



Know Your Schools 2021

for incoming Kindergarten Parents

Superintendent Dan Gutekanst and Principal Michael Kascak

Welcome!

Imagine the future our children will be facing in 2034...

- PORTRAIT OF A NEEDHAM GRADUATE:
Shared vision of the *future*
- Framework of equity in education and consensus on district priorities



Kindergarten Student
at Sunita Williams Elementary School

Agenda

- Needham Public Schools Values, Vision, Priorities
- Hybrid Learning Plan
- About Kindergarten
- Introducing Key Staff
- Questions



Our Core Values

- Scholarship
- Citizenship
- Community
- Personal Growth



Our Vision & Priorities

**PRIORITY #1
ALL STUDENTS
ARE DRIVERS
OF THEIR OWN
LEARNING**

**PRIORITY #2
ALL STUDENTS
EXPERIENCE
INTEGRATIVE
TEACHING AND
LEARNING**

PORTRAIT OF A NEEDHAM GRADUATE SHARED VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR OUR PRE-K TO 12 STUDENTS



PREPARING ALL NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS TO BE...

CREATIVE THINKERS AND PROBLEM SOLVERS

Raise questions driven by curiosity; Analyze relevant information;
Express creativity; Design and innovate solutions

COMMUNICATORS AND COLLABORATORS

Listen effectively; Articulate ideas using a variety of communication
strategies and skills; Interact with others respectfully and productively;
Contribute to teamwork

SOCIALLY AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CONTRIBUTORS

Understand and respect diversity; Act with empathy and courage to
ensure equity, access, and an anti-racist culture; Address local and
global issues through civic and community engagement

RESPONSIBLE AND RESILIENT INDIVIDUALS

Take responsibility for actions; Make healthy choices to achieve
physical and emotional well-being; Self advocate;
Persist to overcome personal challenges; Adapt to change

EMPOWERED LEARNERS

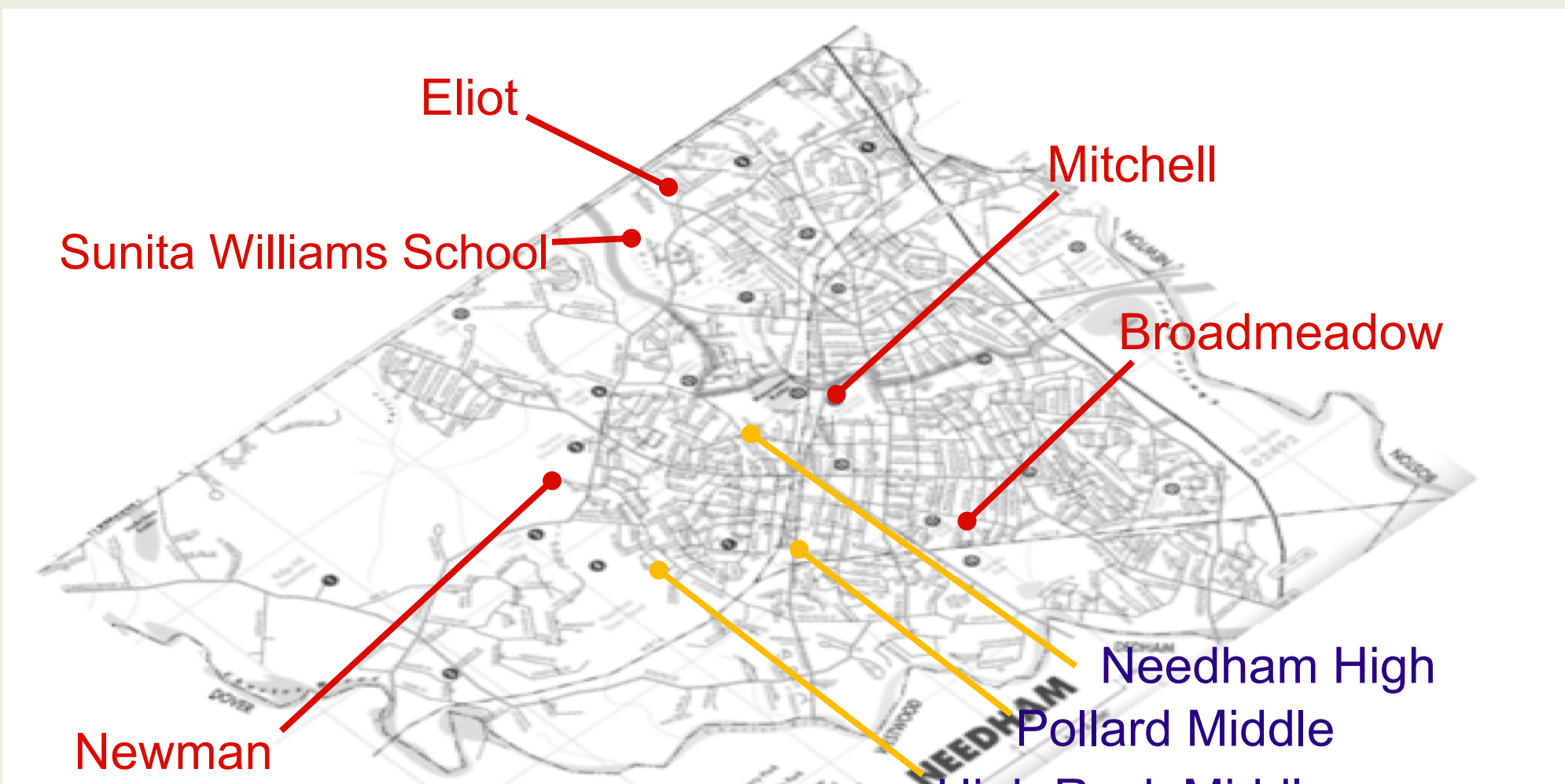
Discover and integrate content from multiple disciplines;
Engage in self-directed learning; Use technology to support
learning and navigate a digital world



**PRIORITY #3
ALL STUDENTS
LEARN & GROW
WITHIN
ADAPTABLE
ENVIRONMENTS**

**PRIORITY #4
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUPPORTS
NEEDS OF
ALL STUDENTS**

Your Schools



Eliot

Mitchell

Sunita Williams School

Broadmeadow

Newman

Needham High

Pollard Middle

High Rock Middle

Performance Report

- Census data
- Progress toward district's strategic priorities
- Opportunities/Challenges
- How Needham compares



PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020



Needham Schools Profile 2019-2020

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- 5,706 Students
- 23.9% Students of Color
(1,364)
- 10.0% First Language not English
(571)
- 5.6% Economically Disadvantaged
(320)



Eliot Students performed at last year's
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
January 2020



School Committee members pictured with Sunita Williams at dedication of new elementary school

Needham Schools Profile 2019-2020

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Andrea Longo Carter, Chair

Connie Barr, Vice Chair

Heidi Black

Michael Greis

Susan Neckes

Aaron Pressman

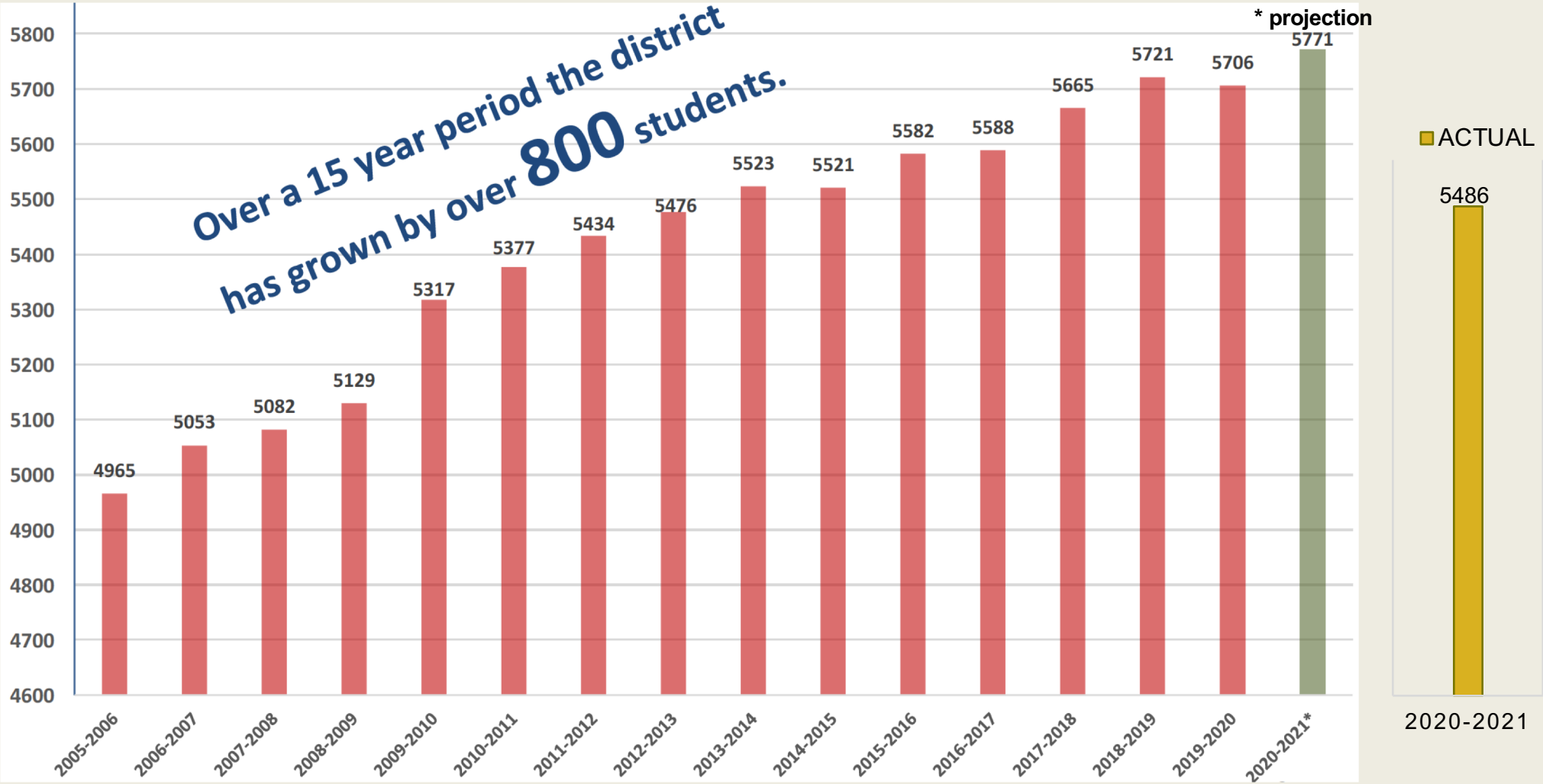
Matthew Spengler

Aidan Michelow, Student rep

*Responsible for budget, policies,
hiring Superintendent*

Overall Enrollment has grown

year over year, except for *impact of COVID* on 2021 Actuals



What are the different cohorts in the Hybrid Learning Model?

Blue Cohort

Gold Cohort

- **Each group attends school in-person one week and participates remotely the next week, with all students remote every Wednesday.**
- **Cohorts are heterogeneous and not leveled K-5.**
- **Cohorts are arranged by family when feasible.**
- **Students K-2 receive an iPad; Students in grade 3-5 receive a Chromebook.**

Green Cohort (Full-Time In-Person)

- **Preschool students and our most vulnerable students, including those with high needs disabilities & English Learners attend school in-person every week through a modified schedule.**

Red Cohort (Full-time Remote)

- **Students who are immunocompromised, those exposed to COVID-19, or those whose families opt-out of hybrid participate in 100% remote learning.**
- **These students do not attend school in-person.**
- **These students can participate in virtual co-curricular activities.**

What does learning look like in person and during the remote week of instruction?

REMOTE Learning Hybrid	IN PERSON Hybrid
Starting the day: Each day, homeroom teachers meet with both cohorts to “launch the learning.”	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students participate in asynchronous and synchronous academic & special subject area activities each day.• Learning activities are designed to allow students to work independently but with support as needed.• Students supported by other educators throughout the week (e.g. Special Ed, ELL teacher, counselor, literacy/math coach).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are in school for the regular school day.• Students follow their regular schedule for both academic and special area classes.• Recess and lunch have modifications to accommodate distancing and space requirements.

What are the health protocols for keeping students and staff safe?

- School maintenance (custodial and HVAC support, disinfectant teams, rapid response to ventilation issues, and Wed/Weekend cleaning)
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Mask wearing
- Physical distancing
- Hygiene protocols
- Lunch schedules
- Employee attestation
- Contact tracing
- Week-on/off hybrid model where appropriate to facilitate contact tracing
- Keeping students at home who have shared classroom space with positive individual
- Weekly meetings of Joint Committee on Health & Safety to ensure accountability and ownership around school safety concerns
- Transparency on cases via the district dashboard

“All students, grades PreK to 12, benefit from the interactions, socialization, collaborative and hands-on learning, communication, and personal relationships that are nurtured and supported by in person teaching and learning.”

“Our focus has been - and will remain - the health, safety, and wellbeing of all students and staff.”

Dan Gutekanst, Superintendent of Schools

www.needham.k12.ma.us

Staying Informed

Website,
Blog,
Tweets,
List Serv,
Links to
Schools

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Needham Public Schools website. At the top left is the Needham Public Schools logo, featuring a stylized 'N' inside a building icon. To the right of the logo is the text 'Needham Public Schools'. Further right is the tagline 'Scholarship - Citizenship - Community - Personal Growth'. Below this is a navigation menu with links for Home, District Info, Schools, Departments, Equity, Community Ed, Calendars, Careers, and Contact Us. The main content area features a large image of children in a parking lot, some wearing masks and holding books. To the right of the image is a calendar widget showing dates for remote days and Gold Cohort Week. Below the calendar are four menu items: COVID-19 TEACHING & LEARNING, FOR STUDENTS, FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS, and FOR STAFF, each with a right-pointing arrow. At the bottom of the page is a row of six icons with corresponding text: COVID-19 Health & Safety (first aid kit), COVID-19 Teaching & Learning (book), Technology & Digital Learning (laptop), News & Updates (calendar), Student Registration (checkmark), and Nutrition Services (fork and knife).

Needham Public Schools
Scholarship - Citizenship - Community - Personal Growth

Home District Info Schools Departments Equity Community Ed Calendars Careers Contact Us

JAN 20 Remote Day for all students All Day

JAN 25 Gold Cohort Week All Day

JAN 27 Remote Day for all students All Day

COVID-19 TEACHING & LEARNING →

FOR STUDENTS →

FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS →

FOR STAFF →

COVID-19 Health & Safety

COVID-19 Teaching & Learning

Technology & Digital Learning

News & Updates

Student Registration

Nutrition Services

Introductions: Staff & Community Groups

STAFF:

Michael Kascak	Principal, Sunita Williams Elementary School
Shane Marchand	Director, Transportation
Ruth Griffin	Director, Nutrition Services
Barbara Singer	Director, Health Services
Rebecca Sparrell	Director, Preschool
Diane Simmons	Director, Strategic Planning/Community Engagement

COMMUNITY GROUPS:

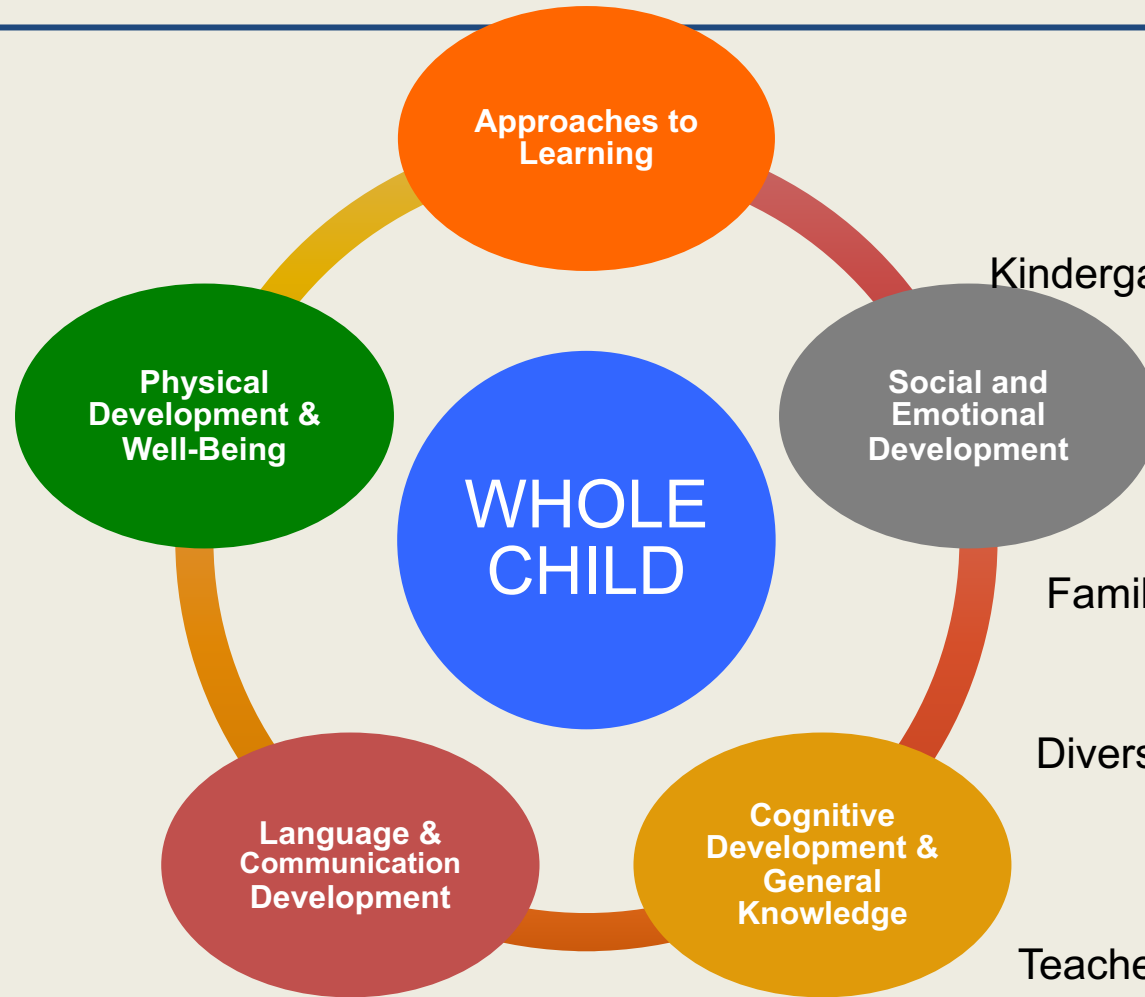
Citizens for Needham Schools ([CNS](#)), Special Education Parent Advisory Council ([SEPAC](#)), Needham Education Foundation ([NEF](#))

Kindergarten - Logistics

- Open to students who turn 5 years old on or before 8/31/21
- Neighborhood school districts
- Full Day Program
- Check school website for times



FDK Vision & Core Principles



Principle 1:

Learning encompasses the whole child

Principle 2:

Kindergarten children construct their own knowledge and skills

Principle 3:

Relationships and play are key ingredients

Principle 4:

Families play an essential role in their children's learning

Principle 5:

Diversity in backgrounds, experiences and learning styles enriches learning

Principle 6:

Teachers and school leaders commit to continuous learning

Vision into Action: “Focus on K2”

Centers

- Interdisciplinary, play, projects, peer interaction, hands-on materials

Whole Group

- Read a-louds; story telling; discussions; reflections

Small Group

- Teach & support specific reading skills; facilitate project work

Writer’s Workshop

- Motivating, authentic writing experiences

Storytelling – Story Acting

- Children share stories that are enacted by peers

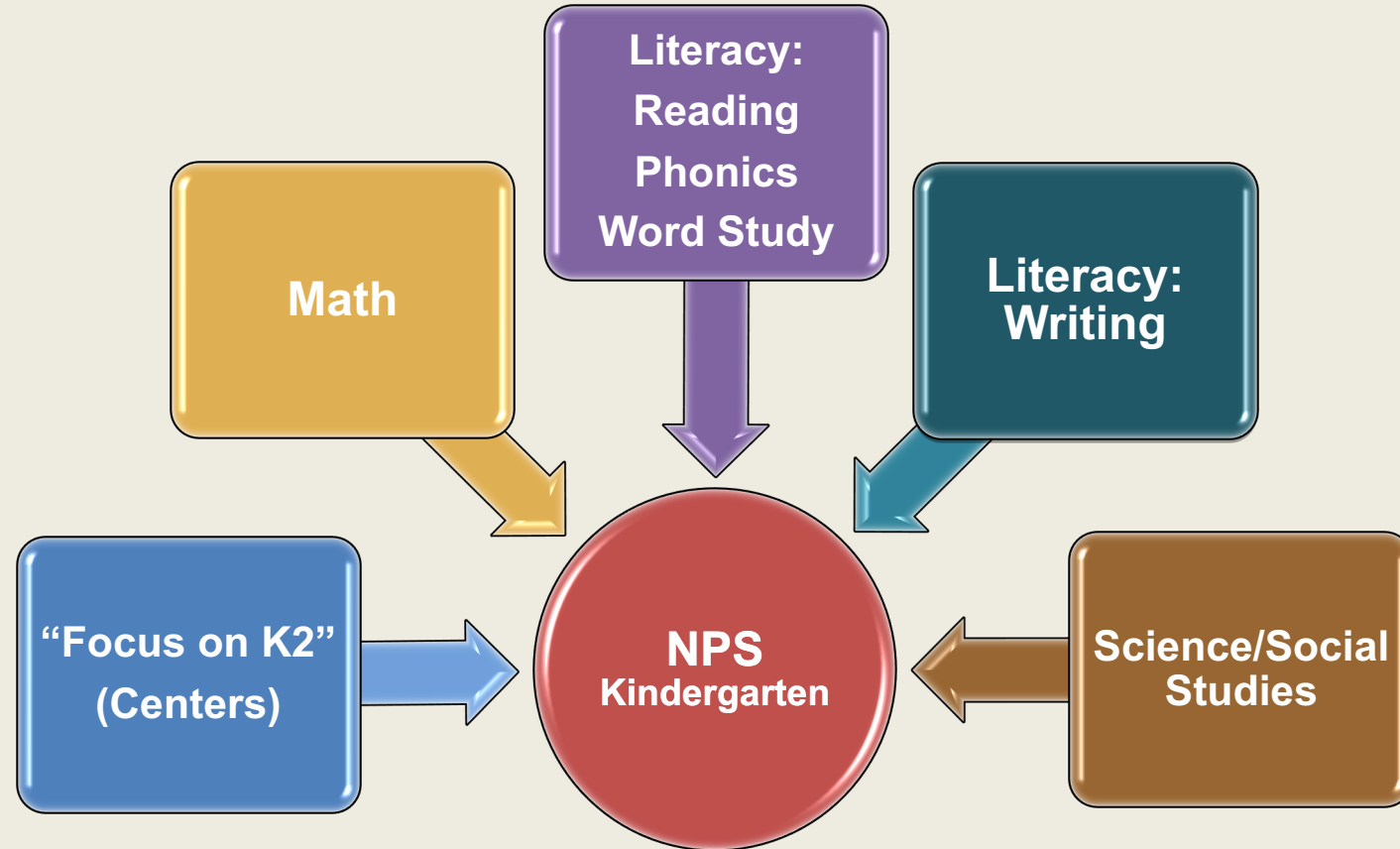
Math Investigations

- Develop mathematical understandings through hands-on materials

- Centers -

1. Art Studio
2. Blocks
3. Dramatization
4. Listening & Library
5. STEM Center
6. Reading, Writing & Drawing

Curriculum Integration



Racial Literacy Curriculum

Kindergarten- Grade 2

- Build self-esteem and community
- Increase racial, cultural, and geographical awareness
- Recognize similarities and celebrate differences

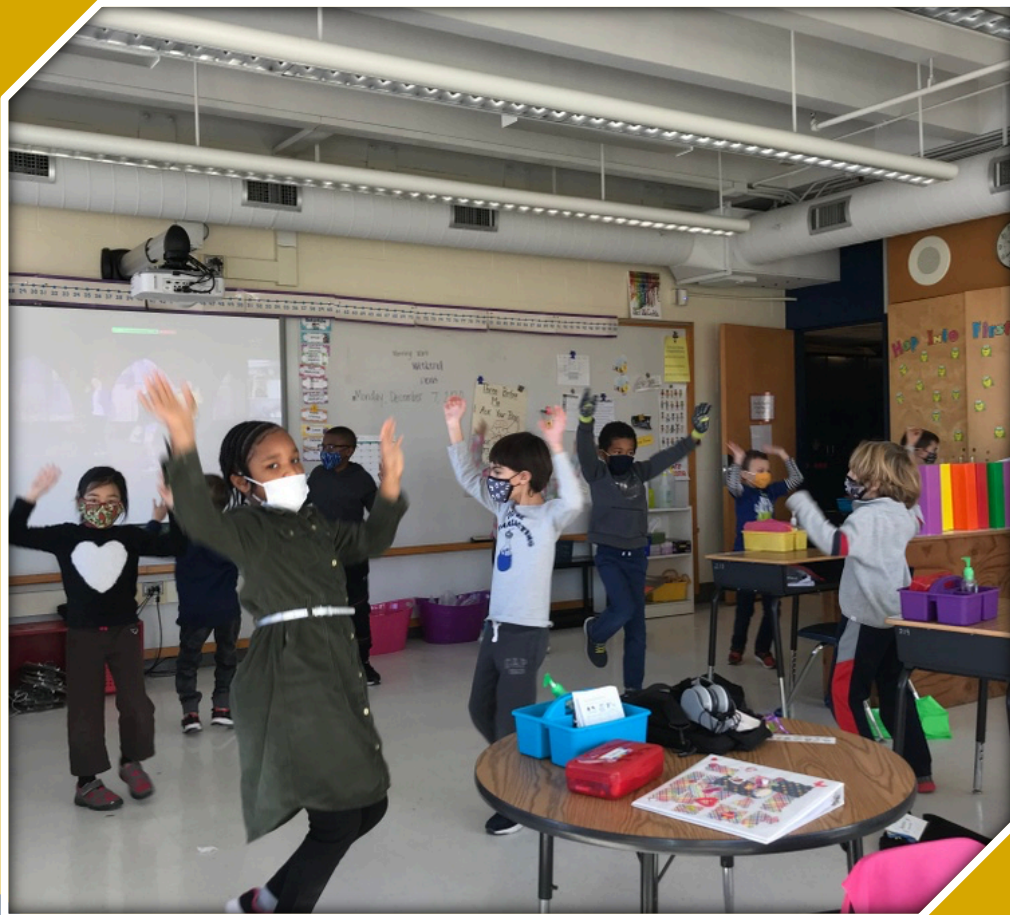
Grades 3-5

- Introduce history with multicultural perspectives
- Focus on those who resisted forms of discrimination and/or fought for equality
- Dispel myths of racial inferiority and superiority



Kindergarten – Sample Schedule

- Arrival: Community of Learners
- Centers
- Writing
- Lunch and Recess
- Read Aloud
- Math
- Phonics/Word Study
- Story Acting/Telling
- Dismissal



Newman Students get their “wiggles” out during Morning Meeting activity

Special Area Curriculum

Six Specials:

(1/week X 40 minutes)

- **Art**
- **Music**
- **PE/Wellness**
- **Library/Media**
- **Spanish**
- **Technology**



Kindergarten Enrichment Options



- **NCE-Elementary**
*Needham Community Education offers **After School Enrichment classes** and **Summer Explorations***
- **Before & After school care**
Needham Extended Day Program ([NEDP](#))

Kindergarten Registration

School Registration

(See homepage on district website)



Student Registration

Parent Orientation to be held in the spring

- *For parents/guardians at your neighborhood school*

Virtual Verification

- *Book appointment online or call for appointment:*
- *Registrar, Corine Burke, at 781-455-0400 x11245*

Transportation

- **Services provided for Needham-resident students in grades K-6 who live more than 2 miles from their assigned school**
- Services provided for our Boston-resident students
- *Fee-based services* for Needham resident students in grades K-6 who live 2 miles or less from their assigned school
- Fee-based services for all Needham resident students in grades 7-12 regardless of distance
- Also provide transportation for students based on their IEP for Special Education





QUESTIONS?