



Spotlight School Award 2017–18

PURPOSE

The Spotlight School Award recognizes schools that have a record of powerful and research based learning for young adolescents and consistently observe middle level best practices. A NELMS Spotlight School is a center of learning and strong effective programs that reflect concepts contained in *Turning Points 2000*, and *This We Believe*.

PROCESS

Schools submit an application, self-assessment survey and other supporting school based data. NELMS reviews the materials and identifies schools that meet criteria to continue in the process. Following initial selection, NELMS will schedule a site visit to the school where 2-3 evaluators, known for their knowledge and expertise in middle level education, will observe the school and its programs in practice. A final determination of Spotlight School designation will be made by April 2018.

RECOGNITION

Once identified, a Spotlight School receives a Spotlight School banner, recognition in the NELMS *Midlines* publication and website, and press releases to local and regional media outlets. Spotlight Schools will have the opportunity to host visits to showcase their best practices. NELMS makes all arrangements for such visits.

TIMELINE

Application materials must be received by **Friday, October 20, 2017**.

FEE

A non-refundable fee of \$400.00 is submitted with the application.



The Spotlight School application includes the components outlined below:

- ⊗ Application information sheet
- ⊗ Self-Assessment Survey
 - Please select a representative group of educators to complete the survey. Individual results should be tabulated and a consensus average should be assigned to each question. A single survey indicating the consensus average is submitted.
- ⊗ School Improvement Plan
- ⊗ Relevant curriculum documents
- ⊗ Summary of Professional Development activities for the last 3 years
- ⊗ Summary pages of state test scores for the last 3 years
- ⊗ Student and staff attendance rates for the last 3 years
- ⊗ Discipline profile
- ⊗ Student Handbook
- ⊗ A statement of **no more than 2 pages** that answers the question, “*What Makes (NAME) a Spotlight School?*” It is acceptable to include examples and quotes from students, staff, parents, and community members.

Application packet and **non-refundable fee of \$400.00** should be mailed, faxed, or sent electronically to the NELMS office by **Friday, October 20, 2017**.



New England League of Middle Schools



Spotlight School Application

School Name: _____ NELMS Member? Yes No

Principal's Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Contact Person: _____ E-mail: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ FAX: _____

School Website URL: _____

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: _____

These documents were completed and/or prepared by:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

I am aware of the information that is being submitted in this package.

Principal _____ Date _____

Superintendent _____ Date _____

Form of Payment

Total due: \$400

Signed Purchase Order Check Enclosed Credit Card

Credit Card: MasterCard VISA Discover

Card # _____ Billing ZIP: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Cardholder's Name: _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____

Complete and mail or fax application packet with payment or signed purchase order to:

New England League of Middle Schools, 50 High Street, Suite 10, North Andover, MA 01845-2648

(978) 557-9311 FAX: (978) 557-9312



New England League of Middle Schools



Self-Assessment Survey (Revised 7/01/17)

School _____

Date _____

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 researched based middle level practices and focus on improved student achievement as reflected in *Turning Points 2000*, and *This We Believe: Successful Schools for Young Adolescents*.

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 and Assessment

Teach a curriculum grounded in rigorous, public academic standards for what students should know and be able to do, relevant to the concerns of adolescents and based on how students learn best.

Is your school:

Using state standards as a basis for the design of curriculum?

1 2 3 4

Using a process to collect data and use it to inform instruction as well as to assess student progress?

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

Using a process to articulate curriculum across grade levels and between teams in each of the content areas?

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

Use instructional methods that prepare all students to achieve higher standards and become lifelong learners.

Is your school:

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

1 2 3 4

Providing evidence of a variety of grouping arrangements within a primarily mixed-ability environment?

1 2 3 4

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 faculty with daily individual planning time?

1 2 3 4

Utilizing a standards-based reporting system?

1 2 3 4

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

1 2 3 4

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

1 2 3 4

Middle Level Teachers

Staff middle grades schools with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents, and engage teachers in ongoing, targeted professional development opportunities.

Is your school:

Providing on going professional development about the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social characteristics of young adolescents and best middle level practices for teaching them?

1 2 3 4

Establishing a process for continuous professional growth that connects research to best practices including workshop attendance, conferences and coaching in the content areas?

1 2 3 4

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

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

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

1 2 3 4

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

1 2 3 4

Ensuring that faculty is accomplished in the use of technology as an integral component of their instructional practices.

1 2 3 4

Organization

Organize relationships for learning to create a climate of intellectual development and a caring community of shared educational purpose.

Is your school:

Using daily team planning time for curriculum development, common team concerns, scheduling, grouping and conferencing?

1 2 3 4

Using a team notebook for meeting agendas, minutes, and notes?

1 2 3 4

Setting team goals that focus on learning and student achievement?

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

Utilizing a high degree of common policies on a team regarding expectations, discipline, late work, homework, etc.?

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

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

1 2 3 4

Using an effective and collaborative orientation and transition process to serve the needs of students and parents in making the following transitions:

a. elementary to middle school?

1 2 3 4

b. middle to high school?

1 2 3 4

c. new students entering the middle school?

1 2 3 4

Govern Democratically

Govern democratically, through direct or representative participation by all school members, the adults who know the students best.

Is your school:

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

1 2 3 4

Using on going data collection and analysis to continue school improvement focused on student learning?

1 2 3 4

Using inquiry groups created to investigate the causes and solutions to school based problems?

1 2 3 4

Using a data-driven, comprehensive school improvement plan developed collaboratively by all stakeholders?

1 2 3 4

Receiving sustained support for student achievement and school programs from district level personnel?

1 2 3 4

School Environment

Provide a safe and healthy school environment as part of improving academic performance and developing caring and ethical citizens.

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

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

1 2 3 4

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

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

Using Advisory or other social/emotional programs to ensure that every student is well known by at least one adult?

1 2 3 4

Involving Parents and Community

Involve parents and communities in supporting student learning and healthy development.

Is your school:

Ensuring that students, parents, and community members feel welcome in the school setting.

1 2 3 4

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

1 2 3 4

Using frequent communication to keep families aware of student progress and performance?

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 and business partners as educational resources and an environment to promote relevant learning?

1 2 3 4