

District Review Report

Berlin School District

Review conducted April 27–30, 2015



Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

Berlin School District Review Overview	1
Berlin School District Review Findings	5
Berlin School District Review Recommendations	23
Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit	30
Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures	32
Appendix C: Instructional Inventory	41

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Replay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner
Published August 2015

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, an affirmative action employer, is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Inquiries regarding the Department's compliance with Title IX and other civil rights laws may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148-4906. Phone: 781-338-6105.

© 2015 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Permission is hereby granted to copy any or all parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes. Please credit the "Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education."

This document printed on recycled paper

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu



Berlin School 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 2014–2015 school year include districts classified into Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 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 Berlin school district, which consists of Berlin Memorial Elementary School, was conducted from April 27–30, 2015. The site visit included 33.5 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 30 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted an interview with four teachers’ association representatives, constituting almost half of the classroom teachers in the district. Since the discussion did not consume the allotted time, the review team used the remaining time to ask the teachers’ association representatives questions that are typically posed in the teachers’ focus group. No teachers attended the scheduled teachers’ focus group on the following day.

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 10 classrooms at Berlin Memorial

Elementary School. 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

Berlin has a town manager form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. The three members of the school committee meet monthly.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 2012. The district leadership team includes the director of curriculum and grants, the pupil personnel services director, the technology coordinator, and the director of finance, all of whom serve the Berlin, Boylston, and Berlin-Boylston Regional school districts, and the principal of Berlin Memorial Elementary School.

Berlin and Boylston are regionalized at the middle/high school levels and separate districts at the elementary level. In 2013 Berlin reconfigured the Berlin Memorial Elementary to serve prekindergarten through grade 5; grade 6 was incorporated in the regional district (Berlin-Boylston Regional Middle/High School).

The director of curriculum and grants position, which had been a stipendiary addition to the principal’s role, became a full-time position in 2013. The current principal assumed the role in 2013 when the former principal acceded to the director of curriculum and grants position.

There has been flux in the leadership of finance; the director of finance position was vacated in 2012 and again in 2013. The district contracted with an external vendor in 2013, but the relationship was terminated in 2014 and the position of director of finance was restored and advertised. During the search for a new director, the superintendent assumed the responsibility for finance for three months. The current director of finance assumed the role in the fall of 2014.

The district has one principal leading Berlin Memorial Elementary School. A lead teacher serves as principal in the absence of the principal in addition to her full-time responsibilities as a special educator. This position is within the collective bargaining unit. According to ESE data, in the 2014-2015 school year there were 17 teachers in the district. In the 2014–2015 school year, 186 students were enrolled in the Berlin Memorial Elementary School.

**Table 1: Berlin School District
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment*, 2014–2015**

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Berlin Memorial Elementary School	ES	PK–5	186
Totals	1	PK–5	186
*As of October 1, 2014			

Between 2011 and 2015 overall student enrollment decreased by 7.5 percent, from 201 to 186 students. Much of the enrollment reduction resulted from a grade span reconfiguration in 2013. Under this reconfiguration, both the Berlin and Boylston elementary schools became PK–5 when grade 6 was added to Berlin-Boylston (Tahanto) Regional Middle/High School. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, 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 higher than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 45 elementary districts of similar size (<500 students) in fiscal year 2014: \$18,704 as compared with \$16,305 (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

Berlin is a Level 2 district because Berlin Memorial is in Level 2 for not meeting its gap narrowing targets.

- Berlin Memorial is in the 39th percentile of elementary schools and is in Level 2 with a cumulative Progressive Performance Index (PPI) of 50 for all students and 42 for high needs students; the target is 75.

The district did not reach its 2014 Composite Performance Index (CPI) targets for ELA, math, and science.

- ELA CPI was 83.4 in 2014, below the district’s target of 89.7.
- Math CPI was 82.3 in 2014, below the district’s target of 85.8.
- Science CPI was 84.1 in 2014, below the district’s target of 85.8.

ELA proficiency rates declined in the district as a whole and in the 3rd and 4th grades between 2011 and 2014.

- ELA proficiency rates for all students in the district declined by 12 percentage points, from 69 percent in 2011 to 57 percent in 2014.
- 3rd grade ELA proficiency rates declined 11 percentage points from 63 percent in 2011 to 52 percent in 2014, below the 2014 state rate of 57 percent.
- 4th grade ELA proficiency rates declined 9 percentage points from 61 percent to 52 percent in 2014, below the 2014 state rate of 54 percent.
- 5th grade ELA proficiency rates increased 3 percentage points from 64 percent in 2011 to 67 percent in 2014, above the 2014 state rate of 64 percent.

Math proficiency rates were above the state rate in the 4th and 5th grades. There was a large decline in math proficiency in the 3rd grade between 2011 and 2014.

- Math proficiency rates for all students in the district were 62 percent in 2011 and 61 percent in 2014.
- 3rd grade math proficiency rates declined 14 percentage points from 74 percent in 2011 to 60 percent in 2014, below the 2014 state of 58 percent.
- 4th grade math proficiency rates declined 3 percentage points from 61 percent in 2011 to 58 percent in 2014, above the state rate of 58 percent.
- 5th grade math proficiency rates increased 12 percentage points from 52 percent in 2011 to 64 percent in 2014, above the 2014 state rate of 61 percent.

The science proficiency rate in the 5th grade was lower in 2014 than in 2011, above the state rate.

- 5th grade science proficiency rates declined from 61 percent in 2011 to 58 percent in 2014, 5 percentage points above the 2014 state rate of 53 percent.

Berlin students' growth on the MCAS assessments on average is comparable to that of their academic peers statewide in ELA and slower than that of their academic peers statewide in mathematics.

- On the 2014 MCAS assessments, the districtwide median student growth percentile (SGP) for ELA was 45.5; the state median SGP was 50.0.
- On the 2014 MCAS assessments, the districtwide median SGP for mathematics was 40.0; the state median SGP was 50.0.
 - Math median SGP fell below 40.0 in the 4th grade (38.0).

Berlin School District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. The superintendent has worked to establish a common curriculum, assessments, and instructional practices in Berlin and Boylston to ensure that elementary students from both districts have the same preparation for the Berlin-Boylston Regional Middle/High School program.

A. Berlin and Boylston are regionalized at the middle/high school levels and separate districts at the elementary level. Interviewees told the review team there had been little commonality in the programs and practices of the two elementary school districts, although they had always operated under the leadership of the same superintendent. For example, at one time Berlin had a balanced literacy program while Boylston used a basal series.

B. In an effort to bring consistency to the educational program, the current superintendent has worked to establish greater uniformity in curriculum, assessment, and instruction, strengthened positions with a PK–12 scope, and provided formats for joint decision-making and action.

1. The superintendent established the director of curriculum and grants as a full-time position. Previously, the position was combined with the position of Berlin principal.

a. Administrators told the review team that the combined position was not meeting curriculum development and revision needs.

2. Increasingly within the last three years, Berlin, Boylston, and the Berlin-Boylston Regional Middle/High School have functioned as a PK–12 district under the leadership of the current superintendent. Interviewees said that the administrative team, consisting of the superintendent, both elementary principals, the director of curriculum and grants, the pupil personnel services director, and the technology director, meets biweekly and has a major role in program development and monitoring the effectiveness of recent changes in the literacy curriculum and assessment practices.

a. Administrators told the review team that they hope to produce a seamless sequence for students as they progress through the grades.

3. Interviews and a document review indicated that the superintendent formed literacy, data, professional development, and technology committees composed of teachers and administrators from Berlin, Boylston, and the Berlin-Boylston Regional Middle/High School, in order to provide a PK–12 perspective. These teams make recommendations on curriculum, assessment, use of data, and instructional materials for the entire PK–12 grade span.

4. Teachers and administrators told the review team that both Berlin and Boylston have adopted the Reading Wonders program, share professional development opportunities, and work together on implementation strategies, sometimes via Skype. They credited the superintendent with providing the central direction that “makes collaboration work.”
5. Interviews with administrators and teachers and a document review indicated that both elementary districts have common assessments administered according to a centrally developed schedule.
6. Teachers and administrators reported increased use of the Rubicon Atlas database. They stated that it was a helpful tool for organizing and articulating curriculum at each grade level. They went on to say that the superintendent was maximizing use of this tool, which the district purchased in 2011.

Impact: By developing a PK–12 leadership model the district has ensured that elementary students from Berlin and Boylston receive a comparable education. In addition, the model facilitates practices that can systematically improve instruction and raise student achievement throughout the district.

Curriculum and Instruction

2. **Berlin and Boylston had outdated or incomplete curriculum documents before the term of the current superintendent. The districts now have the same ELA and mathematics core programs and a growing curriculum database. At the time of the onsite review the district was on track to complete a revision of its science curriculum by June 2015.**
 - A. Interviews and a review of documents indicated that Berlin, Boylston, and the regional district (Berlin-Boylston Regional Middle/High School) selected the Rubicon Atlas curriculum database in 2011 to facilitate documentation and revision of the curriculum and to provide teachers ready and constant access to curriculum maps.
 - B. Berlin and Boylston adopted the enVisionMath program in 2009 and the Literacy Wonders program in 2014. Literacy Wonders is aligned with the *2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*; enVisionMath was updated to align in 2012.
 - C. Interviews and a review of documents indicated that teachers and administrators in Berlin, Boylston, and the regional district began to document the curriculum on the database in 2012 using a backward design consisting of the following components: establishing standards (what students should know and be able to do); developing formative, benchmark, and summative assessments to provide evidence of mastery of the standards and learning and learner needs; and developing instructional strategies and supplemental resources to ensure that all learners can master the standards.

1. The K–5 ELA and mathematics curriculum maps consist of enduring understandings and essential questions, essential vocabulary, content topics, and skills. The maps incorporate the district’s battery of formative and benchmark assessments in addition to the unit and weekly assessments in the Literacy Wonders and enVisionMath programs. Some of the assessments in Literacy Wonders are optional at certain grade levels.
 2. The curriculum maps contain a limited repertoire of instructional strategies and few resources beyond those in the adopted literacy and mathematics programs. Central office administrators and teachers told the review team that instructional strategies and resources would be added gradually.
 3. Administrators said that the written language component of the ELA curriculum was under review because the Empowering Writers program, which teachers had become accustomed to and liked, was incompatible with the approach taken in Literacy Wonders. The superintendent told the review team that in the fall of 2015 she would conduct a workshop on blending the Empowering Writers approach with the Literacy Wonders approach. She also said that later aspects of the Empowering Writers program may be added to the ELA curriculum.
 4. Central office administrators said and a document review confirmed that a district committee composed of administrators, teachers, and parents is scheduled to conduct a review of mathematics programs including the 2016 version of enVisionMath.
- D.** Central office administrators told the review team that the district STEM Committee, established by the superintendent in 2013 and consisting of community members and administrators, and grade-level teacher teams, established in 2014, are working collaboratively to revise the science curriculum, which has not been updated since 2002. A document review indicated a plan to upload a revised and updated science curriculum to the database by June 2015.

Impact: A documented curriculum ensures that all Berlin students are receiving standards-based instruction at all grade levels in all core subject areas. A fully elaborated curriculum is fundamental to improving proficiency rates, closing the proficiency gap, interpreting the results of student and programmatic assessments, ensuring that the intended curriculum is taught, and identifying professional development needs.

Assessment

3. The district set goals about the collection, analysis, and use of student achievement data in its two most recent School Improvement Plans and is beginning to establish a balanced assessment system consisting of multiple measures, including District-Determined Measures.

A. The second goal of the 2014–2015 Berlin Memorial Elementary School Improvement Plan is to “utilize building-based and district-wide data teams in order to more effectively analyze a variety of data sources and use this data in planning and decision-making.”

1. Administrators and teachers interviewed by the review team seemed familiar with this goal and informed about the district’s progress in accomplishing it.

B. Interviewees and a document review indicated that the district has begun to develop an ELA and mathematics assessment battery consisting of multiple measures.

1. In ELA, the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) is administered two times annually K–5; aimsweb is administered three times annually K–3; and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) language and reading assessments are administered three times annually in grades 4 and 5. The Reading Wonders program weekly and interim assessments are administered K– 5, although not all of the Reading Wonders assessments are required at every grade level. A locally developed writing prompt scored with a common rubric is administered three times each year.

2. In mathematics, aimsweb is administered three times annually K– 3; MAP is administered three times annually in grades 4 and 5 and the enVision Math program unit tests are administered K–5.

3. Students not meeting grade-level expectations on the aimsweb ELA or mathematics assessments are monitored with progress monitoring assessments biweekly in order to determine their progress and needs.

C. The district provided initial training for teachers on data analysis and use and afforded teachers time to discuss the curricular and instructional implications of assessment results with the principal and each other.

1. In accordance with the 2014–2015 professional development plan, the district offered in-service education sessions for teachers on the topic of “district-driven decision-making on standard/non standard assessments.” These sessions were held on professional development days in September 2014 and January 2015. The January session was specific to the aimsweb assessments. Teachers and administrators told the review team that they had also received training on the MAP assessments in 2013–2014.

2. Administrators and teachers told the review team that teachers discuss student achievement data bimonthly at grade-level meetings and occasionally at bimonthly faculty meetings.

Teachers said and the principal confirmed that every teacher meets biweekly with the principal to discuss individual student progress and that these discussions are informed by data.

- D. The district has developed District-Determined Measures (DDMs) in accordance with requirements for the implementation of the educator evaluation system. In June 2014 the district submitted a DDMs Implementation Plan for the 2014–2015 school year to ESE’s Center for Educator Effectiveness.
 - 1. The DDM initiative was designed by teachers and administrators and managed by the objectives set forth in the district’s data plan.

Impact: An assessment system enables the district to monitor and improve student performance and set district and school improvement plan goals, and informs decisions about professional development, educator evaluation, curriculum development and modification, and resource allocation.

Human Resources and Professional Development

- 4. **The professional development plan developed in accordance with ESE guidelines is broadly based on a comprehensive needs assessment from multiple sources. The training topics on the 2013–2016 professional development calendar correspond with the training needs identified by these sources.**
 - A. Interviews and a document review indicated that the professional development council, which is composed of the superintendent, administrators, and teacher representatives from Berlin, Boylston, and the regional district, created a three-year (2013–2016) professional development (PD) plan based on ESE guidelines.
 - B. The PD plan is broadly based on multiple sources, including School Improvement Plan goals, a faculty needs assessment conducted in March 2014, and training recommendations from the technology, literacy, and data committees.
 - 1. The technology committee recommended PD to ensure training for staff about how to use technological devices to empower their teaching and learning in an ever-changing technology environment. The corresponding training topics on the three-year PD calendar include: Power School/Power Grade Technology; Website Design; Google email–Google docs; Using On-Line Assessments; iPad Usage and Classroom Integration; and Basic and Advanced Technology Workshops.
 - 2. The literacy committee recommended PD based on the training needs identified by teachers. The corresponding topics include: Understanding by Design (UBD,); Core Reading Program McGraw-Hill Reading Wonders; Creative Curriculum Training; Literacy Curriculum Alignment; Writing across Content Areas; and Close Reading Strategies.

3. The data committee recommended PD to ensure training on using data to support teaching and learning and to measure student growth. The corresponding topics include: GOLD Assessment Training; UBD Training Using Rubicon Atlas; Data-Driven Decision-Making Based on Standard/Non-Standard Assessments; and Using Online Assessment Effectively in the Classrooms.

Impact: With continuous monitoring, the PD plan can ensure that the learning needs set forth in educators' professional goals are met and that continuous opportunities for additional PD aligned to educators' plans are provided, likely resulting in improved student achievement.

Student Support

5. **Clear special education entry criteria, a child-study process, and a growing ability to provide for individual needs in the general education program are helping staff to identify students' needs and to respond quickly.**
 - A. Central office administrators stated that the district had reviewed the criteria for making a finding of a disability under the special education law with all classroom teachers and taken steps to ensure that district decision-makers were applying these criteria consistently.
 - B. Central office administrators and teachers described a child-study process known as the Instructional Support Team (IST). The IST meets weekly on demand to consider referrals of students making unsatisfactory progress. It is chaired by the literacy specialist and composed of teacher representatives and the principal.
 1. Referring teachers are required to furnish student assessment data and work samples together with a record of the interventions they have used to assist struggling students and the outcomes of these interventions.
 2. Whenever possible, the IST recommends further interventions and develops a general education improvement plan for the student to be reviewed within six weeks. The student's parents are informed of this plan.
 - a. When there is no improvement under the conditions of the plan, the student may be referred for an evaluation under the special education law.
 - b. Teachers told the review team that the principal expected them to describe how they had attempted to identify and address a struggling student's needs when making a referral to the IST.
 - c. Some teachers said that the IST process had been helpful while others viewed it as a barrier to service provision. Administrators told the review team that those who viewed the process as a barrier to service provision were in the minority.

3. The district has added to the general education program tiered interventions and an IMPACT block during which individually appropriate instruction is planned and rendered based on assessment results. Administrators and teachers agreed that — despite some of the flaws in the program design—students were getting “more of what they needed.”
- C. According to ESE and district data, the percentage enrollment in special education in Berlin declined from 28 percent in 2013 to 21 percent in 2015.

Impact: Clear special education entry criteria, a child-study process to help classroom teachers make appropriate provisions for individual needs, and tiered interventions in the general education program provide students with targeted support. These actions also help to ensure that all students have access to the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment.

Financial and Asset Management

6. The district is well funded and enjoys broad community support.

- A. According to ESE data, the Berlin school district is funded at 88 percent above required net school spending and the district’s total in-district per-pupil expenditures are substantially higher than the median in-district per-pupil expenditures for similar districts.¹
- B. The review team observed that Berlin classrooms are well provisioned and teachers said that the supplies and materials they request are provided.
1. The superintendent told the review team that the district purchased the full Literacy Wonders program with all its components.
 2. The district recently refurbished a computer lab and purchased iPads.
- C. Administrators, school committee members, and town officials told the team that the annual increases to the school budget have averaged five percent over at least the last five years. They said that the proposed fiscal year 2016 budget represents a 5.1 percent increase over the fiscal year 2015 budget.
- D. Members of the board of selectmen and finance committee expressed willingness to fund the schools at an even higher level, when addressing a substantiated need would have an impact on student achievement.
- E. Parents and community members spoke positively about the school. Many referred to a strong school culture and a family-centered environment for students conducive to both academic learning and social/emotional growth.¹

¹ Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were higher than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 45 elementary districts of similar size (<500 students) in fiscal year 2014: \$ 18,704 as compared with \$16,305 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](#)).

Impact: When the community provides the personnel and materials required for quality education and facilities, teachers and administrators can devote full attention to improving 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/Financial and Asset Management

7. The district has made many major changes within a three-year period in curriculum, assessment, staffing, and policy. It may be that some educators, parents, and school committee members do not have a clear picture of students' progress, recent educational changes, or the district's priorities, plans, and goals to improve teaching and learning.

- A. Some stakeholders questioned the validity and usefulness of student performance data and did not seem to have a clear idea of trends in student achievement in the district.
 - 1. Some parents, administrators, and school committee members qualified the MCAS tests' results by expressing the view that the small number of students enrolled at each grade level in Berlin affected the validity of the data.
 - 2. A parent questioned the need to augment the local test battery in order to measure student performance and said that there was "an over-emphasis on data" in the district.
 - 3. Parents seemed surprised to learn during the review that Berlin Memorial Elementary School was in the 39th percentile of elementary schools in the state.
 - 4. Some school committee members said that they would like to be better informed about School Improvement Plan goals.
 - 5. Town officials said that they had little knowledge of students' progress in Berlin and the changes the district was making to improve educational results. They expressed a desire for more information so that they could become better advocates.
- B. The school committee revised the attendance policy in 2014.
 - 1. Parents and teachers told the review team that they did not perceive the need to make the policy more stringent.
 - 2. School council members and teachers said that they had not been consulted about the policy change.

3. One parent said, and others agreed, that faulty recordkeeping on student attendance created the appearance of a problem, but this had been corrected.
 4. According to ESE data, the 2013–2014 attendance rate in Berlin was 96.3 percent, compared with the state rate of 94.9 percent.
- C.** Teachers did not seem to have a shared picture of the district’s expectations about implementation of changes in scheduling, assessment, and curriculum.
1. Teachers expressed different views about the nature of student groupings for the new intervention block (see the Student Support finding below).
 2. There seemed to be confusion about some of the requirements for the new assessment battery (see the Assessment finding below).
 3. Teachers said that the expectations for the written language component of the Reading Wonders literacy program were not clear.

Impact: Without the dissemination of timely, comprehensive information about educational changes and progress in the district to stakeholders, including town officials and the broader community, stakeholders may not have a clear picture of and support for the district’s mission and strategies.

8. District leaders project declining student enrollment, which will mean very small classes or larger single classes at each grade level. However, the district does not have a long-term resource allocation plan (involving funding, staff, and time) to address the challenge of unpredictable fluctuations in enrollment in the coming years.

- A.** According to ESE data, from 2011–2015, overall student enrollment decreased by 7.5 percent, from 201 to 186 students.
1. Between 2011 and 2013 Berlin Memorial Elementary School served prekindergarten through grade 6; enrollment increased from 201 in 2011 to 213 in 2012 to 223 in 2013.
 2. In 2013 the district reconfigured the school to serve prekindergarten through grade 5. Grade 6 was incorporated in the regional district.
 3. Enrollment decreased from 223 in 2013 to 204 in 2014 (PK–5) and further to 186 in 2015.
 4. Between 2011 and 2015 enrollment by grade fluctuated, but overall decreased in kindergarten and in grades 1, 2, and 5, and increased in grades 3 and 4. As of October 1, 2014 (school year 2014–2015), grade-level enrollments were as follows: 22 (PK); 20 (K); 26 (grade 1); 27 (grade 2); 36 (grade 3); 26 (grade 4); and 29 (grade 5).
- B.** Interviewees told the team that school choice had been used judiciously and strategically to augment enrollment, but the district does not have a formal plan to use school choice for this purpose.

1. According to ESE data, the district's school choice enrollment has declined by one-half over the last three years, from 36 students to 18 students; however, a three-year comparison includes fiscal year 2013 when grade 6 students were still in the school. From fiscal year 2014 to fiscal year 2015 school choice enrollment declined by 36 percent, from 28 students (14 percent of enrollment) to 18 students (10 percent of enrollment).
- C.** Interviews and a document review indicated that enrollment in Berlin is projected to decline through 2019 resulting in more single classes at each grade level.
1. Interviewees said that having only one class at a grade level makes it difficult to consider factors in matching students with teachers and peers and limits options for grouping and supporting students.
 2. Having only one class at a grade level also limits the opportunities teachers have to collaborate with other teachers in the same grade and across grade levels. With only one class at a grade level, the opportunity for teachers to analyze data and share methods would be restricted to the three professional development days each year that the Berlin and Boylston elementary schools have in common.
- D.** Administrators, school committee members, and town officials said that school enrollment might increase upon the completion and occupancy of two housing developments currently under construction in Berlin, noting that the impact would not be known until 2017.
- E.** The review team did not find a long-term strategic plan to address changes in student enrollment and allocate resources to meet resulting needs.
1. District leaders reported that portions of a long-term strategic plan have been presented at the budget hearing and at school committee meetings. They noted that the superintendent formed a budget task force in the fall of 2013 "to include the finance committee, the school committee, and the business director of all towns to determine the sustainability of our schools."
- F.** At the budget hearing on March 24, 2015, the superintendent said that overall student enrollment is projected to decline to 173 students in fiscal year 2016. She also said that a first-grade teacher would retire at the end of the 2014–2015 school year.
1. Much of the discussion at the hearing concerned adding a second kindergarten class to accommodate an anticipated increase in kindergarten enrollment based on the census. Parents of students entering kindergarten in attendance at the hearing recommended adding students through school choice to ensure two classes and to partially offset the cost of adding (back) a teacher. School leaders were reluctant to take this approach choosing instead to wait to have a more accurate idea of kindergarten enrollment based on the kindergarten registration at the end of March.

Impact: Without planning for contingencies in the next few years, the district may face difficult decisions within a shortened timeframe and more limited options for supporting students and for enabling teachers to collaborate and to strengthen instruction.

Curriculum and Instruction

9. In observed classrooms the learning environment was clearly and consistently positive, but best practices were not clearly and consistently evident. The district does not have common expectations for lesson plans.

The team observed 10 classes at Berlin Memorial Elementary School which contains preschool through grade 5. The team observed five ELA classes, two mathematics classes, and three classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were two intervention block classes. The observations were approximately 40 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. The learning environment was positive in classes observed by the review team.

1. The review team found clear and consistent evidence in all 10 classes observed that the tone of interactions among students and between teachers and students (#1) was positive and respectful, behavioral standards were clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, were effectively and equitably managed (#2), and classroom rituals and routines promoted transitions with minimal loss of instructional time (#4).

B. In observed classes overall, the review team found a low incidence of some key characteristics of effective instruction.

1. Most teachers did not make the learning objectives apparent to the students.
 - a. Although instruction was clearly purposeful in most observed classes, teachers clearly and consistently communicated clear learning objectives aligned to the *2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* (#8) in only 4 of the 10 classes or 40 percent overall.
 - b. Administrators and teachers said that the district encouraged but did not require teachers to post objectives or to refer to them orally.
 - i. District leaders reported that this has been required since the fall 2012 for ELA and math instruction only.
 - c. Administrators and teachers told the review team that administrators usually ascertained whether students understood the purpose of the lesson by asking them during classroom visits what they were learning and why.

2. There was clear and consistent evidence of students articulating their thinking orally or in writing (#18) in only 4 of the 10 observed classes or 40 percent overall, and students elaborating about content and ideas when responding to questions (#20) in only 3 of the 10 observed classes or 30 percent overall. There was clear and consistent evidence of teachers using questioning techniques that required thoughtful student responses that demonstrated understanding (#12) in only 1 of the 10 classes observed or 10 percent overall.
 - a. In most observed classes, teachers did not require students to give fully developed responses that showed or substantiated their conceptual thinking. For example, in one class students gave short unelaborated responses to the teacher's questions.
3. The team found clear and consistent evidence of teachers conducting frequent formative assessments to check for student understanding and to inform instruction (#15) in only 3 of the 10 observed classes or 30 percent overall. The teachers who checked for understanding used a variety of methods, including:
 - asking students to position their thumbs up if they understood a concept; down if they did not; and sideways if they were uncertain
 - 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
4. Teachers made use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning (#16) in none of the 10 observed classes. Students made use of technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding (#22) in none of the 10 observed classes.
 - a. The school has a refurbished computer lab and two iPad carts and a laptop cart for classroom use.
 - b. Every classroom is equipped with a white board and a SMART board.
5. There was clear and consistent evidence of teachers providing opportunities for students to engage in higher-order thinking such as use of inquiry, explanation, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (#11) in only 3 of the 10 classes observed or 30 percent overall. Students clearly and consistently inquired, explored, applied, analyzed, synthesized and/or evaluated knowledge or concepts (#19) in only 2 of the 10 observed classes or 20 percent overall. There was clear and consistent evidence of students engaged in challenging academic tasks (#17) in only 1 of the 10 classes observed or 10 percent overall.
 - a. Most lessons did not have structures for rigorous learning such as brainstorming, problem-based learning, inquiry-research, simulation, role-playing, or project-based learning.

- b. Observed examples of practices and activities reflecting rigor and promoting higher-order thinking included:
 - drawing conclusions and substantiating them with evidence from the text
 - explaining the mathematical reasoning used to solve a problem
 - predicting the outcome of a story
 - guessing what a story might be about from the cover illustration
 - c. 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
 - dominating the class with teacher talk and not engaging students
 - providing little opportunity for students to discuss the meaning of the facts
 - not considering the viewpoints expressed by students and allowing the teacher’s thinking to predominate
 - not providing extension tasks for students who finish assigned work early
- C.** Berlin does not have a common format for lesson plan design or a systematic process for lesson plan review.
1. Although central office and school administrators and teachers said that there was broad agreement in the district about lesson plan components, they agreed that the district did not have a common format for lesson plan design. Some teachers told the team said that they used commercially designed lesson plan formats, which had some common features.
 2. Teachers told the review team that they submit their plan books weekly to the principal. The principal and teachers told the review team that the principal reviewed the plans, but did not make written or oral comments on the content or quality.
 - a. The principal and teachers stated that the principal used the plans primarily to determine when and for how long disciplinary content was being taught.
 - b. The principal stated that he had many informal conversations with teachers about teaching and learning and expressed the view that teachers should be “trusted to do the right thing.”

Impact: The absence of common expectations for lesson plan design and a system for formal lesson plan review makes it difficult for the district to ensure that teachers are using key instructional practices or

that the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity. The district has established a positive learning environment positioning the district to move forward in closing the proficiency gap. However, when lesson objectives are not posted or stated, learning can be less meaningful and motivating to students, and teachers' instruction may drift from mastery of the Massachusetts Frameworks. While there was some evidence of best practices in observed classes, the incidence of some key characteristics of effective instruction was generally low and there was little promotion of higher-order thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. It will be difficult for the district to improve student achievement until these practices become more prevalent.

Assessment

10. The district's assessment system is unbalanced and incomplete in some disciplines and there is confusion about the required components in ELA. Teachers have received limited training to use assessment results to plan instruction and do not have sufficient time for deep data discussions. In observed classrooms, most teachers did not make use of in-the-moment assessments.

- A. Teachers and administrators told the review team that the district does not have diagnostic assessments in mathematics.
 - 1. One teacher said and others agreed: "We have plenty of information about what students are having trouble with (in mathematics), but not enough information about why they are having trouble."
 - 2. Several teachers told the review team that there was too much testing in ELA. When asked about this, central office administrators said that the Literacy Wonders and BAS assessments were duplicative, but teachers had been administering them since 2007 and were highly familiar with them.
 - a. Central office administrators told the review team that the BAS assessments were time consuming to administer by comparison with the briefer aimsweb assessments, which provided essentially the same information. They went on to say that they hoped that teachers would conclude that BAS testing should be eliminated in favor of Literacy Wonders. They added that they were reluctant to impose this decision "top down."
- B. Teachers did not seem to have a common picture about which Reading Wonders program weekly and unit tests are required at each grade level.
 - 1. Several teachers said that the expectations had changed several times and there was resulting confusion.
- C. Teachers told the review team that they had received limited training on using assessment data to plan instruction.

- D. Administrators agreed that teachers were at a beginning stage of data analysis and use and needed more and better training. They added that they did not find some of the in-service trainings helpful and several valuable trainings were optional.
 - 1. An administrator said that while teachers always knew which students were having difficulty, “They now know what students are having difficulty with, but not necessarily what they can do about it.” One administrator said that it might take three years for teachers to become data proficient. Another said that it would likely take much longer.
- E. In observed classrooms, most teachers did not make brief, in-the-moment classroom assessments of student understanding.
 - 1. There was clear and consistent evidence of teachers conducting frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction in only 3 of the 10 classes (or 30 percent overall) observed by the review team.
- F. Teachers and administrators told the review team that there was not enough time for deep discussions of data.
 - 1. Teachers and administrators said that grade-level meetings were only 30 minutes long and data discussions were infrequent at monthly faculty meetings.
 - 2. While Professional Learning Community (PLC) time was used for data discussions in the 2013–2014 school year, in 2014-2015 PLC time is devoted to the implementation of the new Reading Wonders program. Administrators and teachers told the review team that during PLC time teachers are sharing instructional strategies and methods and learning how to access and use the online assessments of the Reading Wonders program.

Impact: The district has established a battery of assessments and structures and formats for data collection, analysis, and use. However, Berlin will not derive maximum benefits from this system until the assessment battery is augmented, refined, and extended to other disciplines, and teachers have more time for data discussions and receive more training on the use of data to plan instruction.

Human Resources and Professional Development

- 11. The district adopted an educator evaluation system consistent with the new educator evaluation regulations in September 2013 and has implemented it with fidelity; however, almost all educator evaluations were devoid of recommendations for professional growth and improvement.**
 - A. The district has developed a new district evaluation system consistent with the new educator evaluation regulations.

1. Interviewees told the review team that the educator evaluation training hours required by state law (Chapter 131 of the Acts of 2012) for both educators and evaluators were provided during the summer and fall of 2013.
 2. The district uses a database to track and monitor the components, stages, and timelines of the new educator evaluation system. Standard protocols and procedures have been developed to collect, log, and store evaluative data and documents.
- B.** According to ESE’s Center for Educator Effectiveness, the district submitted its DDMs Implementation Plan and the Evaluating Educator Impact Update form on time. The district plans to report Student Impact Ratings in 2015–2016 for all educators.
- C.** A review of the personnel folders of all Berlin teachers and all district administrators, including that of the superintendent, indicated that the district had implemented all the elements of the process.
1. The review team found that except for two teachers the district was following a five-step evaluation cycle, all the required components including a self evaluation and goals had been completed at each stage of the cycle, and timely formative and summative evaluations had been conducted.
- D.** Teacher evaluations were descriptive of the teacher’s performance and contained commendations for and encouragement to continue good practices. Only one, however, contained specific, targeted recommendations for improvement in teachers’ practice.
- E.** Similarly, administrators’ evaluations were informative,² but only one evaluation contained recommendations to promote professional growth and development.

Impact: The district has demonstrated a strong commitment to implementing the educator evaluation system with fidelity. The system has the potential to enhance the professional competencies and overall effectiveness of educators and evaluators and to produce increased opportunities and outcomes for students. However, the potential impact of the system as a lever for change is compromised when the district does not provide teachers and administrators concrete recommendations that could contribute meaningfully to improved instruction.

² An informative evaluation is factual and cites instructional details such as methodology, pedagogy, Principles of Effective Teaching, or instruction of subject-based knowledge that is aligned with the state curriculum frameworks. It does not commit to improvement strategies.

Student Support

12. Berlin does not have a plan for formally evaluating and making needed improvements to the IMPACT block that it is piloting in 2014–2015.

- A. Interviews and a document review showed that Berlin instituted an intervention block known by the acronym IMPACT (Instruction Made Powerful for All Children Today) in November 2014. This block consists of a 30-minute period at the beginning of the day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.
- B. Students not meeting grade-level expectations on the district’s literacy assessments are assigned to skill-building groups based on their challenges. The groups are named for the areas of need such as Letters Sounds and Rapid Naming; and Manipulating, Sequencing and Blending Phonemes.
 - 1. Students meeting grade-level expectations are assigned to Open Response and Vocabulary groups. These students spend half of a seven-period in each group.
 - 2. Students exceeding grade-level expectations are assigned to an enrichment group where they participate in project-based learning under a teacher’s direction.
 - 3. All students are re-assessed at seven-week intervals and the group assignments are revised based on the results.
- C. Administrators and teachers told the review team that classroom teachers and specialists such as the literacy specialist plan and render targeted instruction to students during the IMPACT block. Paraprofessionals instruct some students under the direction of the teachers with whom they have weekly common planning time.
- D. Teachers expressed concerns about group composition and the size and effective use of limited support staff during the IMPACT block.
 - 1. Teachers and administrators said that the targeted instructional groups were multi age and multi grade. Teachers expressed the view that while grouping grade 1 with grade 2 students worked well, grouping grade 3 with grade 5 students created social discomfort even when students’ skill levels were comparable.
 - a. They described one student’s emotional reaction in an intermediate level group composed of students from grades 3–5.
 - 2. Teachers told the review team and district records confirmed that the size of some student groups approached or exceeded the size of the classes from which the students were taken. For example, an intermediate Phonics group was composed of 16 students and an intermediate Vocabulary group was composed of 15 students; class sizes averaged about 14 students.

3. Teachers said that scheduling the IMPACT block at the same time for the entire school had the unwanted effect of increasing group sizes because the number of support staff and teachers was insufficient to serve more groups concurrently.
- E. Teachers and administrators expressed different views about whether instructional groups would continue to be multi grade at the intermediate level (grades 3–5) once the IMPACT block resumed following PARCC testing. Some said that the groups would become grade specific, while others said that they would continue to be multi grade.
- F. When asked about a plan, administrators told the review team that they do not have a plan to formally evaluate the IMPACT block.

Impact: Intervention is a highly complicated process that can easily become uncoordinated unless it is systematic. Success depends upon interpretation of the instructional implications of student assessment results, careful alignment of instruction with students' needs, dedicated personnel to implement and manage the process, and continuous evaluation and improvement of the model.

Berlin School District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. The district should ensure that it is providing all stakeholders with timely, comprehensive information about the district’s mission and strategies, the changes initiated in recent years, and students’ progress.

- A. District leaders should communicate more clearly and consistently with the district as a whole and the broader educational community about key priorities, recent changes, and student achievement.

Benefits: A focused effort to communicate to all stakeholders timely, complete information about recent educational changes, students’ progress, and the district’s mission and goals will further promote the work of the district on improved teaching and learning

2. The district may wish to develop a three-year plan that addresses three enrollment possibilities: fewer students, the same number of students, and more students.

- A. In projecting enrollment, district leaders should consider local and specific factors, including the impact of new housing developments and the reasons families are leaving the town.
- B. The planning should involve consideration of constraints in the event of a decrease in enrollment as well as what will happen if enrollment increases. It should also project the impact of changes on revenues and expenditures, including the level of support that the town is willing to give to the schools.
- C. School choice is an unpredictable source of revenue for the town; if the district would like to count on it more, it should develop an active marketing strategy.

Recommended resources:

- *Smart School Budgeting* (<http://www.renniecenter.org/research/SmartSchoolBudgeting.pdf>) is the Rennie Center’s summary of existing resources on school finance, budgeting, and reallocation.
- *Best Practices in School District Budgeting* (<http://www.gfoa.org/best-practices-school-district-budgeting>) outlines steps to developing a budget that best aligns resources with student achievement goals. Each step links to a Best Practice guide.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will help provide continuity in instruction at Berlin Memorial and will support consistency in the educational program for the elementary schools in Berlin and Boylston.

Curriculum and Instruction

3. The district should build upon its efforts to bring consistency to the educational program by identifying and communicating a shared instructional model and support teachers in its implementation.

- A.** The district should convene a representative group of leaders and teachers from each grade level to define the characteristics of high-quality, research-based instruction.
- B.** Once a model of instructional practice is identified and defined, district administrators should develop a plan to share instructional expectations with staff.
 - 1. The district is encouraged to provide opportunities for educators to discuss ideas and strategies, for example, as part of PLC and faculty meetings and professional development sessions.
 - 2. Administrators are also encouraged to conduct non-evaluative walkthroughs in pairs or small groups and to generalize and share feedback about the trends observed and to discuss improvement strategies regularly with teachers.
- C.** Teachers should be provided with appropriate guidance and feedback as they implement the model.
 - 1. Job-embedded professional development should focus on the elements of the model, especially in the introductory year.
 - 2. Administrators should ensure that teachers have the information and support necessary to meet the district's expectations for instruction.
 - 3. Teachers should receive frequent, helpful feedback that helps them to continually improve their instruction.

Recommended resources:

- *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 walkthrough process. 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.
- *Characteristics of a Standards-Based K-12 Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/Standards-BasedClassroom.pdf>) and *Characteristics of a*

Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom

(http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/news07/mathclass_char.pdf) are references for instructional planning and observation, intended to support activities that advance standards-based educational practice, including formal study, dialogue and discussion, classroom observations, and other professional development activities.

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

Benefits : The establishment of a shared instructional model of high-quality instruction will ensure that administrators and teachers have clear and articulated expectations for student learning. This will provide a common language that will facilitate more focused feedback and professional development. A district that prioritizes high-quality instruction for all students creates and sustains a culture of continuous improvement, resulting in professional growth and increased student achievement.

Assessment

4. The district should continue to refine, balance, and expand its assessment system and provide the time and support teachers need to develop greater assessment expertise and data literacy.

- A.** The data team should continue its work to ensure that a full range of assessments in all core disciplines is administered and analyzed at all grade levels.
 - 1. Administrators should collaborate with teachers to identify diagnostic assessments, especially in mathematics, and use them to plan targeted instruction.
- B.** Ongoing, targeted training in the collection, analysis, and use of student performance data should be provided for staff in each grade level and subject area.
- C.** The district should continue to develop curriculum units, with attention to the assessment component.
 - 1. This should include real-time assessments and questioning strategies that teachers can use during a lesson to determine students' understanding.
- D.** The district should ensure that educators at all levels use data strategically to inform instruction, ongoing curriculum revisions, program evaluation, and the educator evaluation system.
 - 1. The district should continue identifying and using District-Determined Measures (DDMs) and develop the process by which teachers will be trained and supported in their use as a tool to improve teaching and learning.

- E. The district should ensure that the conditions for success in building a more comprehensive assessment system are in place at all schools.
1. Teachers should have more frequent, regularly scheduled meeting time to collaborate in PLCs.
 - a. Teachers should use PLC time to analyze assessment data to adjust curriculum and assessments and plan instruction for individuals or groups.

Recommended resources:

- 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.
- The *Edwin Analytics* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/>) includes links to a Getting Started Guide, as well as a video tutorial series.
- *District-Determined Measures* (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssguEalxpfpzD6gG9zxvPWl0c>) is a series of videos featuring different aspects of the development and use of District-Determined Measures (DDMs).
- ESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/webinar/PartI-GapAnalysis.pdf>) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, the district can determine potential next steps.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will mean a comprehensive and consistent approach to the selection and development of assessments. A balanced system consisting of multiple measures can provide information about students' progress and achievement to guide curriculum development, instructional planning, and educational policy and decision making. In addition, students, teachers, administrators, and families will be better informed about progress, achievement, and areas in need of improvement. With more frequent, regularly scheduled time to meet in PLCs, teachers will have increased opportunities to improve assessment and instruction. A robust assessment system can help teachers identify and meet a wider range of students' learning needs.

Human Resources and Professional Development

5. Berlin should develop policies and practices to effectively promote the culture of growth-oriented supervision and evidence-based evaluation that is the goal of the educator evaluation system.

- A.** District leaders should review evaluator policies, practices, and expectations to ensure that the quantity and quality of evaluative feedback, both written and verbal, are enhanced.
 - 1. Evaluators should serve as instructional coaches/mentors to educators by engaging them in an ongoing, performance-based, collaborative dialogue, thereby providing them with informal and formal feedback, guidance, and support that is continuous, frequent, and focused on specific professional practice and skills.
 - 2. Administrators should receive ongoing training to enhance their ability to observe and to analyze instruction and to provide staff with feedback focused directly on professional practice and student achievement.
 - 3. The district should support and monitor the skills and practices of evaluators to ensure that they are regularly providing high-quality instructional feedback that is timely, informative, instructive, and designed to promote individual growth and overall effectiveness.
- B.** District leaders should annually survey educators about the quality of evaluators' feedback, guidance, and support in order to make continuous improvements to the evaluation system.
 - 1. The district should identify opportunities for evaluators to calibrate expectations, grounded in the Standards of Effective Teaching and Administrative Leadership Practice.

Recommended resources:

- Educator Evaluation Implementation Surveys for Teachers and Administrators (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/implementation/>) are designed to provide schools and districts with information about the status of their educator evaluation implementation. Information from these surveys can be used to target district resources and supports where most needed to strengthen implementation.
- *Rating Educator Performance* (www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/implementation/RatingEdPerformance.pdf) is a guide to assist educators and evaluators in the determination of Summative Performance Ratings.
- *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation & Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/QRG-ProfessionalDevelopment.pdf>) describes how educator evaluation and professional development can be used as mutually reinforcing systems to improve educator practice and student outcomes.

- *Rating Educator Impact: The Student Impact Rating* (www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/EducatorImpact.pdf) is a guide to assist educators and evaluators in the determination of Student Impact Ratings.
- ESE's *Student and Staff Feedback* webpage (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/feedback/>) provides guidance on the incorporation of student and staff feedback into the evaluation process and includes a set of valid and reliable student and staff surveys aligned to the Massachusetts Standards of Effective Practice.

Benefits: Student achievement and teacher proficiency will likely improve if Berlin provides evaluators with guidance on conducting observations and providing educators with timely, relevant, and continuous feedback, and if evaluations focus on specific professional practice and skills and promote professional growth.

Student Support

- 6. The district should conduct a formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the IMPACT block, including an analysis of data; make decisions about improvements based on the analysis; and ensure oversight of its tiered intervention system.**
 - A.** District leaders should formally gather feedback (for example, through a survey) from administrators, teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, students, and parents to determine the strengths of the IMPACT block model and the areas needing improvement. Questions should address the specific concerns expressed by various stakeholders during the review including group composition, group size, and effective use of staff.
 1. The district should convene a representative group of administrators, teachers, specialists, and paraprofessionals to develop a plan for gathering this feedback from each constituent group.
 - B.** The group should analyze the results and formulate recommendations for improvement of the IMPACT block model.
 - C.** The group should revise the model as needed and inform all stakeholders of the changes.
 - D.** The group should help the principal ensure continuous management of the district's tiered intervention system and resolve implementation problems.

Recommended Resources:

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/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/apa/sss/mtss/sa/default.html>

- ESE's *Early Warning Indicator System* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html>) is a tool to provide information to districts about the likelihood that their students will reach key academic goals. Districts can use the tool in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions and to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede students' ability to meet academic goals.
- The *Early Warning Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/2014ImplementationGuide.pdf>) provides information on how to use early warning data, including the Massachusetts Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS), to identify, diagnose, support and monitor students in grades 1-12. It offers educators an overview of EWIS and how to effectively use these data in conjunction with local data by following a six-step implementation cycle.

Benefits: An evaluation of the IMPACT block will help the district to build on the work it has completed by identifying areas of improvement to guide decision-makers. The steering committee will provide continuous and systematic management of the intervention system in order to ensure that students derive maximum benefit. A well-articulated and delivered intervention system will likely increase student growth and proficiency in the district.

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

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from April 27–30, 2015, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Dr. Magdalene Giffune, leadership and governance and financial and asset management
2. Dr. James McAuliffe, curriculum and instruction and student support, *review team coordinator*
3. Ms. Willette Johnson, assessment and human resources and professional development

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: director of finance, assistant to the director of finance, and payroll/benefits specialist.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: chair, vice chair, and secretary.

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

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: superintendent, pupil personnel services director, technology coordinator, director of finance, director of curriculum and grants, and principal.

The team visited the Berlin Memorial Elementary School (PK–5).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with the principal. The review team conducted an interview with four teachers' association representatives, constituting almost half of the classroom teachers in the district. Since the discussion did not consume the allotted time, the review team used the remaining time to ask the teachers' association representatives questions that are typically posed in the teachers' focus group. The teachers' focus group was held as scheduled on the following day, but no teachers attended.

The team observed 10 classes at Berlin Memorial Elementary School.

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

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

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

Site Visit Schedule

Monday April 27, 2015	Tuesday April 28, 2015	Wednesday April 29, 2015	Thursday April 30, 2015
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers’ association.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; Interviews with town or city personnel; teacher focus group; interviews with school committee members; and visits to Berlin Memorial Elementary School for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; parent focus group; visits to Berlin Memorial Elementary School for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Berlin Memorial Elementary School for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Berlin School District
2014–2015 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	1	0.5%	83,556	8.7%
Asian	3	1.6%	60,050	6.3%
Hispanic	8	4.3%	171,036	17.9%
Native American	--	--	2,238	0.2%
White	167	89.8%	608,453	63.7%
Native Hawaiian	--	--	930	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	7	3.8%	29,581	3.1%
All Students	186	100.0%	955,844	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2014

**Table B1b: Berlin School District
2014–2015 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations³**

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	40	--	21.5%	165,060	--	17.1%
Economically disadvantaged	--	--	--	--	--	--
ELLs and Former ELLs	5	--	2.7%	81,146	--	8.5%
All high needs students	--	--	--	--	--	--

Notes: As of October 1, 2014. 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 186; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 966,391.

³ Because of changes in free-lunch policies in some districts the population of students from economically disadvantaged families and high-needs students has not yet been calculated for the 2014–2015 school year.

**Table B2a: Berlin School District
English Language Arts Performance, 2011–2014**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2011	2012	2013	2014	State 2014	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	25	84.4	94.7	88.2	79	82.6	-5.4	-9.2
	P+	25	63.0%	85.0%	59.0%	52.0%	57.0%	-11.0%	-7.0%
4	CPI	31	83.7	78.7	76.5	83.9	79.1	0.2	7.4
	P+	31	61.0%	41.0%	50.0%	52.0%	54.0%	-9.0%	2.0%
	SGP	31	48	33	36.5	40	49	-8	3.5
5	CPI	33	82.6	85.9	84.6	86.4	84.5	3.8	1.8
	P+	33	64.0%	70.0%	58.0%	67.0%	64.0%	3.0%	9.0%
	SGP	33	43	47	49	52	50	9	3
All	CPI	89	86.2	85.5	84.4	83.4	86.7	-2.8	-1
	P+	89	69.0%	67.0%	60.0%	57.0%	69.0%	-12.0%	-3.0%
	SGP	64	46	47	49	45.5	50	-0.5	-3.5

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

**Table B2b: Berlin School District
Mathematics Performance, 2011–2014**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2011	2012	2013	2014	State 2014	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	25	88	86.8	94.5	79	85.1	-9	-15.5
	P+	25	74.0%	74.0%	81.0%	60.0%	68.0%	-14.0%	-21.0%
4	CPI	31	82.6	74.1	76.4	87.9	79.6	5.3	11.5
	P+	31	61.0%	37.0%	37.0%	58.0%	52.0%	-3.0%	21.0%
	SGP	31	50	37	29	38	50	-12	9
5	CPI	33	71.2	83.7	70.2	79.5	80.4	8.3	9.3
	P+	33	52.0%	74.0%	42.0%	64.0%	61.0%	12.0%	22.0%
	SGP	33	48	50	38	41	50	-7	3
All	CPI	89	81	80.1	83	82.3	80.3	1.3	-0.7
	P+	89	62.0%	59.0%	59.0%	61.0%	60.0%	-1.0%	2.0%
	SGP	64	52	51	38	40	50	-12	2

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: Berlin School District
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2011–2014**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2011	2012	2013	2014	State 2014	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
5	CPI	33	81.1	85.9	79.8	84.1	79	3	4.3
	P+	33	61.0%	65.0%	54.0%	58.0%	53.0%	-3.0%	4.0%
All	CPI	33	81.1	85.9	79.8	84.1	79.6	3	4.3
	P+	33	61.0%	65.0%	54.0%	58.0%	55.0%	-3.0%	4.0%

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: Berlin School District
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2011–2014**

Group and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines		
			2011	2012	2013	2014	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend	
High Needs	District	CPI	36	68.4	69.7	74.4	68.1	-0.3	-6.3
		P+	36	35.0%	37.0%	39.0%	22.0%	-13.0%	-17.0%
		SGP	24	34	46	46	39	5	-7
	State	CPI	241,069	77	76.5	76.8	77.1	0.1	0.3
		P+	241,069	48.0%	48.0%	48.0%	50.0%	2.0%	2.0%
		SGP	183,766	46	46	47	47	1	0
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	12	0	77.5	72.9	75	75	2.1
		P+	12	0.0%	50.0%	42.0%	25.0%	25.0%	-17.0%
		SGP	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	189,,662	77.1	76.7	77.2	77.5	0.4	0.3
		P+	189662	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%	51.0%	2.0%	1.0%
		SGP	145,621	46	45	47	47	1	0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	25	65.2	65	72.7	64	-1.2	-8.7
		P+	25	29.0%	30.0%	34.0%	20.0%	-9.0%	-14.0%
		SGP	18	32	46	39	0	-32	-39
	State	CPI	90,777	68.3	67.3	66.8	66.6	-1.7	-0.2
		P+	90,777	30.0%	31.0%	30.0%	31.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		SGP	66,688	42	43	43	43	1	0
English language learners or Former ELLs	District	CPI	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	47,477	66.2	66.2	67.4	67.8	1.6	0.4
		P+	47,477	33.0%	34.0%	35.0%	36.0%	3.0%	1.0%
		SGP	32,239	50	51	53	54	4	1
All students	District	CPI	89	86.2	85.5	84.4	83.4	-2.8	-1
		P+	89	69.0%	67.0%	60.0%	57.0%	-12.0%	-3.0%
		SGP	64	46	47	49	45.5	-0.5	-3.5
	State	CPI	488,744	87.2	86.7	86.8	86.7	-0.5	-0.1
		P+	488,744	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		SGP	390,904	50	50	51	50	0	-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: Berlin School District
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2011–2014**

Group and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines		
			2011	2012	2013	2014	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend	
High Needs	District	CPI	36	59.8	61.2	69.4	65.3	5.5	-4.1
		P+	36	24.0%	24.0%	30.0%	33.0%	9.0%	3.0%
		SGP	24	33	39	30.5	26.5	-6.5	-4
	State	CPI	241,896	67.1	67	68.6	68.4	1.3	-0.2
		P+	241,896	37.0%	37.0%	40.0%	40.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	184,937	46	46	46	47	1	1
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	12	0	67.5	66.7	72.9	72.9	6.2
		P+	12	0.0%	30.0%	25.0%	42.0%	42.0%	17.0%
		SGP	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	190,183	67.3	67.3	69	68.8	1.5	-0.2
		P+	190,183	38.0%	38.0%	41.0%	41.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	146,536	46	45	46	47	1	1
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	25	56.5	55	67.7	63	6.5	-4.7
		P+	25	19.0%	17.0%	29.0%	32.0%	13.0%	3.0%
		SGP	18	33	45	23.5	0	-33	-23.5
	State	CPI	91,181	57.7	56.9	57.4	57.1	-0.6	-0.3
		P+	91,181	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	22.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		SGP	67,155	43	43	42	43	0	1
English language learners or Former ELLs	District	CPI	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	47,847	62	61.6	63.9	63.8	1.8	-0.1
		P+	47847	32.0%	32.0%	35.0%	36.0%	4.0%	1.0%
		SGP	32,607	52	52	53	52	0	-1
All students	District	CPI	89	81	80.1	83	82.3	1.3	-0.7
		P+	89	62.0%	59.0%	59.0%	61.0%	-1.0%	2.0%
		SGP	64	52	51	38	40	-12	2
	State	CPI	490,288	79.9	79.9	80.8	80.3	0.4	-0.5
		P+	490,288	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	60.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	392,953	50	50	51	50	0	-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: Berlin School District
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2011–2014**

Group and Measure		Number Included (2014)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines		
			2011	2012	2013	2014	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend	
High Needs	District	CPI	13	60	0	78.8	65.4	5.4	-13.4
		P+	13	20.0%	0.0%	54.0%	15.0%	-5.0%	-39.0%
	State	CPI	100,582	63.8	65	66.4	67.3	3.5	0.9
		P+	100,582	28.0%	31.0%	31.0%	33.0%	5.0%	2.0%
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	79,199	62.8	64.5	66.1	66.8	4	0.7
		P+	79,199	28.0%	31.0%	32.0%	33.0%	5.0%	1.0%
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	10	0	0	75	65	65	-10
		P+	10	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	20.0%	20.0%	-30.0%
	State	CPI	38,628	59.2	58.7	59.8	60.1	0.9	0.3
		P+	38,628	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	22.0%	2.0%	2.0%
English language learners or Former ELLs	District	CPI	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	16,871	50.3	51.4	54	54	3.7	0
		P+	16,871	15.0%	17.0%	19.0%	18.0%	3.0%	-1.0%
All students	District	CPI	33	81.1	85.9	79.8	84.1	3	4.3
		P+	33	61.0%	65.0%	54.0%	58.0%	-3.0%	4.0%
	State	CPI	211,440	77.6	78.6	79	79.6	2	0.6
		P+	211,440	52.0%	54.0%	53.0%	55.0%	3.0%	2.0%

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 B6: Berlin School District
Attendance Rates, 2011–2014**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2011–2014		Change 2013–2014		State (2014)
	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	96.5%	96.6%	95.7%	96.3%	-0.2	-0.2%	0.6	0.6%	94.9%

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

**Table B7: Berlin School District
Suspension Rates, 2011–2014**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2011–2014		Change 2013–2014		State (2013)
	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	--	0.0	--	2.1%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	--	0.0	--	3.9%

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: Berlin School District
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2012–2014**

	FY12		FY13		FY14	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$2,659,302	\$2,643,405	\$2,664,609	\$2,659,082	\$2,505,155	\$2,708,544
By municipality	\$3,617,195	\$3,538,880	\$3,885,693	\$3,760,973	\$3,303,603	\$3,650,192
Total from local appropriations	\$6,276,497	\$6,182,285	\$6,550,302	\$6,420,055	\$5,808,758	\$6,358,736
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$386,637	--	\$446,815	--	\$532,913
Total expenditures	--	\$6,568,922	--	\$6,866,870	--	\$6,891,648
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$500,103	--	\$507,703	--	\$433,030
Required local contribution	--	\$1,321,677	--	\$1,379,734	--	\$1,228,268
Required net school spending**	--	\$1,821,780	--	\$1,887,437	--	\$1,661,298
Actual net school spending	--	\$3,227,713	--	\$3,291,141	--	\$3,179,401
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$1,405,933	--	\$1,403,704	--	\$1,518,103
Over/under required (%)	--	77.2	--	74.4	--	91.4

*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: FY12, FY13, and FY14 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website

Data retrieved April 22, 2015

**Table B9: Berlin School District
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2011–2013**

Expenditure Category	2011	2012	2013
Administration	\$944	\$810	\$867
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$1,438	\$1,177	\$1,130
Teachers	\$6,750	\$7,399	\$7,139
Other teaching services	\$2,157	\$1,526	\$1,558
Professional development	\$165	\$88	\$145
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$305	\$301	\$454
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$447	\$437	\$431
Pupil services	\$1,045	\$954	\$966
Operations and maintenance	\$1,295	\$1,246	\$1,406
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$2,850	\$2,625	\$2,526
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$17,396	\$16,564	\$16,621

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment & Teaching	By Grade Span	Evidence		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive & respectful.	ES	0	0	10
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	0	10
	Total %	0	0	100
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively & equitably.	ES	0	0	10
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	0	10
	Total %	0	0	100
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	1	1	8
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	1	1	8
	Total %	10	10	80
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time.	ES	0	0	10
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	0	10
	Total %	0	0	100
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	2	4	4
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	2	4	4
	Total %	20	40	40
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	0	2	8
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	2	8
	Total %	0	20	80
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	0	9	1
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	9	1
	Total %	0	90	10

Teaching	By Grade Span	Evidence		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to the <i>2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks</i> .	ES	2	4	4
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	2	4	4
	Total %	20	40	40
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective (s) and content.	ES	0	7	3
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	7	3
	Total %	0	70	30
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	0	8	2
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	8	2
	Total %	0	80	20
11. The teacher provides 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	1	6	3
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	1	6	3
	Total %	10	60	30
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	0	9	1
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	9	1
	Total %	0	90	10
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a safe learning environment where students give opinions, make judgments, explore and investigate ideas.	ES	1	5	4
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	1	5	4
	Total %	10	50	40
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students’ learning needs.	ES	0	6	4
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	60	40
	Total %	0	60	40
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	2	5	3
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	2	5	3
	Total %	20	50	30
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	7	3	0
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	7	3	0
	Total %	70	30	0

Learning	By Grade Span	Evidence		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	2	7	1
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	2	7	1
	Total %	20	70	10
18. Students articulate their thinking verbally or in writing.	ES	0	6	4
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	0	6	4
	Total %	0	60	40
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom’s Taxonomy).	ES	2	6	2
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	2	6	2
	Total %	20	60	20
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	1	6	3
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	1	6	3
	Total %	10	60	30
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experience, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	1	7	2
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	1	7	2
	Total %	10	70	20
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	10	0	0
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	10	0	0
	Total %	100	0	0
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	5	2	3
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	5	2	3
	Total %	50	20	30
24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	7	3	0
	MS	0	0	0
	HS	0	0	0
	Total #	7	3	0
	Total %	70	30	0