

District Review Report

Abington Public Schools

Review conducted March 3-6, 2014



Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

Abington Public Schools District Review Overview	1
Abington Public Schools District Review Findings	6
Abington Public Schools District Review Recommendations	19
Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule	23
Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures	25
Appendix C: Instructional Inventory	35

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Abington 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 systemwide functions, with reference to the six district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE): 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 2013-2014 school year include districts classified into Level 2 or Level 3 of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance. 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 reviews 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 onsite 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 Abington School District was conducted from March 3-6, 2014. The site visit included 28 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 75 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted 4 focus groups with 5 elementary school teachers, 13 middle school teachers, 8 high school teachers, and 6 students.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, student performance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 67 classrooms in 5 schools. The team collected data using an instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

The Abington School District has a town manager form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. There are 5 members of the school committee and they meet monthly.

The current superintendent has been in the position since 2007-2008. The district leadership team includes a superintendent, two assistant superintendents, an elementary director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and a director of technology. Central office positions have been mostly stable in number with the exception of the addition this year of the elementary director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The district has five principals leading five schools. There are other school administrators, including three assistant principals. There were 127.4 teachers in the district in 2013-2014.

In the 2013-2014 school year, 1,954 students were enrolled in the district’s five schools:

**Table 1: Abington Public Schools
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment* 2013-2014**

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Center Elementary School	EES	PK-K	179
Beaver Brook Elementary School	ES	1-4	646
Woodsdale Elementary School	ES	5-6	340
Frolio Middle School	MS	7-8	329
Abington High School	HS	9-12	460
Totals	5 schools	PK-12	1,954
*As of October 1, 2013			

Between 2010 and 2014 overall student enrollment decreased by approximately 10 percent. 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 were lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditure for 51 public school districts of similar size (1,000-1,999 students) in fiscal year 2013: \$10,766 as compared with \$12,506. Actual net school spending has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B8 in Appendix B.

Student Performance¹

As of the date of the onsite review, Abington was a Level 2 district because Frolio Middle School and Abington High were in Level 2.

- Woodsdale Elementary was in Level 1 in the 49th percentile of elementary schools with a cumulative Progress Performance Index (PPI) of 81 for all students and 83 for high needs students; the target is 75.
- Frolio Middle was in the 34th percentile of middle schools and Abington High was in the 26th percentile of high schools. Frolio Middle and Abington High were in Level 2 for not meeting their gap narrowing goals for all students and high needs students. Abington High was also in Level 2 for low MCAS participation (less than 95 percent) for all students and white students.

The district did not reach its 2013 Composite Performance Index (CPI) targets for ELA, math, and science.

- ELA CPI was 86.9 in 2013, below the district's target of 90.3.
- Math CPI was 78.6 in 2013, below the district's target of 81.5.
- Science CPI was 74.5 in 2013, below the district's target of 77.3.

ELA proficiency rates in Abington were below the state rates for the district as a whole and for grades 3 through 5, but were above or equal to the state rates in grades 6, 7, 8, and 10.

- ELA proficiency in 2013 for all students in the district was 69 percent in 2010 and 67 percent in 2013, 2 percentage points below the state rate of 69 percent.
- ELA proficiency in 2013 was lower than the state rate by 6 percentage points in the 3rd grade, by 7 percentage points in the 4th grade, and by 2 percentage points in the 5th grade.
 - ELA proficiency rates were lower in 2013 than 2010 by 12 percentage points in grade 3, by 10 percentage points in grade 6, and by 3 percentage points in grade 7.
- ELA proficiency was higher than the state rate by 5 percentage points in the 6th grade, by 2 percentage points in the 8th grade, by 1 percentage point in the 10th grade, and equal to the state rate in 7th grade.
 - ELA proficiency was higher in 2013 than 2010 by 4 percentage points in the 4th and 5th grade, by 2 percentage points in the 8th grade, and by 5 percentage points in the 10th grade.

¹ See also student performance tables in Appendix B.

Math proficiency rates were below the state rate for the district as a whole and for every grade except the 5th and 6th grades located in Woodsdale Elementary.

- Math proficiency for all students in the district was 55 percent in 2010 and 2013, 6 percentage points below the state rate of 61 percent in 2013.
- Math proficiency was lower than the state rate by 10 percentage points in the 3rd grade, by 15 percentage points in the 4th grade, by 7 percentage points in the 7th grade, by 6 percentage points in the 8th grade, and by 2 percentage points in the 10th grade.
 - Math proficiency was lower in 2013 than 2010 by 6 percentage points in the 4th and 7th grades.
- Math proficiency was higher than the state rate by 4 percentage points in the 5th grade and by 2 percentage points in the 6th grade, both located in Woodsdale Elementary.
 - Math proficiency was higher in 2013 than 2010 by 11 percentage points in grade 5, by percentage points in grades 8, and by 2 percentage points in grade 10.

Students with disabilities did not meet their 2013 CPI targets in ELA and math and ELA and math proficiency rates for students with disabilities were below the state rates.

- ELA CPI for students with disabilities was 62.9 in 2013 below the target of 72.1 and ELA proficiency was 23 percent in 2013, 7 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate of 30 percent; below the state rate of 30 percent.
- Math CPI for students with disabilities was 51.2 in 2013 below the target of 57.6 and math proficiency was 16 percent in 2013, below the state rate of 22 percent.

Science proficiency in the district was below the state rate and lower in 2013 than in 2010 for all tested grades.

- 5th grade science proficiency was 33 percent in 2013, 14 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate of 47 percent, and 18 percentage points below the state rate of 51 percent.
- 8th grade science proficiency was 33 percent in 2010 and 32 percent in 2013, 7 percentage points below the state rate of 39 percent.
- 10th grade science proficiency was 64 percent in 2013, 14 percentage points below the 2010 rate of 78 percent, and 7 percentage points below the state rate of 71 percent.

Abington met its 2014 four year cohort graduation rate target of 80.0 percent and did not meet the five year cohort graduation rate target of 85.0 percent.²

² Whether the 2014 graduation rate targets are met is determined based on the 2013 four year cohort graduation rate and 2012 five year cohort graduation rate. ESE's 2014 accountability determinations have not yet been released.

- The four year cohort graduation was 86.8 percent in 2010 and 88.9 percent in 2013, above the state rate of 85.0 percent.
- The five year cohort graduation was 84.3 percent in 2012, 8.4 percentage points lower than the 2009 rate of 92.7 percent, and below the state rate of 87.5 percent.
- The annual dropout rate for Abington was 2.3 percent in 2010 and 1.2 percent in 2013, below the statewide rate of 2.2 percent.

Abington Public Schools District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership & Governance

- 1. Stability in leadership, particularly at the central office, has created a leadership team notable for a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and consistency of practice.**
 - A.** The superintendent has held his current position for seven years, and had previously served in two other leadership roles in the district for an additional seven years. The two assistant superintendents have combined leadership service of 16 years in the district.
 - B.** Collaboration, cooperation, and consistency within the leadership team are fostered through a series of districtwide scheduled meetings, which place an emphasis on implementing the new educator evaluation system as well as monitoring goal achievement.
 1. The central office leadership team meets every Monday morning.
 - a. Among the items discussed are the agendas for both the leadership and management meetings to be held with the principals.
 2. Monthly leadership meetings are held with the principals.
 - a. One administrator said, "I've never seen such a communicative team. They stay true to what they say."
 - b. Included in the leadership meetings are the teachers' association president and vice president. This contributes to the positive relationship between the administration and the association. Members of the teachers' association stated they have an open line of communication with the superintendent.
 - c. Department heads attend these meetings as well. This creates a channel of direct communication to the teachers.
 - d. A review of the agendas of the leadership team meetings from September 17, 2013, through February 25, 2014, showed that the implementation of the educator evaluation system was an agenda topic at each meeting.
 - i. Implementing the educator evaluation system is one of the superintendent's goals for 2013-2014.
3. Separate from the leadership meetings, monthly management meetings are also held with the principals.

- a. A review of the agendas of the management team meetings from August 20, 2013, through February 11, 2014, indicated that the principals have an opportunity at each meeting to raise issues related to facilities, personnel, programs, and students.
 - b. Matters involving finance, technology, and personnel are also discussed at these meetings.
4. A Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) composed of teachers and administrators has been collaborating to revise the Abington Faculty Handbook. In addition to this collaboration, together they have overseen the implementation of the new educator evaluation system.
 - a. The work and deliberations of the JLMC frequently appear on the leadership team meeting agendas.
 - b. Teachers' association members expressed a positive view of the educator evaluation system, stating that the process is a catalyst for dialogue about issues around teaching and learning.
5. The Curriculum Planning & Professional Development Council, composed of administrators, principals, department heads, department chairs, and curriculum coordinators, meets monthly to discuss curriculum issues, and to stay on top of districtwide goals with input from school leadership.
 - a. Teachers at all levels within the district spoke of a positive administrative attitude, and described the superintendent and administrators as approachable.
6. Through meetings of the school councils, the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) at each school are developed and monitored throughout the year.
 - a. Administrators reported that the strategic plan serves as a guide to provide a strong alignment between the district strategic plan and the SIPs.
 - b. The superintendent told the team that the district improvement plan is updated annually, and his goals are aligned with the strategic plan as well as those of the teachers and principals.
 - c. Teachers reported that an annual survey at the beginning of the school year determines the content of the SIPs.
 - d. Parent members of the school councils asserted that the SIP at each school is considered an important document and is reviewed by the school council.
- C. From the inception of the team budget development process to its finalization, the budget is considered to be a reflection of the needs of the entire district, not of the particular schools.

1. The principals characterized their budget deliberations as collaborative with a clear recognition, for example, that large class sizes at the elementary level have a future impact on student performance at the secondary level. The approach of the principals, they collectively reported, was to think of the district as a whole.
 - a. The school committee described the relationship with the superintendent as very good, and added that he was open, careful, and a person of integrity.
 - b. Harmony is a distinctive and prevalent factor in the relationship between the school district and the town and is a key element in successfully presenting a budget that reflects the needs of the district. School committee members described the relationship between the district and the town as collegial, and town officials, in turn, characterized the relationship as being both good and cohesive.

Impact: The unified nature and the organizational collaboration of the leadership team infuse the district and the community with a spirit of cooperation and good will. The addition of a determination to achieve the goals in the district strategic plan and the SIPs means that the district can operate successfully with very limited resources in a challenging environment.

Human Resources and Professional Development

2. **The district is continuing its record of evaluating all staff on a timely basis, this year (2013-2014) concentrating on introducing the educator evaluation system and making sure that all staff have completed each step of the process following an agreed upon schedule.**
 - A. Staff has participated fully in the evaluation process during this first year of implementation.
 1. The team reviewed the evaluations of all four central office administrators, all five school principals, and a random sample of teachers. The review included evaluations from previous years as well as from this year.
 2. All staff members reviewed had entered self-assessments, individual educator plans, and several pieces of evidence in support of their work on the plan. In addition, each evaluator had completed at least one observation, in most cases two, and entered these observations into the evaluation files.
 - B. The district administration and the teachers' association have worked collaboratively to implement the new educator evaluation system, a mentoring/peer assistance program for all teachers without professional status and for those on corrective action, and an agreed-upon schedule for teacher observations and administrative feedback.
 1. The district and the teachers' association adopted ESE's model collective bargaining language with minor changes.

2. As part of its new evaluation system, the district and the teachers' association have created a JLMC team that promotes a smooth and collaborative process to discuss critical educational and leadership issues.
3. The mentoring program was cited by the teachers' association as one of the best things that has come out of the new educator evaluation system. The association credits the system with leading to the first systemic mentoring program within the district for supporting new teachers.
4. The district chose a software program called Baseline Edge to manage the documents and data related to the educator evaluation process.

Impact: As a result of using a collaborative process to implement the initial components of the educator evaluation system, the district is in good position to make changes and improve the quality of the program as challenges arise.

Student Support

3. **High school leaders have instituted policies and programs to address weak attendance, inappropriate conduct, and incidents that previously resulted in suspensions.**
 - A. The high school has instituted practices that help the school to closely monitor students' absences and tardies and to promote regular school attendance.
 1. The attendance policy has a multi-pronged approach for high school students: parents are informed of their students' attendance issues; attendance is tied to credit acquisition; there are incentives for being in school; and students with weak attendance receive extra attention.
 - a. Parents are partners in attendance improvement efforts since the attendance policy requires automated calling to parents at every 4th, 7th, and 11th absence.
 - i. The school nurse, counselors, and other personnel are involved in monitoring calls to parents as well as letters sent home to keep parents informed.
 - b. A buy-back component of the attendance policy helps prevent students from failing classes or losing credits because of frequent absences, and helps students avoid suspensions for skipping detentions for excessive absences.
 - i. A buy-back period runs for five consecutive school days during which a student must not be suspended, receive an office or teacher detention, receive an unexcused late for school or class, be dismissed except with administrative approval, and complete all class work.

- c. Students are tracked daily and reports are sent to the Student Support Team for possible assistance by area agencies.
- B. The high school promotes credit recovery programs to support students who are in danger of retention or loss of credits needed for graduation.
 - 1. Aventa is an online, individual credit recovery program that allows students the opportunity to retrieve lost credits by retaking failed courses.
 - 2. Credit recovery is also possible for students who have failed classes to avail themselves of night school options in neighboring school districts: Rockland, Brockton, and Middleboro.
- C. The Bullying Prevention Policy is being used to call attention to bullying in schools, at sports events, after school, and while students are participating in social media. School leaders are using the policy to promote and to maintain safe conditions for all students.
- D. District and school leaders reported the institution of a Check-and-Connect Program, which ensures that every student is well known by an adult; that adult checks in on the student regularly to prevent possible incidents.
 - 1. Students reported that checking in on students continues through association in sports, drama club, band, and other extracurricular activities because it helps students make friends and avoid confrontations.

Impact: High school students who find themselves in difficulties because of excessive absence and insufficient earned credits can improve their situation through opportunities that enable them to alter their behavior and engage more fully with school.

Financial and Asset Management

- 4. **The district annually builds a comprehensive budget that provides clear documentation as to where and why budgetary dollars are proposed for allocation. The process used is open and transparent.**
 - A. The district's budget development process begins in October and culminates at the annual town meeting in June.
 - 1. All stakeholders have opportunities to review and provide input into the budget proposal and make recommendations to the school committee. Following a public hearing, the budget is presented at the annual town meeting for a vote.
 - 2. The superintendent creates and maintains an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation between school and town leaders by involving key constituents throughout the budget process.

- a. School committee members reported that the superintendent is an extremely open and careful leader. They described him as an administrator with integrity and indicated that their relationship with him is very good. They told review team members that he is open to feedback in any manner and that he also wants to hear the perspective of parents.
 - b. Central office administrators reported that they provide a great deal of information to the town's finance committee and the district provides the finance committee with an executive summary of budget priorities for the new budget.
 - c. Town officials told review team members that there is a good working relationship and communication between the town and the superintendent.
 - d. Principals reported that the district's administrators are a collaborative team that looks at the needs of the whole district in the budget building process. They indicated that there is a spirit of camaraderie in place including a positive relationship with the teachers' association.
- B.** The budget document is comprehensive and contains supportive and clarifying detail. It identifies the district's needs based upon the Strategic Plan and the DIP.
1. The superintendent's message provides clarifying detail that identifies matters of concern and the underlying facts, assumptions, projections and challenges upon which the budget request is based.
 - a. The superintendent reported that budgeting begins with a discussion with district administrators about the district's priorities. The town manager told review team members that when the superintendent presents his budget and advocates for what the district needs. The town manager reported that the superintendent understands that it is generally not feasible to receive his entire request. However, he added that the superintendent has a responsibility to advocate for his needs. After discussion and review, a subsequent budget request was closer to the budget amount.
 2. The budget document identifies budgetary increases from fiscal year 2014 to the fiscal year 2015 proposed budget totaling \$1,431,115. For fiscal year 2015, these include increases in contractual obligations; the costs of new or restored positions; technology infrastructure; special education tuitions; athletics and music programs and stipends; transportation contracts; special education transportation; and textbooks.
 3. Requests for additional or restored personnel positions are provided along with an indication of the position, cost impact, school site, and rationale or impact of the addition or restoration to the district.
 4. Other clarifying and supportive documentation provided to make the budget more intelligible include the school department's six year budget history (2009-2014); a comparison of integrated per pupil costs for selected schools systems; student enrollment

data and an overview of K-12 class sizes; staffing deployment in the district; percentage apportionment of the budget by account category; and textbook requests.

Impact: Implementing an annual budget building process in a manner that is open, transparent, and readily intelligible to all the district's constituents has contributed to the superintendent's ability to build and maintain support for the district in an atmosphere of mutual trust and collegial collaboration between school and town leaders.

5. The district's plan for the construction of a new grade 5-12 middle/high school and pre-K facility addresses overcrowding, generates space for expanded kindergarten classes, and is cost-effective.

A. The district's current facilities are aging, overcrowded, and in need of renovation.

1. Three of Abington's school buildings opened in the 1930s, two opened in the 1950s, and one opened in 1963.
2. A review of 2013-2014 class size data as presented in the district's budget document showed class sizes of 25 or more students in grades 2 through 6. Teachers reported in a focus group that large classes are a problem sometimes because there is not enough physical space to work effectively in a crowded classroom.
3. Review team members observed that the middle and high schools in particular need renovation.

B. The district's plan to build a new facility is less costly than renovating the existing middle and high schools.

1. Renovating and expanding the current middle and high schools would be a more expensive option than building a new school since extensive renovations would have to be made to the aging buildings to bring them up to code (ADA, electric, fire safety, accessibility) and would also take a year longer to complete.
 - a. The district anticipates that it will qualify for a Massachusetts School Business Authority school construction grant that will pay for 55 to 60 percent of the project's cost. If the state pays for 55 to 60 percent of the cost of the project, the town would need a \$45 million dollar debt exclusion for 30 years at a 4 1/2 percent borrowing rate. Using preliminary cost estimates and assumptions about state grant money, the district estimates the cost to the average homeowner would initially be approximately \$600 per year and would decrease every year thereafter.

Impact: Construction of a new middle/high school and pre-K facility might well lead Abington students to stay in the district for their entire K-12 school experience and save the district out of district costs. Having grades 5-12 in one school will also create opportunities for improved instructional supervision by department heads. The plan would also provide opportunities for some middle school academic acceleration through access to high school courses.

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.

Curriculum and Instruction

6. The district's curriculum maps do not consistently include key components. Many do not include instructional strategies, resources, pacing guides, and assessments.

A. Curriculum maps exist for all grades and disciplines. However, a sampling of 16 curriculum maps in the network's curriculum folder showed maps that do not include key elements. Of the 16 maps sampled:

1. All maps included a content component;
2. None contained instructional strategies;
3. Eight included a pacing guide or timeline;
4. Five included instructional resources;
5. Thirteen contained an assessment component. However, 11 simply listed generic references to tests, quizzes, homework and projects;
6. There were five different curriculum map formats.

Impact: Without key components, curriculum guides do not specify for teachers the teaching and learning that is to take place in each course of study. As a result, the district cannot ensure that students have the opportunity to master what the state requires in its curriculum frameworks.

7. In visited classrooms, team members observed a low incidence of some key instructional characteristics.

The team observed 67 classes throughout the Abington school district: 18 at the high school, 18 at the middle school, and 31 in elementary school classrooms. The team observed 24 ELA, 21 mathematics, 9 science lessons, and 13 other classes. 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. This data is presented in Appendix C.

A. In a majority of the observed Abington classrooms, review team members found the instructional climate to be conducive to learning. A majority of the district's teachers

demonstrated knowledge of subject and content; interactions between teachers and students were positive and respectful; and behavioral standards were enforced.

1. In elementary classrooms, observers' data indicated clear and consistent evidence of:
 - a. A positive tone of interactions between students and teachers in 90 percent of the classrooms visited;
 - b. The establishment of standards of behavior in 84 percent of classes; and
 - c. Teachers demonstrating knowledge of subject and content in 81 percent of visited classrooms.
 2. In the middle school, observers' data indicated clear and consistent evidence of:
 - a. A positive tone of interactions between students and teachers in 94 percent of the classrooms visited;
 - b. The establishment of standards of behavior in 100 percent of classes; and
 - c. Teachers demonstrating knowledge of subject and content in 89 percent of visited classrooms.
 3. In high school classrooms, observers' data indicated clear and consistent evidence of:
 - a. A positive tone of interactions between students and teachers in 83 percent of the classrooms visited
 - b. The establishment of standards of behavior in 83 percent of classes.
- B.** Additionally, a review of the observers' data indicated a low incidence of key instructional methods and student learning practices.
1. Team members observed the absence or infrequent occurrence of the following instructional methods or learning opportunities in the district's elementary classrooms:
 - a. Teachers provided multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking in 23 percent of the classrooms visited;
 - b. Students engaged in inquiry, analysis, or evaluation of knowledge or concepts in 16 percent of the classes; and
 - c. Students engaged in challenging academic tasks in 35 percent of the classrooms.
 2. Observers noted infrequent occurrences of the following instructional methods or student learning experiences in the district's middle school:

- a. Teachers providing multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking in 28 percent of the classrooms visited;
 - b. Teachers checking for understanding in 17 percent of the classes; and
 - c. Students having opportunities to inquire, analyze, and evaluate knowledge, or concepts in 33 percent of the visited classrooms.
3. Observations indicated the infrequent occurrence of the following instructional methods or student learning experiences in high school classrooms:
- a. Teachers implemented lessons reflecting rigor and high expectations for learning in 17 percent of the classrooms visited;
 - b. Teachers provided multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking in 6 percent of the classes;
 - c. Teachers checked for student understanding in 17 percent of the observed classrooms;
 - d. Students engaged in challenging academic tasks in 22 percent of the classes; and
 - e. Students engaged in the use of inquiry, analysis, or evaluation of knowledge or concepts in 11 percent of the observed classrooms.

Impact: Student achievement in Abington will not adequately improve until teachers, through their instruction, raise their expectations for student performance.

Assessment

- 8. The district is in the initial stages of developing a balanced assessment system that will enable teachers to assess their students' progress and modify instruction to address those students' needs.**
- A.** The district has implemented a mix of summative and formative assessments. However, there is limited availability of formative or benchmark assessments that measure students' progress at regular intervals against specific benchmarks.
1. Most assessments are summative because they measure student learning relative to content after a long period of instruction. These assessments are important, but they take place infrequently and results are not immediately available to modify classroom instruction.
 - a. MCAS, a summative assessment, measures student achievement once per year.

- b. Common assessments currently being developed from Test Wiz and in use at the high school and at Woodsdale Elementary are administered three times a year and are summative.
 2. Some assessments are formative. These are assessments administered throughout the school year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards.
 - a. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy) are formative and in use in kindergarten and grade 1 to monitor student progress against benchmarks at regular intervals.
 - b. ORF (Oral Reading Fluency) and MAZE (an assessment of reading comprehension) are in use at Woodsdale Elementary and are being introduced at Beaver Brook. While these assessments are administered to all students only three times year, they do assess growth against benchmarks and are used with greater frequency with students in need of more frequent progress monitoring.
 3. Teachers at all levels in the district reported that developing formative assessments is a goal but not yet a reality.
 4. Assessments most frequently referred to were those developed by individual teachers or from the Test Wiz item bank.
- B.** Teachers do not have frequent opportunities to discuss data.
 1. There is no common planning time at the high school, and department meetings are voluntary.
 2. Middle school teachers do have common planning time, but by team and seldom by content area where discussion of content assessments could take place.
 3. Most elementary teachers have common planning time, but special education teachers are not participating this year.
 4. Professional development, which is school-based, is devoted this year to the state's educator evaluation system.
- C.** Data teams are gradually being introduced, but their impact districtwide is limited.
 1. The high school has what members describe as a small, informal data team that discusses matters such as dropout rates and scheduling.
 2. The middle school had data team training in the 2012-2013 school year, but implementation this year has been sporadic because of emphasis on educator evaluation.
 3. Woodsdale and Beaver Brook have had data team training.

- a. Woodsdale uses common planning time fluidly when grade-level meetings function as a data team to review current data and make instructional decisions.
- D. In interviews and in responses to the 2014 TELL Mass survey 57 percent of teachers expressed a need for more training in data analysis and making data based decisions to teach students more effectively.

Impact: Without formative or benchmark assessment results, teachers do not have data to make instructional decisions that address their students' needs in a timely fashion.

Human Resources and Professional Development

9. The implementation of the educator evaluation system has not been as effective as anticipated. There have been challenges with the rollout of the program as well as the quality of feedback provided to teachers.

- A. While the district used a collaborative process to implement the initial components of the educator evaluation system and is in a good position to make changes and to improve the quality of the system, there have been challenges with the implementation and the quality of feedback to teachers.
- B. Teachers in the elementary, middle, and high school focus groups expressed frustration with the rollout as well as the demands of the new educator evaluation system.
 - 1. They referred to the piecemeal introduction of the system and to the challenges that meeting the related deadlines presented.
 - a. Many seemed overwhelmed with the new system.
 - b. Few appeared to have a clear grasp of the purpose and power of the system.
- C. A document review indicated that the feedback provided to teachers under the new system is descriptive rather than instructive. It describes the activities in which the teacher is engaged but frequently misses the opportunity to comment on the effectiveness of instructional practices observed or to offer recommendations for instructional improvements.
- D. The district includes in its educator evaluation software program ESE's rubric for teacher effectiveness as a reference concerning what constitutes good instruction. However, in the random sample of evaluations reviewed, teachers do not refer to the rubric when setting their goals, and administrators do not refer to it when providing feedback on classroom observations.

Impact: With the absence of instructive feedback provided to teachers in evaluations—and the lack of clarity about the new evaluation system and educators' roles in the process—the district has compromised its expressed purpose of using the educator evaluation system as a tool for the

improvement of teaching and learning. The implementation of the system will not be sufficiently effective unless the educators clearly understand its purpose and their roles in the evaluation process.

10. The district does not provide sufficient resources to plan, develop, and support a systemwide, coordinated, high quality professional development program.

- A. As discussed earlier in the report, there are limits to the time available for professional development at all levels.
- B. Professional development monies have been among the first funds cut during the recent years of fiscal austerity.
- C. The district does not have a professional development committee responsible for reviewing data and planning professional development that supports improvement in student achievement. The review team's observations indicated a low incidence of higher order thinking, checks for understanding, and students engaged in challenging academic tasks.

Impact: The classroom observation data indicated serious challenges in teaching and learning in the district. Without focused professional development to add to and refine teachers' repertoire of instructional strategies—and time for professional development in every school—the district cannot adequately support improvement in student achievement.

Abington Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Curriculum and Instruction

- 1. Abington should ensure that its curriculum includes the necessary components to provide teachers with a clear understanding of the teaching, learning, and assessment that is expected to occur in each discipline and classroom.**
 - A.** Curriculum for all content areas should include objectives, resources, instructional strategies, timelines or pacing guides, and measureable outcomes or assessments.
 - B.** Abington should determine which curriculum map format is best suited to support its students' learning, and ensure that this format is used districtwide.

Recommended resources:

- *The Model Curriculum Unit and Lesson Plan Template* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/MCUtemplate.pdf>) includes Understanding by Design elements. It could be useful as Abington formalizes its curriculum elements and format.
- *Creating Curriculum Units at the Local Level* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/mcu_guide.pdf) is a guidance document that can serve as a resource for professional study groups, as a reference for anyone wanting to engage in curriculum development, or simply as a way to gain a better understanding of the process used to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.
- *Creating Model Curriculum Units* (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssquWrLjKc9h5h2cSpDVZqe6t>) is a series of videos that captures the collaboration and deep thinking by curriculum design teams over the course of a full year as they worked to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units. The series includes videos about developing essential questions, establishing goals, creating embedded performance assessments, designing lesson plans, selecting high-quality materials, and evaluating the curriculum unit.
- *ESE's Quality Review Rubrics* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/rubrics/>) can support the analysis and improvement of curriculum units.
- *Curriculum Mapping: Raising the Rigor of Teaching and Learning* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/Candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf>) is a presentation that provides definitions of curriculum mapping, examples of model maps, and descriptions of curriculum mapping processes.
- Sample curriculum maps (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/default.html>) were designed to assist schools and districts with making sense of students' learning experiences over time, ensuring

a viable and guaranteed curriculum, establishing learning targets, and aligning curriculum to ensure a consistent implementation of the MA Frameworks.

Benefits: Complete curricula provide teachers with clarity and a common understanding of the teaching, learning, and assessment they are to facilitate in each discipline and classroom. Additionally, administrators have the tools they need to effectively supervise curriculum in the classroom.

2. The district should provide its teachers with professional development and classroom supervision to ensure that students receive instruction that challenges them as learners.

- A.** Teachers' professional development opportunities should emphasize rigorous instructional strategies that provide students with challenging academic tasks and encourage higher order thinking.
 - 1. Effective implementation of these strategies requires frequent checks for understanding so that teachers are able to focus their instruction to meet students' specific needs. This is also an important topic for professional growth.
 - 2. Decisions concerning the particular professional development focus areas should be based upon a review of the instructional inventory and data from classroom observations made under the educator evaluation system.
- B.** Administrators should use classroom observations as an opportunity to support teachers in these areas.
 - 1. Constructive feedback from observers is a critical tool for teachers' continued growth.
- C.** District leaders should consider establishing a professional development committee that can use data, including data based on trends from classroom observations, to plan targeted professional development.
- D.** The district should ensure that all educators have sufficient time to engage in professional development.

Benefits: Professional development that supports a focused districtwide commitment to effective instruction and high expectations for students will improve the achievement of all learners.

Assessment

- 3. The district should implement a system of formative assessments to provide teachers and administrators with the data they need to make sound instructional decisions. The district should also provide teachers with the support and resources they need to develop their data analysis skills.**

- A. To have a balanced system of assessments, the district should develop a full complement of formative assessments.
 - 1. Formative assessments provide teachers with timely information about each student's progress and learning needs.
- B. The district should provide staff at all levels with training in data analysis and decision-making.
- C. The district should provide all teachers with time for analysis of assessment results with grade level- or content-alike peers.
- D. The district should form data teams at the district and school levels with the responsibility for analyzing relevant data and providing guidance to educators about using data to inform instruction.
 - 1. The district data team can serve as a model for the schools as they implement data teams.

Recommended resource:

- ESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/webinar/PartI-GapAnalysis.pdf>) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, districts can determine potential next steps.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include:

- teachers planning their instruction based on current data concerning their students' progress and needs
- administrators and teachers making budgetary and other decisions based upon student needs evident in the data

Human Resources and Professional Development

- 4. The district should continue to provide ongoing professional development to staff responsible for implementing the educator evaluation system. Topics should include writing effective feedback about classroom observations, a review of a range of effective instructional strategies, and teacher supervision that leads to improvement in teaching and learning.**
 - A. Writing good feedback is predicated on having a clear model of best instructional practices that is widely discussed, analyzed, and agreed upon throughout the district (see Curriculum and Instruction recommendation above).

1. The rubric for teacher effectiveness, based on the model provided by the state and included in the district's educator evaluation software program, can serve as an important resource for effective feedback.
- B. A complement to the renewed teacher focus on implementing effective instructional strategies should be additional training for administrators to support teachers in this endeavor.
 1. Administrative staff should work together to write exemplars and critique their own examples. These opportunities will help administrators to articulate how best to provide guidance for teachers on improving their instruction.

Recommended resources:

- The March 2014 ESE Educator Evaluation e-Newsletter (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/communications/newsletter/2014-03.pdf>) includes a section called *Implementation Spotlight: Strategies for Focusing Observations and Providing Consistent, Constructive Feedback*.
- *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation & Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/QRG-ProfessionalDevelopment.pdf>) describes how educator evaluation and professional development can be used as mutually reinforcing systems to improve educator practice and student outcomes.
- *The Relationship between High Quality Professional Development and Educator Evaluation* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-aDxtEDncg&list=PLTuqmiQ9ssqt9EmOcWkDEHPKBqRvurebm&index=1>) is a video presentation that includes examples from real districts.
- Educator Evaluation Implementation Surveys for Teachers and Administrators (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/implementation/>) are designed to provide schools and districts with information about the status of their educator evaluation implementation. Information from these surveys can be used to target district resources and supports where most needed to strengthen implementation.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include a common understanding among administrators about what constitutes effective instructional practice. This will lead to improvements in the support provided to teachers in effective use of these practices.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from March 3 to March 6, 2014, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Dr. Owen Conway, leadership and governance
2. Dr. Peter McGinn, curriculum and instruction
3. Patricia Williams, assessment, review team coordinator
4. Dr. Sara Freedman, human resources and professional development
5. Willette Johnson, student support
6. Dr. William Contreras, financial and asset management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: assistant superintendent, accountant.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: chair, member.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: president, vice-president.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: superintendent, two assistant superintendents, elementary director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, Title I director.

The team visited the following schools: Center Elementary School (PK-K), Beaver Brook Elementary (grades 1-4), Woodsdale Elementary (grades 5-6), and Frolio Middle School (grades 7-8), and Abington High School (grades 9-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with 5 principals and 3 focus groups with 5 elementary school teachers, 13 middle school teachers, and 8 high school teachers.

The team observed 67 classes in the district: 18 at the high school, 18 at the middle school, and 31 at the 3 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	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
03/03/2014	03/04/2014	03/05/2014	03/06/2014
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; review of personnel files; interview with teachers’ association.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; student focus group; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; and visits to Abington High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with town personnel; interviews with school leaders; interview with school committee members; visits to Beaver Brook and Woodsdale Elementary for classroom observations.	District review team meeting; visits to Center Elementary, Frolio Middle, and Abington High for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Abington Public Schools
2013-2014 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	42	2.1%	82990	8.7%
Asian	35	1.8%	58455	6.1%
Hispanic	71	3.6%	162647	17.0%
Native American	7	0.4%	2209	0.2%
White	1793	91.8%	620628	64.9%
Native Hawaiian	1	0.1%	1007	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	5	0.3%	27803	2.9%
All Students	1954	100.0%	955739	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2013

**Table B1b: Abington Public Schools
2013-2014 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	264	42.4%	13.3%	164336	34.8%	17.0%
Low Income	391	62.9%	20.0%	365885	77.5%	38.3%
ELLs and Former ELLs	43	6.9%	2.2%	75947	16.1%	7.9%
All high needs students	622	100.0%	31.3%	472001	100.0%	48.8%

Notes: As of October 1, 2013. 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 1,986; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 966,360.

**Table B2a: Abington Public Schools
English Language Arts Performance, 2010-2013**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	158	85.5	78.9	81.3	81.5	83.3	-4	0.2
	P+	158	63.0%	49.0%	56.0%	51.0%	57.0%	-12.0%	-5.0%
4	CPI	181	75.8	79.6	76.9	75.7	78.9	-0.1	-1.2
	P+	181	42.0%	53.0%	46.0%	46.0%	53.0%	4.0%	0.0%
	SGP	168	46	54	46	50	49	4	4
5	CPI	159	85.6	88.5	85.5	86.3	84.7	0.7	0.8
	P+	159	60.0%	71.0%	63.0%	64.0%	66.0%	4.0%	1.0%
	SGP	150	55.5	60	59	63	52	7.5	4
6	CPI	158	92.3	89.3	86.6	88.6	85.1	-3.7	2
	P+	158	82.0%	72.0%	67.0%	72.0%	67.0%	-10.0%	5.0%
	SGP	148	54	61	60	57	52	3	-3
7	CPI	182	90.7	91.1	89.8	89.3	88.4	-1.4	-0.5
	P+	182	75.0%	79.0%	73.0%	72.0%	72.0%	-3.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	172	51.5	38	43	47.5	48	-4	4.5
8	CPI	164	92.8	93.4	93.8	92.2	90.1	-0.6	-1.6
	P+	164	78.0%	81.0%	86.0%	80.0%	78.0%	2.0%	-6.0%
	SGP	158	41	48	52	52.5	50	11.5	0.5
10	CPI	126	96.6	96	96.3	97.6	96.9	1	1.3
	P+	126	87.0%	88.0%	85.0%	92.0%	91.0%	5.0%	7.0%
	SGP	120	41	34	23.5	35.5	57	-5.5	12
All	CPI	1128	88.1	88.3	86.7	86.9	86.8	-1.2	0.2
	P+	1128	69.0%	71.0%	67.0%	67.0%	69.0%	-2.0%	0.0%
	SGP	916	49	50.5	49	52.5	51	3.5	3.5

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.

**Table B2b: Abington Public Schools
Mathematics Performance, 2010-2013**

Grade and Measure	Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines		
		2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend	
3	CPI	158	80.7	75	78.7	78.8	84.3	-1.9	0.1
	P+	158	58.0%	44.0%	54.0%	56.0%	66.0%	-2.0%	2.0%
4	CPI	181	76.5	76	78.5	73.5	80.2	-3	-5
	P+	181	43.0%	43.0%	48.0%	37.0%	52.0%	-6.0%	-11.0%
	SGP	168	40	54	67.5	41	54	1	-26.5
5	CPI	160	78	80.4	80.6	84.1	80.6	6.1	3.5
	P+	160	54.0%	59.0%	60.0%	65.0%	61.0%	11.0%	5.0%
	SGP	150	61	65	63	67	54	6	4
6	CPI	158	84.1	80	81.8	82.4	80.3	-1.7	0.6
	P+	158	65.0%	62.0%	61.0%	63.0%	61.0%	-2.0%	2.0%
	SGP	149	55	48	60	57	50	2	-3
7	CPI	183	75.4	75.6	71.4	71.6	74.4	-3.8	0.2
	P+	183	51.0%	53.0%	48.0%	45.0%	52.0%	-6.0%	-3.0%
	SGP	173	56.5	37	45	32	46	-24.5	-13
8	CPI	163	73.3	71.7	79.7	74.1	76	0.8	-5.6
	P+	163	44.0%	44.0%	64.0%	49.0%	55.0%	5.0%	-15.0%
	SGP	161	36	47	57	45	50	9	-12
10	CPI	130	91	88.3	89.2	89.2	90.2	-1.8	0
	P+	130	76.0%	75.0%	74.0%	78.0%	80.0%	2.0%	4.0%
	SGP	124	45	42	34.5	43.5	51	-1.5	9
All	CPI	1133	79.2	77.8	79.4	78.6	80.8	-0.6	-0.8
	P+	1133	55.0%	54.0%	58.0%	55.0%	61.0%	0.0%	-3.0%
	SGP	925	50	50	56	47	51	-3	-9

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.

**Table B2c: Abington Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2010-2013**

Grade and Measure	Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines		
		2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend	
5	CPI	160	78.3	74.2	77.9	70.9	78.5	-7.4	-7
	P+	160	47.0%	41.0%	46.0%	33.0%	51.0%	-14.0%	-13.0%
8	CPI	163	70.9	59.7	73.2	69.6	71	-1.3	-3.6
	P+	163	33.0%	16.0%	40.0%	32.0%	39.0%	-1.0%	-8.0%
10	CPI	124	93.4	91.4	91.1	85.5	88	-7.9	-5.6
	P+	124	78.0%	77.0%	76.0%	64.0%	71.0%	-14.0%	-12.0%
All	CPI	447	79.2	72.7	78.8	74.5	79	-4.7	-4.3
	P+	447	49.0%	40.0%	50.0%	41.0%	53.0%	-8.0%	-9.0%

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.

**Table B3a: Abington Public Schools
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	416	78.6	77	75.9	77.2	-1.4	1.3
		P+	416	47.0%	48.0%	45.0%	48.0%	1.0%	3.0%
		SGP	322	45.5	49.5	48	48	2.5	0
	State	CPI	237163	76.1	77	76.5	76.8	0.7	0.3
		P+	237163	45.0%	48.0%	48.0%	48.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	180087	45	46	46	47	2	1
Low Income	District	CPI	287	84	81.9	81.1	81.9	-2.1	0.8
		P+	287	60.0%	56.0%	54.0%	57.0%	-3.0%	3.0%
		SGP	224	48	48	47	47	-1	0
	State	CPI	184999	76.5	77.1	76.7	77.2	0.7	0.5
		P+	184999	47.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	141671	46	46	45	47	1	2
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	173	71.6	66.5	64.4	62.9	-8.7	-1.5
		P+	173	30.0%	30.0%	24.0%	23.0%	-7.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	131	39	53	44	48	9	4
	State	CPI	88956	67.3	68.3	67.3	66.8	-0.5	-0.5
		P+	88956	28.0%	30.0%	31.0%	30.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	64773	41	42	43	43	2	0
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	31	82.7	80	66.7	70.2	-12.5	3.5
		P+	31	54.0%	45.0%	29.0%	32.0%	-22.0%	3.0%
		SGP	20	0	0	0	57.5	57.5	57.5
	State	CPI	46676	66.1	66.2	66.2	67.4	1.3	1.2
		P+	46676	32.0%	33.0%	34.0%	35.0%	3.0%	1.0%
		SGP	31672	51	50	51	53	2	2
All students	District	CPI	1128	88.1	88.3	86.7	86.9	-1.2	0.2
		P+	1128	69.0%	71.0%	67.0%	67.0%	-2.0%	0.0%
		SGP	916	49	50.5	49	52.5	3.5	3.5
	State	CPI	496175	86.9	87.2	86.7	86.8	-0.1	0.1
		P+	496175	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	1.0%	0.0%
		SGP	395568	50	50	50	51	1	1

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 B3b: Abington Public Schools
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013**

Group and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines		
			2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend	
High Needs	District	CPI	415	64.9	61.7	64.1	66.5	1.6	2.4
		P+	415	30.0%	30.0%	34.0%	36.0%	6.0%	2.0%
		SGP	324	41	46	48	42.5	1.5	-5.5
	State	CPI	237745	66.7	67.1	67	68.6	1.9	1.6
		P+	237745	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	40.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	180866	46	46	46	46	0	0
Low Income	District	CPI	287	71.8	68.6	71.3	70.5	-1.3	-0.8
		P+	287	43.0%	38.0%	43.0%	43.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		SGP	226	46.5	45.5	55	42	-4.5	-13
	State	CPI	185392	67.1	67.3	67.3	69	1.9	1.7
		P+	185392	37.0%	38.0%	38.0%	41.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	142354	47	46	45	46	-1	1
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	171	56.1	49.1	50	51.2	-4.9	1.2
		P+	171	15.0%	15.0%	16.0%	16.0%	1.0%	0.0%
		SGP	130	37	46.5	36	38.5	1.5	2.5
	State	CPI	89193	57.5	57.7	56.9	57.4	-0.1	0.5
		P+	89193	21.0%	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		SGP	65068	43	43	43	42	-1	-1
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	31	75	71.3	59.8	70.2	-4.8	10.4
		P+	31	46.0%	40.0%	26.0%	42.0%	-4.0%	16.0%
		SGP	21	0	0	0	76	76	76
	State	CPI	47046	61.5	62	61.6	63.9	2.4	2.3
		P+	47046	31.0%	32.0%	32.0%	35.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	31986	54	52	52	53	-1	1
All students	District	CPI	1133	79.2	77.8	79.4	78.6	-0.6	-0.8
		P+	1133	55.0%	54.0%	58.0%	55.0%	0.0%	-3.0%
		SGP	925	50	50	56	47	-3	-9
	State	CPI	497090	79.9	79.9	79.9	80.8	0.9	0.9
		P+	497090	58.0%	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	3.0%	2.0%
		SGP	396691	50	50	50	51	1	1

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 B3c: Abington Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013**

Group and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines		
			2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend	
High Needs	District	CPI	156	68	60.9	68.3	61.5	-6.5	-6.8
		P+	156	28.0%	24.0%	34.0%	20.0%	-8.0%	-14.0%
	State	CPI	96902	64.3	63.8	65	66.4	2.1	1.4
		P+	96902	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	31.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Low Income	District	CPI	105	75.5	65.5	73	66	-9.5	-7
		P+	105	43.0%	32.0%	41.0%	25.0%	-18.0%	-16.0%
	State	CPI	75485	63.6	62.8	64.5	66.1	2.5	1.6
		P+	75485	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	32.0%	4.0%	1.0%
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	64	61.5	56.2	58.1	52	-9.5	-6.1
		P+	64	15.0%	14.0%	22.0%	11.0%	-4.0%	-11.0%
	State	CPI	37049	59	59.2	58.7	59.8	0.8	1.1
		P+	37049	19.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	1.0%	0.0%
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	10	0	0	0	52.5	52.5	52.5
		P+	10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
	State	CPI	16179	51.8	50.3	51.4	54	2.2	2.6
		P+	16179	16.0%	15.0%	17.0%	19.0%	3.0%	2.0%
All students	District	CPI	447	79.2	72.7	78.8	74.5	-4.7	-4.3
		P+	447	49.0%	40.0%	50.0%	41.0%	-8.0%	-9.0%
	State	CPI	209573	78.3	77.6	78.6	79	0.7	0.4
		P+	209573	52.0%	52.0%	54.0%	53.0%	1.0%	-1.0%

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 B4: Abington Public Schools
Annual Grade 9-12 Dropout Rates, 2010-2013**

	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	2.3	2.2	3.7	1.2	-1.1	-47.8%	-2.5	-67.6%	2.2

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 B5a: Abington Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2010-2013**

Group	Number Included (2013)	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
		2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	43	66.7%	65.1%	72.7%	79.1%	12.4	18.6%	6.4	8.8%	74.7%
Low income	29	66.7%	70.8%	72.0%	72.4%	5.7	8.5%	0.4	0.6%	73.6%
Students w/ disabilities	20	59.3%	58.3%	63.0%	80.0%	20.7	34.9%	17.0	27.0%	67.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	63.5%
All students	144	86.8%	88.1%	84.3%	88.9%	2.1	2.4%	4.6	5.5%	85.0%

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 B5b: Abington Public Schools
Five-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 Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	44	85.3%	66.7%	67.4%	72.7%	-12.6	-14.8%	5.3	7.9%	78.9%
Low income	25	90.0%	66.7%	75.0%	72.0%	-18.0	-20.0%	-3.0	-4.0%	77.5%
Students w/ disabilities	27	80.0%	59.3%	58.3%	63.0%	-17.0	-21.3%	4.7	8.1%	73.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	68.5%
All students	134	92.7%	86.8%	88.8%	84.3%	-8.4	-9.1%	-4.5	-5.1%	87.5%

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 B6: Abington Public Schools
Attendance Rates, 2010-2013**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	94.5%	94.2%	94.4%	94.3%	-0.2	-0.2%	-0.1	-0.1%	94.8%

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 B7: Abington Public Schools
Suspension Rates, 2010-2013**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.2%	4.5%	5.2%	4.1%	3.9	1,950%	-1.1	-21.2%	2.2%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	5.2%	4.5%	3.3%	3.1%	-2.1	-40.4%	-0.2	-6.1%	4.3%

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.

**Table B8: Abington Public Schools
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2011–2013**

	FY11		FY12		FY13	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$17,312,528	\$17,171,394	\$17,770,984	\$17,790,710	\$18,591,001	\$18,653,235
By municipality	\$6,137,941	\$6,559,739	\$6,631,088	\$6,814,830	\$7,213,640	\$6,785,980
Total from local appropriations	\$23,450,469	\$23,731,133	\$24,402,072	\$24,605,540	\$25,804,641	\$25,439,215
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$2,737,679	--	\$2,810,992	--	\$2,609,754
Total expenditures	--	\$26,468,812	--	\$27,416,532	--	\$28,048,969
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$7,205,352	--	\$7,244,034	--	\$7,324,394
Required local contribution	--	\$11,741,657	--	\$12,056,554	--	\$12,498,017
Required net school spending**	--	\$18,947,009	--	\$19,300,588	--	\$19,822,411
Actual net school spending	--	\$20,428,341	--	\$21,073,198	--	\$21,758,535
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$1,481,332	--	\$1,772,610	--	\$1,936,124
Over/under required (%)	--	7.8	--	9.2	--	9.8

*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 September 12, 2014

**Table B9: Abington Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010-2012**

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012	2013
Administration	\$305	\$320	\$356	\$467
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$499	\$504	\$541	\$554
Teachers	\$3,782	\$3,949	\$4,188	\$4,275
Other teaching services	\$607	\$814	\$841	\$837
Professional development	\$120	\$145	\$178	\$177
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$456	\$468	\$392	\$462
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$289	\$433	\$477	\$375
Pupil services	\$768	\$875	\$999	\$1,015
Operations and maintenance	\$682	\$933	\$743	\$711
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$1,667	\$1,974	\$2,039	\$1,892
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$9,175	\$10,415	\$10,756	\$10,766

Sources: [Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website](#)

Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding.

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	Evidence by Grade Span			Evidence Overall				
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)			(2)	(0)	
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive and respectful.	ES	0	3	28	#	0	7	60
	MS	0	1	17	%	0%	10%	90%
	HS	0	3	15	--	--	--	--
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	ES	1	4	26	#	2	6	59
	MS	0	0	18	%	3%	9%	88%
	HS	1	2	15	--	--	--	--
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	2	2	27	#	6	14	47
	MS	3	4	11	%	9%	21%	70%
	HS	1	8	9	--	--	--	--
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	ES	2	7	22	#	15	11	41
	MS	6	3	9	%	22%	16%	61%
	HS	7	1	10	--	--	--	--
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	4	6	21	#	18	18	31
	MS	8	4	6	%	27%	27%	46%
	HS	6	8	4	--	--	--	--

(Please see next page)

Teaching	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	1	5	25	#	1	11	55
	MS	0	2	16	%	1%	16%	82%
	HS	0	4	14	--	--	--	--
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	8	13	10	#	21	27	19
	MS	7	5	6	%	31%	40%	28%
	HS	6	9	3	--	--	--	--
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	ES	18	5	8	#	38	10	19
	MS	8	1	9	%	57%	15%	28%
	HS	12	4	2	--	--	--	--
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	ES	6	9	16	#	23	19	25
	MS	6	4	8	%	34%	28%	37%
	HS	11	6	1	--	--	--	--
10. The teacher uses appropriate modifications for English language learners and students with disabilities such as explicit language objective(s); direct instruction in vocabulary; presentation of content at multiple levels of complexity; and, differentiation of content, process, and/or products.	ES	22	5	4	#	49	12	6
	MS	14	3	1	%	73%	18%	9%
	HS	13	4	1	--	--	--	--
11. The teacher provides multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking such as use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	10	14	7	#	28	26	13
	MS	10	3	5	%	42%	39%	19%
	HS	8	9	1	--	--	--	--

(Please see next page)

Teaching (continued)	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	7	10	14	#	18	24	25
	MS	7	3	8	%	27%	36%	37%
	HS	4	11	3	--	--	--	--
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a learning environment where students can take risks--- for instance, where they can make predictions, make judgments and investigate.	ES	6	12	13	#	22	19	26
	MS	8	3	7	%	33%	28%	39%
	HS	8	4	6	--	--	--	--
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	ES	5	7	19	#	11	19	36
	MS	1	7	10	%	17%	29%	55%
	HS	5	5	7	--	--	--	--
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	8	8	15	#	27	19	21
	MS	11	4	3	%	40%	28%	31%
	HS	8	7	3	--	--	--	--
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	16	2	13	#	33	8	26
	MS	9	1	8	%	49%	12%	39%
	HS	8	5	5	--	--	--	--

(Please see next page)

Learning	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	6	14	11	#	19	26	22
	MS	6	5	7	%	28%	39%	33%
	HS	7	7	4	--	--	--	--
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	3	14	14	#	14	29	24
	MS	5	5	8	%	21%	43%	36%
	HS	6	10	2	--	--	--	--
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom’s Taxonomy).	ES	11	15	5	#	27	27	13
	MS	8	4	6	%	40%	40%	19%
	HS	8	8	2	--	--	--	--
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	12	11	8	#	35	21	11
	MS	13	4	1	%	52%	31%	16%
	HS	10	6	2	--	--	--	--
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	9	12	10	#	16	25	26
	MS	1	5	12	%	24%	37%	39%
	HS	6	8	4	--	--	--	--
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	19	1	11	#	44	8	15
	MS	14	2	2	%	66%	12%	22%
	HS	11	5	2	--	--	--	--
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	4	15	12	#	11	26	31
	MS	3	3	13	%	16%	38%	46%
	HS	4	8	6	--	--	--	--
24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	14	7	10	#	37	14	16
	MS	12	1	5	%	55%	21%	24%
	HS	11	6	1	--	--	--	--