

District Review Report

Marlborough Public Schools

Review conducted April 8-11, 2013



Center for District and School Accountability
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

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Published September 2013

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Marlborough Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of system wide functions using the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (ESE) six district standards: leadership and governance, curriculum and instruction, assessment, human resources and professional development, student support, and financial and asset management. Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results.

Districts reviewed in the 2012-2013 school year included those classified into Level 3¹ of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance in each of the state's six regions: Greater Boston, Berkshires, Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Pioneer Valley. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the six district standards above. A district review team consisting of independent consultants with expertise in each of the district standards review documentation, data, and reports for two days before conducting a four-day district visit that includes visits to individual schools. The team conducts interviews and focus group sessions with such stakeholders as school committee members, teachers' association representatives, administrators, teachers, parents, and students. Team members also observe classroom instructional practice. Subsequent to the on-site review, the team meets for two days to develop findings and recommendations before submitting a draft report to ESE. *District review reports focus primarily on the system's most significant strengths and challenges, with an emphasis on identifying areas for improvement.*

Site Visit

The site visit to the Marlborough Public Schools was conducted from April 8-11, 2013. The site visit included 31 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 95 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, teachers' association representatives, and students. The review team conducted three focus groups with 12 elementary school teachers, 8 middle school teachers, and 5 high school teachers.

¹ Districts selected were in Level 3 in school year 2012-2013; all served one or more schools among the lowest 20 percent of schools statewide serving common grade levels pursuant to 603 CMR 2.05(2)(a). The districts with the lowest aggregate performance and least movement in Composite Performance Index (CPI) in their respective regions were selected for review from among those districts not exempt under Chapter 15, Section 55A. A district was exempt if another comprehensive review was completed or scheduled within nine months of the review window.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule can be found in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, expenditures, and student performance. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 78 classrooms in 5 schools. The team collected data using ESE’s instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

The Marlborough Public Schools has a mayor/city council form of government and the chairman of the school committee is the mayor. The seven members of the school committee meet approximately twice a month, more frequently during budget preparation.

At the time of the review an interim superintendent had served in the position since the summer of 2012. A new superintendent had just been hired and would begin service in July 2013. The district leadership team includes two instructional leadership directors, an interim business manager, a special education director, an assistant director of special education, a human resources director, and a communications liaison. Central office positions have been reorganized and redefined and have experienced multiple turnovers over the past decade or more. The district has five principals leading five schools, a director of the early childhood center, and a director of the alternative high school program located in a building apart from the high school. Other school administrators include nine assistant principals. There are 377 teachers in the district.

In 2012-2013, 4,589 students were enrolled in the district’s 6 schools:

**Table 1: Marlborough Public Schools
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment**

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Early Childhood Center	EES	PK	154
Charles Jaworek	ES	K-4	704
Francis J. Kane	ES	K-4	670
Richer	ES	K-4	558
1 Lt. Charles W. Whitcomb	MS	5-8	1,378
Marlborough High School	HS	9-12	1,125
Totals	6 schools	PK-12	4,589

*As of October 1, 2012

Between 2008 and 2013 overall student enrollment was stable at 4,594 students in 2008 and 4,589 students in 2013. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low

income families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs), as compared with the state, are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures for Marlborough were higher in 2011 than the median for 25 districts of similar size (4,000-4,999 students): \$13,236 compared with a median of \$11,635. Actual net school spending has been well above what is required under state law, as shown in Table B2 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

Information about student performance includes: (1) the accountability and assistance level of the district, including the reason for the district's level classification; (2) the progress the district and its schools are making toward narrowing proficiency gaps as measured by the Progress and Performance Index (PPI); (3) English language arts (ELA) performance and growth; (4) mathematics performance and growth; (5) science and technology/engineering (STE) performance; (6) annual dropout rates and cohort graduation rates; and (7) suspension rates. Data is reported for the district and for schools and student subgroups that have at least four years of sufficient data and are therefore eligible to be classified into an accountability and assistance level (1-5). "Sufficient data" means that at least 20 students in a district or school or at least 30 students in a subgroup were assessed on ELA and mathematics MCAS tests for the four years under review.

Four-and two-year trend data are provided when possible, in addition to areas in the district and/or its schools demonstrating potentially meaningful gains or declines over these periods. Data on student performance is also available in Appendix B. In both this section and Appendix B, the data reported is the most recent available.

1. The district is Level 3 because Marlborough High is Level 3.²

- A. Marlborough High is among the lowest performing 20 percent of high schools and the school's low income students are among the lowest performing 20 percent of subgroups served by high schools.³
- B. The district's five schools place between the 18th percentile and the 34th percentile based on each school's four-year (2009-2012) achievement and improvement trends relative to other schools serving the same or similar grades: Francis J. Kane, Richer, and Charles Jaworek (lack sufficient data to calculate their percentile among elementary schools); 1 Lt. Charles W. Whitcomb School (34th percentile of middle schools); and Marlborough (18th percentile of high schools).

² Due to the district's Level 3 classification, it received a concurrent determination of need for special education technical assistance or intervention of "Needs Technical Assistance (NTA)." This serves as an indication that while areas of the district's performance may be positive, one or more schools (or, in the case of a single school district, the district as a whole) may be experiencing poor outcomes for students with disabilities and/or are having compliance issues.

³ A district is classified into the level of its lowest-performing school unless it has been placed in Level 4 or 5 by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education independent of the level of its schools.

2. The district is not sufficiently narrowing proficiency gaps.

- A. The district as a whole is not considered to be making sufficient progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps. This is because the 2012 cumulative PPI for all students and for high needs⁴ students is less than 75 for the district. The district's cumulative PPI^{5 6} is 49 for all students and 40 for high needs students. The district's cumulative PPI for reportable subgroups are: 46 (low income students), 45 (ELL and former ELL students), 30 (students with disabilities), 93 (Asian students), 52 (African American/Black students), 49 (Hispanic/Latino students), and 55 (White students).

3. The district's English language arts (ELA) performance is very low⁷ relative to other districts and its growth⁸ is moderate.⁹

⁴The high needs group is an unduplicated count of all students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and Former ELL students, or low income students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch).

⁵The PPI combines multiple measures of performance data (achievement, improvement, and graduation and dropout rates) over multiple years into a single number. All districts, schools, and student subgroups receive an *annual PPI* based on improvement from one year to the next and a *cumulative PPI* between 0 and 100 based on four years of data. A district's, school's or subgroup's cumulative PPI is the average of its annual Progress and Performance Index scores over the four most recent MCAS administrations, weighting recent years the most (1-2-3-4). A cumulative PPI is calculated for a group if it has at least three annual PPIs. If a group is missing an annual PPI for one year, that year is left out of the weighting (e.g., 1-X-3-4). While a group's annual PPI can exceed 100 points, the cumulative PPI is always reported on a 100-point scale.

⁶The cumulative PPI is a *criterion-referenced* measure of a district or school's performance relative to its own targets, irrespective of the performance of other districts or schools. Conversely, school percentiles are *norm-referenced* because schools are being compared to other schools across the state that serve the same or similar grades.

⁷All districts, schools, and subgroups are expected to halve the gap between their level of performance in the year 2011 and 100 percent proficient by the 2016-17 school year in ELA, mathematics, and STE. The Composite Performance Index (CPI), a measure of the extent to which a group of students has progressed towards proficiency, is the state's measure of progress towards this goal. In this report the 2012 CPI is used to compare the performance of districts, schools, and grades in a particular subject for a given year. For districts, for each level of school, and for each grade the CPIs are ordered from lowest to highest and then divided into five equal groups (quintiles) with the corresponding descriptions: "very high", "high", "moderate", "low" or "very low". In their assignment to quintiles single-school districts are treated as schools rather than districts. Quintiles for grades are calculated two ways: using a ranking of all districts' CPIs for a particular grade, and using a ranking of all schools' CPIs for a particular grade. CPI figures derive from the MCAS Report on the Department's School and District Profiles website: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/mcas.aspx.

⁸Massachusetts uses student growth percentiles (SGP) to measure how much a student's or group of students' achievement has grown or changed over time. At the student level, student growth percentiles measure progress by comparing changes in a student's MCAS scores to changes in MCAS scores of other students with similar achievement profiles ("academic peers"). Growth at the district, school, and subgroup levels are reported as median SGPs - the middle score when the individual SGPs in a group are ranked from highest to lowest. Median SGPs are reported for ELA and mathematics. In contrast to the CPI, which describes a group's progress toward proficiency based on the group's current level of achievement, the median SGP describes a group's progress in terms of how the achievement of the students in

- A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for Asian students; the district did not meet its annual improvement targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, students with disabilities, African-American/Black students, Hispanic/Latino students, multi-race non-Hispanic/Latino students, and White students.¹⁰
 - B. The district met its annual growth for Asian students, and African-American/Black students; the district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, students with disabilities, Hispanic/Latino students, multi-race non-Hispanic/Latino students, and White students.
 - C. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for Asian students, and African American/Black students, and it did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.
 - D. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grades 4, 5, and 7 and very low performance in grades 3, 6, 8, 10, and overall relative to other districts.
 - E. In 2012 the district demonstrated moderate growth in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and overall and low growth in grade 10.
 - F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful¹¹ declines in grade 6 in CPI, the percentage of students scoring Proficient and Advanced, and SGP. Most of the declines in grade 6 were attributed to its performance between 2009 and 2012, except CPI that can be attributed to its performance over both periods.
-

the group changed relative to the prior year as compared to their academic peers. A group demonstrates “moderate” or “typical” growth if the group’s median SGP is between the 41st and 60th percentiles.

⁹ For ELA trends in the aggregate see Table B4a in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5a.

¹⁰ A district, school, or subgroup is considered to have met its target when its CPI is within 1.5 CPI points of the target.

¹¹ The following changes in measures of achievement and growth, either positive or negative, are potentially meaningful, pending further inquiry: CPI (2.5 points); SGP (10 points); percent *Proficient* and *Advanced* (3 percentage points). Changes are more likely to be potentially meaningful for larger groups of students; higher performing groups tend to demonstrate fewer potentially meaningful changes than lower performing groups; and certain subjects and grade levels are more likely to demonstrate potentially meaningful changes than others. A consistent pattern of potentially meaningful change over several consecutive pairs of consecutive years is more likely to be meaningful than changes from one year to another, whether consecutive or not. In this report, a statement of potentially meaningful change is provided when a district, school, grade level, or subgroup demonstrates three or more instances of declines or gains of the amounts specified above in the CPI, SGP, and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* over the last four years, the most recent two years, or both. Any instance of decline of one of the amounts specified above (or more) prevents three or more instances of gain from being considered potentially meaningful, and vice versa.

- G. The 2012 performance of the Francis J. Kane School (K-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 3 and overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the declines in grade 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
 - H. The 2012 performance of the Richer School (K-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 3. Most of the gains in grade 3 were attributable to its performance over both periods.
 - I. The 2012 performance of the Charles Jaworek School (K-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 3 and overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the declines in grade 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
 - J. The 2012 performance of the 1st Lt. Charles W. Whitcomb School (5-8) is low relative to other middle schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 5 and 6. Most of the declines in grade 5 were attributed to its performance over both periods and the decline in grade 6 to its performance between 2009 and 2012.
 - K. The 2012 performance of the Marlborough High School (9-12) is low relative to other high schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the gains overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.
- 4. The district's mathematics performance is very low relative to other districts and its growth is moderate.¹² There were variations in performance among grades.**
- A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for Asian students; the district did not meet its annual improvement targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, students with disabilities, African-American/Black students, Hispanic/Latino students, and White students.
 - B. The district met its annual growth for Asian students; the district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, students with disabilities,

¹² For mathematics trends in the aggregate, see Table B4b in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5b.

African-American/Black students, Hispanic/Latino students, multi-race non-Hispanic/Latino students, and White students.

- C. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for ELL and former ELL students, Asian students, and African American/Black students, and it did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.
- D. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grades 4, 5, 8, 10 and very low performance in grades 3, 6, 7, and overall relative to other districts.
- E. In 2012 the district demonstrated high growth in grade 8, moderate growth in grades 5 and overall, and low growth in grades 4, 6, 7, and 10.
- F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 3, 5, 6, and overall. Most of the declines in grade 3, 5, 6, and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- G. The 2012 performance of the Francis J. Kane School (K-4) is very low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 3 and overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the declines in grades 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- H. The 2012 performance of the Richer School (K-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is low.
- I. The 2012 performance of the Charles Jaworek School (K-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 3 and overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the declines in grades 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- J. The 2012 performance of the 1st Lt. Charles W. Whitcomb School (5-8) is low relative to other middle schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 5, 6, and overall. Most of the declines in grade 5, 6, and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- K. The 2012 performance of the Marlborough High School (9-12) is moderate relative to other high schools and its growth is low.

5. The district's science and technology/engineering (STE) performance is low relative to other districts.¹³

- A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, Hispanic/Latino students, and White students; the district did not meet its annual improvement targets for students with disabilities.
- B. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for all students, high needs students, low income students, ELL and former ELL students, Hispanic/Latino students, and White students, and it earned extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for ELL and former ELL students, and White students..
- C. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grades 5, 10 and overall, and very low performance in grade 8 relative to other districts.
- D. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 5 and overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the gains in grade 5 and overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.
- E. The 2012 performance of the 1st Lt. Charles W. Whitcomb School (5-8) is moderate relative to other middle schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 5 in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient of Advanced. Most of the gains in grade 5 were attributable to its performance over both periods.
- F. The 2012 performance of the Marlborough High (9-12) is low relative to other high schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains overall in CPI and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the gains overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.

6. In 2012, the district met its annual improvement targets for all students for the four-year cohort graduation rate, and the five-year cohort graduation rate.¹⁴ The district did not meet its annual improvement target for all students for the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate. Over the most recent three-year period for which data is

¹³ For STE trends in the aggregate, see Table B4c in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5c.

¹⁴ All groups (districts, schools, and subgroups) are expected to make steady progress toward a goal of 90 percent for the four-year cohort graduation rate and 95 percent for the five-year rate by the 2016-17 school year. For accountability determinations in any given year, the cohort graduation rate from the prior school year is used. For example, 2012 accountability determinations for the four-year rate use data from 2011; determinations for the five-year rate use data from 2010. Districts, schools, and subgroups are considered to be on target if they meet the state's federally-approved annual targets in a given year for either the four-or five-year cohort graduation rate, whichever is higher.

available,¹⁵ the four-year cohort graduation rate declined, the five-year cohort graduation rate declined, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined. Over the most recent one-year period for which data is available, the four-year cohort graduation rate declined, the five-year cohort graduation rate increased, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined.¹⁶

- A.** Between 2009 and 2012 the four-year cohort graduation rate declined 1.7 percentage points, from 81.8% to 80.1%, a decrease of 2.1 percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it declined 4.2 percentage points, from 84.3% to 80.1%, a decrease of 5.0 percent.
- B.** Between 2008 and 2011 the five-year cohort graduation rate declined 0.2 percentage points, from 87.5% to 87.3%, a decrease of 0.2 percent. Between 2010 and 2011 it increased 0.2 percentage points, from 87.1% to 87.3%, an increase of 0.2 percent.
- C.** Between 2009 and 2012 the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined 0.4 percentage points, from 2.7% to 2.3%, a decrease of 14.8 percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it declined 0.7 percentage points, from 3.0% to 2.3%, a decrease of 23.3 percent.

7. Marlborough Public Schools' rates of in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions in 2011-2012 were significantly lower than the statewide rates.¹⁷

- A.** The rate of in-school suspensions for Marlborough was 2.7 percent, lower than the state rate of 3.4 percent. The rate of out-of-school suspensions for Marlborough was 3.0 percent, lower than the state rate of 5.4 percent.
- B.** There was not a significant difference among racial/ethnic groups for in-school suspensions.¹⁸ However, there was a significant difference among racial/ethnic groups for out-of-school suspensions. The out-of-school-suspension rate was 8.9 percent for African-American/Black students, 2.3 percent for Asian students, 3.9 percent for Hispanic/Latino students, 7.2 percent for Multi-race (not Hispanic or Latino) students, and 2.2 percent for White students.
- C.** There was a significant difference between the in-school suspension rates of high needs students and non high needs students (4.2 percent compared to 1.1 percent), low income students and non low income students (4.9

¹⁵ Note that the 2012 four-year graduation and dropout rates and the 2011 five-year graduation rate will be used in the 2013 accountability determination; the 2011 four-year graduation and dropout rates and the 2010 five-year graduation rate were used in the 2012 determination. See previous footnote.

¹⁶ For annual dropout rate trends from 2009 to 2012, see Table B6 in Appendix B. For cohort graduation rate trends for the last three years available, see Tables B7a and B7b.

¹⁷ Statistical significance based on one sample T test. $P \leq .05$

¹⁸ Statistical significance for racial/ethnic groups and other subgroups based on Chi Square. $P \leq .05$

percent compared to 1.2 percent), and students with disabilities and students without disabilities (5.3 percent compared to 2.2 percent).

- D.** There was also a significant difference between the rates of out-of-school suspensions for high needs students and non high needs students (4.5 percent compared to 1.4 percent), low income students and non low income students (5.3 percent compared to 1.4 percent), students with disabilities and students without disabilities (6.2 percent compared to 2.3 percent), and English language learners and non English language learners (1.7 percent compared to 3.3 percent).
- E.** On average students in the Marlborough Public Schools missed 1.7 days per disciplinary action,¹⁹ lower than the state average of 3.1.

¹⁹ Disciplinary action refers to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, permanent expulsion, removal by an impartial hearing officer to an alternative setting, or removal by school personnel to an alternative setting.

Marlborough Public Schools Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. **The interim superintendent and the school committee worked collaboratively with city officials in 2012-2013 to build trust and increase transparency and were able to decrease the tension that had existed before.**
 - A. City and school officials described budget discussions in previous years as tense, and in fiscal year 2013 there was a budget presentation that did not include some necessary expenditures. See the Finance and Asset Management Strength finding below.
 - B. Members of the school committee told the review team, “Trust is the biggest issue. Last year [2011-2012] there was no trust. [The interim superintendent] came in and built trust.”
 - C. A review of documents by the team showed that the interim superintendent’s recommended budget for fiscal year 2014 used student performance data and directly addressed the goals of the five-year strategic plan, *Believe 2016*, providing both direction and continuity for the 2013-2014 school year.
 - D. The mayor said that when a supplemental budget for fiscal year 2013 was up for approval by the city council, he was initially concerned about the need for a supplemental budget but the interim superintendent confidently explained the rationale. To show his support for the supplemental budget, the mayor said that he sat next to the interim superintendent at the city council meeting when the budget was voted and approved.
 - E. When teachers were asked what the incoming superintendent should know, they said that he should continue the good communication practices of the interim superintendent.

Impact: The trust and communication developed by the interim superintendent and his collaboration with the school committee and city officials have promoted a culture of transparency, accountability, and cooperation and laid the foundation for new leadership in 2013-2014.

2. **The district has sought considerable external expertise to review current practices and programs and develop reports and recommendations for the new superintendent and other new leaders to use to improve teaching and learning.**
 - A. Through a collaborative planning process guided by consultants in 2010, the school committee and district leadership developed a well-considered needs assessment, “Blueprint for the Future,” which evolved into a high-quality strategic plan, *Believe 2016: Building a World-Class School System*.
 1. As stated in the executive summary of the strategic plan, the process to develop the plan engaged community, business, parent, and school-based groups in a series of discovery activities and focus group meetings to obtain critical insights about district and school strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The

school committee and district leadership used these insights to shape the strategic plan, *Believe 2016*, which identified and acknowledged the need for significant change in four key areas:

- a. Student Achievement, to promote high expectations and eliminate the achievement gap.
- b. Operational Effectiveness and Efficiency, to promote efficient and effective operations.
- c. Family and Community Engagement, to foster partnerships with the community.
- d. Culture, to foster support of high expectations and the belief that all students can succeed.

- B.** In addition to the strategic plan, the district also engaged various consultants to conduct a curriculum audit -in 2010-2011 of 1000 K-12 curriculum units, a study of special education services, and a technology audit in 2012-2013 to assess technology needs in the district.

Impact: The identification of needed change through a thoughtful strategic plan and the review of particular systems and practices provide considerable evidence to support needed district improvements. The recent reports and studies also establish a foundation on which to build a culture of high expectations and data driven improvement of student learning.

Curriculum and Instruction

3. In 2010-2011 the district adopted Understanding by Design (UbD) as a curriculum framework and provided guidance and training for curriculum mapping through grade 12. Since 2011-2012, the district has focused on documenting UbD curriculum in all content areas through grade 8 and aligning new curriculum to 2011 Massachusetts frameworks.

- A.** A 2010-2011 Atlas curriculum audit of nearly 1,000 K-12 units in all core content areas showed that curricula were not aligned to standards. Findings noted a range in quality and wide variability in knowledge of the UbD framework because of “poor roll out, unclear expectations and inconsistent support for staff.”
1. The Atlas mapping audit cited less attention to elementary units and limited evidence of cross grade alignment. The audit also showed that [ELA] teachers had worked for several years to understand UbD, raising questions about UbD’s impact on unit design and about the need for professional development.
 2. In 2011-2012, based on Atlas recommendations and the absence of a codified curriculum through grade 8, the then superintendent required the district to focus on mapping PK-8 curriculum. This was also prioritized in the five-year strategic plan, *Believe 2016*.
 3. In 2011-2012, the instructional leadership directors organized UbD professional development for 140 PK-12 staff. Principals selected staff members based on content area competency (PK-4), interest in the task (grades 5-8), and previous or current experience as curriculum leaders (grades 9-12).

Impact: When the district provided focused, quality professional development on UbD, it was more likely to achieve a shared common understanding of the elements of standards-based curriculum mapping. By training a core group of PK-12 teachers to document curriculum through grade 8, the district established an initial baseline for written curricula. This laid the foundation for continued work to complete curriculum documentation and alignment through grade 12 while simultaneously ensuring both horizontal and vertical alignment and building capacity to prepare for PARCC assessments in 2015.

Human Resources and Professional Development

4. Though the district's past culture did not include the supervision and evaluation of staff and challenges remain, at the time of the review the district had made progress in implementing the state's new evaluation system.

- A.** In a review of 38 faculty members' randomly selected personnel folders and those of all 22 district and school administrators, even though the district has employed a four-year, instead of the required two-year, evaluation cycle for staff with Professional Status (PS), the team did not find evidence that any educator had been evaluated even over the course of that cycle.
1. Teachers and administrators acknowledged that it had been many years since most teachers had received an evaluation.
 2. Staff without professional status had not been evaluated annually and several had not been evaluated.
 3. The district's 22 current administrators had not been evaluated annually during their period of administrative service and over 95 percent of administrators had never been evaluated.
- B.** Though the district has had a history of non-compliance with Massachusetts' regulations, in April 2013, the district had taken many steps toward implementing a new evaluation system. Reviewers gathered extensive evidence of the efforts and progress that has been made.
1. According to administrators, the district has completed the ESE-prescribed training for evaluators (11 hours and for teachers 4 hours). Additional training is ongoing or planned. For example, 35 staff members have been trained by *Teachers 21* and are serving as school-based mentors/coaches for staff. All administrators were scheduled to receive Research for Better Teaching data training this summer, and six were scheduled to receive National Institute for School Leadership training this fall. Administrators said that this would continue as a professional development focus area in 2013-2014.
 2. During the latter part of the 2011-2012 school year, the district and the Marlborough Educators Association (MEA) formed a Joint Teacher Evaluation committee to oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation program that is fully aligned with the requirements and expectations of the state's new system. That committee was composed of teachers and administrators and has worked throughout the 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 school years to accomplish its mission. In interviews with review

team members, faculty, MEA leaders, and administrators alike expressed confidence and satisfaction with the committee's efforts and outcomes.

3. The district and MEA agreed on a new educator evaluation system and signed an agreement in December 2012. Administrators and teachers confirmed that, with only minor modifications, they adopted the new Massachusetts educator evaluation system. The district submitted its model to ESE for review and received feedback from ESE indicating that the district's model adequately addressed six key components of the evaluation framework set forth in state regulations.
4. In the months since contractual agreement was reached, the district has worked to introduce and implement its new evaluation system.
 - a. Documents and interviews showed that timelines and specific action steps for PS and NPS staff had been produced and were being followed.
 - b. Administrators and faculty have developed educator plans that include a self-assessment, SMART goals related to both student learning and professional practice, and specific actions to meet those goals.
 - c. Appropriate documents have been developed to support and facilitate this process and have been submitted for review. This process is supported by the web-based tool TeachPoint.
5. Because of the shortened timeline necessitated by the agreement on the new educator evaluation system not being reached until December 2012, the district decided to make NPS staff the focus of its initial implementation efforts during the remainder of the 2012-2013 school year.
 - a. All NPS teachers are now supervised according to requirements of the new evaluation model.
 - b. PS staff did self-assessment, SMART goal setting, educator plans, and evidence collection but did not receive summative evaluations during 2012-2013. They were being visited on a more "regular basis" by administrators, and the visits were being consistently followed up with a classroom observation form that was returned to the teacher within 3-5 days for signature and included in the Teach Point system. The review team was given copies of a random selection of these forms and found them to be both informative and instructive.
6. Through random selection, in 2013-2014 50 percent of PS staff will be placed on a one-year self-directed growth plan and 50 percent of PS staff will be placed on a two-year self-directed growth plan under the new model.
7. Central office and school administrators as well as teachers told the review team that all observations and scheduled evaluations were being conducted and the team was shown a number of completed formative evaluations.

- C. Although both teachers and administrators spoke with satisfaction about the district's progress in implementing the new evaluation system, they also named concerns about remaining challenges.
 - 1. Administrators spoke of the need to develop district-determined measures that could be administered across all schools where the same grade or subject was taught and could accurately assess student growth and achievement.
 - 2. Administrators also said that there were too few evaluators to adequately meet the demands of the new system. At the high school, for example, there were only 3 administrators responsible for the supervision and evaluation of over 125 professional staff, though interviewees mentioned plans to increase the number of evaluators at the high school in 2013-2014.

Impact: The district has succeeded in creating a vehicle with the potential to significantly improve the quality of teaching and learning within the district. When the challenges remaining are met and the system is fully and properly implemented, this system will promote the development and overall effectiveness of professional staff.

Finance and Asset Management

- 5. **The city has funded its schools above the required net school spending level in recent years. Although there had been antagonism and mistakes in past budget negotiations, resulting in the need for a supplemental appropriation in fiscal year 2013, negotiations with a new superintendent on the fiscal year 2014 budget were described as more transparent and positive.**
 - A. Net school spending (NSS) has been between 22.5 percent and 26.6 percent above required NSS since fiscal year 2010, according to ESE data.
 - 1. Fiscal year 2012 expenditure per in-district pupil was \$13,325, 1.5 percent higher than the state \$13,121, according to ESE data.
 - 2. Interviews and a review of documents showed that the school committee recently commissioned an audit of the district's technology needs, and the mayor authorized additional funding for technology for the schools.
 - B. City and school officials described previous budget discussions as tense, compounded in fiscal year 2013 by a budget presentation that did not include some necessary expenditures for special education tuitions, curriculum materials, and overdue retroactive payroll obligations.
 - C. Improved communication between school and city officials, better financial reporting, and use of data and the strategic plan to justify budget requests led to a supplemental appropriation for the schools in December 2012 including both the missing items above and capital and technology needs, and good prospects for a better process to establish the fiscal year 2014 school budget.

1. The superintendent's proposed fiscal year 2014 budget documents clearly describe increases such as ELL staffing, contractual obligations, utilities, transportation, and curriculum materials along with justifications based on the strategic plan, projected classroom enrollment data, and data regarding the achievement gap between regular education students and English language learners and students with disabilities.
2. Documentation on the proposed fiscal year 2014 budget includes narratives, revenue sources, a PowerPoint presentation summarizing major increases and decreases with justifications, and a detailed document comparing last year's expenditures, current budget, and proposed budget for each budget line.
3. Monthly financial reports for the school committee were revised in January 2013 in response to committee requests, and now include a narrative highlighting recent and projected changes in expenditures, budget expenses, encumbrances, and available balances for each school and line item including grants, special information and utilities data and a PowerPoint summary.
4. City officials and district administrators said that the city council approved the district's Statement of Interest (SOI) to the MSBA for a school building expansion.
5. District administrators noted that the city facilities director and his department have been responsive to school building needs.

Impact: The strong financial position of the city, improved communications between school leaders and city officials, and increased transparency have meant adequate funding for the schools.

The new superintendent turned around a difficult situation by working closely with city government, and the city's support of a supplemental appropriation during the fiscal year alleviated the need to make drastic mid-year budget adjustments caused by mistakes in the prior year's budget presentation.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

It is important to note that district review reports prioritize identifying challenges and areas for growth in order to promote a cycle of continuous improvement; the report deliberately describes the district's challenges and concerns in greater detail than the strengths identified during the review.

Leadership and Governance

6. **In recent years the district has had substantial instability among administrators, particularly in the position of superintendent, and the amount of leadership in the district for curriculum and instruction and the education of English language learners has been cut back.**
 - A. Personnel changes have been frequent for many years and there has been insufficient guidance and clear direction.

1. An administrator said that 9 superintendents had led the district in the past 15 years.
2. Of the current 16-member leadership team, 12 have been in their role 3 years or less and most, 2 years or less, according to principals.
3. An evaluation of special education in the district provided to the review team states: “The district has experienced a dramatic turnover in leadership at the superintendent and special education levels, which has affected the operation and function of special education as well as the perception that special education costs are out-of-control.”
4. In an interview, elementary teachers noted “32 administrative changes in 16 years.”
5. In conversations with school committee members and human resources and professional development staff, the review team learned that compensation for principals and other administrators was so low that assistants often received more compensation than the principal or director.
6. In an interview with principals, one said that some staff members believed they could ignore the principals because they thought they would be “gone in a couple years.” Another principal said, “We need people to be here [in the district] for a number of years moving in the same direction.” A school committee member noted the “progression of people in charge,” and said that resistance to change had not been counteracted by “a clear vision for change.”
7. An administrator said that there were formerly two assistant superintendents, one for teaching and learning and one for business and operations. Both roles were eliminated when the previous superintendent appointed instructional leadership directors (ILDs) for PK-4, grades 5-8, and grades 9-12, respectively. The PK-4 director left the district and the middle school director was assigned PK-8 responsibilities. Now there are two ILDs.
 - a. The two ILDs said that until 2012-2013, they had broader responsibilities such as negotiations. For the last two years they have concentrated on curriculum development and have not given any attention to instructional improvement. The review team did not find evidence of a current job description for the ILD position.
 - b. Elementary teachers described starting to align curriculum to 2011 state frameworks and targeting completion by the end of 2012-2013. They noted an absence of guidance, especially when some teachers did not have a background in curriculum development. A teacher on the math committee described needing to write assessments without the knowledge to do so.
8. A high school staff member said that there used to be curriculum coordinators with administrative responsibilities. In 2011-2012 these positions were replaced by curriculum leaders who have part-time teaching loads and do not have administrative responsibilities. The administrative responsibilities were then

not reassigned to others.

9. A review of personnel records and interviews showed that the district did not currently have a position of director of English language learners, though ELLs and former ELLs make up 18.7 percent of the student population (see Table B1b). Two ELL coordinators (PK-8 and grades 9-12) are assigned responsibility for English language learners and the position of director for English language learners has been left unfilled. Although the job description for the position of director of English language learners states that the position requires membership on the leadership team, the interim superintendent told the review team that the two ELL coordinators were not part of the leadership team and did not attend leadership meetings unless called to address a specific issue.

Impact: These frequent changes in personnel and the curtailing of curriculum and instruction and ELL leadership make it difficult for the district and its schools to move in a unified way to improve the education Marlborough students receive.

7. While the district has developed a five-year strategic plan, it does not have a comprehensive, actionable District Improvement Plan or any aligned and actionable School Improvement Plans.

- A. The district has a five-year strategic plan, *Believe 2016*. However, it does not have a District Improvement Plan (DIP) that serves as an action plan with essential components to guide efforts to attain strategic goals.
 1. Although the district has highlighted priorities in *Believe 2016*, it has not designated staff with primary responsibilities for planning and implementing priorities. The district has not established timelines for completion of priorities and has not identified measurable evidence, outcomes, indicators, and specific student performance goals based on achievement data to indicate that priorities have been met.
 2. A school committee member noted the district did not have a District Improvement Plan.
 3. A document review by the team showed that current SIPs, while aligned to the five-year strategic plan, did not include goals, timelines, and benchmarks.
 - a. The interim superintendent told reviewers that district leaders reviewed the strategic plan with principals and reminded them that SIPs should be linked to the strategic plan but that there was no direction about how the school plans should be organized.
 - b. When high school teachers were asked whether they were involved in developing the SIP, one said that they had seen it on a slide at a faculty meeting and talked about it together. The review team was told, “The SIP is not an active document.”
 4. An evaluation of special education in the district states, “The view of many interviewed staff was that there is not a clear mission for the district with respect to general and special education . . . and buildings are

operating in silos. There is a feeling of disconnect in some instances between the special education leadership and building leaderships.”

Impact: Finely and thoughtfully crafted planning documents cannot help improve any aspect of the school district without similarly developed, aligned, and implemented action plans for both the district and each school. Without a complete and comprehensive DIP and aligned SIPs, the district, schools, and community are unable to systematically implement, monitor, and refine continuous improvement efforts, and the district cannot ensure accountability for meeting improvement priorities.

Curriculum and Instruction

8. The district has not established expectations, responsibilities, and the capacity to ensure sufficient leadership and support for curriculum and instruction, especially at the school level.

- A.** In recent years there have been repeated changes in the organizational structure and personnel responsible for leadership of curriculum and instruction at every district level.
 - 1. In 2011-2012, the position of assistant superintendent for teaching and learning was eliminated and three instructional leadership directors (ILDs) were appointed, one each for PK-4, grades 5-8, and grades 9-12. The PK-4 director left the district and the middle school director was given PK-8 responsibilities.
 - 2. Two ELL coordinators (PK-8 and grades 9-12) were assigned responsibility for English language learners and the vacant position of director for English language learners was left unfilled.
 - a. In teacher interviews and focus groups, teachers expressed concern about the absence of focused, district-level advocacy and leadership for ELLs who make up 13 percent of all students.
 - b. Curriculum to support ELL students is uneven. In a focus group teachers said that the ELL role in curriculum development was not clearly defined and that after much curriculum work was done, ELL and special education staff were asked to add to it. One teacher said: “We plugged in ELL resources for teachers to use in certain units. Units are being constantly revised ... new versions uploaded. Some have that work, some have lost it.”
 - 3. According to teacher leaders, there are varying perceptions in the district about the role of principals as curriculum and instructional leaders because of numerous changes in principals’ responsibilities in recent years and principals’ inconsistent work to support and monitor curriculum development.
 - a. The current K-12 principals are either new to the district or recently hired from within the district in the past two to three years. Interviews and a review of job descriptions showed that although the expectation for principals to be curriculum and instructional leaders was clearly stated in job descriptions it had not been effectively defined and responsibilities had not been explicitly assigned.

- b. In focus groups, teachers and specialists said: “Principals have been stepping up in the last year and a half; they can converse at our level, not as in the past when everyone did their own thing. Principals are in the early stages of this work.”
4. Administrators said: “Every elementary school used to be its own fiefdom and kids’ experiences were different based on the school. Now, we don’t make decisions for one school without making decisions for three schools.”
5. ELA and mathematics specialists and middle and high school teacher leaders identified themselves as curriculum and instructional leaders. They said that this was because of their recently assigned responsibilities to develop and disseminate PK-12 curriculum and provide professional development via district mini-courses and vertical team meetings with grade-level and content area colleagues.
 - a. Elementary ELA and mathematics specialists allocate 80 percent of their time as Title I specialists, often in a teaching role. Only 20 percent of their time is allotted to instructional support---focused mainly on supporting teachers’ writing and sharing curriculum.
 - b. Teacher leaders said that the high school department chair role was reassigned to teacher leaders in 2011-2012. They said that they were supposed to do coaching but had not been given any guidance on what coaching looked like or training on coaching.

Impact: The district cannot pursue the goals identified in *Believe 2016* without a solid curriculum in all core subjects. Without clearly defined leadership roles and responsibilities at the district and school levels, efforts to develop curriculum have become haphazard and unfocused, particularly given the multiple reconfigurations and turnover in leadership positions in recent years.

9. Marlborough does not have a complete PK-12 curriculum. The district does not have well-established systems to ensure both horizontal and vertical articulation or review and revision of curriculum.

- A.** A review of documents and interviews showed that current curriculum maps did not represent a usable 21st century set of curriculum materials aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks. The high school curriculum is partially written and aligned only at grades 9-10. Maps for grade 5 and grade 7 are especially variable in mathematics and ELA.
 1. Despite the charge to use the UbD framework, new curriculum maps do not currently provide detailed, progressive lesson structures and sufficient depth in foundational skills, writing, mathematics, science, technology and engineering, history and social sciences and most of all, higher order thinking and understanding. They are missing engaging learning tasks with rubrics aligned to specific predictive and summative assessments and suitable teaching materials to support standards-based instruction.
 2. World-class Instructional Design and Assessment standards (WIDA) have not been embedded in the most recent curriculum development documents.

3. The district does not have any specifically designed alternate academic curricula for students requiring significant modifications to access a high quality curriculum.
- B.** Systems have not yet been developed to ensure clear horizontal and vertical alignment of PK-12 curriculum and to regularly monitor newly developed standards-based curriculum.
1. The district currently uses two platforms to store and share curriculum: Atlas Curriculum Mapping for grades 9-12 (with the exception of mathematics) and Sky Drive for PK-8 and grades 9-10 mathematics. Visual Arts and Health and Wellness curricula are stored on both platforms.
 2. The district does not have a formal communication structure for teacher leaders responsible for curriculum to meet with district instructional leaders and principals to discuss curriculum review, revision, and monitoring.
 - a. Clear communication and review protocols are omitted from the curriculum development process.
 - b. Interviews with district leaders showed that the district did not have any clearly defined “next steps” for curriculum review and revision because of the “churn at the administrative level, putting out so many fires at the same time.” District leaders said: “The willingness is there, just no time!”
 3. The district does not yet have an established data-driven culture, disseminated data or embedded practices to use student achievement data to inform curriculum development and alignment, according to administrators.

Impact: Until the district designs a thoughtful, data-driven approach to guide PK-12 curriculum mapping and to align curriculum to 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks, it cannot guarantee that high-quality curriculum will be taught to all students. Without integration of English language development standards into curriculum development, English language learners do not have a viable curriculum that meets their learning needs. Without an informed and ongoing plan to improve and monitor curriculum, students will not be prepared for the 2015 PARCC assessments.

10. The district does not yet have a clearly articulated understanding or research-based model of high-quality standards-based instruction that meets the diverse learning needs of all students.

The team observed 78 classes: 21 at the high school, 20 at the middle school, and 37 at the elementary schools. The team observed 23 ELA classes, 25 mathematics classes, and 30 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were one special education class, one ELL class, and one career/technical education class. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE’s instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. See Appendix C for data on the team’s classroom observations.

- A.** The vision for high quality instruction in a standards based environment using a pedagogy of understanding aligned to the Understanding by Design framework is not yet understood in the district. In most observed lessons instruction was not focused on clear objectives, did not use appropriate educational materials, or

include a sufficient range of strategies, technologies, and supplemental materials aligned with students' developmental levels and learning needs. Observed lessons rarely promoted deeper understanding and application of knowledge in line with an Understanding by Design curriculum.

1. In observed classrooms instruction did not consistently reflect implementation of effective instructional practices.
 - a. In 88 percent of observed classrooms, there was clear and consistent evidence of positive and respectful interactions between teachers and students and among students.
 - b. In 66 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence of lessons reflecting rigor and high expectations. At the high school only 19 percent of observed classrooms showed clear and consistent evidence of rigor and high expectations. This was supported by students in a high school focus group who said that teachers "set high expectations, but if you have trouble with it they might baby you." When asked for clarification, they noted, "they'll lessen the demands ... it's very dependent on the teacher. One teacher is really hard and will give tons of writing and another may be hard but give writing once-a-month."
 - c. In 40 percent of observed classrooms there was clear and consistent evidence that multiple resources were available to meet students' diverse learning needs. However, middle school science labs were well equipped. In a grade 7 STEM class, students used a variety of materials and manipulatives.
 - d. In 71 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence of clearly communicated grade-appropriate learning objectives aligned to standards. ELL language objectives were not evident in most observed classes.
 - e. In 81 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that teachers used a variety of questioning techniques that required or sought thoughtful responses and promoted deeper understanding. For example, teachers asked lower level questions such as, "What would that answer have been?" Observation notes by review team members described how teacher-talk dominated lessons and students' responses often consisted of one or two words or were non-existent.
 - f. In 61 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence of the explicit use of appropriate and varied strategies matched to learning objectives and content.
 - g. In 86 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence of using instructional strategies that developed students' inquiry and higher order thinking skills. This was underscored by students in a focus group who said, "We have Socratic seminars; we have never done it in subjects other than history."
 - h. In 62 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence of frequent formative assessments used to check understanding and inform instruction. Teachers assessed understanding by

asking questions such as, “Who got number four?” and then moved on without checking with students or adjusting teaching.

2. In observed classes instruction did not consistently support student’s learning needs and engage them in thinking and deeper understanding of ideas.
 - a. In 76 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that students were engaged in challenging academic tasks. For example, elementary observations noted a heavy reliance on paper and pencil tasks using workbooks and worksheets during the morning work period. Students who finished work were not provided additional or enriching academic tasks but were told to start homework or sit and wait.
 - b. In 83percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that students responses to questions elaborated about content and ideas. Often, teachers asked simple questions without follow-up questions to probe thinking. In other instances, students talked in small groups and the teachers did not check any group.
 - c. In 70 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that students made connections to prior knowledge, real world experiences and other subject matter.
 - d. In 64 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that students articulated their thinking or reasoning verbally or in writing either individually, in pairs or in groups. Elementary students often sat in small groups in class, but teachers targeted lessons to the whole class.
 - e. In 13 percent of observed classrooms there was clear and consistent evidence that student work demonstrated high quality and could serve as exemplars.
- B.** Teachers, teacher leaders, and district instructional leaders said that the focus for 2012-2013 was completion of the written curriculum.
 1. District and school staff members referred to 2012-2013 as “the year of the ‘what’,” focusing on documenting what to teach. They said: “We will do instruction next year... [we are] now starting to think about how to teach better, get kids to listen to each other.”
 2. The only commonly used, researched-based instructional practice identified K-8 was Words Their Way, a student-centered, word study program.
- C.** The effective use of time for instruction and collaborative planning was not evident on the schedules presented to the team or during classroom observations.
 1. Classroom instruction in most elementary classes started late, at 9:30 a.m. when school started at 8:50 a.m. In some instances, grade 1 literacy was scheduled between 1:00 and 2:30 p.m.; grade 2 mathematics was scheduled for 1:45 p.m.

2. Specials seemed the key driver in one elementary school schedule given their prominent placement with academics often scheduled late in the day.
 3. Observers noted that there was not a strict adherence to the master schedule, particularly in some elementary classrooms. Observers' notes highlighted activities such as multiple paper and pencil tasks and correcting morning work, especially for mathematics, during the scheduled literacy block.
 4. Significant time was allocated to Words Their Way (WTW) and "The Daily Five" routines. In many observed classrooms, these student-centered routines associated with WTW were not accompanied by specific directed instruction and other routines associated with an effective balanced literacy curriculum.
 5. A review of K-12 schedules by the team showed that they did not include teachers' collaborative cross-grade common planning time.
 6. A review of the middle school and high school schedules by the team showed that they did not reflect researched-based secondary instructional and scheduling models. For example, the high school schedule includes only two days of extended learning blocks in every nine-day cycle. Passing time is not accounted for in the middle school schedule. The time and learning data from the middle school shows 951 hours of instructional time. This meets elementary time-on-learning guidelines, but not secondary guidelines.
- D.** A 2013 special education audit of the Marlborough Public Schools and classroom observations by review team members showed weaknesses in how well instruction supported students with disabilities. For example, effective inclusion practices and co-teaching in regular education classrooms were not observed in any classrooms. The 2013 special education audit notes, "The district needs to review co-teaching and in-classroom support practices and establish a clear and consistent approach to these models across the district."
- E.** A 2013 technology audit of the Marlborough Public Schools and classroom observations by review team members showed that the availability and use of a range of instructional materials and resources including technology varied across classrooms and many classrooms were not adequately provisioned.
1. All classrooms in the district have ceiling mounted projectors, according to the 2103 technology audit.
 2. The 2013 technology audit states: "Little attention has been paid by the district to support technology purchases for the learners in the different academic areas outside of the STEM initiative. The most significant initiative outside of STEM has been the support to a reading intervention program "Read Live" that has been utilized in a limited way in the elementary schools and middle school."
 - a. Students in the district's STEM Innovation project receive laptops.
 - b. The review team did not observe any technologies other than a tape recorder in regular classrooms.

- c. There was clear and consistent evidence that teachers used technology to enhance learning in only 10 percent of observed classrooms. In 93 percent of observed classrooms there was partial or no evidence that students used technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.
3. In some elementary classrooms, non-fiction texts to support literacy were evident. However, most observed classroom libraries contained older books that were not leveled. Mathematics resource materials were not readily available or used in observed classrooms.
- F. The 2013 audit of special education in the Marlborough Public Schools showed that the district did not have a consistently understood and equitably accessed approach to tiered systems of support that provide additional instructional time and appropriate classroom interventions for students.
 1. On page 27: “The district has not provided a structure for teachers to access and implement tiered instructional supports and strategies including the effective use of paraprofessionals.”
 2. On page 27: “The Response to Intervention (RtI) process is not embedded across the district. There were pockets of tiered instruction, but not in a unified approach.” “The Instructional Support Team (IST) process is not linked to Response to Intervention (RtI) across the district. There are no appropriate and consistent tiers of intervention across the district.”
 3. On page 28: “General education staff and paraprofessionals have not had ongoing training on how to effectively utilize the paraprofessional in the general education classroom.”
 4. On page 27: “The view of many interviewed staff was that there is not a clear mission for the district with respect to general and special education...and buildings are operating in silos. There is a feeling of disconnect in some instances between the special education leadership and building leaderships.”

Impact: The absence of a clear vision and research-based model for instruction has left an impact on every aspect of teaching and learning in the district. Teaching in observed classrooms did not reflect the Understanding by Design model:

- Teaching methods were not always well matched to students’ learning needs. Teachers often insufficiently addressed learning needs for students with disabilities and for English language learners. Instructional strategies were often one-size-fits-all rather than tailored to meet specific learning needs.
- Teaching methods were often idiosyncratic and usually teacher-centered. Instruction did not engage students in productive and collaborative learning activities. Observers did not see shared teaching routines to support and scaffold learning as students matriculated through the system.
- Students too often engaged in low leverage activities that did not have rigor and high expectations. Students at all levels did not often have opportunities to construct meaning and understanding. In the absence of clear objectives, diverse learning tasks, and higher order thinking implemented in a standards-based approach, teaching was not robust.

- Students too often were passive recipients of content and did not assume responsibility for their own learning.
- Instructional time met state requirements for time-on-learning but was not designed to meet students' time-to-learn needs. Some students, therefore, frequently did not experience equal access to the curriculum and were not given adequate support for learning.

Without explicit support and direction during a dedicated tier of targeted instruction guided by analysis of student achievement data, the needs of all students are not always met in the regular education setting. This sometimes results in increased referrals to special education for both academic and behavioral concerns.

Without a clear definition of what constitutes good instruction and the support needed to implement it in every classroom, every day, the district cannot ensure that students are college or career ready.

Assessment

11. The district is beginning to develop a more balanced and comprehensive assessment system using formative and summative assessments and other information to improve learning and teaching. However, assessments and assessment practices are uncoordinated and incomplete at all school levels.

- A.** A priority in the strategic plan is to develop and implement a balanced and comprehensive student assessment system with provisions for formative and summative assessments, data teams, data analysis and professional development of staff to develop assessments and use assessment data.
- B.** At the elementary schools, formative and summative assessments are used to measure student progress and success. However, as teachers have developed new curriculum units, their development of new assessments has fallen behind. Both curriculum units and assessments are incomplete. Consequently, assessments and assessment practices are uncoordinated and student progress and achievement cannot be consistently and accurately measured against learning standards through grade 5. Assessment results cannot fully inform instructional and curricular decision-making.
 1. Elementary ELA teachers use DRA2 as a formative assessment three times a year to monitor progress in literacy skills and reading comprehension and to form flexible reading groups. They also use frequent spelling inventories to accompany Words Their Way.
 2. ELA curriculum units were written last year with the intent of including new assessments; however, specialists noted that assessments are being written this year as units are taught.
 3. Teachers administer multiple writing prompts and have developed common writing rubrics. Yet, the district does not have a writing program or instructional model for writing, making the assessment of writing tenuous.

4. In mathematics, teachers continue to create common pre- and post-tests for grades 1-4 to accompany new curriculum units. Tests are evolving as units evolve and neither is complete.
 5. Depending on the school, specialists describe contrasting views of the use of formative mathematics assessments: one noted that there were more formative assessments in the new units while another noted there were not as many formative assessments as in past years.
 6. Specialists said that teachers did not know how to validate post-tests and that “no one is [was] checking that.”
 7. Principals said that assessments for new units still needed work and expressed concern about the quality of assessments as well as the assessment plan. They said: “We have pieces but it is not coordinated.”
- C.** There are impediments to good assessment practices at the elementary level.
1. Specialists and teachers described teachers as being “overwhelmed” by all the changes in curriculum and assessment.
 2. The elementary schools’ new standards-based report card being piloted this year reports on progress toward meeting learning standards in 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks using grade-level benchmark assessments --- these are the tests being created “in real time” as units are being taught. Many units are not yet aligned to the frameworks, as noted earlier. This indicates a less purposeful and reflective approach to student assessment.
 3. The Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) and Group Math Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE) have been administered over a 3-day period for the past 8 years. This year, problems with the scanner made results unavailable and therefore unusable for some teachers.
- D.** At the middle school, teacher leaders and teachers are developing benchmark assessments for new ELA and mathematics units aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks. The middle school has an incomplete assessment system and uncoordinated assessment practices.
1. A teacher leader noted that ELA unit assessments were being handed in as plans were being developed for the next month’s lessons. One interviewee spoke of being asked to write assessments without the knowledge to do so.
 2. In a focus group, middle school teachers said that data from new summative assessments had not yet been distributed.
 3. History teachers have developed common formative and summative assessments for each unit and have the freedom to choose how they use formative assessments and lessons.
 4. Although common writing prompts and rubrics are used at the middle school, writing assessment timeframes are uncoordinated and teachers have to wait for analyses if tests are given early or late.

5. Rather than administer grade-level tests, STEM teachers are designing mastery tests to measure student proficiency in learning standards. STEM tests measure both knowledge and skills and include group performance assessments with rubrics for each unit component.
- E.** At the high school, apart from the typical standardized tests, teacher leaders said that a “culture of commonality” has been created in terms of common assessments. The assessment system and practices at the high school are also uncoordinated.
1. Teachers said that multi-section courses now required common mid-term and final examinations. Common assessments are mainly used to assign grades with time is not allocated for teachers to look at data. Formative assessments to guide and pace instruction are not common.
 2. High school teachers described the difficulty of administering common assessments in English because teachers used different texts, adding that there was no clear idea of where students should be in ELA. A district leader noted progress in assessing English skills using different genres and readings.
 3. In both ELA and mathematics, teachers have begun to develop end-of-unit common assessments to accompany new curriculum units, aiming to complete them by the end of 2012-2013.
 4. Interviewees described an effort to include more open response questions in assessments for core subjects, because of students’ poor performance on MCAS open response questions.
 5. High school students described various assessment formats they experienced such as tests, videos, and research papers. They agreed that the quality of assessments they were required to complete depended on the teacher and that being reflective about their work was an uncommon expectation.
- F.** The high school continues to be “on warning” for the Standards for Accreditation on Assessment from the 2010 NEASC accreditation visit.
1. The NEASC Committee recognized the high school’s progress in using common assessments in revising curriculum and instructional and assessment practices. However, NEASC also cited the need to demonstrate progress in developing new schoolwide rubrics. A leader said that work on academic rubrics had not yet begun and a mini-course would be offered for a cross curricular team to design the rubrics.
 2. The NEASC Committee also required the school to address the use of formative and summative assessment results to change curriculum and instruction and to describe its progress in the Five-Year Progress Report due in March, 2015.
- G.** Even with some evidence of progress, teacher-leaders said that next steps related to assessments were not planned because of the “churn at the administrative level,” the need to “put out fires” and inadequate department time to complete and prepare for the implementation of new assessments.

- H. Clear and consistent evidence of frequent on-the-spot formative assessments was noted in 49 percent of elementary lessons, 42 percent of middle school lessons, and 19 percent of high school lessons.

Impact: For the most part, the assessment system is incomplete and practices are uncoordinated across schools. Without a complete and planned set of formative and summative assessments for each subject, the district does not have and cannot implement a balanced and comprehensive assessment system. Without such an assessment system, it is difficult to accurately measure student progress and success and inform decisions to revise curriculum and instruction.

12. The district has not yet developed an inquiry-based culture or data-driven systems and practices.

- A. Although a district data warehouse was identified in the strategic plan, it has not yet been established and data, therefore, is not yet easily accessible to all to guide decision-making. A district leader noted that all teachers should be mining for data and that only a few understood how to do this.
- B. The interim superintendent modeled good data use by identifying and analyzing data for improvement planning and budgeting. A review of documents by the team and interviews showed that budget presentation data included subgroup achievement data and demographics and student-teacher ratios used to target resources to close the achievement gap.
- C. The interim superintendent described several new initiatives to improve the district's use of data.
 1. At the time of the review the plan was that in the summer of 2013 the district would offer professional development for 40 teachers and leaders to learn how to use data and in 2013-2104 introduce data teams at each school.
 2. The interim superintendent also noted that formative assessments would eventually be used to measure progress and guide decision making, but staff needed training to develop the plans.
 3. The interim superintendent also said the district was scheduled to be trained on and pilot ESE's Edwin teaching and learning database.
- D. School committee members described how data had been included in budget presentations and helped set district priorities, but said that they still needed more data to be better informed.
 1. Members acknowledged in one interview that they were in the early stages of using data to measure progress and identify needs within individual schools and across the district.
 2. In another interview, school committee members said that they believed there was a shortage of data. They said that they saw MCAS results but did not see "a plethora of assessments." School committee members expressed the view that the district was not near or at the peak of effectively using data.
- E. A district leader noted that a lot of data was available, but data was not yet used to implement change even though common assessments were being put in place. A district leader also observed that there was so much

organizationally and operationally that got in the way and needed fixing, particularly with iPass and the district's technology, that disseminating and using data was difficult.

- F.** At the school level, the principals' leadership and engagement in curriculum, assessments, and student achievement data is inconsistent and varies by school.
 - 1. Interviewees said that principals played a lesser role because the last superintendent made the instructional leadership directors responsible for curriculum, instruction and assessment.
 - 2. Elementary teacher-leaders described differences in school principals' expectations for teachers on the analysis and use of data, how principals monitored assessment results, and how teachers used CPT. At one elementary school, a teacher-leader described the principal as attuned to curriculum and the new evaluation tool(s). At another, teachers noted that the principal looked at pre-assessments but then "left it up to them to work it out as long as [they] differentiated instruction."
 - 3. Although interviewees said that some assessment data was provided to principals, they noted that some looked at and used ELA benchmark data but not math data because there was no data collection in math. Others said that their principals never looked at the data.

- G.** At the elementary schools, although there is increased awareness of the need to generate and use data, apart from DRA2 data and math pre-tests, teachers do not routinely analyze data trends at grade-level meetings or at faculty meetings.
 - 1. When asked how teachers used assessment data to inform decisions, interviewees said that some teachers saw data as an imposition rather than a tool, adding "We don't know enough to ask questions" and noting that many "lack the numerical ability." When asked whether leaders or teachers engaged in more complex data analyses, an interviewee said that people did not know the questions to ask.
 - 2. Sample elementary school data reports submitted to the review team arrayed data mainly at the individual student level. As a result, teachers tended to focus on individual student data to form instructional groups and tailor instruction based on analyzing individual student data. Teachers rarely looked at broader patterns over time to better understand achievement trends, analyze the performance of subgroups, and then plan revisions to curriculum and instruction.
 - 3. The district's systems analyst has entered some data into the iPass system to generate reports; however, few, teachers or leaders have requested reports. It was stated that the iPass system was not as robust as needed and that the district capacity to store, analyze and disseminate data would be stronger next year when SharePoint was adopted and the summer professional development had taken place.
 - 4. Elementary teacher-leaders also said that the district did not have a data-driven-system of tiered support to guide and differentiate instruction for struggling students based on their learning needs.

5. A common point of reference was to refer to this year as “the year of the ‘what’,” meaning a district focus on developing curriculum and assessments and to next year as “the year of the ‘how’,” meaning a district focus on instruction and the use of assessment data.
- H.** At the middle school and high school, the use of data by teachers and leaders to improve both student and teacher performance was inconsistent.
1. A middle school teacher-leader gave data to teachers but noted, “The principal does not see it.”
 2. One middle school teacher-leader described her role as giving input on curriculum materials, curriculum development, and leading meetings. She taught a full load but data was not part of her responsibilities.
 3. Middle school teacher-leaders noted that “big picture” and subgroup data had been reviewed and that in the past there had been an item analysis of ELA data. The most frequent use of data analysis now was to develop additional strategies and tools to help students with open response questions.
 4. Interviewees noted that in the past principals and assistant principals did item analyses but now, with attention focused on the new teacher evaluation system that work had “fallen to the side.”
 5. Data reports and analyses were not presented at the middle school, according to teachers. For example, one teacher noted the need to go through MCAS results for the whole sixth grade to highlight her students’ item analyses results --- to see how they did on multiple choice questions. She had to make her own spreadsheet because a tailored report had either not been provided or properly requested.
 6. Another middle school teacher-leader noted that data conversations did not take place; the focus now was on designing unit assessments. This was supported by comments at a focus group where a middle school teacher said that they intended to discuss student data at department meetings, but they had not had a chance to generate the data from new assessments for the new curriculum.
- I.** At the high school, there had been little guidance on how to use data to guide decision-making for curriculum and instruction and as a result it was not generally done.
1. High school teachers have access to MCAS data and ESE’s Data Education Warehouse, but have not had any recent training on how to use data. However, the principal has engaged some departments in discussions of students’ strengths and weaknesses on MCAS tests and on improving results on open response questions.
 2. One high school teacher-leader described her role as “mostly helping students with course changes and interacting with parents about discipline for kids with problems,” rather than working with colleagues on improving curriculum and instruction using data.
 3. High school teacher-leaders said that they did not conduct walkthroughs to collect data on classroom practices that might need improvement or to establish baselines of good practice. They noted that they had hoped for training to do coaching, walkthroughs, and how to give feedback to teachers. They said that

training was not given and that they were not aware of any protocols. Teacher-leaders said that in 2011-2012, they had worked on walkthrough protocols, but with the “turmoil” last year, work on walkthroughs did not resume.

4. High school teachers noted that assessments were mainly used for grading and there was not much department time to use data to analyze teaching. High school teachers had 45 minutes of department meeting time each month. They said, “We want to get our curriculum down, so time doesn’t exist to do data analysis.”
 5. In one department, teachers used one half-day of released time to review MCAS data and the teacher-leader for that department noted that teachers sometimes talked informally at lunch about how students performed on certain MCAS questions.
 6. One teacher-leader at the high school was described as being very data-driven. In fact, he had prepared “a thorough MCAS data analysis for his department,” which led to increased emphasis and new strategies to improve students’ responses to open response questions.
- J. The district has not yet promoted a culture that is data-driven and based on inquiry. Data teams have not existed in the district although there were plans to add them in 2013-2014. A DSAC grant was to be used in summer 2013 to train 40 staff members, including teachers from all grade levels, all principals and assistant principals, and some central office staff, on the use of data and the role of data teams. The anticipation was that the district and each school would initiate a data team in the 2013-2014 academic year.
- K. District teachers responding to the TELL Mass Survey, a statewide survey of educators administered in spring 2012, provided their views using assessment data for improvement.
1. Fifty-seven percent of teachers at one elementary school and fifty-seven percent of high school teachers reported in an average week either never or less than one hour a week spending time preparing assessments (less than the state rate of fifty-eight percent).
 2. Fifty-six percent of teachers at one elementary school and sixty-four percent of high school teachers reported needing professional development in using student assessments (benchmark or formative)---more than the state rate of forty-eight percent.
 3. Thirty-five percent of teachers at one elementary school and sixty-two percent of high school teachers reported needing professional development about using data to drive instructional decision-making (more than the state rate of forty-five percent).
 4. Fifty percent of teachers at one elementary school and sixty-seven percent of high school teachers reported either never or less than once a month spending time with their mentors reviewing results of student assessments (less than the state rate of fifty-four percent).

Impact: Without more available data, more thorough and more sophisticated data analyses, and the knowledge and expertise on how to use data well, teachers and leaders do not have the information that they need to guide decision making. Without the time, expertise, and commitment to build leaders' and teachers' capacity to understand and use data well, the district cannot promote a more inquiry-based, data-driven culture. Hopefully, professional development in the summer of 2013 and data teams in 2013-2014 will constitute a new beginning.

Human Resources and Professional Development

13. Although the district's professional development program is funded well and provides adequate time and structures to support and promote teachers' professional growth, its programming is uncoordinated and unfocused, has not been planned collaboratively by leaders and teachers, and is not aligned well with district priorities, goals, and the strategic plan.

- A. The district's professional development (PD) program has adequate financial resources and provides sufficient levels and types of in-service, released time, and job-embedded learning opportunities and activities to support the professional needs of teachers.
 - 1. The district provides its staff two full PD days in late August, two additional full training days in the fall, and four Early Release Days throughout the rest of the school year.
 - 2. Additionally, an extensive array of teacher-developed and -taught mini courses are offered; in 2012-2013 these were offered in fall, winter, spring, and summer. These courses provide both PDPs and salary lane change benefits.
 - 3. Finally, all teachers are provided regularly scheduled school-based, job embedded opportunities to meet in grade level, department, and faculty meetings throughout the year.
 - 4. A review by the team of district documents showed the district's commitment of time and resources to support PD programming. Professional Development Day agendas, mini-course schedules, and specific language in the collective bargaining agreement (Article XXV) provide detailed evidence of the district's desire to build professional capacity and improve student achievement.
- B. In practice, PD programming is uncoordinated and generally unfocused. It does not have sustained commitment to specific educational practice(s), formal teacher input and collaboration in its planning and implementation, and a clear or direct alignment with core district goals, priorities, or the strategic plan.
 - 1. Article XXV of the 2006-2009 collective bargaining agreement between the school committee and the Marlborough Educators Association specified: "A professional development committee will be formed by the Marlborough Educators Association. The committee will consist of one representative from each school building. Representatives will be elected from each building and will be identified to the Committee each

spring. The committee will seek input from teachers regarding professional development workshops to be given during professional development days. This input will be forwarded to the Curriculum Directors.”

2. In December 2012, as part of a memorandum of understanding with the teachers’ association, the language in Article XXV of the collective bargaining agreement was changed to replace the last two sentences in the language above with: “The MEA Professional Development Committee will work collaboratively with district administrators regarding professional development workshops to be given during professional development days.”
 3. In interviews with teacher groups, district leaders, and school administrators, however, reviewers were told that this collaborative model had not functioned for years, that the staff was not involved in any meaningful way in the planning, development, or design of PD for the district, and that PD programming was currently directed by what was described as a small “*ad hoc*” committee of district leaders.
- C. Teachers voiced concerns that PD was both disjointed and disconnected and that they had not had input into the process or direction of PD planning and delivery.
1. Further, they, along with school administrators and program leaders, expressed frustration at what often appeared to be an absence of adequate detailed planning, preparation, and coordination and the seemingly “last minute” and *ad hoc* nature of some PD programming.
 2. Staff concerns about the overall quality of in-service PD was also strongly shown in the TELL Mass Survey, a statewide survey of educators administered in spring 2012. For example, of district teachers who responded to the survey, 10 percent of Marlborough teachers agreed that PD “deepened their content knowledge,” 14 percent agreed that programming enhanced their “ability to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student needs,” and 8 percent indicated that staff played a moderate or a large role in “determining the content of in service PD programs.”
- D. Finally, interviewees said that the scope of the district’s PD program was overly wide and insufficiently deep.
1. Staff repeatedly said that there did not appear to be any sustained commitment to well defined strategic goals or professional objectives and that there were simply too many topics presented over the course of a typical school year. This resulted in superficial and cursory understandings by staff, rather than focused and meaningful professional growth and systematically improved practice.
- E. A document review by the visiting team showed an absence of systematic alignment, linkage, and integration between PD programming and major goals and objectives in the district’s strategic plan and individual School Improvement Plans.
1. Although the district’s strategic priorities included: the development of a collegial PD model, the implementation of a comprehensive data system that uses data to inform curriculum and instruction, and providing teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to implement effective research-based instructional practices in their classrooms, reviewers found little evidence of formal or comprehensive

implementation of these initiatives across the district. Nor was it evident that they were being supported or advanced in any planned, systematic manner through PD programming.

Impact: The overly broad scope of the district's professional development program and disconnected system of programs and activities have prevented the district from adequately expanding and improving the staff's professional competencies and therefore from effectively advancing the district's educational goals or improving student academic achievement.

Student Support

14. The district has not provided teachers sufficient training to accommodate the diverse learning needs of all students. In observed classes, team members found little evidence of strategies for diverse learners.

- A.** The district has offered limited professional development in strategies that make learning more accessible to students with varying needs.
 - 1. Teachers and administrators cited the need for training on differentiated instruction. Several individuals referred to pockets of training, but a review by the team of professional development offerings showed an absence of opportunities for teachers to acquire needed strategies. Staff said that there had not been any formal training in nine years. Teachers' association members confirmed the absence of training.
 - 2. The district has offered limited category training to teachers. While staff said that some had received training for administering the MELA-O, several said that there had not been any ELL training for the last three years. Documentation of teacher certification and training provided by the district did not give numbers of teachers who had received category training.
 - 3. The district received a grant for ELL training for 14 teachers at Framingham State University. This graduate program, a no-cost five-year master's program in Teaching English as a Second Language, was to start in spring 2013, with another course taking place during the summer.
- B.** Teachers are not adequately using differentiated strategies and accommodations within the classroom.
 - 1. District leadership said that although student-centered instruction was desired, they expected that the review team would see mostly teacher-centered instruction in observed classes. Classroom observations by the review team confirmed this view. With some variation, the review team found little evidence of strategies that reached out to diverse learners and used good questioning techniques, discussion, and technology as well as connections to prior learning. In addition, while teachers communicated learning objectives in some observed classes, the review team did not observe use of specific ELL language objectives in most visited classes.

2. When staff members at all levels were asked about differentiated instruction, they either did not describe differentiation correctly or were unsure what it was. Some spoke about talking one-on-one to students. Others talked about differentiation affecting the validity of assessments or leading to a demand for extra time on a test that might not be legitimate.
3. Instructional support team (IST) members expressed the need for updating the school curriculum accommodation plan so that they could provide teachers with appropriate strategies to meet students' needs in regular education classrooms. Interviews and a review of documents showed that there was a district curriculum accommodation plan with a substantial list of strategies but that it has not been updated. Teachers and administrators said that regular education classes did not support different learners well.
4. At every level of instruction, interviews indicated a perception among staff that students with disabilities and English language learners receive necessary instruction and support in separate learning environments at least in part because teachers in regular education classrooms do not have adequate training to provide these students with appropriate support. Although some of this separate instruction may be required hours of English language instruction or other specialized services, the view was that frequently these high needs students are separated because they cannot receive their education in an inclusion or SEI classroom, though that would be appropriate.
 - a. Though the proportion of district students in full inclusion classes was similar to the statewide proportion (56.0 percent for the district compared to 57.9 percent statewide), in 2010-2011 15.1 percent of the district's students with disabilities received instruction and support in partial inclusion settings, compared with the state rate of 20.1 percent. The same year in Marlborough 22.8 percent of students with disabilities received instruction and support in substantially separate settings, compared with the state rate of 15.1 percent.

Impact: When teachers and administrators do not have the necessary training to accommodate the diverse learning needs and styles of students, students with disabilities may receive instruction and support in more restrictive settings than necessary, and students in general education classes are prevented from getting the supports they need to have full access to the curriculum. This means lost opportunities for learning.

15. The district does not have a systematic approach for the use of data and does not have consistent and adequate assessments to use to place students into programs and exit them when the learning goals have been achieved.

- A. Placement in programs such as special education and ELL is not clearly guided by specific criteria and is hampered by inadequate communication within the district.
 1. Staff members told the review team that some students were referred for special education services when their primary problem was one of limited English proficiency.
 2. Leaders and teachers alike said that entry and exit criteria for English language learners varied by school. There are also no written criteria for students who are recommended to take an Alternate MCAS.

- B. The district does not have sufficient data for the ISTs to measure student progress. Because there are few formative assessments, the ISTs must rely on anecdotal evidence from teachers to determine whether interventions are working.

Impact: In the absence of formative assessments to monitor student progress and the use of appropriate assessments to determine when students should enter and exit specialized services, the district is unable to monitor the success of its support services. In addition, it is likely that without appropriate assessments and without the capacity to evaluate its support services the district is not allocating resources efficiently.

16. The district has not developed an effective system of support that ensures that all students' academic and non-academic needs are met and that there is communication with families about school policy and student achievement.

- A. A review of documents and interviews showed that there were issues with staffing and materials in the ELL program, K-12, and student needs were not adequately communicated districtwide.
 - 1. The district, recognizing that elementary English language learners (ELLs) have not had adequate hours of ESL and support, approved funds for five new ELL positions for the 2013-2014 school year. Currently, ELL classes in one elementary school are held in the hall. Three ELL staff members share one set of materials. While the ELL department welcomes the needed new staff members, there is concern that the district has not sufficiently considered the issues involved for new staff members to be optimally effective.
 - 2. The district does not offer a SEI science option for ELLs at the high school beyond Biology and does not have a certified person to teach SEI History.
 - 3. The ELL department, along with the special education department, has had a limited voice in current curriculum planning. Staff said that their input was sought near the end of the process.
- B. Staff told the review team that the district tried to reach out to parents of English language learners (ELLs), who make up 13.2 percent of students, but expressed the opinion that not enough was done and parents of ELLs students did not routinely attend school meetings.
 - 1. Although the district website has translations of school handbooks and closing procedures for families of ELLs, the titles of the documents are in English.
 - 2. Staff said that although interpreter services provided by a variety of school staff were available during the school day, these services were not available for after-school meetings.

- C. Interviewees said that parents of students with disabilities did not understand the impact of taking an alternate assessment and that the conversation with parents needed to start earlier. It was determined whether children would take an alternate assessment early in their elementary years of schooling.
- D. Although activities are planned to help students transition from one level to the other within the district, transfer of documents is often late and there is no orientation day for grade 5 or grade 9. In addition, the district reconfigured grade levels two years ago without sufficient transition planning.
 - 1. Two years ago the TLC program that had been housed at the Jaworek School was split into K-2 and 3-4 classes, necessitating an additional room that was not available. Consequently, grades 3 and 4 were sent to the Kane School. The district moved these students without providing a transition from one school to the next.
 - 2. Multiple transition activities between the elementary, middle, and high schools are planned yearly. However, documents and interviews showed that the exchange of documentation between staff members for students with disabilities often took place as late as June. The district does not have an orientation day for grade 5 and 9 students before classes start, although this is under discussion for the high school. As a result, these students do not have the opportunity to meet new classmates and explore their schedule without the stress of the rest of the student body in attendance.
- E. The review team did not find evidence that the high school has systematically or comprehensively addressed the declining 9th to 10th grade promotion rate.
 - 1. According to ESE data, the high school's rate of promoting grade 9 students to grade 10 has declined from 97 percent in 2007 to a level of 85 to 87 percent between 2008 and 2011.
 - 2. The district has a policy of not promoting grade 9 students if they do not pass either ELA or math. Students with an average between 50 and 59 can make up the credits in summer school.
 - 3. The district has not had a summer school so students have had the option of attending summer school at Assabet Valley. This year for the first time, the district will use some of its Title I money to open a summer school. Other options include the Burncoat High School's summer school in Worcester or, for those who have the means, the Virtual High School.
 - 4. In some years the district has had to return grant money to the state because it has not used it all.
- F. Because school offices are not staffed during the summer months, incoming students are unable to enroll until school starts in September. Besides being an inconvenience for parents, this can delay scheduling for many students. And scheduling for ELLs and students with disabilities can be delayed for days, while these students are identified, tested, and placed into support classes.

- G.** The district has many advanced curricular offerings, but there are challenges to attracting some students to these programs and in providing timely information to parents.
1. The high school has extensive (21) AP courses and a STEM early college high school program, open to students who meet the criteria. The high school also offers Real World Design Challenge, a national engineering competition. However, staff expressed concern about the number of black and, especially, Latino students in upper-level classes. According to 2011-2012 ESE data for AP participation, African American/black students made up 2.7 percent of the district's enrollment and Hispanic/Latino students, 33.3 percent, while the number of black AP test takers in 2012 was 5 (2.3 percent of 218 test takers) and the number of Hispanic test takers was 31 (14.2 percent of the 218 test takers). Numbers were not available.
 2. The STEM program may eventually expand to the elementary level and become a K-12 program. It has benefited from grant funds for technology and curriculum and has given the high school a talking point with parents considering the nearby math and science charter high school. Although STEM seeks a diverse representation, staff members noted that there have been impediments to meeting their goal. For example, many middle school students did not select the program because at first the information was not translated, and ELL staff members are not asked to assist in recruiting students. Other teachers said that students whose parents took the initiative found a spot in the program. STEM application materials are now translated into Portuguese and Spanish. ELL staff members do reach out individually to parents of English language learners, and time is given for students to complete STEM applications with guidance counselors if parents are unable to assist.
- H.** The district has found many partners for grants but has few partnerships with community organizations to share services, information, and support.
1. The district has benefited from goods and services from several corporate partners but and planned to train teachers in ELL and students in writing at Framingham State University. However, it does not have partnerships with area social and health services. Staff described connections, strongest at the elementary level, with such groups as the Federation for Children with Special Needs, South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), Behavioral Health, and the Department of Children and Families, but said that the district did not have a path for these organizations to work with the schools to lend expertise or assist with social, emotional, and health issues.

Impact: The absence of an effective system of supports has hampered the ability of the district to provide for students' social, emotional, and physical well-being and improve their achievement.

Finance and Asset Management

17. Financial management procedures and the oversight of cash receipts and student activity funds are not clearly documented.

- A.** Though review team members observed well-documented approvals for purchases of supplies and equipment, bidding and contracts, and personnel appointments and payrolls, written procedures for handling cash income from gate receipts, student activities, and other sources were not available to reviewers.
 - 1. The employee handbook did not contain guidelines for ordering materials and supplies, for handling cash revenues, or for overseeing funds for student activities or field trips.
 - 2. Administrators said that financial management procedures were not documented, but that the district did follow state regulations.
- B.** Student activity accounts have not recently been audited, as required by law. Administrators said that they planned to have them audited along with the city audit in 2013.

Impact: Without documentation of procedures for ordering materials and handling receipts, roles and responsibilities for those actions are not clear and new employees do not have necessary guidance to do their jobs. Without documentation of procedures along with audits of accounts involving cash receipts, such as athletic gate receipts and student activity funds, the district has an increased risk of fraud, loss, and inaccurate financial records.

Marlborough Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

- 1. The new superintendent should develop a strategy and take actions to support, develop, and retain an effective, stable, and representatively diverse district and school leadership team.**
 - A. The superintendent should review and clarify the responsibilities of all members of the leadership team to ensure that the team's work is structured so that it can implement the district's programs and achieve its goals effectively and efficiently.
 1. The team should include an administrator (with the appropriate certification) to serve as director of English language learners, providing oversight, advocacy, and leadership at the district level (see recommendation below under Student Support).
 - B. The superintendent should develop a culture of distributed leadership in which each administrator, while responsible for a specific area, is also jointly responsible for collaborating with the superintendent and with the rest of the superintendent's staff for the success of the district and all its students.
 - C. The superintendent should prioritize effective implementation of the educator evaluation system, in order to ensure that district- and school-level leaders set appropriate goals and receive useful feedback.
 - D. In order to attract, develop and retain an effective and representatively diverse district and school leadership team, the superintendent should review all compensation and benefits packages and prioritize reallocating funds so that the district is competitive with similar regional and local communities.

Benefits: Implementation of this recommendation could result in providing greater clarity and direction regarding roles and responsibilities, in reducing or eliminating the frequent change of district and school level leaders, and in the development of an ongoing, well organized, established, and effective administrative team.

- 2. The new superintendent should immediately promote a culture of transparency, accountability, confidence, collaboration, and joint responsibility for student learning within the district and broader community by developing a District Improvement Plan (DIP) based on the goals adopted by the school committee in *Believe 2016*.**
 - A. The DIP should be developed and refined through a collaborative process that includes input from the school committee, the district leadership team, and other relevant stakeholders.
 1. The DIP should be revised and updated on a regular basis.

- B.** Each school and program leader should immediately and annually develop a school or program improvement plan aligned to the DIP and guided by input from staff, families, and partners about school goals, initiatives, policies, and programs.
- C.** Both the district and school improvement plans must include a clear vision and data-based determination of priorities; designated administrators and staff with primary responsibility for planning, implementing, and continuously assessing specific strategies; specific, measurable, rigorous, and time-bound student performance goals based on analysis of current and relevant performance data; and the assessment data and other criteria that will be used to measure progress and success.
- D.** District and school leaders should regularly report to the school committee, staff, families, and community on the progress in meeting the plans' goals, particularly regarding student achievement.
 - 1. *District Accelerated Improvement Planning-Guiding Principle for Effective Benchmarks* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level4/AIP-GuidingPrinciples.pdf>) provides information about different types of benchmarks to guide and measure district improvement efforts; this could be a useful tool as the district develops and refines the outcomes in the DIP and SIPs.

Benefits: Implementation of this recommendation will communicate a clear vision and ensure that district and school leaders focus their work and their staff's work on district and school goals about student performance and high quality instruction. It will provide the school committee, district and schools with a systematic method to target actions to achieve goals and measure success, especially with respect to student achievement. It will help ensure alignment between district and school goals and actions. It will provide a method for the schools and district to keep the community informed of progress in meeting goals, and will allow the new superintendent to build on the culture of transparency and communication between the school district, the school committee, and the community that the interim superintendent began to develop.

Curriculum and Instruction

- 3. Leaders and teachers should collaborate to define, communicate, and implement a research-based high quality instructional model.**
 - A.** District- and school-level instructional leaders should identify a clear research-based instructional model of what constitutes excellent teaching in Marlborough and ensure that the model is communicated, agreed upon, and supported in all schools.
 - 1. The model should address the need for rigor, higher-order thinking, the use of formative assessment data, strategies that address diverse learners, and the role of technology as a tool to support learning.
 - B.** The district and each school should plan to develop teachers' capacity to implement the district's instructional model through appropriate professional development and monitoring.

1. Highly focused, intentional, time-bound instructional walkthroughs should become a normative practice in the district as a way to continue to refine the district's definition of high-quality instruction, to identify strengths and areas for growth in overall instructional practice, to provide schoolwide feedback, and to inform the district's professional development plan.
 - a. A resource that might be useful is *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/04.0.pdf>), a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning. This resource is part of DESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/>).
 - b. Two resources, *An Effective Standards-Based Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/scitechclass_char.pdf) and *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/mathclass_char.doc) are references for science and technology/engineering and mathematics instructional planning and observation that are intended to support formal study, dialogue and discussion, classroom observations, and other professional development activities.
- C. The district should clarify roles and responsibilities with regard to instruction.
 1. The district should clearly communicate expectations for principals to ensure that their main function is instructional leadership.
 2. In order for teacher leaders to be successful, their roles must be clarified and communicated.
 - a. High school department chairs should be given clear guidance regarding their roles as coaches, and this information should be widely communicated so that all staff members have a shared understanding of this role.
- D. The district and each school should support and continue to improve instruction through opportunities for collaborative reflection and planning among grade-level and subject-level colleagues.
 1. Each school should provide adequate, regular meeting time for grade-level and subject-level teams to collaborate to review the curriculum, plan teaching, and analyze student work.
 2. District and school leaders should be explicit about expectations for how collaborative time is used for instructional and curricular improvement, with the overall aim of improving student achievement.
 3. District and school leaders should also reconsider how time for learning is allocated at all school levels and ensure that students have adequate opportunities to learn based on age-appropriate, curricular, and instructional needs.
 - a. *More Time for Learning: Increased Learning Time Strategies to Catalyze School Turnaround* (<http://www.mass2020.org/node/215>) is a set of detailed presentations and resources, including ideas

about how to assess the way a school uses time and how to maximize the time available within a school day.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will provide more consistent, effective instruction to its students. A shared understanding of effective instruction will also increase clarity regarding instructional expectations and will provide a framework for useful feedback to teachers. Learning walkthroughs and increased opportunities for collaborative work will provide embedded professional development and will enable teachers to learn from each other. Addressing scheduling challenges will allow the district to maximize instructional time.

4. The district should prioritize curriculum development and alignment in order to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality, comprehensive curriculum that is horizontally and vertically aligned and reflects the current Massachusetts frameworks.

- A. If needed, the district should continue to collaborate with external curriculum experts or other expert personnel through DSAC and ESE to support curriculum development.
1. Other resources to inform and support curriculum development include:
 - *How to Develop Curriculum Maps to Support a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum that Guides Instruction* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf>), a presentation about curriculum mapping, with definitions, examples, and other information
 - Massachusetts Model Curriculum Units (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/sample.html>), a set of units based on current Massachusetts frameworks, which incorporate that Common Core State Standards
 - Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Model Content Frameworks (<http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-model-content-frameworks>), which serve as a bridge between the Common Core State Standards and the PARCC assessments
- B. The district should integrate ELL standards and special education guidelines in curriculum maps to ensure access for all learners.
1. WIDA (*World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment*; <http://wida.us/index.aspx>) is an important resource for this work. The WIDA English Language Development Standards can be found at <http://wida.us/get.aspx?id=540>.
 2. The *Resource Guides to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html>) identify “entry points” that provide students with disabilities access to the same standards as non-disabled students.
- C. The district should form relationships with districts with similar student populations that have successfully aligned ELA and math curriculum and have models of excellence in curriculum and classroom practice. The

district may also want to consider joining a nearby educational collaborative to have more frequent access and exposure to best practices.

- D. The district should establish a curriculum review cycle to ensure that curriculum is continually updated, improved, and informed by current data.
 - 1. ESE's *Quality Review Rubrics* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/rubrics/>) can support the analysis and improvement of curriculum units.

Benefits: As a result of this work, the district will meet its responsibility to guarantee high quality, viable curriculum for all learners. A comprehensive, high-quality curriculum that is continually updated can help district leaders, ILDs, principals, and teacher leaders focus their efforts more purposefully. The intentional inclusion of WIDA standards and special education guidelines communicates that all teachers are responsible for all learners.

Assessment

5. The district should establish a more holistic approach to developing and implementing a balanced and comprehensive student assessment system, including multiple assessment formats and providing support for teachers in the design of student assessments.

- A. The district should ensure that the design, development and implementation of formative and summative assessments and other assessment formats are more closely linked to and embedded in the development of curriculum units and lesson plans.
 - 1. By integrating these activities, teachers can better design appropriate assessments, use multiple assessment formats, and identify appropriate teaching strategies and resources. They can also identify assessment data that will serve as key indicators of students' mastery of learning standards.
 - 2. When designing assessments for new curriculum units, teachers should also include assessments to meet the needs of diverse learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities. ELL and special education specialists should participate as full partners in developing and analyzing assessments and assessment data.
 - 3. The district should build on the growing "culture of commonality" among teachers with regard to assessments by providing sufficient time, professional development, and support to ensure that teachers are able to design effective assessments and use their results.

Benefits: By integrating assessment design more closely with curriculum and instruction, the district can strengthen teaching and learning. Deliberate attention to specific formative, summative, and other assessment formats in curriculum documents can provide a way for teachers to monitor how well students understand what is being taught

and what changes are needed to improve student achievement. Alignment of assessments with curriculum can also be a way to communicate to students what they have learned and what they need to work on.

6. The district should develop a more systematic and collaborative process to collect, analyze, discuss, and use data to inform decision-making. To support that effort, the district should strengthen leaders' and teachers' capacity to lead data-driven improvement.

A. The district should proceed with plans to provide professional development on data use and establish a district data team and data teams at each school. The district should ensure that new data team members develop the necessary knowledge and skills to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate data and lead data-rich small group discussions at grade-level and subject meetings in schools. The district data team should be charged with analyzing the overall progress of the district and collaborating with school-based data teams to identify action steps for continuous improvement.

1. With professional development about data use planned for summer 2013, data team members can learn to identify appropriate data, and to understand how it can be organized, analyzed, disseminated, and used to guide improvements for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
2. Data team members should learn to use data to better understand students' diverse learning styles and challenges, and to collaborate with grade-, subject-, and course-level teacher teams to redesign instructional strategies and revise or fine-tune curriculum to better meet student needs.
 - a. ESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apu/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf>) is a resource designed to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.
3. The district should find ways to establish more frequent and structured common planning time at all schools to ensure that data team representatives from each school have regular opportunities to meet with teacher teams.
4. The district should ensure that the infrastructure is in place to ensure that data can be collected efficiently and that user-friendly data reports are easily accessible for teachers and administrators.

Benefits to the Marlborough Public Schools for implementing this recommendation include the more effective collection and use of assessment data and other information to develop and strengthen curriculum and instruction, with the goal of improving student achievement. With strengthened leadership from data teams, the district and each of its schools can use data in a more systematic way, thereby promoting a high-performing culture of inquiry and data-based decision-making.

Human Resources and Professional Development

7. The district should focus its professional development program significantly so that it provides sustained and cohesive structures, supports, and experiences that directly support well-defined improvement goals.

- A. Professional development (PD) programs and services should be built around core district priorities and informed by systematically identified staff needs, student achievement data, and assessments of instructional programs and practices.
- B. Although clearly focused around core district goals, PD programs should be flexible and differentiated enough to allow for staff's varied needs, responsibilities, expertise, and experiences.
- C. Embedded professional development, such as structured department and grade level common planning time, should be optimized as a means of contributing to teachers' growth and making continuous improvements to instructional practice and the curriculum.
- D. The district should support teacher leadership and growth by creating opportunities for exemplary staff to be assigned responsibility for instructional leadership and peer mentoring. For example, Marlborough's successful efforts to train teachers to serve as school-based coaches and facilitators for the district's new evaluation program should be replicated to support the 2013-2014 data initiative.
- E. Along with developing the high-quality district-determined assessments required to accurately measure student growth and achievement and educator effectiveness, the district should continue to provide both teachers and administrators with the ongoing training required to properly support the successful implementation of Marlborough's new educator evaluation system.

Benefits: By concentrating programs and resources on fewer, more clearly defined and sustained professional development (PD) initiatives carefully linked to core strategic goals, the district will create an integrated and efficient PD system that advances the district's mission and allows for more in-depth learning for teachers.

8. The district should make professional development (PD) a truly collaborative endeavor by formally involving teachers in the planning, oversight, and implementation of PD activities, programs, and opportunities in order to enhance professional growth and practice and better meet district needs.

- A. A joint teacher-administrator committee should be created to oversee the design and delivery of PD programs and services in the district. Involving staff directly in planning, coordinating, and evaluating PD experiences enhances teachers' sense of ownership, support, and active participation in the district's plan(s) for attaining high levels of achievement for all students.

Benefits: The active involvement of teachers in professional development planning will help to ensure that the district provides opportunities for growth that are based on teachers' needs. It will also help to identify and communicate the rationale for the district's professional development offerings.

Student Support

9. The district should develop the abilities of all staff members to effectively teach students with different needs in the mainstream classroom when appropriate, to monitor and support their progress, and to follow consistent, pre-determined practices to assess their need for additional supports.

- A.** The district should build teachers' capacity to address students' academic needs in the mainstream classroom.
 - 1. As soon as possible, the district should embark on a plan to educate faculty and principals about strategies for differentiating instruction in the regular classroom.
 - a. The district should consider using an outside provider for training and should ensure through embedded professional development (for example, through ongoing coaching and classroom visits) that the training is continuous and that it has an impact on classrooms.
 - b. The district should communicate its focus on differentiated instruction in a way that allows teachers to align their professional practice goals with this approach. Principals should comment on these practices after classroom visits and should be held accountable for developing these capabilities in their staff.
 - c. The district should provide training and support to help mainstream teachers and special education teachers to co-teach effectively in order to meet the needs of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.
 - d. The district should reconsider how paraprofessional staff is used in the regular classroom. Paraprofessionals should be trained to provide more effective instruction and support to students with diverse learning needs.
 - 2. The district's curriculum accommodation plan should be updated.
- B.** The district should train faculty to use data that is available to them as well as data from new formative assessments to accurately identify the needs of students who have not yet achieved proficiency.
 - 1. The district should clearly identify the assessments and criteria that will be used when considering student placements into tiered interventions and into ELL and special education programs. This information should be clearly communicated to all faculty members and should be consistently referenced.
 - 2. IST teams should use data systematically to make suggestions for ways to support students' learning and to determine whether students are making progress. Recommendations to move students to the next tier of intervention should be based on comprehensive, reliable data.
- C.** The district should analyze data from the high school to identify ways to better meet students' needs.

1. It is important to identify the root causes of the declining rate of promotion from grade 9 to grade 10. Factors to consider include instructional effectiveness and the availability of student supports, such as options for credit recovery, including access to summer school.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include more student-centered classrooms that address the varied learning styles and needs of students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. Staff will have a shared understanding of the specific criteria that should be used to identify appropriate supports for students. The proportion of students educated in the least restrictive environment could increase, with positive results for students. The strategic analysis of data can help the district to identify ways to better support students, including addressing the causes of retention at the secondary level.

10. The district should provide district-level leadership and oversight for its English language learners (ELLs) to ensure that their needs are identified and addressed.

- A. The district, through its director of English language learners (see recommendation under Leadership and Governance above) should establish consistency across schools as to entry and exit criteria, hours, and manner of instruction and curriculum. This will require ongoing communication among district and school leaders for the purpose of monitoring and providing for special services.
- B. The ELL program must be carefully planned, including identifying the facilities and other resources necessary to provide high-quality services.
 1. *An Analysis of District Systems and Practices Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners* (overview: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/0511/item8.html>; direct link: http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/docs/0511/item8_analysis.pdf) is a resource that provides the results of a study identifying four factors supporting English language learner (ELL) achievement.
- C. The specific roles of the new ELL staff members beginning employment in the district in 2013-2014 should be clearly delineated and communicated. The district should identify specific structures for supporting all ELL staff.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will provide ELL students with a more effective, well-planned program, which can lead to increased student achievement and help to ensure that the district provides *all* students with a high-quality education.

11. As part of its updated strategic plan, the district should develop a vision of inclusion and opportunity in order to unify the school, parents, and community in the education of all its children.

- A. The district should reach out to families of English language learners (ELLs). It may wish to establish a parent council specifically made up of parents of ELLs, involve local organizations frequented by these families such as

churches, and consider social and informational meetings in order to engage families in their children's education.

1. The district may want to consult *Massachusetts Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>), which contains guidelines and research-based practices for the engagement of families, schools, and communities in supporting equitable learning opportunities for students.
 2. Other useful resources related to family engagement can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/titlei/parta/family-engagement/?section=FE>.
- B.** The district should open and staff an office in one of its buildings during the summer so that families moving into the district can enroll their children in the schools in time for assessment and placement before the start of school, avoiding the loss of learning time.
- C.** The district should demonstrate that it has high expectations for all its students and provide access to challenging curriculum options.
1. Students with severe disabilities should not too quickly be put into a track leading to the Alternate MCAS assessment. This is a decision that should evolve over time and parents should be notified of the ramifications of this choice.
 2. The district should ensure that materials about academic programs and extracurricular activities are translated into the languages spoken by the district's students and their families and that there is sufficient outreach to ELLs and their families about different programs.
 3. The district should take steps to ensure that enrollment in advanced placement courses and other academically challenging opportunities is more representative of the district's diversity. Participation in these opportunities should not depend on the initiative of parents, but on the district's systems for identifying and cultivating students' academic abilities.
- D.** The district should look to widen the role of current community partnerships. Businesses and community services already have connections with the schools as donors or in providing referrals for social, emotional, or behavioral services. Relationships with these contacts can be expanded, providing access to expertise, internships, technology support, and other professional services to benefit schools.
1. The district may want to consult *Addressing Students' Social, Emotional, and Health Needs: Guidance and Promising Practices* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/StudentsNeeds.pdf>), which is intended to assist district, school, and community leaders in planning a system of supports for students.

Benefits: Students and their families will find that the Marlborough schools have provided for the learning needs of all students. As the district actively engages all stakeholders, they will become more invested in the schools and will help the district achieve its vision.

Finance and Asset Management

12. As the district prepares and revises budgets it should prioritize needs along with current programs in order to assign budget increases and reallocate resources in ways that will improve instruction and student achievement.

- A.** Needs include resources to improve instruction and achievement for all students, to narrow the achievement gap for English language learners and students with disabilities, and to use data more thoroughly to guide instruction.
1. These needs have been identified as primary goals in the strategic plan for the district and are emphasized in the body of this report. They drove decisions in the proposed fiscal year 2014 budget provided to the review team.
 2. Reorganizing leadership, clarifying leadership roles, and revising responsibilities for instructional services are examples of possible reallocations of resources to achieve these important goals.
 3. For assistance in strategies for reallocation within school budgets see the Rennie Center's document *Smart School Budgeting* at <http://www.renniecenter.org/research/SmartSchoolBudgeting.pdf>.

Benefits from this recommendation would include better support for improved achievement for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, and more effective use of human and financial resources.

13. Financial management procedures and practices should be documented. Audits of student activity accounts should be done annually.

- A.** Procedures for handling cash receipts in particular should be documented in order to reduce the risk of mishandling funds and to prevent loss. Cash receipts are especially vulnerable to misuse, and the use of two or more persons in their collection and counting in cafeterias and at school events is recommended. Audits of accounts such as student activity funds should be completed regularly as required by law.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will clarify financial management procedures, help prevent the misuse of funds, help orient new staff members to the district's financial practices and procedures, and help keep the district's practices in line with legal requirements and good financial practice.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from April 8-11, 2013, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Richard Silverman, Ed. D., Leadership and Governance
2. Marilynne Smith-Quarcoo, Ph. D., Curriculum and Instruction
3. Linda L. Greysen, Ed. D., Assessment and review team coordinator
4. Frank Sambuceti, Ed. D., Human Resources and Professional Development
5. Kathy Lopez Natale, Ph. D., Student Support
6. George Gearhart, Ed. D., Finance and Asset Management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: interim business manager and clerk.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: mayor/chairman, vice-chairman, and four members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: president, chair and three members of the negotiation team, grievance representative, parliamentarian, political action liaison, and seven building representatives.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: interim superintendent, two instructional leadership directors, interim business manager, special education director, and communications liaison.

The team visited the following schools: Jaworek Elementary School (K-4), Kane Elementary School (K-4), Richer Elementary School (K-4), Whitcomb Middle School (grades 5-8), and Marlborough High School (grades 9-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with principals and focus group[s] with 12 elementary school teachers, 8 middle school teachers, and 5 high school teachers.

The team observed 78 classes in the district: 21 at the high school, 19 at the middle school, and 38 at the three elementary schools.

The review team analyzed multiple data sets and reviewed numerous documents before and during the site visit, including:

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
- Data on the district’s staffing and finances.
- Published educational reports on the district by ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district’s end-of-year financial reports.
- All completed program and administrator evaluations, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 04/08/2013	Tuesday 04/09/2013	Wednesday 04/10/2013	Thursday 04/11/2013
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews and review of personnel files; interview with teachers’ association leaders and representatives.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; interview with city personnel; teacher focus groups; student focus group; school committee focus groups; and visits to Marlborough High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with district and school leaders; interview with teachers’ association leaders and representatives; parent focus group; visits to Jaworek Elementary School, Kane Elementary School, and Whitcomb Middle School for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Kane Elementary School, Richer Elementary School, and Marlborough High School for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Expenditures, Performance

**Table B1a: Marlborough Public Schools
2012-2013 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
Asian	164	3.6%	56,517	5.9%
Afr. Amer./Black	115	2.5%	81,806	8.6%
Hispanic/ Latino	1,562	34.0%	156,976	16.4%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp. /Lat.	118	2.6%	26,012	2.7%
Nat. Haw. Or Pacif. Isl.	2	0.0%	1,020	0.1%
White	2,627	57.2%	630,150	66.0%
All students	4,589	100.0%	954,773	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2012

**Table B1b: Marlborough Public Schools
2012-2013 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

Student Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	914	35.3%	19.6%	163,921	35.5%	17.0%
Low income	1,982	76.6%	43.2%	353,420	76.5%	37.0%
ELL and Former ELL	860	33.3%	18.7%	95,865	20.7%	10.0%
All high needs students	2,586	--	55.5%	462,272	--	47.9%

Notes: As of October 1, 2012. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 4,663; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 965,602.

**Table B2: Marlborough Public Schools
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2011–2013**

	FY11		FY12		FY13
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated
Expenditures					
From local appropriations for schools					
By school committee	48,248,997	47,436,716	49,514,206	49,390,887	50,852,532
By municipality	19,939,529	19,618,596	20,059,912	19,761,953	20,360,117
Total from local appropriations	68,188,526	67,055,312	69,574,118	69,152,840	71,212,649
From revolving funds and grants	---	8,481,374	---	7,801,705	---
Total expenditures	---	75,536,686	---	76,954,545	---
Chapter 70 aid to education program					
Chapter 70 state aid*	---	13,061,334	---	14,405,503	17,545,221
Required local contribution	---	33,104,620	---	33,125,854	33,652,670
Required net school spending**	---	46,165,954	---	47,531,357	51,197,891
Actual net school spending	---	57,917,240	---	60,000,672	62,708,894
Over/under required (\$)	---	11,751,286	---	12,469,315	11,511,003
Over/under required (%)	---	25.5	---	26.2	22.5

*Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations.

**Required net school spending is the total of Chapter 70 aid and required local contribution. Net school spending includes only expenditures from local appropriations, not revolving funds and grants. It includes expenditures for most administration, instruction, operations, and out-of-district tuitions. It does not include transportation, school lunches, debt, or capital.

Sources: FY11, FY12 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website

Data retrieved March 6, 2013 and (for c. 70) April 17, 2013

**Table B3: Marlborough Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010–2012**

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012
Administration	\$363	\$434	\$452
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$966	\$868	\$685
Teachers	\$4,796	\$4,991	\$5,262
Other teaching services	\$1,475	\$1,495	\$1,406
Professional development	\$275	\$246	\$424
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$342	\$239	\$116
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$398	\$389	\$409
Pupil services	\$1,101	\$1,214	\$1,276
Operations and maintenance	\$1,166	\$1,186	\$1,074
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$2,053	\$2,173	\$2,201
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$12,935	\$13,236	\$13,303

Sources: Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website

Data retrieved April 17, 2013

**Table B4a: Marlborough Public Schools
English Language Arts Performance, 2009-2012**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
3	CPI	358	84.2	87.3	83.9	82.3	-1.9	-1.6	--	Very Low
	P+	358	61%	65%	60%	55%	-6	-5	--	--
4	CPI	378	75.8	78.1	78.4	78.2	2.4	-0.2	--	Low
	P+	378	44%	50%	50%	53%	9	3		--
	SGP	351	41.0	39.0	40.0	43.0	2.0	3.0		Moderate
5	CPI	407	84.2	82.1	84.3	81.9	-2.3	-2.4	--	Low
	P+	407	61%	59%	65%	61%	0	-4		--
	SGP	383	52.0	50.0	48.0	48.0	-4.0	0.0		Moderate
6	CPI	349	88.9	85.0	84.6	82.1	-6.8	-2.5	Yes	Very Low
	P+	349	70%	69%	65%	64%	-6	-1		--
	SGP	330	65.0	59.5	54.0	45.5	-19.5	-8.5		Moderate
7	CPI	320	88.5	87.8	88.8	87.3	-1.2	-1.5	--	Low
	P+	320	67%	69%	71%	67%	0	-4		--
	SGP	303	49.0	42.0	49.0	48.0	-1.0	-1.0		Moderate
8	CPI	301	88.0	86.8	90.1	89.4	1.4	-0.7	--	Very Low
	P+	301	72%	69%	77%	77%	5	0		--
	SGP	280	38.0	38.0	43.0	52.0	14.0	9.0		Moderate
10	CPI	256	92.1	93.0	90.2	93.4	1.3	3.2	--	Very Low
	P+	256	82%	79%	77%	82%	0	5		--
	SGP	215	58.0	54.0	48.0	39.0	-19.0	-9.0		Low
All	CPI	2,369	85.6	85.3	85.4	84.3	-1.3	-1.1	--	Very Low
	P+	2,369	64%	65%	66%	64%	0	-2		--
	SGP	1,862	50.0	47.0	47.0	47.0	-3.0	0.0		Moderate

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time. The "2012 Performance" column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts' CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above. The "2012 Performance" column also gives the level of the median SGP. Median SGPs from 0 to 20 are considered to be Very Low; from 21 to 40, Low; from 41 to 60, Moderate; from 61 to 80, High; and from 81 to 100, Very High.

**Table B4b: Marlborough Public Schools
Mathematics Performance, 2009-2012**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
3	CPI	359	81.5	83.2	86.4	73.1	-8.4	-13.3	Yes	Very Low
	P+	359	64%	64%	70%	46%	-18	-24		--
4	CPI	376	78.9	78.0	76.8	77.6	-1.3	0.8	--	Low
	P+	376	48%	47%	46%	48%	0	2		--
	SGP	352	49.0	43.0	46.0	40.5	-8.5	-5.5		Low
5	CPI	407	80.7	76.1	79.8	73.8	-6.9	-6.0	Yes	Low
	P+	407	62%	50%	61%	51%	-11	-10		--
	SGP	382	59.5	51.0	51.0	47.5	-12.0	-3.5		Moderate
6	CPI	348	78.8	71.8	74.5	70.3	-8.5	-4.2	Yes	Very Low
	P+	348	54%	47%	49%	46%	-8	-3		--
	SGP	330	40.0	26.0	33.0	24.0	-16.0	-9.0		Low
7	CPI	322	76.0	73.8	63.5	68.7	-7.3	5.2	--	Very Low
	P+	322	49%	45%	34%	39%	-10	5		--
	SGP	305	48.0	35.0	32.0	40.0	-8.0	8.0		Low
8	CPI	303	73.6	75.3	73.6	71.5	-2.1	-2.1	--	Low
	P+	303	48%	52%	49%	45%	-3	-4		--
	SGP	281	51.0	53.0	53.0	64.0	13.0	11.0		High
10	CPI	251	88.8	89.8	87.8	90.4	1.6	2.6	--	Low
	P+	251	74%	73%	75%	78%	4	3		--
	SGP	210	48.5	50.0	36.0	35.0	-13.5	-1.0		Low
All	CPI	2,366	79.3	78.0	77.8	74.6	-4.7	-3.2	Yes	Very Low
	P+	2,366	56%	53%	55%	49%	-7	-6		--
	SGP	1,860	50.0	44.0	42.0	41.0	-9.0	-1.0		Moderate

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time. The “2012 Performance” column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts’ CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above. The “2012 Performance” column also gives the level of the median SGP. Median SGPs from 0 to 20 are considered to be Very Low; from 21 to 40, Low; from 41 to 60, Moderate; from 61 to 80, High; and from 81 to 100, Very High.

**Table B4c: Marlborough Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2009-2012**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
5	CPI	406	74.1	77.5	72.9	80.7	6.6	7.8	Yes	Low
	P+	406	41%	48%	43%	54%	13	11		--
8	CPI	303	62.7	65.3	64.8	65.3	2.6	0.5	--	Very Low
	P+	303	28%	29%	29%	31%	3	2		--
10	CPI	247	87.1	80.3	81.7	84.5	-2.6	2.8	--	Low
	P+	247	68%	57%	56%	63%	-5	7		--
All	CPI	956	72.7	73.8	72.8	76.8	4.1	4.0	Yes	Low
	P+	956	42%	43%	42%	49%	7	7		--

Notes: P+ = percent *Proficient* or *Advanced*. Students participate in STE MCAS tests in grades 5, 8, and 10 only. Median SGPs are not calculated for STE. The “2012 Performance” column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts’ CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above.

**Table B5a: Marlborough Public Schools
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	1,264	76.2	76.2	76.2	74.4	-1.8	-1.8
		P+	1,264	44%	46%	47%	45%	1	-2
		SGP	948	42.0	42.0	43.0	43.0	1	0
	State	CPI	235,216	75.3	76.1	77.0	76.5	1.2	-0.5
		P+	235,216	44%	45%	48%	48%	4	0
		SGP	177,719	45.0	45.0	46.0	46.0	1	0
Low income	District	CPI	1,014	76.7	76.4	76.6	75.3	-1.4	-1.3
		P+	1,014	47%	48%	49%	48%	1	-1
		SGP	778	44.0	42.0	43.0	45.0	1.0	2.0
	State	CPI	180,261	75.5	76.5	77.1	76.7	1.2	-0.4
		P+	180,261	45%	47%	49%	50%	5	1
		SGP	137,185	45.0	46.0	46.0	45.0	0.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	495	68.2	66.6	63.7	59.5	-8.7	-4.2
		P+	495	25%	27%	24%	21%	-4	-3
		SGP	350	33.0	35.5	38.0	37.0	4.0	-1.0
	State	CPI	91,757	67.8	67.3	68.3	67.3	-0.5	-1.0
		P+	91,757	28%	28%	30%	31%	3	1
		SGP	66,785	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	3.0	1.0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	328	66.5	66.3	63.3	63.9	-2.6	0.6
		P+	328	30%	31%	28%	27%	-3	-1
		SGP	213	45.0	50.0	47.0	46.0	1.0	-1.0
	State	CPI	45,367	64.8	66.1	66.2	66.2	1.4	0.0
		P+	45,367	30%	32%	33%	34%	4	1
		SGP	29,933	51.0	51.0	50.0	51.0	0.0	1.0
All students	District	CPI	2,369	85.6	85.3	85.4	84.3	-1.3	-1.1
		P+	2,369	64%	65%	66%	64%	0	-2
		SGP	1,862	50.0	47.0	47.0	47.0	-3.0	0.0
	State	CPI	497,549	86.5	86.9	87.2	86.7	0.2	-0.5
		P+	497,549	67%	68%	69%	69%	2	0
		SGP	395,772	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculation. State figures are provided for comparison purposes only and do not represent the standard that a particular group is expected to meet.

**Table B5b: Marlborough Public Schools
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	1,256	67.5	66.4	66.9	62.5	-5	-4.4
		P+	1,256	35%	34%	37%	31%	-4	-6
		SGP	944	46.0	41.0	40.0	37.0	-9.0	-3.0
	State	CPI	235,552	64.5	66.7	67.1	67.0	2.5	-0.1
		P+	235,552	32%	36%	37%	37%	5	0
		SGP	178,144	45.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	1.0	0.0
Low income	District	CPI	1,008	67.8	66.6	67.5	63.1	-4.7	-4.4
		P+	1,008	37%	36%	39%	32%	-5	-7
		SGP	775	48.0	40.0	40.0	36.0	-12.0	-4.0
	State	CPI	180,433	64.5	67.1	67.3	67.3	2.8	0.0
		P+	180,433	33%	37%	38%	38%	5	0
		SGP	137,529	44.0	47.0	46.0	45.0	1.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	488	58.4	55.1	54.5	47.8	-10.6	-6.7
		P+	488	20%	15%	20%	13%	-7	-7
		SGP	348	37.0	40.5	39.0	31.5	-5.5	-7.5
	State	CPI	91,876	56.9	57.5	57.7	56.9	0.0	-0.8
		P+	91,876	20%	21%	22%	21%	1	-1
		SGP	66,876	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	0.0	0.0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	325	60.9	60.5	58.2	55.8	-5.1	-2.4
		P+	325	29%	28%	27%	24%	-5	-3
		SGP	213	50.5	45.0	45.0	41.0	-9.5	-4.0
	State	CPI	45,695	59.2	61.5	62.0	61.6	2.4	-0.4
		P+	45,695	29%	31%	32%	32%	3	0
		SGP	30,189	49.0	54.0	52.0	52.0	3.0	0.0
All students	District	CPI	2,366	79.3	78.0	77.8	74.6	-4.7	-3.2
		P+	2,366	56%	53%	55%	49%	-7	-6
		SGP	1,860	50.0	44.0	42.0	41.0	-9.0	-1.0
	State	CPI	497,984	78.5	79.9	79.9	79.9	1.4	0.0
		P+	497,984	56%	58%	58%	59%	3	1
		SGP	396,357	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculation. State figures are provided for comparison purposes only and do not represent the standard that a particular group is expected to meet.

**Table B5c: Marlborough Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	483	58.4	61.0	60.0	64.4	6	4.4
		P+	483	19%	22%	21%	28%	9	7
	State	CPI	96,996	62.1	64.3	63.8	65.0	2.9	1.2
		P+	96,996	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Low income	District	CPI	387	56.2	60.3	59.3	63.2	7	3.9
		P+	387	18%	23%	22%	29%	11	7
	State	CPI	74,300	61.1	63.6	62.8	64.5	3.4	1.7
		P+	74,300	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	198	55.3	54.0	54.4	52.8	-2.5	-1.6
		P+	198	14%	12%	11%	13%	-1	2
	State	CPI	38,590	58.1	59.0	59.2	58.7	0.6	-0.5
		P+	38,590	18%	19%	20%	20%	2	0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	102	45.2	49.0	45.5	55.4	10.2	9.9
		P+	102	10%	10%	10%	24%	14	14
	State	CPI	15,271	50.8	51.8	50.3	51.4	0.6	1.1
		P+	15,271	15%	16%	15%	17%	2	2
All students	District	CPI	956	72.7	73.8	72.8	76.8	4.1	4.0
		P+	956	42%	43%	42%	49%	7	7
	State	CPI	211,464	76.8	78.3	77.6	78.6	1.8	1.0
		P+	211,464	50%	52%	52%	54%	4	2

Notes: Median SGPs are not calculated for STE. State figures are provided for comparison purposes only and do not represent the standard that a particular group is expected to meet.

**Table B6: Marlborough Public Schools
Annual Grade 9-12 Dropout Rates, 2009-2012**

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	2.7%	1.7%	3.0%	2.3%	-0.4	-14.8%	-0.7	-23.3%	2.5%

Notes: The annual dropout rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who drop out over a one-year period by the October 1 grade 9–12 enrollment, multiplied by 100. Dropouts are those students who dropped out of school between July 1 and June 30 of a given year and who did not return to school, graduate, or receive a GED by the following October 1. Dropout rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B7a: Marlborough Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2009-2012**

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	142	71.5%	72.7%	74.5%	69.0%	-2.5	-3.5%	-5.5	-7.4%	74.1%
Low income	106	76.3%	72.0%	75.0%	67.9%	-8.4	-11.0%	-7.1	-9.5%	72.4%
Students w/ disabilities	62	55.3%	60.3%	68.3%	66.1%	10.8	19.5%	-2.2	-3.2%	68.6%
English language learners (ELL) or Former ELL	29	78.3%	63.6%	45.5%	62.1%	-16.2	-20.7%	16.6	36.5%	61.1%
All students	256	81.8%	84.4%	84.3%	80.1%	-1.7	-2.1%	-4.2	-5.0%	84.7%

Notes: The four-year cohort graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students in a particular cohort who graduate in four years or less by the number of students in the cohort entering their freshman year four years earlier, minus transfers out and plus transfers in. Non-graduates include students still enrolled in high school, students who earned a GED or received a certificate of attainment rather than a diploma, and students who dropped out. Graduation rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B7b: Marlborough Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2008-2011**

Group	Number Included (2011)	School Year Ending				Change 2008-2011		Change 2010-2011		State (2011)
		2008	2009	2010	2011	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	141	79.0%	77.7%	77.3%	78.7%	-0.3	-0.4%	-1.4	-1.8%	76.5%
Low income	108	84.4%	82.5%	77.1%	78.7%	-5.7	-6.8%	1.6	2.1%	75.0%
Students w/ disabilities	60	68.2%	61.7%	68.3%	71.7%	3.5	5.1%	3.4	5.0%	70.8%
English language learners (ELL) or Former ELL	22	72.2%	82.6%	63.6%	50.0%	-22.2	-30.7%	-13.6	-21.4%	64.2%
All students	267	87.5%	86.0%	87.1%	87.3%	-0.2	-0.2%	0.2	0.2%	86.3%

Notes: The five-year cohort graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students in a particular cohort who graduate in five years or less by the number of students in the cohort entering their freshman year five years earlier, minus transfers out and plus transfers in. Non-graduates include students still enrolled in high school, students who earned a GED or received a certificate of attainment rather than a diploma, and students who dropped out. Graduation rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers. Graduation rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B8: Marlborough Public Schools
Attendance Rates, 2009-2012**

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All Students	95.1%	95.0%	95.2%	95.2%	0.1	0.1%	0.0	0.0%	94.9%

Notes: The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days students attended school by the total number of days students were enrolled in a particular school year. A student's attendance rate is counted toward any district the student attended. In addition, district attendance rates included students who were out placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense. Attendance rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B9: Marlborough Public Schools
Suspension Rates, 2009-2012**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.0%	1.2%	2.5%	2.7%	2.7	--	0.2	8.0%	3.4%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	0.0%	2.1%	3.5%	3.0%	3.0	--	-0.5	-14.3%	5.4%

Note: This table reflects information reported by school districts at the end of the school year indicated. Suspension rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
1. Interactions between teacher & students & among students are positive & respectful.	ES	3%	0%	97%	(0)	5	6%
	MS	15%	15%	70%	(1)	5	6%
	HS	4%	10%	86%	(2)	68	88%
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated. Disruptions, if present, are managed effectively & equitably.	ES	5%	11%	84%	(0)	6	8%
	MS	15%	35%	50%	(1)	18	23%
	HS	5%	33%	62%	(2)	54	69%
3. Classroom procedures are established & maintained to create a safe physical environment & promote smooth transitions among all classroom activities.	ES	5%	14%	81%	(0)	8	10%
	MS	10%	45%	45%	(1)	22	27%
	HS	19%	24%	57%	(2)	51	63%
4. Lesson reflects rigor & high expectations.	ES	46%	14%	41%	(0)	35	45%
	MS	20%	45%	35%	(1)	17	21%
	HS	67%	14%	19%	(2)	26	33%
5. Classroom rituals, routines & appropriate interactions create a safe intellectual environment in which students take academic risks & most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.	ES	18%	11%	70%	(0)	17	22%
	MS	15%	20%	65%	(1)	15	19%
	HS	33%	33%	33%	(2)	46	59%
6. Multiple resources are available to meet students' diverse learning needs.	ES	22%	30%	49%	(0)	20	25%
	MS	20%	35%	45%	(1)	27	35%
	HS	38%	43%	19%	(2)	31	40%
7. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment & provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	5%	5%	89%	(0)	5	7%
	MS	0%	35%	65%	(1)	17	22%
	HS	9%	48%	43%	(2)	54	71%

Teaching	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
8. Demonstrates knowledge of subject & content.	ES	19%	8%	73%	(0)	11	14%
	MS	10%	30%	60%	(1)	14	18%
	HS	10%	24%	66%	(2)	53	68%
9. Communicates clear grade-appropriate learning objectives aligned to state standards. Applicable ELL language objectives are evident.	ES	43%	19%	38%	(0)	34	44%
	MS	50%	25%	25%	(1)	21	27%
	HS	38%	43%	19%	(2)	23	29%
10. Uses appropriate & varied strategies matched to learning objectives & content.	ES	32%	14%	54%	(0)	30	38%
	MS	15%	55%	30%	(1)	18	23%
	HS	71%	9%	19%	(2)	30	38%
11. Requires inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, &/or evaluation of concepts individually, in pairs or in groups to demonstrate higher-order thinking. (circle observed skills)	ES	62%	30%	8%	(0)	46	60%
	MS	40%	25%	35%	(1)	20	26%
	HS	76%	19%	5%	(2)	14	18%
12. Uses varied questioning techniques that require/seek thoughtful responses & promote deeper understanding.	ES	59%	19%	22%	(0)	46	59%
	MS	40%	30%	30%	(1)	17	22%
	HS	76%	19%	5%	(2)	15	19%
13. Implements appropriate & varied strategies that meet students' diverse learning needs.	ES	40%	14%	46%	(0)	36	46%
	MS	30%	50%	20%	(1)	18	23%
	HS	71%	14%	14%	(2)	24	31%
14. Paces lesson to engage all students & promote understanding.	ES	24%	8%	68%	(0)	27	34%
	MS	20%	45%	35%	(1)	15	19%
	HS	67%	14%	19%	(2)	36	46%
15. Conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding & inform instruction.	ES	35%	16%	49%	(0)	32	41%
	MS	35%	25%	40%	(1)	16	21%
	HS	57%	24%	19%	(2)	30	38%
16. Makes use of technology to enhance learning.	ES	89%	3%	8%	(0)	55	71%
	MS	70%	15%	15%	(1)	14	18%
	HS	38%	48%	14%	(2)	9	12%

Learning	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
17. Students are engaged in productive learning routines.	ES	14%	14%	73%	(0)	25	32%
	MS	25	35%	40%	(1)	18	11%
	HS	67%	19%	14%	(2)	19	50%
18. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	59%	11%	30%	(0)	41	53%
	MS	25%	50%	25%	(1)	18	23%
	HS	67%	19%	14%	(2)	19	24%
19. Students assume responsibility for their own learning.	ES	41%	16%	43%	(0)	30	38%
	MS	15%	45%	40%	(1)	21	27%
	HS	57%	29%	14%	(2)	24	35%
20. Students articulate their thinking or reasoning verbally or in writing either individually, in pairs or in groups.	ES	38%	14%	49%	(0)	37	47%
	MS	40%	25%	35%	(1)	13	17%
	HS	71%	14%	14%	(2)	28	36%
21. Students' responses to questions elaborate about content & ideas (not expected for all responses).	ES	70%	8%	22%	(0)	56	71%
	MS	65%	20%	15%	(1)	9	12%
	HS	80%	10%	10%	(2)	13	17%
22. Students make connections to prior knowledge, real world experiences & other subject matter.	ES	46%	19%	35%	(0)	40	51%
	MS	45%	25%	30%	(1)	15	19%
	HS	67%	14%	19%	(2)	23	29%
23. Students use technology as a tool for learning &/or understanding.	ES	95%	0%	5%	(0)	67	86%
	MS	90%	0%	10%	(1)	4	5%
	HS	71%	19%	10%	(2)	6	8%
24. Student work demonstrates high quality & can serve as exemplars.	ES	81%	5%	14%	(0)	63	81%
	MS	75%	15%	10%	(1)	5	6%
	HS	86%	0%	14%	(2)	10	13%