District Review Report

Bellingham Public Schools

Review conducted April 28-May 1, 2014

Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

Bellingham Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

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

Districts reviewed in the 2013-2014 school year include districts classified into Level 2 or Level 3 of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Bellingham Public Schools was conducted from April 28 to May 1, 2014. The site visit included approximately 31 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 180 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, parents, teachers' association representatives, and students. The review team conducted 3 focus groups with 57 elementary school teachers, 10 middle school teachers, and 44 high school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, student performance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 60 classrooms in 7 schools. The team collected data using an instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

Bellingham has a town manager form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected by school committee members. There are five members of the school committee and they meet twice a month.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 2011. The district leadership team includes the director of special services, the director of curriculum and professional development, the director of technology, the maintenance director, and the business coordinator. Central office positions have been mostly stable in number over the past three years. The district has seven principals leading seven schools. There are two assistant principals. There were 173.9 teachers in the district in 2013-2014.

In 2013-2104, 2,404 students were enrolled in the district's seven schools:

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

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Bellingham ECC	EES	PK	89
Macy	ES	K-4	239
South	ES	K-4	446
Stall Brook	ES	K-4	252
Bellingham Memorial Middle School	MS	5-8	731
Bellingham High School	HS	9-12	625
Primavera Junior Senior High School	MSHS	7-12	22
Totals	**7 schools**	**PK-12**	**2, 404**
*As of October 1, 2013			

Between 2010 and 2014 overall student enrollment decreased by 8.8 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 48 districts of similar size (2,000-2,999 students) in fiscal year 2013: $11,960 as compared with $12,246 (see District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance). Actual net school spending has been

well above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B8 in Appendix B.

Student Performance[1]

Bellingham is a Level 2 district because four of its five schools with reportable data are in Level 2.

- All three of Bellingham's elementary schools are in Level 2 for not meeting their gap narrowing goals for all students and high needs. Stall Brook was in the 32nd percentile, Macy was in the 39th percentile, and South was in the 61st percentile of elementary schools.

- Bellingham Middle is in the 49th percentile of middle schools and is in Level 2 for failing to meet its gap narrowing targets for all students and high needs students.

- Bellingham High is in the 43rd percentile of high schools and is in Level 1 with a cumulative PPI of 83 for all students and 82 for high needs students; the target is 75.

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

- ELA CPI was 89.0 in 2013, below the district's target of 91.4.

- Math CPI was 80.1 in 2013, below the district's target of 83.8.

- Science CPI was 84.3 in 2013. This was considered on target because it was within 1.25 points of the district's target of 84.5.

ELA proficiency rates were above the state rate for the district as whole and for every grade except the 5th grade. ELA performance varied in the elementary school.

- ELA proficiency for all students in the district was 73.0 percent in 2010 and 2013, and was above the state rate of 69 percent.

- In 2013 ELA proficiency was above the state by 1 to 5 percentage points in grades 3, 6, and 10, and by 7 to 12 percentage points in grades 4, 7, and 8. ELA proficiency was below the state rate by 1 percentage point in grade 5.

  - In the elementary schools ELA proficiency ranged from 41 percent at Stall Brook Elementary to 74 percent at South Elementary.

- In 2013 ELA proficiency was higher than the 2010 rate by 7 percentage points in grades 7 and 10 and lower by 8 and 6 percentage points in grades 3 and 6, respectively.

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[1] See also student performance tables in Appendix B.

Math proficiency rates were below the state rate in grades 5, 6, and 7 located at Bellingham Memorial Middle. Math proficiency rates varied by elementary school.

- Math proficiency for all students in the district was 57 percent in 2010 and 59 percent in 2013, compared to the 2013 state rate of 61 percent.

- Math proficiency was below the state rate in grades 5, 6, and 7 by 7 to 11 percentage points and above the state rate by 1 to 4 percentage points in grades 3, 4, and 10 and by 9 percentage points in grade 8.

    o In the elementary schools math proficiency ranged from 43 percent at Stall Brook Elementary to 71 percent at South Elementary.

- In 2013 math proficiency was higher than the 2010 rate by 5 percentage points in grade 5 and by 11 percentage points in grade 8, but lower by 7 percentage points in grade 7.

Science proficiency was above the state rate in the district as a whole and in each tested grade.

- 5th grade science proficiency was 62 percent in 2013, lower than the 2010 rate of 68 percent, and above the 2013 state rate of 51 percent.

- 8th grade science proficiency was 47 percent in 2013, higher than the 2010 rate of 41 percent, and higher than the 2013 state rate of 39 percent.

- 10th grade science proficiency was 72 percent in 2013, higher than the 2010 rate of 50 percent, and higher than the 2013 state rate of 71 percent.

Bellingham met the 2014 four year cohort graduation rate target and did not meet the five year cohort graduation rate target.

- The four year cohort graduation rate was 89.6 percent in 2013, higher than the 2010 rate of 81.4 percent, and above the 2013 state graduation rate of 85.0 percent.

- The five year cohort graduation rate was 83.3 percent in 2012, lower than the 2009 rate of 85.6 percent, and lower than the 2012 state graduation rate of 87.5 percent.

- The annual dropout rate for Bellingham declined each year from 2.7 in 2010 to 1.6 in 2013, below the statewide rate of 2.2 percent.

Bellingham Public Schools District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership & Governance

1. **Principals act as a team and collaborate to implement district programs, secure essential resources to advance literacy and mathematics goals, and create a climate for student success.**

   A. Elementary principals make a joint presentation during the budget development process.

   B. Principals support the hiring of additional staff at schools other than their own.

      1. Principals told the review team that they supported the request for an additional .5 FTE guidance counselor for the Primavera Junior Senior High School. One said "We asked ourselves how we can have an alternative school without a full time guidance counselor."

      2. All of the other principals supported the South Elementary School principal's request for an assistant principal (although the position was not ultimately funded).

   C. Principals make a concerted effort to transfer staff eliminated in their schools to other district schools in order to avoid job losses.

   D. In interviews, elementary principals emphasized the importance of reviewing their school Improvement goals annually, as well as jointly aligning their goals. As a result, the elementary schools have two common goals in their school improvement plans.

   E. Programs are in place, to effect orderly and comfortable student transitions from the pre-school to the elementary schools, from the elementary schools to the middle school and from the middle school, to the high school. These programs include visits to sending schools by receiving school administrators and teachers.

Impact: By acting in a cohesive manner, principals demonstrate effective cooperative leadership in developing the budget, making staff assignments and planning and effecting student transitions. This unified approach strengthens the entire district

Assessment

2. **Bellingham administers an array of assessments in the elementary schools and a growing number of assessments in the middle and high schools, which gives the district an opportunity to monitor and address student progress in literacy and mathematics during the school year.**

   A. Administrators described and documents confirmed that an array of assessments are administered in the three elementary schools.

1. To assess ELA needs and progress, elementary schools use Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL), Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd edition (DRA2), Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), Clay Observation Survey, and Dolch Word List. The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) is used at South Elementary only. Think Math beginning- and end-of-year unit tests are used in all three elementary schools and the middle school grade 5 to monitor mathematics progress.

B. The middle school has adopted two new electronic assessment systems.

1. Documents showed and administrators reported that MobyMax was recently adopted at the middle school. MobyMax is an online assessment program that covers ELA, mathematics, and science. It automatically diagnoses areas of weakness, assigns targeted lessons to improve those areas, and tracks student progress.

2. Interviews and a document review also showed that ASSISTments, an online assessment program developed by Worcester Polytechnic Institute, is used by all math teachers (grades 6 to 8) in the middle school. Interviewees said that ASSISTments provides real-time data.

C. The high school is using common assessments and piloting other benchmark assessments.

1. Administrators at the high school reported and teachers confirmed that common assessments are in place in most content areas, including common midterms, finals, quizzes, end-of-unit tests, and projects. Administrators said and a review of documents confirmed that the high school has recently piloted Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in ELA and mathematics in grades 9 and 10 at Bellingham High School and grades 8 to 12 at Primavera Junior Senior High School. Additionally, teachers received half day professional development training on the use of MAP. The Primavera Junior Senior High School also uses Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) and Study Island to monitor student growth and performance.

Impact: The administration of benchmark assessments at multiple times during the school year gives educators readily available information about student progress and thus enables educators an opportunity to fill gaps quickly and provide accelerated work options for students.

Human Resources and Professional Development

3. **As required for Race to the Top (RTTT) participants, the district began implementing the new educator evaluation system in 2012-2013 for all educators and is now in the second full year of implementation.**

A. As a recipient of a Race to the Top grant and in accord with the new educator evaluation regulations, the district was required to begin implementing the new educator evaluation

system in school year 2012-2013. The district and the Bellingham Teachers' Association (BTA) agreed that 2012-2013 would be a pilot year and no teacher would be put on an improvement plan as a result of observation and evaluation activities during that year.

1. District leaders and BTA representatives reported that the school committee and the teachers' association collaboratively negotiated and agreed to a Supervision and Evaluation Process Memorandum of agreement (MOA) in the spring of 2012. The agreement was ratified by the BTA membership on September 27, 2012.

    a. On October 30, 2012, ESE informed the district that in general the MOA conformed to all six components of the educator evaluation regulations. ESE also noted where the MOA differed from regulation and model collective bargaining agreement language and asked the district to consider the differences.

    b. The district adopted most of ESE's model collective bargaining language and rubrics with limited adaptations of some forms. District leaders told the review team that educator plans and self-assessment forms were merged for school year 2013-2014.

    c. The district and BTA agreed that observations would last a minimum of 10 minutes and that the number of unannounced observations would be determined by the plan assigned to the teachers and their professional teaching status.

    d. District and school leaders said that the district uses TeachPoint software to assemble educator evaluation information.

2. Interviews with BTA leaders and a review of the MOA showed that a joint   labor-management committee is in place to review the evaluation procedures and documents.

    a. BTA leadership stated that the BTA is continuing to negotiate DDMs with the district.

3. District leaders and teachers reported that evaluators and all teachers received training during the summer of 2012. A review of training documents provided to the team showed that between August 2, 2012, and April 12, 2013, educator evaluation training sessions were scheduled for administrators and teachers using five ESE training modules.

    a. Training topics included Unpacking the Rubric, Self-Assessment, SMART goals, Gathering Evidence, and Structuring and Conducting Observations.

Impact: District, school, and BTA leaders have an opportunity to reflect on almost two years of experience in implementing the educator evaluation system. Such experience will help the district make the strategic changes needed to improve the quality of observations, evaluations, and staff competency and likely lead to improved student achievement.

Student Support

4. **The district has developed transition practices for students moving between schools going from one level to the next.**

    A. Principals said that transition meetings involving staff members begin in the spring.

        1. For students transitioning to kindergarten from the Early Childhood Center, meetings take place between representatives of the special education department, the psychologist, and teacher representatives to ensure that information about the student's needs are transmitted to the new school to determine services and placement.

        2. For students with IEPs entering the high school, the placement process begins with a meeting between the liaison and the current and the receiving special educators of students needing services.

        3. When high school guidance counselors visit the middle school, for placement purposes they talk with middle school guidance counselors about incoming students.

    B. Staff members from the receiving schools reported that they visit the sending schools to introduce incoming students to programs and educators of the receiving schools.

        1. The middle school principal visits the elementary schools to talk with students.

        2. In February, high school guidance counselors bring tee-shirts to the grade 8 students whom they visit.

    C. Students have multiple opportunities to visit their new schools.

        1. All grade 4 students visit the middle school one day in late May or June for a tour of the school, lunch, and to view a video. A locker day in August offers students the opportunity to meet with teachers, open their lockers, and generally acquaint themselves with the school. The principal discusses the rules and expectations for all students.

        2. In June the middle school students walk over to the high school where they receive a tour given by high school students, see a video about the school, and meet the principal and assistant principal. The grade 9 class officers are announced at this meeting. In August, there is a grade 9 orientation day.

    D. Parents have an opportunity to interact with their children's new schools.

        1. The middle school leadership meets with parents in June a few days before their children visit the school.

2. The high school invites the parents of incoming grade 9 students to visit the school one evening in February. Parents can meet the principal, assistant principal, department heads, and guidance counselors during the subject selection time period.

E. Students in need of more transitioning help are afforded additional access to their new schools.

1. The extended year programs for students with IEPs in grades 4 and 8 are held in the receiving school so students can become more accustomed to the school and staff without the full student body in attendance.

2. Students who need further transitioning help, especially grade 4 students on IEPs or those on 504 plans, may be offered additional opportunities to visit their new schools with their teachers.

F. Planning for implementation of the 2013 New England School Development Council (NESDEC) recommendations about consolidation of schools has been accompanied by a consideration of how the new configuration will be supported by transitions.

1. Current plans call for grades 4 and 5 at the middle school to be taught in classrooms that are more similar to those in the elementary schools rather than in the current middle school configuration.

2. Plans for a new grade 9 team will be expanded to include grade 8, which would move to the high school in one of the reconfiguration proposals.

Impact: The key to student success is a comfortable learning environment and the transition process enables this to happen. Students with disabilities, physical or emotional, rely even more on a well-planned transition process. In addition to providing time for staff to properly plan for needed services, the multiple opportunities for students to visit the school and meet their teachers and other school staff reduce anxiety and provide everyone the time needed to settle into the new surroundings.

Financial and Asset Management

5. **School committee members and central office administrators demonstrate an open working relationship with the municipality.**

A. Town officials participated on the fiscal year 2015 Budget Review Committee (BRC); principals did not participate on the BRC.

1. Select board and finance committee members assisted the district in reviewing the fiscal year 2015 budget.

       a. This gave town officials the opportunity to understand the requests of the district and to inform their colleagues. Town officials indicated that there was too much school infrastructure and school costs were too high.

       b. The 2015 fiscal year final budget was supported by the board of selectmen and the finance committee.

       c. The town allocated $600,000 for the fiscal year 2015 school budget from unused funds in various town accounts. This one-time funding was intended to help the district deal with the unknown impact of collective bargaining with the BTA.

       d. Town officials said that they are supporting the school district technology plan in the amount of $185,000 at the upcoming fall town meeting.

B. The town and school district share resources.

    1. The district has a full time facility director position, which was initially jointly funded by the town and school district.

       a. This enables the facility director to assist the town with maintaining municipal facilities.

    2. The town (80 percent) and school district (20 percent) have jointly funded the position of chief financial officer/school business manager.

       a. This position is intended to assist the school district in the timely and accurate completion of the ESE End of Year Report, financial reporting, capital planning, and budget development.

    3. One of the two school payroll staff positions is funded by the town.

       a. Previously, the school payroll was processed by the town. When the payroll activities were shifted to the school business office, the town agreed to fund one of the two positions so that the school budget would only have to increase by one position.

    4. The school district and town use the same financial software program.

Impact: When school and town leaders work cooperatively, both parties have the opportunity to better understand the goals and challenges of the community. This promotes an environment where there is purposeful direction and effective communication for the improvement of student achievement.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

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

Leadership and Governance

6. **The district is involved in a prolonged labor dispute and there are concerns about both the budget development and facilities study processes among certain stakeholders.[2]**

   A. In a ruling dated April 22, 2014, the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations found that the teachers' association "has failed to bargain in good faith," and "has derivatively interfered with, coerced, and restrained the School Committee in the exercise of its rights under the Law."

      1. The school committee scheduled a meeting on April 29, 2014, to discuss the ruling and said that it would post the ruling to its website.

      2. The investigation by the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations stems from different interpretations of the contents of a Memorandum of Understanding between the school committee and the teachers' association, dated November 1, 2013.

         a. In reporting on the school committee meeting, the local press characterized the dispute between the parties as "a he-said she-said quarrel."

   B. Representatives of the teachers' association reported that in September, 2013, the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations found probable cause that the school committee had failed to bargain in good faith and used regressive bargaining.

   C. At the time of the review the parties had been involved in collective bargaining negotiations for approximately 18 months.

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[2] Since the April 2014 site visit, the Bellingham School Committee and Bellingham Teachers' Association entered into a three-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) on June 10, 2014. The CBA includes salary increases in each of the three years. The school committee and the teachers' association also agreed to dismiss labor charges they had filed against each other with the state Department of Labor Relations. According to accounts of the meeting in the local press, the school department incurred $37,500 in legal fees through April 30, 2014. Most of the fees were for the state Department of Labor Relations cases.

On June 24, 2014, the Bellingham School Committee agreed to implement a redistricting plan in September 2015. Under this plan, grade 4 will move to the middle school, grade 8 will move to the high school, and the Clara A. Macy Elementary School will close. According to accounts of the meeting in the local press, the district anticipates savings of $450,000 in the first year of redistricting.

1. Before the start of negotiations, the executive board of the teachers' association met with the superintendent approximately every six weeks. These meetings were suspended when negotiations began.

   a. Teachers' association representatives told the review team that the superintendent became less visible and approachable after the onset of collective bargaining.

2. Members of the teachers' association expressed the belief that both sides to the dispute believe that they are right, and that the matter is moving "in a most negative direction."

D. A variety of constituent groups told the review team that the protracted nature of the labor dispute has had a deleterious effect on the schools.

1. Administrators reported that the teachers "feel squeezed in the fight between the union and the school committee" and said that teachers were reluctant to make presentations at staff meetings because the necessary preparation time seemed to be in violation of an association modified work to rule agreement. Administrators said that although teachers provided students with support, "extra support" had been curtailed. Additionally, Keys to Literacy and peer observations have been placed "on hold."

2. In an interview, students noted that some clubs were not meeting because teachers were a abiding by a modified work to rule agreement.

3. Principals reported that the teachers were not engaged in some professional development activities; that the professional learning communities were now "different;" and that some customary planning for end of the year activities had stopped.

4. Parents observed that the teachers were not participating on the school councils because of the current collective bargaining negotiations.

5. The updated (Spring 2014) District Improvement Plan notes that in the Improvement Focus areas of "Development of Leadership," "Instructional Integrity", and "Collaborative Structures," "most all initiatives have stalled since spring 2013, awaiting the conclusion of BTA contract negotiations." Particular emphasis was placed on professional learning communities not being operational.

E. Key stakeholders differ with school committee members and central office administrators in their views about the transparency of the budget development process, the adequacy of the budget and budget management.

1. Central office administrators said that the budget process began with the teachers and the principals.

2. Principals, however, were of the opinion that the Budget Review Committee (BRC) set the bottom line and that they had to reconcile their requests as dictated by the BRC. They said they were "not fully part of the process" because they were not BRC members.

3. Concerning the fiscal year 2015 proposed budget, administrators interviewed by the review team expressed the view that there were insufficient funds for curriculum development, professional development, student interventions, and academics. One administrator said, "maintenance…trumps academics here. It should be the reverse. We went backwards."

4. Teachers in two focus groups, consisting of almost one-third of the teaching staff, said that the school committee was mainly "interested in reducing costs," that there was a "lack of books and instructional supplies," and that they were "not asked for input into the school budget." Teachers added that they did not believe that the principals had much input into the budget development process, and that the BRC "decided what to cut." Finally, teachers expressed concern about an absence of information on the proposed budget from the central office. They told the review team, "We get to know stuff through the grapevine and [through] rumor."

5. In contrast to the views of the principals and teachers interviewed by the team, school committee members told the review team that they believed that the BRC had "established an open and transparent budget process."

6. Selectmen expressed skepticism about the management of revolving accounts and grants, describing them as "afterthoughts" to be used at the convenience of the district "when they don't want the town to be asked for money." The selectmen also said that they did not know about all of the sources of the funds in school department accounts.

F. The facilities study process has created a level of uncertainty, anxiety, and disagreement among some constituent groups. As a result of a December 2013 New England School Development Council report on school enrollment, the district is currently studying the possibility of closing some facilities and reconfiguring grade levels because of projected declining enrollment. Any changes would go into effect in September 2015. The study process is being conducted by a district steering committee that includes subcommittees for the high school, the middle school, and the elementary schools, as well as a transportation subcommittee.

1. Teachers' association representatives said that teachers were not included on the district steering committee, and as a result, there is no staff involvement in the decision making process, and "a great deal of uncertainty" about the possibility of lost jobs through consolidation. Association representatives also observed that parents had not been provided enough information about the possible changes to grade configurations.

2. In an interview, elementary teachers told the review team that they "have had no input in the decision making" about the closing of the Macy Elementary School.

3. Selectmen were of the opinion that some facilities should have been closed previously because there was an "overabundance of unused space," and the district had "too much infrastructure." In an interview, they recommended closing the school administration building and relocating the district offices to the municipal complex and closing the Primavera Junior-Senior High School.

Impact: Labor disharmony and deep-seated skepticism about budget development and management, combined with possible substantial changes in facility use and grade configuration, have created a climate within the school district that detracts significantly from improving teacher effectiveness and enhancing student achievement.

Curriculum and Instruction

7. **The district has limited personnel with defined responsibility and time for curriculum development.**

    A. In July 2011, the district curriculum consisted of unarticulated grade-level maps that were not aligned with the 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks and not in common use.

        1. Interviewees said that the prior director oversaw the development of these maps over a two-year period. The position was full-time in the first year, but reduced to part-time in the second, which limited both the scope of the work and the rate of completion.

        2. Central office administrators told the review team that the maps were largely incomplete and stored in the administration building rather than located in the schools. They also said that there was little commonality in curricular content at a grade level from school to school and sometimes within the same school.

            a. Elementary teachers told the review team that they had participated in curriculum mapping, but did not know what had become of the maps. Many said that the activity was ineffective because the maps had little instrumental value.

            b. Teachers at the middle school said that they had developed a grade-level curriculum in each discipline and high school teachers said that they had developed course curricula, but vertical alignment of the curriculum had been largely unaddressed.

    B. In October 2011, the current director of curriculum and professional development enacted a new plan for curriculum development and renewal.

        1. Interviews and a documentation review showed that a database (Rubicon Atlas) was adopted to facilitate documentation and revision of the curriculum and to provide teachers constant ready access to curricular documents.

2. The director instituted a curriculum leadership council (CLC) composed of 11 teachers representing grade levels and disciplines to serve as a steering committee for district curriculum development and renewal, provided them with training and a defined cycle for curriculum development.

   a. In November 2011 CLC members and principals attended a three-day training sponsored by the district on backward curriculum design.

   b. Subsequently, the district entered the first stage of a five-to-seven-year curriculum development cycle based on backward design principles and consisting of the following stages: (1) identifying what students should know and be able to do; (2) developing assessments to provide evidence of learning and learner needs; and (3) developing instruction, including differentiated instruction to ensure mastery of standards.

C. Interviews and a review of documentation showed that the district is in the third year of the five- to seven-year cycle and has only completed approximately 80 percent of the first stage (identifying what students should know and be able to do).

   1. The review team found that kindergarten through grade 5 mathematics and grade 7 science were complete at stage 1 and kindergarten through grade 5 ELA was nearly complete. Except for high school English and mathematics, all disciplines were at least partially documented at each grade level.

   2. High school level English and mathematics courses were undocumented at stage 1 because high school English and mathematics teachers were involved in the adoption of MAP testing during the 2012-2013 school year.

D. The district does not have sufficient personnel with clearly defined responsibility for curriculum development.

   1. According to the organizational chart and interviews, the director of curriculum and professional development does not have authority over the principals. The director is on the same line as the principals on the organizational chart. A central office administrator told the review team that the director of curriculum and professional development position should be reclassified as an assistant superintendent position to establish authority in curricular decision-making.

      a. Principals said that decisions about curricular initiatives involving more than one school have been deferred because no one has clear decision-making authority. They described "backing off" on initiatives when there was no consensus.

      b. Principals described the director of curriculum and professional development as the district curriculum leader, but expressed uncertainty and concern about their own role in district curriculum development. They described the director as burdened with heavy responsibility, and said that they were unable to assist with district curriculum work.

Three of the five principals are without assistant principals. They told the review team that teacher evaluation responsibilities and student matters took priority. The principals said that one principal served on the CLC and kept the others informed. They said that they were the curriculum leaders in their schools, in close consultation with specialists or department heads, adding that their role was to help teachers implement the district curriculum determined by the central office.

c. Department heads acknowledged their responsibility for high school curriculum development; however, central office administrators told the review team that department heads were reluctant to determine the curriculum for other teachers and stated that budget preparation and scheduling took much of their time.

d. Interviews and a review of documentation showed that the district's middle school team leaders address grade level matters and parental and student concerns. They have no formal role in curriculum development. The district's three literacy specialists and one part-time mathematics specialist instruct students and also have no formal role in curriculum development, although two serve on the CLC.

e. In interviews with the review team, CLC members were unclear about its functions. Some said that all requests to modify the curriculum needed approval of the CLC while others maintained that the CLC was advisory to the director of curriculum and professional development and had no actual authority. Principals were also unsure of the purpose of the CLC. One expressed the view that it served as a "sounding board" for the director.

E. The district has not provided sufficient time for curriculum development and renewal.

1. Interviews and a document review showed that the district's professional development days are used for many purposes, including mandatory trainings.

2. Elementary and middle school teachers have only one period of common planning time each week, occasionally augmented by faculty meeting time once each month. At the middle school, common planning time is grade level rather than discipline specific. High school teachers have one department meeting each month.

3. In 2012-2013 the district devoted nearly all of its professional development and faculty meeting time to implementation of the new educator evaluation system.

4. Central office administrators engaged substitutes to allow elementary teachers to devote a full day to documenting the K-5 mathematics curriculum in 2013-2014. Although they said that much was accomplished, they told the review team that they hesitate to remove teachers from their classrooms as a routine practice. Despite advocacy, a proposal to fund summer curriculum work amounting to $12,000 was eliminated from the fiscal year 2015 budget.

Impact: Bellingham does not have a fully documented curriculum in all core subject areas and has not defined the roles of personnel for curriculum development and renewal. Under current conditions, it is difficult to ensure that all Bellingham students are receiving standards-based instruction at all grade levels in all core subject areas. A fully elaborated and documented curriculum is fundamental to improving proficiency rates, closing the achievement gap, interpreting the results of student and programmatic assessments, holding teachers accountable for teaching and learning, and identifying professional development needs.

8. **In observed classrooms, learning objectives were usually not made apparent to students, and teachers' use of best practices was inconsistent, especially at the middle/high school level.**

    The team observed 60 classes throughout the district: 13 at the high school, 20 at the middle school, and 27 at the 3 elementary schools and the Bellingham Early Childhood Center. The team observed 21 ELA classes, 25 mathematics classes, and 14 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were six special education classes, including three at the Primavera Junior Senior High School, the district's alternative junior-senior high school facility. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

    A. There was clear and consistent evidence of some common strengths in the review team's observations of district classes.

        1. The environment was conducive to teaching and learning in district classes observed by the review team at both the elementary (preK-4) and middle/high school (5-12) levels.

            a. Interactions among students and between teachers and students were positive and respectful (in 98 percent of classes), behavioral standards were clearly communicated and effectively and equitably managed (in 82 percent of classrooms) and transitions were managed with minimal loss of instructional time (in 88 percent of classes).

        2. Classrooms were arranged to provide all students with access to learning activities (in 95 percent of classrooms) and most students assumed responsibility for their own learning in individual work and while working with other students (in 70 percent of classes).

    B. Overall, the review team found a low incidence of some learning characteristics.

        1. Most teachers did not make the learning objectives apparent to students.

            a. Although instruction was clearly purposeful in most observed classes, teachers verbalized or posted written lesson objectives aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in only 13 percent of the classes observed.

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i.   In an interview with the review team, principals said that although the district did not require teachers to post objectives or to refer to them orally, some principals encouraged this practice in their schools.

ii. Both principals and teachers told the review team that some principals ascertained whether students understood the purpose of the lesson by asking them during classroom visits what they were learning. These principals gave teachers feedback intended to reinforce the importance of making the lesson objectives clear to students.

2. Teachers clearly and consistently asked students to elaborate about content, opinions or ideas in only 15 percent of observed classes.

   a. In most observed classes, teachers did not require students to give fully developed responses. For example, in an elementary class students answered "yes" or "no" to an opinion question; in a middle school class, students provided the numerical solution to a mathematical problem without explaining the underlying reasoning; and in a high school class, students merely named the character they thought had changed most in a novel they had read without providing supportive evidence from the text.

C. In its classroom observations the review team found substantial differences between the elementary, middle, and high school levels in rigor and expectations, opportunities for higher order thinking, formative assessment and higher order tasks.

   1. At the elementary (K-4) level, the review team found clear and consistent evidence of teachers providing lessons reflecting rigor and high expectations in 67 percent of observed classes and teachers providing multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking in 56 percent of observed classes. At the middle and high school (7-12) levels, the review team found clear and consistent evidence of teachers providing lessons reflecting rigor and high expectations in 20 percent and 46 percent of observed classes at the middle school and high school levels, respectively, and teachers providing multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking in 20 percent and 23 percent of observed classes at the middle school and high school levels, respectively.

      a. Examples of practices and activities reflecting rigor and promoting higher order thinking from the review team's classroom observations included:

         • drawing conclusions and substantiating them with evidence from the text
         • interpreting a complex graph
         • classifying objects by color, shape and use
         • predicting the outcome of a story
         • guessing what a story might be about from the cover illustration
         • applying knowledge of heat transfer to design and construct a scale model cool home for penguins

- describing how two characters in a story are similar and different
- identifying the strategies authors use to connect the end with the beginning of a novel
- through relevant reading and hands-on experiments at lab stations, experiencing the processes that resulted in the formation of Cape Cod , including weathering, erosion and deposition
- investigating which block formations are the most stable and easiest to build
- surveying the class for opinions

2. Teachers were observed to be checking for student understanding through formative assessments in 81 percent of elementary and in 25 percent and 38 percent of middle school and high school classes, respectively.

   a. Examples of checking for understanding from the review team's classroom observations included:

   - asking students to put their thumbs up if they understand a concept; thumbs down if they do not; and thumbs sideways if they are uncertain
   - giving students a problem to solve based on the lesson as a 'ticket to leave"
   - asking students whether an explanation is making sense to them and to jot down one question to ask
   - circulating to monitor students' independent or small group work and providing direct in the moment assistance
   - asking students to repeat given directions in their own words

D. Students were observed to be engaging in challenging academic tasks in 67 percent of elementary classes and in 20 percent and 31 percent of middle school and high school level classes, respectively.

1. Examples of practices and activities that were not sufficiently challenging included:

   - calling only on volunteers without broadening the discussion
   - getting to "right answers" without discussing strategies and reasoning
   - having students transfer their recorded notes from a history text to a chart without providing an opportunity for them to discuss the meaning of the facts
   - not considering the different points of view expressed by two students and spending most of the class time on the teacher's own conclusions
   - having students wait in line to have their work checked
   - not engaging the class as a student graphed an exponential fraction on the board
   - not providing extension tasks for students who finish assigned work early

Impact: When lesson objectives are not posted or stated, learning is less meaningful and motivating to students and teachers' instruction may drift from mastery of the standards. While there is evidence of best practices intended to increase rigor and foster higher order thinking, especially at the elementary level, the district will not make effective progress until these practices become common.

Assessment

9. **The district does not have a common set of practices for data collection, dissemination, and use in its schools.**

    A. The district does not have data teams that regularly monitor student performance. Data is reviewed by varied groups at the elementary, middle, and high schools.

        1. The Macy Elementary School is the only school with a school-based data team. At Macy, the principal has monthly meetings with teachers and specialists to review benchmark assessment data and jointly create classroom goals.

        2. Interviewees said that data is reviewed by building-based RtI teams made up of the principal, literacy specialist, special education teacher, and regular teacher. RtI teams in Bellingham operate similarly to student support teams in other districts. Classroom teachers refer students who are not making expected gains on benchmark assessment to RtI teams. RtI teams provide suggestions for teachers to try in the classrooms. They may also suggest additional small group support outside the classroom. Student performance is followed up after six weeks.

        3. The review team was told that literacy specialists in the elementary schools collect and disseminate benchmark data three times a year for students under benchmark and two times a year for students on benchmark. Elementary teachers reported that they administer assessments, create spreadsheets, submit data from their assessments to the secretary, and then they "don't know what happens to it after that."

        4. The mathematics specialist at the Stall Brook Elementary School collects mathematics data and does an item analysis. This does not happen in the other elementary schools.

        5. Other administrators reported that assessments are administered at the high school and then put away; they said that they are not analyzing data.

    B. There is limited evidence of data-based decisions at the district level; decisions based on data take place primarily at the school level.

        1. The District Improvement Plan does not include student performance data or measureable goals.

        2. The recent District Improvement Plan Update provided to the review team had no mention of student performance as an indicator of current progress or continued challenges.

        3. The fiscal year 2015 PowerPoint Budget Presentation to the school committee did not include student performance data as a rationale for budget requests or reductions.

4. School improvement plans reviewed by the team show little evidence of data analysis and only the Primavera Junior Senior High School Improvement Plan (enrollment 22 in 2013-2014) had measurable goals.

5. Interviewees reported that data is used to create instructional groups and to identify and refer students for support and enrichment in the elementary schools.

6. Middle school grade level teams use data to plan flex periods and flexible groupings for remediation and extension work.

7. Data at the high school is discussed by department chairs with staff; however, interviewees said that there is a need for improvement to go deeper.

Impact: The absence of a cohesive, systemwide focus on data collection and analysis limits the district's ability to monitor improvement efforts and to know whether these efforts are successful and having an impact on student achievement.

Human Resources and Professional Development

10. While the district has implemented the educator evaluation system as required for Race to the Top (RTTT) participants, all administrators were not evaluated in a timely manner and evaluations were not consistently instructive.

A. A review of educator evaluation information included in TeachPoint files of administrators and teachers showed that, for the most part, the process had been implemented with fidelity for teachers and administrators in 2012-2013, but not for administrators in 2013-2014.

1. The team reviewed evaluations for 19 teachers with professional or non-professional status and those of all administrators, except the superintendent. The superintendent has not been evaluated by the school committee.

    a. Most evaluations of administrators were timely in 2012-2013, but not in 2013-2014. In addition, the signing of documents by the evaluator and the administrator was inconsistent. A review of the 19 teachers' files showed that, for the most part, documentation of formative assessments/evaluations was included and timely as this information related to the teachers' plans. A review of a subsample of educator plans, goal setting documents, and formative and summative evaluations, showed they were informative but not consistently instructive. Not all documents were signed by both the teacher and the evaluator.

      b.   District leaders stated that more is needed to improve the self-assessment and evaluation process, and that many evaluations were not completed during the first year of implementation.

2. The district has eight primary evaluators. High school department heads in the same bargaining unit as teachers are used as observers, but cannot perform formal evaluations, nor can the information documented in their observations be used to influence the content of formative evaluations of teachers. The information they document can be used, however, to determine whether another walkthrough should be conducted.

      a.   District and school leaders repeatedly told the team that they need more capacity to effectively observe and evaluate teachers.

3. Interviews with BTA leaders and a document review showed that although the MOA includes language that indicates the joint labor-management committee would meet quarterly, it is meeting sporadically.

Impact: Inconsistent implementation of the evaluation system for all staff causes dilution of accountability and misalignment of goals between teachers and administrators. Writing observations and evaluations that are not constructive and do not inform professional development for teachers is not sufficient to improve teaching and learning.

11. **For several years, professional development in the district has focused on implementing district and ESE initiatives. While other professional development opportunities are available to staff, they are generally not differentiated or informed by an analysis of assessment data or teacher evaluations. Common planning time is limited throughout the district.**

    A. During the last three years, determining professional development topics in the district has been a top-down process, concentrating on implementing the Keys to Literacy program, the ESE educator evaluation system, and district curriculum initiatives, such as entering components of curricula into Rubicon Atlas. The district has three full days and two half days of formal scheduled professional development.

1. The district has neither a professional development plan to articulate a theory of action nor a professional development committee to consider and suggest professional development topics. District leaders said that the district offers programs that capture the instructional components that teachers need for their individual professional development.

2. A review of the offerings for the last three years as well as information on the professional development section of the district's website showed that staff attended a wide range of trainings. The topics included educator evaluation, Daily 5 Group Book Work, and training in IPASS Think Math, Keys to Literacy, MAP, and Understanding by Design training.

    a. Staff can enroll in professional development offerings through a portal on the district's website. Staff can enroll in sessions offered during early release days and on district professional development days.

    b. Other professional development may take place during common planning time, mentoring, staff meetings, or department meetings; some teachers told the review team that little professional development related to content areas is offered.

        i. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are in place in four of the six schools in the district, but interviewees told the review team that development of PLCs has stalled because of a labor action.

        ii. Some funding targeted for curriculum professional development was used to implement TeachPoint.

    c. According to 2012 TELL Mass survey results, the latest available data, 53 percent of the teachers who responded agreed or strongly agreed that professional development deepened knowledge and 49 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that professional development was differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers. Periodically, some differentiated professional development was offered by the district, including Writers Workshop and Daily Five.

    d. Common planning time is limited, but is more developed at the elementary schools, where common prep times are more aligned. At the high school, department meetings are the venue for planning meetings. At the middle school, teams members meet during flex time, but not all teams have the same schedule, so content teachers cannot always meet together.

        i. According to 2012 TELL Mass survey results, 17 percent of teachers who responded indicated that they spent no time planning collaboratively, and 44 percent said that they spent less than one hour.

Impact: The absence of adequate common planning time for all teachers to strategically plan leads to inconsistency in the implementation of the curricula and other initiatives. Professional development that is not informed by teacher and student needs and is not aligned to district goals likely inhibits teacher and student growth and may preclude the district from meeting academic goals.

Student Support

12. Response to Intervention (RtI) practices are inconsistent within and between levels.

    A. The practices of student support teams at the elementary level vary by school.

1. All elementary schools have a literacy specialist and a special educator on the student support team. At the Macy and South elementary schools, the literacy specialist is the chair of the team. At the Stall Brook Elementary School, a grade 4 teacher chairs the team.

   a. At the two Title I schools, the Title I teacher is also a member of the team.

   b. Team members vary depending on who volunteered and who is available for meetings.

   c. At the Macy Elementary School, the school psychologist and behavior specialist are team members.

2. The student support team is usually called the RtI team, although at the Macy Elementary School the data team plays a role in the support process.

   a. At the Stall Brook Elementary School, the RtI team is used to identify students who need services. Those who need special support are monitored more frequently with running records every 7 to 10 days. The process also serves to determine student grouping. For example, in grade 4 the RtI team has divided the two grade 4 classes into four groups for literacy as follows: a small group of students needing specially designed instruction by a special educator, a group of skill-deficient students co-taught by a special educator and an instructional learning assistant (ILA), and an on-level and an above-level group split between the two grade-level teachers.

   b. Staff members told the review team that the Macy Elementary School has a data team that functions like an RtI team but looks at whole-class data. The principal or the data team meets with individual teachers. The specialists also attend this meeting. If students continue to struggle, the RtI team, which is similar in composition to the data team, monitors their progress through portfolios of student work and running records every 7 to 10 days.

   c. At the South Elementary School, when students are not making progress, they are brought to the RtI team where intervention begins. The RtI creates pull-out groups for intervention.

3. Literacy assessments for intervention and progress monitoring vary by school.

   a. The Stall Brook Elementary School uses DRA for progress monitoring.

   b. The Macy Elementary School uses BAS and running records for progress monitoring.

   c. The South Elementary School uses the SRI for screening, DRA2 for progress monitoring, and the BAS to monitor interventions.

4. All schools provide additional supports for students. The Macy and Stall Brook elementary schools have a Before and After School Enrichment (BASE) program based on grade level and need for services. It is staffed by teachers twice per week during their contracted after-

school time. These two schools also offer a summer enrichment program to which Title I students are invited. All teachers remain after school twice a week to work with students. The middle and high schools provide late buses to support students' transportation needs.

B. The secondary schools have an RtI team or teams, which function differently from the elementary schools.

1. The middle school grade-level teams provide support for struggling students. According to a goal in its improvement plan, the middle school intends to develop individual teacher's abilities to identify struggling students, to use appropriate strategies, and to find interventions. The middle school also has a schoolwide RtI team composed of a team leader and four teachers.

   a. The middle school has two teams per grade in grades 5 through 8. These teams are composed of four general education teachers, a special educator, and an ILA. The grade level teams decide which interventions are needed by students.

      i. Staff members reported that the process varies considerably among teams. In several interviews, staff members mentioned a grade 7 team that did a particularly effective job.

   b. Planning services for middle school students is challenging since some of the elementary schools use different assessments. As a result, the middle school RtI team does not receive the data they need to create student support groups for grade 5. The middle school has therefore implemented the Group Reading and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) in for grade 5 as a common assessment.

      i. The RtI team has encouraged grade-level teams to bring students to them, but teachers do not always use the RtI team. In an effort to help the school, the RtI team has implemented measures to improve morale.

2 . The high school RtI team is led by guidance counselors and has both regular and special education team members. The five member team is composed of the student, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, and principal or assistant principal. The team looks at discipline and attendance records for the preceding three years. Referred students are usually in grade 9 or 10 and often need help with keeping an agenda, doing homework, or coming to school regularly. The RtI team intervenes in an effort to prevent students from dropping out

C. A districtwide RtI form was created to systematize the process and address the need for documentation prior to referral of a student for evaluation under the special education law. The form was created in the 2013-2014 school year along with a PowerPoint presentation to explain its use. However, only the South Elementary School RtI team seemed aware of it.

D. There was no evidence of differentiation of instruction or appropriate modifications in 68 percent of classrooms observed by the review team. There was no evidence of these practices in

51 percent of visited elementary classrooms, in 95 percent of classrooms at the middle school, and in 62 percent of observed high school classrooms.

1. The district has offered limited opportunities to its staff to receive training for differentiation of instruction and modifications for special populations.

2. High school staff say that differentiation is accomplished primarily through course levels.

Impact: The district's ability to meet the needs of all learners is impeded by an RtI process that varies by school and is not consistently documented. Staff do not have access to complete records, comparable data, or use a common language to discuss the process. General education teachers have inadequate differentiation strategies to provide for a wider range of learners.

13. **Access to personnel and resources for RtI among schools is limited.**

   A. The district has limited staff available for interventions.

   1. The Stall Brook Elementary School has a Title I teacher, a literacy specialist, and a school psychologist, but no adjustment counselor. In 2013-2014, Stall Brook Elementary School was the only elementary school in the district to have a part-time mathematics coach.

   2. The Macy Elementary School has a school psychologist, a literacy specialist, and a Title I teacher. It shares the behavioral specialist (BCBA) with the high school.

      a. A document review showed that the half-time Reading Recovery teacher positions at the Stall Brook and Macy elementary schools were under consideration for elimination in the 2014-2015 school year budget.

   3. The South Elementary School has one literacy specialist and a literacy specialist/Reading Recovery teacher. The school also has a behavioral specialist since it houses the program for social/emotional disabilities. Although the behavioral program is fully inclusive and the student population is large, there are no other intervention resources available in this school. Staff reported that while both the Stall Brook and Macy elementary schools have four interventionists, the South Elementary School with nearly double the student population is understaffed.

   4. The middle school does not have sufficient personnel to provide interventions for its student body.

      a. While the middle school receives the inclusion population of South Elementary School's program for students with social/emotional disabilities, it does not have the personnel to accommodate their needs. It does not have a school adjustment counselor and a school psychologist consults only two days per week. It has one literacy specialist and two guidance counselors for a student population of over 700.

5. The high school shares personnel with the Macy Elementary School, providing the high school with a .5 FTE adjustment counselor. In addition, the high school has a .8 FTE school psychologist.

B. The district's schools, especially through grade 8, have limited materials especially for intervention.

1. The middle school does not have a text for mathematics in grades 6 and 7. Mathematics teachers for those grades are creating their own daily lessons in mathematics for general education students.

2. Interviewees told the review team that elementary staff have requested additional literacy and mathematics intervention materials through the budget, but the budget was insufficient to fund them.

Impact: The district does not have adequate tools to provide appropriate instruction and interventions to support all of its students.

14. **The district's policies and practices are not improving student attendance at the high school.**

A. Attendance rates at the high school need improvement.

1. At 93.8 percent, grade 10 student attendance was the highest in the school. Attendance for grade 12 was 90.3 percent and the lowest of all four classes.

2. The percentages of chronically absent students were as follows: 18.9 for grade 9; 16.5 for grade 10; 19.3 for grade 11; and 30.7 for grade 12. These data reflect the percentage of students absent more 10 percent of the days in membership.

B. Staff and students said that tardiness has also been a problem.

1. High school staff identified tardiness as a problem.

2. Students said that since being a few minutes tardy or missing the entire period incurs the same penalty, they saw no advantage in entering a class late as opposed to not attending the class at all. However, missing the entire class affects the student's attendance as well.

3. High school students spoke about inconsistent enforcement of penalties for tardiness by teachers.

C. High school policies do not encourage better attendance.

1. The high school handbook states that 8 unexcused absences per semester or 16 per year will result in loss of credit.

        a. As long as they can be validated, absences for illness, doctor's appointments, and two college visits do not count toward the total number of absences that trigger consequences.

    2. The Student Attendance Board can give students a reprieve from the consequences by requiring that certain conditions be met, such as better attendance going forward.

D. School practices rely on individual teachers to record students' attendance and inform parents.

    1. Although the district uses iPass, the teacher is responsible for initiating the first notice about absences to parents. With a rotating schedule that places different periods first in the school day, a student's tardiness may trigger an absence warning. One teacher said that absence from a class may not, then, be the same as a day's absence from school.

        a. Once the first letter is sent, the guidance department tracks the student's attendance to prevent loss of credit.

Impact: Students who are not in school often fall behind and are at greater risk of dropping out. Requiring teachers who do not have ready access to attendance records to enforce the school's attendance policy can open the door to inequitable application of the rules. Although tardiness and unexcused absences for an individual class are aspects of the attendance policy, it is unclear whether the school is enforcing attendance or disciplinary rules. Ambiguous rules may encourage students to find a way to avoid consequences. The district relies upon individual teachers to initiate contact with parents when students are frequently absent, while a team effort including teachers, administrators and counselors would bring parents more closely into partnership with the school and its goals.

Financial and Asset Management

15. Implementation of district and school improvement plans are not clearly demonstrated in the fiscal year 2015 budget process. Principals and staff are not closely involved, and student performance data is not referenced in the budget process.

    A. Budgeting for staff and materials to implement school improvement plans is not clearly articulated.

        1. Individual school budgets for materials make reference to school improvement goals but do not provide a specific description of how the proposed budget is funding or supporting the implementation of the goals.

        2. There is no specific reference to student performance data.

    B. The adopted budget by the school committee is based upon the recommendations of the Budget Review Committee (BRC) without reference to School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and District Improvement Plan and with little staff input.

1. The BRC is composed of seven voting members (two school committee members, one selectman, one finance committee member, and three community members) and four nonvoting members (the superintendent, business coordinator, town chief financial officer, and town administrator).

2. Principals told the review team that the BRC sets the bottom line and the principals have to "reconcile" the budget requests.

3. All budget presentations by principals and administrators are made to the BRC. No presentation is made to the entire school committee.

4. The BRC made the budget recommendations to the school committee on April 8, 2014; the school committee adopted the school budget on April 15; and on April 29 a public presentation of the fiscal year 2015 budget was made. There was one week between the recommendation of the BRC and the school committee's adoption of the budget.

C. Reductions that were made to the fiscal year 2015 proposed budget do not appear to relate to the implementation of school and district improvement plans.

1. Principals expressed the view that they were not really part of the process.

2. Some of the requests to the BRC were viewed as not necessary by town board members who wanted the schools to become more efficient.

3. Principals, school committee members, and teachers reported that achievement data does not appear to factor into budget decisions.

4. Principals make a conscious effort to include the DIP and the SIPs in budgeting but the effort breaks down in the budget process.

5. Staff members told the review team that the school committee and superintendent do not appear to advocate actively for student needs during the budgeting process.

Impact: The purposeful alignment of community resources focused on student achievement is critical to the success of the district. Without a focus on school improvement planning and without student performance data in the school budgeting process, district leadership misses the opportunity to demonstrate to the community and stakeholders the importance of improving student performance and cannot implement plans for school improvement.

16. **The district does not have documented facility maintenance, energy management, and capital and facilities improvement plans to maximize and prolong the effective use of school facilities.**

A. Administrators told the team that a facility maintenance management plan is not documented. The maintenance management plan would demonstrate that proactive facility planning is an organizational priority; maintenance priorities are identified; data is important and used for informed decision making; environmental safety is a priority; various types of maintenance

(routine, emergency, preventive, and predictive) are defined; cleaning standards have been established; and new staff training and professional development are important.

B. An energy management plan is not documented. An energy plan is the guiding document that outlines the strategy for managing energy consumption. An energy management plan would include a school district energy policy, energy conservation activities, tracking consumption, setting conservation goals, equipment upgrades, efficient operations, vacation and summer scheduling and funding opportunities.

    1. Some energy management activities have taken place, such as classroom lighting and building automation systems.

C. A documented capital and facilities improvement plan does not exist. The capital and facilities improvement plan is the blueprint for the future use of school facilities. It documents the condition of each facility; identifies the amount of deferred maintenance; prioritizes improvements; and projects the needs of the district.

    1. Administrators told the review team that the District Steering Committee is working on a long-range facilities plan.

    2. An assessment of the condition of school facilities was conducted several years ago.

    3. A facility use study was recently completed by the New England School Development Council.

        a. This is intended to assist the district in consolidating schools.

        b. Consolidation of schools is expected to reduce school district expenses.

    4. A capital improvement plan for vehicles and equipment does not exist. The capital plan is a guiding document for the schools and community.

Impact: Without a documented and coordinated plan, it is impossible to know whether the day-to-day maintenance operations support current and future priorities of the district and provide the level of stewardship for facilities expected by the community. The school district has the responsibility to provide safe, clean and well maintained school facilities to support the missions of the district. A plan would also help to resolve the uncertainty about the closing of schools because of declining enrollment.

Bellingham Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. **In light of the new collective bargaining agreement,[3] the district should review the District Improvement Plan (DIP) with a sense of urgency and seek to revitalize those activities that were deferred during the protracted negotiations.**

   A. Effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are integral to fostering leadership among teachers in efforts to improve teachers' effectiveness. According to the revised DIP (Spring 2014), the PLCs were dormant because of the lengthy and contentious negotiations.

   B. The school committee should consider the membership of the newly reconstituted Budget Review Committee (BRC) to ensure that principals play a role in formulating the annual budget.

      1. The strongly collaborative team effort among the principals should be harnessed to communicate school-level needs to the BRC.

      2. The school committee should receive regular reports on progress toward DIP and SIP goals.

Benefits: By renewing attention to previously established initiatives, the district will ensure that its plans serve as road maps to achieving short- and long-term goals. In particular, the rejuvenation of PLCs can play a significant role in achieving many of the goals of the DIP. Ongoing communication about progress toward key goals will inform the BRC and school committee about the resources needed to support the district's ongoing effort to improve teaching and learning.

Curriculum and Instruction

2. **The district should create a more direct curriculum leadership structure and provide more time for curriculum development and renewal.**

   A. All districts were expected to have aligned their ELA and math curricula to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. Race to the Top (RTTT) districts received an orientation to the 2011 frameworks and resources to help them accomplish the alignment.[4]

   B. The district should establish central office direction for curriculum development and renewal by giving the position of director of curriculum and professional development clear authority on curricular matters and amending the organizational chart to reflect this change.

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[3] See footnote to Leadership and Governance finding 6.
[4] See *Guidelines for Years 2 to 4 of Race to the Top*, p. 31, available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/rttt/district.html.

1. The director should be tasked with recommending to the superintendent specific steps to quicken the pace of curriculum development and to ensure that existing curriculum is systematically reviewed for quality.

2. The role and responsibilities of the CLC should be clarified and communicated.

    a. The director should ensure that the CLC is leveraged to meaningfully support curriculum development, renewal, and implementation.

C. The district should increase the time available for curriculum development and renewal, including vertical alignment of curriculum.

1. Possible approaches to accomplish this include:

    a. Increasing the number of early-release days for professional development and dedicating these to curriculum development activities;

    b. Holding curriculum development workshops after school and during the summer; or

    c. Other district-determined approaches.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Common Core State Standards Initiative* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/) includes links to several resources designed to support the transition to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, which incorporate the Common Core.

- *Creating Curriculum Units at the Local Level* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/mcu_guide.pdf) is a guidance document that can serve as a resource for professional study groups, as a reference for anyone wanting to engage in curriculum development, or simply as a way to gain a better understanding of the process used to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.

- *Creating Model Curriculum Units* (http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssquWrLjKc9h5h2cSpDVZqe6t) is a series of videos that captures the collaboration and deep thinking by curriculum design teams over the course of a full year as they worked to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units. The series includes videos about developing essential questions, establishing goals, creating embedded performance assessments, designing lesson plans, selecting high-quality materials, and evaluating the curriculum unit.

- *Model Curriculum Units* (http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssqvx_Yjra4nBfqQPwc4auUBu) is a video series that shows examples of the implementation of Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.

- ESE's *Quality Review Rubrics* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/rubrics/) can support the analysis and improvement of curriculum units.

Benefits: Strong central office direction for curriculum will facilitate curricular coherence and ensure that decisions about programs and initiatives serve the entire district. A fully documented curriculum based on the 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks with shared, rigorous expectations for student learning as well as vertical and horizontal alignment will contribute to smoother transitions for students, and has the potential to raise the overall level of student achievement in Bellingham.

3. **The district should establish common lesson components and a common definition of high quality instruction with an emphasis on higher order thinking.**

    A. The district should establish common lesson components that are expected districtwide.

        1. In addition to the lesson objective, these components might include key vocabulary, an activator, a sequence of whole-class instruction followed by guided practice, formative assessments, small group or independent work, and an assessment. Teachers could select the components most appropriate to the lesson objective.

    B. Leaders and teachers should develop a common definition of high quality instruction emphasizing high expectations for student learning and higher order thinking.

        1. The district should provide guidance to educators, including professional development, to support the use of instructional strategies that provide an appropriate level of challenge for students.

        2. The district should consider identifying and disseminating examples of best practices in this area.

    C. District and school leaders should inform teachers that lesson objectives must be posted, stated orally, or both, and referenced periodically during the course of the lesson.

    D. Principals should provide regular feedback on teachers' lessons in order to improve the quality and consistency of instruction.

        1. The quality of instruction should be monitored as part of informal classroom visits and formal observations.

Recommended resource:

- ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/ImplementationGuide.pdf) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a *Learning Walkthrough* process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner.

Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/04.0.pdf) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.

Benefits: The establishment of common lesson elements will ensure that teachers design instruction with high expectations for student learning that consist of: clear learning goals closely aligned with the standards and with curriculum unit outcomes; provisions for diverse learning needs; and measurement with a variety of on-the-spot and summative assessments. This will help to ensure educational equity for all students. It will provide a basis for determining students' strengths and needs and will help distrit educators to use a common approach to lessons as a way to continually improve the effectiveness of instruction. High expectations and an emphasis on higher-order thinking will accelerate and deepen student learning and increase achievement.

Assessment

5. **The district should develop common practices for data collection, dissemination, and use in its schools.**

   A. The district should model its vision and expectations for data collection and analysis in district, school, and RtI planning at each school. This can be accomplished by:

      1. Creating a central office data team and identifying a person who will be responsible for the collection and dissemination of data;

      2. Including data analysis and measurable goals in the District Improvement Plan; and

      3. Requiring schools to include analysis of data and measurable achievement goals in their School Improvement Plans.

   B. The district should develop a more systemic process for data collection, analysis, and use.

      1. Principals and teachers should be provided the necessary guidance and resources to establish school data teams.

      2. The data teams should establish expectations and protocols regarding the dissemination and analysis of student performance data, with the goal of helping teachers to use data to inform their instructional planning.

   C. The district should provide professional development for all educators in data collection, analysis, and application of results to modify instruction. This should be in concert with the work of the school and district data teams.

Recommended resources:

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

- ESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.

Benefits: By using data to inform district-level decisions and planning, the district will have a clear way to measure progress and can make mid-course corrections as needed. By developing a more systemic approach to data collection, dissemination, and analysis at the school level, the district will ensure that teachers have the necessary opportunities and resources to use data to inform their instruction. In this way, the district will cultivate a culture of data use. With an increased emphasis on monitoring student performance goals and making mid-course adjustments, the district is more likely to be successful in improving student performance and closing achievement gaps.

Human Resources and Professional Development

6. **The district should complete the work needed to fully implement the educator evaluation system, including the evaluation of all administrators.**

    A. The school committee should evaluate the superintendent.

    B. The district should ensure that all administrators are evaluated in a timely manner as determined by the administrators' educator plans.

    C. As noted in the MOA, the district and BTA should meet quarterly to guide continued implementation of the system.

    D. The district should ensure that observations and evaluations are instructive and inform professional development.

    E. The district should identify opportunities for evaluators to calibrate expectations, grounded in the Standards of Effective Teaching and Administrative Leadership Practice.

    F. To develop additional capacity to observe and to evaluate teachers, the district should consider revisiting policies that prohibit an individual from serving as a primary evaluator to a member of the same bargaining unit, or reallocating resources to fund positions for instructional leaders whose responsibilities would include teacher evaluation.

Recommended resources:

- The March 2014 ESE Educator Evaluation e-Newsletter (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/communications/newsletter/2014-03.pdf) includes a section called *Implementation Spotlight: Strategies for Focusing Observations and Providing Consistent, Constructive Feedback*.

- *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation & Professional Development* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-ProfessionalDevelopment.pdf) describes how educator evaluation and professional development can be used as mutually reinforcing systems to improve educator practice and student outcomes.

- *The Relationship between High Quality Professional Development and Educator Evaluation* (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-aDxtEDncg&list=PLTuqmiQ9ssqt9EmOcWkDEHPKBqRvurebm&index=1) is a video presentation that includes examples from real districts.

Benefits: Consistent and coherent implementation of the evaluation system districtwide will ensure that all staff are working toward aligned district, school, and staff improvement and student learning goals. Developing the necessary capacity to conduct timely and instructive observations and evaluations will allow evaluators additional time to not only conduct instructive observations and evaluations, but also to provide verbal and written feedback.

7. **The district should develop a systematic professional development program.**

   A. To ensure that professional development is developed collaboratively, the district should create a professional development committee whose membership includes district and school leaders and teachers.

      1. The committee should create a professional development plan that is aligned with the DIP and SIPs.

      2. The plan should include opportunities for professional development that are differentiated based on teachers' roles, roles, readiness, interests, and needs.

      3. The committee should ensure that professional development is informed by assessment data, educator evaluation data, and the status of curriculum development and implementation.

   B. The district should review scheduling in order to allocate structured common planning time at all schools for teachers in all grade levels and specialties to plan collaboratively.

      1. As part of this effort, the district should work to reinstate PLCs at schools where they have been stalled and to establish PLCs at schools where they are not yet in place.

Recommended resources:

- *The Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development*
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.pdf) describe, identify, and characterize what high quality
  learning experiences should look like for educators.

- The *PLC Expansion Project* website (http://plcexpansionproject.weebly.com/) is designed to support
  schools and districts in their efforts to establish and sustain cultures that promote Professional
  Learning Communities.

Benefits: Implementing an organized, collaborative, and aligned professional development system will
support ongoing improvement in classroom practice. Structured and meaningful common planning time
will provide opportunities for teacher teams to complete curriculum work, to begin or continue the
work of PLCs, and to review achievement data to inform instruction.

Student Support

8. **The district should strengthen its system of support for students by building teachers' capacity to
    differentiate instruction, establishing consistent procedures, and providing the necessary
    resources.**

    A. The district should provide workshops and embedded training for teachers on how to
        differentiate instruction in order to meet students' diverse needs.

        1. Common planning time and monthly teacher meetings could focus on this topic. These
            forums would give teachers the ability to share practices, ask questions, and develop
            expertise on an ongoing basis.

    B. The district should consider reviewing the roles and processes of RtI teams to ensure
        effectiveness and consistency.

        1. The teams should serve as a resource for teachers, providing additional guidance and
            expertise in meeting students' needs in the classroom.

        2. If suggested measures do not produce the desired results, the RtI team should identify
            school resources that can be used for Tier 2 interventions.

        3. The RtI form should be used districtwide to document measures that have been
            recommended and taken as well as assessments results. The information on the form is
            needed for students recommended for Tier 3 services, or for use by staff in any new school
            to which the student moves.

4. If the district chooses not to use the same assessments from school to school, the district should establish a crosswalk document (as appropriate) so results can be compared and children who need services can be identified regardless of the assessment used.

C. The district should plan to provide resources for intervention.

1. The district should consider the student population in each school and provide the staff needed to support an adequate number and range of interventions. This may require reallocation of funds.

2. Allocation of resources should also depend on the needs of the students in the school.

a. Resources for helping students who have social/emotional issues should be considered among those that are required.

3. The district should provide material resources for intervention.

a. Thesemay include literacy kits, software for literacy or mathematics, or supplementary curriculum materials.

Recommended resources:

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students.

  MTSS Self-Assessment Overview (includes links to the MTSS Self-Assessment tool and *How to Complete the MTSS Self-Assessment*): http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/sa/

- The *Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework* (http://bhps321.org/viewframework.asp) is a guidance document to help schools establish supportive environments with collaborative services that will enable all students – including those with behavioral health needs – to achieve at their highest potential.

- *Addressing Students' Social, Emotional, and Health Needs* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/StudentsNeeds.pdf) provides guidance and promising practices to help schools create a safe school environment and make effective use of a system for addressing the social, emotional, and health needs of its students that reflects the behavioral health and public schools framework.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will provide all students with a network of support that is systematic and consistent between schools. It will increase the effectiveness of instruction and will ensure that students' needs are met within and outside of the classroom.

9. **The high school should revise its attendance and tardiness policies to improve students' attendance.**

   A. Although the high school may excuse extended absence because of illness or hospitalization, it should rewrite its attendance policy so that students are expected to be in school daily and absence for any reason should not total more than 10 days per year.

   B. The guidance department should be charged with tracking student attendance and communicating with parents, including sending the first notice about absences.

      1. The guidance department should inform parents when their children are in danger of not receiving credit for a course.

   C. The high school should examine ways to encourage students to arrive at school on time.

      1. The school should determine the start of the school day rather than relying on the clocks in the rooms of individual teachers. It could use a bell or tone, even if this is only used at the start of the day.

      2. Tardiness of a few minutes and tardiness that results in missing most or all of a class period should be viewed differently and assigned different penalties.

      3. The high school might consider options that would allow students to enter the building early to study, to have breakfast, or to get extra help.

Benefit: A revised attendance policy with clear guidelines, clarity of roles, consistent enforcement and support for students at risk should improve attendance, enhance student learning, and prepare students for postsecondary educational and workplace expectations.

Financial and Asset Management

10. **The Bellingham School District should implement a budgeting process that clearly demonstrates how the budget relates to district improvement plans, school improvement plans, and student performance.**

   A. Principals and administrators who develop the proposed budget for their domains should include a description of how the proposed budget supports the implementation of the district improvement plan (DIP) and the school improvement plans (SIPs).

      1. This may include a narrative that lists each school improvement goal and how the proposed budget supports the attainment of the goal in detail.

B. It is recommended that the budget process include budget presentations by administrators to the full school committee; these would include a description of how each proposed budget supports the SIP for each school.

C. It is recommended that when budget reductions take place, the impact on the implementation of the SIP is identified and discussed at school committee meetings. Similarly, reductions put forth by principals and administrators should include impact statements.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will provide a sharper focus on relating the school budget to the goals of the School Improvement Plans. The school committee will become more aware of how the budget supports teaching and learning and the impact of budget increases and reductions on attaining school improvement goals. Relating the budget process to district and school goals will increase community awareness of the the importance of plans to improve student achievement.

11. **The Bellingham School District should develop formal, well documented plans for school facility maintenance management, energy management, and capital and facilities planning.**

A. Elements of the facility maintenance management plan would include but not be limited to involving stakeholders, creating a vision, conducting a facility audit, establishing/identifying needs (cleanliness, student safety, addressing deferred maintenance), identifying priorities, collecting and using data to inform decisions, providing a safe environment, and managing staff and contractors.

B. Elements of the energy management plan would include but not be limited to establishing a district energy policy, tracking all energy consumption (electrical, heating, water, and trash), conducting an energy audit, benchmarking, identifying an Operations and Management action plan, identifying quick and low cost initiatives, and recognizing and motivating staff.

C. Elements of the capital plan would include but not be limited to involving stakeholders, identifying the dollar value of the capital projects, conducting an auditing of the facilities for capital projects, creating a process for conducting a facility needs assessment, using life cycle modeling, planning for funding, and communicating with community leadership and members. The plan would include maintenance required, training of staff, life cycle information, replacement plan and staging of projects, and involvement of stakeholders.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *School Building Issues* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/sbuilding/) includes funding opportunities, guidelines, and resources related to school buildings.

- *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* (http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003347), from the National Center for Education Statistics, is intended to help school districts plan for efficient and effective operations. It addresses various topics, including conducting a facilities audit, planning and evaluating maintenance, and managing staff and contractors.

- *The Massachusetts School Checklist*
  (http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/environmental-health/exposure-topics/iaq/iaq-methods/the-mass-school-checklist.html) is a list of the most important environmental health and safety issues for schools to address. It includes regulations and industry standards/guidelines related to elements on the checklist, as well as additional resources.

- The Green Ribbon Schools Award honors schools that are exemplary in reducing environmental impact and costs, improving the health and wellness of students and staff, and delivering effective environmental and sustainability education. Bellingham might find several related resources useful, including Massachusetts' *Green Ribbon Schools Award Resource Guide* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/sbuilding/GreenRibbon/ResourcesGuide.pdf) and the US Department of Education's *Green Strides* resource list (http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/green-strides/resources.html).

- MassEnergyInsight (http://www.massenergyinsight.net/home) is a free, web-based tool made available by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources as part of the Massachusetts Green Communities Program. The tool is designed to help communities learn about and monitor energy use and related costs, plan energy efficiency programs, and communicate this information.

Benefits: A well documented master plan is a blueprint for daily decision making. With a coordinated plan, it is possible to know whether day-to-day maintenance operations support current and future priorities.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from April 28-May 1, 2014, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Dr. Owen Conway, leadership and governance

2. Dr. James McAuliffe, curriculum and instruction

3. Lenora Jennings, assessment, review team coordinator

4. James Hearns, human resources and professional development

5. Dr. Katherine Lopez-Natale, student support

6. Roger Young, financial and asset management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: chief financial officer (CFO), business coordinator, two payroll clerks, two bookkeepers, three selectmen, and one member of the town finance committee.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: chair and two members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: president and nine members.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: superintendent, director of special services, director of curriculum and professional development, director of maintenance, and business coordinator.

The team visited the following schools: Early Education Center (PK), Macy Elementary School (K-4), South Elementary (K-4) Stall Brook Elementary (K-4), Bellingham Memorial Middle School (grades 5-8), Bellingham High School (grades 9-12), and Primavera Junior Senior High School (grades 7-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with 6 principals and focus groups with 57 elementary school teachers, 10 middle school teachers, and 44 high school teachers. The team observed 60 classes in the district: 13 at the two high schools, 20 at the one middle school, and 27 at the 3 elementary schools (including 2 at the early childhood center).

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

o   Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.

o   Data on the district's staffing and finances.

o   Published educational reports on the district by ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).

o   District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports.

o   All completed program and administrator evaluations, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 04/28/2014	Tuesday 04/29/2014	Wednesday 04/30/2014	Thursday 05/01/2014
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers' association.	Interviews with district staff, principals and town officials; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; student focus group and visits to Bellingham High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with district staff; interviews with school leaders; follow-up with teachers' association, interviews with school committee members; visits to Macy, Bellingham Memorial Middle School, South, Stall Brook, and the Early Childhood Center for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Bellingham Memorial Middle School, Bellingham High School, Primavera Junior Senior High School, and South for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

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

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	32	1.3%	82990	8.7%
Asian	91	3.8%	58455	6.1%
Hispanic	75	3.1%	162647	17.0%
Native America	4	0.2%	2209	0.2%
White	2169	90.2%	620628	64.9%
Native Hawaiian	--	--	1007	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	33	1.4%	27803	2.9%
All Students	2404	100.0%	955739	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2013

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

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	393	47.5%	16.2%	164336	34.8%	17.0%
Low Income	540	65.3%	22.5%	365885	77.5%	38.3%
ELLs and Former ELLs	33	4.0%	1.4%	75947	16.1%	7.9%
All high needs students	827	100.0%	34.0%	472001	100.0%	48.8%

Notes: As of October 1, 2013. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 2,431; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 966,360.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	189	88.9	87.5	87.8	85.2	83.3	-3.7	-2.6
	P+	189	70.0%	61.0%	68.0%	62.0%	57.0%	-8.0%	-6.0%
4	CPI	205	84.2	81.6	83.7	83.5	78.9	-0.7	-0.2
	P+	205	61.0%	58.0%	57.0%	65.0%	53.0%	4.0%	8.0%
	SGP	197	51	51.5	50	49	49	-2	-1
5	CPI	199	87.6	88.4	83.8	86.2	84.7	-1.4	2.4
	P+	199	67.0%	71.0%	61.0%	65.0%	66.0%	-2.0%	4.0%
	SGP	191	40	40	45	42	52	2	-3
6	CPI	186	90.1	92.1	87.5	87.4	85.1	-2.7	-0.1
	P+	186	75.0%	77.0%	70.0%	69.0%	67.0%	-6.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	175	44	47	40	50	52	6	10
7	CPI	166	89.9	92.3	91.4	91.7	88.4	1.8	0.3
	P+	166	72.0%	77.0%	81.0%	79.0%	72.0%	7.0%	-2.0%
	SGP	156	44	46	52	47.5	48	3.5	-4.5
8	CPI	185	93.2	89.9	92.5	93.1	90.1	-0.1	0.6
	P+	185	81.0%	72.0%	78.0%	85.0%	78.0%	4.0%	7.0%
	SGP	176	40	32.5	32.5	49	50	9	16.5
10	CPI	177	95.6	96.2	96.9	97.6	96.9	2	0.7
	P+	177	85.0%	90.0%	91.0%	92.0%	91.0%	7.0%	1.0%
	SGP	160	52	49	43	57.5	57	5.5	14.5
All	CPI	1307	90	89.7	88.9	89	86.8	-1	0.1
	P+	1307	73.0%	72.0%	72.0%	73.0%	69.0%	0.0%	1.0%
	SGP	1055	44.5	44	44	49	51	4.5	5

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time.

Table B2b: Bellingham Public Schools
Mathematics Performance, 2010-2013

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	189	86.3	89.7	81.5	84.8	84.3	-1.5	3.3
	P+	189	70.0%	72.0%	60.0%	70.0%	66.0%	0.0%	10.0%
4	CPI	206	83.2	76.6	81.7	80.3	80.2	-2.9	-1.4
	P+	206	52.0%	45.0%	51.0%	53.0%	52.0%	1.0%	2.0%
	SGP	198	38	39	46	59.5	54	21.5	13.5
5	CPI	199	74.5	78.2	69.7	77.9	80.6	3.4	8.2
	P+	199	49.0%	55.0%	43.0%	54.0%	61.0%	5.0%	11.0%
	SGP	191	30	29	23	39	54	9	16
6	CPI	186	76	79.9	77.8	74.5	80.3	-1.5	-3.3
	P+	186	50.0%	57.0%	52.0%	50.0%	61.0%	0.0%	-2.0%
	SGP	175	30	37	32	47	50	17	15
7	CPI	167	73.7	74.3	76.2	71	74.4	-2.7	-5.2
	P+	167	50.0%	47.0%	51.0%	43.0%	52.0%	-7.0%	-8.0%
	SGP	157	55	41	51	44	46	-11	-7
8	CPI	184	78	76	79.5	79.8	76	1.8	0.3
	P+	184	53.0%	56.0%	58.0%	64.0%	55.0%	11.0%	6.0%
	SGP	175	54	64	65	62	50	8	-3
10	CPI	175	92.9	91.6	92.8	92.6	90.2	-0.3	-0.2
	P+	175	81.0%	82.0%	81.0%	82.0%	80.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	SGP	161	48	51	48.5	55	51	7	6.5
All	CPI	1306	80.3	80.6	79.8	80.1	80.8	-0.2	0.3
	P+	1306	57.0%	59.0%	56.0%	59.0%	61.0%	2.0%	3.0%
	SGP	1057	43	44	41	52	51	9	11

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
5	CPI	199	87.6	83	86.1	85.7	78.5	-1.9	-0.4
	P+	199	68.0%	55.0%	67.0%	62.0%	51.0%	-6.0%	-5.0%
8	CPI	184	74.2	76.8	76.8	77.6	71	3.4	0.8
	P+	184	41.0%	48.0%	49.0%	47.0%	39.0%	6.0%	-2.0%
10	CPI	165	81.9	86.1	87.5	90.2	88	8.3	2.7
	P+	165	50.0%	66.0%	69.0%	72.0%	71.0%	22.0%	3.0%
All	CPI	548	81.3	81.4	83.1	84.3	79	3	1.2
	P+	548	53.0%	55.0%	61.0%	60.0%	53.0%	7.0%	-1.0%

Notes: P+ = percent *Proficient* or *Advanced*. Students participate in STE MCAS tests in grades 5, 8, and 10 only. Median SGPs are not calculated for STE.

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	455	79.8	80	78.8	77.2	-2.6	-1.6
		P+	455	50.0%	49.0%	51.0%	51.0%	1.0%	0.0%
		SGP	358	38	40	46	44.5	6.5	-1.5
	State	CPI	237163	76.1	77	76.5	76.8	0.7	0.3
		P+	237163	45.0%	48.0%	48.0%	48.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	180087	45	46	46	47	2	1
Low Income	District	CPI	294	85.5	84.6	82.4	81.4	-4.1	-1
		P+	294	62.0%	59.0%	59.0%	59.0%	-3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	236	40	40	43	47	7	4
	State	CPI	184999	76.5	77.1	76.7	77.2	0.7	0.5
		P+	184999	47.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	141671	46	46	45	47	1	2
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	239	67.2	69.4	67.8	65.2	-2	-2.6
		P+	239	21.0%	25.0%	29.0%	31.0%	10.0%	2.0%
		SGP	173	32.5	38	43	37	4.5	-6
	State	CPI	88956	67.3	68.3	67.3	66.8	-0.5	-0.5
		P+	88956	28.0%	30.0%	31.0%	30.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	64773	41	42	43	43	2	0
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	24	79.8	87.5	81	80.2	0.4	-0.8
		P+	24	54.0%	67.0%	48.0%	50.0%	-4.0%	2.0%
		SGP	20	0	0	0	53	53	53
	State	CPI	46676	66.1	66.2	66.2	67.4	1.3	1.2
		P+	46676	32.0%	33.0%	34.0%	35.0%	3.0%	1.0%
		SGP	31672	51	50	51	53	2	2
All students	District	CPI	1307	90	89.7	88.9	89	-1	0.1
		P+	1307	73.0%	72.0%	72.0%	73.0%	0.0%	1.0%
		SGP	1055	44.5	44	44	49	4.5	5
	State	CPI	496175	86.9	87.2	86.7	86.8	-0.1	0.1
		P+	496175	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	1.0%	0.0%
		SGP	395568	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	453	68.1	67.6	66.1	65.6	-2.5	-0.5
		P+	453	35.0%	37.0%	37.0%	36.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	358	36	39	37	42.5	6.5	5.5
	State	CPI	237745	66.7	67.1	67	68.6	1.9	1.6
		P+	237745	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	40.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	180866	46	46	46	46	0	0
Low Income	District	CPI	293	73.4	73.2	71	71.6	-1.8	0.6
		P+	293	43.0%	46.0%	46.0%	45.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	236	38.5	41	34	43.5	5	9.5
	State	CPI	185392	67.1	67.3	67.3	69	1.9	1.7
		P+	185392	37.0%	38.0%	38.0%	41.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	142354	47	46	45	46	-1	1
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	236	56.8	56	52.2	52.3	-4.5	0.1
		P+	236	17.0%	21.0%	17.0%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		SGP	172	37.5	39	36	41	3.5	5
	State	CPI	89193	57.5	57.7	56.9	57.4	-0.1	0.5
		P+	89193	21.0%	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		SGP	65068	43	43	43	42	-1	-1
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	24	67.3	70	72	62.5	-4.8	-9.5
		P+	24	38.0%	44.0%	44.0%	38.0%	0.0%	-6.0%
		SGP	20	0	0	45.5	39.5	39.5	-6
	State	CPI	47046	61.5	62	61.6	63.9	2.4	2.3
		P+	47046	31.0%	32.0%	32.0%	35.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	31986	54	52	52	53	-1	1
All students	District	CPI	1306	80.3	80.6	79.8	80.1	-0.2	0.3
		P+	1306	57.0%	59.0%	56.0%	59.0%	2.0%	3.0%
		SGP	1057	43	44	41	52	9	11
	State	CPI	497090	79.9	79.9	79.9	80.8	0.9	0.9
		P+	497090	58.0%	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	3.0%	2.0%
		SGP	396691	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	199	70.8	70.1	69.8	74.5	3.7	4.7
		P+	199	28.0%	37.0%	35.0%	41.0%	13.0%	6.0%
	State	CPI	96902	64.3	63.8	65	66.4	2.1	1.4
		P+	96902	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	31.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Low Income	District	CPI	135	72.4	74.6	72.1	78.9	6.5	6.8
		P+	135	32.0%	44.0%	39.0%	49.0%	17.0%	10.0%
	State	CPI	75485	63.6	62.8	64.5	66.1	2.5	1.6
		P+	75485	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	32.0%	4.0%	1.0%
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	87	63.6	58.6	62.7	63.2	-0.4	0.5
		P+	87	14.0%	18.0%	25.0%	18.0%	4.0%	-7.0%
	State	CPI	37049	59	59.2	58.7	59.8	0.8	1.1
		P+	37049	19.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	1.0%	0.0%
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	11	0	0	0	75	75	75
		P+	11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%
	State	CPI	16179	51.8	50.3	51.4	54	2.2	2.6
		P+	16179	16.0%	15.0%	17.0%	19.0%	3.0%	2.0%
All students	District	CPI	548	81.3	81.4	83.1	84.3	3	1.2
		P+	548	53.0%	55.0%	61.0%	60.0%	7.0%	-1.0%
	State	CPI	209573	78.3	77.6	78.6	79	0.7	0.4
		P+	209573	52.0%	52.0%	54.0%	53.0%	1.0%	-1.0%

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

Table B4: Bellingham Public Schools
Annual Grade 9-12 Dropout Rates, 2010-2013

	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	2.7	2.6	2.5	1.6	-1.1	-40.7%	-0.9	-36.0%	2.2

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

Table B5a: Bellingham Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2010-2013

Group	Number Included (2013)	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
		2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	65	64.0%	75.0%	63.5%	80.0%	16.0	25.0%	16.5	26.0%	74.7%
Low income	49	67.4%	72.7%	66.7%	83.7%	16.3	24.2%	17.0	25.5%	73.6%
Students w/ disabilities	30	55.8%	71.1%	41.7%	73.3%	17.5	31.4%	31.6	75.8%	67.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	63.5%
All students	173	81.4%	84.3%	81.3%	89.6%	8.2	10.1%	8.3	10.2%	85.0%

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

Table B5b: Bellingham Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2009-2012

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	85	77.6%	66.7%	78.6%	68.2%	-9.4	-12.1%	-10.4	-13.2%	78.9%
Low income	63	75.5%	69.8%	76.4%	69.8%	-5.7	-7.5%	-6.6	-8.6%	77.5%
Students w/ disabilities	36	75.7%	60.5%	73.3%	50.0%	-25.7	-33.9%	-23.3	-31.8%	73.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	68.5%
All students	209	85.6%	84.2%	86.4%	83.3%	-2.3	-2.7%	-3.1	-3.6%	87.5%

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

Table B6: Bellingham Public Schools
Attendance Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	94.7%	95.0%	95.1%	94.9%	0.2	0.2%	-0.2	-0.2%	94.8%

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

Table B7: Bellingham Public Schools
Suspension Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	-0.2	-66.7%	-0.1	-50.0%	2.2%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	2.5%	1.4%	0.6%	1.8%	-0.7	-28.0%	1.2	200%	4.3%

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

Table B8: Bellingham Public Schools

Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2011–2013

	FY11		FY12		FY13	
	Estimated	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	$22,023,542	$21,900,125	$22,434,186	$22,462,870	$22,329,986	$22,421,773
By municipality	$8,662,120	$8,661,324	$8,710,302	$8,658,241	$8,690,622	$9,300,882
Total from local appropriations	$30,685,662	$30,561,449	$31,144,488	$31,121,111	$31,020,608	$31,722,655
From revolving funds and grants	--	$4,393,877	--	$3,889,585	--	$4,259,420
Total expenditures	--	$34,955,326	--	$35,010,696	--	$35,982,075
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	$7,985,431	--	$8,028,300	--	$8,123,660
Required local contribution	--	$14,070,986	--	$14,331,642	--	$14,719,762
Required net school spending**	--	$22,056,417	--	$22,359,942	--	$22,843,422
Actual net school spending	--	$24,803,040	--	$25,379,195	--	$25,224,167
Over/under required ($)	--	$2,746,623	--	$3,019,253	--	$2,380,745
Over/under required (%)	--	12.5	--	13.5	--	10.4

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

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

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

Data retrieved September 19, 2014

Table B9: Bellingham Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010-2013

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012	2013
Administration	$268	$272	$280	$299
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$514	$617	$633	$675
Teachers	$4,106	$4,346	$4,489	$4,814
Other teaching services	$798	$920	$928	$1,041
Professional development	$213	$214	$231	$147
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	$236	$381	$301	$271
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$325	$260	$278	$300
Pupil services	$1,102	$1,171	$1,207	$1,244
Operations and maintenance	$1,065	$1,216	$1,433	$1,247
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	$1,570	$1,703	$1,645	$1,922
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$10,199	$11,100	$11,424	$11,960

Sources: Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive and respectful.	ES	0	0	27	#	0	1	59
	MS	0	0	20	%	0.0%	1.7%	98.3%
	HS	0	1	12	---	---	---	---
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	ES	0	0	27	#	7	4	29
	MS	7	2	11	%	11.7%	6.7%	81.7%
	HS	0	2	11	---	---	---	---
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	0	0	27	#	1	2	57
	MS	1	0	19	%	1.7%	3.3%	95.0%
	HS	0	2	11	---	---	---	---
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	ES	0	1	26	#	1	6	53
	MS	1	2	17	%	1.7%	10%	88.3%
	HS	0	3	10	---	---	---	---
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	4	1	22	#	18	8	34
	MS	10	3	7	%	30%	13.3%	56.7%
	HS	4	4	5	---	---	---	---

Teaching	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	0	1	26	#	2	6	52
	MS	2	1	17	%	3.3%	10%	86.7%
	HS	0	4	9	---			
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	0	9	18	#	10	22	28
	MS	9	7	4	%	16.7%	36.7%	46.7%
	HS	1	6	6	---	---	---	---
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	ES	21	3	3	#	46	6	8
	MS	14	2	4	%	76.7%	10%	13.3%
	HS	11	1	1	---	---	---	---
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	ES	6	4	17	#	17	16	27
	MS	6	6	8	%	28.3%	26.3%	45%
	HS	5	6	2	---	---	---	---
10. The teacher uses appropriate modifications for English language learners and students with disabilities such as explicit language objective(s); direct instruction in vocabulary; presentation of content at multiple levels of complexity; and, differentiation of content, process, and/or products.	ES	14	1	12	#	41	1	18
	MS	19	0	1	%	68.3%	1.7%	30%
	HS	8	0	5	---	---	---	---
11. The teacher provides multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking such as use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	7	5	15	#	25	13	22
	MS	14	2	4	%	41.7%	21.7%	36.7%
	HS	4	6	3	---	---	---	---

(Please see next page)

Teaching (continued)	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	3	7	17	#	15	16	29
	MS	8	4	8	%	25%	26.7%	48.3%
	HS	4	5	4	---			
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a learning environment where students can take risks---for instance, where they can make predictions, make judgments and investigate.	ES	3	6	18	#	14	17	29
	MS	7	7	6	%	11.10%	22.2%	66.66%
	HS	4	4	5	---	---	---	---
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	ES	0	6	21	#	4	18	38
	MS	3	8	9	%	6.7%	30%	63.3%
	HS	1	4	8	---	---	---	---
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	0	5	22	#	15	13	32
	MS	11	4	5	%	25%	21.7%	53.3%
	HS	4	4	5	---	---	---	---
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	15	2	10	#	35	9	19
	MS	10	6	4	%	58.3%	15%	26.7%
	HS	10	1	2	---	---	---	---

Learning	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	2	7	18	#	12	22	26
	MS	9	7	4	%	20%	36.7%	43.3%
	HS	1	8	4	---	---	---	---
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	4	8	15	#	19	15	26
	MS	9	4	7	%	31.7%	25%	43.3%
	HS	6	3	4	---			
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	9	8	10	#	28	15	17
	MS	13	3	4	%	46.7%	25%	28.3%
	HS	6	4	3	---	---	---	---
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	11	11	5	#	32	19	9
	MS	13	5	2	%	53.3%	31.7%	15%
	HS	8	3	2	---	---	---	---
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	7	5	15	#	18	11	31
	MS	6	3	11	%	30%	18.3%	51.7%
	HS	5	3	5	---	---	---	---
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	21	2	4	#	48	3	9
	MS	16	1	3	%	80%	5%	15%
	HS	11	0	2	---	---	---	---
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	0	6	21	#	5	13	42
	MS	2	3	15	%	8.3%	21.7%	70%
	HS	3	4	6	---	---	---	---
24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	9	10	8	#	38	12	10
	MS	19	1	0	%	63.%	20%	16.7%
	HS	10	1	2	---	---	---	---