



BEACON HIGH SCHOOL

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2011-2012 School Profile

Beacon High School is a co-educational, therapeutic, alternative high school located in Watertown, Massachusetts that serves 64 students, ages 14–22, from the Greater Boston area. Beacon specializes in providing a challenging academic curriculum for students with strong academic potential who benefit from learning in a supportive community.

Generally, students who come to Beacon have had difficulties in other schools for personal, medical, or family reasons not directly related to academics. Beacon provides an academic program that can help them catch up on missed work in a small, supportive school community.

Students attend Beacon with the aim of understanding themselves as learners who take time to explore academic topics, and to make connections to their own lives and the surrounding world. Many graduates from Beacon High School go on to attend either two or four year colleges.

The Beacon High School staff is a multi-disciplinary team composed of seven clinicians, two guidance counselors, a nurse, thirteen classroom teachers, and psychiatric and educational consultants. The ratio of students to staff is better than 2.5 to 1. There are no more than eight students in a class.

Goals and Philosophy

Beacon High School is dedicated to providing a stimulating and supportive school environment that fosters learning and strengthens a student's capacity for effectively meeting lifelong challenges. The goals of the program extend beyond the diploma, and encourage a student's civic participation and community engagement:

- ◆ To provide educational and supportive services to students whose previous educational experiences in traditional schools were unsuccessful;
- ◆ To provide the opportunity for students to develop their skills and broaden their knowledge, with the ultimate goal of earning a high school diploma;
- ◆ To facilitate a process of personal growth which will continue in the family, employment, and educational spheres after graduation; and
- ◆ To provide a sense of belonging, of community, a place in which each student's self-perception is enhanced and where cooperative learning takes place.



About Beacon High School

Type of school:

Private, co-educational, therapeutic, alternative high school

Total enrollment:

64 students

Pattern of school year:

198-day, 11-month program divided into 5 terms

Academic day:

Monday through Thursday, 8:30 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.; Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

Director:

Pamela Travers, M.Ed.

College Board/ACT code number:

220458

Accreditation/License:

Chapter 766-approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education and certified by the Watertown School Committee to grant a high school diploma

Criteria for admission:

Students whose academic abilities are average or above average may apply for admission.

Staff-to-student ratio:

1 to 2.5

To request copies of student transcripts and evaluations, GPA equivalents, or any other supplemental information, please send an e-mail inquiry the Beacon High School Guidance office:

Theresa Melito, Guidance Counselor
tmelito@beaconhighschool.org
617-993-5128

Bernadette Smith, Guidance Counselor
bsmith@beaconhighschool.org
617-993-5127

Program Components

The major components of the Beacon High School program are academic and therapeutic, individually designed to meet the needs of the students in four primary areas: *cognitive* (educational and vocational), *affective* (attitude and behavior), *psychological*, and *interpersonal*. The school's therapeutic component is critical to the students' emotional growth and development.

Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

English	4.0 credits
Mathematics	2.0 credits
Science	1.0 credits
US History	1.0 credits
Fine & Performing Arts/Technology	.5 credits
Career/College Planning	.5 credits
Physical Education	.5 credits
Health	.5 credits

19 total credits and 10 hours of Community Service

All publicly funded students must also earn a passing score in all MCAS Graduation/Competency Determination Requirements.

Additional courses offered may include: biology, chemistry, physics, world civilizations, art, health, music, photography, psychology, and others. Many Beacon graduates eventually attend college programs, and parts of the curriculum are geared specifically for college preparation. Beacon High School accepts transfer credits from other schools. Students are also permitted to choose from several elective classes and non-academic activities offered at Beacon. Due to Beacon's small size, it is not possible to provide foreign language instruction, team sports, or designated honors-level or AP classes.

English and math classes are grouped according to skill level and instructional style. Instruction is differentiated in other subjects as much as possible to permit more capable students to work at an advanced level, while adequate support is provided to those who need it.



Beacon High School operates as a 198-day, 11-month program for all students. The academic year is divided into 5 terms. Students receive a written evaluation and are eligible to earn credits at the end of each term. The five-term system allows students to recover credit they may have lost prior to enrolling in Beacon High School. The five terms are the equivalent of 1.25 years of school. Students earn credit based on attendance and performance. For additional credit, independent study projects may also be arranged in addition to the student's regular curriculum.

Guidance is provided through scheduled Future-Planning Seminars, as well as individual vocational and college counseling. Students who work after school may earn work-study credit toward graduation. As graduation from Beacon approaches, students may have the opportunity to enroll in college course work at area colleges through dual enrollment programs.

Grading System

Beacon is a non-graded, cooperatively oriented program. Instead of letter grades, students receive written evaluations at the end of each term. In these evaluations, teachers cover areas of strength and progress as well as areas needing improvement.

Colleges and scholarship programs seeking to make comparisons between Beacon evaluations and graded programs may request additional copies of evaluations. A student's overall GPA can be approximated by the Beacon guidance office upon request, when necessary. Beacon High School is only able to offer the SAT on campus through a non-standard administration.



Last Updated September 13, 2011