

Ottoson Middle School School Improvement Plan 2021 - 2022

**Presentation to Arlington School Committee
October 28, 2021**

Ottoson Middle School

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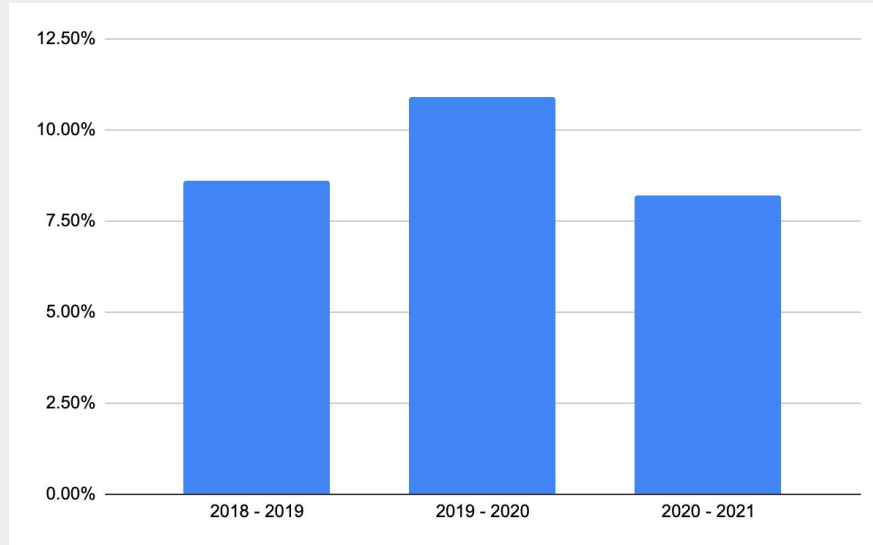
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School Improvement Goals

- 1. Ottoson Middle School will improve student engagement and attendance by the implementation of a Bridge Program.**
- 2. The Ottoson Middle School will adopt RULER SEL and will create an Advisory Program.**
- 3. Ottoson Middle School will collaborate with the mathematics department to investigate equitable pathways through mathematics coursework beginning in grade 7.**

Goal 1: Ottoson Middle School will improve student engagement and attendance by the implementation of a Bridge Program.



What is a Bridge Program?

1. Helps students transition back from an extended absence.
2. Offers students temporary help, both emotionally and academically, until they are able to be back in classes full-time.
3. Consists of an academic coordinator and a clinical coordinator (social worker) who support these students.

Reasons for creating a Bridge Program

1. The number of chronically absent students due to hospitalizations and school refusal
2. An increase in anxiety and depression
3. The referrals to Special Education

History of the Bridge Program at OMS: A Timeline

During that **2018-2019** school year, we identified students who missed school for social-emotional reasons.

During **2019-2020**, OMS partnered with Bridge for Resilient Youth (BRYT)

2019-2020:

Hired a teacher to run the program
Designed a space for the program
Developed entrance and exit criteria

Percentage of chronically absent students rose to 10.9.

2020-2021: Bridge program paused due to hybrid & remote learning

2021-2022:
Bridge rollout begins

National Trends - Depression and Anxiety

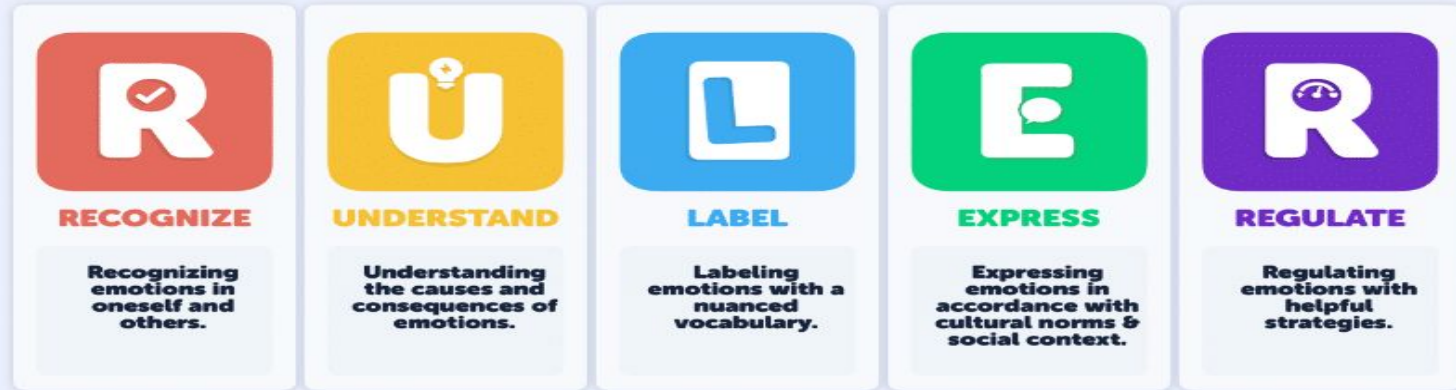
The Ottoson Middle School, like many schools in the area, is seeing an increasing number of students suffering from anxiety and depression.

1. According to national studies, depression and anxiety were on the rise pre-pandemic. For example, the Pew Research Center found that **depression, especially among girls, had worsened over the last decade**. The report was published in 2019, the year before Covid.
2. The pandemic has made the situation worse. This year, a survey by C.S. Mott's Children Hospital in Ann Arbor Michigan reported that **one in three teenage girls and one in five teenage boys have experienced new or worsening anxiety during Covid**.

Collecting Data

1. The academic coordinator for the Bridge Program will monitor absences monthly and facilitate monthly meetings with building administrators.
2. The academic coordinator will be in contact with [Cindy Sheridan-Curran](#) about students who are on pace to be chronically absent.
3. The academic coordinator will maintain data on students going to and through the Bridge Program.

Goal 2: The Ottoson Middle School will adopt RULER SEL and will create an Advisory Program



History of Advisory and ASPIRE

1. Currently, we do not have a social emotional learning curriculum at OMS, nor a dedicated time and place in the schedule to do specific SEL work. Both the high school and the Gibbs have advisory periods, OMS does not.
2. The Ottoson Middle School had advisory for two years and it was not successful. The lessons were either too scripted or too vague.
3. We now have ASPIRE (Announcements, Snack, Plan, Inspire, Rest, Engage) for 10 minutes. Teachers and students like this break in the morning.

Action Steps for SEL and Advisory

1. All three administrators enrolled in the RULER (Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, Regulating) training
2. A RULER school team was created
3. We are teaching RULER lessons at our faculty meeting to build staff capacity
4. An Advisory Committee will be formed to look at possibly of having an advisory period next year

Goal 3: Ottoson Middle School will collaborate with the mathematics department to investigate equitable pathways through mathematics coursework beginning in grade 7.

- Currently we offer Math 7 and Math 7A to a majority of our 7th grade students.
- The curricula are very similar.
- Students who identify as Black or African American are disproportionately represented across our core math classes in Math 7 and Math 7A.

Questions framing our thinking:

- Are students internalizing their math skills and labeling themselves.
- Should we be stressing a growth mindset?
- How can we differentiate in heterogeneous class structure?

Heterogeneous Math Groupings in 7th Grade

40 % of 7th grade students taking Math 7 in 2020-2021	81 % of Black or African American students in Math 7 in 2020-2021
60 % of 7th grade students taking Math 7A in 2020-2021	19 % of Black or African American students in Math 7A 2020-2021
33 % of 7th grade students taking Math 7 in 2021-2022	70 % of Black or African American students in Math 7 in 2021-2022
66 % of 7th grade students taking Math 7A in 2021 - 2022	30 % of Black or African American students in Math 7A 2020-2021

Action Steps:

1. Plan collaboratively with Matt Coleman
2. Look at revising curriculum mapping for 6th, 7th and 8th grades
3. Create time for professional development for 7th grade teachers on differentiated instruction
4. Set up community forums to engage the larger community in discussion about the 7th grade math curriculum
5. Conduct learning walks in math classrooms
6. Look at repurposing Math Support
7. Assess whether we would be able to pilot heterogenous math classes with two learning communities in the 2022-2023 school year

Questions?