

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

11MA1

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.
7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 3 Elementary schools
 (per district designation) 1 Middle/Junior high schools
1 High schools
0 K-12 schools
5 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 13898

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Suburban
4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	147	159	306
3	0	0	0		10	166	155	321
4	0	0	0		11	122	149	271
5	0	0	0		12	134	146	280
Total in Applying School:								1178

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
13 % Asian
5 % Black or African American
2 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
78 % White
3 % Two or more races
100 % Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting 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.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 3%
 This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	11
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	22
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	33
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	1155
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.03
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	3

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 1%
 Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 6
 Number of languages represented, not including English: 6
 Specify languages:

Chinese, Vietnamese, French, Farsi, Russian, Creole

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 7%
 Total number of students who qualify: 79

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 11%
 Total number of students served: 126

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>10</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>17</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>57</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>15</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>2</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>1</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>23</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>69</u>	<u>6</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>29</u>	<u>7</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Support staff	<u>19</u>	<u>5</u>
Total number	<u>132</u>	<u>19</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 18:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Teacher turnover rate	6%	5%	6%	12%	10%
High school graduation rate	98%	96%	97%	97%	99%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	<u>280</u>
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>95%</u>
Enrolled in a community college	<u>1%</u>
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0%</u>
Found employment	<u>0%</u>
Military service	<u>0%</u>
Other	<u>4%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

A suburban public high school serving 1,200 students in grades 9 through 12, Sharon High School lies in the quiet community of Sharon, MA, a location embedded in New England history with ties to 17th century Native American battles, American Revolutionary hero Deborah Sampson, and an early 20th century resort around its 350 acre Lake Massapoag. Sharon High School prides itself on a strong commitment to academic excellence, delighting in the intellectual and cultural diversity of a committed student body, and a community dedicated to education, community service, and religious tolerance.

SHS students scored significantly above state and national averages on 2010 standardized tests: 97 percent of SHS students scored in the proficient level or higher in both English and Math, and SAT scores for reading, writing and math were 579, 575, and 584 respectively. Sharon High School students can choose from among 16 AP courses; in 2010, 255 students took 515 exams, of which 45% earned scores of 5 and 79% earned scores of 4 or higher. US News & World Report in 2009 named Sharon High School a Silver Medal School for its academic excellence, and Boston Magazine has named it “one of Boston’s Best High Schools.”

Sharon High School boasts 27 sports teams and a growing number of clubs with diverse opportunities for all. The intellectually curious students welcome challenging competitive environments for team and individual involvement as well in Academic Decathlon, Math meets, Model UN, Chess tournaments, Mock Trial competitions, and the annual Drama Guild Festival. Sharon High recently qualified for one of sixteen spots with the WGBH High School Quiz Show, a fast-paced trivia competition covering topics in science, math, history, literature, the arts, sports, and current events.

Students embrace leadership opportunities in a variety of student government roles and in established school programs: Student Council, Class Planning Boards, School Council, Anti-Defamation League, Students Against Destructive Decisions, Gay-Straight Alliance, Yellow Ribbon Club, Find Our Asian Roots, Black Student Union, Protect Our World and Environment Through Recycling, Friendship Club, and Art Club to name a few.

SHS enthusiastically embraces 21st century learning skills. SHS recently partnered with Virtual High School (VHS), a Massachusetts-based company that offers on-line courses, and SHS is in the midst of developing a global competence program that emphasizes the importance of thinking globally, communicating effectively, and contributing responsibly. Additionally, SHS students enjoy a television production program which provides opportunities in all aspects of film and broadcasting production, including a live program presented to the student body each school day. Classrooms feature presentation systems and many contain interactive whiteboards. Two computer labs and a technology rich library support student learning needs before, during and after school.

A community of roughly 17,000 people, Sharon currently has six Protestant churches, seven synagogues, a Christian Science Reading Room, an Islamic Center, a Catholic Church, and a Unitarian Church. Today, Sharon has a large Jewish population, as well as one of the largest concentrations of Holocaust survivors in North America. The community’s religious diversity is reflected in the ethnic diversity of Sharon High School, and cultural diversity is further complemented by existing or developing exchanges program with China and France. Hundreds of students in the community also participate in Interfaith, an organization which inspires and trains teens to increase understanding and cooperative action among diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups in the community.

Sharon residents bear a large portion of the town’s tax burden as the community has little industry. As a result, the community maintains appropriate per pupil spending, which remains below the state average despite the fact that the town’s tax rate is one of the highest in the state.

Sharon High School’s mission encourages students to REACH for new and creative challenges in its safe and supportive community and to become active learners and responsible citizens. By fostering a climate of respect, honesty and accountability, Sharon High School empowers students to apply academic skills, take creative risks, strive for excellence, and achieve their highest potential. This mission guides our collective work as a school community and has made all of us very proud.

1. Assessment Results:

As a public high school, Sharon High School participates in the state's MCAS testing, an annual standardized assessment administered in the spring by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Sophomores take the English/Language Arts and Mathematics tests; SHS freshmen take the Physics test. (The state also administers Chemistry and Biology tests; students who do not pass the Physics test may take one of these in the appropriate year, so as to meet the state's graduation requirements.)

The MCAS tests are graded on a scale of 200–280, and students are designated as Advanced (260–280), Proficient (240–258), Needing Improvement (220–238), or Failing (100–218). The state uses these performance data as part of its Competency Determination Standard, which must be met if a student is to receive a high-school diploma. Details of the assessment system and graduation standards are at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/>.

Sharon High School's aggregate performance on the MCAS testing has historically been among the best in Massachusetts. For the 2009–2010 school year, 97 percent of our students are Proficient or Advanced in ELA and Math, and 96 percent are Proficient or Advanced in Science; the combined score of 290 was the 4th highest in the state. Moreover, while this percentage has held steady over the last five years, the number of students moving from the Proficient range to the Advanced range has been increasing.

Performance within student subgroups has likewise been strong, and some of the trends have been dramatic. ELA and Math scores for African–American/Black students have increased a combined 33 percentage points from 2006 to 2010; both rates are now at 86% (state averages are 60% and 53%).

ELA and Math scores for low-income students have increased a combined 46 percentage points from 2007 to 2010; both rates are now at 94% (state averages are 57% and 54%). Data for this subgroup were not reported in 2006 because there were fewer than 10 students within it.

ELA and Math scores for students with disabilities have increased a combined 46 percentage points from 2006 to 2010; both rates are now at 80% (state averages are 38% and 36%).

Performance among the Asian students is, in a word, spectacular. One hundred percent of these students are Proficient or Advanced in all three tests (matching their performance of 2008).

The overall strength of Sharon High School's MCAS performance masks weaker results among our students with disabilities, even though this subgroup far outperforms its equivalent subgroup statewide. We work diligently to help these students achieve at a higher level, providing supplemental MCAS support, either formally (via an after-school class) or informally (via periodic in-class tutorials).

The MCAS tests measure the performance of Sharon High School freshmen and sophomores. Performance of the juniors and seniors can be gauged by an analysis of SAT, ACT, and AP scores.

Sharon High School's mean score for the Critical Reading exam has increased from 550 in 2006 to 591 (77th percentile) in 2010.

The mean score for the Mathematics exam has gone from 571 to 604 (76th percentile) in the same time frame.

The mean score for the Writing exam has improved from 550 to 600 (82nd percentile), also in the same time frame.

Because ACT scores are presented in a different scale (1–36, as opposed to 200–800), year-to-year gains, even if significant, are harder to discern. Even so, the mean composite score for Sharon High School has increased from 24.7 in 2006 to 26.0 in 2010, with gains in all ACT subject areas (English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science).

In 2010, 255 SHS students took 515 AP exams, and received passing grades (3, 4, or 5) in 94 % of them. In 45% of the exams, the student received a score of 5, the highest possible.

The data and their associated narrative show that Sharon High School exceeds state and national norms. But no teacher or administrator at SHS considers such data to be indicative of the true performance or aptitude of Sharon students. Our courses go beyond the requirements of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and of the newly promulgated Common Core Standards, the goal being to prepare students not only for college, but for the world that awaits them.

2. Using Assessment Results:

The DESE releases MCAS results in the fall, at which time Sharon High School administrators, curriculum coordinators, guidance counselors, and subject teachers review overall and item-level performance. We analyze data in two key ways. At the individual level, guidance counselors and subject teachers compare 10th-grade results with students' 8th-grade data. This kind of analysis (which SHS helped to pilot on behalf of the DESE) allows us to develop individualized success plans for students whose performance has not improved.

The broader analysis tracks item-level performance to help identify weaknesses in the high-school curriculum or background gaps that may need to be addressed at the middle-school level. In the latter effort, we benefit from the fact that the department coordinators' duties encompass both SHS and Sharon Middle School.

Specifically, item analysis shows us which topics and questions proved troublesome enough for our students that changes to curriculum (at SHS or Sharon Middle School), or shifts in topic emphasis, are warranted. Over the past five years, MCAS results have not motivated the former, and few instances of the latter have occurred. Indeed, the 2010 data show that SHS students do well even in their lowest-performing areas:

- The most difficult item in the ELA test (75% correct answers) asked students to examine imagery in a sonnet.
- The lowest-scoring Mathematics item (59% correct answers) was a probability question that most Algebra II curricula do not cover until near the end of the school year.
- The lowest-scoring Physics item (59% correct answers) asked students to examine how energy and work are related as a bat strikes a ball.

In each of the above cases, Sharon High School's most difficult item was also the lowest-scoring item statewide. This is not to suggest that we dismiss results of this sort. Rather, we analyze not just the numerical data, but also the details underlying the data.

When curriculum changes are made, they are usually in response to an analysis of the summative and formative assessments administered within Sharon High School. Thus, we have significantly revised Mathematics courses that target lower-performing students, realigned the Science sequence, and created interdisciplinary ELA and Social Studies courses.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Sharon High School embraces diverse forms of formal and informal methods to communicate student performance. School-based formal evaluations are distributed with quarterly report cards and midterm progress reports, both of which allow teachers to include personal observations, in addition to a letter grade, in order to draw attention to the student's special contribution to class or to a specific area of concern. Individual student MCAS results are reported to families with a summary of school-wide performance results which are also presented to the local school committee, listed in the local newspaper, The Sharon Advocate, and posted on the school website. Sharon High School is also currently working toward enabling parent access to online student grades.

In addition to regular and formal methods of communication, Sharon High School guidance counselors, administrators, and teachers communicate with parents via e-mail and on the phone. Teacher e-mails and individual telephone extensions are posted on the school website and included on all course syllabi distributed to students and to parents on Parent Open House Night. In these ways, communication flourishes.

Technology also supports communication of student achievement in the school and in the community. Sharon High School airs a daily news broadcast during which students celebrate events and accomplishments, generate support for activities and fundraisers, and alert students about important dates. For many academic accomplishments, administrators or teachers will appear to spotlight the individual or individuals being recognized, as well as pertinent information to clarify the magnitude of the accomplishment. Additionally, the principal uses Twitter and AlertNow to inform the community when important activities are taking place, and the Parent Teacher Support Organization is an active group with a widely distributed newsletter.

Sharon High School features visible reminders of student achievement in the form of bulletin boards, display cases, and pep rallies. Glass-enclosed bulletin boards feature evidence of student accomplishments, including academic teams, such as the Math Team and Mock Trial Team, in the form of the physical product created by the student, the newspaper clippings, or the award or certificate itself. Additionally, glass cases in the high school lobby feature theater and art accomplishments, while in the gym lobby the glass cases contain athletic trophies. Pep rallies each season also provide opportunities for teachers and students to recognize the athletic teams and engage in spirited, student-led activities.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Sharon High School actively communicates with other schools in the district and state. The three elementary schools, middle school and high school are linked with the First Class e-mail system. In this way, everyone can receive all district wide-communications, engage in district-wide professional development opportunities and opening school day district meetings, and share and participate actively in district-wide evaluations, such as department reviews through department coordinators. Curriculum Coordinators meet regularly with principals and communicate relevant information to staff members in respective schools and conduct professional development to support the needs identified through such meetings. Administrators attend department meetings to clarify district-wide accomplishments and results, as well as to invite comments or suggestions. Additionally, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent maintain a presence at department and school-wide meetings to do the same. The Superintendent also has specific web-space on the school listserv to communicate or clarify important information.

Sharon High School teachers and administrators participate in various educational and professional organizations, contribute to subject-area listservs, and network with colleagues in other schools too. Teachers attend conferences sponsored by state and national organizations, such as the College Board conference, have membership in content specific organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of English, and attend professional development opportunities through the Norfolk County Teachers Association, which allows collegial networking with teachers from other districts. Additionally, teachers

who embrace advisory and coaching roles participate in additional networking in conference environments while supervising students, such as the Hockomock League Captain's Conference and the Southeastern Massachusetts Student Council Conference. The administrative team also maintains strong affiliations with state and national organizations, including the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators' Association.

1. Curriculum:

English: The English curriculum is organized around thematic principles for each year of study. Curriculum is marked by its academic rigor, its emphasis on progressive instructional practices, and its commitment to honor the diverse voices and visions that comprise the landscape of literature. Writing is the major focus of all English classes, and the exploration of language enables students to perform the four essential writing functions of analyzing, informing, persuading, and inspiring.

Mathematics: A strong mathematics background is essential in a society that relies on science, technology, and commerce. Our mathematics curriculum stresses critical thinking, problem solving, written and oral communication, reasoning, and connections to other mathematics courses and real-world applications. In addition to learning mathematics through numerical, graphical, and analytical approaches, students use technology, specifically the graphing calculator, as tools for expediency, amplifiers for conceptual understanding, and catalysts for critical thinking.

Science: A fundamental background in science is essential to the comprehensive education of any citizen and young scientist. All science courses expand students' mathematical, reading, writing, and technology skills and cultivate high-level mathematical understandings and reasoning. Instructional approaches focus on developing the critical thinking and reasoning skills that are the basis for modern scientific investigation and for the daily decision making needs of students now and in the future.

Social Studies: It is our collective belief that history and social studies need to be "alive" and that studying history means asking questions, developing hypotheses, and testing and revising our ideas to better understand how we got here. Through analysis, investigation, speculation, classification, comparison, generalization, questioning, and debating, students are able to comprehend the ideas and events that have shaped the present conditions of the United States and the world and subsequently are better prepared to exercise and understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens of our nation and the world community.

Foreign Language: In our global society, foreign language learning is an essential component of every student's education in the twenty-first century. Guided by the enduring understandings of communication, cultures, comparisons, connections, and continuity, foreign language curricula increases students' proficiency in a language other than their first. Teachers utilize a rich complement of instructional approaches and resources to develop students' mastery of language and culture including a multi-media language laboratory, interactive programs and software, and primary sources such as magazines, films, and music.

Wellness: Students are enrolled in a Wellness Program that combines Physical and Health Education. During the Physical Education portion of the course, emphasis is placed on lifetime fitness and overall physical wellness. The Health Education portion of the course addresses the many issues that youth of today face, including: communication skills, values, decision-making, relationship skills, sexuality issues, teen dating violence, injury and violence prevention, body image issues, first aid, non-communicable and communicable diseases, contraception and alcohol/substance abuse. The focus is on helping young people to become healthy, well-rounded members of the community while addressing pertinent social, mental and physical health issues.

Visual Arts: The curriculum focuses on higher levels of knowledge and understanding of contemporary visual arts, and practices exploration, artistic behavior, intellectual curiosity, and analysis in the artistic process. Students are supported to creatively solve problems and take risks in their art-making. Students learn vocabulary and techniques, and critical reasoning to analyze the elements and principles of art and design. In all courses, students are encouraged to discuss their creative process in group critiques and

discussions. The work done will reflect three major concerns and constants in art education: quality, concentration, and breadth.

Music: Various styles of music are studied, including: pop, jazz, classical, folk, madrigals and chamber music. Curricular offerings include: Concert Band and Chorus, Jazz Band, Treble, Select, and Tenor/Bass Choirs, Guitar, Music Theory, and Digital Music Composition. Students learn about rhythm, harmony, melody, form, sequencing, sound combinations, effects, recording, and mixing. The study of composers, creative music writing and staging, music theory, and music history, coupled with non-musical skills such as ensemble playing, teamwork, intonation, technique, and sensitivity, are examined.

Media & Communications: The media and communications curriculum is vast and develops students' skills, knowledge, and understandings of television production, newsroom and digital editing, and multimedia publishing. An understanding of the power of media is built through both the creation of student projects and analysis of commercial television. As a result of their experiences with the media and communications curriculum, students produce and broadcast studio programs and also create video projects for contests and for sharing on the Internet.

Theatre/Acting: The theatre and acting curriculum emphasizes acting techniques that include: concentration exercises, improvisation, character development, movement, storytelling, emotional analysis, and the fundamentals of preparing a scene. Performance is a regular part of each class. Course goals include: instilling confidence, improving public speaking, and inspiring the imagination.

2. Reading/English:

Sharon High School's English Language Arts curriculum is marked by its academic rigor, its emphasis on progressive instructional practices, and its commitment to honor the diverse voices and visions that comprise the landscape of literature. The department has organized its core courses around salient thematic principles that anchor lesson and unit content. These thematic platforms are highlighted in the following manner:

- Grade 9: Freshmen English is designed around the study of archetypes – those reoccurring patterns of storytelling that transcend various time periods and cultures.
- Grade 10: Sophomore English is designed around the study of world literature, and it emphasizes the consideration of six major themes: 'appearance vs. reality,' 'alienation and love,' 'the hero quest,' 'the search for justice,' 'the individual vs. society,' and 'social order.'
- Grade 11: Junior English and the American Studies interdisciplinary program both grapple with a key thematic tenet: What are the influences that have shaped American identity and its literature, art, and culture? This question is considered through the completion of four prominent units: the role of diversity in American society, the essence of the American Dream, the shaping of the American environment, and a short story unit.
- Grade 12: Senior English and the Humanities interdisciplinary program both engage with elements of the human experience. Several enduring understandings frame this thematic premise: 'Humans have free will and their behavior has an impact on society,' 'Individuals have certain ethical and moral responsibilities to self and society,' and 'Images of humanity are projected through the works of literature audiences study.'

The ELA curriculum also emphasizes several practices to positively impact the teaching of reading and writing skills. Foremost, there is a concerted effort to assign writing assessments that target three primary modes of composition – analytical, creative, and expository. This triangulation of genres exposes students to narratives ranging from MLA-formatted analytical papers, to the sculpting of extended and original

works of fiction. Teaching close and inferential reading skills are also a staple of the curriculum. Passage analysis exercises are taught in every grade level and assessed during all midyear and final exams. Repetition and reinforcement of reading strategies and differentiated instruction across grade levels provides consistency for students needing to improve reading skills. Instructors often tutor students requiring additional support with reading during the school's Eagle Block sessions, and a new peer-tutoring program provides additional options for academic support.

3. Mathematics:

It is Sharon High School's contention that a strong mathematics background is essential in a society that relies heavily on science, technology, and commerce. To that end, students are encouraged to complement their other coursework by pursuing mathematics courses that best reflect their interests and strengths. All courses are aligned with the Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks, and we are also philosophically aligned with the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards. Through a strong, standardized departmental program that emphasizes problem solving, communicating, reasoning and proof, making connections, and using representations, students learn to develop self-confidence and a positive attitude towards mathematics. The department's guiding principles are as follows:

- Mathematical ideas should be explored in ways that stimulate curiosity, create enjoyment of mathematics, and develop depth of understanding.
- Effective mathematics programs focus on problem solving and require teachers who have a deep knowledge of the discipline.
- Technology is an essential tool in a mathematics education, and all students should gain facility in using it where advantageous.
- All students should have a high-quality mathematics program.
- Assessment of student learning in mathematics should take many forms to inform instruction and learning.
- All students should understand the basic structure of mathematics.
- All students should recognize that the techniques of mathematics are reflections of its theory and structure.
- All students should gain facility in applying mathematical skills and concepts.
- All students should understand the role of inductive and deductive reasoning in mathematical and real life situations.

The Sharon High School Mathematics Department offers courses that meet students' needs, interests, and abilities. Students are not locked into a particular level for their high school experience, and taking multiple mathematics courses in the same academic year is allowed. With this in mind, the department offers courses in Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, and Statistics at the Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, College Preparatory, and Foundations level. In addition to courses offered during the school day, after-school support and enrichment courses focused around the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) are offered in the spring. Students who scored in the Warning or Needs Improvement category in previous tests are the first students invited to enroll. This occurs at no cost to the family, is conducted in small group sessions, and is intent on providing individualized help that can address areas of weakness.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

The primary goal of Sharon High School's science curriculum is to ensure that all students graduate with the skills and knowledge necessary to become scientifically literate citizens. We achieve this goal by offering a comprehensive curriculum that includes courses in the main branches of science. Our teachers provide students with teaching practices that are rooted in inquiry-based learning and instruction, as well as a curriculum that integrates 21st century learning skills into each course.

The core sequence, which includes physics, chemistry, and biology, provides students with learning progressions through each course, and opportunities to build upon fundamental skills to prepare them to encounter increasingly abstract subject matter. For example, students use physics lessons on energy transfer to understand chemical equilibrium and then apply this learning to ecosystems in biology.

To graduate, all students must complete three years of science, but many take additional science courses such as anatomy and physiology, an earth and space science elective, or an AP level science during their junior and senior years.

- Grade 9: Students in physics focus on the theme of energy by exploring the major branches of physics, including: motion, heat, electricity and magnetism, and light and sound. Students participate in a number of hands-on activities that provide them with opportunities to develop their data collection and analysis skills.
- Grade 10: Students in chemistry apply their understanding of forces, at the atomic and molecular level, to make sense out of how matter is constructed. Students participate in a number of computer-based activities to further refine their data collection and analysis skills.
- Grade 11: In biology, students synthesize the skills and content knowledge they have gained during their 9th and 10th grade science courses by applying their understanding of forces, at the atomic and molecular levels, to life. They also apply their observational and experimental skills so that they can understand the world around them.
- Grade 12: Seniors are provided with the opportunity to explore one of the core sciences in greater depth or to explore a new science. In addition, some students choose to take more than one science course concurrently.

The science curriculum provides students with relevant and diverse opportunities for students to become active learners and responsible citizens. Each course provides students with the opportunity to read and write effectively, to solve problems analytically and critically, to work independently and collaboratively, and to use technology effectively.

5. Instructional Methods:

Sharon High School benefits from a schedule that allows for instructional flexibility. With periods of 55 or 90 minutes during a six-day cycle, there are frequent opportunities for student-centered learning. The schedule allows teachers to move beyond traditional lectures to engage students in activities such as formal debates, Socratic seminars, demonstrations, group projects, creation of wikispaces and websites, peer teaching, as well as individual and group research. In addition to a variety of instructional methods, teachers vary ways of assessing student learning, and often give students a choice in how they demonstrate their understanding of the subject. A district goal, which is supported by building administration, is for teachers to use frequent formative assessments to gauge student understanding. This practice permits teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses throughout the year and allows teachers to adjust their instruction accordingly.

To assist teachers in differentiating their instruction and assessments, formal professional development is

provided by the school district. For the past three years, Teachers 21 has facilitated courses such as Differentiated Instruction (DI) and Understanding by Design (UBD), as well as The Skillful Teacher. In addition, our school schedule allows for departmentalized professional development during the school day. In these meetings, teachers share strategies for reading, writing, math, study and organizational skills, as well as ways to increase student participation and achievement. Another focus for professional development is further incorporating technology – from interactive whiteboards to class websites – into the classroom so that students have multiple ways of accessing the curriculum.

Regular education teachers continuously work with the special education and guidance departments, ensuring that they are meeting the needs of individual students. Teachers identify and work with students who require additional support to either meet the class expectations or enrich learning. Beginning this year, Sharon High School offers a peer-tutoring program available to any student who is identified as needing extra assistance to succeed in his or her classroom. Peer tutors have been selected and formally trained by the administration. This semester, they will be matched with students identified by their teachers as needing additional help beyond the classroom. In addition, to allow students to explore classes not offered at Sharon High School and to experience an online classroom environment, Virtual High School (VHS) has been made available to juniors and seniors.

6. Professional Development:

Sharon High School staff enjoys a rich and varied professional development experience. A significant factor influencing teacher growth and development is the time provided in the daily schedule for professional collaboration. All certified staff enjoys two daily planning periods, one of which is dedicated to department or course-alike meetings. Often these meetings are facilitated by a department coordinator, and the agendas are designed so that they are light on administrative information. Instead, these meetings are often dedicated to the sharing of effective pedagogy, the design and revision of curricular documents, and the alignment of course-alike learning standards and assessment instruments.

In addition to the time provided in the daily schedule for professional collaboration, teachers participate in four, three-hour sessions that occur as a result of late student arrival to school. These sessions are dedicated to professional inquiry, and the topics discussed often include effective practices that will offer students a rich high school experience. During the past two years, teachers and administrators have been involved in discussions around changing the school start time (later) to coincide with adolescent sleep and productivity patterns. Other topics discussed during these sessions include the implementation of a student advisory program and schedule alterations to address issues of student stress. It should also be noted that each year the District provides to the staff, two to three graduate courses free of charge, as well as a \$350.00 stipend to be used for professional development of their own choosing. Staff members are well represented in these offerings (Response to Intervention, Differentiated Instruction, Studying Skillful Teaching, Understanding by Design).

The rich and varied professional development that is offered supports student learning, as students are among the highest achieving in Massachusetts. Ninety-five percent (95%) of our tenth graders earn a rating of Proficient or Advanced – in both English and Mathematics – on the state-mandated assessment during their first attempt at taking the test. Ninety-four percent (94%) of students taking the state Physics test earn a Proficient or Advanced rating on the first administration of the test. In addition, the scores earned by Sharon High School students on both the SAT and the ACT continue to increase yearly. Finally, teachers are continuously assessing students with quick, formative assessments to determine student mastery of material. These formative assessments occur daily, and the resulting student data are often the topic of discussion, as all staff work to address individual student needs.

7. School Leadership:

The formal leadership team at Sharon High School includes the principal, two assistant principals, administrators for guidance, special education, and athletics, and curricular coordinators/facilitators for each subject area. Grounded in a firm belief that the education of our students is a multifaceted

partnership that spans many years, as well as a wealth of different intellectual and social experiences, the leadership team works in concert with all stakeholders to provide a safe, supportive, nurturing, and enriching educational and co-curricular program that places our students, as well as our faculty and staff, in positions to meet success and to define that success in personal, positive, and meaningful manners.

Guided by our school's mission and expectations for learning, as well as by our core values, emphasis has been placed on the following principles:

- our understanding of innate mutual respect
- our ability to empower ourselves and those around us
- our commitment to achieve to our highest potential
- our willingness to create and take advantage of opportunities
- our eagerness to honor our surroundings, as well as our past, present, and future world

To these ends, the leadership team strives to effectively and responsibly foster attainment of identified goals by welcoming input and advice, modeling and engaging in collaborative and transparent practices, communicating well, and learning from past experiences and challenges.

The principal takes a proactive role in leading the school and promoting its culture. Visible in all facets of daily life, the principal helps maintain a focus on continuous improvement, as well as on the conditions that can provide for excellent teaching and learning. In recent years, the revision of the parent/student handbook, the restructuring of the internal schedule, the shift to a later start/end time, the development of the school's website, and the refinement of evaluation instruments and processes have all served as vehicles through which equity, opportunity, and advocacy have facilitated higher levels of student achievement.

Students, parents, faculty, staff, community representatives, and members of the established leadership team play an integral role in the fulfillment of such initiatives. The work of numerous committees and councils is also complemented by ongoing, informal dialogue, as well as by a common understanding that individual and school growth is an evolving process. As such, a strong sense of commitment and pride permeates our environment – one that exemplifies our underlying dedication to policies, programs, resources, and relationships that guarantee success.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 10 Test: MCAS

Edition/Publication Year: Most recent Publisher: Measured Progress

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	97	96	96	95	90
Advanced	82	81	83	78	77
Number of students tested	267	274	278	250	294
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	94	90	90	67	
Advanced	56	50	70	42	
Number of students tested	16	10	10	12	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	86	91	87	69	72
Advanced	50	45	60	38	44
Number of students tested	14	11	15	13	18
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient	84	86	80	69	60
Advanced	42	33	42	32	30
Number of students tested	24	30	24	19	30
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	96	100	100	100
Advanced	91	92	100	94	97
Number of students tested	35	26	25	18	29
NOTES: In 2005-2006, the subgroup representing socio-economically disadvantaged students was less than 10.					

11MA1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 10 Test: MCAS

Edition/Publication Year: Most recent Publisher: Measured Progress

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	97	98	96	97	92
Advanced	63	60	58	57	39
Number of students tested	266	274	278	250	296
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	94	80	100	75	
Advanced	38	10	30	17	
Number of students tested	16	10	10	12	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	86	91	80	84	67
Advanced	43	27	40	15	11
Number of students tested	14	11	15	13	18
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient	80	80	67	69	58
Advanced	13	7	13	16	3
Number of students tested	24	30	24	19	31
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	93	100	94	93
Advanced	91	81	88	50	62
Number of students tested	35	26	25	18	29
NOTES: In 2005-2006, the subgroup representing socio-economically disadvantaged students was less than 10.					

11MA1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	97	96	96	95	90
Advanced	82	81	83	78	77
Number of students tested	267	274	278	250	294
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	94	90	90	67	
Advanced	56	50	70	42	
Number of students tested	16	10	10	12	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	86	91	87	69	72
Advanced	50	45	60	38	44
Number of students tested	14	11	15	13	18
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient	84	86	80	69	60
Advanced	42	33	42	32	30
Number of students tested	24	30	24	19	30
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	96	100	100	100
Advanced	91	92	100	94	97
Number of students tested	35	26	25	18	29
NOTES: In 2005-2006, the subgroup representing socio-economically disadvantaged students was less than 10.					

11MA1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading

Grade: 0

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Advanced + Proficient	97	98	96	97	92
Advanced	63	60	58	57	39
Number of students tested	266	274	278	250	296
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Advanced + Proficient	94	80	100	75	
Advanced	38	10	30	17	
Number of students tested	16	10	10	12	
2. African American Students					
Advanced + Proficient	86	91	80	84	67
Advanced	43	27	40	15	11
Number of students tested	14	11	15	13	18
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Advanced + Proficient	80	80	67	69	58
Advanced	13	7	13	16	3
Number of students tested	24	30	24	19	31
5. English Language Learner Students					
Advanced + Proficient					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Asian					
Advanced + Proficient	100	93	100	94	93
Advanced	91	81	88	50	62
Number of students tested	35	26	25	18	29
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