

**Michael E. Smith Middle School
100 Mosier St.
South Hadley MA 01075**

**School Improvement Plan
2024 - 2026**



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Executive Summary
<p>Michael E. Smith Middle School is a public school located in South Hadley, MA, which is in a large suburb setting. The student population of Michael E. Smith Middle School is 511 and the school serves 5-8. Students to Teacher ratio 12.8 : 1. Student demographics: 78.5% White, 16.4% Hispanic, 2.7% Multi-race/Non Hispanic, 1.4% Asian, and 1% African American.</p>
Mission
<p>We, as a community of students, staff, families and stakeholders, strive to be inclusive, open-minded and curious. We value self-reliance, scholarship, honesty, and kindness while fostering opportunities for growth and building community. We encourage each other to embrace challenges while also celebrating successes within a safe and welcoming environment.</p>
Vision
<p>Our vision is to develop a well-rounded curriculum that helps students to achieve their full potential. We will do this by having students begin to explore their interests in a welcoming, safe, and supportive learning environment.</p>
Core Values
<p>The Michael E. Smith Middle School Tigers will show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● GRIT● RESPECT● RESPONSIBILITY
Civic and Social Expectations:
<p>Practice Kindness and Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Be Inclusive: Invite others to join in activities, especially those who might feel left out.● Show Empathy: Try to understand what others are going through and offer support when needed.● Use Positive Language: Speak kindly to peers and teachers, avoiding negative or hurtful comments. <p>Have Integrity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Be Honest: Tell the truth even when it's difficult, and avoid cheating or plagiarism.● Stand Up for What's Right: If you see bullying or unfair treatment, speak out or seek help from an adult.● Stay True to Values: Hold onto your principles, even when it's challenging or unpopular. <p>Collaborate Effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Work Well with Others: Respect different opinions and work towards common goals in group settings.● Communicate Openly: Express your ideas and listen to others, ensuring everyone has a voice.● Resolve Conflicts Peacefully: Use problem-solving skills to address disagreements without resorting to anger or violence. <p>Reflect on Personal Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Self-Assessment: Regularly think about your actions and decisions, considering how they align with your values.

- Set Goals: Identify areas for improvement and set specific goals to build character traits like patience, diligence, or generosity.
- Seek Feedback: Ask teachers, peers, or family members for constructive criticism to help you grow.

Theory of Action

If we . . .

- Provide relevant learning opportunities that are engaging, inclusive and equitable
- Create strong relationships between staff and students in order to build equity and an inclusive culture
- Allocate resources to meet the needs of students, staff, families and the community,

Then we will . . .

- Foster a joy of learning and maximize student success, providing every student with opportunities and support they need for academic achievement and wellness.

Strategic Objectives

Goal #1: Curriculum, Instruction and Data

Design learning environments that will enable students to think deeply, make meaning for themselves and become aware of their own learning process

Objectives	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline
1. Develop a Multi-Tiered System of Support that has a focus on student academic needs and gaps.	Continue Student Assistance Team Meeting to discuss students academic needs and interventions needed.	Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.	Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.
2. Improve teaching and learning opportunities through the development of an instructional coaching model that engages in robust professional development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct classroom observations and gather data to understand teachers' current instructional practices. • Use Self-Assessment to identify areas where they feel they need more support or professional growth. • Establish clear and measurable goals for the instructional coaching model. 	Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.	Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure these goals align with MESMS's academic objectives and teachers' needs. <p>Implement a Data-Driven Feedback Loop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use classroom observation data and student achievement data to provide targeted feedback to teachers. • Hold regular debrief sessions between administration and educators to reflect on progress, identify challenges, and adjust strategies as needed. 		
<p>3. Create a vertically aligned, horizontally aligned and culturally responsive and inclusive standards based curriculum that is aligned to the MA frameworks as well as a reporting system for grades and achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all curriculum areas are reviewed against the MA Curriculum Frameworks to align instruction with state standards, incorporating the expected competencies at each grade level. • Integrate diverse perspectives, texts, and resources that reflect the backgrounds, cultures, and languages of students. Include materials that challenge stereotypes and 	<p>Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.</p>	<p>Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.</p>

	<p>offer multiple viewpoints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that learning objectives are inclusive of different learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, providing varied entry points for students to access content.• Embed social-emotional learning and culturally responsive pedagogy across the curriculum.• Develop assessments aligned with the MA Frameworks that measure students' mastery of content standards, offering multiple methods of assessment (e.g., projects, portfolios, performance-based assessments).• Ensure assessments are culturally responsive by being accessible to all learners and free from cultural bias.• Use standardized reading assessments, screening tools, and teacher recommendations to identify students who require additional reading support. Tools like DIBELS, Fountas & Pinnell, or iReady assessments can help assess students' reading levels and specific		
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	<p>areas of need (e.g., phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, comprehension).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group students by skill level or reading need for more targeted intervention. These groups should remain flexible, with students moving in and out based on their progress. 		
<p>4. Continue with expansion upon related arts offerings to include STEM, Foreign Language and Pre-Vocational Skills course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a scope and sequence for each new course area, ensuring that skills and content build progressively across grade levels. Integrate coding, robotics, and engineering concepts that align with high school STEM programs. For foreign languages, ensure that introductory courses provide a foundation for advanced language learning in high school. For pre-vocational skills, focus on hands-on, practical skills (e.g., technical literacy, problem-solving) that can be expanded in high school vocational or CTE (Career and Technical Education) pathways. Work with educators and 	<p>Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.</p>	<p>Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.</p>

	<p>curriculum designers to develop course objectives, lesson plans, and resources for each new course. Ensure alignment with state standards and district expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Incorporate critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving into course designs, particularly in STEM and pre-vocational courses, to align with future workforce needs. ● Ensure that foreign language offerings are culturally responsive, integrating the study of diverse cultures alongside language skills to provide students with global perspectives. ● Emphasize how these new courses align with district programs and prepare students for high school, college, and career pathways in STEM fields, language studies, and vocational careers. 		
<p>5. Develop Inclusive Curriculum and Instructional Strategies that supports ALL students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that the curriculum is accessible and adaptable for both general and special education students. Use Universal 		

	Design for Learning (UDL) principles to create flexible learning environments that meet the needs of all students.		
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Goal #2: School Community Social Emotional Health and Wellness
 Foster constructive partnerships with students, families and key stakeholders for the purpose of enriching the learning environment for students and supporting inclusivity.

Objectives	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline
1. Develop and implement a focus for the Student Assistance Team on student absenteeism, chronic absenteeism and student improvement plans for absenteeism with a focus on student interventions that vertically align with district programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement MTSS with fidelity Define the Focus on Absenteeism: Set clear, measurable goals for reducing absenteeism, both for students with occasional absences and those with chronic absenteeism - Strive for 5 absences or less initiative Use a data-driven approach to track student attendance daily. Implement attendance monitoring systems (e.g., PowerSchool) to flag students who show signs of emerging absenteeism (e.g., missing several days in a row or reaching a certain percentage of absences). Create a clear and simple process for teachers, counselors, or administrators to refer students to the SAT when attendance issues arise. 	Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.	Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When a student is referred, collect qualitative data from teachers, parents, and even students themselves to better understand the reasons behind the absenteeism (e.g., health issues, family difficulties, transportation problems, disengagement).• Involve families in discussions about attendance. Conduct family meetings or home visits (if necessary) to understand challenges they may face in ensuring their child attends school regularly, and offer support where needed.• For students with chronic absenteeism, develop Student Improvement Plans (SIPs) that outline specific strategies and interventions to improve attendance. The plan should include measurable goals, a timeline, and a designated team member responsible for overseeing the student's progress.• Schedule regular SAT meetings to review the attendance data and the progress of students on		
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	<p>improvement plans. Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and make necessary adjustments.</p>		
<p>2. Continue and refine the Advisory model that addresses social pragmatics and study skills with the Sown To Grow Curriculum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct a comprehensive review of the current advisory model, including its strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement. Solicit feedback from students, teachers, and advisory leaders to assess how well the model is meeting its goals. ● Use student data from the Sown To Grow platform to track social-emotional growth and academic goal-setting. ● Provide professional development for advisors to ensure they fully understand the Sown To Grow platform and curriculum. ● Advisors will know how to use the platform’s tools for SEL and study skills, including goal-setting, self-reflection, and tracking progress. ● Map out how the Sown To Grow curriculum aligns with the specific social pragmatics 		

	<p>and study skills goals of the advisory program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For social pragmatics, ensure the curriculum includes role-playing, communication strategies, and empathy-building exercises.• For study skills, focus on time management, organization, test preparation, and learning strategies.• Create a structured and predictable schedule for advisory periods that balances the time spent on social pragmatics, study skills, and reflection using the Sown To Grow platform. Ensure consistency across all advisory groups to provide equity in content delivery.• While maintaining structure, allow flexibility for advisors to adjust sessions based on the needs of their students.• Clearly define learning objectives for each advisory session, ensuring that both social pragmatics and study skills are addressed regularly. Use the Sown To Grow curriculum to guide weekly or bi-weekly goals, such as practicing		
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	<p>positive peer interactions or developing personal academic goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly monitor student progress using the data provided by the Sown To Grow platform. Track improvements in social-emotional skills, attendance to advisory sessions, and achievement of academic goals. • Use student data to identify those who may be struggling with social pragmatics or study skills, and provide targeted interventions for these students within the advisory framework. • Collect feedback from students about their experiences with the advisory model and the Sown To Grow curriculum. Use surveys, informal check-ins, and focus groups to gather input on what works well and what could be improved. 		
<p>3. Increase parent involvement through MESMS PTO or Site Council Team (SCT)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out surveys or conduct polls to assess parents' interest in participating in a PTO. Ask about their preferred methods of involvement, meeting times, and 	<p>Administration and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Ongoing for the 24-26 School Years with quarterly monitoring of progress.</p>

	<p>areas of concern or interest (e.g., fundraising, event planning, school policies). Establish a clear purpose for the PTO or Site Council Team . The PTO may focus on school events, fundraising, and community-building , while a SCT will focus on providing feedback on school policies, budget, curriculum, or other initiatives and needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure that the group's objectives align with the school's mission, vision, and district goals, such as improving student success, fostering community engagement, and supporting student well-being. ● Introduce the PTO/SCT at school events like open houses, parent-teacher conferences, or back-to-school nights. Distribute informational materials explaining how parents can get involved and the benefits of their participation. 		
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Goal #3: Improved Special Education and General Education Alignment
 Support practices that encourage healthy constructive engagement in the school and town that reflects the primary work of educators to educate students in their social/emotional growth

Objectives	Action Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline
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<p>1. Increase opportunities for co-teaching and collaboration time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Co-teaching opportunities, shared resources, or enhanced communication between staff. ● Establish cross-disciplinary grade level teams that include special education and general education teachers to collaborate on lesson planning, curriculum development, and student support strategies. ● Schedule regular meetings for these teams to discuss student progress, share resources, and develop joint strategies to support students' academic and social/emotional needs. 	<p>Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.</p>	
<p>2. Provide professional development on co-teaching models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer training for teachers on effective co-teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and the use of inclusive practices to support diverse learners 	<p>Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.</p>	
<p>3. Increase opportunities for co-teaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement co-teaching models in classrooms where special education and general education teachers collaborate to deliver instruction. This model allows 	<p>Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.</p>	

	for differentiated instruction and support for all students.		
4. Integrate Sown to Grown priority standards and concepts into lessons when possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate SEL into both general and special education settings. Focus on strategies that support emotional regulation, peer relationships, and conflict resolution. Incorporate SEL resources and curricula that are designed for all students, ensuring that special education students also have access to social/emotional learning opportunities. 	Administration, Counselors, Educators and supporting staff.	
5. Implement a model of restorative practices and restorative justice that shape the culture of student/staff relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide comprehensive training for all staff on restorative practices, emphasizing their principles, benefits, and implementation strategies. Include workshops on communication skills, conflict resolution, and empathy-building techniques. Create a restorative practices team comprising teachers, administrators, counselors, and community members to lead the initiative. This team will be 	Administration, Counselors, Students, Educators and supporting staff.	

	<p>responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating restorative practices within the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop specific goals and objectives for the implementation of restorative practices, focusing on enhancing relationships, reducing disciplinary issues, and promoting a positive school climate.• Involve students in the development and implementation of restorative practices. Create student leadership groups to gather input, facilitate discussions, and promote restorative initiatives among their peers.• Integrate activities and lessons that promote empathy, understanding, and emotional intelligence. Encourage students and staff to recognize and respect each other's feelings and perspectives.• Emphasize the importance of accountability within restorative practices. Encourage students to take responsibility for		
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	<p>their actions and understand the impact of their behavior on others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regularly collect data on the effectiveness of restorative practices in improving student behavior, attendance, and academic performance. Use surveys, feedback forms, and disciplinary records to gauge the impact. 		
Outcomes			
<p>A. The percentage of students making progress toward English Language Arts proficiency, having been identified as “path forward: declined.” MESMS declined by 3.1 in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). The greatest decline was in the subgroup of Hispanic/Latino at -6.3. The goal for 2025 is 496.7 which is a 6.5 point growth.</p> <p>B. All students will increase in proficiency from 34% to 42% by June of 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students classified as High Needs will increase from 20% to 28% by June of 2025 b. Students with disabilities will increase from 9% to 20% by June of 2025 c. Students categorized as EL or former EL will increase from a 476 scaled score average to a 485.8 scaled score average by June of 2025 <p>C. The percentage of students making progress towards Mathematics proficiency, having been identified “improved below target” by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), will increase by 6 points by the year 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All students will increase in proficiency from 33% to 39% by June of 2025 b. Students classified as High Needs will increase from 14% to 20% by June of 2025 c. Students with disabilities will increase from 7 to 15% by June of 2025 d. Students categorized as EL or former EL will increase from a 478 scaled score average to a 485 scaled score average. <p>D. Michael E. Smith Middle School will aim at having students' attendance be at 95% or higher by implementing the “Strive for 5” Initiative. Students who are identified as chronically absent will have a letter sent home at 5 unexcused absences and at 10 unexcused absences will have a meeting, which will include parents and the student will have a written plan to reduce absences.</p> <p>E. The percentage of students who are identified as being chronically absent (10% or more) will reduce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. For all students from 26.3% in 2023-2024 to 14.3% by June of 2025 b. For High Needs students from 35.5% to 20% by June of 2025 c. For students with disabilities from 29% to 14% by June of 2025 d. For LEP (English Language Learner) from 46% to 31% by June of 2025 			