

Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services

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Agawam Public Schools Review

Executive Order 393

*Education Management Accountability Board Report
April 2000*

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I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act (MERA) of 1993 has three major goals: to increase student achievement; to achieve adequate funding for all local and regional school districts over a seven-year period; and to bring equity to local taxation efforts based on a community's ability to pay. In February 1997, the Governor issued Executive Order 393 to evaluate the education reform program that was nearing the end of its fourth year. In FY97, Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Ch. 70 state aid for education reached \$2.1 billion. With an investment of this magnitude in the Commonwealth's schools, it is critical to "review, investigate and report on the expenditures of funds by school districts, including regional school districts, consistent with the goals of improving student achievement." To that end, Executive Order 393 established the Education Management Accountability Board (EMAB). Chapter 70 state aid has reached \$2.8 billion in FY2000.

The Secretary of Administration and Finance, serving as chief of staff to the EMAB, selected a team of auditors from the Department of Revenue's (DOR) Division of Local Services (DLS) to conduct the school district reviews. DOR's Director of Accounts is the chief investigator with authority to examine municipal and school department accounts and transactions pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 44, §§45 and 46A. The reviews are conducted in consultation with the State Auditor and the Commissioner of Education.

The Agawam Public Schools (APS) is the nineteenth school district reviewed under Executive Order 393. The audit team began the review of APS in August 1999, and completed it in October 1999. As part of this review, the audit team conducted a confidential survey of employees of the school district and included the results in this report. School officials cooperated fully with the audit team.

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

II. Executive Summary

The Agawam Public District has made reasonable progress in achieving some of the goals of education reform. The curriculum appears to be aligned with the state frameworks. Working in committees, teachers and department coordinators began to align the curriculum in 1996 and a director of curriculum was hired in the summer of that year. The position was elevated to Assistant Superintendent in March of 1998 reflecting the district's emphasis on curriculum improvement. In a parallel effort, the district invested significantly in textbooks that were aligned with the curriculum. MCAS scores were near or above state average in all grades and subject areas, except mathematics which was slightly below state average in all three grades. MCAS scores in 1999 show an improvement in all subjects in grades four and eight but were lower for 10th graders.

APS had a student enrollment of 4,605 in FY1998 and its net school spending was \$24.3 million. That represents 100.3% of the foundation target budget for the district. Total net school spending increased from \$18.9 million in FY94 to \$24.3 million in FY98. The increase of \$5.4 million has been funded with \$2.3 million in local funds and \$3.1 million in state aid. Special education enrollment is higher than the state average and spending for SPED has been increasing significantly, reaching \$3.0 million in FY98, and taking a larger share of total expenditures. Although teachers have been added since FY93, the overall student to teacher ratio was at 16.7:1 in FY98, considerably higher than the state average of 14.2:1 as student enrollment had increased as well. Spending on computers and textbooks has increased during the past three years. Spending for professional development has exceeded the minimum legal requirement from FY95 through 98.

The City of Agawam's five-year capital plan included building additions to all elementary schools and the high school. These have been completed. Renovations were also made to the middle school. The City administers the maintenance program of all municipal buildings including the school department.

APS is meeting the goals of its technology plan even though there were no formal updates to the plan and the technology committee met only once during FY99. Since the conclusion of the audit, the technology committee has met once in FY00, and has scheduled a second meeting. APS has invested during the past three years in technology for all schools. As a result sixty-nine percent of the 689 computers in the district as of October 1999 are less than three years old.

More progress could be made in other areas of planning and management. There is no district mission statement nor is there a strategic plan for the district. Individual school improvement plans are prepared as required by law, but due in part to the lack of district wide guidelines; they vary in scope, content and quality. There is no system to monitor progress and little follow-up is evident. While all principals work under individual contracts, salary increases are linked to increases in the teachers' contract rather than on

performance. Contracts do contain a provision allowing termination for “good cause.” Purchasing and financial control systems are in place and appear to be functioning.

THE FOUNDATION BUDGET

- APS has met or exceeded net school spending requirements as determined by the Department of Education (DOE) from FY94 through FY98. APS exceeded its total foundation budget target in FY98. The district received \$6.1 million in state aid in FY94 and \$9.2 million in FY98 as a result of Massachusetts’ investment in education. [See Section 5]
- The foundation budget does not mandate spending in a specific category. However, to encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch. 70 § 9 requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education when it has failed to meet foundation budget spending levels for professional development, books and instructional equipment, extended/expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance. Although APS did not meet these levels from FY94 through FY98 in all areas except books and equipment and professional development in FY98, it did not file a report as required by law nor did DOE direct it to do so. [See Section 7]

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- APS test scores have shown generally good results and are generally near or above state averages. Recently released MCAS scores show that APS scored above the state average scaled scores for grades four, eight, and ten, except for Math and English, which was slightly below the state average. SAT scores have generally been just slightly lower than the state average over recent years. MEAP scores are above the state averages for grades 4 and 10 and significant improvement has been shown, especially in the area of grade four proficiency scores. [See Section 16]

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT POWERS

- APS has a superintendent, a deputy superintendent (business manager), and an assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. The Superintendent is in his fourth year at APS.
- APS uses individual contracts for school principals. The contracts are generally for three years in length and state the base-year salary. Annual salary increases are tied to teachers’ contract increases. The Superintendent evaluates principals in writing at the end of the year. [See Section 17]
- The Superintendent meets twice monthly with administrators and principals. In addition, he visits each school weekly and may meet informally with the principal at that time. [See Section 17]

STUDENT/FTE TEACHER STAFFING

- Between FY93 and FY98, the total number of teaching FTE's increased by 14.9, or 5.9 percent, from 250.8 to 275.7. The all students/all FTE teachers ratio increased during this same period from 15.2 to 16.7. The FY93 ratio was higher than the State average of 15.1. The FY98 ratio was higher than State average of 14.2. [See Section 8]

TEACHER COMPENSATION

- APS increased its expenditures for salaries by \$3.9 million between FY93 and FY98, an increase of 34.3 percent. This increase is 7.3 percentage points above the 27 percent increase in total school district expenditures during the same period. Total salaries made up 54.5 percent of these expenditures in FY93 and increased to 57.6 percent in FY98. The APS average teacher salary for FY98 was \$42,656, below the state average of \$42,874. [See Section 9]

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- APS has met the professional development legal minimum spending requirements for FY95 through FY98, but has not met the foundation budget targets for FY94 to FY98. Expenditures in FY96 represented 273.8 percent of the minimum legal spending requirement and decreased to 116.9 percent in FY98. [See Section 10]

TIME AND LEARNING

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

DISTRICT ISSUES

- During FY99 the APS technology committee only met once. As of July 1, 1999 the City has a network administrator splitting time with the schools and City. The Superintendent asked the network administrator to set up a new technology committee. As of October 20, 1999 a date had not been set for a technology committee meeting. Formalization of the network administrator's role in the school district would ensure continuity of services to the APS schools.
- School improvement plans do not have district wide goals incorporated in them. Plans vary in scope, content and quality. Current school improvement plans do not include mission statements, measurable goals, and timetables. Plans do not illustrate that measurable progress has been made on accomplishing school council goals. There is little to be follow-up either at the district level or the school level as to the

accomplishment of goals. Plans do address testing, parental involvement, curriculum frame works and professional development and reflect active parental and community involvement.

BEST PRACTICE

- Through the Mayor's budget each school council receives funds based on enrollment. Funds for FY99 range from \$6,700 for an elementary school to \$25,400 for the high school. These school council budgets provide newly elected school councils with the resources to accomplish some of their objectives without having to wait for the next budget cycle. Establishing this budget has facilitated a more active role for school councils.
- In an effort to control special education expenditures, APS has fully implemented the Instructional Support Team (IST) process in two of the elementary schools in the school district in FY99, and partially implemented the process in the other two elementary schools. The IST is composed of teachers, the principal, counselors and parents of the student involved. The purpose of the IST is to attempt to remedy any academic or behavioral concerns of the student before a SPED referral is made.

Auditee's Response

The audit team held an exit conference with the Superintendent and his staff on Friday January 7, 2000. The team invited APS to suggest specific technical corrections and make a formal written response to the report by Wednesday January 12, 2000. A response was received and changes were made in the report as a result.

Review Scope

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

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

In keeping with the goals set out by the EMAB, the school district review was designed to determine whether or not basic financial goals related to education reform have been met.

The audit team gathered data related to performance such as test scores, student to teacher ratios and class sizes to show results and operational trends. However, this report does not intend to present a definitive opinion regarding the quality of education in APS, or its successes or failures in meeting particular education reform goals. Rather, it is intended to present a relevant summary of data to the EMAB for evaluation and comparison purposes.

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

III. General Conditions and Findings

1. Agawam Overview

The Division of Local Services classifies the City of Agawam as a growth community. It has a 1996 population of 26,721, up 1.71 percent from 1980 and down 2.2 percent from 1990. The population of Agawam is 97.4 percent white, according to 1990 US Census information. Also in 1990, of the 27,323 residents of Agawam, 12,886 were between 15 and 44 years old. Just less than two-thirds of the households at that time were married couple households.

Historically, Agawam has been an agricultural community. Currently, the largest employers in Agawam, exclusive of the town, are the Heritage Hall West Nursing Home with 465 employees, and Olympic Manufacturing with 200 employees.

In 1999, the tax levy in Agawam accounted for 50.1 percent of its revenue source (state aid made up another 30.4 percent of those revenues). According to 1990 US census information, 70.3 percent of the dwellings in Agawam were single-family units. *Charts 1-1 and 1-2* show some key demographic and economic statistics for Agawam.

*Chart 1-1***City of Agawam
Demographic Data**

1996 Population	26,721
FY99 Residential Tax Rate	\$15.89
FY99 Average Single Family Tax	\$1,885
FY99 Avg. Assessed Value Per Single Family	\$118,659
FY99 Tax Levy	\$24,752,868
FY99 Levy Ceiling	\$35,992,066
FY99 State Aid	\$15,010,938
FY99 State Aid as % of Total Revenue	30.4%
1989 Per Capita Income	\$16,111
<u>1996 Average Unemployment Rate</u>	<u>3.9%</u>

Note: Data provided by DLS

The City of Agawam is governed by a mayor and an eleven-member city council. The mayor serves as the chairman of its school committee. The Agawam Public School District is headed by a Superintendent, a Deputy Superintendent who serves as the business manager, and an Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent was originally hired as the Director of Curriculum. This position was elevated to Assistant Superintendent as her responsibilities for all areas of curriculum and instruction grew. As of the audit date, APS consists of a pre-K early childhood center, four elementary schools (grades K-4), a middle school (grades 5-6), a junior high (grades 7-8), and a high school (grades 9-12).

Of the APS high school graduating class of 1997, 40.4 percent of students indicated they intended to attend a four-year college. This is 13 percent below the statewide average. Also, 36 percent indicated an intention to go on to a two-year college. This is 17.5 percent above the statewide average, bringing the overall percentage of students who intend to continue their education to 76.4 percent, 4.5 percent above the state average. In 1997, the high school dropout rate was 2.4 percent, 1 percent below the state average.

Chart 1-2

**Agawam Public Schools
Demographic Data
School Year 1997/98**

	APS	State Average
Enrollment Race / Ethnicity		
White	96.4%	77.5%
Minority	3.6%	22.5%
First Language not English		
Limited English Proficiency	1.2%	4.8%
Special Education	21.1%	16.6%
Percentage Attending Private School (1996/97)	4.2%	10.6%
High School Drop-Out Rate (1996/97)	2.4%	3.4%
Plans of Graduates - Class of '97		
4 Year College	40.4%	53.4%
2 Year College	36.0%	18.5%
2 or 4 Year College	76.4%	71.9%
Work	13.2%	16.8%

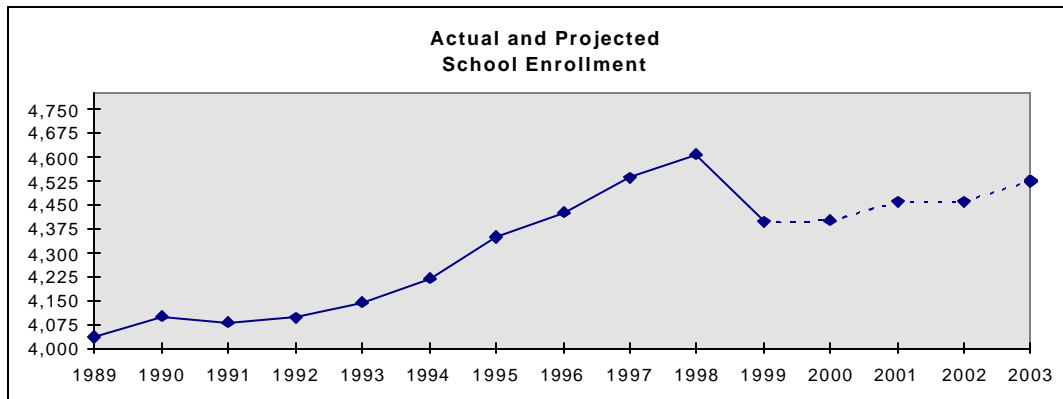
Note: Data provided by DOE

Consistent with the city demographics, the white enrollment at APS is 96.4 percent, with 1.2 percent of those students being limited English proficient.

Chart 1-3 illustrates the APS enrollment trend from October 1988, the 1988/89 school year, to October 1998, the 1998/99 school year. Enrollments projected by the district are shown from October 1999 to October 2003. Enrollment increased steadily from 1989 through 1998 but then declined sharply in 1999. This decline is due to a large high school graduating class leaving the district coupled with a low pre-K enrollment that year. Enrollment projections for the district indicate a renewed increase over the next five years. However, it is not expected that the 1998 enrollment level will be reached again until after the 2002/03 school year. Greater detail about enrollment is provided in *Chart 1-3a*.

Chart 1-3

**Agawam Public Schools
Actual and Projected Student Enrollment
School Years 1988/89 to 2002/03**



Note: Enrollment as of October 1st. Years are in fiscal years. Data obtained from APS.

As shown in *Chart 1-3a*, enrollment has increased from 4,220 in October of the 1993/94 school year, to 4,605 in October of the 1997/98 school year. Total APS enrollment increased 9.1 percent during this period, a lower rate than the statewide increase of 15.1 percent.

Chart 1-3a

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

School Year	Elementary School		Middle School	High School	Tuitioned Out	Total
	Pre K & K	1 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 12	Ungraded	Enrollment
88-89	353	1,570	791	1,285	36	4,035
89-90	374	1,618	857	1,209	41	4,099
90-91	392	1,654	901	1,096	38	4,081
91-92	408	1,623	947	1,078	41	4,097
92-93	410	1,625	977	1,083	49	4,144
93-94	427	1,620	1,033	1,096	44	4,220
94-95	444	1,634	1,025	1,246	0	4,349
95-96	428	1,670	1,033	1,295	0	4,426
96-97	552	1,678	1,018	1,287	0	4,535
97-98	523	1,669	1,023	1,390	0	4,605
98-99	442	1,673	984	1,298	0	4,397
99-00	345	1,708	1,010	1,337		4,400
00-01	361	1,737	1,016	1,345		4,459
01-02	350	1,785	1,058	1,266		4,459
02-03	335	1,808	1,058	1,323		4,524
APS 94-98						
% Change	22.5%	3.0%	-1.0%	26.8%		9.1%
State 94-98						
% Change	20.7%	22.1%	21.8%	2.8%		15.1%
APS 98-03						
% Change	-35.9%	8.3%	3.4%	-4.8%		-1.8%

Note: Data obtained from APS. Tuitioned out/ungraded students shown as reported by the district.

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

Chart 1-4

Agawam Public Schools
Distribution of Enrollment by Type of School

School Year	Elementary School		Middle School	High School	Tuitioned Out	Total Enrollment
	Pre K & K	1 - 5	6 - 8	9 - 12	Ungraded	
88-89	8.7%	38.9%	19.6%	31.8%	0.9%	100.0%
89-90	9.1%	39.5%	20.9%	29.5%	1.0%	100.0%
90-91	9.6%	40.5%	22.1%	26.9%	0.9%	100.0%
91-92	10.0%	39.6%	23.1%	26.3%	1.0%	100.0%
92-93	9.9%	39.2%	23.6%	26.1%	1.2%	100.0%
93-94	9.9%	39.2%	23.6%	26.1%	1.2%	100.0%
94-95	10.1%	38.4%	24.5%	26.0%	1.0%	100.0%
95-96	10.2%	37.6%	23.6%	28.7%	0.0%	100.0%
96-97	9.7%	37.7%	23.3%	29.3%	0.0%	100.0%
97-98	12.2%	37.0%	22.4%	28.4%	0.0%	100.0%
98-99	11.4%	36.2%	22.2%	30.2%	0.0%	100.0%
99-00	10.1%	38.0%	22.4%	29.5%	0.0%	100.0%
00-01	7.8%	38.8%	23.0%	30.4%	0.0%	100.0%
01-02	8.1%	39.0%	22.8%	30.2%	0.0%	100.0%
02-03	7.8%	40.0%	23.7%	28.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Percentage Point Change SY88-89 to SY97-98						
		-2.2%	-1.1%	2.2%		
Percentage Point Change SY88-89 to SY02-03						
		0.8%	0.2%	2.3%		

Note: Data obtained from APS.

2. School Finances

At APS state aid composed 35 percent of district funding in FY98. APS has benefited from additional funds available due to education reform. As state aid increased from \$6.1 million in FY94 to \$9.2 million in FY98, the combination of state aid and the local share allowed the district to increase teaching salaries and significantly increase spending on textbooks and technology.

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

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

Generally, the audit team examines the school committee budget in some detail as a matter of practice because it reflects basic financial and educational decisions, provides an overview of financial operations and indicates how the community expects to meet the goals and objectives of education reform. We examined the budget in detail during this review.

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

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

3. School Committee Budget Trend

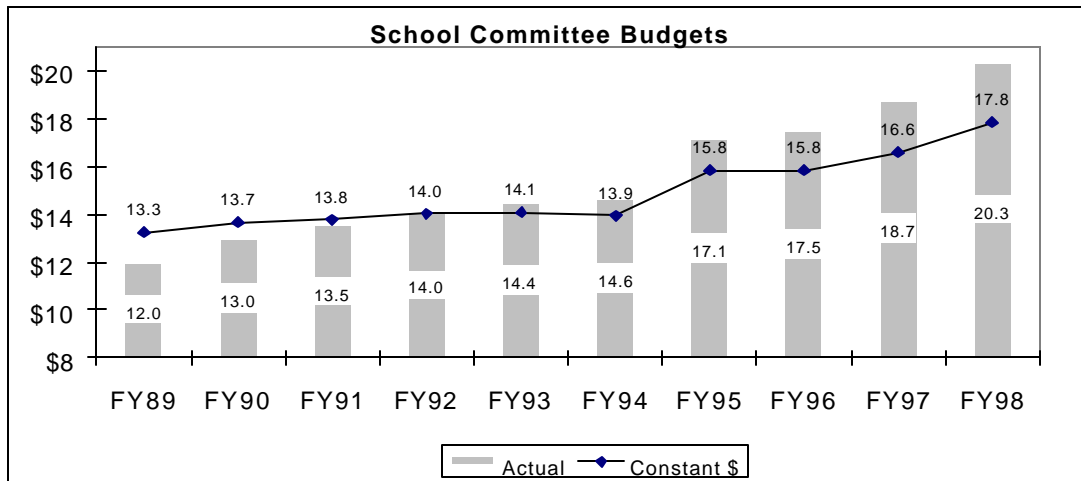
Chart 3-1 illustrates the school committee budget trend from FY89 to FY98. This information was obtained from Schedule 19 of the district and DOE EOY reports, and APS budget packages.

The total school committee budget increased by \$2.4 million or 20.3 percent between FY89 and FY93. With education reform aid, the budget increased between FY93 and FY97 by \$4.3 million or 29.8 percent. The FY98 budget further increased over FY97 by \$1.6 million or 8.5 percent.

In constant dollars, where FY92 is set at 100, the chart illustrates how the school committee budget fared with respect to inflation over time. From FY89 to FY97, the school committee budget as defined above increased from \$13.3 million to \$16.6 million, a 25.1 percent increase in constant dollars. From FY93 to FY97, it increased \$2.5 million or 17.8 percent in constant dollars, from \$14.1 million to \$16.6 million. In constant dollars, APS has not experienced net budget decreases in the last five years.

Chart 3-1

Agawam Public Schools
School Committee Budgets in Actual and Constant Dollars
 (in millions)
 FY89 - FY98



Note: Data obtained from APS.

4. Total School District Expenditures

Total school district expenditures include expenditures by the school committee and the city for school purposes as reported in the DOE EOY report. FY93 includes state per pupil aid. Total school district expenditures increased between FY89 and FY93 by \$3.9 million or 23 percent. Expenditures increased between FY93 and FY97 by \$4.0 million or 19.2 percent.

Expenditures paid for by the town for school purposes were \$5.1 million in FY93 and increased to \$5.5 million in FY97. In FY97, the major components were \$2.2 million for operation and maintenance of plants, \$1.3 million for employee insurance, and \$632 thousand for long-term debt retirement.

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

Chart 4-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)**

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
School Committee	\$12.8	\$15.7	\$15.9	\$16.7	\$17.6	\$19.3	\$20.6
City	\$4.1	\$5.1	\$4.7	\$5.2	\$5.5	\$5.5	\$5.8
Total	\$16.9	\$20.8	\$20.7	\$22.0	\$23.1	\$24.8	\$26.5

Note: Data obtained from APS

Chart 4-2

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

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY94-FY97 Change	FY98
Expenditures / Student in Actual \$	\$4,468	\$4,571	\$4,748	\$5,002	12.0%	\$5,271
Expenditures / Student in 1992 \$	\$4,259	\$4,228	\$4,297	\$4,427	3.9%	\$4,623

Note: Data obtained from APS

Chart 4-2 shows the FY94 to FY98 trend in net school spending per student. It indicates that actual net school spending per student has increased from \$4,468 in FY94 to \$5,002 in FY97, or 12 percent. The inflation-adjusted figures have also increased from \$4,259 in FY94 to \$4,427 in FY97, or 3.9 percent in 1992 dollars.

5. Net School Spending Requirements

Pursuant to the education reform law, DOE develops annual spending requirements and budget targets for each school district. The requirements are based on a formula which is used to set specific minimum spending requirements and, in combination with other factors, is also used to set “foundation” budget targets, as well as determining the amount of state aid for each district. Each school district must meet a net spending requirement. Expenditures which count towards a district’s “net school spending” generally include all education related expenditures paid for with state aid under Chapter 70 and municipal

appropriations used for that purpose. Excluded from the net school spending definition are expenditures for school transportation, school lunch, school construction, and certain capital expenditures. Expenditures from federal funds and from school revolving accounts are also excluded.

As indicated in *Chart 5-1*, during FY94 to FY98 required net school spending, the amount the district must spend to move towards the foundation budget target, increased by 22.1 percent, from \$19.0 million to \$23.2 million. Actual net school spending exceeded this requirement in all years except FY94 when the minimum requirement was met. While the required net school spending amounts are below the foundation for each fiscal year shown, actual net school spending amounts have been between 96 and 99.8 percent of foundation in all years except FY98 when actual net school spending was at 100.3 percent of foundation. To date, actual net school spending has consistently met or exceeded the minimum requirement.

Chart 5-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Foundation Budget and Net School Spending (NSS)
(in millions of dollars)**

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Foundation Budget Target	\$19.6	\$20.4	\$21.6	\$22.7	\$24.2
Required NSS as % of Foundation	96.5%	96.6%	95.0%	88.8%	95.8%
Required Net School Spending	\$19.0	\$ 19.8	\$ 20.5	\$ 20.2	\$ 23.2
Actual Net School Spending	\$18.9	\$ 19.9	\$ 21.0	\$ 22.7	\$ 24.3
Variance \$	(\$0.1)	\$0.1	\$0.5	\$2.5	\$1.1
Variance %	-0.5%	0.6%	2.3%	12.4%	4.6%
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	96.0%	97.2%	97.2%	100%	100.3%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

Chart 5-2 indicates the state aid, as a percent of actual net school spending, has increased from 32.3 percent in FY94 to 38 percent in FY98, while the local share has decreased from 67.7 percent in FY94 to 62 percent in FY98.

Chart 5-2

**Agawam Public Schools
Net School Spending
(in millions of dollars)**

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Required Local Contribution	\$12.9	\$13.3	\$13.4	\$12.2	\$14.0
Actual Local Contribution	\$12.8	\$13.4	\$13.9	\$14.7	\$15.1
Variance \$	(\$0.1)	\$0.1	\$0.5	\$2.5	\$1.1
Variance %	-0.8%	1.0%	3.5%	20.5%	7.7%
Required Net School Spending	\$19.0	\$19.8	\$20.5	\$20.2	\$23.2
Actual Net School Spending	\$18.9	\$19.9	\$21.0	\$22.7	\$24.3
Local Share \$	\$12.8	\$13.4	\$13.9	\$14.7	\$15.1
State Aid	\$6.1	\$6.5	\$7.1	\$8.0	\$9.2
Local Share %	67.7%	67.4%	66.1%	64.8%	62.0%
State Aid %	32.3%	32.6%	33.9%	35.2%	38.0%

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

6. School Committee Program Budget

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

APS does not currently prepare budgets on a program basis. APS prepares its budget currently by functional areas or cost centers. Salary budgets for each cost center are prepared by the central office. The remainder of the budget is prepared by each cost center "manager". School councils review the budget for each school. Cost center managers make a budget presentation to the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Administrative Assistant, and Assistant Superintendent. At that time, they must support the need for items requested in their budget. Any preliminary wording or amount changes are made. All cost center budgets are rolled-up into a district budget. A complete district budget proposal is given to each cost

center manager, school council, and school committee. Cost center budgets are explained to the school committee during a series of presentations. There each receives tentative approval. Final approval is obtained after a public hearing by residents of the city in attendance. The approved budget is sent to the Mayor for presentation to the City Council.

Chart 6-1 shows the APS school committee budgets for FY93, FY95, and FY98. It is evident from the chart that the cost center structure has evolved since FY93 into a largely school based cost center structure. FY93 to FY98 comparisons were not made, as they would not be meaningful. For example, in FY93 where textbooks were budgeted as a separate line item, they are now included in the line items cost center. Similarly, where athletics were previously budgeted separately, that expense is included in the applicable school's cost center.

Chart 6-1

**Agawam Public Schools
School Committee Budget
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY93	FY95	FY98
Acquisition of Equipment	45,810	0	0
Adult Education	0	10,099	0
Athletics	168,469	190,376	0
Attendance	25,707	27,841	0
Audio Visual	27,614	8,703	0
Band	0	43,314	0
Benjamin Phelps School	0	646,854	819,500
Business Functions	199,800	220,882	0
Central Office	0		492,596
Clifford Granger School	0	863,546	976,554
Computer Science	0	288,885	323,476
Data Processing	0	53,138	0
Early Childhood	0		154,422
Gifted	0	101,572	97,187
Guidance	510,848	417,761	0
Health	7,342	7,932	0
Home Economics	0	305,626	0
Improvement of Buildings	575		0
Insurance	80,500		0
James Clark School	0	646,557	714,413
Junior High School	0	1,570,266	2,429,144
Library Services	119,178		0
Line Items	0		1,542,228
Maintenance of Equipment	53,716		0
Middle School	0	1,254,823	1,608,052
Music	0	428,935	0
Other School Activities	52,101	0	0
Physical Education	0	534,552	0
Principals	786,391	0	0
Programs with Other Districts	1,186,364	436,444	626,094
Psychological Services	236,785	0	0
Recreation	17,900	17,900	0
Replacement of Equipment	5,547	0	0
Robinson Park School	0	850,401	940,690
School Committee	41,630	43,931	59,500
Senior High School	0	2,716,391	4,133,712
Special Education	0	3,160,323	4,183,719
Superintendent	150,734	158,308	0
Supervisors	202,177	0	0
Teaching	9,509,784	0	0
Technology Education	0	400,057	0
Textbooks	79,577	0	0
Transportation	870,875	1,092,525	1,238,096
Undistributed	0	543,579	0
	60,100	57,000	0
Total	14,439,524	17,098,521	20,339,383

Chart 6-1a

**Agawam Public Schools
School Committee Budget
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY93	FY95	FY98
Acquisition of Equipment	0.32%	0.00%	0.00%
Adult Education	0.00%	0.06%	0.00%
Athletics	1.17%	1.11%	0.00%
Attendance	0.18%	0.16%	0.00%
Audio Visual	0.19%	0.05%	0.00%
Band	0.00%	0.25%	0.00%
Benjamin Phelps School	0.00%	3.78%	4.03%
Business Functions	1.38%	1.29%	0.00%
Central Office	0.00%	0.00%	2.42%
Clifford Granger School	0.00%	5.05%	4.80%
Computer Science	0.00%	1.69%	1.59%
Data Processing	0.00%	0.31%	0.00%
Early Childhood	0.00%	0.00%	0.76%
Gifted	0.00%	0.59%	0.48%
Guidance	3.54%	2.44%	0.00%
Health	0.05%	0.05%	0.00%
Home Economics	0.00%	1.79%	0.00%
Improvement of Buildings	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Insurance	0.56%	0.00%	0.00%
James Clark School	0.00%	3.78%	3.51%
Junior High School	0.00%	9.18%	11.94%
Library Services	0.83%	0.00%	0.00%
Line Items	0.00%	0.00%	7.58%
Maintenance of Equipment	0.37%	0.00%	0.00%
Middle School	0.00%	7.34%	7.91%
Music	0.00%	2.51%	0.00%
Other School Activities	0.36%	0.00%	0.00%
Physical Education	0.00%	3.13%	0.00%
Principals	5.45%	0.00%	0.00%
Programs with Other Districts	8.22%	2.55%	3.08%
Psychological Services	1.64%	0.00%	0.00%
Recreation	0.12%	0.10%	0.00%
Replacement of Equipment	0.04%	0.00%	0.00%
Robinson Park School	0.00%	4.97%	4.62%
School Committee	0.29%	0.26%	0.29%
Senior High School	0.00%	15.89%	20.32%
Special Education	0.00%	18.48%	20.57%
Superintendent	1.04%	0.93%	0.00%
Supervisors	1.40%	0.00%	0.00%
Teaching	65.86%	0.00%	0.00%
Technology Education	0.00%	2.34%	0.00%
Textbooks	0.55%	0.00%	0.00%
Transportation	6.03%	6.39%	6.09%
Undistributed	0.00%	3.18%	0.00%
	0.42%	0.33%	0.00%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Chart 6-1a shows the same budget data on a percentage distribution basis.

7. Foundation Budget

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

Chart 7-0

Agawam Public Schools

Actual NSS as Percent of the Foundation Budget Target

(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Foundation Budget Target	\$19.6	\$20.4	\$21.6	\$22.7	\$24.2
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	96.0%	97.2%	97.2%	99.8%	100.3%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

The foundation budget establishes spending targets by grade (pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, junior high and high school) and program (special education, bilingual, vocational and expanded or after-school activities). Grade and program spending targets are intended to serve as guidelines only and are not binding on local school districts. However, to encourage appropriate levels of spending, M.G.L. Ch. 70, §9 requires that a school district report to the Commissioner of Education why it has failed to meet foundation budget spending levels for professional development, books and instructional equipment, extended/expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance. According to *Chart 7-1*, expenditures did not reach foundation budget in any of these categories for the fiscal years shown, except in the area of books and equipment in FY98 when spending was at 107.6 percent of foundation, and professional development in FY98 when spending was at 103.2 percent of foundation. APS did not file a report with the Commissioner's office as required by Ch. 70, §9 for these fiscal years, nor did DOE direct APS to submit such report.

Chart 7-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Net School Spending
Foundation Budget
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY94		FY96		FY98	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Professional Development	\$271	\$306	\$283	\$337	\$389	\$377
Books and Equipment	\$745	\$1,192	\$1,308	\$1,320	\$1,585	\$1,474
Expanded Program	\$0	\$87	\$0	\$146	\$0	\$161
Extraordinary Maintenance	\$0	\$627	\$0	\$695	\$0	\$779

Expenditures As Percentage of Foundation Budget

	FY94	FY96	FY98
	NSS/FND	NSS/FND	NSS/FND
Professional Development	88.6%	84.2%	103.2%
Books and Equipment	62.5%	99.1%	107.6%
Expanded Program	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Extraordinary Maintenance	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

Appendix A1 shows the APS foundation budget for FY94, FY96 and FY98. For each year, the chart shows expenditures and variances from the foundation budgets as well as how expenditures compare with the foundation budgets. Although APS did not meet the foundation budgets in some required categories for these fiscal years, total spending was at or between 96 and 100.3 percent of the foundation budget target from FY94 to FY98.

8. Staffing - Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Trends

Since salaries comprise approximately 57.6 percent of FY98 total school district expenditures, budget changes closely reflect changes in staffing or FTE's.

In FY93 the district had a total of 357.9 FTE's including 264.9 teachers. According to information reported to DOE on the October 1 reports, FY98 total FTE's increased to 481.2 FTE's, with 275.7 teaching FTE's. This represents an approximately 4.1 percent increase in teaching FTE's. In this context, teachers exclude instructional assistants.

Teacher FTE's are different in section 8 and in section 9 of this report. This is because School System Summary Reports (October 1 Reports) were used to calculate FTE staff in section 8 and the EOY Reports (Schedule 13) were used to calculate FTE teachers and average teacher salary in section 9. The data for each report is reported at two different times during the year.

APS went through a period of slight reduction in teaching FTE's between FY89 and FY93, reducing teaching FTE's by 14.1. This was partially compensated for by an increase in instructional assistants. Due to increased state aid, staffing increased by 22.8 percent between FY93 and FY98, as 89.3 FTE's including 24.9 teaching FTE's were added. This addition of 24.9 teaching FTE's is an increase of 9.9 percent. This compares to a total student enrollment increase of 11.1 percent during this time period. During the FY89 to FY98 period, schools in the district were able to increase staff by 34.5 percent, with the number of teachers rising by 4 percent, much lower than the enrollment increase of 14.1 percent.

Chart 8-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Staffing Trends
Full Time Equivalent (FTE)**

	Teachers as % Instruct.				All		
	Total FTEs	Teachers	of FTEs	Assists.	Principals	Administrators	Others
FY89	357.9	264.9	74.0%	24	12	8.5	48.5
FY93	391.9	250.8	64.0%	68.8	11.0	5.0	56.3
FY98	481.2	275.7	57.3%	84.8	11.0	6.0	103.7
FY89-98	123.3	10.8		60.8	-1.0	-2.5	55.2
Incr. / Decr.	34.5%	4.1%		253.3%	-8.3%	-29.4%	113.8%

Note: Data obtained from APS.

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

Chart 8-2

**Agawam Public Schools
Teachers By Program
Full Time Equivalents
(excluding teaching aides)**

	FY89	FY93	FY98	FY89 - FY98	
				Increase	% Incr / Decr
Elementary	67.0	62.0	69.5	7.5	12.1%
Middle/Secondary	197.9	188.8	206.2	17.4	9.2%
Systemwide	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Subtotal	264.9	250.8	275.7	24.9	9.9%
Special Education	26.0	30.0	31.0	1.0	3.3%
Subtotal	26.0	30.0	31.0	1.0	3.3%
Total	290.9	280.8	306.7	25.9	9.2%

Note: Data obtained from APS.

Student/teacher ratios follow a similar trend in all areas. They increased between FY93 and FY98, as shown in *Chart 8-3*. The overall ratio for students to teachers was 16.5:1 in FY93. It increased to 16.7:1 in FY98. When adjusted for the number of SPED teachers, using the same total student population for illustration purposes, the resulting ratios would be slightly higher as illustrated in the chart. The student/teacher ratios are generally higher than the state average.

Chart 8-3

**Agawam Public Schools
Students Per Teacher**

	FY89	FY93	FY98
All Students / All Teachers - APS	15.2	16.5	16.7
All Students / All Teachers - State Average	13.8	15.1	14.2
All Students / Non-SPED, ESL & Bilingual - APS	16.9	18.8	18.8
All Students / Non-SPED, ESL & Bilingual - State Average	17.2	19.2	18.1
All Students / All Teachers			
Elementary	9.7	32.8	31.5
Middle/Secondary	10.5	10.9	11.7

Note: Data obtained from APS.

Teaching staff increased between FY93 and FY98 in most core subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies as shown in *Chart 8-4*.

Chart 8-4

**Agawam Public Schools
Teachers (FTE) - Certain Core Subjects
High and Middle School**

	FY89	FY93	FY98	FY93 - FY98	
				Increase	% Incr / Decr
English	18.0	16.8	18.5	1.7	10.1%
Mathematics	25.0	12.0	13.0	1.0	8.3%
Science	20.1	16.0	17.6	1.6	10.0%
Social Studies	15.0	13.7	15.7	2.0	14.6%
Total	78.1	58.5	64.8	6.3	10.8%

Note: Data obtained from APS.

9. Payroll - Salary Levels, Union Contracts

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

Chart 9-1 indicates how school salaries have increased in comparison to total school district expenditures. APS increased its expenditures for salaries by \$3.9 million between FY93 and FY98, an increase of 34.3 percent. This increase is 7.3 percentage points above the 27 percent increase in total school district expenditures during the same period. Total salaries made up 54.5 percent of these expenditures in FY93 and increased to 57.6 percent in FY98. This chart includes fringe benefits.

Of the \$5.6 million total school expenditure increase from FY93 to FY98, \$3.9 million is attributable to salaries. Of this \$3.9 million salary increase, \$3.1 million or 78.7 percent, applied to teaching salaries and \$0.8 million, or 21.3 percent, applied to non-teaching salaries. The latter group includes administrators, para-professionals, clerical staff, custodial staff, etc.

Chart 9-1

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

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY93 - FY98	
								\$ Incr. / Decr.	% Incr. / Decr.
Total School Committee and Municipal Expenditures	\$16.9	\$20.8	\$20.7	\$22.0	\$23.1	\$24.8	\$26.5	\$5.6	27.0%
Total Salaries	\$9.8	\$11.4	\$12.5	\$13.2	\$13.3	\$14.2	\$15.2	\$3.9	34.3%
as % of Total Expenditures	57.8%	54.5%	60.7%	60.0%	57.6%	57.2%	57.6%	69.1%	
Teaching Salaries	\$7.5	\$8.8	\$9.4	\$10.1	\$10.2	\$11.0	\$11.9	\$3.1	34.8%
as % of Total Salaries	77.1%	77.5%	75.2%	77.0%	76.9%	77.4%	77.8%	78.7%	
Non-Teaching Salaries	\$2.2	\$2.6	\$3.1	\$3.0	\$3.1	\$3.2	\$3.4	\$0.8	32.5%
as % of Total Salaries	22.9%	22.5%	24.8%	23.0%	23.1%	22.6%	22.2%	21.3%	

Note: Data obtained from APS

Chart 9-2 shows that the average teacher's salary increased from \$34,450 to \$42,656 between FY93 and FY98. The FY97 average teacher's salary of \$41,270 is below the state average salary of \$42,874 reported by DOE.

Chart 9-2

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

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
Teaching Salaries (\$ in mil)	\$7.5	\$8.8	\$9.4	\$10.1	\$10.2	\$11.0	\$11.9
FTE - Teachers	256.2	255.4	262.2	264.7	262.4	266.5	278
FTE Incr. / Decr. from Previous Year	-1.8	-0.3	6.8	2.5	-2.3	4.1	11.5
Average Salary per FTE	\$ 29,381	\$34,450	\$35,964	\$38,341	\$38,998	\$41,270	\$42,656
DOE Reported Statewide Average	N/A	\$38,681	\$39,012	\$40,718	\$41,760	\$42,874	N/A

Note: FTE excludes adult education teachers. Average salary per FTE consists of all salaries (i.e. assistant principals, advisors, coaches etc.), step increases, longevity and differentials. Data obtained from APS and DOE end-of-year reports.

Chart 9-2a indicates that increases due to annual contracts and steps ranged between 4.6 percent and 9.5 percent per year from the 1993 to 1998 time period, with the exception of 6.6 percent in 1996.

Chart 9-2a

**Agawam Public Schools
Teachers Salaries - Step and Contract Percent Increases**

Period	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Total
Annual Contract Increase	0.0%	3.5%	4.5%	2.0%	3.5%	4.7%	13.5%
Step Increase	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.8%	23.1%
Total	4.6%	8.1%	9.1%	6.6%	8.1%	9.5%	36.6%

Note: Data obtained from APS

As shown in *Chart 9-3*, a review of salary changes over the FY93 to FY98 period indicates that the step 12 salary levels increased 19.5 percent without including step increases or lane (degree level) changes. This represents the minimum increase a full-time teacher would receive exclusive of raises due to step changes or obtaining an advanced academic degree. Similarly, the state and local government implicit price deflator indicates about a 10.2 percent inflationary trend for the FY93 to FY97 period.

Chart 9-3 shows how APS salary schedules might apply to a particular teacher for the period of FY93 to FY98 depending on the step and academic degree. Various examples outline different situations. The chart illustrates so-called lane changes due to credit hours taken or degree earned such as BA to BA+15 and M to M+15.

For example, as of FY93, teacher A was on the maximum step 12 and had a BA. By FY98, this teacher on step 12 has received salary increases that total 19.5 percent. If this teacher had earned a BA+15 and changed salary lanes to BA+15 during this period, the increase would have amounted to 21.4 percent.

Teacher B had a BA, step 7, in FY93. In FY98, this teacher is on step 12 (the maximum step for a BA) and has received a salary increase of 54.9 percent. Had this teacher earned a BA+15 and changed to salary lane BA+15 during this period, the increase would have amounted to 57.4 percent.

Teacher C entered APS with a BA at step 1 in FY93. By FY98, this teacher had reached step 6 and had received a 47.1 percent increase in pay. By earning a BA+15 and changing salary lanes to BA+15, the percent increase would have amounted to 50.4 percent.

Chart 9-4 shows the salary schedule for all lanes for steps 1 and 12 from FY93 to FY98.

Chart 9-3

Agawam Public Schools
Teaching Staff
Step/Degree Summary - Selected Years

	FY93 Base Pay		FY98 Base Pay			FY93-98 % Change	
	Step	Base Pay BA	Step	Base Pay BA	BA + 15	BA	BA + 15
Teacher A	12	\$34,295	12	\$40,977	\$41,628	19.5%	21.4%
Teacher B	7	\$26,446	12	\$40,977	\$41,628	54.9%	57.4%
Teacher C	1	\$20,682	6	\$30,422	\$31,116	47.1%	50.4%
	M		M			MA	M + 15
Teacher A	13	\$37,432	13	\$44,725	\$45,861	19.5%	22.5%
Teacher B	8	\$28,657	13	\$44,725	\$45,861	56.1%	60.0%
Teacher C	1	\$21,794	6	\$31,816	\$32,659	46.0%	49.9%

Note: APS has 5 salary lanes: BA - Bachelor degree; BA + 15; M - Master degree; M + 15; 6th Year;
 For BA, there are 12 steps. For M to 6th Year there are 13 steps. Data obtained from APS.

Chart 9-4

Agawam Public Schools
Teaching Salary Schedules
Comparison of FY93 and FY98 Salary Schedules - Steps 1 and 12

Salary Lane	Initial Entry Level - Step 1					
	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	\$20,682	\$21,406	\$22,369	\$22,816	\$23,615	\$24,712
BA+15	\$21,249	\$21,993	\$22,983	\$23,443	\$24,264	\$25,390
MA	\$21,794	\$22,557	\$23,572	\$24,043	\$24,885	\$26,041
MA+15	\$22,444	\$23,230	\$24,275	\$24,761	\$25,628	\$26,818
6th Year	\$23,098	\$23,906	\$24,982	\$25,482	\$26,374	\$27,599

Salary Lane	Highest Level - Step 12					
	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98
BA	\$34,295	\$35,495	\$37,092	\$37,834	\$39,158	\$40,977
BA+15	\$34,840	\$36,059	\$37,682	\$38,436	\$39,781	\$41,628
MA	\$35,388	\$36,627	\$38,275	\$39,041	\$40,407	\$42,283
MA+15	\$36,238	\$37,506	\$39,194	\$39,978	\$41,377	\$43,298
6th Year	\$37,084	\$38,382	\$40,109	\$40,911	\$42,343	\$44,309

Note: APS has 5 salary lanes: BA - Bachelor degree; BA + 15; M - Master degree; M + 15; 6th Year;
 For BA, there are 12 steps. For M to 6th Year there are 13 steps. For purposes of comparison between
 between BA and M, the highest step for a BA was used. Data obtained from APS.

10. Professional Development Program

DOE requires school systems to prepare a professional development plan and to meet minimum spending requirements for professional development. During FY95 and FY96, DOE required school districts to spend at a rate equivalent to \$25 per pupil for professional

development. This requirement increased to \$50 per pupil for FY97 and \$75 per pupil for FY98. As can be seen in *Chart 10-1* APS has significantly exceeded the minimum spending requirements for FY's 95 through FY98. Foundation enrollment figures used to calculate the minimum legal spending requirements are as adjusted by the DOE and, therefore, will not agree with enrollment figures contained in Section 1: Overview. APS does track PDP's for individual teachers at the district level. The professional development committee has representation from every school. Teacher representatives are elected by the staff in their respective building for three-year terms. *Chart 10-2* shows a sample of courses offered, the numbers of professional development points (PDP's) earned for each course, and the number of attendees. *Chart 10-2* also includes some of the external courses attended by APS teachers.

Chart 10-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Expenditures for Professional Development
(in whole dollars)**

	Professional Development	Minimum Spending Requirement	Total Spent as % of Requirement
FY94	\$271,322	N/A	N/A
FY95	\$247,867	100,650	246.3%
FY96	\$283,402	103,525	273.8%
FY97	\$324,896	212,400	153.0%
FY98	\$389,241	333,000	116.9%

Note: Data obtained from APS and DOE

Chart 10-2

Agawam Public Schools
Selected Professional Development Offerings 1998/99

Title	PDP's	Attendance
Performance Standards in the Classroom	6	45
What Does Proficient Look Like? Grades K - 4	6	40
Applied Behavior Analysis	3	39
Passive Restraint Training	3.5	39
Teaching & Learning in a Standards Based Classroom	6	38
Open Response for MCAS - English Lang. Arts & Social Studies	6	34
Evaluating Theme Tests - Grades 5 & 6 Reading	3.5	34
Teacher Mentor Training - Part One	6	33
Teacher Mentor Training - Part Two	4	30
Cross Discipline Ideas & Issues Workshop	2	25
The Essentials of Standards Based Performance	6	21
Research Paper Format - Grades 9 to 12	3	20
Mass Science & Technology Curriculum Frameworks Workshop	3.5	19
Math Manipulatives for Grades K - 2	20	17
1998-99 Professional Development Committee	15	16
Agawam Middle School Special Education Program	6	13
Middle Grades Math	20	10

Note: Information obtained from APS

11. School Improvement Plans

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

APS is meeting the requirements of the law. School improvement plans do not have district wide goals incorporated in them. As a result, plans vary in scope, content and quality. Overall, current school improvement plans do not include mission statements, measurable goals, and timetables. Plans do not illustrate that measurable progress has been made on accomplishing school council goals. Although plans are approved by the superintendent and school committee there is no follow up either at the district level or the school level as to the accomplishment of goals. Plans do address testing, parental involvement, curriculum frame works, and professional development. Overall, plans reflect active parental and community involvement.

Although there is no district wide school improvement plan there is some coordination of school improvement plans at the elementary level. Three of the elementary schools have the same goal of reducing special education referrals and the same action steps. The

City of Agawam budgets funds specifically for school councils. Funds for FY99 ranged from \$ 6,700 for Clark Elementary School to \$ 25,400 for Agawam High School. Only one plan shows a budget and shows what the funds were spent on.

12. Time and Learning

Time and learning standards refer to the amount of time students are expected to spend in school, measured by the number of minutes or hours in a school day and the number of days in the school year. As of September 1997, DOE requires 990 instruction hours per year for the high schools. For junior high and middle schools, the requirement is either 990 hours or 900 hours based on the decision of the school committee. For the elementary schools, the requirement is 900 hours, and the requirement for kindergarten schools is 425 hours. The school year remains at 180 days per year; APS has 182 days per school year. As shown in *Chart 12-1*, APS time and learning plan exceeds these standards by 20 hours for the high school, 90 hours for the junior high school, 34 hours for the middle school, 31 hours for the elementary schools, and 40 hours for kindergarten. Extra time is used for two additional school days a year, as well as added class time.

Chart 12-1

Agawam Public Schools Time and Learning Standards

	1995/96 APS Standard	DOE Req.	1998/99 APS Standard
	Hours Per Year	Hours Per Year	Hours Per Year
High School	1002	990	1010
Junior High School	990	900	990
Middle School	934	900	934
Elementary School	931	900	931
Kindergarten	465	425	465

Note: Data obtained from APS

13. Courses and Class Sizes

Chart 13-1 summarizes selected high school class sizes for FY99. The school's average enrollment in core subject sections consisted of just under 20 students per class. English had the smallest average class size with 17.5 students, while social studies had the largest average with 21.5 students. English and social studies had 3 sections with 30 or more students. Science and math had no classes with more than 30 students.

Chart 13-1

**Agawam Public Schools
High School Classes
1998/99 School Year**

Subject	Number of Sections	Total Enrollment	Avg. Enroll. Per Section	Sect. w/ 25-29	Sect. w/ 30 or more	30+ %
English	80	1401	17.5	12	1	1.3%
Math	48	1002	20.9	12	0	0.0%
Science	60	1179	19.7	8	0	0.0%
Social Studies	62	1334	21.5	17	2	3.2%

Note: Data obtained from APS

14. Technology

DOE approved the APS' Technology plan on April 17, 1997. The plan was a work product of the technology committee. APS developed a five-year implementation plan to improve technology for the years 1996-2001. APS has made progress in accomplishing the goals of the technology plan, even though there were no formal updates to the technology plan and even though during FY99 the technology committee only met once. Although APS has made progress in technology, APS has outgrown its technology plan and needs to address this area. The superintendent has recognized the need for an active technology committee, with a memo asking the network administrator to set up a new committee.

As of October 20 1999 the technology committee has not set a date for the first meeting with the new network administrator. As of July 1, 1999 the City of Agawam has a network administrator who splits his time between the city and the school district. The original network administrator is teaching at the high school and will be a technology facilitator for the high school. The district has a software support specialist along with an administration data processing specialist. The middle, junior high, and high school will have technology facilitators in place in October of 1999. The technology facilitator position is a stipend-based position. Basic computer repairs and setups are done by the network administrator, technology facilitators, and students under the supervision of the technology facilitator at the high school. The students work in an intern program after school hours and during the summer.

APS had no ongoing inventory to track its computers. As a result, an inventory was conducted in October for the purpose of this audit. APS has a ratio of 7.3 students per instructional computer, which is above the state average of 7.2 students. There are a total of 689 computers of which 603 are instructional and 86 are administrative. Sixty-nine percent of the computers are three years old and newer. All the elementary schools have new library media centers.

15. Textbooks and Instructional Equipment

The audit team reviewed the status of supplies and textbooks by several methods:

- by reviewing expenditures in both APS budget and in DOE end-of-year report as detailed in *Chart 15-1*
- by conducting on-site inspections of textbooks
- by interviewing several APS staff, and
- by examining FY97 & 98 invoices from major publishing houses.

The school district's annual budget provides an amount for materials including textbooks, instructional supplies, library collections and periodicals, workshops to enhance staff instructional effectiveness, certain components of the technology plan, and capital acquisition. *Chart 15-1* shows total expenditures for textbooks and instructional supplies for selected years and yearly per student amount. The chart reveals a fairly consistent pattern in each of these categories except for FY93, where spending on supplies rose due to grants. During early to mid nineties the district was level funding its budgets. By FY96 the district dramatically increased spending on textbooks and supplies in order to change its curriculum. Textbook spending was at \$87 per pupil in FY98, up from \$16 per pupil in FY94. APS has spent \$271,809 in FY99 for textbooks.

Chart 15-1

Agawam Public Schools
Textbooks and Instructional Equipment
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY89	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY94 - FY98	
								\$ Incr.	% Incr.
High School	\$134	\$185	\$98	\$106	\$126	\$205	\$158	\$60	61%
Junior High School	\$78	\$55	\$36	\$29	\$58	\$64	\$85	\$49	136%
Middle School	\$51	\$69	\$27	\$22	\$44	\$80	\$65	\$39	145%
Elementary	\$112	\$140	\$121	\$96	\$154	\$256	\$219	\$98	81%
SPED	\$17	\$26	\$18	\$7	\$21	\$19	\$28	\$10	52%
Bilingual							\$2	\$2	
Systemwide	\$6	\$63	\$5	\$5	\$115	\$106	\$217	\$212	3998%
Total	\$398	\$537	\$305	\$266	\$518	\$730	\$773	\$468	154%
Textbooks Only	\$141	\$73	\$66	\$38	\$175	\$242	\$399	\$332	500%
Supplies	\$257	\$465	\$239	\$228	\$343	\$488	\$375	\$136	57%
Textbooks / Student	\$34	\$18	\$16	\$9	\$40	\$53	\$87	\$71	450%
Supplies / Student	\$63	\$112	\$57	\$52	\$77	\$108	\$81	\$25	44%

Note: Data obtained from APS. Figures may not agree due to rounding.

Site visits as well as book listings indicated that students are using reasonably current textbooks in the classroom. APS does have a formal textbook evaluation and replacement plan and is above the foundation budget for books and instructional equipment. The survey of teachers shows that 88 percent of teachers felt that they have receive sufficient and appropriate supplies to do their job. Further, 91 percent of teachers felt that there is an adequate number of current textbooks available. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers felt that they are adequately supplied with ancillary curriculum materials. Eighty-three percent felt that the process for obtaining supplies and materials is effective, time sensitive and responsive to classroom needs.

16. Test Scores

Test scores are generally at or above state averages. SAT scores for 1998 were 995, slightly below the state average of 1004. The Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), the state's educational testing program from 1988 to 1996, showed that APS scores increased in grade 4 reading, math, science, and social studies. Results from the 1999 statewide Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) indicate that 94 percent of APS third graders scored at the higher reading skill levels of "proficient" and "advanced", which is above the statewide average of 75 percent for these skill levels.

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

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

Chart 16-1

**Agawam Public Schools
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Results**

SAT Scores	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
	APS	State Avg.	APS	State Avg.	APS	State Avg.	APS	State Avg.	APS	State Avg.
Verbal	420	426	414	430	496	507	490	508	498	502
Math	446	475	458	477	475	504	491	508	497	502
Total	866	901	872	907	971	1011	981	1016	995	1004
APS - % of State Avg.	96.1%		96%		96.0%		96.6%		99.1%	

Note: Data obtained from APS and DOE

Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

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

Proficiency scores shown in *Chart 16-2* indicate that APS fourth graders increased in all level 2, when comparing 1992 to 1996. Also Grade 4 scores all decreased in level 1 and below scores. Grade 8 proficiency scores also increased in level 2 scores. Grade 8 scores decreased in levels 3 and 4 scores for all subjects, while decreasing in level 1 and below in reading and math.

Chart 16 - 2

**Agawam Public Schools
MEAP Proficiency Scores
1992 - 1996 Fourth and Eighth Grades**

Fourth Grade	1992			1996		
	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	30%	39%	31%	25%	42%	34%
Mathematics	38%	42%	20%	24%	61%	14%
Science	34%	41%	25%	12%	60%	27%
Social Studies	34%	39%	27%	19%	59%	23%
Eighth Grade	1992			1996		
	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	38%	29%	34%	33%	36%	31%
Mathematics	48%	29%	23%	43%	42%	16%
Science	37%	27%	37%	41%	39%	20%
Social Studies	40%	24%	37%	40%	42%	18%

Note: Data provided by DOE and APS

Between 1988 and 1996 MEAP scores for students in grade 4 increased in all four subject areas, while scores for students in grade 8 decreased. Furthermore, for 1992 to 1996 reading scores increased for grade 4. Variations of 50 points or more are considered statistically significant. The MEAP scores for all grades tested are shown in *Appendix B*.

Chart 16-3 shows reading scores for the fourth grade for selected school districts whose scores in 1988 fell between 1370 and 1420 as compared to Agawam's 1390 score. From 1992 to 1996 Agawam increased in fourth grade reading and scores were higher than the state average. The scores for the fourth grade students are particularly significant, because by 1996 these students had experienced education reform initiatives in the early stages of formal education. The greatest impact of education reform should initially be seen in the performance of these students.

Chart 16-3

MEAP READING SCORES - 4TH GRADE
Selected Communities with 1988 Scores from 1370-1420

	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1992-1996 Change
North Andover	1370	1400	1410	1410	1370	-40
Quabbin	1370	1360	1330	1410	1370	40
Ashland	1370	1330	1370	1350	1360	-10
Watertown	1370	1270	1260	1300	1360	100
Westford	1380	1380	1440	1460	1460	20
Winchester	1380	1380	1470	1510	1460	-10
Milton	1380	1410	1460	1430	1440	-20
Littleton	1380	1400	1440	1380	1430	-10
North Reading	1380	1430	1430	1460	1430	0
Rockport	1380	1310	1340	1430	1420	80
Danvers	1380	1340	1440	1410	1410	-30
Walpole	1380	1410	1370	1410	1400	30
Grafton	1380	1380	1410	1400	1370	-40
Gateway	1380	1320	1280	1300	1330	50
North Brookfield	1380	1350	1420	1330	1320	-100
Norfolk	1380	1330	1370	1280	1310	-60
Westwood	1390	1470	1420	1440	1480	60
Dover	1390	1470	1440	1490	1440	0
Sherborn	1390	1470	1440	1490	1440	0
Agawam	1390	1390	1400	1410	1430	30
Marblehead	1390	1440	1410	1440	1420	10
Chelmsford	1390	1400	1440	1430	1410	-30
Williamstown	1390	1430	1390	1440	1410	20
Monson	1390	1380	1300	1320	1340	40
Lexington	1400	1440	1440	1460	1460	20
Hanover	1400	1460	1450	1470	1440	-10
Wachusett	1400	1420	1410	1420	1440	30
Manchester	1400	1440	1430	1530	1430	0
Marshfield	1400	1420	1450	1440	1410	-40
Middleton	1410	1340	1370	1370	1460	90
Andover	1410	1420	1470	1460	1430	-40
West Boylston	1410	1370	1450	1470	1400	-50
Amherst	1410	1380	1410	1410	1370	-40
Newton	1420	1450	1480	1500	1480	0
Concord	1420	1470	1440	1510	1470	30
Wrentham	1420	1450	1380	1470	1410	30
State Average	1300	1310	1330	1300	1350	50

A significant change in a score is considered to be 50 points in one direction or another.

Iowa Tests

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Iowa tests) for the third grade was administered throughout Massachusetts in the spring 1999. APS' overall total percentile rank in reading for all students tested under routine conditions was 74 – over the statewide score of 64. The test defines four different levels of reading comprehension: pre-reader, basic reader, proficient reader, and advanced reader. Pre-readers and basic readers made up 12 percent of tested students while proficient and advanced readers made up 86 percent of all students who were tested in APS. About 84 percent of the tested students have attended APS since the first grade.

The Iowa Test of Educational Development, also referred to as the Massachusetts Grade 10 Achievement Test, was administered in the spring of 1997. It tested seven different areas of skills including reading, quantitative thinking, social studies, etc. Scores were based on a national sample of students who took the test. APS' 10th graders scored at the 53rd percentile compared to the national sample. APS' performance compares to scores as high as the 89th percentile and as low as the 28th percentile for other Massachusetts school districts.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Tests

MCAS scores for 1998 show that APS scored above the state average scaled scores for all students in grades 4, 8, and 10, except for math, which was slightly below the state average. All scores for students attending the district for three years or more were above the state average scaled scores, except for math. Scores in 1999 show an increase in all grades and subjects, except for grade 10, which show a decrease in scores.

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

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

MCAS tests are reported according to performance levels that describe student performance in relation to established state standards. Students earn a separate performance level of Advanced, Proficient, Needs Improvement, and Failing based on their total scaled score for each test completed. There is no overall classification of student performance across content areas; however, school, district, and state levels are reported by performance levels. *Chart 16-4* shows scores for all APS students in tested grades. *Appendix E* provides additional detail on MCAS scores. Scores for 4th and 8th graders improved from 1988 to 1999 while scores for 10th graders declined.

Chart 16-4

Agawam Public Schools
MCAS Test Scores
All Students

	1998 District	1998 State	Point Diff.	1999 District	1999 State	Point Diff.	1998 - 1999 District	Inc./Dec. State
Grade 4:								
English Language Arts	232	230	2	233	231	2	1	1
Mathematics	232	234	-2	238	235	3	6	1
Science & Technology	240	238	2	243	240	3	3	2
Grade 8:								
English Language Arts	239	237	2	240	238	2	1	1
Mathematics	224	227	-3	228	226	2	4	-1
Science & Technology	228	225	3	229	224	5	1	-1
History	N/A	N/A	N/A	225	221	4	N/A	N/A
Grade 10:								
English Language Arts	234	230	4	228	229	-1	-6	-1
Mathematics	221	222	-1	219	222	-3	-2	0
Science & Technology	230	225	5	227	226	1	-3	1

Note: Data provided by DOE

17. Management and Personnel Practices

Management Practices

The current Superintendent was hired in August 1996. Reporting to the Superintendent are a Deputy Superintendent, hired in January 1984 and an Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services hired in December 1996. All principals, assistant principals, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, academic coordinators, liaisons, and elementary specialists report to the Superintendent and indirectly to the Assistant Superintendent. The business office staff, Director of Athletics, Food Services Supervisor, Director of Special Services, and secretarial staff report to the Deputy Superintendent. Formally, the Superintendent meets twice monthly the Wednesday following a school committee meeting with all principals, directors, and the Deputy and Assistant Superintendents. The Superintendent performs site visits weekly at each of the schools. At this time he performs informal classroom observations and may interact with the class.

Management is somewhat school centered. Principals, curriculum coordinators, elementary specialists, and program directors prepare budgets and review them with the Deputy Superintendent and the Superintendent. Modifications may be made before its

final presentation to the school committee. The school committee approves budgets for each cost center. Supplies for each school are purchased centrally at the APS administrative offices using a bid process. Supplies are then distributed to each school. All salary budgets are prepared at the APS administrative offices.

Currently, there are no district-wide school improvement plans or long-range strategic plans. The Superintendent has begun to solicit input from the school committee in order to create a district school improvement plan. There is a district-wide five-year technology plan that has been mostly completed and, therefore, has become outdated. A new plan addressing current needs has not yet been drafted. Also, the Technology Committee is in the process of reorganizing as many of its members are no longer in the district. The Superintendent has indicated to the Chairmen of the Technology Committee that its members should include a wide range of stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, and community business leaders.

The school committee meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Present at each meeting are all seven members of the school committee, including the mayor who serves as the chairman of the school committee, the Superintendent, and Assistant and Deputy Superintendents. There are several subcommittees of the school committee and each of these meets on an as needed basis.

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction has been instrumental in providing a district-wide vision for alignment of the curriculum. She has worked in partnership with curriculum coordinators, liaisons, and elementary specialists to align APS curriculum with the State frameworks. This work has been documented and its implementation in the classroom monitored.

Hiring Process

APS uses a contractual transfer policy to fill projected teaching vacancies. For positions filled from outside the school system, APS advertises them in local newspapers. For positions that may be harder to fill, APS also advertises the position in Hartford and Boston newspapers. A committee made up of the applicable principal, a teacher, and a curriculum coordinator, liaison or specialist reviews resumes. The committee decides who is to be interviewed by the committee. As candidates are interviewed each interviewer completes a rating sheet. The ratings are compared, and a finalist selected. The principal notifies the Superintendent of his choice, and the Superintendent makes the final determination. The Superintendent informed the auditors that only twice has he declined to hire a principal's chosen candidate. The reasons for this were budgetary restrictions, and poor recommendations from prior employers. The principals and occasionally the Superintendent make all reference inquires.

The hiring of a principal follows the same format as that of teacher hiring. The vacant position is posted in the local newspaper as well as Boston and Hartford newspapers. A committee made up of the Superintendent, Deputy and Assistant Superintendents,

parents, and teachers is formed and evaluates candidates. The Superintendent makes the final hiring decision

The audit team examined all administrative contracts, inclusive of the Superintendent, assistant superintendents, and the principals of all seven schools. All of the contracts were for three-year terms. All principal contracts include wording to allow termination for “good cause.” Also, salary increases for all principals are tied to raises in the teachers’ contract.

Evaluation Process

Principals and Administrators

Each principal’s contract includes an evaluation section that indicates that the Superintendent will evaluate each principal by June 15 annually. The contract is silent as to the evaluation instrument. The Superintendent requires that each principal compile a portfolio that serves as the basis for evaluation. No written instruction was given for the completion of the portfolios.

APS has hired one new principal since education reform. The prior principal has since retired.

Teachers

The current teachers’ union contract incorporates as part of its evaluation section the “Guide for the Evaluation of Teaching.” There are three components to the evaluation process as indicated by the guide. The first is the classroom observation. The form used indicates several components that may be rated “satisfactory,” “needs improvement,” and “not observed.” Where the rating of “needs improvement” is given, the reviewer must note specific recommendations for improvement, direct assistance to implement such recommendation, provisions for additional resources for utilization in assisting the improvement, and a time schedule to monitor progress. The second component is the teacher self-evaluation of an observed lesson. And the third component is the written summary of the observations, which serves as the evaluation. A post-observation or post-evaluation conference is held.

Non-professional status teachers are evaluated at least twice annually. Professional status teachers are evaluated at least every other year. If a teacher transfers to a new building, that teacher will be evaluated in their first year in that building. The principal performs evaluations. Where one exists, academic coordinators have input into the teachers’ evaluations. Academic coordinators, liaisons, and elementary specialists are evaluated in their role as teacher. Additionally, the Assistant Superintendent evaluates them in their role as coordinators, liaisons, and specialists.

During the auditors’ interviews with principals, they indicated that they either had been to Research for Better Teaching (RBT) training or were scheduled to go to this training.

Neither the contract nor the evaluation guide indicates that this is the method that will be used for teacher evaluations.

18. Accounting and Reporting

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

An annual audit of the school district is included in the city audit. In addition, the school district had an independent review as of January 18, 1995. All findings in the review have been addressed. The biggest strength in the business office is the longevity in the department of the deputy superintendent and administrative assistant. This stability has produced sound purchasing procedures and accurate account reporting. The mayor, serving as chairman of the school committee, approves invoices and the payroll.

19. Review of Expenditures

The audit team completed a review of APS expenditures and purchasing controls and analyzed the account structure and selected accounts from the general ledger for FY98. The review showed that purchasing procedures and controls are in place.

The review process also included accounts of vendors who have done business with APS. The ledgers and individual vendor files were reviewed. Auditors did not note any questionable or unusual payments. It was evident that separation of duties and responsibilities is maintained throughout the school system. The city auditor provides general oversight and audit review of financial transactions made by the school district. The treasurer's office of the city issues payroll and vendor checks.

20. High School Accreditation

Agawam High School is accredited. The school was visited by a team from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) from October 4 to October 7, 1998. The NEASC voted to place the school on warning for the Standards on Curriculum and Instruction, Library, Technology and Media Services, and School Facilities. In these areas the school will be required to submit a Special Progress Report by November 1, 1999. As part of the accreditation process, the school will be required to submit a two-year and five-year status report on the status of the 89 recommendations contained in the report. The Capital Improvement Plan includes \$7.1 million for additions and renovations to the high school. *Chart 20-1* identifies the recommendations by subject category

Chart 20-1

Agawam High School
Accreditation Recommendations

Statement of Purpose and Expectations	6
Curriculum and Student Support	14
Library, Technology, and Media	7
Administration, Faculty and Support Services	10
School Facilities	10
Community Support and Involvement	24
Financial Support	2
School Climate	4
Assessment of Student Learning and School Performance	5
<u>Total</u>	<u>7</u>
	89

21. Grade 3 Transiency

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

Of fifteen school districts selected by population shown in *Chart 21-1*, Agawam has the sixth highest percentage of third graders who attended APS in grades 1, 2 and 3. Agawam's stable population of 83.4 percent is above the statewide average of 80.4 percent. Agawam's transiency percentage of 16.6 percent is below the statewide average of 19.6 percent.

Chart 21-1

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

Community	Stable Population	Total Population	Stable Population Percent	Transiency Percent
Saugus	208	236	88.1%	11.9%
Milton	256	300	85.3%	14.7%
Melrose	213	250	85.2%	14.8%
Dartmouth	237	282	84.0%	16.0%
Needham	313	374	83.7%	16.3%
Agawam	247	296	83.4%	16.6%
Dracut	262	314	83.4%	16.6%
North Attleborough	280	349	80.2%	19.8%
Shrewsbury	269	338	79.6%	20.4%
Wakefield	206	262	78.6%	21.4%
Franklin	298	382	78.0%	22.0%
Chelsea	239	311	76.8%	23.2%
Stoughton	244	318	76.7%	23.3%
West Springfield	217	285	76.1%	23.9%
Milford	129	262	49.2%	50.8%

Note: Student population includes only students tested under "routine" conditions.

Data obtained from DOE's 1998 Iowa Grade 3 reading test summary results.

22. Special Education and Transitional Bilingual Education

Special Education (SPED)

In 1998, Agawam had a special education participation rate of 20 percent, 3.4 percent higher than the state average of 16.6 percent. Total SPED enrollment since 1994 has averaged around 880 students. As a percentage of the total enrollment, the SPED enrollment has averaged around 20 percent since 1994 and has remained consistent over time. Also, the number of students who fall into the substantially separate categories has continued to decrease from FY94 to FY98. SPED enrollment has remained consistent with total enrollment.

Chart 22-1

Agawam Public Schools
SPED Enrollment
Based on October 1 Reports

School Year Ending	Total Enrollment	Total SPED	SPED as % of Total Enrollment	Substantially Separated	Substantially Separated as % of SPED
1994	4,220	841	19.9%	103	12.2%
1995	4,349	865	19.9%	90	10.4%
1996	4,426	888	20.1%	77	8.7%
1997	4,535	881	19.4%	68	7.7%
1998	4,605	923	20.0%	59	6.4%

Note: Data obtained from APS

The increase in SPED costs from FY93 to FY98 was \$1,325,813, or 80.9 percent, while the increase in total school spending as reported to DOE for the same time period was 27 percent. SPED expenditures for FY93 increased from 8 percent of the total school district expenditures to 11.2 percent for FY98.

Chart 22-2

**Agawam Public Schools
SPED Expenditures**

	FY89	FY93	FY97	FY98	FY93-FY98 Increase	
					\$	%
Special Education	\$1,125,263	\$1,638,419	\$2,740,569	\$2,964,232	\$1,325,813	80.9%

Note: Data obtained from APS

In an effort to control special education expenditures, APS has fully implemented the Instructional Support Team (IST) process in two of the elementary schools in the school district in FY99, and partially implemented the process in the other two elementary schools.

The purpose of this program, in addition to controlling SPED expenditures, was to provide support to classroom teachers who are dealing with students who are at risk behaviorally or academically. The IST works collaboratively to resolve the issues of "at risk" students that may contribute to academic or behavioral concerns before they are referred to the SPED program.

The IST is composed of the building principal, the teacher, the building IST coordinator, the building adjustment counselor, the parents, and if necessary, a school psychologist and any other necessary educational staff.

Utilizing the services of a consulting psychologist, the district composed a comprehensive manual to guide the IST process. The manual includes assessment tools, standardized forms, and specific processes to be used. Principals are responsible to track statistical data regarding this process and report it to the Superintendent.

Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)

Consistent with the district demographics, APS has only approximately 100 students who take part in either English as a Second Language (ESL) or TBE program. In FY98, APS spent only \$150,264 or 0.56% of its total expenditures on bilingual education services.

23. Dropout and Truancy

APS' dropout rate for FY97 was 2.4 percent, which is below the state average of 3.4 percent. As shown in *Chart 23-1*, APS has the seventh lowest dropout rate of the 15 communities with similar populations to Agawam. Statewide, APS has the twenty-fourth lowest dropout rate.

A review of attendance statistics contained in the DOE EOY reports from 1993 to 1998 indicates that the APS attendance rate has remained fairly constant at about 96 percent.

Chart 23-1

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

Community	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
North Attleborough	2.9%	2.6%	4.3%	2.3%	4.7%
Chelsea	8.5%	12.4%	7.4%	6.6%	4.0%
West Springfield	4.2%	3.9%	3.8%	3.5%	3.7%
Dracut	2.6%	1.8%	1.6%	3.7%	3.0%
Milford	2.1%	3.7%	3.2%	2.0%	2.8%
Saugus	1.1%	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%	2.8%
Shrewsbury	2.3%	3.4%	2.0%	2.0%	2.7%
Agawam	3.1%	3.3%	3.7%	3.2%	2.4%
Dartmouth	1.1%	2.2%	0.8%	1.1%	1.8%
Franklin	1.0%	1.1%	2.0%	2.2%	1.3%
Stoughton	2.4%	3.1%	3.1%	1.3%	1.2%
Melrose	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	1.4%	1.2%
Milton	0.1%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%
Needham	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%
Wakefield	2.9%	2.3%	1.2%	3.3%	0.5%
Average These Communities	2.9%	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	2.3%
Median These Communities	2.3%	2.6%	2.0%	2.2%	2.4%
State Average	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%

Note: Data provided by DOE

The high school uses a number of strategies to keep students from dropping out of school. The principal indicated that attempting to “anticipate” a student dropout is the main strategy used. A great deal of time is spent reviewing student grades and attendance. Weekly guidance meetings are held and the issues of grades and attendance are discussed. Contact is made with the student to discuss any issues contributing to attendance or grade problems. The principal, vice principal, drug and alcohol counselor, adjustment counselor, and guidance counselors all participate in these activities. SPED referrals are sometimes made, if the student's past record and current testing indicate that it is necessary.

APS also participates in a regional truancy program, which was funded by a grant at the district attorney's office. Each day, a computer generates a report of absent and tardy students. A computer automatically initiates phone calls to a student's home indicating that the student was either absent or tardy. Parents are given the opportunity to help keep their children in school. If the high school feels that they aren't receiving parental support regarding attendance, they will file a 51A with the Department of Social Services.

If the student seems intent on leaving school, counselors and the principal discuss their options with them. Often, the Adjustment Counselor takes the student for a GED pre-test. Another option for the student is the evening school offered at APS. The Agawam school department runs the program. Students must pay some tuition to attend, and complete various requirements in order to receive a diploma. This diploma is recognized by local community colleges.

24. Maintenance and Capital Improvement

Maintenance

Maintenance for the APS is the responsibility of the Director of Building Maintenance of the city. The grounds are the responsibility of the city's Department of Public Works. The city's building maintenance department consists 40 people of whom 10 are assigned to maintenance for all town buildings and the municipal golf course, the remaining personnel are custodians assigned to specific buildings. The Director is not an employee of the school department, he reports to the Mayor.

The audit team visited all the schools and found the interior general maintenance to be generally good to excellent. However, while touring the high school the audit team observed areas around the school that were cluttered with trash. The area near the municipal maintenance building located next to the high school was littered with wooden pallets, plastic barrels and other discarded materials. The area surrounding the green houses had discarded pallets.

However, the accreditation study done by NEASC did find a number of building related issues that had to be addressed by the district. The accreditation visit took place during October 4 to October 7, 1998.

The NEASC has cited the high school for problems with the maintenance. The purposes of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) are:

- a. Town funds will be spent for improvements compatible with Town goals, needs, and capabilities as defined in basic policy documents of the Town.
- b. Projects will be undertaken on a coordinated basis.
- c. The community will be informed that certain projects and expenditures are to be expected.
- d. Needed public improvements will be initiated.
- e. Town funds will be spent on the basis of priorities.

- f. Improvements will be undertaken without causing an undue burden on the Town's fiscal capacity.

The report included the following. "The number of lavatories and drinking fountains available to students, however is insufficient with some in disrepair. Most lavatories are locked and inaccessible to students. Students are concerned about the lack of doors on the stalls, soap, and toilet tissue. Some science classrooms do not have necessary safety equipment, i.e. safety glasses, fire blankets, or eye wash equipment. The lockers in the boys' athletic area need to be repaired or replaced. Some lockers in the corridor also need to be repaired. The art room needs additional storage areas and improved ventilation. In the family consumer science department, the visiting committee has noted a number of recommendations which administration needs to evaluate in relation to the safe and effective environment for child development classes."

Capital Improvement

Section 5-3 of the Town Charter requires the Mayor to submit a five-year capital plan to the Town Council every year. A capital asset is defined as costing over \$10,000 (\$20,000 in FY 2000) and/or a life expediency of 10 years or more; equipment and vehicles are not included). The plan covers the succeeding five years, beginning with the next fiscal year. According to the Mayor's transmitting letter, "The major purposes of the Capital Improvement Program are:

- (a) to prioritize proposed capital improvements;
- (b) to research and estimate the revenue necessary to fund proposed capital improvements;
- (c) to set parameters on the revenue dedicated to fund proposed improvements; and
- (d) to forecast future principal and interest expenditure."

The plan sets priorities and limits to the principal interest payments the Town will make during the five years, based on funding realities. The plan includes all town projects including the school system. Several of the projects in progress are:

- Asbestos removal at the middle school
- A new heating system at the junior high school
- Additions to the high school
- Additions to the elementary schools

New projects considered for funding are:

- Improvement of technology in the schools
- Replacement of the clock and intercom system

25. Curriculum Development

At APS, the process to revise curriculum and align areas with the frameworks began in 1995. APS faculty members and department heads, led by a retired elementary teacher who was hired for this purpose by the previous Superintendent, began the revision process. A plan for revision was drafted indicating the curriculum area, the participants responsible for the area, and the timeframe for completion. The curriculum revision plan was again reviewed in June 1996. Generally, curriculum revision work was done independently by coordinators and faculty with no “system-wide” leadership.

In December 1996, a Director of Curriculum and Instruction was hired. In March 1998, the School Committee voted and approved that the Director of Curriculum position be elevated to the level of Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services as of July 1, 1998. Reporting to the Assistant Superintendent are all principals, assistant principals, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff. Appointed from among the teaching staff are academic coordinators, liaisons, and elementary specialists. By contract, each of these positions earns an additional stipend. The Assistant Superintendent meets monthly with the coordinators and liaisons and separately with the specialists. Twice annually, there is a full-day meeting with all coordinators, liaisons, and specialists present. The Assistant Superintendent performs an evaluation of all coordinators, liaisons, and specialists. Additionally, as part of the evaluation, all are asked to prepare portfolios of items demonstrating various skills such as communication with faculty regarding both curriculum and professional development, curriculum relevant professional development workshops, efforts toward curriculum writing and improvement, and curriculum monitoring.

Curriculum at APS has been aligned with the State frameworks for grades pre-K to 10 in English Language Arts, History and Social Science, Mathematics, and Science. Other curriculum areas have been aligned at the grade 6 to 12 levels. The areas of Computer Science and Physical Education are still in progress for certain grade levels. The Assistant Superintendent ensures that the frameworks are being implemented in the classroom at the secondary level via classroom observations performed by the coordinators and liaisons. Curriculum mapping has begun in all curriculum areas and these maps are being used as a tool by coordinators in the observation process to monitor whether teachers are delivering the approved curriculum in the classroom. Additionally, the coordinators review lesson plans. The observations performed by the coordinators are used in the teacher's evaluation by the principal. At the elementary level, principals perform classroom observations. The Assistant Superintendent is in the process of developing a procedure of review at the elementary level to ensure the approved curriculum is being delivered in the classroom.

Elementary specialists review and assess curriculum needs at the elementary school level (pre-K to 6). Elementary specialists are in place for English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Coordinators and liaisons are assigned to the high school and the junior high school. For each curriculum area there is both a coordinator and a liaison for the areas of Business, Computer Science, English Language Arts, Health Education, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Tech Education, Visual and Performing Arts (Art and Music), and World Language. The responsibility of the coordinators is to continually monitor and evaluate existing curriculum, while assessing the curriculum needs

of the district. As part of that responsibility, coordinators may request funds annually for curriculum writing and revision. Curriculum writing positions are posted and the revision work takes place during the school year and summer months. For FY97 through FY99, approximately \$10,000 was included annually in the budget for curriculum writing positions.

In order to maintain alignment with the State frameworks, textbooks and classroom materials are continually reviewed for compliance. When necessary new textbooks are evaluated and when one is selected, it is recommended to the school committee for adoption in the classroom. The coordinators employ various methods of textbook review; however, all methods involve the curriculum area faculty for the grade in question, and in many cases, for the preceding and following grades.

Extensive analysis of MCAS scores has been done at all grade levels. Coordinators, liaisons, and specialists presented this information in FY99 to the school committee and in a public forum on television, to parents of APS students. The Assistant Superintendent, coordinators, specialists, and liaisons made presentations to K to 12 faculty. Additionally, two full-day sessions were presented by Advance Systems. The topics were "Teaching and Learning in a Standards-Based Classroom" and "Performance Standards in the Classroom." For the second session Advance Systems reviewed the MCAS scores beforehand and made recommendations for ways to improve scores. Also, MCAS score analysis has been included on the Assistant Superintendent's monthly meeting agenda. Scores were also a topic for review during the full-day curriculum meetings. Professional development offerings listed in Section 10 of this report show many course offerings related to performance standards.

Discussion with the Assistant Superintendent indicated that APS places a high value on parental involvement in student learning. This has been shown in a variety of activities designed to include parents. Camp S.O.A.R. (Summer of Active Reading) was a four-week summer reading camp offered for incoming second, third, and fourth graders. One of the components of the camp required that parents sign a contract committing to read to their child for twenty minutes each evening and to attend an evaluation meeting at the end of the camp. Also, an elementary curriculum night, "Curriculum Connections," was held for APS parents. During this event, elementary specialists presented each curriculum area to parents so they would have a better understanding of what their child is expected to know at each grade level. A computer lab was open to parents at that event where parents were able to answer MCAS questions at computer stations. Other events were held for parents of students entering the junior high school and the high school. Parents were presented with information regarding programs of study and extra-curricular activities.

IV. Employee Survey

The audit team conducted a confidential survey of all employees of APS to provide a forum for teachers and staff to express their opinions on education in APS. Approximately 250 questionnaires were delivered to school staff and 134 responses were received and tabulated, a response rate of 53.6 percent. Areas covered by the survey include:

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

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

The survey results indicated that education reform is a high priority in Agawam. Seventy-nine percent of teachers think that education reform issues are considered when their own school plans are made and 76 percent think that that also applies to districtwide plans. Ninety-two percent believe that the school district is taking positive steps to improve education and 86 percent state that their job has changed because of education reform.

Teachers have a clear understanding about the district's goals and objectives (80 percent) and how they relate to their jobs (79 percent). Fifty-seven percent feel that they have a role in developing their own goals and objectives and 64 percent confirm that there are indicators used to measure their progress toward their goals and objectives.

The survey also indicates that 58 percent of the teachers do not feel that an increase in school funding is tied directly to improvements in education. Fifty-four percent of teachers think that improvements in education would have occurred without education reform.

Teachers are positive about curriculum development in Agawam. Eighty-seven percent believe that the curriculum is coherent and sequential. Ninety-five percent feel that there is a coherent, on-going effort within APS to keep curriculum current.

Eighty-four percent feel that teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising the curriculum. They are also less positive that the curriculum now in use in their school will improve student test scores. Only 60 percent believe it will, while 36 percent think it will not. A

majority of respondents, 69 percent, believe that the curriculum does not impact test scores as much as how a teacher teaches a subject.

V. Superintendent's Statement - Education Reform

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

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

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

VI. APPENDIX

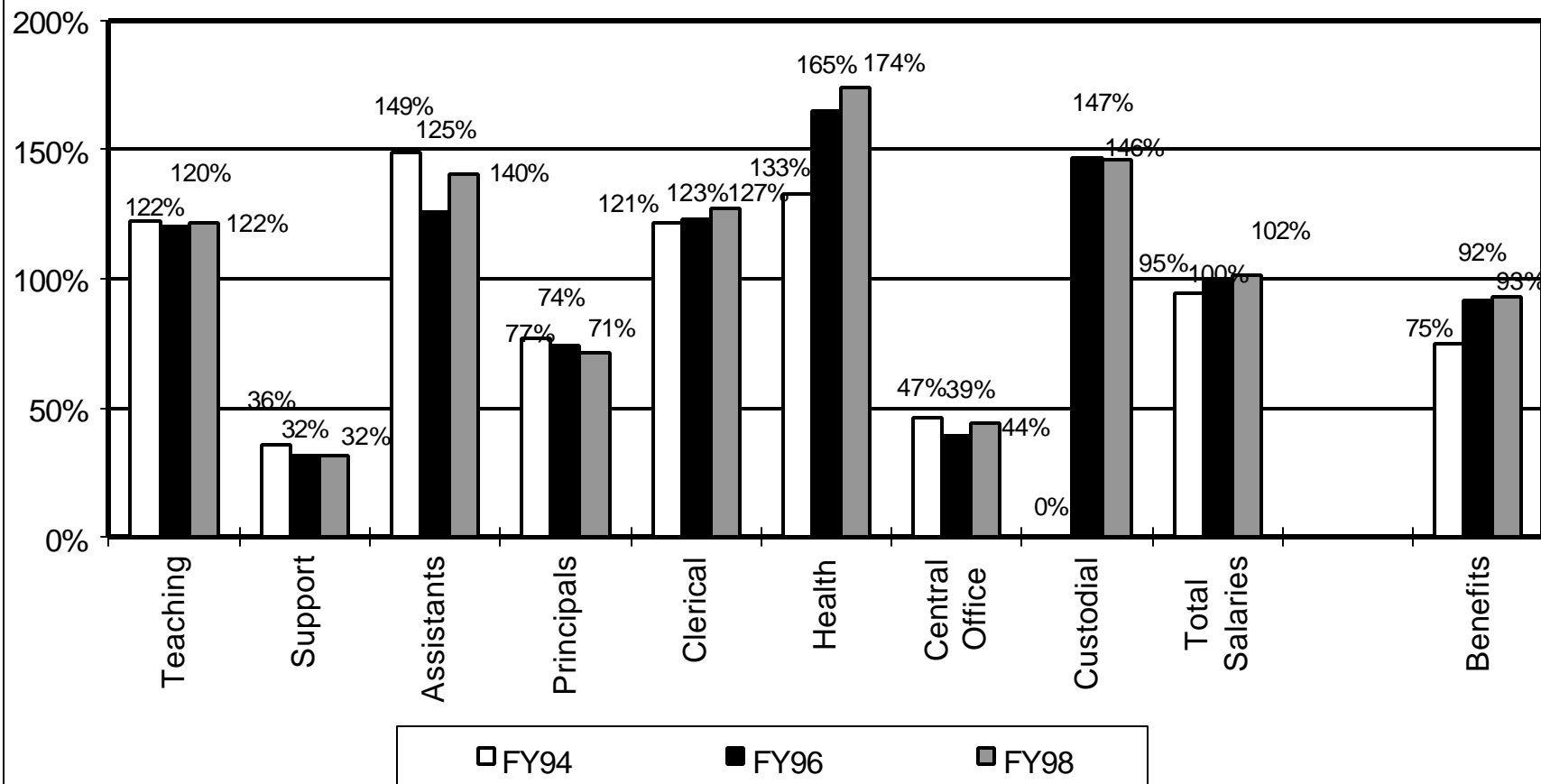
Appendix A1	Foundation Budget line Items Targets and Expenditures FY94, FY96-FY98 - Table
Appendix A2 - 3	Foundation Budget line items Targets and Expenditures FY 94, FY96-FY98 Graph
Appendix B	Mass. Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Summary
Appendix C	Employee Survey Results
Appendix D	Superintendent's Statement on Education Reform Accomplishments, Barriers and Goals
Appendix E	Comparison of MCAS Average Scaled Scores

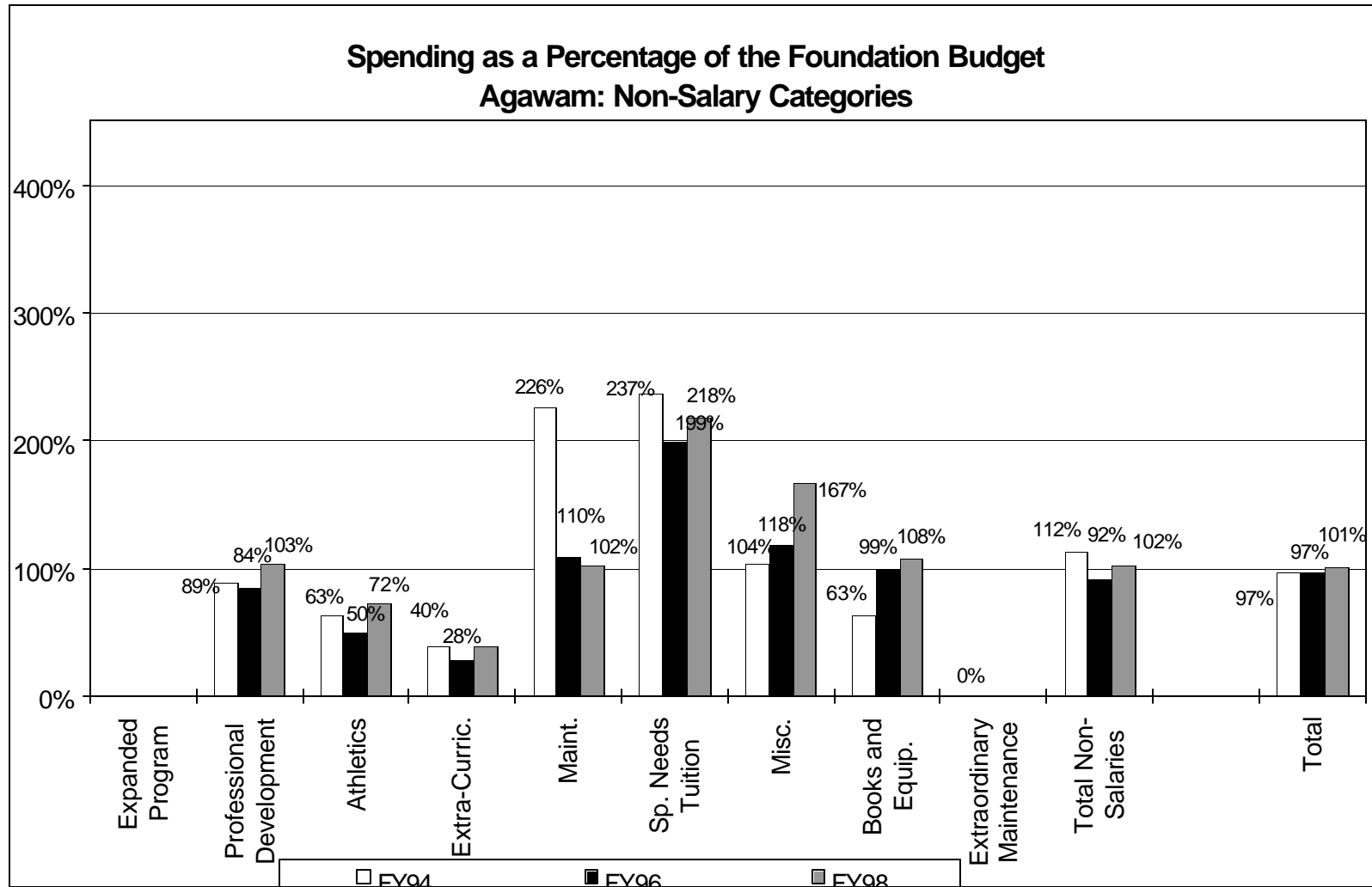
Agawam Public Schools
Net School Spending According to Foundation Budget Categories
(in thousands of dollars)

	Reported Expenditures			Foundation Budget			Variance		
	FY94	FY96	FY98	FY94	FY96	FY98	Expend. over	(under)	Foundation
	FY94	FY96	FY98	FY94	FY96	FY98	FY94	FY96	FY98
Teaching Salaries	\$9,557	\$10,382	\$11,819	\$7,819	\$8,661	\$9,714	\$1,738	\$1,722	\$2,105
Support Salaries	\$849	\$807	\$901	\$2,384	\$2,561	\$2,858	(\$1,535)	(\$1,754)	(\$1,957)
Assistants' Salaries	\$536	\$479	\$616	\$360	\$382	\$439	\$176	\$97	\$178
Principals' Salaries	\$580	\$614	\$657	\$755	\$824	\$921	(\$174)	(\$210)	(\$264)
Clerical Salaries	\$536	\$591	\$682	\$441	\$480	\$537	\$94	\$112	\$145
Health Salaries	\$215	\$288	\$344	\$162	\$175	\$198	\$53	\$113	\$146
Central Office Salaries	\$331	\$304	\$382	\$711	\$772	\$864	(\$380)	(\$468)	(\$482)
Custodial Salaries	\$0	\$1,083	\$1,209	\$671	\$738	\$827	(\$671)	\$345	\$382
Total Salaries	\$12,603	\$14,548	\$16,610	\$13,302	\$14,592	\$16,358	(\$699)	(\$44)	\$252
Benefits	\$1,397	\$1,875	\$2,134	\$1,865	\$2,042	\$2,294	(\$468)	(\$168)	(\$160)
Expanded Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$87	\$146	\$161	(\$87)	(\$146)	(\$161)
Professional Development	\$271	\$283	\$389	\$306	\$337	\$377	(\$35)	(\$53)	\$12
Athletics	\$172	\$159	\$246	\$274	\$316	\$341	(\$102)	(\$157)	(\$95)
Extra-Curricular	\$50	\$40	\$58	\$127	\$140	\$150	(\$76)	(\$100)	(\$91)
Maintenance	\$2,130	\$1,146	\$1,201	\$943	\$1,045	\$1,172	\$1,188	\$101	\$29
Special Needs Tuition	\$1,258	\$1,155	\$1,392	\$532	\$580	\$638	\$726	\$575	\$755
Miscellaneous	\$395	\$493	\$780	\$380	\$416	\$467	\$15	\$77	\$313
Books and Equipment	\$745	\$1,308	\$1,585	\$1,192	\$1,320	\$1,474	(\$447)	(\$12)	\$112
Extraordinary Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$627	\$695	\$779	(\$627)	(\$695)	(\$779)
Total Non-Salaries	\$5,021	\$4,585	\$5,652	\$4,467	\$4,995	\$5,558	\$555	(\$410)	\$94
Total	\$19,022	\$21,007	\$24,396	\$19,634	\$21,629	\$24,210	(\$612)	(\$622)	\$186
Revenues	\$5	\$410	\$0				\$0	\$0	\$0
Net School Spending	\$19,016	\$20,597	\$24,396	\$19,634	\$21,629	\$24,210	(\$612)	(\$622)	\$186

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

Spending as a Percentage of the Foundation Budget Agawam: Salaries and Benefits





Agawam Public Schools
Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Scores

	Grade	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1988-96 Change	1996 State Average	1996 APS Over/(Under) State Avg.
Reading	4	1390	1390	1400	1410	1530	140	1350	180
	8	1360	1410	1350	1400	1410	50	1380	30
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1360	1330		1310	20
Math	4	1340	1320	1410	1460	1500	160	1330	170
	8	1380	1380	1330	1340	1380	0	1330	50
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1330	1310		1310	0
Science	4	1360	1330	1430	1500	1530	170	1360	170
	8	1390	1380	1380	1340	1390	0	1330	60
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1380	1320		1310	10
Social Studies	4	1340	1310	1410	1460	1500	160	1340	160
	8	1380	1370	1350	1320	1370	-10	1320	50
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1340	1310		1300	10

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

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam**Teachers**

s may not add to 100% due to rounding

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

1	Education Reform	1&2	4 &5	3
1.a.	Are you familiar with the issues of Education Reform, the Law passed in 1993?	93%	2%	4%
1.b.	Do you feel you have a good understanding of the purpose and the goals of the law?	85%	3%	12%
1.c.	Do you feel that there is a lot of confusion about what Education Reform is all about?	57%	21%	23%
1.d.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school district plans are made?	76%	2%	21%
1.e.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school-based plans are made?	79%	2%	19%
1.f.	In your opinion is the school district taking positive steps to improve education?	92%	3%	5%
1.g.	Do you feel your job has changed because of Education Reform?	86%	10%	4%
1.h.	Do you think there has been an improvement in student achievement in your school due to Education Reform?	37%	30%	33%
1.i.	Do you think the improvements in education at the school would have happened without Education Reform?	54%	15%	32%
1.j.	Have you perceived an increase in school funding tied directly to improvements in education in your district?	58%	15%	27%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam**Teachers**

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

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

Educational Goals and Objectives		1 & 2		4 & 5		3
2.a.	Are the school administration's goals and objectives generally clear and understandable?	80%		9%		11%
2.b.	Are you clear about the school district's goals and objectives as they relate to your own job?	79%		7%		15%
2.c.	Are there indicators issued to measure progress toward goals and objectives generally?	61%		11%		28%
2.d.	Are there indicators used to measure your progress toward goals and objectives?	64%		11%		25%
2.e.	Do you have a role in developing these goals and objectives?	57%		26%		17%

3	Curriculum	1 & 2		4 & 5		3
3.a.	Do you believe that your district's curriculum is coherent and sequential?	87%		4%		9%
3.b.	Do you believe that your curriculum is challenging and tied to preparing students for life after secondary school?	82%		5%		13%
3.c.	Is there a coherent, on-going effort within the district to keep curriculum current with evolving trends and best practices in pedagogy and educational research?	95%		1%		4%
3.d.	Do teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising curriculum in the district?	84%		7%		9%
3.e.	Will the curriculum now in use in your school improve student test scores?	60%		4%		36%
3.f.	Do you believe that the curriculum content does not impact test scores as much as how a subject is taught by a teacher?	69%		13%		18%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam**Teachers**

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

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Planning		1&2	4 & 5	3
4.a.	Is the planning for important issues (e.g. curriculum, budgetary, etc.) within the district a top-down process?	85%	6%	9%
4.a.1.	If the answer is "Definitely yes" (1) or "Generally yes" (2), is there an important role for teachers and professional staff in the planning process?	64%	19%	17%
4.b.	If staff does not have an important role in developing plans, are decisions made by the central office/school committee explained so that you can understand the basis for the decision/policy?	34%	33%	34%

5 Communications and Mission Statement		1&2	4 & 5	3
5.a.	Is there adequate on-going communication between teachers and district administrators? In other words, do you think that you know what is going on in the district?	53%	29%	18%
5.b.	Is there adequate communication between you and your superiors?	70%	17%	12%
5.c.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school district?	81%	3%	16%
5.d.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school?	84%	4%	12%
5.e.	Does the mission statement define how the school is run, and how students are taught?	71%	6%	23%
5.f.	Are these mission statements applied in the operation of the school and the teaching of students?	66%	7%	27%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam**Teachers**

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

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

Budget Process		&2	&5	3
6.a.	Do you understand your school budget process?	4%	4%	12%
6.b.	Do you understand how the budget process impacts your department?	1%	7%	12%
6.c.	Is the school budgeting process fair and equitable?	0%	1%	39%
6.d.	Are budgetary needs solicited and adequately addressed in the budget process?	4%	2%	25%
6.e.	When the budget is approved and implemented, does the allocation and use of funds match the publicly stated purposes?	1%	8%	32%
6.f.	In the circumstances, does the school department seem to be doing the best it can with in the school budget process.	2%	2%	27%
6.g.	Are there deficiencies in this process?	6%	9%	46%

7 Professional Development		&2	&5	3
7.a.	Is there an adequate professional development program in your school?	3%	7%	11%
7.b.	Is the program designed to meet school needs and tied to new frameworks and assessments?	0%	1%	9%
7.c.	Is the program designed to change the content of pedagogy in classrooms?	0%	9%	20%
7.d.	Are there deficiencies in the professional development program?	0%	7%	33%
7.e.	Do you participate in the professional development program in 1997/98?	7%	2%	1%
7.f.	Is professional development making a difference and will it improve education in my school district.	1%	8%	20%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam

Teachers

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

percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

8	Supplies	1&2		4 &5		3
8.a.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate supplies to do your job?	88%		7%		5%
8.b.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate basic educational supplies (e.g. chalk, paper, pens, pencils, etc.) to do your job?	96%		2%		2%
8.c.	Have you generally been supplied with a sufficient number of a current edition of textbooks?	91%		5%		4%
8.d.	Are students given a copy of these textbooks to keep at home during the year?	7%		91%		2%
8.e.	Have you generally been supplied with sufficient ancillary curriculum materials (e.g. current maps, lab supplies, videos, etc.)?	78%		10%		12%
8.f.	Is the process for obtaining supplies and materials effective, time sensitive and responsive to your classroom needs?	83%		12%		6%

9	Facilities	1&2		4 &5		3
9.a.	How would you rate the overall state of school facilities (e.g. cleanliness, security, maintenance, and structural integrity)?	69%		20%		11%
9.b.	How would you rate the overall state of classrooms, labs, and other teaching rooms/areas?	74%		16%		11%
9.c.	How would you rate the overall state of the common areas (e.g. hallways, stairwells, and cafeteria)?	79%		11%		10%
9.d.	How would you rate the overall state of the areas outside of the building (e.g. playgrounds, walkways and grounds)?	64%		19%		17%
9.e.	Would you agree with the following statement: "The school administration makes an effort to provide a clean and safe working environment."	83%		7%		10%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Agawam

Teachers

Rating Scale		
Yes/No		Opinion

Appendix E

Questions		
Yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

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

Computers and other Educational Technology		1&2		4 &5		3
10.a.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the management practices at the school?	63%		16%		21%
10.b.	Is the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the instructional practices at the school?	45%		30%		25%
10.c.	In terms of student usage, are computers generally available only in a computer laboratory setting or library/media center?	67%		26%		7%
10.d.	How many computers are located in your classroom?	NA				
10.e.	Do you have a school computer provided for and dedicated for your usage?	36%		63%		1%
10.f.	Is there a school computer provided for and shared by you and other teachers?	50%		43%		7%
10.g.	Are there computers available for and used on a regular basis by students?	62%		23%		15%
10.h.	About how many minutes a week does each student use a computer?	NA				
10.i.	Is the number of available computers sufficient for the number of students?	18%		64%		19%
10.j.	Are the computers in good working order?	62%		10%		28%
10.k.	Are the software packages uniform and consistent with the instructional level to be provided?	44%		21%		34%
10.l.	Is there a policy or program providing for computer training for teachers on software and computers used by students?	53%		26%		22%

Agawam Public Schools
1998 and 1999 MCAS Test Scores
Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level

			Average Scaled Score	Advanced	Proficient	Needs Improve- ment	Failing (Tested)	Failing (Absent)
Grade 4	English Lang. Arts	1999	223	0	20	75	4	0
		1998	232	1	17	75	7	0
	Mathematics	1999	238	12	30	49	9	0
		1998	232	5	20	57	18	0
	Science and Technology	1999	243	9	54	35	2	0
		1998	240	5	52	37	6	0
Grade 8	English Lang. Arts	1999	240	2	60	35	4	0
		1998	239	1	60	33	5	0
	Mathematics	1999	228	3	22	42	32	0
		1998	224	3	20	33	44	0
	Science and Technology	1999	229	4	28	34	33	0
		1998	228	1	27	42	29	0
	History	1999	225	1	15	49	34	1
		1998	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 10	English Lang. Arts	1999	228	2	27	43	29	0
		1998	234	1	47	34	18	0
	Mathematics	1999	219	2	12	31	54	0
		1998	221	4	13	29	53	0
	Science and Technology	1999	227	2	21	48	29	0
		1998	230	0	27	51	21	0

Note: Data provided by DOE

