



New England League of Middle Schools 2015-2016

Spotlight School Award

Get the recognition your school deserves!

Purpose:

The purpose of the Spotlight School Award is to recognize schools that have a record of powerful learning for young adolescents and consistently observe middle level best practices. A NELMS Spotlight School is recognized for being a center of learning and developing strong effective programs that reflect concepts contained in *Turning Points 2000* and *This We Believe*.

Process:

Schools submit data to NELMS by completing self-assessment surveys and providing additional supporting documentation. NELMS reviews the material and makes the selections of schools that will continue the process. Following the initial selection, one or two representatives of NELMS will visit the school. After the visit, schools who meet the criteria of Spotlight Schools recognition will be notified. NELMS representatives are selected for their knowledge of effective middle level practices. NELMS also recognizes schools based on its knowledge of individual middle level schools. Schools that have participated in the NELMS School Assessment process may be awarded the Spotlight School designation as a result of the assessment.

Fees:

The initial application requires a \$300 fee. Application fees are non-refundable.

Timeline:

Application MUST be received at NELMS no later than Thursday, November 12, 2015.

Visitation: The visitation by the NELMS representatives will take place beginning in January 2016.

Recognition: Announcement will be by April 2016.

Application:

The process requires the completion of a middle level practices indicator survey and the submission of supporting data.

Recognition:

Recognition for this prestigious award including a presentation of a Spotlight School banner, press releases to local and regional news outlets, announcements in NELMS publications and recognition of the NELMS website. At time visitors may wish to observe and learn about effective practices at a Spotlight School. Visitations will be scheduled and coordinated by NELMS. Additionally, it is expected that a Spotlight School remain actively involved with NELMS including, at times, presenting and sharing information at professional development events.

The Application Process

A completed application involves the completion of the information sheet, the NELMS Self Assessment Survey, and the submission of additional information as requested below.

Establishing the Group

It is suggested that the school assemble a representative group of educators from the building. Time should be available to reflect on the the entire school, with specific attention to the following components:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> grade levels | <input type="checkbox"/> extra-curricular activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> school communication | <input type="checkbox"/> classroom instruction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recognition & special programs | <input type="checkbox"/> parent & community relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> individual teams | <input type="checkbox"/> unified arts subjects & teams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> multiple assessment practices | <input type="checkbox"/> standards based instruction |

Completing the Self Assessment Survey

We suggest that the representative group cooperatively completes the self-assessment survey. To accomplish this, we suggest the following process:

1. each person completes the self-assessment individually;
2. a group member combines the results;
3. the group discusses the results and reaches consensus;
4. **a single survey** is then completed for submission.

Additional information

Please include:

- ✓ A statement, of not more than 2 pages, that answers the question “What makes your Middle Level school a Spotlight School?” (Please include quotations from parents, students, and teachers.)
- ✓ Copies of summary pages of state test scores over the last 3 years.
- ✓ A copy or a synopsis of your current school improvement plan/strategic plan.
- ✓ List the major professional development activities provided over the last 3 years. Highlight the activities that focused on MLE.
- ✓ Staff and student attendance rates for the last 3 years .
- ✓ Student in-school and out-of-school suspension rates over the last 3 years.
- ✓ A copy of the most recent student handbook.
- ✓ Additional relevant data

*******Do not submit individual names with any of this date.*******

Spotlight School Application Information Sheet

School Name: _____

Principal's Name: _____

Contact Person (if different): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____ NELMS Member YES NO

Grades: _____ Total Number of Students: _____

Number of Students	Number of Teams	Number of students on each team
Grade 5: _____	Grade 5: _____	Grade 5: _____
Grade 6: _____	Grade 6: _____	Grade 6: _____
Grade 7: _____	Grade 7: _____	Grade 7: _____
Grade 8: _____	Grade 8: _____	Grade 8: _____

Average Class Size: _____

These documents were completed and/or prepared by:

Name Title

Name Title

Name Title

We certify that the information contained in this packet is accurate and true.

Principal Superintendent

Form of Payment

Total Due: **\$300** Signed Purchase Order Attached Check Enclosed

MasterCard Visa Discover Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Cardholder Signature _____

Complete and mail or fax application form with payment or signed purchase order to:
New England League of Middle Schools
120 Water Street, Suite #403, North Andover, MA 01845-2648
FAX: (978) 557-9312

Please note: There are no refunds for the application fee.
Applications MUST be received at the NELMS office NO later than Thursday, November 12, 2015.



New England League of Middle Schools



Self-Assessment Survey for Spotlight School Application

(Revised 8/22/2013)

The purpose of the NELMS' Spotlight School Award is to recognize schools that have a record of effective teaching and learning for young adolescents, consistently implement research based middle level best practices and focus on improved student achievement. A NELMS Spotlight School is recognized for developing strong effective programs that reflect concepts contained in *Turning Points 2000, This We Believe*, and current middle level state recommendations.

School _____ Date _____

Answer the following questions based on your perspective of the common practice, attitude or understanding in your school. Circle your response using the following scale.

1 – NOT Evident 2 – SELDOM Evident 3 – USUALLY Evident 4 – EVIDENT

Curriculum

Is your school:

Using Common Core State Standards as a basis for the design of curriculum?

1 2 3 4

Using test data and student work to design units of study, assess progress, and improve instruction?

1 2 3 4

Ensuring support for student-centered learning through a variety of approaches to instruction and assessment?"

1 2 3 4

Implementing intervention and enrichment opportunities determined by data driven evidence?

1 2 3 4

Providing a full array of unified arts experiences for every student?

1 2 3 4

Articulating curriculum across grade levels so that skills and best practices are shared?

1 2 3 4

Implementing a curriculum that integrates the different disciplines to allow students to see the interconnectedness of the skills, concepts and content they are learning and how these are applied in the world beyond school?

1 2 3 4

Instruction

Is your school:

Utilizing a variety of instructional strategies including but not limited to: collaborative learning, small group and large group instruction, flexible grouping practices, and differentiated instruction?

1 2 3 4

Providing evidence of a variety of grouping arrangements within a primarily heterogeneous environment?

1 2 3 4

Analyzing and utilizing data to assess instructional strategies to insure meeting the needs of ALL students?

1 2 3 4

Providing daily team planning time for the purpose of dealing with curriculum development, common team concerns, scheduling, grouping and conferencing?

1 2 3 4

Providing staff with daily individual planning time?

1 2 3 4

Utilizing a student progress reporting system based on standards?

1 2 3 4

Recognizing and encouraging the interests, needs, and concerns of individual students through organized curricular and co-curricular programs?

1 2 3 4

Middle Level Teachers

Is your school:

Providing professional growth within the context of a school's vision, mission and goal statements?

1 2 3 4

Committed to the belief that EVERY student can learn and be successful?

1 2 3 4

Using PLCs for continuous staff improvement that connects research to best practices including workshop attendance, conferences and coaching in the content areas?

1 2 3 4

Providing ongoing professional development on the physical, emotional, intellectual and social characteristics of young adolescents and the best middle level practices?

1 2 3 4

Ensuring teacher participation in designing and applying school improvement goals, staff development training, and other professional activities?

1 2 3 4

Ensuring that staff is proficient in using a variety of instructional and authentic assessment strategies, which provide for effective student learning?

1 2 3 4

Articulating curriculum across the grade levels so that skills and best practices are shared?

1 2 3 4

Teaming

Is your school:

Using guidelines for the productive use of daily team planning time, which include curriculum development, common team concerns, scheduling, grouping and conferencing?

1 2 3 4

Setting annual team goals to regularly self-assess and develop goals for self-improvement?

1 2 3 4

Using a systematic monitoring process for achieving team goals?

1 2 3 4

Using an RTI framework within the teams to meet individual learning needs?

1 2 3 4

Utilize a leadership team, which facilitates and encourages the development of teaming and an integrated approach to learning?

1 2 3 4

Demonstrate a school wide atmosphere of cooperation and caring through positive interpersonal relationships?

1 2 3 4

Maintain a team notebook of minutes and agendas?

1 2 3 4

Develop and implement an effective and cooperative orientation and transition process to serve the needs of parents and students in making the following transitions:

a. elementary to middle school?

1 2 3 4

b. middle to high school?

1 2 3 4

c. for new students entering the middle school?

1 2 3 4

Develop a unity of purpose and a shared sense of team spirit by both students and teachers?

1 2 3 4

Govern Democratically

Is your school:

Involving students, parents and community members in meaningful democratic participation focusing on matters that clearly affect them?

1 2 3 4

Implementing on-going data collection and analysis to continuing school improvement focused on student learning?

1 2 3 4

Requiring the creation of inquiry groups created to investigate the causes and potential solutions to school based problems?

1 2 3 4

Developing and adopting a data-driven, comprehensive school improvement plan?

1 2 3 4

Receiving sustained support for student achievement from district level personnel?

1 2 3 4

School Environment

Is your school:

Providing a variety of age appropriate social experiences and activities that are inclusive and support participation of every student?

1 2 3 4

Providing a safe, caring, and healthy environment that promotes student responsibility and meaningful parent involvement?

1 2 3 4

Providing a variety of activities that are inclusive and support participation of every student?

1 2 3 4

Embedding healthy, physical activities into each day?

1 2 3 4

Expecting students to support each other and respect individual differences?

1 2 3 4

Creating Advisory or Personalized Learning programs to ensure that every student is well known by at least one adult?

1 2 3 4

Involving Parents and Community

Is your school:

Frequently assessing and evaluating the methods used to report student performance to families?

1 2 3 4

Keeping families aware of student progress in relationship to instructional standards through frequent communication?

1 2 3 4

Promoting the importance of being open and receptive to the concerns of students, families, and community?

1 2 3 4

Providing regular and meaningful opportunities for students to engage in community service and service learning activities?

1 2 3 4

Utilizing the community as an educational resource and an environment to promote relevant learning?

1 2 3 4