

Improved Appreciation for Diversity	
Members of the Newburyport Public Schools community recognize the strength and wisdom in having a diverse and respectful community. Members report an increased feeling of respect by others in the school community.	
<i>Vision Statement</i>	

Newburyport recognizes that the strength of its school system is built on diversity. The broader and wider its foundation of unique values and strengths, the stronger and higher Newburyport can build its

educational excellence. Newburyport Public Schools welcome every member of the community with each person's unique values, characteristics, passions and challenges. Each member of our community reaches out to others and seeks to understand and appreciate their abilities. Each member strives to recognize those moments when they automatically “stereotype” another person, and actively reach out to that person to move beyond the stereotype. The community monitors itself for persistence of non-appreciative behavior and, when recognized, implements programs and activities to help reduce the behavior.

Opportunity for Improvement

There are pockets or groups of students who are not receiving the respect and appreciation they deserve. Sometimes this non-appreciating behavior is intentional, but usually it happens casually and is unrecognized by the offending person. Often non-appreciating behavior is coupled with student social and group behaviors, and occurs because “everyone is doing it.” Of course, the targets of the behaviors recognize the non-appreciative behavior, are hurt, and seek to avoid further exposure to it by distancing themselves from the perpetrator. The community fragments.

Root Cause: No data Baseline exists on diversity appreciation

No clear baseline exists to measure community members’ beliefs, behaviors, and experience about appreciating diversity in the community.

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
<p>Develop clear baseline information by standardizing on survey questions that can be repeated annually, preferably a validated instrument.</p>	<p>Collaborate with NYS and City Hall to send School Committee Survey on perceptions of the schools and community values via property tax bills.</p> <p>Continue annual school effectiveness surveys and include specific questions about appreciation for diversity.</p> <p>Extract data from ASSETS Survey sections <u>Interpersonal Confidence</u> and <u>Cultural Competence</u>. Chart the data.</p>

Root Cause: Not all members of school community receive Equal respect

Not everyone in the Newburyport Schools community feels appreciated by others in the community

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
Hold focus groups on issues of respect at each school and at the district level for students, staff, parents, and community facilitated by a professional.	
Brainstorm cultural and program changes that increase respect.	
Create a PK-12 continuum of programs that support respect and appreciation for differences.	Catalog all programs, PK-12, that help to promote respect and appreciation of differences.
Increase coordination of PK-12 developmental programming for respect and appreciation of differences.	
Support and implement new efforts based on survey results.	
Provide education for students, staff, parents on respect and appreciation for diversity. Collaborate with other organizations such as Parent partnership, PTO, Commission on Diversity and Tolerance, YWCA, Learning Enrichment Center, etc.	
Build diversity into school events. Events don't necessarily have to focus on diversity, but should make diversity an underlying context for the event. For example, a drama club event where Newburyport students interact with students from the Lawrence High School drama club to produce a play.	
Focus efforts to increase appreciation of all groups, but especially key groups that are under-appreciated, as identified by survey data.	

Long Term Strategies	FY09 Specific Actions
<p>Gather data to determine specific groups suffering from a lack of appreciation. Explore root causes for this lack of respect and identify possible solutions.</p>	<p>Collaborate with NYS to identify any specific groups that are non-appreciated in the school community, perhaps through focus groups. For identified groups, explore possible root causes for the lack of respect.</p>