Massachusetts Department of Revenue *Division of Local Services*
Frederick A. Laskey, Commissioner Joseph J. Chessey, Jr., Deputy Commissioner

East Longmeadow Public Schools Review

Executive Order 393

Education Management Accountability Board Report
December 1999

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The Division of Local Services would like to acknowledge the professional cooperation extended to the audit team by The Department of Education, East Longmeadow Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Edward Costa and the school department staff.

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I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act (MERA) of 1993 has three major goals: to increase student achievement; to achieve adequate funding for all local and regional school districts over a seven-year period; and to bring equity to local taxation efforts based on a community's ability to pay. In February 1997, the Governor issued Executive Order 393 to evaluate the education reform program that was nearing the end of its fourth year. In FY98, Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Ch. 70 state aid for education reached $2.3 billion. With an investment of this magnitude in the Commonwealth's schools, it is critical to "review, investigate and report on the expenditures of funds by school districts, including regional school districts, consistent with the goals of improving student achievement." To that end, Executive Order 393 established the Education Management Accountability Board (EMAB).

The Secretary of Administration and Finance, serving as chief of staff to the EMAB, selected a team of auditors from the Department of Revenue's (DOR) Division of Local Services (DLS) to conduct the school district reviews. DOR's Director of Accounts is the chief investigator with authority to examine municipal and school department accounts and transactions pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 44, §35 and 46A. The reviews are conducted in consultation with the State Auditor and the Commissioner of Education.

The East Longmeadow Public Schools (ELPS) is the twelfth school district reviewed under Executive Order 393. The audit team began the review of ELPS in April 1999, and completed it in June 1999. As part of this review, the audit team conducted a confidential survey of employees of the school district and included the results in this report. School officials cooperated fully with the audit team.

The Executive Summary includes some of the more significant observations and findings of the review of ELPS' operations. When possible, the audit team has identified and presented best practices, which may be helpful to other school districts. The report discusses all results, best practices and deficiencies, if any, in greater detail in the "General Conditions and Findings" section.

II. Executive Summary

The East Longmeadow Public Schools have experienced a significant turnover in superintendents that seems to have delayed progress in implementing key education reform initiatives over the 1993 through 1998 period. More progress has been made recently through the initiatives undertaken by the current Superintendent who was hired in June of 1998.

While maintaining the basic principles of site-based management, he appears to have focused the efforts of the ELPS management team on a common district-wide mission of achievement and accountability. The formalization of certain key documents has been a significant outcome of this effort. An updated technology plan, a K-12 curriculum handbook, a policies and procedures manual, a district-wide student code of conduct manual, and district-wide procedures for the development of school improvement plans are examples.

With total school spending of $15.2 million in FY98, up by 34.5% from FY94, resources have been sufficient to boost real spending per student as enrollment increased only by 4.9% over that period, to 2,536 students. However, the overall student/teacher ratio in FY98 stood at 15.9, higher than the state average of 14.5 and significantly higher than the district's FY93 figure of 13.0.

ELPS test scores are generally above state averages as might be expected based on better than state average demographic characteristics of the school district. MCAS results for students in grades 4, 8, and 10 were above state average in all subject areas. MEAP scores increased significantly from 1992 to 1996 and the percentage of fourth and eight graders performing at the lowest level of achievement in 1992 decreased substantially by 1996 in all subjects.

Salary increases for school principals are based on both merit and non-merit related factors. The Superintendent stated to the auditors that all salary increases for principals would be linked to performance by February 2000. All principals' contracts contain language providing for termination for "good cause."

ELPS appears to benefit from a relatively high level of community support both in terms of financial support for capital projects and community involvement. The FY2000 capital budget includes $962,000 for school projects. More than one-third of this amount is budgeted for the purchase of classroom computers. ELPS is in the process of building a new $19.6 million middle school scheduled to open in September 2000. An additional amount of $130,000 was included in this budget for new textbooks. Active community involvement at ELPS was evidenced by parents, teachers, and other community members performing the actual wiring that provided Internet access to all ELPS classrooms. A local business firm made a donation of the cable and provided staff expertise to perform the work.

Despite the above noted achievements, ELPS has been slow to improve in other areas. Spending for textbooks and professional development has not met foundation budget levels or legal spending requirements in the case of professional development. Extensive turnover in the superintendent position (five superintendents in the past ten years) resulted in a delay in the development of a strategic plan and other formal district-wide policy documents such as a curriculum handbook and school improvement plans. There also has been a lack of sufficient controls in the expenditure process regarding the use of purchase orders prior to FY1999. However, this issue has been addressed in FY1999.

Inaccuracies in inventories of personal computers indicate that controls over ELPS assets must be strengthened with the expected arrival of new computer hardware for the FY2000 school year. Procedures for disposal of assets and removal from inventories should be implemented.

Review of the payroll process revealed that ELPS lacks adequate controls and finds itself in a position of having to recover funds from employees who were paid for leave time taken in excess of available balances.

THE FOUNDATION BUDGET

- ELPS has exceeded net school spending requirements as determined by the Department of Education (DOE) from FY94 through FY98. Also, ELPS has met or exceeded the foundation budget in total for FY95 to FY98. The district received $1.7 million in state aid in FY94 and $2.7 million in FY98 as a result of Massachusetts' investment in education. [See Section 5]

- The foundation budget does not mandate spending in specific category. However, to encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch. 70 Sec. 9 requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education when it has failed to meet foundation budget spending levels for professional development, books and instructional equipment, extended/expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance. Although ELPS did not meet these levels from FY94 through FY98, it did not file a report as required by law nor did DOE direct it to do so. [See Section 7]

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- ELPS test scores have shown generally good results and are generally above state averages. Recently released MCAS scores show that ELPS scored above the state average scaled scores for grades four, eight, and ten. SAT scores have generally been just slightly lower than the state average over recent years. MEAP scores are above the state averages and significant improvement has been shown, especially in the area of grade four proficiency scores. [See Section 16]

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT POWERS

- There have been five superintendents in the last ten years, and the positions of business manager, bookkeeper, and payroll clerk have also experienced turnover. The current Superintendent was hired in June 1998 and the Business Manager was hired in October 1998.

- ELPS uses individual contracts for school principals. The contracts are generally for three years in length and state the salary or salary range for each year of the contract. Annual salary increases are either merit-based or a specific dollar amount, with all contracts to be merit-based by February 2000. The Superintendent evaluates principals in writing at the end of the year. [See Section 17]

- The Superintendent conducts weekly meetings with administrators and principals. He visits each school weekly and meets with the principal at that time. There is no curriculum director. The Superintendent oversees this function stating that he works closely with the curriculum coordinators. [See Section 17]

STUDENT/FTE TEACHER STAFFING

- Between FY93 and FY97, the total number of teaching FTE's decreased by 27.4, or 14.7 percent, from 186.4 to 159.0. The all students/all FTE teachers ratio increased during this same period from 13.0 to 15.9. The 1993 ratio was slightly lower than the State average of 15.1. The FY97 ratio was slightly higher than State average of 14.5. [See Section 8]

TEACHER COMPENSATION

- ELPS increased its expenditures for salaries by $3.1 million between FY1993 and FY98, an increase of 43.4 percent. This increase is 3.5 percentage points above the 39.9 percent increase in total school district expenditures during the same period. Total salaries made up 65 percent of these expenditures in FY1993 and increased to 66.6 percent in FY98. The ELPS average teacher salary for FY97 was $38,410, below the state average of $42,874. [See Section 9]

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ELPS has not met either the professional development legal minimum spending requirements for FY96 to FY98 or the foundation budget targets for FY94 to FY98. Expenditures in FY96 represented only 80 percent of the minimum legal spending requirement and increased to 96.6 percent in FY98. [See Section 10]

TIME AND LEARNING

- ELPS met DOE's time requirement of 990 hours per year for high schools, 990 hours per year for middle schools and 900 for elementary schools. [See Section 12]

DISTRICT ISSUES

- During our documentation of the payroll system, we noted that ELPS personnel can be paid for time in excess of available "leave time" balances, causing a year-end employee "pay docking" situation (i.e., amounts owed to the district are deducted from employees' final paychecks). Since payroll is processed mainly on an "exception" basis, available balances should be checked prior to processing the payroll. Employees who have taken time in excess of available balances would not be paid for that time taken. ELPS should not be in a position of "recovering" cash at the end of the school year.

- PC inventories were found to be inaccurate at the high school.

BEST PRACTICE

- ELPS has developed a high level of community support and including business partnerships. That is exemplified in the Internet wiring project.

Auditee's Response

The audit team held an exit conference with the Superintendent and his staff on September 23, 1999. Changes were made to the draft report as a result of the meeting and a formal reply to the revised draft has been received and is included in Appendix F.

Review Scope

In preparation for the school district reviews, the audit team held meetings with officials from DOE, the State Auditor's Office and other statewide organizations such as the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, the Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. The audit team also read published reports on educational and financial issues to prepare for the school district reviews.

The audit team met with the private audit firm that conducts financial audits of ELPS. In addition, DOE provided data including the EOY reports, foundation budgets, evaluations of test results for ELPS students, as well as statewide comparative data. The DOR's Division of Local Services Municipal Data Bank provided demographic information, community profiles and overall state aid data. While on site, the audit team interviewed officials including, but not limited to the school committee chairman, the Superintendent, the Business Manager, and all principals. Documents reviewed included vendor and personnel contracts, invoices, payroll data, statistics on students and teachers as well as test results and reports submitted to DOE.

In keeping with the goals set out by the EMAB, the school district review was designed to determine whether or not basic financial goals related to education reform have been met. The audit team gathered data related to performance such as test scores, student to teacher ratios and class sizes to show results and operational trends. However, this report does not intend to present a definitive opinion regarding the quality of education in ELPS, or its successes or failures in meeting particular education reform goals. Rather, it is intended to present a relevant summary of data to the EMAB for evaluation and comparison purposes.

The focus of this review was on operational issues. It did not encompass all of the tests that are normally part of a year-end financial audit such as: review of internal controls; cash reconciliation of accounts; testing compliance with purchasing and expenditure laws and regulations; and generally accepted accounting practices. The audit team tested financial transactions on a limited basis only. The audit team also excluded federal grants, revolving accounts and student activity accounts. The audit team did not test statistical data relating to enrollment, test scores and other measures of achievement. This report is intended for the information and use of EMAB and ELPS. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.

III. General Conditions and Findings

1. East Longmeadow Overview

The Division of Local Services classifies the Town of East Longmeadow as an economically developed suburb. It has a 1996 population of 13,890, up 7.6 percent from 1980 and up 3.9 percent from 1990. The population of East Longmeadow is 98.5 percent white, according to 1990 US Census information. Also in 1990, of the 13,367 residents of East Longmeadow, 5,361 were between 15 and 44 years old. More than two-thirds of the households at that time were married couple households.

Historically, East Longmeadow was known for its sandstone quarries. Also, Pratt and Whitney employed 4,300 individuals in their East Longmeadow factory during wartime

where they built aircraft engine parts. Currently, the largest employer in East Longmeadow is Milton Bradley, employing approximately 2,400 people. The second largest employer is American Saw, employing 900 people.

In 1997, the tax levy in East Longmeadow accounted for 64.7 percent of its revenue source (state aid made up another 16 percent of those revenues). According to 1990 US census information, 90.6 percent of the dwellings in East Longmeadow were single-family units. Of the total number of structures at that time, 55.2 percent were built after 1950.

Charts 1-1 and *1-2* show some key demographic and economic statistics for East Longmeadow.

Chart 1-1

City of East Longmeadow
Demographic Data

1996 Population	13,890
FY99 Residential Tax Rate	$19.43
FY99 Average Single Family Tax	$2,794
FY99 Avg. Assessed Value Per Single Family	$143,820
FY99 Tax Levy	$18,266,229
FY99 State Aid	$4,511,741
FY98 State Aid as % of Total Revenue	16.0%
1989 Per Capita Income	$17,037
1996 Average Unemployment Rate	3.3%

Note: Data provided by DLS

A three member Board of Selectmen governs the Town of East Longmeadow. The Chairman has been newly appointed to this position, and is serving his second year on the Board. Another member is serving his fifteenth year on the Board, and the third member is in his first year on the Board. The Superintendent was appointed to the position in June 1998. The ELPS Business Manager was hired in October 1998. As of our audit date, ELPS consists of one elementary school (grades K-2), two elementary schools (grades 3-5), one middle school (grades 6-8), and one high school (grades 9-12). The October 1998 total school enrollment was 2,632.

Of the ELPS high school graduating class of 1997, 63.1 percent of students indicated they intended to attend a four-year college. This is 9.7 percent above the statewide average. Also, 27.4 percent indicated an intention to go on to a two-year college. This is 8.9 percent above the statewide average, bringing the overall percentage of students who intend to

continue their education to 90.5 percent, 18.6 percent above the state average. In 1997, the high school dropout rate was 0.4 percent, 3 percent below the state average.

Chart 1-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Demographic Data
School Year 1997/98

	ELPS	State Average
Enrollment Race / Ethnicity		
White	97.0%	77.5%
Minority	3.0%	22.5%
Special Education	26.0%	16.6%
Percentage Attending Private School (1996/97)	6.1%	10.6%
High School Drop-Out Rate (1996/97)	0.4%	3.4%
Plans of Graduates - Class of '97		
4 Year College	63.1%	53.4%
2 Year College	27.4%	18.5%
2 or 4 Year College	90.5%	71.9%
Work	5.6%	16.8%

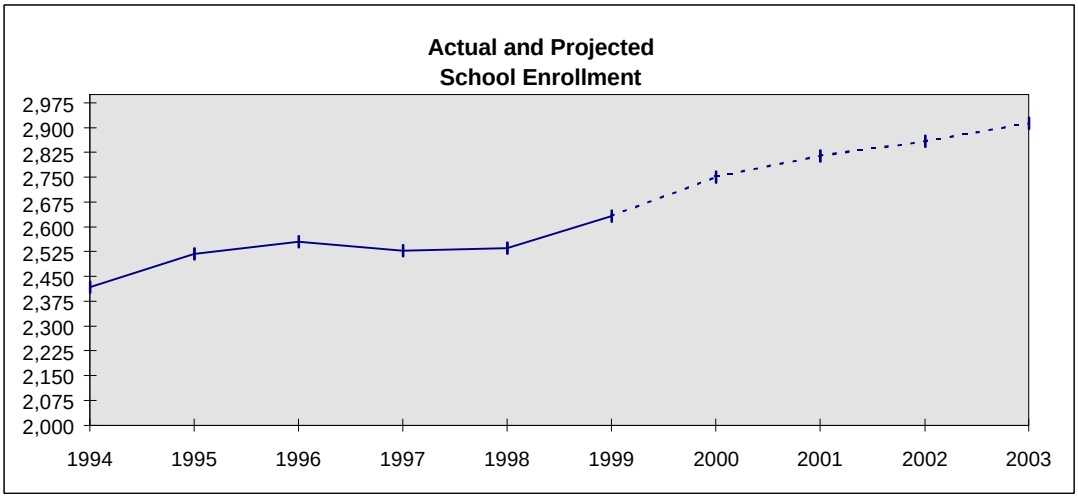
Note: Data provided by DOE

Consistent with the town demographics, the white enrollment at ELPS is 97 percent, with none of the students being limited English proficient. Therefore, ELPS does not incur any significant expense related to bilingual education.

Chart 1-3 illustrates the ELPS enrollment trend from October 1993, the 1993/94 school year, to October 1998, the 1998/99 school year. Enrollments projected by the district are shown from October 1999 to October 2003. All enrollments are as of October 1 of each year.

Chart 1-3

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Actual and Projected Student Enrollment
School Years 1993/94 to 2002/03



Note: Enrollment as of October 1st. Years are in fiscal years. Data obtained from ELPS.
A solid line represents actual enrollment; a dotted line represents projected enrollment.

As shown in *Chart 1-3a*, enrollment has increased from 2,417 in October of the 1993/94 school year, to 2,536 in October of the 1997/98 school year. Total ELPS enrollment increased 4.9 percent during this period, a much lower rate of increase than the state increase of 15.1 percent. The chart shows a total enrollment increase in each year, except for the 1996/97 and 1997/98 school year. Total enrollment projections show large growth in enrollments.

Chart 1-3a

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Actual and Projected Student Enrollment
School Years 1988/89 to 2002/03

	Elementary School		Middle School	High School	Tuitioned Out	Total
School Year	Pre K & K	1 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 12	Ungraded	Enrollment
93-94	196	963	589	669		2,417
94-95	219	1,006	584	709		2,518
95-96	203	997	591	764		2,555
96-97	203	985	576	765		2,529
97-98	198	1,001	577	760	0	2,536
98-99	235	994	594	809	0	2,632
99-00	230	1,036	652	833	0	2,751
00-01	247	1,064	645	859	0	2,815
01-02	263	1,118	611	866	0	2,858
02-03	244	1,196	571	903	0	2,914
ELPS 94-98 % Change	1.0%	3.9%	-2.0%	13.6%		4.9%
State 94-98						
ELPS 98-03	23.2%	19.5%	-1.0%	18.8%		14.9%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. Tuitioned out/ungraded students shown as reported by the district. Enrollment information was not available for FY88 to FY93.

The following C*hart 1-4* illustrates the relative growth in the high school and middle school in contrast to the elementary schools, expressed in terms of percentage of total enrollment.

Chart 1-4

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Distribution of Enrollment by Type of School

	Elementary School		Middle School	High School	Tuitioned Out	Total
School Year	Pre K & K	1 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 12	Ungraded	Enrollment
93-94	8.1%	39.8%	24.4%	27.7%	0.0%	100.0%
94-95	8.7%	40.0%	23.2%	28.2%	0.0%	100.0%
95-96	7.9%	39.0%	23.1%	29.9%	0.0%	100.0%
96-97	8.0%	38.9%	22.8%	30.2%	0.0%	100.0%
97-98	7.8%	39.5%	22.8%	30.0%	0.0%	100.0%
98-99	8.9%	37.8%	22.6%	30.7%	0.0%	100.0%
99-00	8.4%	37.7%	23.7%	30.3%	0.0%	100.0%
00-01	8.8%	37.8%	22.9%	30.5%	0.0%	100.0%
01-02	9.2%	39.1%	21.4%	30.3%	0.0%	100.0%
02-03	8.4%	41.0%	19.6%	31.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Percentage Point Change SY93-94 to SY97-98		-0.4%	-1.6%	2.3%		
Percentage Point Change SY93-94 to SY02-03		1.2%	-4.8%	3.3%		

Note: Data obtained from ELPS.

2. School Finances

At ELPS state aid composed only 20.4 percent of district funding in FY98. ELPS has benefited from additional funds available due to education reform. As state aid increased from $1.7 million in FY94 to $2.7 million in FY98, the combination of state aid and the local share allowed the district to increase salaries, expand special needs programs, and increase spending on technology.

School district funding and financial reporting requirements are generally complex and become especially complicated in the context of education reform. A district annually determines how much money it will spend on education. However, DOE considers only certain expenditures and funding when determining whether or not a district meets education reform requirements.

This audit examines school funding primarily from three perspectives: the school committee budget; net school spending; and the foundation budget.

Generally, the audit team examines the school committee budget in some detail as a matter of practice because it reflects basic financial and educational decisions, provides an overview of financial operations and indicates how the community expects to meet the goals and objectives of education reform. We did not examine the budget in detail during this review, due to ELPS management being unable to provide detailed budget documents to the auditors.

Net school spending, the sum of the required minimum contribution from local revenues plus state chapter 70 education aid, is a figure issued annually by DOE that must be met by school districts under education reform.

The foundation budget is a school spending target under education reform that the school district should meet. Calculated on the basis of pupil characteristics and community demographics, it is designed to insure that a minimum level of educational resources is available per student in each school district. Under education reform, all school districts are expected to meet their foundation budget targets by the year 2000.

3. School Committee Budget Trend

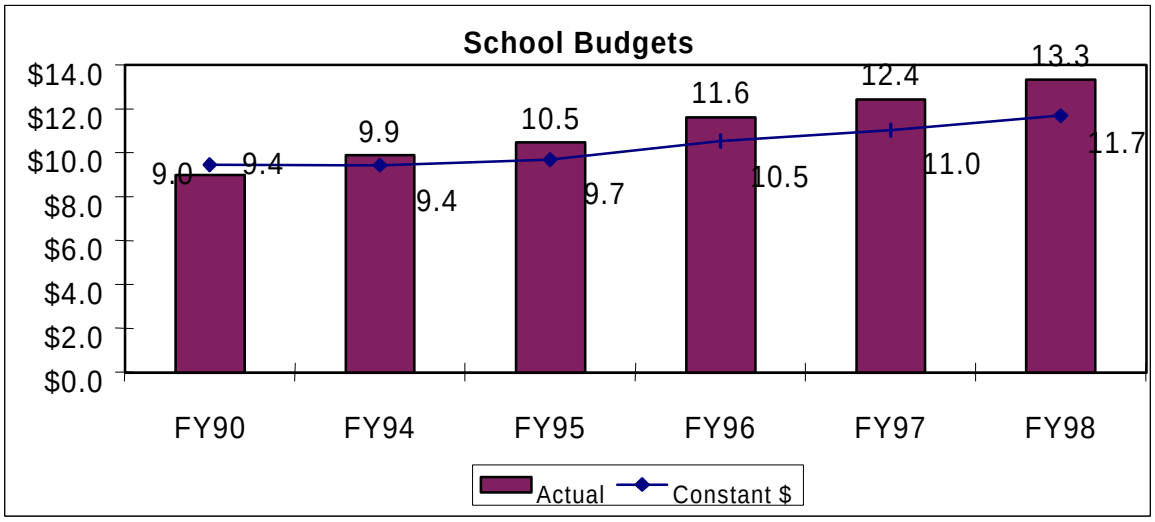
Chart 3-1 illustrates the school committee budget trend from FY90 to FY98, exclusive of FY89 and FY91 to FY1993. This information was obtained from Schedule 19 of the district and DOE EOY reports, as final budget packages were not available from ELPS, due to management turnover. Therefore, base-year comparisons will be made to FY90.

The total school committee budget increased by $938,631 or 10.5 percent between FY90 and FY94. With education reform aid, the budget increased between FY94 and FY97 by $2.5 million or 25.7 percent. The FY98 budget further increased over FY97 by $1.7 million or 13.9 percent.

In constant dollars, where FY92 is set at 100, the chart illustrates how the school committee budget fared with respect to inflation over time. From FY90 to FY97, the school committee budget as defined above increased from $9.0 million to $12.4 million, a 16.6 percent increase in constant dollars. From FY94 to FY97, it increased $1.5 million or 16.7 percent in constant dollars, from $9.4 million to $11.0 million. In constant dollars, ELPS has not experienced net budget decreases in the last nine years.

Chart 3-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
School Budgets in Actual and Constant Dollars
FY89 - FY98
(in $ millions)



Data obtained from ELPS.

4. Total School District Expenditures

Total school district expenditures include expenditures by the school committee and expenditures by the city for school purposes as reported in the DOE EOY report. FY1993 includes state per pupil aid. Total school district expenditures increased between FY89 and FY1993 by $800,000 or 8 percent. Expenditures increased between FY93 and FY97 by $3.3 million or 30 percent.

Expenditures paid for by the town for school purposes were $1.3 million in FY93 and increased to $1.8 million in FY97. In FY97, the major components were $0.7 million for employee insurance and $0.3 million for employer retirement contributions.

Chart 4-1 illustrates East Longmeadow's total school district expenditures from FY89 to FY98.

Chart 4-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
School Committee	$8.9	$9.5	$9.9	$11.2	$11.8	$12.4	$13.4
City	$1.2	$1.3	$1.4	$1.7	$1.7	$1.8	$1.7
Total	$10.1	$10.9	$11.3	$12.9	$13.5	$14.2	$15.2

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

Chart 4-2 shows the FY94 to FY98 trend in net school spending per student. It indicates that actual net school spending per student has increased from $4,378 in FY94 to $5,236 in FY97, or 19.6 percent. The inflation-adjusted figures have also increased from $4,173 in FY94 to $4,633 in FY97, or 11.0 percent in 1992 dollars.

Chart 4-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Net School Spending Per Student
Actual and Constant (1992=100) Dollars

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY94-FY97 Change	FY98
Expenditures / Student in Actual $	$4,378	$4,771	$4,860	$5,236	19.6%	$5,212
Expenditures / Student in 1992 $	$4,173	$4,413	$4,398	$4,633	11.0%	$4,572

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

5. Net School Spending Requirements

Pursuant to the education reform law, DOE develops annual spending requirements and budget targets for each school district. The requirements are based on a formula which is used to set specific minimum spending requirements and, in combination with other factors, is also used to set "foundation" budget targets, as well as determining the amount of state aid for each district. Each school district must meet a net spending requirement. Expenditures which count towards a district's "net school spending"

generally include all education related expenditures paid for with state aid under Chapter 70 and municipal appropriations used for that purpose. Excluded from the net school spending definition are expenditures for school transportation, school lunch, school construction and certain capital expenditures. Expenditures from federal funds and from school revolving accounts are also excluded.

As indicated in *Chart 5-1*, during FY94 to FY98 required net school spending, the amount the district must spend to move towards the foundation budget target, increased by 25 percent, from $10.5 million to $13.1 million. Actual net school spending exceeded this requirement in all years. While the required net school spending amounts are below the foundation for each fiscal year shown, actual net school spending amounts have met or exceeded foundation in all years, except FY94. To date, actual net school spending has consistently exceeded the minimum requirement.

Chart 5-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Foundation Budget and Net School Spending (NSS)
(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Foundation Budget Target	$11.4	$11.8	$12.5	$13.0	$13.2
Required NSS as % of Foundation	92.0%	94.8%	94.7%	95.3%	98.9%
Required Net School Spending	$10.5	$ 11.2	$ 11.8	$ 12.4	$ 13.1
Actual Net School Spending	$10.6	$ 12.0	$ 12.4	$ 13.2	$ 13.2
Variance $	$0.1	$0.8	$0.6	$0.8	$0.1
Variance %	0.8%	7.3%	5.0%	6.7%	1.1%
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	92.7%	101.8%	99.5%	101.8%	100.0%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

Chart 5-2 indicates the state aid, as a percent of actual net school spending, has increased from 16.5 percent in FY94 to 20.4 percent in FY98, while the local share has decreased from 83.5 percent in FY94 to 79.6 percent in FY98.

Chart 5-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Net School Spending
(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Required Local Contribution	$8.8	$9.2	$9.6	$9.9	$10.4
Actual Local Contribution	$8.8	$10.1	$10.2	$10.7	$10.5
Variance $	$0.1	$0.8	$0.6	$0.8	$0.1
Variance %	0.9%	8.9%	6.2%	8.5%	1.4%
Required Net School Spending	$10.5	$11.2	$11.8	$12.4	$13.1
Actual Net School Spending	$10.6	$12.0	$12.4	$13.2	$13.2
Local Share $	$8.8	$10.1	$10.2	$10.7	$10.5
State Aid	$1.7	$2.0	$2.2	$2.6	$2.7
Local Share %	83.5%	83.7%	82.0%	80.7%	79.6%
State Aid %	16.5%	16.3%	18.0%	19.3%	20.4%

Note: Data obtained from DOE. Amounts may not add due to rounding.

6. School Committee Program Budget

Within the context of education reform and improving student achievement, the audit team tries to establish how much a school district budgets and spends on academic courses such as English and science versus other subjects or programs. Program budgets are generally intended to show the total financial resources for a particular program or activity. Well-developed program budgets include goal statements, planned actions and expected outcomes, along with the total amount of resources required to achieve the objectives. In the school environment, a program budget for mathematics, for example, would show salaries for mathematics teachers and related costs such as supplies, textbooks, etc. It would indicate the expected outcomes for the budget year.

ELPS does not currently prepare budgets on a program basis. Budget categories are set up to correspond generally to Schedule 1 of the EOY report. For FY00, the Superintendent, Business Manager and all ELPS principals prepared the ELPS budget for the district. This was accomplished gradually, during the Superintendent's weekly management meetings. Operational and program needs were analyzed and prioritized. Likewise, capital needs were assessed and prioritized in relation to the five-year capital plan.

Once the ELPS budget was approved at the Town meeting, the ELPS management team allocated line item budget resources to each school. Either the number of students or square footage of the school facility determined the amount of this allocation. Further, once individual school budgets were complete, principals met with school councils and faculty to determine the allocation of school resources to each classroom.

The Superintendent contracted with the CPA firm of Polumbo and Kulas to perform a review of the existing ELPS budget and expenditure processes and system. The Superintendent did this in an effort to understand and correct weaknesses in these areas caused, in part, by high turnover in the business office prior to his arrival. The CPA firm's report indicated weaknesses in the ability to track actual versus budgeted expenses. This was supported by the school department's request for supplemental funding twice during FY98. Personnel turnover, as well as a lack of budget documentation supporting the original budget, limited the accountant's review of the FY98 budget process. The audit team noted budget documents prior to FY98 to be equally inadequate. Therefore, we relied upon Schedule 19 in the EOY reports to develop *Chart 6-1*. The audit team did note that there was more comprehensive documentation for the FY00 budget in the form of a budget book. Also, the audit team noted the use of line item transfer request forms with supporting documentation.

Chart 6-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
School Committee Budget
(in thousands of dollars)

				FY94 - FY97		%	
	FY94	FY96	FY97	$ Diff	% Diff	of Total	FY98
Instructional Services	$7,356	$8,245	$8,746	$1,389	18.9%	54.6%	$9,435
Pupil Support Services	$75	$131	$164	$89	100.0%	3.5%	$172
Administration	$268	$274	$278	$10	3.8%	0.4%	$330
Operations & Maintenance	$923	$1,051	$1,160	$238	25.8%	9.3%	$1,152
Employer Retirement Contributions	$0	$0	$0	$0	100.0%	0.0%	$0
Employee Benefits	$0	$0	$0	$0	0.0%	0.0%	$0
Pupil Transportation	$275	$539	$429	$153	55.6%	6.0%	$460
Student Body Activities	$106	$159	$257	$151	100.0%	5.9%	$184
Non-Public Transportation	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	0.0%	$0
Fixed Assets	$52	$57	$104	$52	101.2%	2.1%	$210
School Choice/Charter Schools	$0	$36	$0	$0	0.0%	0.0%	$0
Payments to Other Districts	$233	$207	$245	$13	5.5%	0.5%	$249
Payments to Collaboratives	$611	$933	$1,061	$451	73.8%	17.7%	$1,126
Insurance Except Retired School Employees	$0	$0	$0	$0	0.0%	0.0%	$0
Total	$9,899	$11,631	$12,445	$2,546	25.7%	100.0%	$13,319

Note: Data obtained from ELPS EOY reports.

Chart 6-1a shows the same budget data on a percentage distribution basis to illustrate how particular budget items have changed since FY94 in certain areas.

Chart 6-1a

East Longmeadow Public Schools
School Committee Budget

	FY94	FY96	FY97	% Point Incr / Decr. FY94 - FY97	FY98
Instructional Services	74.3%	70.9%	70.3%	-4.0%	70.8%
Pupil Support Services	0.8%	1.1%	1.3%	0.6%	1.3%
Administration	2.7%	2.4%	2.2%	-0.5%	2.5%
Operations & Maintenance	9.3%	9.0%	9.3%	0.0%	8.6%
Employer Retirement Contributions	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Employee Benefits	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pupil Transportation	2.8%	4.6%	3.4%	0.7%	3.5%
Student Body Activities	1.1%	1.4%	2.1%	1.0%	1.4%
Non-Public Transportation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Fixed Assets	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	1.6%
School Choice/Charter Schools	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Payments to Other Districts	2.3%	1.8%	2.0%	-0.4%	1.9%
Payments to Collaboratives	6.2%	8.0%	8.5%	2.4%	8.5%
Insurance Except Retired School Employees	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS EOY reports.

7. Foundation Budget

The foundation budget is a target level of spending designed to insure that school districts either reach or maintain a certain level of school spending. That level of spending is deemed to be a reasonable minimum amount to ensure that basic educational services and reasonable student to teacher ratios are funded. The financial goal of education reform is that all school districts should reach at least the 100 percent level of foundation spending by FY00. The foundation budget target is set by DOE for each school district and is updated annually to account for changes in key formula factors such as student enrollment and inflation. ELPS has reached 100 percent of its foundation target as of FY98. *Appendix A1* details foundation spending.

Chart 7-0

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Actual NSS as Percent of the Foundation Budget Target
(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Foundation Budget Target	$11.4	$11.8	$12.5	$13.0	$13.2
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	92.7%	101.8%	99.5%	101.8%	100.0%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

The foundation budget establishes spending targets by grade (pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, junior high and high school) and program (special education, bilingual, vocational and expanded or after-school activities). Grade and program spending targets are intended to serve as guidelines only and are not binding on local school districts. However, to encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch. 70, § requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education when it has failed to meet foundation budget spending levels for professional development, books and instructional equipment, extended/expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance. According to *Chart 7-1*, expenditures did not reach foundation budget in any of these categories for the fiscal years shown as well as for FY95. ELPS did not file a report with the Commissioner's office as required by Ch. 70, § for these fiscal years, nor did DOE direct ELPS to submit such report.

Chart 7-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Net School Spending
Foundation Budget
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY94		FY96		FY97	
	Actual	**Budget**	**Actual**	**Budget**	**Actual**	**Budget**
Professional Development	$45	$178	$51	$194	$117	$202
Books and Equipment	$482	$697	$485	$768	$458	$807
Expanded Program	$0	$29	$0	$38	$0	$45
Extraordinary Maintenance	$8	$360	$0	$396	$0	$413

Expenditures As Percentage of Foundation Budget

	FY94 NSS/FND	FY96 NSS/FND	FY97 NSS/FND
Professional Development	25.4%	26.3%	57.7%
Books and Equipment	69.2%	63.1%	56.8%
Expanded Program	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Extraordinary Maintenance	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

Appendix A1 shows the ELPS foundation budget for FY94, FY96 and FY97. For each year, the chart shows expenditures and variances from the foundation budgets as well as how expenditures compare with the foundation budgets. Although ELPS did not meet the foundation budgets in the required categories for these fiscal years, total spending was at or above the foundation budget target in all years but FY94.

8. Staffing - Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Trends

Since salaries comprise approximately 66.6 percent of FY98 total school district expenditures, budget changes closely reflect changes in staffing or FTE's.

In FY93 the district had a total of 313.3 FTE's including 186.4 teachers. According to information reported to DOE on the October 1 reports, FY97 total FTE's remained about the same at 313.2 FTE's, with 159 teaching FTE's. This represents an approximately 14.7 percent decrease in teaching FTE's. In this context, teachers exclude instructional assistants.

Teacher FTE's are different in section 8 and in section 9 of this report. This is because School System Summary Reports (October 1 Reports) were used to calculate FTE staff in section 8 and the EOY Reports (Schedule 13) were used to calculate FTE teachers and

average teacher salary in section 9. The data for each report is reported at two different times during the year. As *Chart 8-1* indicates, the percentage increase in instructional assistant FTE's appears to offset the number of teaching

The Superintendent indicated that his belief is that between FY93 and FY97 the number of FTE's should have increased. However, due to the turnover in Central Office staff, we were unable to obtain an explanation regarding FTE's reported on the October 1 report. However, *Chart 13-1* indicates an average class size in certain core subjects at the high school of anywhere between 18.6 to 21.6 students. This would seem to correspond to the FY97 All Student/All Teacher (excluding SPED) ratio of 18.0:1 shown below in *Chart 8-3*.

Chart 8-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Staffing Trends
Full Time Equalivalent (FTE)

	Total FTEs	Teachers	Teachers as % of FTEs	Instruct. Assists.	Principals/ Administrators	All Others
FY93	313.3	186.4	59.5%	38.3	9.0	79.6
FY97	313.2	159.0	50.8%	44.3	8.0	101.9
FY93-97	-0.1	-27.4		6	-1	22.3
Incr. / Decr.	0.0%	-14.7%		15.7%	-11.1%	28.0%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. October 1 reports prior to FY93 were not available.

Chart 8-2 shows changes in teaching FTE's by type of school or program. It indicates that the largest decrease in teachers occurred at the middle/secondary level.

Chart 8-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teachers By Program
Full Time Equivalents
(excluding teaching aides)

			FY93 - FY97	
	FY93	FY97	Increase	% Incr / Decr
Elementary	45.0	45.0	0.0	0.0%
Middle/Secondary	126.9	95.5	-31.4	-24.7%
Systemwide	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Subtotal	171.9	140.5	-31.4	-18.3%
Special Education	14.5	18.5	4.0	27.6%
Subtotal	14.5	18.5	4.0	27.6%
Total	186.4	159.0	-27.4	-14.7%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. October 1 reports prior to FY93 were not available.

Student/teacher ratios follow a similar trend in all areas. They increased between FY93 and FY97, as shown in *Chart 8-3*. The overall ratio for students to teachers was 13.0:1 in FY93. It increased to 15.9:1 in FY97. When adjusted for the number of SPED teachers, using the same total student population for illustration purposes, the resulting ratios would be slightly higher as illustrated in the chart. The student/teacher ratios are also generally lower than the state average.

Chart 8-3

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Students Per Teacher

	FY93	FY97
All Students / All Teachers - ELPS	13.0	15.9
All Students / All Teachers - State Average	**15.1**	**14.5**
All Students / Non-SPED, ESL & Bilingual - ELPS	14.1	18.0
All Students / Non-SPED, ESL & Bilingual - State Average	**19.2**	**18.4**
All Students / All Teachers		
Elementary	25.8	26.4
Middle/Secondary	9.9	14.0

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. October 1 reports prior to FY93 were not available.

Teaching staff increased between FY93 and FY97 in most core subjects such as English, mathematics and science with a decrease in social studies as shown in *Chart 8-4*.

Chart 8-4

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teachers - Certain Core Subjects
High and Middle School FTEs

			FY93 - FY97	
	FY93	FY97	Increase	% Incr / Decr
English	7.6	8.3	0.7	9.2%
Mathematics	7.0	7.4	0.4	5.7%
Science	7.0	8.2	1.2	17.1%
Social Studies	3.1	1.1	-2.0	-64.5%
Total	24.7	25.0	0.3	1.2%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. October 1 reports prior to FY93 were not available.

9. Payroll - Salary Levels, Union Contracts

Expenditures for salaries are reviewed to determine how the school district has increased expenditures for teachers and how teaching salaries have increased as a result of union contract agreements.

Chart 9-1 indicates how school salaries have increased in comparison to total school district expenditures. ELPS increased its expenditures for salaries by $3.1 million between FY93 and FY98, an increase of 43.4 percent. This increase is 3.5 percentage points above the 39.9 percent increase in total school district expenditures during the same period. Total salaries made up 65 percent of these expenditures in FY93 and increased to 66.6 percent in FY98. This chart includes fringe benefits.

Of the $4.3 million total school expenditure increase from FY93 to FY98, $3.1 million is attributable to salaries. Of this $3.1 million salary increase, $2.0 million or 64 percent, applied to teaching salaries and $1.1 million, or 36 percent, applied to non-teaching salaries. The latter group includes administrators, para-professionals, clerical staff, custodial staff, etc.

Chart 9-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Salary Expenditures Compared to Total Sch. Comm. and Mun. Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY93 - FY98 $ Incr. / Decr.	FY93 - FY98 % Incr. / Decr.
Total School Committee and Municipal Expenditures	$10.1	$10.9	$11.3	$12.9	$13.5	$14.2	$15.2	$4.3	39.9%
Total Salaries	$6.2	$7.1	$7.4	$8.5	$8.9	$9.6	$10.1	$3.1	43.4%
as % of Total Expenditures	61.7%	65.0%	65.5%	65.7%	66.1%	67.8%	66.6%	70.8%	
Teaching Salaries	$4.2	$5.0	$5.2	$5.9	$6.1	$6.5	$6.9	$2.0	39.4%
as % of Total Salaries	67.1%	70.5%	70.3%	70.2%	68.2%	67.9%	68.5%	64.0%	
Non-Teaching Salaries	$2.1	$2.1	$2.2	$2.5	$2.8	$3.1	$3.2	$1.1	53.0%
as % of Total Salaries	32.9%	29.5%	29.7%	29.8%	31.8%	32.1%	31.5%	36.0%	

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

Chart 9-2 shows that the average teacher's salary increased from $29,160 to $38,975 between FY93 and FY98. The FY97 average teacher's salary of $38,410 is below the state average salary of $42,874 reported by DOE.

Chart 9-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teaching Salaries and Teachers (FTE)
Average Salary Comparison

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Teaching Salaries ($ in mil)	$4.2	$5.0	$5.2	$5.9	$6.1	$6.5	$6.9
FTE - Teachers	141.8	170.7	150.6	145.7	154.8	169.6	178
FTE Incr. / Decr. from Previous Year	N/A	N/A	-20.1	-4.9	9.1	14.8	8.4
Average Salary per FTE	$ 29,550	$29,160	$34,657	$40,824	$39,396	$38,410	$38,975
DOE Reported Statewide Average	N/A	$38,681	$39,012	$40,718	$41,760	$42,874	N/A

Note: FTE excludes adult education teachers. Average salary per FTE consists of all salaries (i.e. assistant principals, advisors, coaches etc.), step increases, longevity and differentials. Data obtained from ELPS and DOE end-of-year reports. EOY reports prior to 1989 and 1990 to 1992 not available.

Chart 9-2a indicates that increases due to annual contracts and steps ranged between 6.4 percent and 7.5 percent per year from the 1993 to 1997 time period, with the exception of 5.5 percent in 1995.

Chart 9-2a

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teachers Salaries - Step and Contract Percent Increases

Period	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	**Total**
Annual Contract Increase	3.0%	3.0%	2.0%	3.5%	4.0%	15.5%
Step Increase	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	17.3%
Total	6.4%	6.4%	5.5%	7.0%	7.5%	32.8%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

As shown in *Chart 9-3,* a review of salary changes over the FY93 to FY98 period indicates that the step 10 salary levels increased 15.3 percent without including step increases or lane (degree level) changes. This represents the minimum increase a full-time teacher would receive exclusive of raises due to step changes or obtaining an advanced academic degree. Similarly, the state and local government implicit price deflator indicates about a 10.2 percent inflationary trend for the FY93 to FY97 period.

Chart 9-3 shows how ELPS salary schedules might apply to a particular teacher for the period of FY93 to FY98 depending on the step and academic degree. Various examples outline different situations. The chart illustrates so-called lane changes due to credit hours taken or degree earned such as BA to MA and MA to MA+30.

For example, as of FY93, teacher A was on the maximum step 10 and had a BA. By FY98, this teacher on step 10 has received salary increases that total 15.3 percent. If this teacher had earned an MA and changed salary lanes to MA during this period, the increase would have amounted to 27.5 percent.

Teacher B had a BA, step 7, in FY93. In FY98, this teacher is on step 10 (the maximum step for a BA) and has received a salary increase of 38.7 percent. Had this teacher earned an MA and changed to salary lane MA during this period, the increase would have amounted to 53.3 percent.

Teacher C entered ELPS with a BA at step 1 in FY93. By FY98, this teacher had reached step 6 and had received a 48.9 percent increase in pay. By earning an MA and changing salary lanes to MA, the percent increase would have amounted to 62.3 percent.

Chart 9-3

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teaching Staff
Step/Degree Summary - Selected Years

	FY93 Base Pay		FY98 Base Pay			FY93-98 % Change	
	Step	Base Pay	Step	Base Pay			
		BA		BA	MA	BA	MA
Teacher A	10	$33,811	10	$39,532	$43,619	15.3%	27.5%
Teacher B	7	$31,785	10	$39,532	$43,619	38.7%	53.3%
Teacher C	1	$25,366	6	$35,444	$38,244	48.9%	62.3%
		MA		MA	MA + 30	MA	MA + 30
Teacher A	10	$43,619	10	$43,619	$45,076	15.3%	26.7%
Teacher B	7	$34,235	10	$43,619	$45,076	39.8%	53.7%
Teacher C	1	$27,286	6	$38,244	$39,700	51.4%	64.3%

Note: ELPS has 8 salary lanes: BA - Bachelor degree; BA + 15; MA - Master degree; MA + 15; MA + 30; MA + 45/2 MA; CAGS - Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies; EdD/PhD - Doctor of Education/ Doctor of Philosophy. For BA, there are 10 steps. For MA to EdD/PhD there are 12 steps. For purposes of comparison between BA and MA, the highest step for a BA was used. Data obtained from ELPS.

Chart 9-4

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Teaching Salary Schedules
Comparison of FY93 and FY98 Salary Schedules - Steps 1 and 10

Salary	Initial Entry Level - Step 1					
Lane	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	$25,366	$26,127	$26,673	$27,607	$28,711	$29,285
BA+15	$26,268	$27,056	$27,693	$28,662	$29,809	$30,405
MA	$27,286	$28,105	$28,713	$29,718	$30,907	$31,525
MA+15	$27,923	$28,761	$29,376	$30,404	$31,620	$32,252
MA+30	$28,570	$29,427	$30,039	$31,090	$32,334	$32,981
M45/2M	$29,185	$30,061	$30,702	$31,777	$33,048	$33,709
CAGS	$29,928	$30,826	$31,365	$32,463	$33,761	$34,436
EdD/PhD	N/A	N/A	$32,130	$33,255	$34,585	$35,277

Salary	Highest Level - Step 10					
Lane	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	$33,811	$34,825	$36,006	$37,266	$38,757	$39,532
BA+15	$34,925	$35,973	$37,184	$38,486	$40,025	$40,826
MA	$37,704	$38,836	$39,729	$41,120	$42,764	$43,619
MA+15	$38,383	$39,535	$40,392	$41,806	$43,478	$44,348
MA+30	$39,041	$40,212	$41,055	$42,492	$44,192	$45,076
M45/2M	$38,574	$39,732	$41,718	$43,178	$44,905	$45,803
CAGS	$40,314	$41,524	$42,381	$43,864	$45,619	$46,531
EdD/PhD	N/A	N/A	$43,605	$45,131	$46,936	$47,875

Note: ELPS has 8 salary lanes: BA - Bachelor degree; BA + 15; MA - Master degree; MA + 15; MA + 30; MA + 45/2 MA; CAGS - Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies; EdD/PhD - Doctor of Education/ Doctor of Philosophy. For BA, there are 10 steps. For MA to EdD/PhD there are 12 steps. For purposes of comparison between BA and MA, the highest step for a BA was used. Data obtained from ELPS.

10. Professional Development Program

DOE requires school systems to prepare a professional development plan and to meet minimum spending requirements for professional development. During FY95 and FY96, DOE required school districts to spend at a rate equivalent to $25 per pupil for professional development. This requirement increased to $50 per pupil for FY97. As can be seen in *Chart 10-1* ELPS has not met the minimum spending requirements for FY's 95, 96 and 97. This was due to other funding priorities. ELPS does not track PDP's for individual teachers. The contract with the teachers indicates that the Superintendent has ultimate authority in determining whether a teacher may attend a professional development offering. As is evident in *Chart 10-2*, many of the district-wide professional development offerings are committee-based work. Each school also has a professional development committee, offers in-service professional development opportunities, and allows faculty members to request attendance at external professional development offerings, if appropriate. *Chart 10-2* also includes some of the external courses attended by ELPS teachers as well as internal offerings.

Chart 10-2 shows a sample of courses offered, the numbers of professional development points (PDP's) earned for each course and the number of attendees.

Chart 10-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Expenditures for Professional Development
(in whole dollars)

	Professional Development	Minimum Spending Requirement	Total Spent as % of Requirement
FY94	$45,096	N/A	N/A
FY95	$40,516	62,950	64.4%
FY96	$51,143	63,875	80.1%
FY97	$116,738	126,450	92.3%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS and DOE

Chart 10-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Selected Professional Development Offerings 1997/98

Title	PDP	Attendance
State Literacy Conference	6	16
Teaching in a Standards Based Classroom	6	30
Research for Better Teaching	4	6
National Science Association	8	10
Wisnia-Knapp Reading Instruction	6	30
Story Grammar Markers	5	16
Phonographics	30	6
CPR	6	2
Technology Committee	20	3
Building Level: Revisions to Block Scheduling	32	7
STAT Team	10	8
Principals' Advisory Committee	10	3
Study Group - Current Issues & Practices in Education	14-21	12
Master Schedule Committee	15	8
Steering Committee - Building Rep.	30	4
Building Level Professional Development	20-45	21
Birchland Park Report Card Comment Revision	10	4
Mapleshade Technology Committee	20	8
Birchland Park Computer for Dummies Workshop - Ind. Study	10	12
Unit A Negotiations Team	0	9
STAGE Team Interdisciplinary Unit	30	4
Study Group For Grade 2 & 3 Transition	4-10	2

Note: Information obtained from ELPS

11. School Improvement Plans

M.G.L. Chapter 71, §59C mandates that each school must have a school council, which must develop a school improvement plan and update it annually. For the purpose of this audit, the audit team reviewed ELPS school improvement plans. This review included plans for the high school, the middle school and the three elementary schools.

ELPS is meeting the requirements of the law. Prior plans varied in structure and varied widely in scope, content and quality. For example the High School's school improvement plans up until the FY98 plan consisted of only one page and did not

document an active school council due to a lack of measurable goals and objectives, persons responsible, or plans for follow-up. Current school improvement plans include mission statements, measurable goals, action steps and timetables. Plans also address testing, parental involvement, curriculum frame works and professional development. Overall, plans reflect active parental and community involvement; some schools have monthly newsletters that let parents know what is happening at the school.

ELPS is now taking the planning process seriously and the process is well designed and administered. As of last year, principals must submit school improvement plans to the Superintendent by February and in June the School Committee reviews and approves them. ELPS has drafted a strategic district plan with specific vision and mission statements.

12. Time and Learning

Time and learning standards refer to the amount of time students are expected to spend in school, measured by the number of minutes or hours in a school day and the number of days in the school year. As of September 1997, DOE requires 990 instruction hours per year for the high schools. For junior high and middle schools, the requirement is either 990 hours or 900 hours based on the decision of the school committee. For the elementary schools, the requirement is 900 hours, and the requirement for kindergarten schools is 425 hours. The school year remains at 180 days per year.

As shown in *Chart 12-1*, ELPS time and learning plan exceeds these standards by 18 hours for the high school, 72 hours for the middle school, 14 hours for the elementary schools, and 4 hours for kindergarten. At the middle school the extra time is used to round off a class period, which is used for small group enrichment activities, reading instruction, and small group directed tutorials.

Chart 12-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Time and Learning Standards

	1995/96 ELPS Standard	DOE Req.	1997/98 ELPS Standard
	Hours Per Year	Hours Per Year	Hours Per Year
High School	990	990	1008
Middle School	935	900	972
Elementary School	917	900	914
Kindergarten	438	425	429

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

13. Courses and Class Sizes

Chart 13-1 summarizes selected high school class sizes for FY99. The school's average enrollment in core subject sections consisted of just over 20 students per class. Science had the smallest average class size with 18.6 students, while English had the largest average with 21.6 students. Math, English and social studies had 7 sections with 30 or more students. Science had no classes with over 30 students.

Chart 13-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
High School Classes
1997/98 School Year

Subject	Number of Sections	Total Enrollment	Avg. Enroll. Per Section	Sect. w/ 25-29	Sect. w/ 30 or more	30+ %
English	47	1016	21.6	13	4	8.5%
Math	49	1045	21.3	16	2	4.1%
Science	39	726	18.6	13	0	0.0%
Social Studies	37	746	20.1	12	1	2.7%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

14. Technology

DOE approved ELPS'Technology plan on September 12, 1996. The plan was a work product of the technology steering committee. ELPS developed a five-year implementation plan to improve technology for the years 1995-2000.

ELPS has never made updates to the original technology plan. There are site based technology plans for all the schools. These plans have goals and the plans range from a period of three years to five years. Overall, it is clear that the recent site-based plans reflect active site management. The site-based plans were used as a tool to develop a new long-range district technology plan that is currently in place for 1999.

ELPS has a ratio of 7.1 students per instructional computer, which is below the state average of 7.2 students. There are a total of 438 computers of which 403 are instructional and 35 are administrative. Fifty percent of the computers are older than three years. A discrepancy was found in the DOE October 29, 1998 report on computer inventories. The report indicated that the high school had 146 computers, the high school inventory of October 26, 1998 indicated an inventory of 110 computers.

Further, an inventory as of May 5, 1999 shows an inventory of 106 computers. One reason for the discrepancy was that older computers were discarded, but were included in the DOE October 28, 1998 report. ELPS has not maintained an accurate computer inventory. Procedures for the disposal of assets and the removal from inventories should be implemented.

The teachers' surveys revealed that 55 percent of the teachers felt that they are inadequately provided with a computer. Eighty-two percent of the teachers felt that the number of computers available to students is inadequate. Thirty-eight percent felt that computers and other technological tools are not a significant part of the instructional practices. Thirty-nine percent felt that computers were not in good working order.

The Town of East Longmeadow recently approved the ELPS budget for next year. Funding will be available for the new position of Technology Technician. Also the district will spend $ 364,250 for the installation of one new computer in each academic classroom; and install new computers in each of the schools computer labs. This will be phase one of a three-year capital plan that upon completion will add $ 737,000 in technology updates to ELPS.

The Town of East Longmeadow has addressed Y2K and will be Y2K compliant along with the school department's business office. Letters have gone out to vendors to identify Y2K compliance. A contingency plan will be formulated once the letters come back. January third, 2000 has been designated a Professional Development Day: this will allow staff extra time to remedy any Y2K-related situation. Physical plant functions such as heat, alarms, and phones are being addressed.

15. Supplies and Textbooks

The school district's annual budget provides an amount for materials including textbooks, instructional supplies, library collections and periodicals, workshops to enhance staff instructional effectiveness, certain components of the technology plan and capital acquisition.

Chart 15-1 shows total expenditures for textbooks and instructional supplies for selected years and yearly per student amounts. The chart reveals a fairly consistent pattern in each of these categories except for FY95 and FY97, where spending on supplies fell, compared to the prior year. Also, the amount of spending on textbooks per student has dramatically increased during the last two years. Textbook spending was at $132 per pupil in FY98, up from $11 per pupil in FY94. ELPS plans to spend $65,193 in FY99 for textbooks, and $184,439 for instructional supplies.

Chart 15-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Textbooks and Instructional Supplies
(in thousands of dollars)

								FY94 - FY98	
	FY89	**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**	**FY98**	**$ Incr.**	**% Incr.**
High School	$74	$37	$66	$61	$65	$72	$92	$26	39%
Middle School	$58	$23	$40	$41	$36	$52	$63	$23	58%
Elementary	$95	$38	$59	$62	$104	$99	$165	$106	180%
SPED	$9	$8	$13	$13	$24	$13	$15	$2	15%
Bilingual									
Systemwide	$2		$1						
Total	$238	$106	$179	$177	$229	$236	$335	$156	87%
Textbooks Only	$54	$23	$27	$31	$34	$51	$130	$103	381%
Supplies	$184	$83	$152	$146	$195	$185	$205	$53	35%
Textbooks / Student	N/A	N/A	$11	$12	$13	$93	$132	$121	1083%
Supplies / Student	N/A	N/A	$63	$58	$76	$73	$81	$18	29%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS. Student enrollment data was not available for fiscal years 1989 and 1993.

Site visits as well as book listings revealed that students are not using current textbooks in the classroom. The middle school is using a book titled "Vocabulary and Composition" by Amsco that has a copyright date of 1978 and the average copyright date for English books is 1989. At the high school the average copyright date of English books is 1974. Excluding the three oldest books, the average copyright date is 1980. The average copyright date for math books is 1990 at the high school. ELPS does not have either a district wide textbook inventory or a textbook replacement plan. ELPS is below the foundation budget for Books and Instructional Equipment. For FY98 ELPS was 14 percent below foundation budget for Books and Instructional Equipment. ELPS budgeted $130,000 in additional funds for FY00 for just textbooks.

The teacher's surveys revealed that 30 percent of the teachers felt that they did not receive sufficient and appropriate supplies to do their job. Further 35 percent of the teachers felt that there are an inadequate number of current textbooks. Forty-four percent of the teachers felt that they are inadequately supplied with sufficient ancillary curriculum materials. Thirty-eight percent felt that the process for obtaining supplies and materials is not effective, time-sensitive and responsive to classroom needs.

16. Test Scores

Test Scores are generally at or above state averages. SAT scores for 1998 were 993, slightly below the state average of 1004. The Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the state's educational testing program from 1988 to 1996, showed that ELPS scores increased significantly in grade 4 reading, math, science, and social studies. Results from the 1998 statewide Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) indicate that 94 percent of ELPS third graders scored at the higher reading skill levels of "proficient" and "advanced," which is above the statewide average of 75 percent for these skill levels.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

SAT scores are slightly below the state average as shown in *Chart 16-1.* Scores from 1994 and 1995 cannot be compared to 1996 scores since SAT scores were "
in 1996 resulting in a higher score for that year for all schools and consequently, a higher state average.

Chart 16-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Results

	1994		**1995**		**1996**		**1997**		**1998**	
SAT Scores	ELPS	State Avg.	ELPS	State Avg.	ELPS	State Avg.	ELPS	State Avg.	ELPS	State Avg.
Verbal	426	426	407	430	490	507	495	508	495	502
Math	484	475	472	477	489	504	508	508	498	502
Total	910	901	879	907	979	1011	1003	1016	993	1004
ELPS - % of State Avg.	101.0%		97%		96.8%		98.7%		98.9%	

Note: Data obtained from ELPS and DOE

Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

MEAP reports scores in two ways: scaled scores, which range from 1000 to 1600, and proficiency levels, which are reported as percentage of students in each proficiency. Level 1 is the lowest; level 2 is considered the "passing grade" level, while levels 3 and 4 constitute the more advanced levels of skills. Proficiency scores shown in *Chart 16-2*

indicate that ELPS fourth graders increased in levels 2, 3 & 4 when comparing 1992 to 1996. Grade 8 proficiency scores also showed increase in levels 3 & 4 mathematics, but a decrease in levels 3 & 4 reading, science and social studies. From 1992 to 1996 all fourth and eighth grade level 1 or below proficiency scores decreased, also level 2 scores increased in both grades.

Chart 16-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
MEAP Proficiency Scores
1992 - 1996 Fourth and Eighth Grades

	1992			1996		
Fourth Grade	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	26%	36%	37%	12%	47%	42%
Mathematics	34%	33%	34%	13%	52%	35%
Science	26%	37%	37%	10%	47%	43%
Social Studies	26%	51%	24%	12%	52%	36%
	1992			1996		
Eighth Grade	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	37%	26%	37%	23%	46%	32%
Mathematics	51%	27%	23%	34%	40%	26%
Science	43%	16%	41%	30%	45%	26%
Social Studies	44%	22%	34%	35%	40%	25%

Note: Data provided by DOE and ELPS

The MEAP scores for all grades tested are shown in *Appendix B.* Between 1988 and 1996 MEAP scores for students in grade 4 increased significantly in all four subject areas, while scores for students in grade 8 were mixed. For FY96, MEAP scores for all grades and subjects were at or above the state average. Variations of 50 points or more are considered statistically significant.

Chart 16-3 shows reading scores for the fourth grade for selected school districts whose scores in 1988 fell between 1340 and 1360 as compared to East Longmeadow's 1350 score. From 1992 to 1996 East Longmeadow increased significantly in fourth grade reading. The scores for the fourth grade students are particularly significant, because by 1996, these students had experienced education reform initiatives in the early stages of formal education. The greatest impact of education reform should initially be seen in the performance of these students.

Chart 16-3

MEAP READING SCORES - 4TH GRADE
Selected Communities with 1988 Scores from 1340-1360

	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1992-1996 Change
Shrewsbury	1340	1370	1420	1400	1480	60
Topsfield	1340	1480	1490	1450	1460	-30
Lincoln	1340	1350	1440	1460	1450	10
Beverly	1340	1390	1400	1440	1420	20
Plainville	1340	1290	1310	1360	1420	110
Wilmington	1340	1400	1380	1430	1420	40
Framingham	1340	1300	1350	1410	1400	50
Foxborough	1340	1420	1400	1380	1380	-20
Norton	1340	1350	1350	1370	1380	30
Seekonk	1340	1360	1330	1360	1380	50
Berkshire Hills	1340	1320	1350	1350	1370	20
Hampshire	1340	1380	1400	1320	1370	-30
Mohawk Trail	1340	1300	1360		1360	0
Saugus	1340	1300	1370	1370	1350	-20
Hopedale	1340	1430	1400	1380	1340	-60
Spencer East Brookfield	1340	1350	1340	1270	1340	0
Avon	1340	1300	1370	1360	1330	-40
Mansfield	1340	1340	1350	1360	1320	-30
East Longmeadow	**1350**	**1310**	**1440**	**1490**	**1530**	**90**
Arlington	1350	1370	1430	1410	1430	0
Hopkinton	1350	1380	1380	1450	1430	50
Sutton	1350	1360	1260	1280	1420	160
Barnstable	1350	1360	1370	1370	1360	-10
Sharon	1360	1410	1420	1450	1460	40
Franklin	1360	1360	1410	1400	1450	40
Northborough	1360	1460	1440	1450	1440	0
Canton	1360	1340	1420	1420	1410	-10
Falmouth	1360	1310	1410	1400	1390	-20
Lenox	1360	1320	1330	1370	1390	60
North Middlesex	1360	1360	1350	1380	1380	30
Granby	1360	1260	1280	1340	1370	90
Sturbridge	1360	1340	1330	1340	1360	30
Triton	1360	1380	1370	1370	1360	-10
Dennis-Yarmouth	1360	1330	1340	1350	1350	10
Waltham	1360	1330	1370	1370	1350	-20
Westport	1360	1400	1380	1410	1320	-60
State Average	**1300**	**1310**	**1330**	**1300**	**1350**	20

Note: A significant change in a score is considered to be 50 points in either direction.

Iowa Tests

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Iowa tests) for the third grade was administered throughout Massachusetts in the spring 1998. ELPS' overall total percentile rank in reading for all students tested under routine conditions was 79 percent – above the statewide score of 64 percent. The test defines four different levels of reading comprehension: pre-reader, basic reader, proficient reader and advanced reader. Pre-readers and basic readers made up 6 percent of tested students while proficient and advanced readers made up 94 percent of all students who were tested in ELPS. Approximately 88 percent of the tested students have attended ELPS since the first grade.

The Iowa Test of Educational Development, also referred to as the Massachusetts Grade 10 Achievement Test, was administered in the spring of 1997. It tested seven different areas of skills including reading, quantitative thinking, social studies, etc. Scores were based on a national sample of students who took the test. ELPS' 10th graders scored at the 61st percentile compared to the national sample. Other Massachusetts school districts' scores ranged from the 89th percentile to the 28th percentile.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Tests

MCAS scores show that ELPS scored above the state average scaled scores for all students in grades 4, 8, and 10. All scores for students attending the district for three years or more were above the state average scaled scores.

MCAS is the new statewide assessment program given yearly to grades 4, 8, and 10. It measures performance of students, schools, and districts on learning standards contained in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and fulfills the requirements of education reform. This assessment program serves two purposes:

- measuring performance of students and schools against established state standards; and
- improving effective classroom instruction by providing feedback about instruction and modeling assessment approaches for classroom use

MCAS tests are reported according to performance levels that describe student performance in relation to established state standards. Students earn a separate performance level of Advanced, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Failing based on their total scaled score for each test completed. There is no overall classification of student performance across content areas. However, school, district, and state levels are reported by performance levels. *Chart 16-4* shows performance level percentages for all ELPS students in tested grades. *Appendix E* provides additional detail for students who have attended schools in the district for at least three years.

Chart 16-4

East Longmeadow Public Schools
MCAS Test Scores
Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level

All Students	Advanced	Proficient	Needs Improvement	Failing (Tested)	Failing (Absent)	Average Scaled Score	State Avg. Scaled Score
Grade 4:							
English Language Arts	2	41	55	2	0	238	230
Mathematics	24	41	33	2	0	246	234
Science & Technology	12	57	30	1	0	245	238
Grade 8:							
English Language Arts	4	68	26	2	0	243	237
Mathematics	8	30	34	28	0	232	227
Science & Technology	2	37	37	24	0	232	225
Grade 10:							
English Language Arts	5	41	41	13	0	236	230
Mathematics	5	23	33	39	0	227	222
Science & Technology	2	30	50	18	0	232	225

Note: Data provided by DOE

17. Management and Personnel Practices

Management Practices

In the past five years, there have been three superintendents. In the last ten years, there have been five superintendents. The current Superintendent was hired in June 1998. Therefore, items such as a districtwide strategic plan and curriculum are in the draft stages. Also, the ELPS administrative team is working to develop a coordinated Code of Conduct document for ELPS. The mission of ELPS is educational "Achievement and Accountability" to educate "lifelong learners" in the community. The drafts of the strategic plan and curriculum documents strongly echo this mission, which has been distributed throughout the district. The Superintendent meets weekly in his office in a team meeting with all the principals and the Business Manager. The Superintendent has a very participative management style, and believes in making decisions through building consensus among faculty and other stakeholders. Despite this democratic style, the Superintendent provides very strong direction and leadership. The Superintendent also serves in the role of director of curriculum and director of technology and works closely with the Curriculum Coordinators and Technology Coordinators in these areas.

The school committee meets twice monthly. All five members of the committee, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen if there is a matter pertaining to employee benefits,

and the Superintendent who serves as a non-voting member on the committee, attend these meetings. In addition, the several ELPS subcommittees meet at other meetings on an as-needed basis. At the end of each school year, the Superintendent presents an annual report in which he describes the progress made toward the goals in each school improvement plan established by the school councils.

The following administrators report directly to the Superintendent: the SPED Director, Business Manager, and the principals. The curriculum coordinators report directly to the principals and indirectly to the Superintendent. The Superintendent routinely visits each school and meets informally with the principal during these visits.

As previously mentioned the Superintendent serves in the role of director of curriculum. He works closely with the Curriculum Coordinators regarding the development of a districtwide-coordinated curriculum. The Curriculum Coordinators are ELPS teachers who receive an additional stipend through collective bargaining for this additional work. There is currently a draft of a K-8 curriculum, which aligns these grades with the state frameworks. A district-wide curriculum document will be ready for print this summer. Although many textbooks are in need of replacement, and some will be replaced as part of the FY00 budget by additional funding from the town, the frameworks are implemented in the classrooms through additional materials used by the teachers.

Management is very much site-based. FY00 budgets were prepared during the Superintendent's weekly team meetings. Principals determine priorities and develop a budget based on input from the teachers. The school councils are very active and considered being advisors to the principals.

As mentioned earlier, a long-term strategic plan is in the developmental stage. The goal of management is to complete this plan during the 1999-00 school year.

Hiring Process

ELPS uses a contractual transfer policy to fill projected teaching vacancies. For positions to be filled from outside the school system, ELPS posts a notice of vacancy for any available teaching positions in local and statewide newspapers. The school principal and appropriate department head interviews qualified candidates, if applicable. The principals make the final hiring decision.

Vacancies for the position of principal in ELPS are posted regionally and nationally in newspapers. A search committee, made-up of the twenty members includes the Superintendent, principal(s), teacher(s), school committee member(s), parent(s), support staff, Chamber of Commerce members, selectmen, and paraprofessionals. This committee screens resumes and selects the 10 best. The committee performs forty-five minute

interviews with each candidate and recommends three finalists to the Superintendent. The Superintendent interviews the final three and determines which candidate will be hired.

The audit team examined managerial staff contracts for the positions of superintendent and school building principals. Starting salaries for school principals are based on the type of school, the school enrollment level and their professional experience. Although the principals had different salaries, three of the five principals in their current position over the past two years received the same percentage raise and the same three principals have contracts ending on the same date. Each of these three contracts states that no later than February 1, 2000 would a new contract be negotiated with the inclusion of "pay for performance" criteria. All five of the principals' contracts are three year contracts, with the salary or salary range for each contract year stated. The remaining two principals' contract increases are already based on performance.

The dismissal section for all principals' contracts states, "The Superintendent may dismiss, demote, suspend, or reprimand the principal for good cause and in accordance with Massachusetts General Law."

Evaluation Process

-Principals and Administrators

Each principal's contract contains an evaluation section. ELPS principals are evaluated by Massachusetts Board of Education's *Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership*. For principal evaluations in ELPS the Superintendent meets informally with each principal at which time the principal's "self-evaluation" is reviewed. The Superintendent meets formally at the end of the schools year with each principal and provides a final written evaluation on each principal.

-Teachers

The current union contract defines an outline for an evaluation process for teachers. Teachers with professional status are evaluated once every two years. In a teacher's year of review, one observation will take place during the school year with a pre- and post-observation meeting between the principal and teacher. At the pre-conference observation dates, times and goals will be established. The post-conference will be held by the end of the seventh day following the observation, at which time the teacher will receive a copy of the observation report. Observations must be completed by April 1, and the teacher's self-evaluation form completed by June 1. The contract states that "this process will foster the principles of effective teaching"…

Teachers without professional status are to be evaluated at least three times per school year. These evaluations will be scheduled by October 15, November 15, and February 15.

Pre- and post-observation meetings will be conducted each time. At the pre-conference observation dates, times and goals will be established. The post-conference will be held by the end of the seventh day following the observation, at which time the teacher will receive a copy of the observation report. The teacher's self-evaluation form completed by June 1.

18. Accounting and Reporting

The audit team traced a sample of expenditures reported to DOE from the ELPS accounting and budget records. The audit team examined the last 2 years of invoices. The audit team also met separately with several ELPS staff, the town accountant and a representative of the CPA firm, which audits the town.

An annual audit of the school district is included in the town wide audit. In addition, the school district had an independent review as of June 30, 1998, at the request of the new Superintendent. The review found that ELPS' process to encumber funds was not producing accurate data, which was a detriment to the budgeting process. For FY98, the Town of East Longmeadow had made two supplemental appropriations totaling $123,741.79 for ELPS. The review found that many purchase orders were being prepared after invoices were received. This procedure diminished the usefulness of the encumbrance system for predicting spending levels. The review also noted that payrolls were not being compared to anticipated results, thus there was no verification for payroll and payroll variances.

Recently, ELPS the business office has hired three new employees including a new business manager. The district has implemented an "encumbrance first, purchase second" process for expenditures. All purchases made by ELPS will be preceded by an encumbrance. This allows for accurate and timely budget status reports. The district has created a budget book in order to track budget expenditures. The budget book will act as a tool for future budgets and will be continually updated. Payroll is now on a new database that provides that payroll is checked on an exception basis. There is a need for ELPS to update the internal control plan for accounting and variance reporting.

19. Review of Expenditures

The audit team completed a review of ELPS expenditures and purchasing controls and analyzed account expense classification, and selected accounts from the General Ledger from FY98 for review. The review showed that purchasing procedures and controls are starting to be addressed by the new Superintendent. The review process encompassed accounts of vendors who have done business with ELPS. The ledgers and individual vendor files were reviewed. Separation of duties and responsibilities is maintained

throughout the school system and the town accountant provides general oversight and audit review. The East Longmeadow treasurer's office issues payroll and vendor checks.

20. High School Accreditation

The East Longmeadow High School is fully accredited. A team visited the high school from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) from March 21 to March 24, 1993. ELPS submitted progress reports on October 1, 1995, March 1, 1998 and December 15, 1998. Of the 142 recommendations, 97 have been completed. *Chart 20-1* identifies the status of the recommendations.

Chart 20-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Status of High School Accreditation

	NEASC Recomm.	Completed	In Progress	Rejected	Not Addressed
Philosophy	3	1	1	1	
Curriculum & Instruction	14	10	3	1	
Art	4	2		2	
Business Education	1	1			
English	6	5		1	
Foreign Language	2	1		1	
Health	4	2	1	1	
Home Economics	2	2			
Industrial Arts	2	2			
Mathematics	5	3		2	
Music	3	1	2		
Physical Education	4	1	1	1	1
Reading	2		1	1	
Science	5	3		1	1
Social Studies	2	2			
Special Education	4	3	1		
Student Activities	4	4			
Student Services	7	5		2	
Educational Media	9	5	1	1	2
Admin., Faculty & Staff	5	2	2	1	
School Facilities	44	34	2	8	
Community Support	4	4			
School Climate	2	2			
Assessment of Educational Progress	4	2	2		
Total	142	97	17	24	4

21. Grade 3 Transiency

Student transiency is generally defined as the percentage of students who enter and/or leave the system after the first day of school. Transiency poses an educational problem because students may lose the benefit of a sequential and coherent school program as they move from school to school. East Longmeadow has a very stable student population in the lower grades as measured by the 1998 third grade Iowa Reading Test. Results from that test are categorized by students who have taken the test under routine conditions. Students who did not take the test or were given extra time are excluded.

Of a selected number of school districts by population shown in *Chart 21-1,* it is evident that East Longmeadow has the highest percentage of third graders who attended ELPS in grades 1, 2 and 3. East Longmeadow's stable population of 88.6 percent is above the statewide average of 80.4 percent. East Longmeadow's transiency percentage of 11.4 percent is below the statewide average of 19.6 percent.

Chart 21-1

Transiency and Stability - 3rd Grade
Selected Communities by 1996 Population
Student Population Participating in the 1998 Iowa 3rd Grade Reading Test

Community	Stable Population	Total Population	Stable Population Percent	Transiency Percent
East Longmeadow	**187**	**211**	**88.6%**	**11.4%**
Holliston	186	212	87.7%	12.3%
Duxbury	206	237	86.9%	13.1%
Auburn	175	202	86.6%	13.4%
Bedford	109	126	86.5%	13.5%
Longmeadow	172	199	86.4%	13.6%
Seekonk	142	166	85.5%	14.5%
Abington	160	189	84.7%	15.3%
Westport	119	141	84.4%	15.6%
Clinton	148	176	84.1%	15.9%
Grafton	167	202	82.7%	17.3%
Northbridge	151	186	81.2%	18.8%
Westborough	183	235	77.9%	22.1%
Swampscott	130	172	75.6%	24.4%

Note: Student population includes only students tested under "routine" conditions.
Data obtained from DOE's 1998 Iowa Grade 3 reading test summary results.

22. Special Education and Transitional Bilingual Education

Special Education (SPED)

In 1998, East Longmeadow had a special education participation rate of 27.4 percent, 10.8 percent higher than the state average of 16.6 percent reported by DOE. Total SPED

enrollment since 1994 has averaged around 583 students. As a percentage of the total enrollment, the SPED enrollment has averaged around 23.2 percent since 1994 and has consistently shown an increase since that time. Also, the number of students who fall into the substantially separate categories has increased in 1998. The Director of Special Education stated that a large number of students are transferring into the system to take advantage of the SPED services. He estimates that from July, 1998 to the present an additional 40 to 50 students have entered the program. Also, many students transferring into the district require some amount of remedial services in order to catch-up with their grade at ELPS.

Chart 22-1

East Longmeadow Public Schools
SPED Enrollment
Based on October 1 Reports

School Year Ending	Total Enrollment	Total SPED	SPED as % of Total Enrollment	Substantially Separated	Substantially Separated as % of SPED
1994	2,417	475	19.7%	42	8.8%
1995	2,518	539	21.4%	53	9.8%
1996	2,555	566	22.1%	46	8.1%
1997	2,529	642	25.4%	50	7.8%
1998	2,536	694	27.4%	64	9.2%

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

The increase in SPED costs from FY93 to FY97 was $733,704, or 78.8 percent, while the increase in total school spending as reported to DOE for the same time period was 30 percent. SPED expenditures for FY93 increased from 8.5 percent of the total school district expenditures to 11.8 percent for FY97.

Chart 22-2

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Total Expenditures as Reported to DOE
in millions of dollars)

	FY89	FY93		Decr. % Incr. /
Special Education	$675,057	$931,387	$1,665,091	$733,704

Note: Data obtained from ELPS

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)

ELPS does not have a bilingual program. ELPS has an informal English as a Second Language (ESL) program that involves approximately three students for the 1998-99 school year.

23. Dropout and Truancy

ELPS' dropout rate for FY97 was 0.4 percent, which is below the state average of 3.4 percent. As shown in *Chart 23-1*, ELPS has the third lowest dropout rate of the 15 communities with similar populations to East Longmeadow. Statewide, ELPS has the fifth lowest dropout rate.

ELPS does not have a formal policy or procedure regarding student dropout. There is, however, a districtwide "no losses" philosophy. The Superintendent indicated that the faculty and staff "circle the wagons" when they become aware that there is a student considering dropping out of school. ELPS' staff works intensively with the student and the student's family and friends to create a plan that will encourage the student to remain in school. This plan could include course of study changes from college prep to vocational, in order to provide the student with marketable skills.

ELPS also has a Memorandum of Agreement with the East Longmeadow Police Department regarding the sharing of information regarding school-aged children. Outlined in this memorandum are certain procedures governing the response of parties involved. Also, "the procedures will define circumstances in which law enforcement personnel and school department personnel may exchange information concerning matters governed by school policy and regulation." A copy of this policy is located in the High School Student Handbook.

A review of attendance statistics contained in the DOE EOY reports from 1993 to 1998 indicates that the ELPS attendance rate has remained fairly constant at about 96 percent. The DOE EOY report for 1998 indicates an attendance rate of 87.37 percent. A discussion with the Superintendent indicated that this report is incorrect. The correct attendance rate for FY98 is 96 percent, according to information provided by the Superintendent. An amended report will be issued to the DOE by ELPS.

Chart 23-1

High School Dropout Rates
Selected Communities by 1996 Population
FY93 - FY97

Community	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
Longmeadow	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.5%	0.1%
Duxbury	0.4%	0.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.1%
Bedford	0.2%	1.0%	1.4%	0.7%	0.3%
Holliston	0.4%	0.3%	0.9%	0.4%	0.4%
East Longmeadow	**0.8%**	**1.1%**	**0.4%**	**0.5%**	**0.4%**
Auburn	0.5%	1.4%	1.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Swampscott	0.3%	2.3%	2.2%	1.5%	1.2%
Westborough	1.2%	1.3%	1.9%	1.2%	1.4%
Northbridge	1.8%	1.7%	1.2%	2.7%	2.2%
Seekonk	1.1%	1.5%	1.2%	1.2%	2.7%
Swansea	2.3%	0.0%	2.0%	2.7%	3.1%
Abington	0.6%	2.0%	2.7%	1.5%	3.2%
Grafton	1.1%	2.7%	3.9%	1.7%	3.8%
Westport	2.8%	3.3%	1.5%	2.9%	4.5%
Clinton	3.0%	6.3%	3.8%	6.4%	6.0%
Average These Communities	2.9%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	2.0%
Median These Communities	0.8%	1.4%	1.5%	1.2%	1.4%
State Average	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%

Note: Data provided by DOE

24. Maintenance and Capital Improvement

Maintenance

The audit team made visits to all ELPS schools. Overall, schools were found to be clean. Custodians employed by ELPS perform cleaning and light maintenance. Custodians are under the supervision of the business manager as well as the principal of the school at which the custodian works. Area contractors perform heavy maintenance for all schools.

Capital Improvement

ELPS has just started a five-year capital plan. The Town of East Longmeadow has a Capital Improvement Committee, which reviews all town department requests for capital improvements At the town's annual meeting, the Town of East Longmeadow approved $962,000 in capital

projects for ELPS. This funding was for the first year of the capital plan. Large capital projects include $364,250 for classroom computers, $120,000 for renovating high school culinary arts room, and $129,719 for school bus payments. ELPS does its own busing. ELPS is in the process of building a new middle school at a cost of $19.6 million.

25. Curriculum Development

ELPS does not have a Curriculum Director, as the Superintendent coordinates and oversees this area. Instead ELPS has a team of curriculum coordinators. The position of coordinator is covered in the contract between the East Longmeadow Education Association (ELEA) and the East Longmeadow school committee. The coordinators are paid an additional stipend under the contract for this additional work. The Superintendent meets monthly with the coordinators. Tuesdays are designated as "curriculum days" in the district. As much as possible, other activities are not scheduled on Tuesdays to allow the coordinators to meet with the applicable staff or department heads for their curriculum area. At these meetings, curriculum alignment, process, and inclusion are discussed.

In May of 1998, a K-8 curriculum document was drafted. This document addressed the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The Superintendent indicated that work on this document continues in order to change it to a K-12 document. This K-12 coordinated curriculum handbook will be ready for print this summer. The Superintendent indicated that the coordinators do some of the training regarding the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Additionally, two of the coordinators are co-chairs of the Professional Development Committee. They meet with the Superintendent twice monthly. They plan in-house training as well as inform staff of external training opportunities. Review of the professional development offerings shows an offering for standards-based teaching and curriculum.

The Superintendent stated that the frameworks are in place throughout ELPS. This is mainly due to the work of the individual classroom teachers and curriculum coordinators by remaining knowledgeable about the frameworks and implementing them in the classrooms. This sentiment was further confirmed during interviews with ELPS principals.

IV. Employee Survey

The audit team conducted a confidential survey of all employees of ELPS to provide a forum for teachers and staff to express their opinions on education in ELPS. Approximately 234 questionnaires were delivered to school staff and 120 responses were received and tabulated, a response rate of 51 percent. Areas covered by the survey include:

1. education reform;
2. education goals and objectives;
3. curriculum;
4. planning;
5. communications and mission statements;
6. budget process;
7. professional development;
8. supplies;
9. facilities; and
10. computers and other education technology.

Appendix C shows the teachers' answers to the survey questions. The Superintendent also received a summary of responses.

The survey results indicated that education reform is a high priority in East Longmeadow. Eighty-three percent of teachers think that education reform issues are considered when their own school plans are made and 85 percent think that that also applies to districtwide plans. Eighty-two percent believe that the school district is taking positive steps to improve education and 73 percent state that their job has changed because of education reform.

Teachers have a clear understanding about the district's goals and objectives (75 percent) and how they relate to their jobs (76 percent). Sixty-seven percent feel that they have a role in developing their own goals and objectives and 53 percent confirm that there are indicators used to measure their progress toward their goals and objectives.

The survey also indicates that 67 percent of the teachers do not feel that an increase in school funding is tied directly to improvements in education. Forty-seven percent of teachers think that improvements in education would have occurred without education reform.

Teachers are positive about curriculum development in East Longmeadow. Sixty-three percent believe that the curriculum is coherent and sequential. Seventy-five percent feel that there is a coherent, on-going effort within ELPS to keep curriculum current.

Eighty-four percent feel that teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising the curriculum. They are also less positive that the curriculum now in use in their school will improve student test scores. Only 53 percent believe it will, while 40 percent think it will not. A majority of respondents, 64 percent, believe that the curriculum does not impact test scores as much as how a teacher teaches a subject.

V. Superintendent's Statement - Education Reform

As part of this review, the Superintendent was asked to submit a brief statement expressing his point of view with respect to three areas:

1. school district progress and education reform since 1993;
2. barriers to education reform; and
3. plans over the next three to five years.

The Superintendent's statement is included in *Appendix D.*

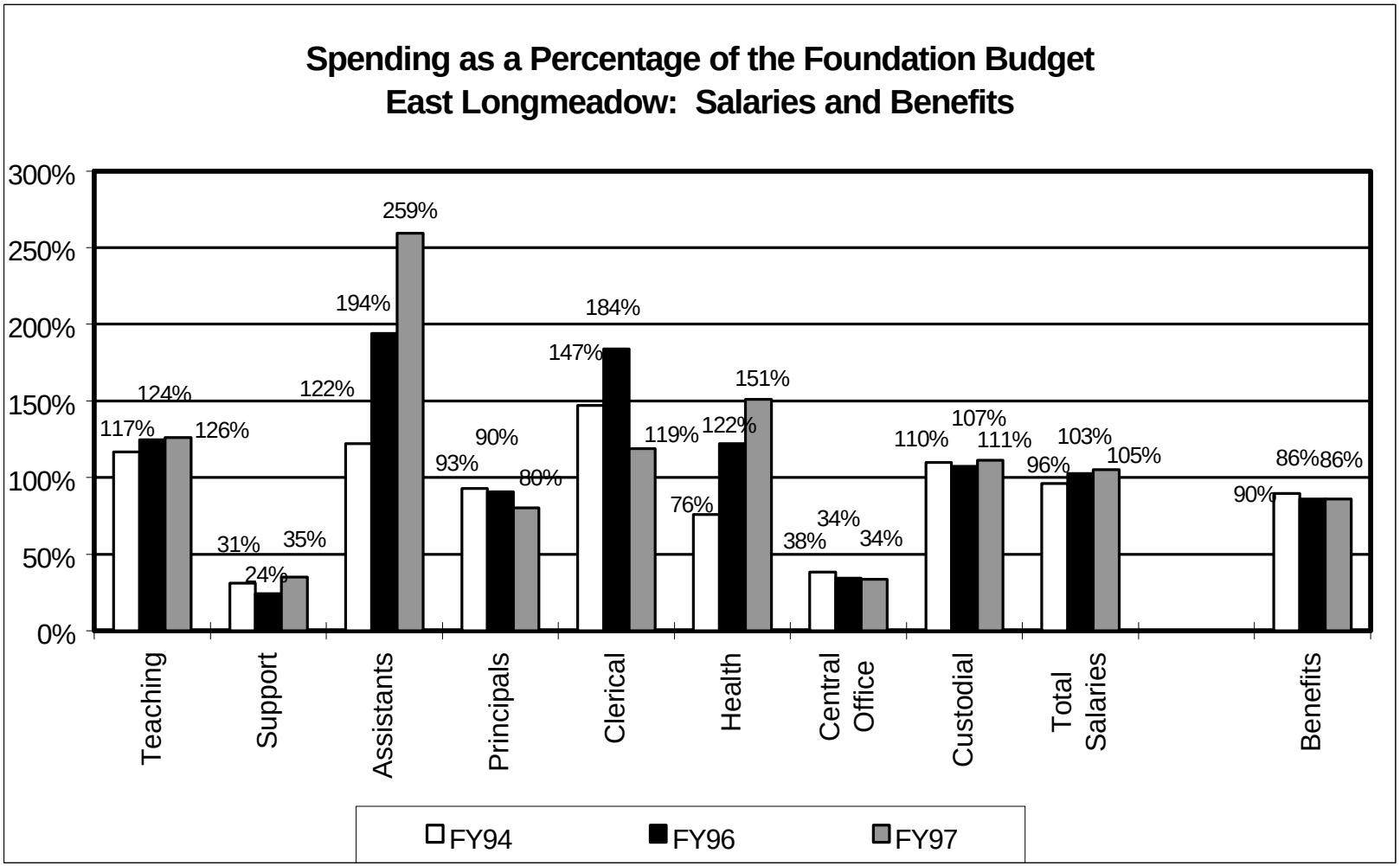
VI. APPENDIX

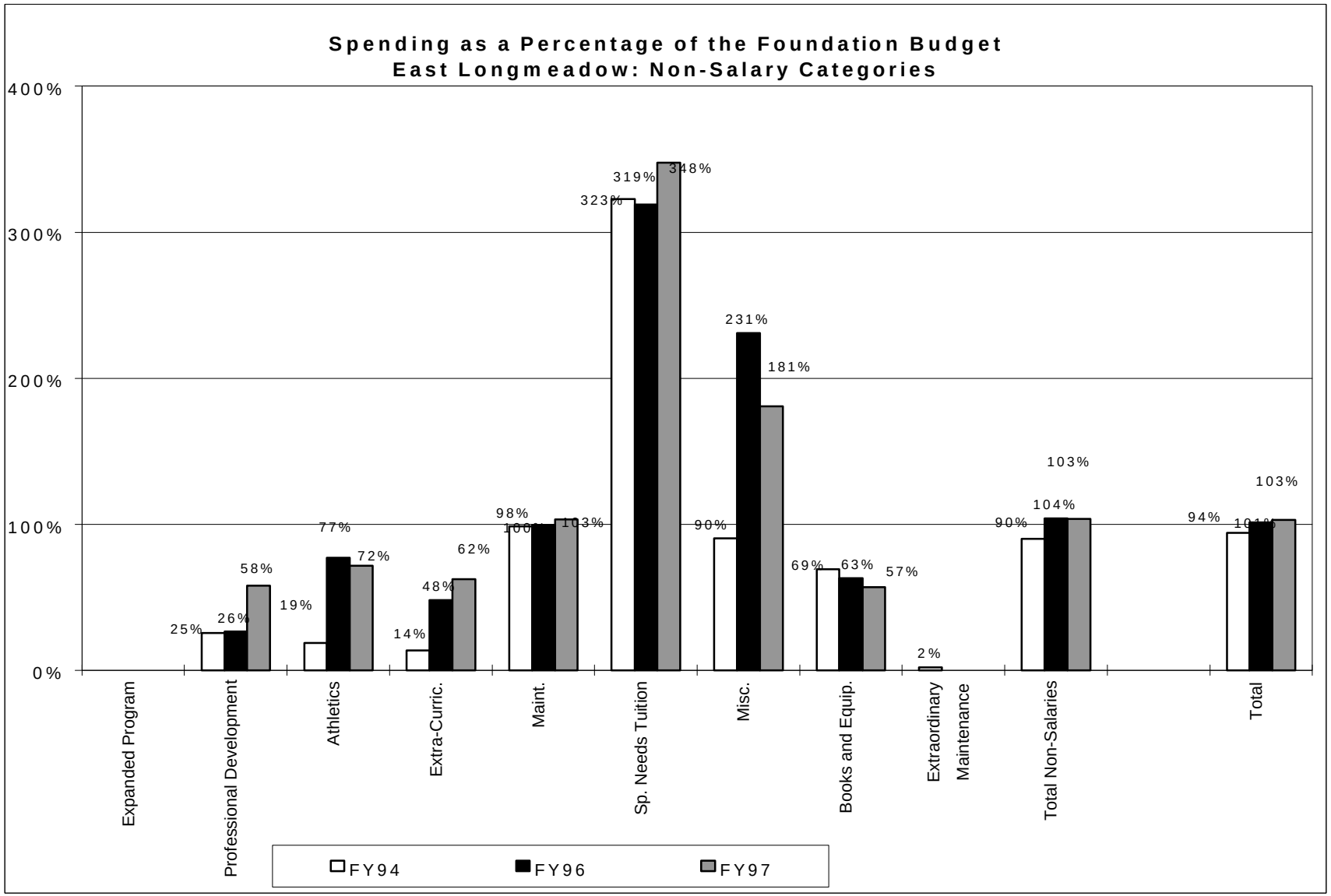
Appendix A1	Foundation Budget line Items Targets and Expenditures FY94, FY96-FY97 - Table
Appendix A2 - 3	Foundation Budget line items Targets and Expenditures FY 94, FY96-FY97 Graph
Appendix B	Mass. Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Summary
Appendix C	Employee Survey Results
Appendix D	Superintendent's Statement on Education Reform Accomplishments, Barriers and Goals
Appendix E	Comparison of MCAS Average Scaled Scores
Appendix F	Auditee's Response

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Net School Spending According to Foundation Budget Categories
(in thousands of dollars)

	Reported Expenditures			Foundation Budget			Variance Expend. over(under) Foundation		
	FY94	FY96	FY97	FY94	FY96	FY97	FY94	FY96	FY97
Teaching Salaries	$5,278	$6,161	$6,536	$4,517	$4,950	$5,187	$761	$1,211	$1,349
Support Salaries	$433	$370	$548	$1,404	$1,520	$1,559	($971)	($1,150)	($1,011)
Assistants' Salaries	$259	$447	$608	$212	$230	$235	$47	$216	$374
Principals' Salaries	$415	$440	$406	$447	$486	$507	($32)	($47)	($100)
Clerical Salaries	$384	$522	$351	$261	$284	$295	$123	$238	$56
Health Salaries	$72	$127	$162	$96	$104	$107	($23)	$23	$55
Central Office Salaries	$161	$157	$160	$421	$458	$475	($259)	($301)	($315)
Custodial Salaries	$428	$456	$494	$390	$426	$444	$38	$31	$50
Total Salaries	$7,431	$8,679	$9,266	$7,747	$8,458	$8,809	($316)	$222	$457
Benefits	$972	$1,019	$1,063	$1,086	$1,186	$1,233	($113)	($166)	($170)
Expanded Program	$0	$0	$0	$29	$38	$45	($29)	($38)	($45)
Professional Development	$45	$51	$117	$178	$194	$202	($133)	($143)	($86)
Athletics	$31	$139	$141	$163	$180	$197	($132)	($42)	($56)
Extra-Curricular	$10	$39	$54	$75	$82	$86	($64)	($43)	($32)
Maintenance	$532	$593	$642	$541	$595	$621	($9)	($2)	$21
Special Needs Tuition	$1,010	$1,083	$1,206	$313	$340	$347	$697	$743	$859
Miscellaneous	$201	$563	$457	$223	$244	$253	($22)	$319	$204
Books and Equipment	$482	$485	$458	$697	$768	$807	($215)	($283)	($349)
Extraordinary Maintenance	$8	$0	$0	$360	$396	$413	($353)	($396)	($413)
Total Non-Salaries	$2,318	$2,952	$3,075	$2,578	$2,837	$2,972	($260)	$115	$104
Total	$10,721	$12,651	$13,404	$11,410	$12,480	$13,013	($689)	$170	$391
Revenues	$115	$0	$0				$0	$0	$0
Net School Spending	$10,605	$12,651	$13,404	$11,410	$12,480	$13,013	($689)	$170	$391

Note: Data obtained from DOE and ELPS. Totals may not add due to rounding.


Spending as a Percentage of the Foundation Budget
East Longmeadow: Salaries and Benefits
300%
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
117%
124%
126%
31%
24%
35%
122%
194%
259%
93%
90%
80%
147%
184%
119%
76%
122%
151%
38%
34%
34%
110%
107%
111%
96%
103%
105%
90%
86%
86%
Teaching
Support
Assistants
Principals
Clerical
Health
Central Office
Custodial
Total Salaries
Benefits
FY94
FY96
FY97


Spending as a Percentage of the Foundation Budget
East Longmeadow: Non-Salary Categories
400%
300%
200%
100%
0%
Expanded Program
Professional Development
Athletics
Extra-Curric.
Maint.
Sp. Needs Tuition
Misc.
Books and Equip.
Extraordinary Maintenance
Total Non-Salaries
Total
25%
26%
58%
19%
77%
72%
14%
48%
62%
98%
100%
103%
323%
319%
348%
90%
231%
181%
69%
63%
57%
2%
90%
104%
103%
94%
101%
103%
FY94
FY96
FY97

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Scores

	Grade	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1988-96 Change	1996 State Average	1996 ELPS Over/(Under) State Avg.
Reading									
	4	1350	1310	1440	1490	1530	180	1350	180
	8	1390	1400	1370	1420	1410	20	1380	30
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1360	1330		1310	20
Math									
	4	1340	1320	1410	1460	1500	160	1330	170
	8	1380	1380	1330	1340	1380	0	1330	50
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1330	1310		1310	0
Science									
	4	1360	1330	1430	1500	1530	170	1360	170
	8	1390	1380	1380	1340	1390	0	1330	60
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1380	1320		1310	10
Social Studies									
	4	1340	1310	1410	1460	1500	160	1340	160
	8	1380	1370	1350	1320	1370	-10	1320	50
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1340	1310		1300	10

Note: N/A indicates that test was not given to all grades in all years. Data obtained from DOE

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - East Longmeadow
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

1	Education Reform	1&2		4 &5		3
1.a.	Are you familiar with the issues of Education Reform, the Law passed in 1993?	91%		5%		5%
1.b.	Do you feel you have a good understanding of the purpose and the goals of the law?	77%		8%		16%
1.c.	Do you feel that there is a lot of confusion about what Education Reform is all about?	52%		20%		28%
1.d.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school district plans are made?	83%		8%		9%
1.e.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school-based plans are made?	81%		5%		14%
1.f.	In your opinion is the school district taking positive steps to improve education?	82%		8%		11%
1.g.	Do you feel your job has changed because of Education Reform?	72%		11%		17%
1.h.	Do you think there has been an improvement in student achievement in your school due to Education Reform?	32%		28%		40%
1.i.	Do you think the improvements in education at the school would have happened without Education Reform?	48%		9%		43%
1.j.	Have you perceived an increase in school funding tied directly to improvements in education in your district?	34%		43%		23%

2	Educational Goals and Objectives	1&2		4 &5		3
2.a.	Are the school administration's goals and objectives generally clear and understandable?	74%		9%		17%
2.b.	Are you clear about the school district's goals and objectives as they relate to your own job?	77%		8%		15%
2.c.	Are there indicators issued to measure progress toward goals and objectives generally?	49%		14%		37%
2.d.	Are there indicators used to measure your progress toward goals and objectives?	60%		17%		23%
2.e.	Do you have a role in developing these goals and objectives?	63%		26%		11%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - East Longmeadow
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

3	Curriculum	1&2		4 &5		3
3.a.	Do you believe that your district's curriculum is coherent and sequential?	60%		15%		25%
3.b.	Do you believe that your curriculum is challenging and tied to preparing students for life after secondary school?	72%		15%		12%
3.c.	Is there a coherent, on-going effort within the district to keep curriculum current with evolving trends and best practices in pedagogy and educational research?	74%		9%		17%
3.d.	Do teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising curriculum in the district?	82%		12%		6%
3.e.	Will the curriculum now in use in your school improve student test scores?	52%		8%		40%
3.f.	Do you believe that the curriculum content does not impact test scores as much as how a subject is taught by a teacher?	63%		16%		21%

4	Planning	1&2		4 &5		3
4.a.	Is the planning for important issues (e.g. curriculum, budgetary, etc.) within the district a top-down process?	58%		25%		17%
4.a.1.	If the answer is "Definitely yes" (1) or "Generally yes" (2), is there an important role for teachers and professional staff in the planning process?	60%		16%		23%
4.b.	If staff does not have an important role in developing plans, are decisions made by the central office/school committee explained so that you can understand the basis for the decision/policy?	41%		28%		31%

5	Communications and Mission Statement	1&2		4 &5		3
5.a.	Is there adequate on-going communication between teachers and district administrators? In other words, do you think that you know what is going on in the district?	62%		22%		17%
5.b.	Is there adequate communication between you and your superiors?	68%		15%		17%
5.c.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school district?	89%		2%		9%
5.d.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school?	86%		2%		12%
5.e.	Does the mission statement define how the school is run, and how students are taught?	69%		11%		20%
5.f.	Are these mission statements applied in the operation of the school and the teaching of students?	60%		8%		32%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - East Longmeadow
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

6	Budget Process	1&2		4 &5		3
6.a.	Do you understand your school budget process?	62%		20%		18%
6.b	Do you understand how the budget process impacts your department?	82%		11%		8%
6.c.	Is the school budgeting process fair and equitable?	48%		27%		25%
6.d.	Are budgetary needs solicited and adequately addressed in the budget process?	52%		30%		19%
6.e.	Once the budget is approved and implemented, does the allocation and use of funds match the publicly stated purposes?	52%		14%		34%
6.f.	Given the circumstances, the school department seems to be doing the best it can with in the school budget process.	56%		17%		27%
6.g.	Are there deficiencies in this process?	45%		23%		31%

7	Professional Development	1&2		4 &5		3
7.a.	Is there an adequate professional development program in your school?	71%		18%		11%
7.b.	Is the program designed to meet school needs and tied to the new frameworks and assessments?	77%		14%		9%
7.c.	Is the program designed to change the content of pedagogy in classrooms?	60%		22%		18%
7.d.	Are there deficiencies in the professional development program?	46%		35%		18%
7.e.	Did you participate in the professional development program in 1997/98?	89%		9%		2%
7.f.	Professional development is making a difference and will improve education in my school district.	69%		14%		17%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - East Longmeadow
Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

8	Supplies	1&2		4 &5		3
8.a.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate supplies to do your job?	49%		31%		20%
8.b.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate basic educational supplies (e.g. chalk, paper, pens, pencils, etc.) to do your job?	72%		18%		9%
8.c.	Have you generally been supplied with a sufficient number of a current edition of textbooks?	44%		37%		19%
8.d.	Are students given a copy of these textbooks to keep at home during the year?	0%		98%		2%
8.e.	Have you generally been supplied with sufficient ancillary curriculum materials (e.g. current maps, lab supplies, videos, etc.)?	28%		45%		28%
8.f.	Is the process for obtaining supplies and materials effective, time sensitive and responsive to your classroom needs?	40%		42%		18%

9	Facilities	1&2		4 &5		3
9.a.	How would you rate the overall state of school facilities (e.g. cleanliness, security, maintenance, structural integrity)?	45%		34%		22%
9.b.	How would you rate the overall state of classrooms, labs, and other teaching rooms/areas?	42%		34%		25%
9.c.	How would you rate the overall state of the common areas (e.g. hallways, stairwells, and cafeteria)?	51%		23%		26%
9.d.	How would you rate the overall state of the areas outside of the building (e.g. playgrounds, walk-ways and grounds)?	57%		25%		18%
9.e.	Would you agree with the following statement: "The school administration makes an effort to provide a clean and safe working environment."	75%		15%		9%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - East Longmeadow
Teachers

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

10	Computers and other Educational Technology	1&2		4 &5		3
10.a.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the management practices at the school?	59%		25%		16%
10.b.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the instructional practices at the school?	30%		41%		30%
10.c.	In terms of student usage, are computers generally available only in a computer laboratory setting or library/media center?	52%		39%		9%
10.d.	How many computers are located in your classroom?	Avg. of 2.8				
10.e.	Do you have a school computer provided for and dedicated for your usage?	43%		56%		2%
10.f.	Is there a school computer provided for and shared by you and other teachers?	78%		13%		9%
10.g.	Are there computers available for and used on a regular basis by students?	56%		30%		14%
10.h.	About how many minutes a week does each student use a computer? (Estimated) min.	41.5 minutes				
10.i.	Is the number of available computers sufficient for the number of students?	9%		83%		8%
10.j.	Are the computers in good working order?	31%		39%		28%
10.k.	Are the software packages in the computers uniform and consistent with the instructional level to be provided?	32%		37%		32%
10.l.	Is there a policy or program providing for computer training for teachers on software and computers used by students?	45%		26%		29%

Superintendent's Statement - Education Reform

Submitted by Dr. Edward W. Costa II
Superintendent of East Longmeadow Public Schools

Forward

East Longmeadow Public Schools has come on strong regarding education reform since 1993. Since the advent of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, our school system has been on the cutting edge of updating and re-energizing our curriculum. Due much to the reform efforts, our new district mission statement is *Achievement & Accountability*. At times, this "cutting edge" has turned into a "bleeding edge" due to the fact that the state has amended and changed their original approved curricula in several areas, some have now had multiple changes from the state. However, all in all, our district is better and more importantly, our students are better due to the reform efforts of Massachusetts.

1. **School District Progress And Education Reform Since 1993**
   East Longmeadow Public Schools has invested in the future of education mandates by beginning many grass roots initiatives at the local level. Many of these pre-date the first year of reform, others came to be due to the reform movement.

   a) **School Councils** - Parent involvement is now pervasive within all of the committees of East Longmeadow Public Schools. Parents are viewed as partners, not adversaries in our district. Every major function of our district includes parent representation and input.

   b) **New Policies -** During the last two years, East Longmeadow Public Schools has undertaken a complete re-drafting of its policies, procedures and practices. As of January, 1999, the school committee now has a new final revised policy book. All new policy books have been disseminated to all five schools. Copies are located in administrative offices and in each school library.

   c) **K-12 Academic Curriculum** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has spent the last three years re-aligning our curriculum. This year, ELPS purchased software to publish our newly aligned curriculum in grade level Curriculum Guides. Our curriculum reflects the Massachusetts State Curriculum Standards, National Standards, and Local Initiatives. Beginning September of 1999, all teachers will have their own copy of our newly aligned curriculum that they have worked on. Extensive professional development in methodologies and strategies will ensue this next year as well.

   d) **School Finance** - In 1998, East Longmeadow Public Schools initiated Site-Based Budgeting for each of its five member schools. The budgeting process is an extension of site-based management philosophy. Each site has a budget council made of teachers, staff, parents, and administrators that forecast, administer, and implement their budget derived from their site student

enrollment. This process gives better accountability and direct services to each and every student.

e) **Professional Development Plan** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has taken an active role in providing quality professional development activities to our staff. All staff for all positions is included in our offerings including academia, safety, technology, medical, and process oriented classes. East Longmeadow Public Schools utilizes site-based professional development councils and a district-wide professional development council to administer quality offerings.

f) **Teacher And Administrator Evaluation Standards** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has revisited our evaluation instruments to reflect the new standards for teaching and administration. Our evaluation is a narrative based assessment derived from the research of Research for Better Teaching (RBT). Both evaluation standards and instruments have become part of the contractual language of each unit's contract.

g) **Strategic Plan -** To ensure community input and vision for the future, East Longmeadow Public Schools has embarked on a long-range strategic plan for our schools. The plan, initiated in 1998, is in its second year of consensus making within our schools and community. In September of 1999, a series of community forums will be held at each of our five schools to gather input, direction and views from our community and local businesses. This process is shared, in part, by the East Longmeadow Chamber of Commerce, an instrumental and crucial business partner of East Longmeadow Public Schools.

h) **Student Suspensions and Expulsions** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has noticed statistically substantial reductions in discipline, specifically suspensions and expulsions. This, in part, is due to a new Code of Conduct, developed jointly by K-12 staff and administration, and block scheduling at the high school.

i) **Time And Learning** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has always had school schedules that exceed the state's time and learning requirements. In 1999, we continue to exceed these requirements to bring a quality and comprehensive education to all of our students.

j) **Technology** - During the six years since the advent of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 East Longmeadow Public Schools has made tremendous strides in technology. Six years ago we were among the bottom quartile of schools in the state regarding access to technology. Today we are among the top. Recently, our community voted at town meeting to increase the town's funding of technology by one million dollars over the next three years. We currently have a wide area network on broadband cable that is NT based, local area networks that are NT based on fiber optics and cat5. We have site-based technology committees and a district wide technology council that make decisions regarding our implementation of new technologies, software platforms and professional development offerings for all staff on a monthly rotating basis.

k) **Health Advisory** - A Health Advisory Council was established as required by the K-12 Health Curriculum Framework.

l) **School Choice** - The East Longmeadow Public Schools School Committee annually holds a public meeting to discuss school choice participation and openings at grade levels for public enrollment.

m) **Police** - A Memorandum Of Understanding was developed and signed by the School Department, Police Department, and Town Selectmen promoting cooperation to ensure a safe and orderly environment in our schools and community.

n) **Local Support and Contribution** - The East Longmeadow Town Selectmen have been a tremendous influence and support for public education. With their support, the town voted to build a new middle school. Additionally, the town continues to contribute above and beyond required school spending.

The Town Appropriations Committee continues to support public education by annually recommending finance measures that include additional town moneys and keep the schools appropriated above the net schools required spending threshold.

The Town Capital Planning Committee continues to support public education by annually recommending large sums of moneys to ensure the school facilities of our community serve our students to the best of capacities. This year, specifically, the Capital Planning Committee recommended at town meeting to expend over one million additional dollars for facility needs for our students.

The Town Accountant supports public education by continually working with the schools and district office to support process and accounting measures that ensure the schools and community get the best "bang for each buck".

o) **Class Size** - Student/Teacher ratios are down, student attendance is up and the dropout rate is down.

p) **Business Partnerships** - East Longmeadow Public Schools enjoy many business partnerships. Holistically, the East Longmeadow Chamber Of Commerce is actively involved with all of our five member schools. Additionally, the Chamber solicits participation from area businesses on the part of our schools to partner. Individual businesses work with our schools. The benefits to our schools include more than money donations, the best benefits include: professional expertise in areas such as technology, mentoring for all student age groups, and professional development from them to our staff members.

2. Barriers To Education Reform

a) **Special Education Costs** - Ever- increasing special education costs have had significant impact on the ability of the school district to redirect funds toward other areas of need, especially those areas addressed in education reform.

b) **Change** - Change itself is hard. Research tells us that permanent change often takes between eight and ten years for the change to become institutional. Our hopes and concerns are that the state allows enough time for all schools to embrace change so that the best benefits are realized.

c) **Time** - In a school district the size of East Longmeadow, where the superintendent is the central office staff, time becomes a barrier. The decision to not hire additional central office staff promotes our philosophy that students come first. By hiring teachers to accommodate class size, the central office comes last. This said, time for all that needs to be done becomes a barrier at times.

3. Plans Over The Next Three To Five Years

a) **Future Plans** - Plans for the next three to five years include the on-going implementation and energizing of curriculum frameworks and MCAS assessment data into our curricula.

b) **Facilities** - East Longmeadow Public Schools has begun a 19.6 million dollar new middle school to accommodate the growing population of student-age children in our community. Additional renovations and additions to existing school facilities are being planned for the immediate future as well.

c) **Technology** - The East Longmeadow Public Schools district-wide technology plan calls for three computers in each classroom over the next three years. Our community is unanimously supportive of this plan as shown at the town meeting, which passed the warrant article for technology without a single dissenting vote.

d) **Strategic Plan** - In September of 1999, a series of community forums will be held at each of our five schools to gather input, direction, and views from our community and local businesses. This series of meetings will be the impetus and guiding force for the direction of our schools over the next ten years.

e) **Special Education** - Continued efforts to expand the inclusion model with special needs students will be another priority in our district.

f) **Remedial Programs** - The East Longmeadow Public Schools will continue to focus on the establishment of new remedial programs to ensure academic

success for students who demonstrate need based on assessments of the MCAS testing data.

g) **Textbooks** - East Longmeadow Public Schools will begin large scale purchasing of new and Mass. Framework aligned textbooks for all curricula areas.

As superintendent of East Longmeadow Public Schools, entrusted by the community to lead our schools into the next millennium, I will work hard to ensure every child is served, all needs are met, and that *Achievement & Accountability* are the standards in which all decisions are based. I welcome the public to visit any of our classrooms to see quality teaching in action. Our teachers are what education reform is all about. The "rubber meets the road" and Philosophy is actualized here in East Longmeadow.

Comparison of MCAS Average Scaled Scores

All Students	East Longmeadow Average Scaled Score	State Average Scaled Score	Point Difference
Grade 4:			
English Language Arts	238	230	8
Mathematics	246	234	12
Science & Technology	245	238	7
Grade 8:			
English Language Arts	243	237	6
Mathematics	232	227	5
Science & Technology	232	225	7
Grade 10:			
English Language Arts	236	230	6
Mathematics	227	222	5
Science & Technology	232	225	7
All Students attending this district for Three Years or More			
Grade 4:			
English Language Arts	238	232	6
Mathematics	247	235	12
Science & Technology	246	239	7
Grade 8:			
English Language Arts	244	238	6
Mathematics	233	228	5
Science & Technology	233	227	6
Grade 10:			
English Language Arts	237	234	3
Mathematics	228	225	3
Science & Technology	233	228	5

Note: Data provided by DOE

EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC SCHOOLS

achievement accountability

Dr. Edward W. Costa II
Superintendent

180 Maple Street
East Longmeadow, MA 01028

Theresa A. Sears
Business Manager

September 27, 1999

Michael Sentance, Chairperson
Educational Management Accountability Board
Department of Revenue
P. O. Box 9655
Boston, MA 02114

East Longmeadow Public Schools
Superintendent's Audit Response

Dear Mr. Sentance:

On September 23, 1999 the audit team met with me regarding the draft results of the 1998/99 spring audit of East Longmeadow Public Schools. At this meeting they presented the 25 general conditions and findings and discussed these findings with me. I find this report to be factual, credible, and pointed. The Department of Revenue's audit team for East Longmeadow Public Schools was professional, courteous, and flexible. In addition, the results of all 25 conditions had been anticipated by me and this administration in that my first year as Superintendent for East Longmeadow Public Schools was one of finding and uncovering issues and making strategic plans for improvement. Additionally, our administrative team will be able to use this audit report as thematic components in our five-year strategic plan for the district.

In discussing the audit with the Department of Revenue's audit team members on September 23, I was pleased to bring them updated information regarding several issues within their report. Perhaps the most pressing issue in this district, which is contained within the Department of Revenue's audit report, is that of continuing increased enrollment. On Page 9 of the Department of Revenue's audit the enrollment projections had been based from a 1993/94 enrollment cohort survival study, which projected enrollments through the year 2003. During this past summer I was able to work with the MISER Group and an enrollment statistician consultant in projecting our growing enrollments up through the year 2010. The data used in these projections were based on three bodies of knowledge: East Longmeadow births as recorded by the Town Clerk, the past 10 years of October 1 Enrollment Reports, and migration enrollment statistics as enrolled in East Longmeadow Public Schools from other communities (move ins.) In presenting this new data it is evident that East Longmeadow Public Schools and community conditions result in a sought-after community in which to live and attend school. This updated data has many

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implications that are additionally addressed by the Department of Revenue Audit Report as well.

Another update that I was able to bring the audit team at our September 23 review conference was that of our curriculum development. While the audit team was here in the spring of 1999 they were able to observe curriculum development strategies that came to fruition during this past summer as well. East Longmeadow Public Schools now has grade-specific and subject-specific curriculum drafts for Grades K-12. We believe that our curriculum development impacts many of the 25 general conditions listed in the Department of Revenue audit. Curriculum development is also part of our strategic planning for East Longmeadow Public Schools.

East Longmeadow Public Schools has also made great strides in staffing full-time equivalent (FTE) in the past two years. We now have designated classroom sizes for all grade levels, K-12, and will be reaching those targets within the next 23 months. East Longmeadow Public Schools, in conjunction with the Town of East Longmeadow, has recently implemented a new software package which tracks all expenditures, receipts, credits, and purchase orders as well as allows for budget forecasting for the schools and town. With this software, implementations of many of the Department of Revenue audit findings are well on their way to be rectified and implemented. Additionally, the private audit done by Polumbo, et al. prior to the Department of Revenue audit also showed these findings which have been incorporated into our strategic plan under Finance.

All in all, East Longmeadow Public Schools has implemented many of the educational reform initiatives as stated in the original re-evaluation of 1993. As per the Superintendent's statement, Appendix D, our school system and community continue to support the initiatives listed in the Education Reform Act. We believe that all children can and will learn, that all children can and will be successful, and that our district mission of Achievement and Accountability is the threshold that all decisions are measured by.

Sincerely,

Dr. Edward W. Costa II
Superintendent of Schools