. Teachers pursue academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) goals that emphasize formative assessment practices and common summative assessments. Teachers meet to review student work and adjust the curriculum and instruction as needed. Teacher-to-teacher peer observations are conducted at least twice per year according to protocols derived from the National School Reform Faculty model. More and more, Executive Function strategies and techniques are being adopted toward the development of a specific Minute-

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man approach to: note-taking, unit organization, and study skills. Academic-Career and Technical curriculum integration results in lessons and student work that feature the application of academic skills in the CTE context and vice versa. That integration lends itself to students' developing and practicing 21st century skills (speaking, listening, collaborating, researching, and presenting). The integration of technology to enhance student learning is an on-going commitment. Finally, this year professional development has also been focused on the new DESE model teacher evaluation system, which requires the development of individual and team goals following the SMART model (Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action-oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results oriented; and Timed).

Student Access, Participation and Support

An Executive Function initiative was launched in 2010. Led by our reading specialist, we have expanded our efforts to include study skills, pre-reading strategies, and unit re-organization to help students with resources to develop habits and techniques to enhance their planning and organization skills.

Minuteman continues to support a full-time Reading Specialist. In addition to working with the students on his own caseload, he consults with academic and CTE teachers toward the development and application of a school-wide reading program.

The Special Education Department continuously develops individualized programs and provides services so that all our students succeed. We focus on teaching students about the nature of their disability and their Individualized Education Program. The Special Education department successfully implemented the Student Learning Center (SLC). The SLC allows students to understand their disability, develop skills, and techniques to minimize the impact of the student's disability, and to promote independence and personal responsibility. The SLC supports the transition to college. The SLC also supports the transition to college, by following a model

of service delivery that is popular among most colleges and universities in the United States.

The Music and Art department continues to grow. Most recently, two students were accepted to the Massachusetts Music Educator's Association Northeast District Chorus; one of whom also received an All State Chorus recommendation. The Visual Arts Department offers 8 different elective courses including traditional studio courses and Digital Photography to over 200 students. Student work has been displayed in various communities including Lexington, Carlisle, Arlington and Watertown. Recent graduates have been accepted at MassArt, Savannah College of Art and Design, Lesley University, New Hampshire Institute of Art and Art Institutes of Boston. The program continues to grow as student interest and enthusiasm is high.

Minuteman offers 16 sports with three levels (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman) throughout the school year. Over the past 12 years the number of participants has doubled in many of the sports offered. The athletic department is also looking to expand to include a track team. Students are offered more than 20 clubs and activities. Success of the Athletic teams has been outstanding within the past few years as students are winning awards and competitions. Minuteman has been participating in the Vocational and MIAA State tournaments. This past Fall season Cross Country runners qualified for the Vocational tournament, the golf team competed in the individual Vocational tournament, the Girls Soccer team qualified and competed in the Vocational tournament (losing in the Quarterfinals) and also competed in the MIAA State tournament, and the Minuteman Football team competed and was runner-up in the Vocational Superbowl.

The Minuteman Parent Association (MPA) meets monthly and supports all aspects of the Minuteman community. In addition, the Grant-a-Wish program supports numerous initiatives and incentives for student achievement.