

MERSD School Improvement Plan

Essex Elementary School

2024-2026 - Updated 9/2025



Every student is at the center of decision-making.

District Strategic Initiative 1 (DSI:1)

Establish and foster an authentic Pre-K-12 learning environment.

1. *Conduct external elementary school level assessments of current practice inclusive of authentic learning self-study. [Student Centered, Student Achievement]*
2. *Define “student centered authentic learning” and develop internal needs assessments for secondary level schools. [Student Centered, Student Achievement]*
3. *Map and deliver a developmentally differentiated professional development plan informed by the outcomes of school-based assessments.*
4. *Strengthen traditional academic program practices to ensure horizontal and vertical articulation. [Student Centered, Student Achievement]*
5. *Develop community partners to provide opportunities for students to connect learning to real-life application. [Family and Community Partnership]*
6. *Prioritize and support programming to promote creativity, innovation, and the arts. [Student Centered, Family Community Partnership]*

School Goals	Resources & Responsibilities	Deliverables (what & when) Measures of Implementation Documentation
<p>EES will continue the process to receive NEASC Elementary Accreditation. This will be done as a collaborative exercise with our MMES counterparts. One focus area will be to align the authentic learning experiences at both elementary schools.</p> <p><i>DSI 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 *</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● EES Principal● Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology● EES Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● NEASC Final Report submitted - Sep 24● NEASC Priority Areas for Growth submitted - Sep 24● NEASC Report to be received- Nov-Dec ‘24● NEASC Steering Committee to review recommendations - Jan ‘25● NEASC Report shared with community- April ‘25● NEASC Recommendations integrated into SIP Update - Sep ‘25● NEASC progress presented during SIP Presentation - Sep ‘26

<p>MERSD Instructional Coaches will work with teachers to add at least one novel Authentic Learning Activity to each grade level. DSI 1.1, 1.2 & 1.5 *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EES Principal • Director of Curriculum and Instruction • MERSD Instructional Coaches • EES Teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current list of authentic learning activities shared and expanded - Oct/Nov '24 • Additional authentic learning activities implemented, evaluated, and documented Oct '24-Jun '26 • Record of identified authentic learning experiences expanded to include novel grade level experiences - June '26
<p>EES will work collaboratively with district staff and MMES staff to design a shared MERSD Elementary Teacher Assistance Team consultation model DSI 1.3, 1.4 *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EES Principal • Director of Student Services • EES TAT Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice and past practice review - Sep '24-Dec '24 • Current practice overview comparison - Sep '24-Dec '24 • MERSD TAT Consultation Model developed and flow chart created/adjusted - Dec '24-Jun '25 • MERSD TAT Consultation Model presented to staff and implemented- Aug '25-Jun '26
<p>EES administration will collaborate with MMES administration and the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology to develop and implement a plan for instructional coaching in the areas of literacy and mathematics. DSI 1.3 1.4 *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EES Principal • Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology • MERSD Instructional Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Meetings with Instructional Coaches - Sep '24- Jun'26 • Monthly Elementary Leadership Meetings - Sep '24- Jun'26 • Collaborative Evaluations completed - May '25 and May '26
<p>EES will collaborate with MMES administration and staff to align performing arts curriculum and performances. DSI 1.6*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EES Principal • EES Music Teacher • EES Band Instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Elementary Music Expectations and Plan Developed - Dec. '24 • Congruent K-5 Winter and Spring Culminating Music Performances Implemented - Dec '24 - Jun '26
<p>EES administration will collaborate with MMES administration to develop and implement a plan for the new Library Teaching Assistant to support students and staff with authentic learning activities DSI 1.3 1.4 *</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MMES Principal • MERSD Librarian • MERSD Library TA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Meetings with Elementary Library Staff - Sep '24- Jun'26 • Monthly Elementary Leadership Meetings - Sep '24- Jun'26

MERSD Instructional Coaches will design and implement an annual Family Literacy Night and Family Mathematics Night to partner with our students' families in each content area. **DSI 1.1, 1.2 & 1.5***

- EES Principal
- Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology
- MERSD Instructional Coaches
- EES Teachers

- Family Literacy/Mathematics Night Plan Developed - Oct-Dec '24
- Opportunities for grant funding explored - Oct-Dec '24
- Family Literacy/Mathematics Night Plan Implemented - Mar '25
- Family Literacy/Mathematics Night Plan Evaluated and Revised - Jun '25- June '26

EES will expand its partnerships with local community organizations and volunteers to offer after school clubs to students. **DSI 1.5, 1.6**

- EES Principal
- Community Partners/Volunteers

- Community outreach to determine club offerings for each session (4-8 clubs for three sessions per year)-- Sept '24
- Implement three sessions (6 weeks each) of afterschool clubs- Ongoing Sept '24 - June '26

NEASC Priority Area #1 Goal Statement: The schools will collectively articulate a written curriculum in a consistent format, including units of study with guiding/essential questions, concepts, content and skills, instructional strategies, and assessment practices for all grades and all subject areas across the two schools (2.2a, 2.2).*

- MERSD Director of Curriculum
- MMES Principal
- MMES Staff

- Continue curriculum mapping across all content areas following the model created for ELA - June '26 and ongoing
- Use identified beliefs about learning to enhance the curriculum with best practices in content areas - June '26 and ongoing
- Identify opportunities within the curriculum at each grade level where students will have the opportunity to develop, practice, and get feedback on their acquisition of the skills identified in the vision of the graduate - June '26 and ongoing

NEASC Priority Area #2 Goal Statement: The schools will use a dynamic, collaborative, and inclusive process informed by current research to develop their shared core values and beliefs about learning in alignment with the district vision of the graduate (1.2a, 1.2)*

- MERSD Director of Curriculum
- MMES Principal
- MMES Staff

- Draft, present, and elicit feedback on a set of common beliefs about learning - Dec '25
- Consider ways current instructional practices align or do not align with the draft beliefs about learning, and identify strategies to improve alignment - May '26
- Refine and publish common beliefs about learning - June '26

NEASC Priority Area #3 Goal Statement: The schools will ensure that the vision of a graduate is actively reflected in the school culture and is

- MERSD Director of Curriculum
- MMES Principal

- Ensure the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate include the school's commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging - May '26

known and understood by all stakeholders (1.2, 2.1).*

- MMES Staff

- Create a VOG Matrix for the elementary grades
 - For each of the six VOG areas, identify the specific ways the skills in that area are currently being developed in the elementary curriculum and learning experiences - May '26
 - Identify benchmarks or goals at critical grade levels, such as grades 2 and 5 with key expectation criteria - Beyond May '26
 - Identify aspects of the vision of the graduate that may require additional focus or the development of expanded learning opportunities - Beyond May '26
 - Articulate age- and grade-appropriate expectations for elementary students in each area - Beyond May '26
 - Develop strategies for students to get feedback on their development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in the vision of the graduate - Beyond May '26
 - Integrate the vision of the graduate into the written elementary curriculum documents - May '26 and ongoing
 - Ensure the core values, beliefs about learning, and vision of the graduate are actively reflected in the school culture and guide the school's policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations - May '26 and ongoing
 - Develop and implement a formal process to assess and communicate individual learner progress toward achieving the district's vision of the graduate to learners and their families - May '26 and ongoing
 - Develop an annual report on whole-school progress toward learners' achievement of the vision of the graduate -Beyond May '26
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Strategic Initiative 2

Integrate social emotional learning into all aspects of the school day.

1. Create a K-12 SEL Leadership model charged with training staff on ways to integrate a variety of strategies to help increase student availability for learning. [Student Achievement, Student Centered, Equity]
2. Create a Vertical SEL Team to support the implementation of SEL informed instruction. [Student Achievement, Student Centered]
3. Design an integration plan and rubric to use to measure effectiveness of SEL integration at the individual student and classroom level. [Student Achievement, Student Centered, Equity]
4. Involve families and the community in the SEL work that our staff and students are engaged in. [Family and Community Partnerships]

School Goals	Resources & Responsibilities	Deliverables (what & when) Measures of Implementation Documentation
EES will work with SEL Leadership Team and MMES staff to implement the developed SEL Scope and Sequence. DSI 2.2 *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EES Principal ● EES Teachers ● SEL Leadership Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share Scope and Sequence with EES staff- Sep-Oct '24 ● Implement scope and sequence during school day- June '25 ● Feedback and refinement to SEL Leadership Team- June '25 ● Continued implementation using feedback/revisions- June '26
EES staff will provide resources for families (via weekly newsletter) to support students who are facing struggles with anxiety and other mental health challenges. This will include a collaboration with a child psychologist with specific expertise in the area of anxiety. DSI 2.4 *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EES Principal ● EES Counselor ● Director of Student Services ● Child Psychologist Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Admin Training - Sep '24 ● Staff Training - Dec '24 ● Monthly Newsletter Outreach- Nov '24-Jun '26
Families will be engaged in the SEL work that our school is undertaking via regular newsletter updates and community SEL opportunities. DSI 2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EES Principal ● MERSD SEL Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Newsletter and email updates – Sep '24-Jun '26 ● SEL Opportunities at Open House – Sep '24 and Sep '25 ● Family Charter Night- Sep '25

EES will establish a dedicated calm space within the school to support students’ sensory needs and enhance self-regulation skills, leading to improved behavior, social emotional learning, and academic performance.
DSI 2.3

- EES Principal
- School Counselor
- Occupational Therapist

- Calm Space set-up and inventory of resources and materials available in the space, including a replenishment plan– Sep - Oct ‘24
- Staff Training and Utilization Guides– Nov ‘24
- Monitoring and Evaluation Report with ongoing refinements based on feedback – Nov ‘24 - June ‘26

Strategic Initiative 3

Celebrate and nurture an inclusive and diverse school culture that recognizes the contributions and uniqueness of all individuals.

1. *Identify and hire a consultant/coach to support the district in achieving cultural proficiency in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion. [Student Centered, Student Achievement, Equity, Family and Community Partnership, Resources]*
2. *Conduct a cultural proficiency, diversity, equity, and inclusion assessment. [Student Centered, Student Achievement, Equity, Family and Community Partnership, Resources]*
3. *Build on and expand inclusion and cultural competence training for staff and students.*

School Goals	Resources & Responsibilities	Deliverables (what & when) Measures of Implementation Documentation
EES will implement the “Investigating History” curriculum as it is released by DESE. This will provide more relevant and inclusive perspectives to students when learning about historical events. DSI 3.3*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EES Principal ● EES Teachers ● MERSD Director of Curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grade 5 - Sep ‘24-Jun ‘25 ● Grade 3 and 4 - Sep ‘25-Jun’26 (pending DESE release)
EES will collaborate with MMES to expose students to authors from diverse backgrounds to increase global awareness and appreciation of diverse cultures. DSI 3.3*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EES Principal ● Elementary Librarian ● FOESS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hena Kahn - ‘24-’25 ● TBD - ‘25-’26

EES will evaluate and revise as needed classroom and schoolwide traditions to ensure they are culturally responsive and accessible to all students, reflecting the diversity of our community. **DSI 3.2, 3.3**

- EES Principal
- EES Leadership Team
- EES School Council
- Audit of current traditions– Feb ‘25
- Creation of inclusive events calendar– June ‘25
- Revision/Implementation of events/traditions– June ‘26

Strategic Initiative 4

Ensure funding for a stable, multi-year budget and capital improvement plan through collaboration with town and community partners.

1. *Develop and pass a budget that maintains quality and forward progress maintaining efficient practices but shifting to greater advocacy for increased funding to the District.*
2. *Articulate large and small scale operational and facilities capital needs and obligations. [Student Centered, Student Achievement, Equity, Family and Community Partnerships, Resources]*
3. *Continue to evolve the central administrative organization structure to efficiently and effectively support district wide improvement goals. [Student Centered, Student Achievement, Resources]*
4. *Review personnel efficiencies to improve or adjust delivery of programs. [Student Centered, Student Achievement, Equity, Resources]*

School Goals	Resources & Responsibilities	Deliverables (what & when) Measures of Implementation Documentation
EES administration will work collaboratively with MERSD district staff to identify materials and staffing gaps in areas highlighted by the NEASC report. DSI 4.1-4*	● EES Principal	● Budget Request - Oct ‘24-Jun ‘26

**Shared goal with MMES*



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