

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Valery Glod Gransewicz
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Luther Conant School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 80 Taylor Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Acton State MA Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 01720-4516

County Middlesex County

Telephone (978) 266-2550 Fax _____

Web site/URL https://conant.abschools.org E-mail vgransewicz@abschools.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Peter Light E-mail plight@abschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Tel. (978) 264-4700

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Ms. Kyra Cook
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 1 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 8 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	28	27	55
1	18	20	38
2	37	23	60
3	36	26	62
4	39	30	69
5	28	38	66
6	32	17	49
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	218	181	399

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 56.6 % Asian
 - 4.2 % Black or African American
 - 8.9 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 25.8 % White
 - 4.5 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2020 - 2021 school year: 7%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

N/A

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	21
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	29
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	394
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.07
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	7

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Arabic, Assamese, Bengali, Chinese, Dinka, French, Filipino, Gujarati, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Panjabi, Portuguese, Pushto, Romani, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Telegu, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 15 %
61 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 11 %

Total number students who qualify: 45

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 17 %
68 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>24</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>2</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>19</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>8</u> Developmental Delay | <u>6</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>3</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>5</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 1
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	3
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	20
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	12
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	22
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	6

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 20:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	99%	95%	96%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2021.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

The Whole Child is the Whole Idea. Our core values are: respect, responsibility, and lifelong curiosity.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs and activities. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the schools.

Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District’s compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA or MGL ch. 76, sec.5 is directed to contact the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Administration Building, 15 Charter Road, Acton, MA, telephone number 978-264-4700, x3265, who has been designated by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District to coordinate the District’s efforts to comply with these laws, or write to the Office for Civil Rights, J. F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room 1875, Boston, MA 02203, or the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Program Quality Assurance Services, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District adopted core values to guide the educational experience of AB students PreK-12. Wellness, Equity, and Engagement are the three domains prioritized, specifically:

Wellness - We partner with families to prioritize social-emotional wellness, which is necessary for learning and developing resilience

Equity - We ensure all students have equitable access to programs and curricula to reach their potential

Engagement - We provide engaging educational opportunities where students develop passion and joy for learning

In addition, Conant aligns its school improvement work with the District Strategy and Beliefs, which focus on engaged learning, inclusive practices, equitable outcomes and opportunities, and social emotional learning.

Each spring, Conant hosts an open house evening in which parents of incoming Kindergarten students can visit the school and learn about the school community. Highlights of the evening include school produced videos, the introduction of administration and staff, as well as Parent Teacher Organization representatives. Parents tour the school and have the opportunity to ask questions, view the curriculum, and learn about extra activities that support the elementary experience K-6.

Acceptance of all students is celebrated at Conant. Over the past few years, the staff has participated in Responsive Classroom workshops. As a Responsive Classroom school, teachers provide students with frequent opportunities that help all students feel valued and accepted. Each classroom has a scheduled morning meeting which includes key activities: greeting each student, reading the teacher's morning message, and reviewing the schedule for the day. In an effort to build more inclusive and culturally sustaining spaces for our students, Conant faculty will participate in on-going professional learning to grow their culturally responsive teaching practice. Conant faculty will partner with Gates Elementary faculty to explore Sara K. Ahmed's book, *Being the Change*. Educators will implement lessons and routines which encourage positive identity development (ex: identity mapping, windows/mirrors/sliding glass doors).

Interactions within the Conant school community foster trust and respect. Teachers work with students to develop classroom rules at the beginning of the school year. Time is spent to discuss the reason for rules and how classroom rules can help students succeed. Every opportunity is provided to help students understand these rules and when issues arise, these rules guide the problem-solving process and outcomes. Student Council leads the school with a variety of community service projects throughout the year. Conant students take pride in giving back to our community.

Finally, Conant is proud of the many ways we promote scholarship. Conant holds students to high standards and provides support as needed to help students meet these standards. Teachers are well versed in state and national curriculum standards. As part of a school-wide transition to a standards-based report, teachers spent time working with colleagues to understand the frameworks and identify the specific standards that were included on the report card. Curriculum and benchmark assessment consistency across grade levels was adopted to support student learning. Conant now has K-6 math, reading, and writing programs, a K-3 phonics program, and Grades 1-6 reading benchmark assessments. As a result of these ongoing efforts, student scholarship has flourished.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:

Conant adopts a holistic approach to instruction and curriculum across all subject domains. This overarching philosophy is evident throughout the school community. Each spring, a comprehensive school schedule, which maximizes teaching and learning, is created for the following school year. All stakeholders provide input in order to facilitate student programs, weekly specials, and whether support services occur in the general education classroom or in a separate setting. Our school schedule includes specific blocks for small group targeted instructional opportunities and special education services such as OT, PT, and SLP.

Additionally, classroom memberships are carefully created through the placement process. Sending classroom teachers collaborate across the grade level and with service delivery providers to group students based on the social, emotional, and learning needs of each student. Heterogeneously balanced classrooms are the goal.

The Principal and Assistant Principal embrace a system that maximizes interactions with teachers and students. Teacher observations and evaluations are evenly distributed. Weekly grade-level collaboration meetings give teachers and administrators the opportunity to share student data, discuss concerns, and problem-solve issues as needed. Daily walk-throughs with follow-up discussions round out classroom connections. Short, frequent visits, in addition to the longer classroom observations, provide a lens through which administrators facilitate best teaching and learning practices.

Maximum effort throughout the Conant community is devoted to student success. Our diverse population and changing demographics have helped us rethink how we ensure that students come ready to learn.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

In language arts, teachers use a variety of resources such as Words Their Way, Foundations phonics program, a rich and diverse classroom library, a schoolwide reading collection of fiction and non-fiction text, Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD), Lucy Calkins Units of Writing, Empowering Writers and Six Traits.

Educators employ whole-class and small group instruction for both reading and writing. For the past five years, classroom teachers and special educators have partnered to learn and implement SRSD. Writing prompts are utilized, as is the writing process, in which students receive feedback on their drafts to edit and revise. Students gradually assume more independence in the writing process as they use the tools associated with SRSD. Whole-class and small group reading instruction is utilized, and independent, pleasure reading is strongly encouraged. Short, grade level, content-specific articles, and primary and secondary sources are used in social studies and science, technology, and engineering for whole-class readings where appropriate scaffolding for students is employed. Small group instruction includes heterogeneous and skill-based groupings. Reading specialists and a reading assistant work closely with classroom teachers to assess student reading and provide support both in and out of the classroom.

A question about the familial history of learning difficulties was added to the DIAL-4 kindergarten screening, as well as to the developmental history/home assessment used in all initial special education evaluations, the RAN (Rapid Automatized Naming) Task - (colors/objects) is part of the kindergarten literacy screening, and a kindergarten protocol document is used to compile information to inform kindergarten teachers as students transition into the school district. The Boston Children's Early Literacy Screener (Early Bird) is implemented in kindergarten. Additional assessments include iReady for grades 1-6, Foundations assessments, Words Their Way assessments, running records, district-developed writing rubrics, and SRSD rubrics, and exemplar pieces of writing for the three types of writing.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Illustrative Mathematics is the Conant mathematics K-6 curriculum, which is closely aligned to the district's core values of wellness, equity, and engagement and its goals around inclusive practices, UDL, and SEL instruction. Our overarching aim is to lay a foundation of great materials in every classroom so teachers can focus on making those materials work for the students they know best. Implementing high quality, universally designed, culturally sustaining, behaviorally supported, and evidenced-based classroom materials are part of the work to build a Multi-tiered System of Support at the school level. The indicators that set IM apart are those for accessibility for students and usability for teachers. IM provides lesson and unit-level UDL considerations and supports student Social, Emotional Learning (SEL). IM also has structures and routines embedded in each lesson to support all learners. A mathematics specialist works directly with students who need prerequisite skill development to access the grade-level content and curriculum. A STEAM coach also partners with classroom teachers to support them in the following ways: support implementation of new/improved teaching strategies; interpret and utilize iReady benchmark assessment data to inform instruction; plan assessment and instruction using the MA Curriculum Frameworks and a variety of resources; think about how to create appropriate learning targets for students; collect and analyze various evidence of student learning to support instructional decision-making; co-teach and debrief a shared lesson; continue to build knowledge of content and pedagogy.

Conant teachers have taken part in many professional learning workshops and opportunities that have focused on the mathematical practices, the use of open-ended tasks, fostering a mathematics growth-mindset for students, using 3-act tasks and other mathematical routines, promoting mathematical discussions, and understanding how mathematical concepts build from grade to grade.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

After the release of the NextGeneration Science Standards (MA STE Frameworks), the district spent four years developing science investigations through multiple research and development projects by the science coordinator, STEAM coaches, classroom teachers, special educators, and English language educators. The result is a highly sequenced set of investigations at each grade level that address the standards in each STE strand (physical science, life science, and earth and space science) and the big ideas. Each investigation starts with an essential question, timeframe, rationale, and performance expectations.

The investigations are built on the 5E Inquiry Model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate). Student choice is embedded throughout the investigation both for the teacher and students. Clear engagement expectations and assessment instruments are also articulated. Supporting documents include Unpacking the Performance Expectations (the Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas, and Crosscutting Concepts), a list of possible field trips, UDL practices to support the investigation, academic language, resources and activities for building academic language, and all the materials necessary for the investigation. The natural environment is accessed and utilized extensively throughout many of the investigations and includes observation (and scientist notebooks), nature walks, and outdoor play spaces. The district and school celebrate STEAM learning as part of a statewide effort to boost the interest, awareness, and ability for all learners to envision themselves in STEAM learning opportunities.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

With the release of the new Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks, the district is currently adjusting existing units of study and creating new units. These adjustments and creations will incorporate UDL principles of representation, engagement, and expression, as well as the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards and social emotional learning . The district has created a three-year implementation plan to minimize gaps as students move through the grades.

For the past three years, the district has supplied money to every classroom teacher, special educator, psychologist, counselor, and reading specialist to build classroom libraries that are more representative of the students served (windows and mirrors) and highlight characters who persevere, problem-solve, think creatively, overcome adversity, etc. (doors). Technology enhances student learning about themselves and

others, for example exploring other places through the use of Google Virtual Field Trips and accessing maps and globes that provide multiple perspectives. Primary and secondary sources are used as whole-class readings that are scaffolded for students. Visual Arts and Performing Arts specialists often collaborate with grade level teachers to engage students in learning about the arts of the culture or region studied.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

ART: The Conant art curriculum is based on a learner-directed, choice-based model called Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB). A choice-based art program allows students to choose from a variety of centers like drawing, collage, painting, sculpture, fiber, printmaking, and clay. The goal is to offer a program where students are encouraged to assume creative control of their art and art-making processes within an environment designed to support individual inquiry and the development of artistic behavior.

In a choice-based classroom, it is the individual student, not the teacher who defines the project. Teachers instead function as facilitators, mentors, instructors, and motivators depending on the observed need, circumstance, and interest of the students. The Conant Art Curriculum is also taught based on the concept of the Studio Habits of Mind where students develop their artistic hands, minds, heart, & world. Throughout the year, all students work in various 2D & 3D media while practicing the Studio Habits of Mind in their art-making process. Students are encouraged to think creatively, ask questions of themselves and others, and make meaning out of their artistic experiences in the art room. In the primary grades, students are introduced to the concept of the Studio Habits of Mind through singing and interpreting a song called I'm an Artist. Students work on practicing using their artistic hands, brain, heart, & world throughout the year. In the upper grades, students go into greater depth to understand the Studio Habits of Mind and implement them into their art-making process. By fifth grade, students set goals for themselves based on a particular habit and track their progress through student-teacher conferences, self-reflection, and assessments.

Music: In the Conant music program, all students participate in a weekly general music class for 45 minutes. Students in Grades 4 - 6 are also provided the option to participate in Ensemble Enrichment, consisting of weekly homogenous group instrument lessons, a weekly band or orchestra rehearsal, and/or a weekly Chorus rehearsal.

PE & Health: The Conant PE and Health curriculum is based on the National standards which define what a student should know and be able to do as a result of a quality physical education program and as such are guided by the following 5 standards:

Standard 1: The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns

Standard 2: The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.

Standard 3: The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

Standard 5: The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment,

challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

Digital Literacy/Library/Media: Students attend library once per week and Digital Literacy is integrated throughout the disciplines with the support of a technology integration assistant and a STEAM coach. Students are exposed to and use student search tools (e.g. Infobits, Sweet Search, Pixabay, Kiddle), assessment, study tools (e.g. Quizlet, Kahoot, Poll Everywhere), and online presentation and collaboration tools (e.g. Thinglink, Padlet, Voki, Powtoon). Students in grades K-1 have access to iPads and starting in grade 2 students begin to use ChromeBooks and Google Classroom.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

Classroom teachers use a variety of formal and informal assessments to monitor student skills and understandings. Teachers employ Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies, use multimodal approaches, and create ICAPs (Individual Curriculum Achievement Plans) to help students access and learn grade-level material within the classroom. Each teacher uses classroom technology such as a Smartboard, video examples, audiobooks, Chromebooks, and educational software to enhance instruction. In addition, educators utilize small instructional groups for students who are struggling to learn grade-level standards.

Additionally, there are a number of individuals who support students, such as: Reading and Mathematics Specialists, who work with students who struggle in math and/or reading; School counselor, who supports students who need individual and small-group intervention around emotional regulation, self-esteem, anger management, and more; Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), who works with teachers to observe/develop behavior support plans for students with behavior concerns. - Some students may still struggle despite these classroom resources. Students for whom teachers have academic, behavioral, and/or emotional concerns are referred to the Instructional Support Team (IST), which reviews each student's areas of strength and any area(s) of concern. The teacher shares student assessment data, instructional strategies that have been implemented, parent concerns, and anecdotal observations with the IST Team members, who review the referral information and visit the classroom to observe the student. The IST develops an intervention plan for the next six weeks to support the student. During these six weeks, the teacher implements strategies, collects additional data, and discusses concerns with parents. At the follow-up meeting, the teacher shares the new data, and the IST determines the next steps.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Teachers strive to provide the right level of challenge for each of their students. To accomplish this goal, they collect student data using a variety of formal and informal assessment tools. Teachers use the data to guide their instructional practices. All students need to be actively engaged in their learning, and it is critical that teachers meet the individual needs of all students. Our curriculum allows for additional enrichment challenges for students who demonstrate mastery of curriculum concepts.

During instruction, teachers provide whole-class instruction and also work with students in small groups or individual students. Groups are flexible, and classroom centers offer students the opportunity to extend their thinking. Teachers encourage students to design passion projects, where they choose a project focus that they are excited about learning. Passion projects encourage students to take charge of their own learning, which allows students who are performing above grade level academic challenges inspirational learning opportunities.

3c. Special education:

Conant houses two Resource Programs for students with autism, split into K-2 and 3-6, that provide intensive and specially designed instruction for students who require additional support within the general education classroom and/or accommodations or modifications to the curriculum. The Resource Programs emphasize the development of self-advocacy skills, greater independence, and responsibility for learning. Conant is also home to three Learning Centers that provide services to students with a variety of disabilities.

Students who receive Learning Center support participate fully in general education with accommodations and specially designed instruction to address individual needs.

Students with IEPs are supported through a variety of teaching models such as whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individualized instruction. Students receive a range of services from accommodations in general education classes to more supported programming in substantially separate, co-taught, and learning center models. Conant special education staff currently includes one IEP team chairperson, five special education teachers, fifteen special education assistants, one school psychologist, two speech-language pathologists, a part-time board-certified behavior analyst (BCBA), an occupational therapist, and a part-time physical therapist.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

Our English Language Education Department focuses on providing students opportunities for meaningful access to content knowledge, vocabulary, and the understanding of conceptual themes in each of the content areas. Our students are encouraged to speak, listen, read and write in English in safe and supportive environments that facilitate confidence across all language domains. Multilingual learners study the same grade level curriculum as fluent English speakers through language-rich experiences. Students in our program increase their proficiency in writing and speaking by using phrases, mastering vocabulary, using authentic phonetic qualities when they speak, and thinking critically about what they hear and read.

Instructional materials for EL instruction are comparable to those provided to all other students and teachers. All textbooks and materials adopted by the district are analyzed through a cultural lens. Our English educators are included in the teams to evaluate materials for English learners. Regardless of the setting for instruction (pull-out, push-in, co-teaching, etc.) Conant provides multilingual learners with subject matter content and ESL instruction aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the WIDA ELD Standards. The ESL curriculum addresses the English language needs of our multilingual learners at all levels and promotes the acceleration of language acquisition.

We provide oral interpretation and written translation services to ensure that families are able to access information about their child's school program in an accessible language. When a family registers for school here, they answer a Home Language Survey to share information about their child's first exposure to and experiences with language(s) other than English. When parents indicate they need an interpreter, translated materials, or both, we note these in our student information system. This way, teachers know which families need these language supports to engage with their child's teachers and school staff.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:

For students who are homeless or refugee, the District offers a variety of supports including parent outreach (in collaboration with our local United Way), education programs, and for families who need it, extensive wraparound services (Family Success Partnership) to help access needed supports (e.g. health, food, shelter, medical care, etc.). We also work closely with the Acton Food Pantry and offer weekend food bags to support families with struggling food insecurity, and we are proud to offer a variety of support services and resources for our families. We understand that our trusted family partnerships are an investment in our students' achievement.

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

At Conant School, the Responsive Classroom is used as an approach to teaching that focuses on helping students develop their academic, social, and emotional skills in a learning environment where students can do their best learning. During the first six weeks of school, all teachers begin the school year by asking their students to reflect on their successes and challenges from the previous year and to name the things they are most looking forward to accomplishing this year. Students select individual hopes and dreams and the classroom teacher builds on these goals by asking the class what rules they will need in the classroom so that everyone is able to achieve their hopes and dreams. By going through this process all classrooms are able to generate their own classroom rules that best support students' learning. Our goal is to standardize our approach to positive discipline to create a safe, calm, and respectful school climate based on a deep respect for all members of the Conant School community.

To best support the health and well-being of our students, we continue to help students develop a positive growth mindset. A growth mindset is a belief that one's intelligence can be grown or developed with persistence, effort, and a focus on learning. Individuals with a growth mindset believe they are capable of learning nearly anything if they work hard and accept failures and challenges as opportunities to grow. Our goal is to provide all students the opportunity to develop a growth mindset through identifying strategies for self-regulation, engagement, and motivation so they can learn effectively. We also incorporate movement breaks, as well as mindfulness activities with our students. When teachers implement mindfulness activities during transition times, such as returning from lunch and recess, students report that their bodies feel calm and they are ready to learn. We have also found that by incorporating Responsive Classroom energizers and frequent movement breaks that students are refreshed and focused on learning during the school day.

Most importantly, our students need to feel loved, valued, challenged, and supported by all of the adults in the Conant School community. We are proud to engage, motivate, and provide our students with a positive learning environment that supports the academic, social and emotional growth of all of our students.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

The Conant School PTO and Conant School Council are two important groups that have made the greatest impact for student success and school improvement at Conant School. The Conant PTO is a volunteer-run organization of parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators. The PTO meets regularly, which provides the administration with the opportunity to share academic achievements and challenges with parents. The Conant PTO funds and supports programs and materials above and beyond those afforded by the town budget, supplementing and supporting the school curriculum and cultural growth. The PTO budget continues to enhance the Conant community and experience for students and families. Each year, the PTO brings an author to visit the school to inspire our students, they provide financial support for classroom assistants, enrichment performances at school assemblies, and field trip scholarships for students whose families cannot afford them. The Conant School PTO plays an active and generous role in providing support to the Conant community.

The Conant School Council is composed of parents, teachers, and community members. The school council assists the principal in adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards. They work towards identifying the educational needs of students attending the school. The council also reviews the annual school building budget. Academic achievements and challenges are also regularly discussed during School Council meetings and minutes from each meeting are shared with families on the school website.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

Conant has structures in place to create a professional working culture. This includes weekly grade level collaboration time during the school day, as well as weekly early release time. During the year, the weekly

early release days are used for District-wide Professional Learning in which educators have choice, District-wide Grade Level Meetings where educators across the District meet with their colleagues for specific learning, Building-based Professional Learning focused on School Improvement Plan goals, and Build-based Grade-Level Meetings to analyze student learning and meet with coaches and specialists for instructional planning.

During weekly grade-level collaboration meetings, teachers and school leaders have the opportunity to share student data, discuss concerns, and problem-solve issues as needed. Daily walk-throughs with follow-up discussions round out classroom connections. Short, frequent visits, in addition to the longer classroom observations, provide a lens through which administrators facilitate best teaching and learning practices.

Staff meetings, twice per month, also provide opportunities to build a culture of sharing what works for students and to build collegial relationships. Our Beginning Teacher Support Program provides new hires a mentor and a cohort of peers with whom they engage in regular and just-in-time professional learning. Finally, this marks the first year of our districtwide Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) staff affinity group, which has provided a much-needed opportunity for staff of color to connect with one another and share their unique experiences and provide input to the District.

4. School Leadership:

At Conant School, we share the District core values (wellness, equity and engagement) and beliefs:

Every student has the right to be loved, valued, challenged, and supported by the adults across our school community.

Learning must be meaningful and engaging for every student.

Each educator is responsible for every student's learning and social-emotional well-being, and every ABRSD employee contributes to supporting the social, emotional, and intellectual growth of all students every day.

By building relationships and trust with students, families, and colleagues, it is safe to make mistakes and learn from others.

Student characteristics that include race, socio-economic status, disability, ethnicity, or any other part of their identity should not be an indicator of access or outcomes; and the language we use to talk about students and families shapes the culture of our schools and district.

Conant School is a diverse learning community and we also understand that all of our students need to feel safe, loved, and supported to achieve success. Conant School has a strong leadership team, where the Principal and the Assistant Principal work closely together to support student learning. We meet each week with our collaborative grade-level teams to review assessment data, discuss curriculum and instruction, and share the academic and social-emotional concerns of our students. The Assistant Principal and Principal value our trusted relationships with our staff, students, and families.

At Conant School, we have learned that student achievement is possible when students have the necessary social-emotional skills such as problem-solving, self-regulation, impulse control, and empathy.

We have expanded our support services to best meet the needs of our students and families. Each week our CARE committee, composed of the Principal, Assistant Principal, nurse, counselor, and psychologist meet to discuss shared concerns for students. Our wraparound services (Family Success Partnership) allows Conant School to provide referrals for families that are in need of innovative, collaborative, and preventative wraparound services. We also work closely with the Acton Food Pantry and offer weekend food bags to support families with struggling food insecurity, and we are proud to offer a variety of support services and resources for our families. We understand that our trusted family partnerships are an investment in our students' achievement.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

This year, the District has adopted The Leadership Academy's Culturally Responsive Leadership: A Framework for School & School System Leaders, which states that culturally responsive practice "requires that education leaders understand and simultaneously attend to a strong foundation of cultural understanding, the academic success of all students, cultivating and deepening the cultural competence of themselves and the adults they lead, and the cultivation of sociopolitical consciousness."

Also, in an effort to build more inclusive and culturally sustaining spaces for our students, Conant faculty will participate in on-going professional learning to grow their culturally responsive teaching practice. Conant faculty will partner with Gates Elementary faculty to explore Sara K. Ahmed's book, *Being the Change*. Educators implemented lessons and routines which encouraged positive identity development (ex: identity mapping, windows/mirrors/sliding glass doors).

This year, Conant welcomed author Karyn Parsons of the Sweet Blackberry Foundation to read aloud two of her books with students. The mission of Sweet Blackberry is to bring little known stories of African American achievement to children everywhere, so students learn stories of African American individuals overcoming the odds and making invaluable contributions to our society.

Additionally, during the first 3 years of employment, every educator is required to take a Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) workshop the goal of which is to better understand how aspects of identity (gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, age, race/ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc.) interact with systems to promote equitable learning spaces and to explore ways to create more inclusive environments.

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Conant's school motto is, "Where the Whole Child is the Whole Idea." This year, our school goals have embodied this value within three branches of work: Culturally Responsive Practice, growing a Responsive Classroom and School, and implementing a robust multi-tiered system of support. This year, the practice that has been most instrumental to our school's success is our focus on culturally responsive and culturally sustaining practices.

In an effort to build more inclusive and culturally sustaining spaces for our students, Conant faculty have been participating in ongoing professional learning to grow their culturally responsive teaching practice. Conant faculty has utilized Sara K. Ahmed's book, *Being the Change* to implement lessons and routines that encourage positive identity development (ex: identity mapping, windows/mirrors/sliding glass doors). Additionally, we engaged in a two-part series of professional coaching with Dr. Kimberly Parker where our staff began examining the intersections between our own identities, our students' identities, and our teaching practice. This work led to students developing identity webs which they will carry with them in "identity portfolios" from one year to the next, creating new and evolving webs as their identities evolve and expand.

Our work with *Being the Change*, coupled with ongoing SEED work, where educators engage in understanding their own identities, has increased educator awareness of their own biases and practices and helped to build more culturally responsive practices in the classroom. Each teacher identifies and implements explicit practices for learning (e.g. correctly pronouncing each student's name within the first week of school, etc.). Additionally, students at all grade levels participate in a developmentally appropriate identity mapping activity, as mentioned above, which evolved throughout the year as relationships and classroom community develop. In addition there are annotated resources, professional learning communities, and organized professional learning to support educators. Next year, we are growing a group of teacher leaders to act as culturally responsive coaches to best support our community in small and large ways alike.