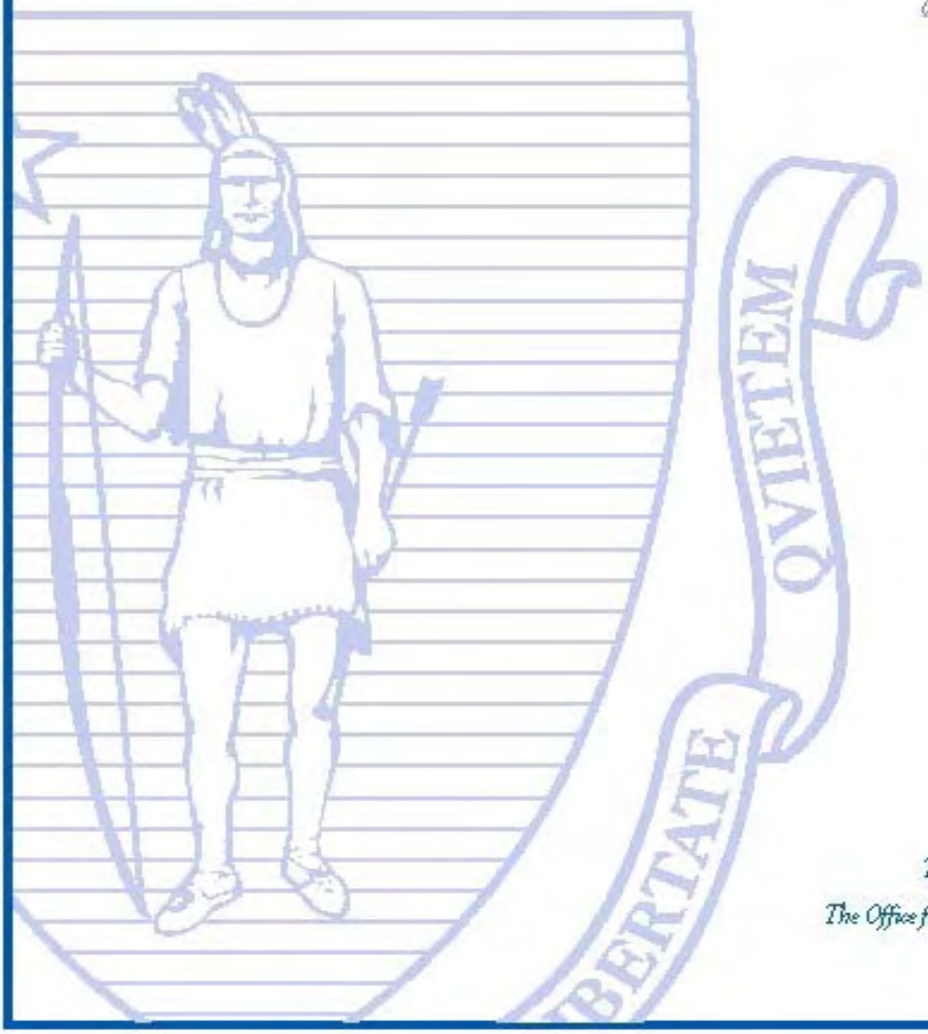
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

School District Examination Report:

Bridgewater-Raynham
Regional School District
Technical Report

data driven
standards based
learner centered



The Education Management Audit Council
The Office for Educational Quality and Accountability

2004 - 2006

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Educational Quality and Accountability

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The Educational Management Audit Council accepted this report and its findings at their meeting of October 1, 2007.

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability would like to acknowledge the professional cooperation extended to the audit team by the Department of Education; the Superintendent of the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District, Robert McIntyre; the school department staff; and the town officials in Bridgewater and Raynham.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) examined the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District in January 2007. With an average proficiency index of 82 proficiency index (PI) points in 2006 (90 PI points in English language arts and 75 PI points in math), the district is considered a 'High' performing school system based on the Department of Education's rating system (found in Appendix A of this report), with achievement above the state average. More than three-fifths of Bridgewater-Raynham students scored at or above the proficiency standard on the 2006 administration of the MCAS tests.

District Overview

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District, located in Bristol County in southeastern Massachusetts, is composed of two member communities, Bridgewater in Plymouth County and Raynham in Bristol County. Historically, Bridgewater was an industrial and agricultural center and Raynham had a strong iron works industry as well as a shipbuilding industry. The largest sources of employment within both communities are retail trade, accommodation and food services, and health care and social services. Both Bridgewater and Raynham have a Board of Selectmen/Open Town Meeting form of municipal government; Raynham also has an Executive Secretary. The school district benefits from its close relationship with Bridgewater State College.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), the median family income in 1999 was $73,953 in Bridgewater (rank 97) and $68,354 in Raynham (rank 133), compared to the statewide median family income of $63,706. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Bridgewater had a total population of 25,185 with a population of 4,765 school-age children, or 19 percent of the total, while Raynham had a total population of 11,739 with a population of 2,375 school-age children, or 20 percent of the total. Of the total households in Bridgewater, 41 percent were households with children under 18 years of age, and 21 percent were households with individuals age 65 years or older. Of the total households in Raynham, 40 percent were households with children under 18 years of age, and 24 percent were households with individuals age 65 years or older. Of the population age 25 years or older, 30 percent in Bridgewater and 23 percent in Raynham held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33 percent statewide.

According to Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) data, in 2005-2006 the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District had a total enrollment of 5,790. The demographic composition in the district was: 93.3 percent White, 2.5 percent African-American, 1.8 percent Hispanic, 1.3 percent Asian, 0.1 percent Native American, 1.0 percent multi-race, non-Hispanic; 0.0 percent limited English proficient (LEP), 8.3 percent low income, and 17.1 percent special education. Eighty-nine percent of school-age children in Bridgewater and 92 percent in Raynham attended public schools. A total of 163 Bridgewater students attended public schools outside the district, including 92 students who attended Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School, nine students who attended county agricultural schools in Bristol and Norfolk counties, and six students who attended charter schools. A total of 154 Raynham students attended public schools outside the district, including 108 students who attended Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School, eight students who attended Bristol County Agricultural High School, and three students who attended charter schools. The district began participating in school choice in 2006-2007.

The district has seven schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 12, including four elementary schools (two in each town) with various grade configurations serving grades pre-kindergarten through 6, one middle school in Raynham serving pre-kindergarten and grades 5 through 8, another middle school in Bridgewater serving grades 5 through 8, and one high school serving grades 9 through 12. The school district's administrative team consisted of a superintendent, an assistant superintendent of business, an assistant superintendent of curriculum, a director of special education, and a director of pupil services. Each school had a principal; each middle school also had an assistant principal. The district has an eight-member school committee.

In FY 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham's per pupil expenditure (preliminary), based on appropriations from all funds, was $8,860, compared to $11,196 statewide, ranking it 290 out of 325 of 328 school districts reporting data. The district exceeded the state net school spending requirement in two of the three years of the period under review, FY 2004 and FY 2006. From FY 2004 to FY 2006, net school spending increased from $39,800,124 to $43,565,748; Chapter 70 aid increased from $18,751,051 to $19,283,254; the required local contribution increased from $20,240,325 to $22,546,085; and the foundation enrollment decreased from 5,918 to 5,801.

Chapter 70 aid as a percentage of actual net school spending decreased from 47 to 44 percent over this period. From FY 2004 to FY 2005, total curriculum and instruction expenditures as a percentage of total Schedule 1 net school spending reported in the End of Year Pupil and Financial Report decreased from 63 to 62 percent.

Context

The regionalization of the Bridgewater-Raynham Public Schools occurred in 1994 with the organization of elementary and middle schools and a high school. Over the years, the district experienced stability in its central office staff. The present superintendent was a principal at the district's high school and then became the district's assistant superintendent, as the district has made it a practice, when possible, to promote from within.

The district suffered financial difficulties in 2004 that resulted in severe staff reductions system-wide. The assistant superintendent lost her entire department and had to assume all duties that had been previously shared among seven district staff members. The assistant superintendent has since left the district, and an acting director of curriculum was in place for the 2006-2007 school year. The district also had to make other staff cuts, and these resulted in the elimination of programs and services. At the time of the EQA review, some of these services have been restored, but large class sizes remain a concern with many classes serving over 30 students.

The superintendent and his staff made good efforts over the years to "open up" the budget process, as previously it was viewed as a "closed process" by many members of the community. Town officials from both communities indicated support for the school budget, but the town of Bridgewater had limited financial resources available while the town of Raynham did not due to its economic growth.

District voters approved over $100 million to construct and renovate school facilities. A new $70 million high school was planned to open in September 2007, and the current high school was scheduled to be remodeled into a middle school at a cost of $10 million. Additionally, the district planned to spend $25 million to upgrade the Williams Middle School.

The EQA Examination Process

The Massachusetts Legislature created the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability in July 2000 to provide independent and objective programmatic and financial audits of the 350-plus school districts that serve the cities and towns of the commonwealth. The agency is the accountability component of the Education Reform Act of 1993, and was envisioned in that legislation. The EQA works under the direction of a five-person citizen council, appointed by the governor, known as the Educational Management Audit Council (EMAC).

From January 16-19, 2007, the EQA conducted an independent examination of the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District for the period 2004-2006, with a primary focus on 2006. This examination was based on the EQA's six major standards of inquiry that address the quality of educational management, which are: 1) Leadership, Governance, and Communication; 2) Curriculum and Instruction; 3) Assessment and Program Evaluation; 4) Human Resource Management and Professional Development; 5) Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support; and 6) Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency. The report is based on the source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the representatives from the school committee, the district leadership team, school administrators, and teachers, and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not consider documents, revised data, or comments that may have surfaced after the onsite visit.

For the period under examination, 2004-2006, this report finds Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District to be a 'High' performing school district with an average proficiency index of 82 proficiency index (PI) points in 2006, marked by student achievement that was 'High' in English language arts (ELA) and 'Moderate' in math on the 2004-2006 MCAS tests. Over this period, student performance was flat in ELA and declined by nearly three PI points in math, and the district's average proficiency widened by nearly two PI points.

The following provides a summary of the district's performance on the 2006 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests and the findings of the EQA examination.

Summary of Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

On the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA, math, and STE, eligible students in Bridgewater-Raynham participated at levels that met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement.

Are the district's students reaching proficiency levels on the MCAS examination?

On average, slightly more than three-fifths of all students in Bridgewater-Raynham attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, more than that statewide. Nearly three-quarters of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), nearly half of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in math, and more than half of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE). Ninety-seven percent of the Class of 2006 attained a Competency Determination.

- Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 82 proficiency index (PI) points, four PI points greater than that statewide. Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 18 PI points.
- In 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in ELA was 10 PI points, six PI points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of more than one PI point annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP). Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in math was 25 PI points in 2006, three PI points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of slightly more than three PI points per year to achieve AYP. Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in STE was 20 PI points, nine PI points narrower than that statewide.

Has the district's MCAS test performance improved over time?

Between 2003 and 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham's MCAS performance showed no improvement overall, in ELA, or in math, and slight improvement in STE.

- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories rose by one percentage point between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the

'Warning/Failing' category also increased by one percentage point. The average proficiency gap in Bridgewater-Raynham was 19 PI points in both 2003 and 2006.

- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Bridgewater-Raynham remained flat at 89 PI points.
- Math performance in Bridgewater-Raynham showed a slight decline of one-half PI point over this period.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham had an improvement in STE performance, increasing by slightly more than one PI point annually over the two-year period. This resulted in an improvement rate of 10 percent.

Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Bridgewater-Raynham students. Of the eight measurable subgroups in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 25 PI points in ELA and 31 PI points in math (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively).

- The proficiency gaps in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, African-American students, low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program), and male students. Less than half of the students in these subgroups attained proficiency, with the exception of the male student subgroup in which less than three-fifths of the students did so.
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, non low-income students, and female students. For each of these subgroups, more than three-fifths of the students attained proficiency.

Has the equity of MCAS test performance among the district's student subgroups improved over time?

The performance gap in Bridgewater-Raynham between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 27 PI points in 2003 to 29 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 33 to 34 PI points over this period.

- Regular education students, non low-income students, and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was regular education students.
- In math, only regular education students and African-American students showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006, with African-American students showing greater improvement.

Standard Summaries

Leadership, Governance, and Communication

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on six and 'Needs Improvement' on seven of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District lacked adequate funding to staff classrooms, school supervisory positions, and the central office despite support from the school committee for educationally sound budgets. The lack of funding created a situation in which Raynham "gifted" the school district additional funds. As a result, inequities occurred between the Raynham Middle School and the Williams Middle School in Bridgewater, such as the existence of library services in the former but not the latter. The district did not use student achievement data to inform budget development and policy changes.

Participating communities did support the construction of a new high school, the renovation and conversion of the current high school to a middle school, and the renovation of the Williams Middle School. The school district provided educational facilities for its students that EQA examiners found to be in 'very good' to 'excellent' condition. The district planned its future space requirements and developed a building program to satisfy its space needs into the near future.

The school committee and superintendent spent considerable time each year meeting with all stakeholders in the district. Through the use of cable television, the local radio, municipal offices, parent meetings, newsletters, and newspapers, the administration disseminated meaningful information.

During the period under review, the district received guidance from two strategic plans, one for 1999-2005 and one for 2006-2011. Clear mission and vision statements provided the foundation for these plans. Staff, parents, and community members provided input into the strategic plans. The district developed eight core values and five goals as part of its 2006-2011 strategic plan. The eight core values and five goals were clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Each school had an approved School Improvement Plan (SIP). Through the use of a Strategic Action Plan Status Report template, the district attempted to align its SIPs to the District Improvement Plan (DIP) or strategic plan. The superintendent directed principals and directors to tie budget requests to the SIPs and DIP; however, this initiative did not always occur. Each principal and/or school council reported to the school committee on the progress of the school's SIP.

During the period under review, the district lacked a system-wide plan to monitor student achievement throughout the year, other than through the MCAS test data. It did use student achievement data to make changes to its educational programs, such as the employment of additional staff to provide remediation for students in need. The district used little disaggregated data other than data received from the Department of Education (DOE). Budget constraints placed severe restrictions on the district's ability to move all students into the proficiency range on the MCAS tests. During this time, the evaluations of the superintendent, central office personnel, and principals were not linked to improving student achievement.

Curriculum and Instruction

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on four and 'Needs Improvement' on six of the ten performance indicators in this standard.

During the period under review, the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District had aligned curricula in the core subjects of English language arts, math, and science. The district developed curriculum guides for use by teachers in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Documents contained objectives, expected student outcomes, instructional strategies, resources, and assessments. The district also developed benchmarks in ELA, science, and math at the high

school level and planned to complete benchmark documents in the core subject areas for pre-kindergarten through grade 8 by June 2007.

In 2004, the district experienced significant budget reductions that impacted the system through the loss of key personnel. These cuts resulted in the elimination of the district's seven-member curriculum department and reduced it to one central administrator. As a result, the structure for curriculum oversight changed. Department heads for ELA, math, and science at the high school became responsible for preK-12 curriculum articulation in addition to their regular teaching duties and their responsibility for teacher observations in grades 6-12 in their particular subject areas. Scheduling differences between schools as well as structures within schools for meetings made it difficult to continue the degree of horizontal and vertical articulation that had been present with the existence of the district curriculum office.

The district had designed a multi-year curriculum review plan that began in 2002. During the period under review, the district developed extensive curriculum documents for ELA, math, and science. Additionally, a revision of the science guide occurred during the cycle. However, numerous factors hampered the district's ability to adhere completely and effectively to the multi-year curriculum review plan. Limited funding impacted the acquisition of needed textbooks and resource materials for multiple grade levels, resulting in the revision of implementation timelines. Further, difficulty in recruiting outside educators for visiting teams responsible for reviewing the existing curriculum affected the review process. Educators in the district identified concerns about the lack of program analysis to determine the effect on student achievement. In addition, the district lacked a process for evaluating the effectiveness of time allotment changes on student achievement.

Educational technology in the district was available and included multiple resources for student use and for teachers to enhance instruction. Study Island, a software program used to improve math and ELA achievement for students in grades 3-8, allowed teachers, administrators, students, and parents to track student progress. Teachers at the middle and high school levels used their school network to record and report students' grades. Some schools had daily attendance reported by teachers through e-mail. The district purchased HomeworkNOW, a program to help parents and students access homework assignments online, but only some

teachers used it. Although educational technology was available and used for particular purposes, the district did not require mandatory teacher training in its application, nor was there a system-wide initiative to integrate educational technology into the curriculum. Interested teachers signed up for technology offerings through the district's professional development program and shared their knowledge informally with fellow teachers. Those who were not as confident did not use the educational technology available and did not avail themselves of the professional development technology offerings. Further, classroom observations by the EQA examiners revealed technology integration in only 18 percent of classrooms at the elementary level, 10 percent at the middle school level, and none at the high school level.

Classroom observations of 66 classes disclosed positive and safe classroom climates in which students and teachers exhibited positive relationships and students treated peers with respect. Teachers planned lessons based on the state curriculum frameworks. Observations revealed that students were made aware of the lesson objectives in 97 percent of classrooms observed, and teachers used classroom time effectively in 94 percent of classrooms observed. Students were actively engaged in their learning, and classroom management was excellent. Teachers used questioning techniques that encouraged elaboration, thought, and broad involvement in 80 percent of the observed classrooms. However, observations revealed that in only 28 percent of the classrooms did the teacher plan multiple tasks and use a variety of resources to engage all levels of learners. Additionally, elements of effective instruction that were not observed to any great degree included the use of differentiated instruction (23 percent), student use of technology (nine percent), multiple resources to address diverse learners (52 percent), and high expectations for student work (41 percent).

Assessment and Program Evaluation

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on two and 'Needs Improvement' six of the eight performance indicators in this standard.

The Bridgewater-Raynham school district had many assessment practices in place even though the school committee did not have a policy regarding student assessment. The district realized the importance of data analysis and hired a consultant to assist it in data analysis 10 years ago.

After receiving the data, the consultant not only analyzed them but also disseminated them to staff. District administrators, principals, and teachers continued to improve their data analysis skills, and in 2004-2005 the district established building assessment teams at each school in the district. The primary function of each building assessment team was not only to analyze and disseminate MCAS data to the school's staff but also to develop a building-based MCAS Improvement Plan.

During the 2004-2005 school year, school assessment teams met on a quarterly basis with the district's assessment team to discuss progress made toward the goals in each building's MCAS Improvement Plan. The functioning of the district and building assessment teams was curtailed as a result of the budget cuts that the district sustained in 2004. At that time, the district's curriculum team suffered a severe reduction that resulted in one district curriculum administrator remaining. As a result, in 2005-2006 the school assessment teams met irregularly with the assistant superintendent for curriculum to discuss progress on the MCAS Improvement Plans.

Budget limitations also impacted the number of summative and formative assessments available within the district. Therefore, the systemic use of formative assessments was limited. The MCAS tests were the only standardized tests given during the 2005-2006 school year. In the past, the district administered the California Achievement Test (CAT). In addition, at the elementary level the Gates MacGinitie, the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) were used to measure students' progress, and a writing development continuum and running records were in place for these students. Their use varied from school to school, based on the preference of the principal.

The district used a variety of ways to communicate student achievement data to the community, including televised presentations to the school committee. The MCAS scores were also available on the district's website. The high school provided aggregate data on its students' SAT and AP scores to the local newspapers and through its website. The superintendent presented an annual written report on student achievement to the community.

The high school developed benchmarks for the core content areas but the EQA team received conflicting evidence as to their use. No benchmarks existed at grades preK-8, although their development was a district goal for the future.

A review of student assessment results showed that the skills in the Math Central Program were not aligned with those in the state curriculum frameworks. Teachers who used the program were forced to develop their own supplementary materials to cover these skills as funds were not available to purchase additional materials.

Based on the MCAS test results, the high school created MCAS remediation courses, which developed into mandatory credit courses. A remediation program was also implemented at the middle school level. The district purchased the Study Island program to help all students in grades 3-8 prepare for the MCAS tests.

The district did not have a formal evaluation plan. With the exception of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluation and a mandated Department of Education Coordinated Program Review (CPR), the district did not engage in voluntary external or internal evaluations. Informal discussions of school or grade-level programs did occur at staff meetings throughout the district.

Human Resource Management and Professional Development

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on five and 'Needs Improvement' on eight of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District followed an established process in recruiting and hiring its professional staff. Although the process of paper screening and interviewing potential candidates varied slightly from one principal to the next, all principals felt that their first choice for a vacancy had been chosen by the central administration the vast majority of the time. In some cases, financial limitations had been placed on the hiring process. Principals reported that they consistently made teaching assignments for their new personnel, trying to assign the new teacher where his/her strengths were the greatest.

When administrative positions were vacant, a wider posting would take place and screening committees of teachers, parents, and community members would interview potential candidates and assist in the hiring process.

The percentage of the district's teachers and administrators who held appropriate licensure was 98.5 percent (384 of 390), and more than half of the district's 104 paraprofessionals were "highly qualified." The few teachers who had been hired on waivers were expected to actively work toward becoming certified, and the central office expected their respective principals to closely monitor their licensure progress.

The district offered a comprehensive orientation program to its new teachers and also reinstated, during the period under review, the mentoring program that had existed in the past. All the district's first-year teachers were assigned veteran teacher mentors. Both the district's administrators and teachers deemed the program very helpful and successful. No formal mentoring program existed for new administrators, but their colleagues informally provided guidance.

Professional development opportunities for the district's teachers took place during the equivalent of four professional development days (two full days and four half days) during each school year. The district's teachers stated that they had input into professional development offerings. In the absence of many districtwide professional development initiatives, the school district offered a number of professional development "modules" to teachers focused on subject matter and grade-level topics; however, none of these "modules" dealt with developing data analysis skills or differentiated instruction. All interviewees, administrators, and teachers alike agreed that adequate funding was not available for proper professional development during the period under review.

Both teachers and administrators in the district had been observed and evaluated by their supervisors in a timely fashion, and the instruments used in most cases followed the standards required by the Education Reform Act. The most significant exception to this was the superintendent's evaluation. It was found to be a compilation of comments made by school committee members on specific areas of expertise rather than a document following the tenets of the Education Reform Act.

The EQA team examined 55 randomly selected summative evaluations of teachers and found that all included informative and/or descriptive comments but none included instructive and/or constructive statements. The administrators' evaluations included no mention of improving

student achievement scores, and only 35 percent (six of 17) of the evaluations had instructive comments. Administrators expressed satisfaction with the evaluation process followed by their superiors.

The district had in place a crisis management team that included members of the town's police and fire departments. The team met regularly throughout the period under review to go over procedural protocols. Each classroom in the district had an easily accessible Crisis Flip Chart for teacher and/or substitute teacher use, and the procedures within the document were reviewed regularly by the respective building principals.

Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on four and 'Needs Improvement' on six of the ten performance indicators in this standard.

The district provided access to all educational programs for all students. Assessment results revealed that students in grades 6-8 in the aggregate failed to meet AYP in math. As a result, the district hired additional math teachers to provide math remediation to students in those grades. Students in grades 9 and 10 identified as at risk by their math teachers received additional math classes. Implementation of the Study Island program provided ELA and math support to students in grades 3-8. Building assessment teams created individual student success plans (ISSPs) for those students who scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category on the MCAS tests.

The preK-4 schools used formative assessments to measure student progress, mainly in literacy. However, the schools lacked consistency in their use of the formative assessments. Districtwide, the use of aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to make changes to support at-risk students was limited.

The district did not have policies, procedures, or practices in place to increase subgroup representation in AP or accelerated courses. No students were excluded from such courses, but there was no formal program to attract students from underrepresented groups into these courses.

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School student absenteeism rate exceeded the state average. According to the student handbook, students were allowed absences totaling 15 days.

This allotment was a decrease from 45 to 25 days to the current 15 days over the last 15 years. A team comprised of the high school attendance officer, school resource officer, nurse, and guidance counselors monitored daily attendance and followed up with telephone calls to parents or guardians of chronic absentees. Students lost credits based on their number of absences.

According to district data, teachers were absent on average 10.4 days per year excluding professional development days, and 11.7 days per year including professional development days. This resulted in attendance rates of 94.3 and 93.7 percent, respectively. Policies and procedures were in place when a teacher was absent to ensure consistency in the delivery of curriculum. The teachers' contract language provided an incentive for the buyback of unused sick days upon their retirement.

During the period under review, difficult budgetary decisions resulted in increased class sizes and staff cuts. In addition, a school adjustment counselor position was eliminated from the high school. During the same period, the new high school administration tightened the enforcement of the disciplinary code. This resulted in increased disciplinary violations.

The district encouraged students to make up failed or missed classes during summer school and retentions were infrequent. Bridgewater-Raynham had a dropout rate that was below the state's dropout rate for each year of the review period. The implementation of the Excel night program for students who may otherwise have dropped out of school provided an opportunity for these students to complete their high school education.

Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

The EQA examiners gave the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District an overall rating of 'Satisfactory' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on seven, 'Needs Improvement' on five, and not applicable on one of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

School committee members, town officials, and administrators described the budget development process as open and participatory. Principals and department heads sought input from staff and school councils and, along with district administrators, prepared and submitted to the school committee a recommended budget for their respective schools that they considered

necessary to continue the existing educational programs and to add new programs and staff. The district began to make some budget decisions based on student performance data during the last year of the period under review. The district did not conduct evaluation-based reviews to determine the cost effectiveness of its instructional programs, but did conduct cost-effectiveness reviews of non-instructional programs, such as its transportation programs.

At four information sessions scheduled in March, the superintendent presented each of the following topics: curriculum and instruction, special education, transportation, and fixed costs. At each session, the superintendent provided a line item explanation of the chosen topic of the evening. The school committee adopted an annual budget which the school district treasurer certified in April and sent to the selectmen in each town for voter approval at the respective town meetings in May. The openness of the budget development process resulted in additional town involvement and support, and the cessation of rumors about district bank accounts with sizeable balances.

The district did not receive adequate funding to provide for effective instructional practices and to provide for adequate operational resources. Officials from both Raynham and Bridgewater indicated support for the school district budget. The officials from the town of Bridgewater believed they had been responsive in supporting the budget during the period under review, but the town had limited financial resources available. Bridgewater lacked business and had not experienced economic growth. No viable locations existed in the town for commercial development. The existence of the tax-exempt state college, state prison, and other state-owned properties represented a loss of significant revenue. The town relied heavily on revenue received from the state. The school budget was not acted upon at the May town meeting but was voted in June after the final state aid figure was available.

Economic growth in Raynham continued during the period under review. At the May town meeting, the voters approved the school budget as presented. The approval of a smaller school budget at the Bridgewater town meeting in June affected Raynham's apportioned assessment. When the school committee adjusted the budget and approved a lower amount based on the Bridgewater vote, the town of Raynham "gifted" the remainder of the funds already approved for the school budget at its May town meeting.

The district maintained revolving accounts for only the school lunch program and the athletic fees collected. The district included all other receipts and state aid in the calculation of the apportionment of assessments to the member towns and also appropriated funds from its excess and deficiency account. Administrators and staff successfully pursued partnerships with local businesses and received revenue from donations as well as additional revenue in the form of mini-grants from Bridgewater State College and the North River Collaborative. The district had not been successful in obtaining new federal or state grants. The district failed to meet the net school spending requirement in fiscal year 2005.

The district had a written preventive maintenance plan. A long-term school facilities master plan and plan of anticipated projects existed that clearly reflected the future capital development and improvement needs, including educational and program facilities of adequate size. The district undertook a new construction and renovation project at the Williams Middle School and a construction project for a new regional high school. Once the new high school opens, planned for September 2007, the district would schedule the current high school for renovation for use as a middle school. The EQA team determined the district had educational and program facilities that were in very good condition, clean, and well maintained.

The school buildings had systems in place to ensure student safety that differed from building to building. Each school had crisis plans in addition to the district crisis plan.

Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

The EQA's analysis of student achievement data focuses on the MCAS test results for 2003-2006, with primary attention paid to the 2006 MCAS tests. This analysis is framed by the following five essential questions:

1. **Achievement: Are the district's students reaching proficiency levels on the MCAS examination?**
2. **Equity of Achievement: Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?**
3. **Improvement: Has the district's MCAS test performance improved over time?**
4. **Equity of Improvement: Has the equity of MCAS test performance among the district's student subgroups improved over time?**
5. **Participation: Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?**

In order to respond accurately to these questions, the EQA subjected the most current state and district MCAS test results to a series of analyses to determine whether there were differences between the mean results of district students and those of students statewide or among student subgroups within the district. Descriptive analyses of the 2006 MCAS test results revealed differences between the achievement of students in Bridgewater-Raynham and the average scores of students in Massachusetts.

To highlight those differences, the data were then summarized in several ways: a performance-level based summary of student achievement in Bridgewater-Raynham; and comparative analyses of districtwide, subject-area, grade, school, and subgroup achievement in relation to that of students statewide, in relation to the district averages, and in relation to other subject areas, grades, and subgroups.

The EQA then subjected the data to gap analysis, a statistical method that describes the relationship between student aggregate and subgroup performance and the state standard or target of 100 percent proficiency on the MCAS tests. Gap analysis also describes the relative achievement of different entities at a specific point in time, as well as how those relationships change over time. Gap analysis consists of several separate indicators, each of which builds on the others, and can be applied to a district, school, or subgroup of students.

The basis for gap analysis is the *proficiency index*, which is a measure of student performance that shows whether students have attained or are making progress toward proficiency, or meeting the state standard. The unit of measure is proficiency index (PI) points, and a score of 100

indicates that all students in the aggregate or in a subgroup are proficient. It can be calculated for overall achievement as well as achievement in an individual subject. Please see Appendix A for more detailed information about the proficiency index.

The *proficiency gap* is a measure of the number of proficiency index points by which student achievement must improve to meet the goal of proficiency for all students. It is the gap or difference between the current level of proficiency as measured by the proficiency index and the target of 100. A gap of zero indicates that all students in the aggregate or in a subgroup are proficient.

The *performance gap* is a measure of the range of, or variance in, achievement among different student subgroups within a district or school at a specific point in time. It measures the differences between the proficiency index of the highest-performing subgroup and those of the other subgroups. It also measures the difference in performance between any two entities. When the performance gap narrows over time, equity increases; when it widens over time, equity decreases.

Achievement

Are the district's students reaching proficiency levels on the MCAS examination?

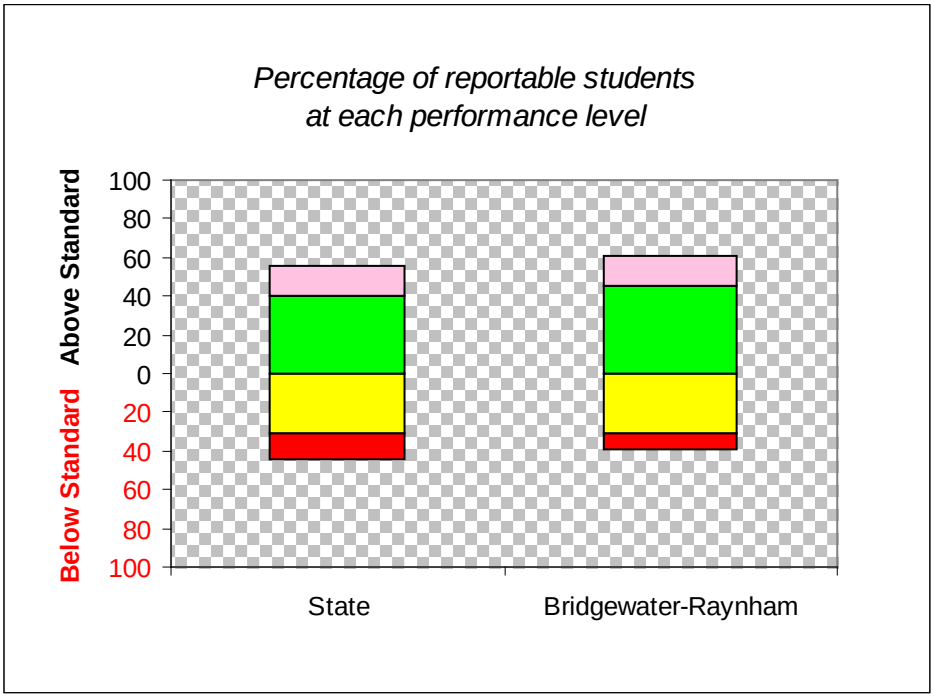
Findings:

- On average, slightly more than three-fifths of all students in Bridgewater-Raynham attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, more than that statewide. Nearly three-quarters of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), nearly half of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in math, and more than half of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE).

- Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 82 proficiency index (PI) points, four PI points greater than that statewide. Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 18 PI points.

- In 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in ELA was 10 PI points, six PI points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of more than one PI point annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP). Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in math was 25 PI points in 2006, three PI points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of slightly more than three PI points per year to achieve AYP. Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gap in STE was 20 PI points, nine PI points narrower than that statewide.

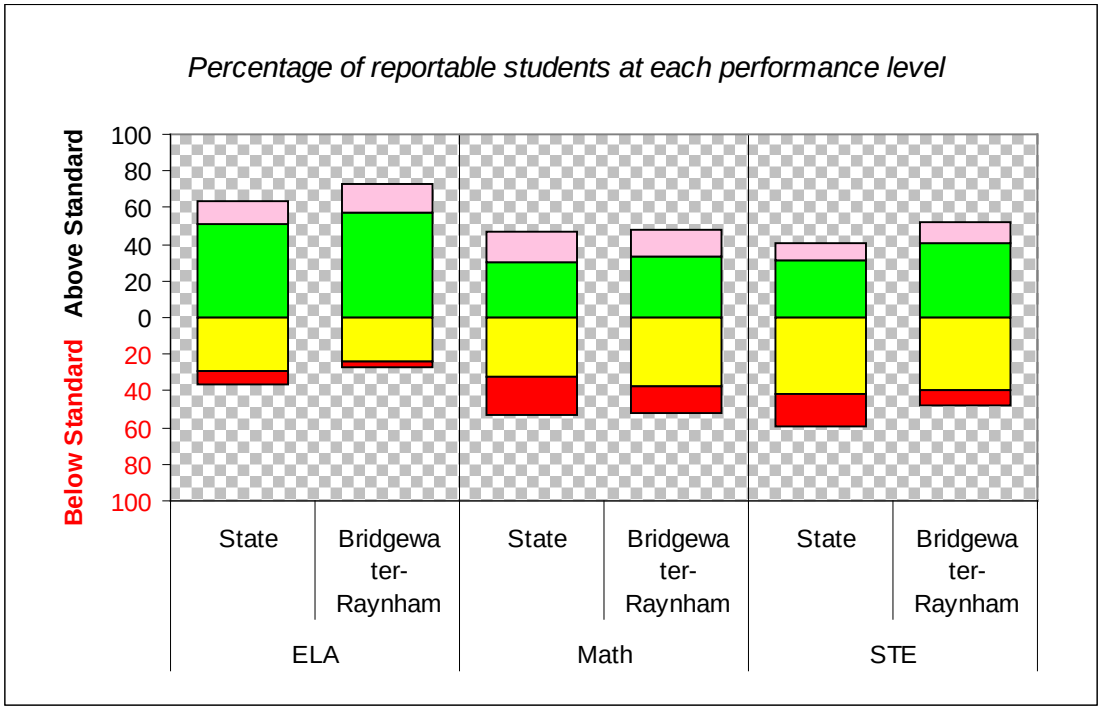
Figure/Table 1: Student MCAS Test Performance, All Students, 2006



	State	Bridgewater-Raynham
Advanced	15	15
Proficient	41	46
Needs Improvement	31	30
Warning/Failing	14	9
Percent Attaining Proficiency	56	61
Average Proficiency Index (API)	78.3	82.3

In 2006, 61 percent of Bridgewater-Raynham students attained proficiency on the MCAS tests overall, five percentage points more than that statewide. Nine percent of Bridgewater-Raynham students scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category, five percentage points less than that statewide. Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 82 proficiency index (PI) points, four PI points greater than that statewide. Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 18 PI points.

Figure/Table 2: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Subject, 2006



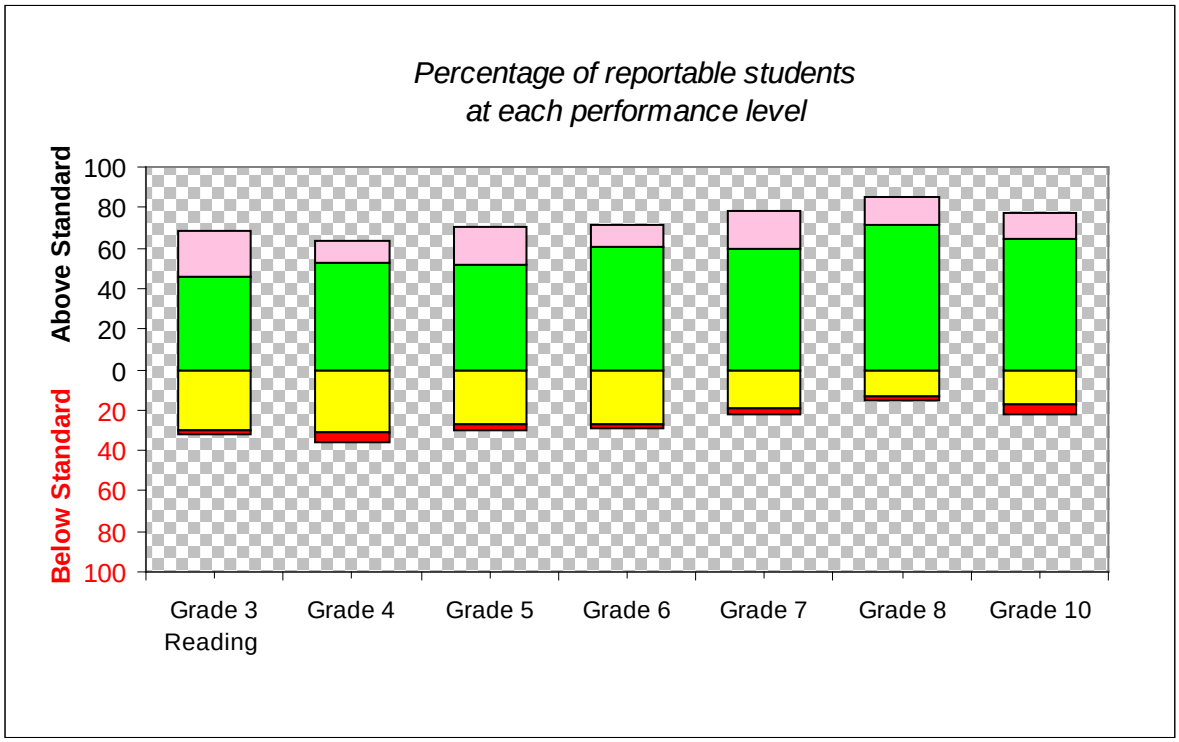
	ELA		Math		STE	
	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham
Advanced	13	16	17	14	10	11
Proficient	51	58	30	34	31	41
Needs Improvement	29	24	33	37	42	40
Warning/Failing	7	3	20	15	17	8
Percent Attaining Proficiency	64	74	47	48	41	52
Proficiency Index (PI)	84.3	89.9	72.3	74.7	71.4	80

In 2006, achievement in English language arts (ELA), math, and science and technology/engineering (STE) was higher in Bridgewater-Raynham than statewide. In Bridgewater-Raynham, 74 percent of students attained proficiency in ELA, compared to 64 percent statewide; 48 percent attained proficiency in math, compared to 47 percent statewide; and 52 percent attained proficiency in STE, compared to 41 percent statewide.

Bridgewater-Raynham students had stronger performance on the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA than in math and STE. The proficiency index for Bridgewater-Raynham students in ELA was 90 PI points; in math, it was 75 PI points; and in STE, it was 80 PI points. These compare to the statewide figures of 84, 72, and 71 PI points, respectively.

The proficiency gap for Bridgewater-Raynham students was 10 PI points in ELA, 25 PI points in math, and 20 PI points in STE. These compare to the statewide figures of 16, 28, and 29 PI points, respectively. Bridgewater-Raynham's proficiency gaps would require an average annual improvement of more than one PI point in ELA and slightly more than three PI points in math to meet AYP.

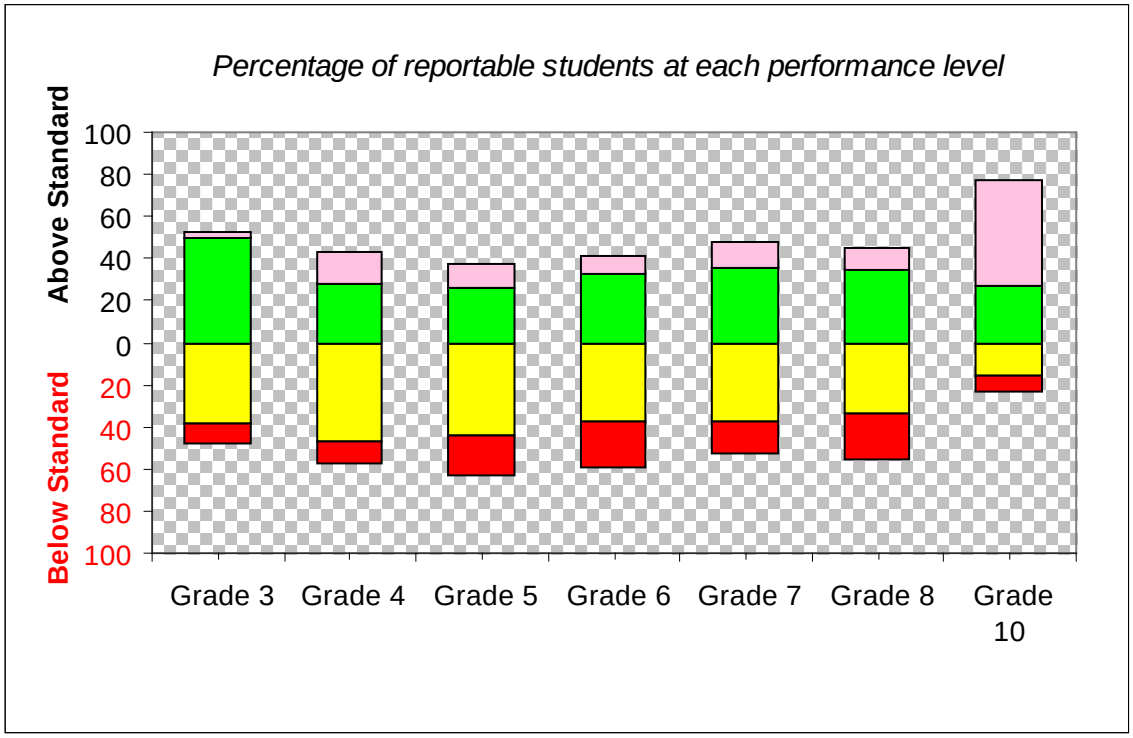
Figure/Table 3: Student MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



	Grade 3 Reading	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Advanced	23	12	19	11	18	13	13
Proficient	45	52	52	60	60	72	64
Needs Improvement	30	31	27	27	19	13	18
Warning/Failing	2	5	3	2	3	2	5
Percent Attaining Proficiency	68	64	71	71	78	85	77

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining proficiency in 2006 in ELA varied slightly by grade level, ranging from a low of 64 percent of grade 4 students to a high of 85 percent of grade 8 students.

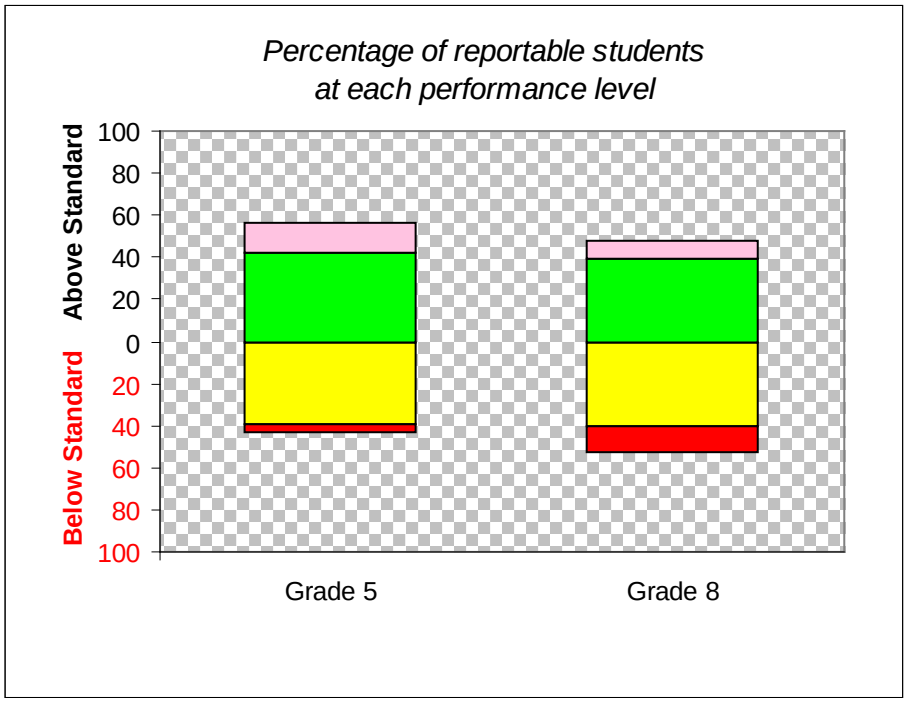
Figure/Table 4: Student MCAS Math Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Advanced	3	15	11	8	12	10	50
Proficient	50	28	26	33	36	34	27
Needs Improvement	38	47	44	37	38	34	16
Warning/Failing	9	10	19	22	15	21	7
Percent Attaining Proficiency	53	43	37	41	48	44	77

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining proficiency in 2006 in math varied somewhat by grade level, ranging from a low of 37 percent of grade 5 students to a high of 77 percent of grade 10 students.

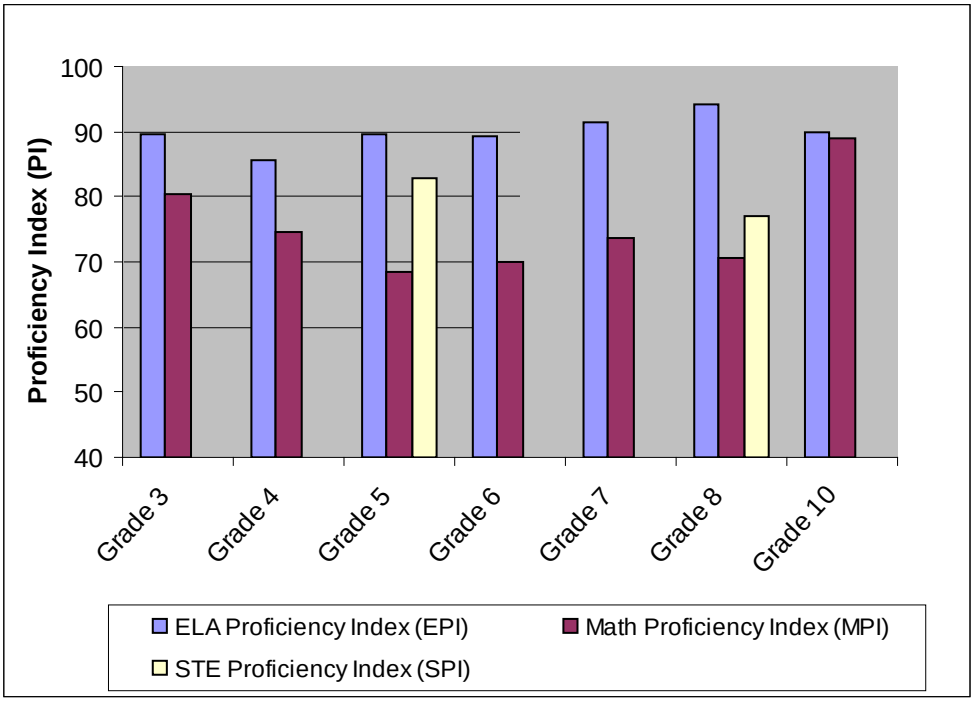
Figure/Table 5: Student MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



	Grade 5	Grade 8
Advanced	15	8
Proficient	42	40
Needs Improvement	39	41
Warning/Failing	4	12
Percent Attaining Proficiency	57	48

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, 57 percent of grade 5 students attained proficiency in STE, and 48 percent of grade 8 students did so.

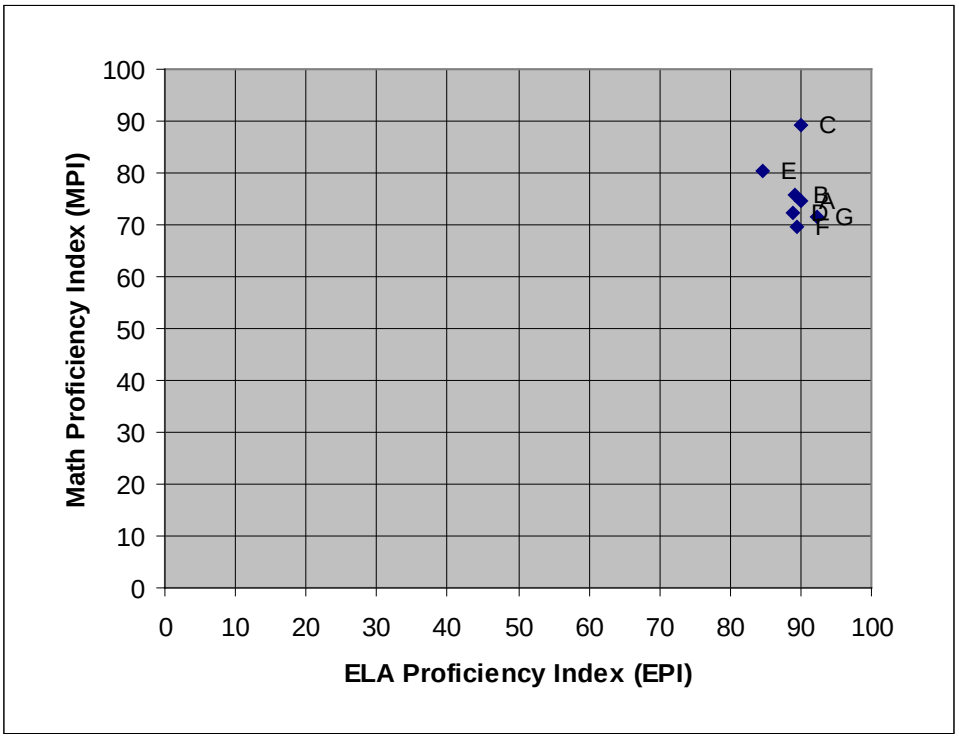
Figure/Table 6: Student MCAS Proficiency Indices, by Grade and Subject, 2006



	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
ELA Proficiency Index (EPI)	89.5	85.6	89.7	89.4	91.4	94.2	90.0
Math Proficiency Index (MPI)	80.4	74.7	68.6	70.0	73.7	70.6	89.1
STE Proficiency Index (SPI)			83.0			76.9	

By grade, Bridgewater-Raynham's ELA proficiency gap in 2006 ranged from a low of six PI points at grade 8 to a high of 14 PI points at grade 4. Bridgewater-Raynham's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of 11 PI points at grade 10 to a high of 31 PI points at grade 5. Bridgewater-Raynham's STE proficiency gap was 17 PI points at grade 5 and 23 PI points at grade 8.

Figure/Table 7: Student MCAS ELA Proficiency Index vs. Math Proficiency Index, by School, 2006



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Bridgewater-Raynham	89.9	74.7	6,297
B	Mitchell Elem	89.3	75.8	949
C	Bridgewater-Raynham High	90.0	89.1	658
D	Burnell Campus Elem	89.0	72.5	401
E	Dr. E.J. LaLiberte Elem	84.7	80.3	754
F	Raynham Middle School	89.6	69.7	1,355
G	Williams Middle School	92.3	71.4	2,180

Bridgewater-Raynham's ELA proficiency gap in 2006 ranged from a low of eight PI points at Williams Middle School to a high of 15 PI points at E. J. LaLiberte Elementary School. Bridgewater-Raynham's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of 11 PI points at Bridgewater-Raynham High School to a high of 30 PI points at Raynham Middle School.

Equity of Achievement

Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

Findings:

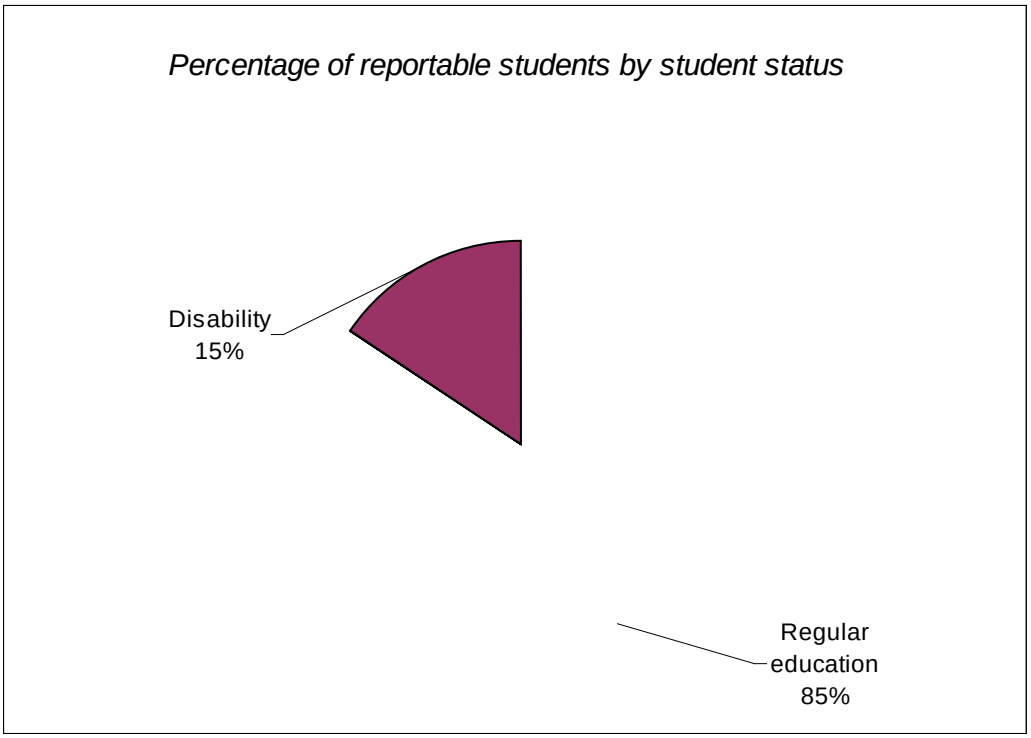
- MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Bridgewater-Raynham students. Of the eight measurable subgroups in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 25 PI points in ELA and 31 PI points in math (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively).

- The proficiency gaps in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, African-American students, low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program), and male students. Less than half of the students in these subgroups attained proficiency, with the exception of the male student subgroup in which less than three-fifths of the students did so.

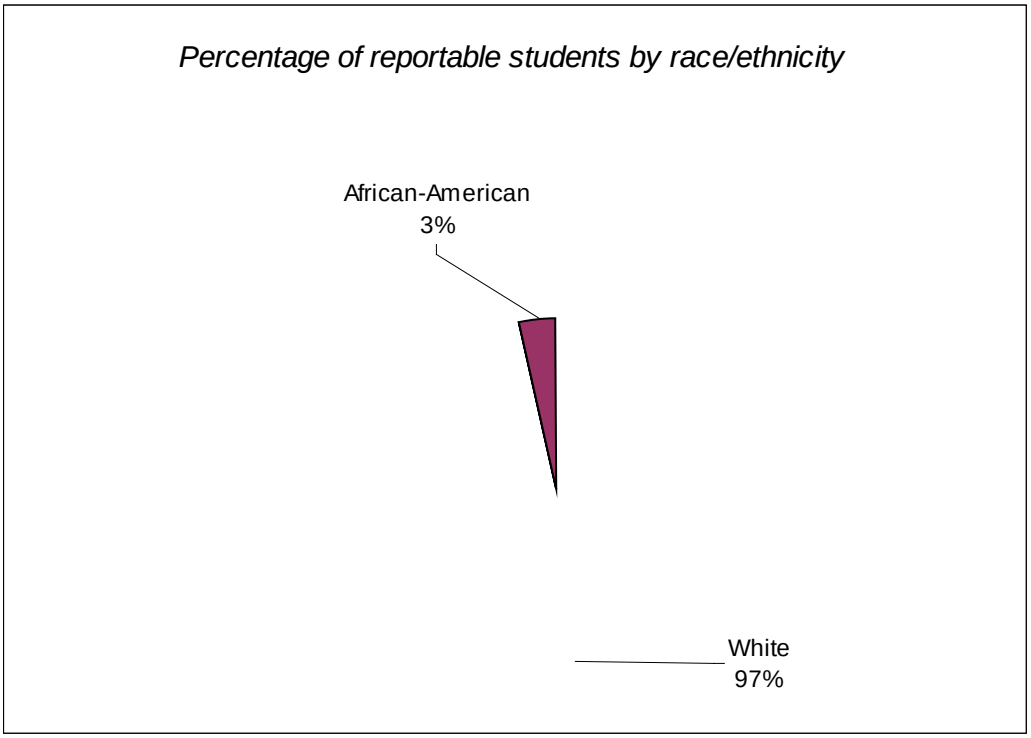
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, non low-income students, and female students. For each of these subgroups, more than three-fifths of the students attained proficiency.

Figures 8 A-C/Table 8: Student Population by Reportable Subgroups, 2006

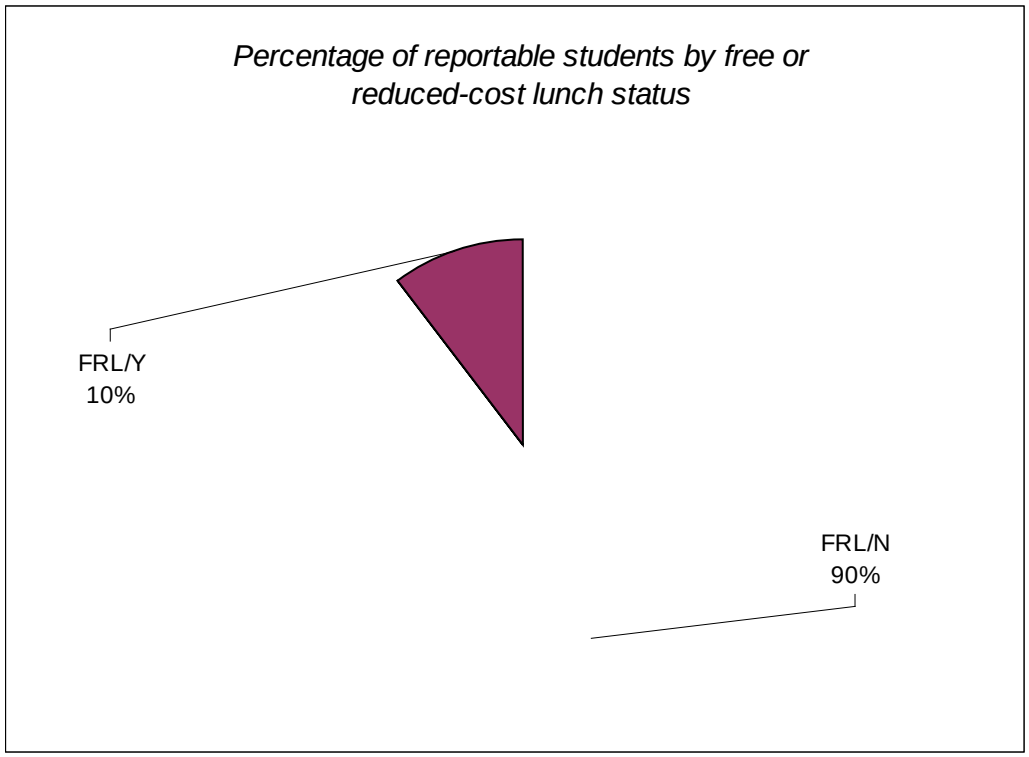
A.



B.



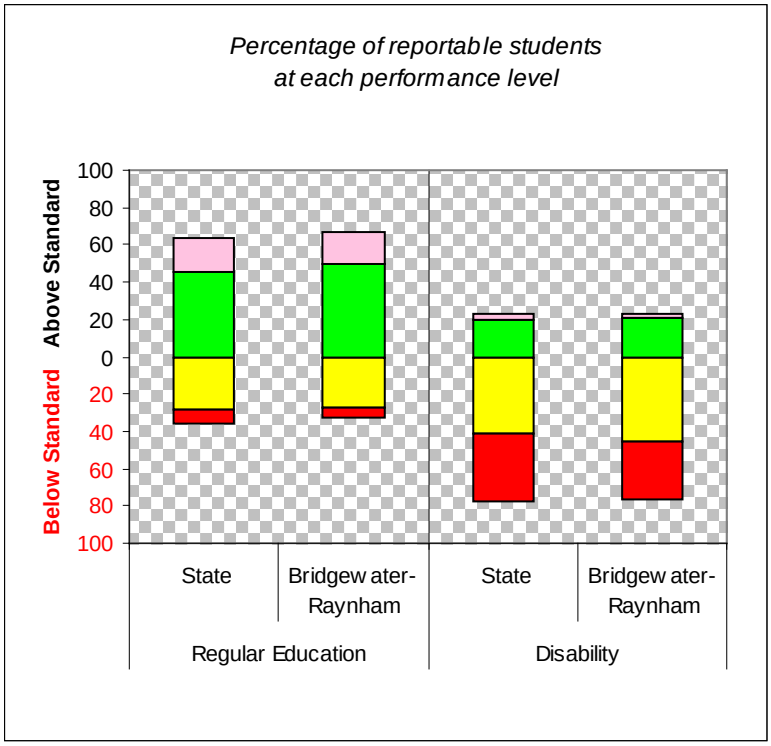
C.



	Subgroup	Number of Students
Student status	Regular education	2,677
	Disability	491
Race/ethnicity	White	2,981
	African-American	100
Free or reduced-cost lunch status	FRL/N	2,846
	FRL/Y	324

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, 15 percent of the students were students with disabilities, three percent were non-White students, and 10 percent were students participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

Figure/Table 9: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Student Status Subgroup, 2006

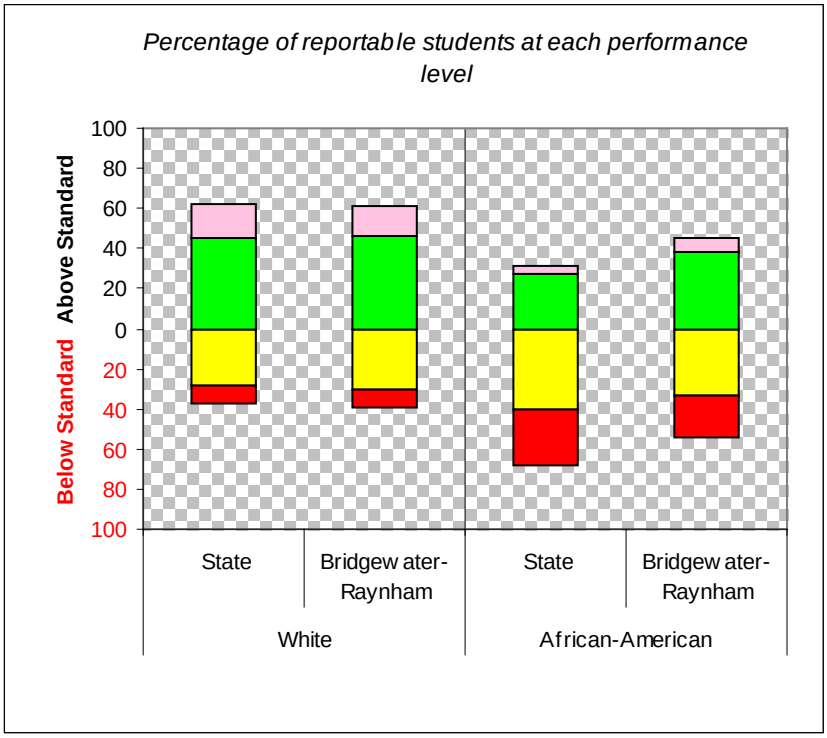


	Regular Education		Disability	
	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham
Advanced	18	17	2	2
Proficient	46	50	20	21
Needs Improvement	28	28	41	46
Warning/Failing	8	5	36	31
Percent Attaining Proficiency	64	67	22	23
Average Proficiency Index (API)	84.0	86.6	55.9	58.5

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, the proficiency rate of regular education students was nearly three times greater than that of students with disabilities. Sixty-seven percent of regular education students and 23 percent of students with disabilities attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests.

Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 13 PI points for regular education students and 41 PI points for students with disabilities. The average performance gap between regular education students and students with disabilities was 28 PI points.

Figure/Table 10: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup, 2006

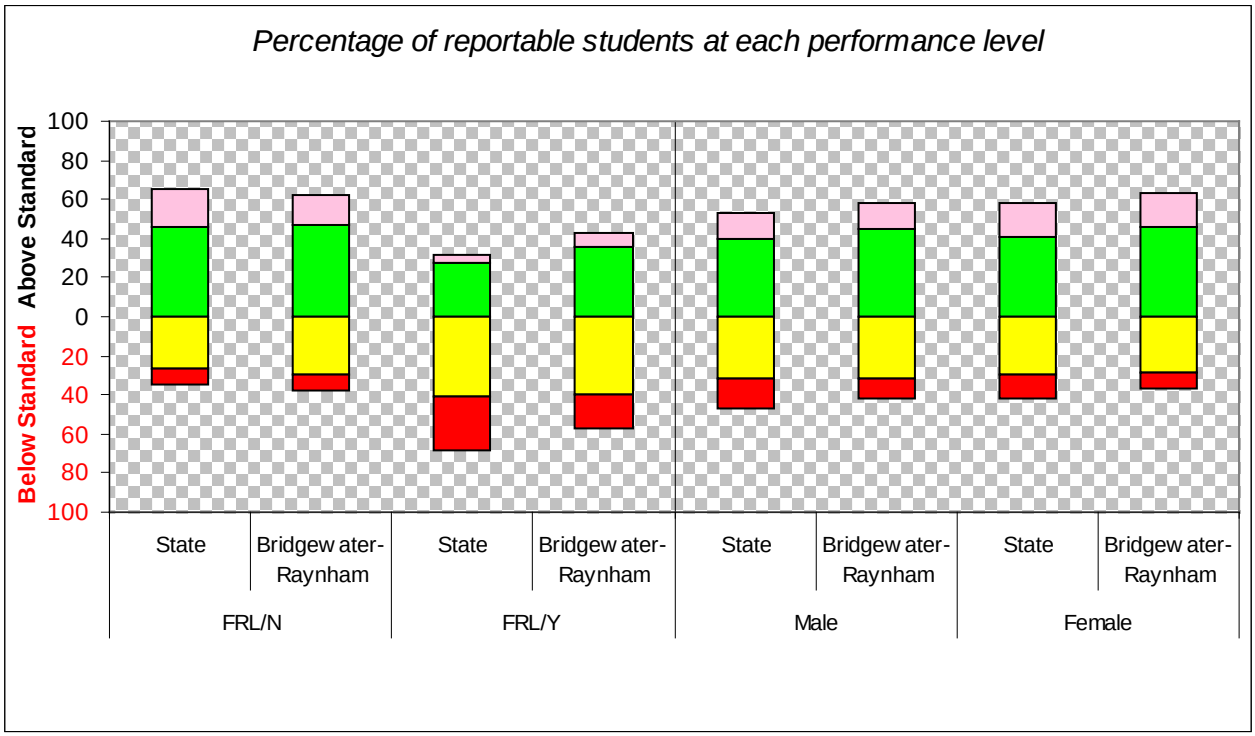


	White		African-American	
	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham
Advanced	17	15	4	7
Proficient	45	46	27	39
Needs Improvement	29	30	40	34
Warning/Failing	9	8	28	21
Percent Attaining Proficiency	62	61	31	46
Average Proficiency Index (API)	82.9	82.9	63.2	70.8

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, performance on the MCAS tests varied by race/ethnicity, as 61 percent of White students and 46 percent of African-American students attained overall proficiency.

Bridgewater-Raynham's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 17 PI points for White students and 29 PI points for African-American students. The average performance gap between White and African-American students was 12 PI points.

Figure/Table 11: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Socioeconomic Status and Gender Subgroups, 2006

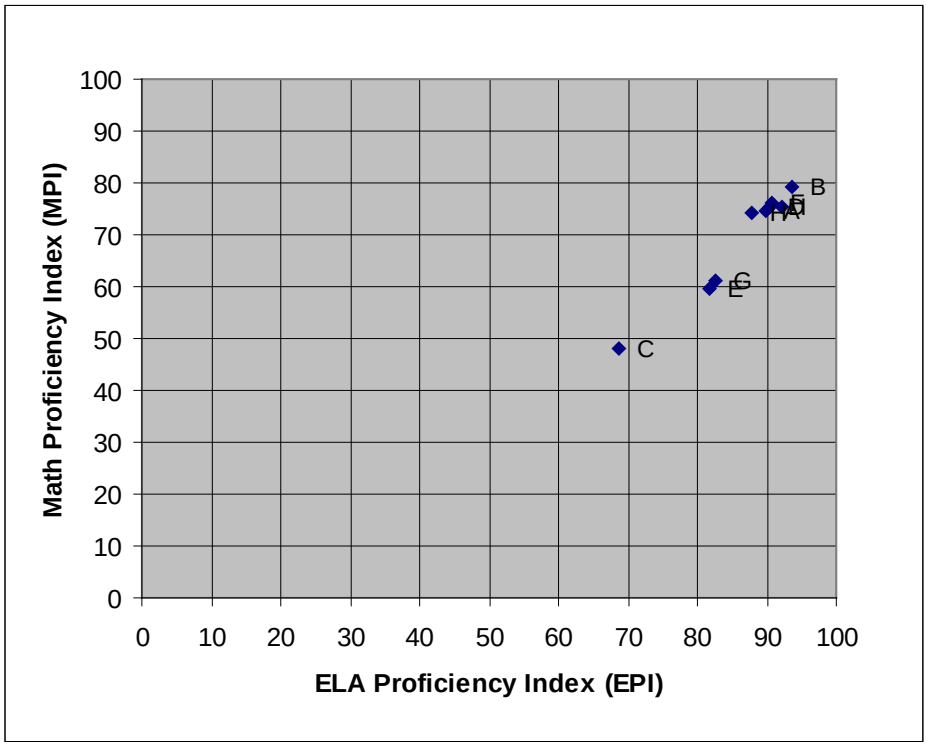


	FRL/N		FRL/Y		Male		Female	
	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham	State	Bridgewater-Raynham
Advanced	19	16	5	7	13	13	17	17
Proficient	46	47	27	36	40	45	41	46
Needs Improvement	27	29	40	40	32	32	29	29
Warning/Failing	8	8	27	18	15	10	13	8
Percent Attaining Proficiency	65	63	32	43	53	58	58	63
Average Proficiency Index (API)	84.5	83.5	63.5	72.0	77.1	81.1	79.6	83.7

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, 43 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests, compared to 63 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The average proficiency gap was 28 PI points for low-income students and 16 PI points for non low-income students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was 12 PI points.

Performance on the 2006 MCAS tests was fairly comparable for male and female students in Bridgewater-Raynham, with 63 percent of female students and 58 percent of male students attaining overall proficiency. The average proficiency gap was 19 PI points for male students and 16 PI points for female students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was three PI points.

Figure/Table 12: Student MCAS ELA Proficiency Index vs. Math Proficiency Index, by Subgroup, 2006

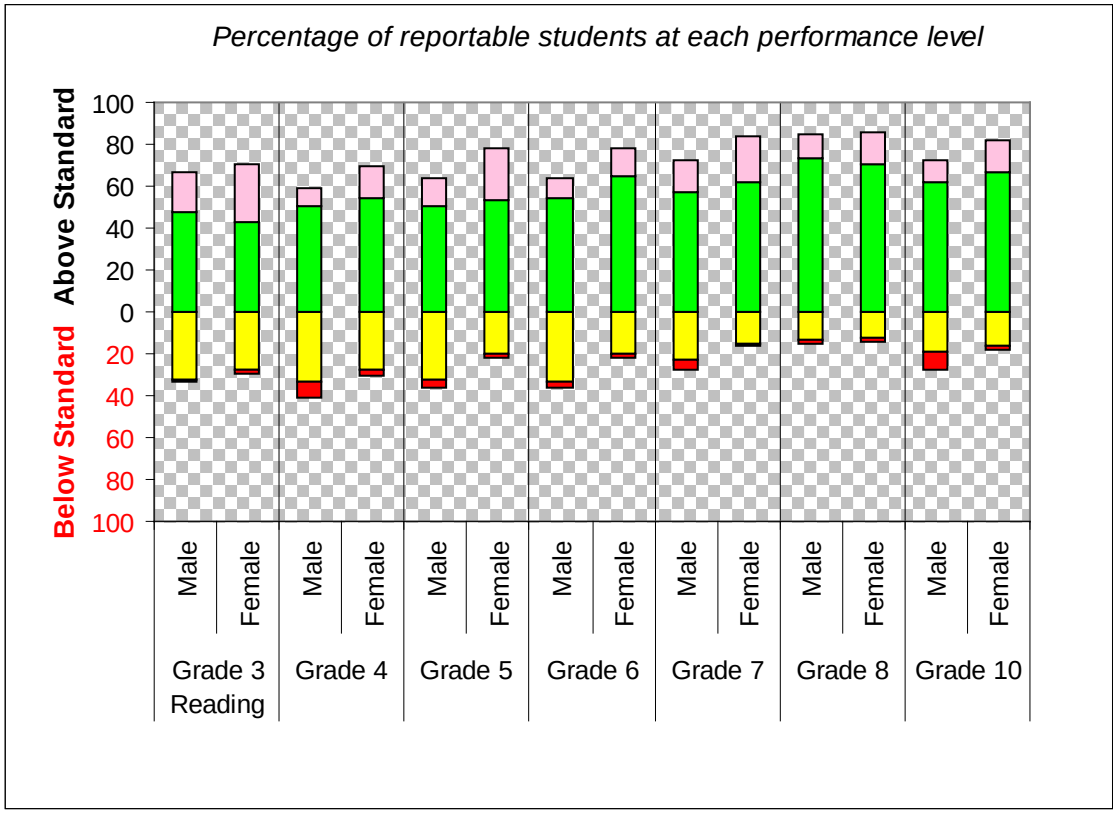


		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Bridgewater-Raynham	89.9	74.7	6,297
B	Regular Education	93.7	79.4	5,348
C	Disability	68.8	48.2	945
D	White	90.3	75.4	5,926
E	African-American	81.8	59.5	196
F	FRL/N	90.7	76.2	5,660
G	FRL/Y	82.6	61.3	637
H	Male	87.9	74.2	3,228
I	Female	92.1	75.2	3,069

Of the eight measurable subgroups in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 25 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 31 PI points in math (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively).

The proficiency gaps in Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, African-American students, low-income (FRL/Y) students, and male students. The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, non low-income (FRL/N) students, and female students.

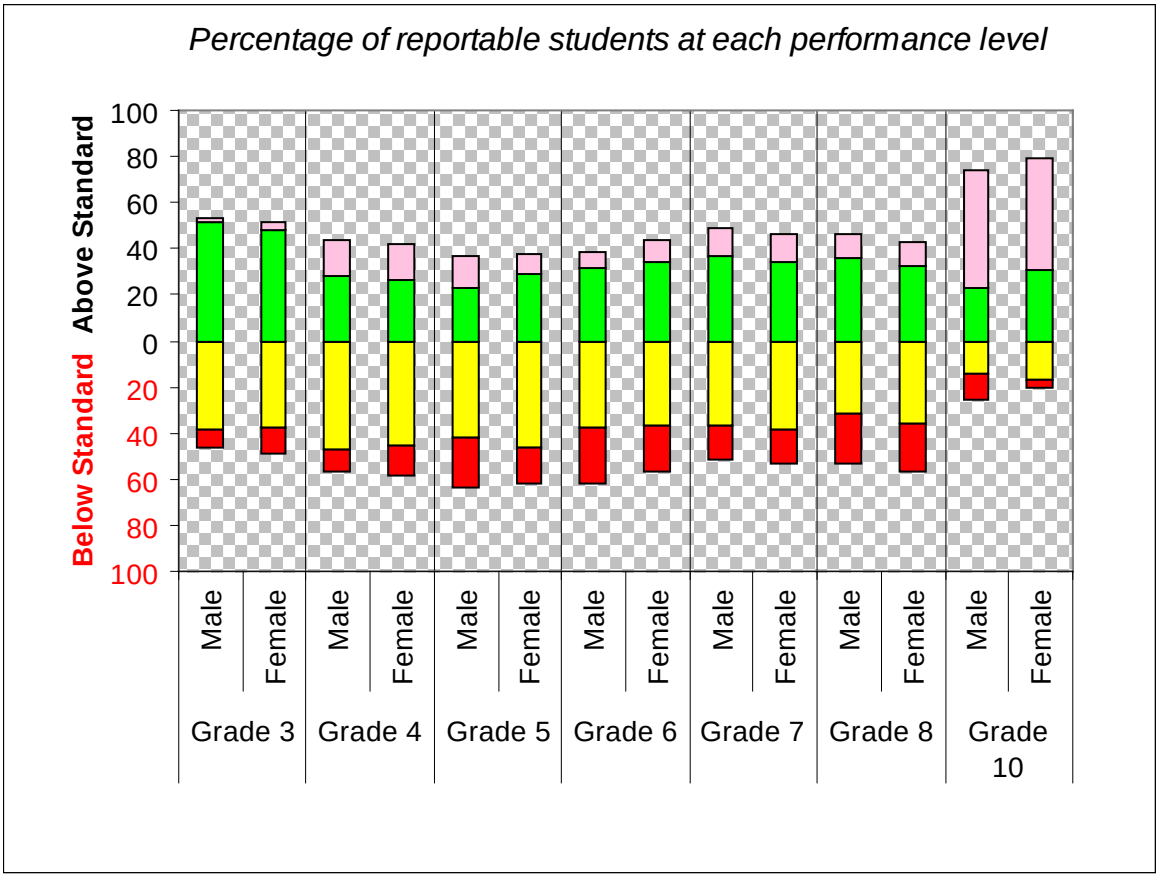
Figure/Table 13: Student MCAS Math Test Performance, by Grade and Gender, 2006



	Grade 3 Reading		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 10	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Advanced	19	27	8	16	13	25	10	13	15	22	12	15	10	15
Proficient	48	43	51	54	50	53	55	65	58	62	73	70	62	66
Needs Improvement	32	28	34	28	33	20	33	20	23	15	13	13	19	16
Warning/ Failing	1	2	7	3	4	1	2	2	5	1	2	2	8	2
Percent Attaining Proficiency	67	70	59	70	63	78	65	78	73	84	85	85	72	81

In Bridgewater-Raynham in 2006, female students outperformed male students on all grade-level ELA tests except at grade 8, where female and male students performed the same.

Figure/Table 14: Student MCAS Math Test Performance, by Grade and Gender, 2006



	Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 10	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Advanced	2	3	15	15	14	9	7	9	12	12	10	10	51	49
Proficient	52	48	29	27	23	29	32	34	37	34	36	33	23	31
Needs Improvement	38	38	47	46	42	46	38	37	36	39	32	36	14	17
Warning/ Failing	8	11	9	12	22	16	24	20	15	15	22	21	11	4
Percent Attaining Proficiency	54	51	44	42	37	38	39	43	49	46	46	43	74	80

On the 2006 MCAS tests in math, male students outperformed female students at grades 3, 4, 7, and 8. Female students outperformed male students at grades 5, 6, and 10.

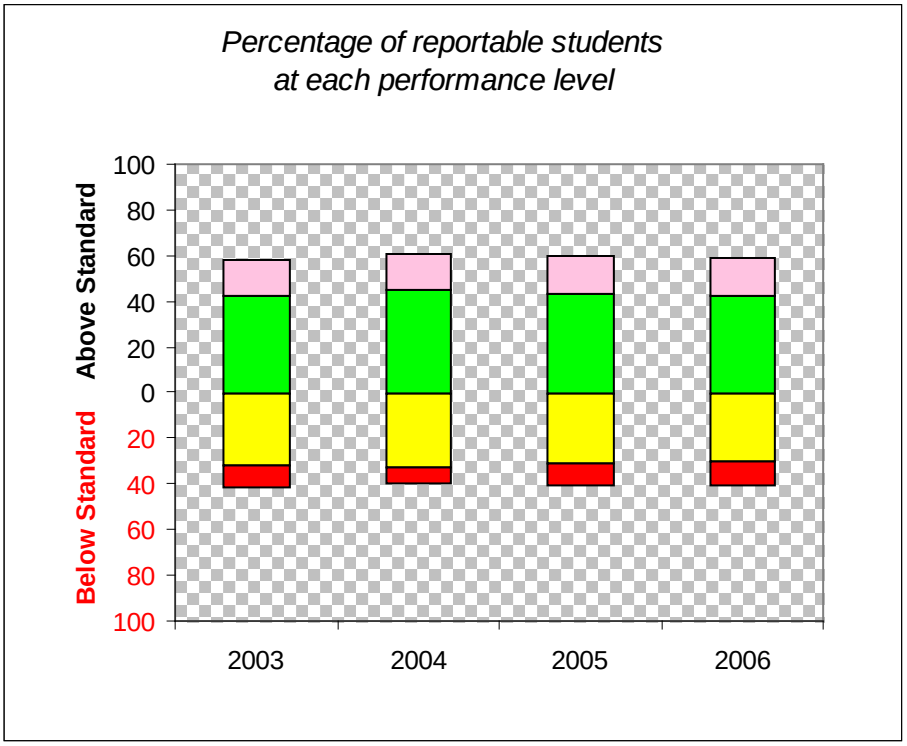
Improvement

Has the district's MCAS test performance improved over time?

Findings:

- Between 2003 and 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham's MCAS performance showed no improvement overall, in ELA, or in math, and slight improvement in STE.
- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories rose by one percentage point between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category also increased by one percentage point. The average proficiency gap in Bridgewater-Raynham was 19 PI points in both 2003 and 2006.
- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Bridgewater-Raynham remained flat at 89 PI points.
- Math performance in Bridgewater-Raynham showed a slight decline of one-half PI point over this period.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Bridgewater-Raynham had an improvement in STE performance, increasing by slightly more than one PI point annually over the two-year period. This resulted in an improvement rate of 10 percent.

Figure 15/Tables 15 A-B: Student MCAS Test Performance, All Students, 2003-2006



A.

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Advanced	16	16	17	17
Proficient	42	45	43	42
Needs Improvement	32	32	31	30
Warning/Failing	10	7	9	11
Percent Attaining Proficiency	58	61	60	59
Average Proficiency Index (API)	81.0	82.7	81.6	80.9

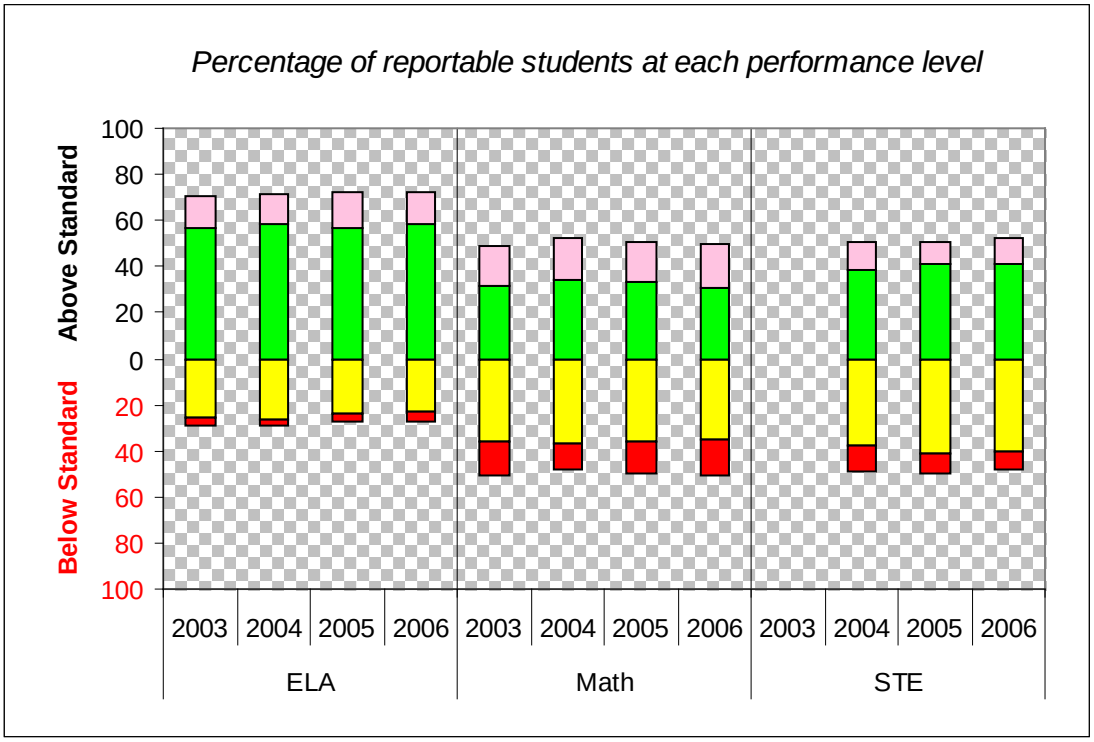
B. n-values

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Advanced	525	495	510	508
Proficient	1,385	1,424	1,309	1,281
Needs Improvement	1,044	1,029	938	903
Warning/Failing	334	236	289	328
Total	3,288	3,184	3,046	3,020

Note: Trend data include grades for which testing was administered for each subject in all four years; therefore, the 2006 data may differ from those reported in Figure/Table 1.

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining overall proficiency on the MCAS tests increased from 58 percent in 2003 to 59 percent in 2006. The percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category increased from 10 percent in 2003 to 11 percent in 2006. The average proficiency gap in Bridgewater-Raynham was 19 PI points in 2003 and in 2006.

Figure/Table 16: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Subject, 2003-2006



	ELA				Math				STE			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
Advanced	14	13	16	14	17	18	17	19		13	10	11
Proficient	56	58	56	58	32	35	33	31		38	41	41
Needs Improvement	26	26	24	23	36	37	36	35		38	41	40
Warning/ Failing	3	3	3	4	15	11	14	16		11	8	8
Percent Attaining Proficiency	70	71	72	72	49	53	50	50		51	51	52
Proficiency Index (PI)	88.5	89.2	89.4	88.8	75.6	77.9	76.0	75.1		77.7	79.2	80.0

Note: Trend data include grades for which testing was administered for each subject in all four years; therefore, the 2006 data for ELA and math may differ from those reported in Figure/Table 2. STE data for 2003 are not available.

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining proficiency in ELA increased from 70 percent in 2003 to 72 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in ELA remained the same at 11 PI points in 2003 and 2006.

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining proficiency in math increased from 49 percent in 2003 to 50 percent in 2006. However, the proficiency gap in math widened from 24 PI points in 2003 to 25 PI points in 2006.

The percentage of Bridgewater-Raynham students attaining proficiency in STE increased from 51 percent in 2004 to 52 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in STE narrowed from 22 PI points in 2004 to 20 PI points in 2006, resulting in an improvement rate of 10 percent.

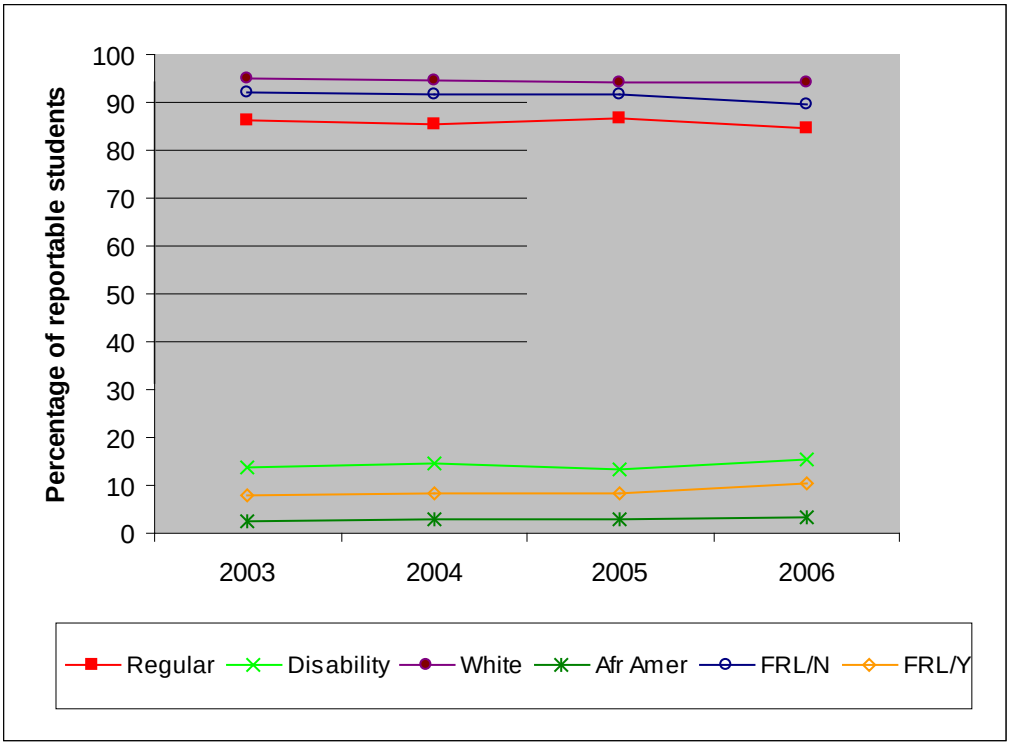
Equity of Improvement

Has the equity of MCAS test performance among the district's student subgroups improved over time?

Findings:

- In Bridgewater-Raynham, regular education students, non low-income students, and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was regular education students.
- In math, only regular education students and African-American students showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006, with African-American students showing greater improvement.
- The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 27 PI points in 2003 to 29 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 33 to 34 PI points over this period.

Figure/Table 17: Student Population by Reportable Subgroups, 2003-2006



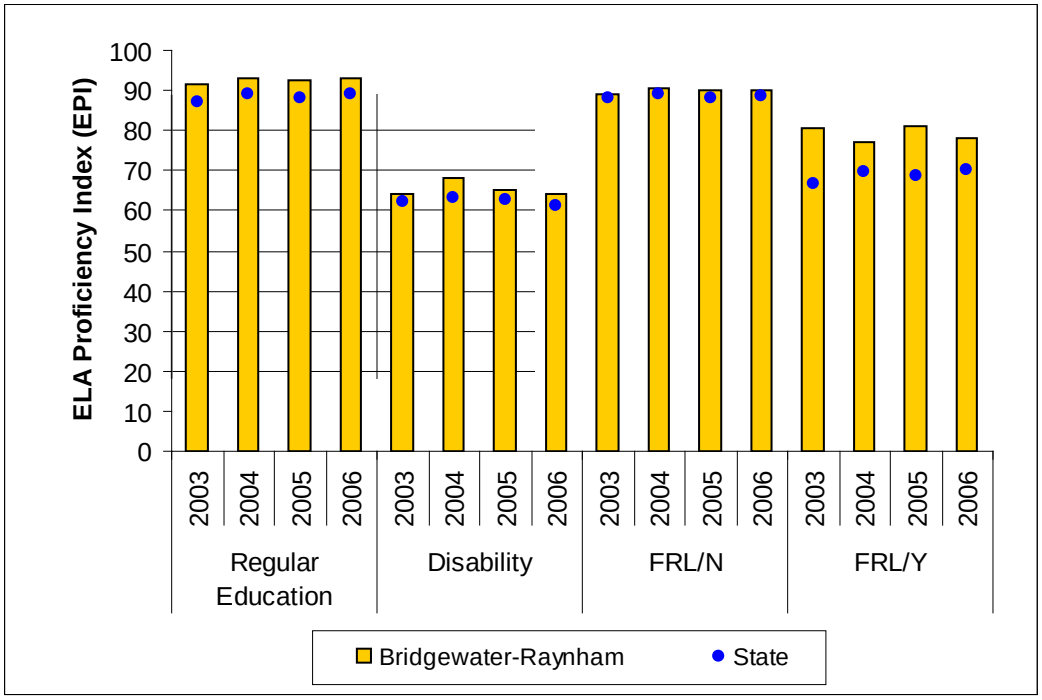
	Number of Students				Percentage of students			
	2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**
Bridgewater-Raynham	2,360	2,849	2,695	3,170	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular	2,039	2,435	2,338	2,677	86.4	85.5	86.8	84.4
Disability	321	412	357	491	13.6	14.5	13.2	15.5
White	2,242	2,694	2,537	2,981	95.0	94.6	94.1	94.0
Afr Amer	57	80	84	100	2.4	2.8	3.1	3.2
FRL/N	2,178	2,613	2,465	2,846	92.3	91.7	91.5	89.8
FRL/Y	182	236	230	324	7.7	8.3	8.5	10.2

Note: The 2006 percentages of students reported here may differ from those reported in Figure 8; the percentages shown here are based on the total number of students in the district, whereas the percentages shown in Figure 8 are based on the number of students in reportable subgroups.

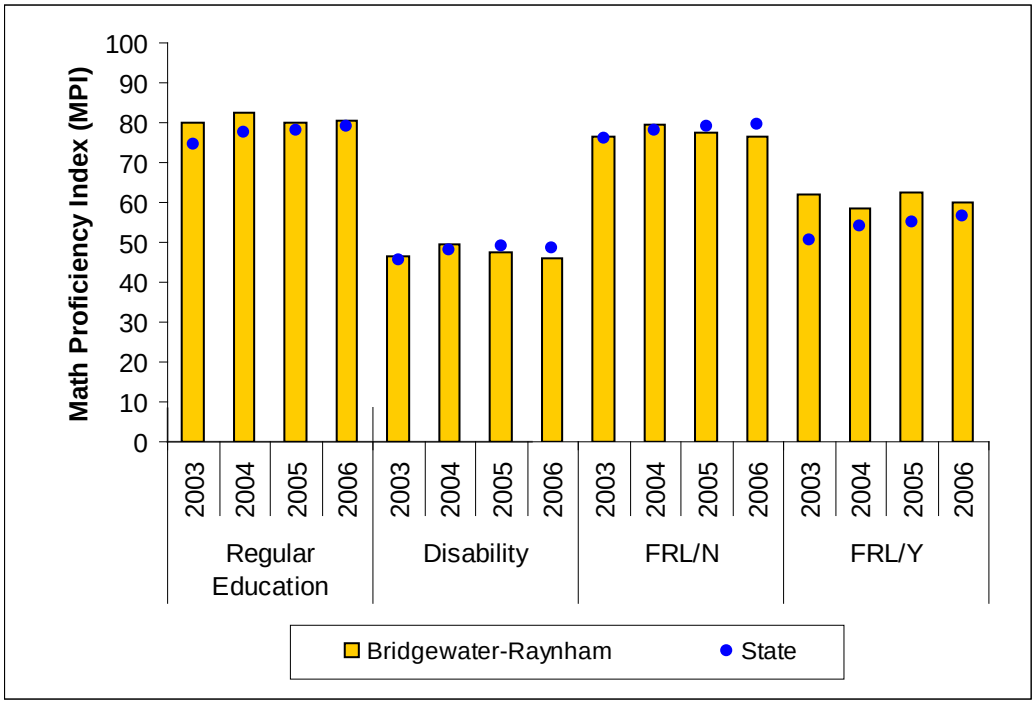
The makeup of the Bridgewater-Raynham student population did not change much between 2003 and 2006. The proportion of students with disabilities increased by roughly two percentage points, the proportion of African-American students increased by nearly one percentage point, and the proportion of low-income (FRL/Y) students increased by two and one-half percentage points during this period.

Figures 18 A-D/Table 18: MCAS Proficiency Indices, by Subgroup, 2003-2006

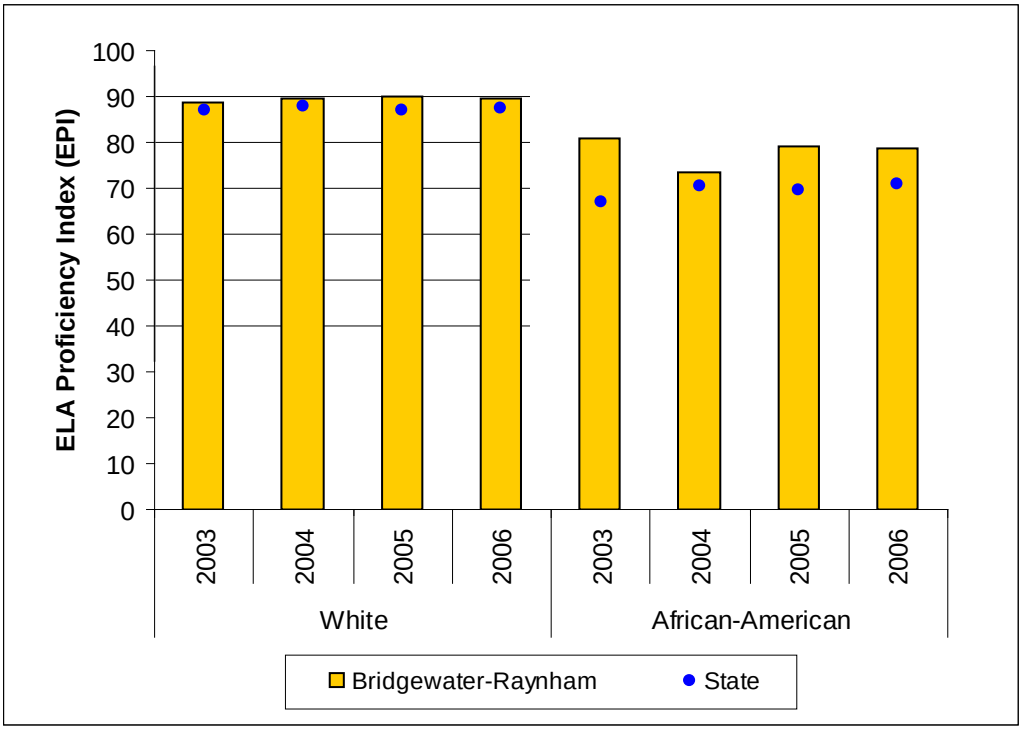
A. ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



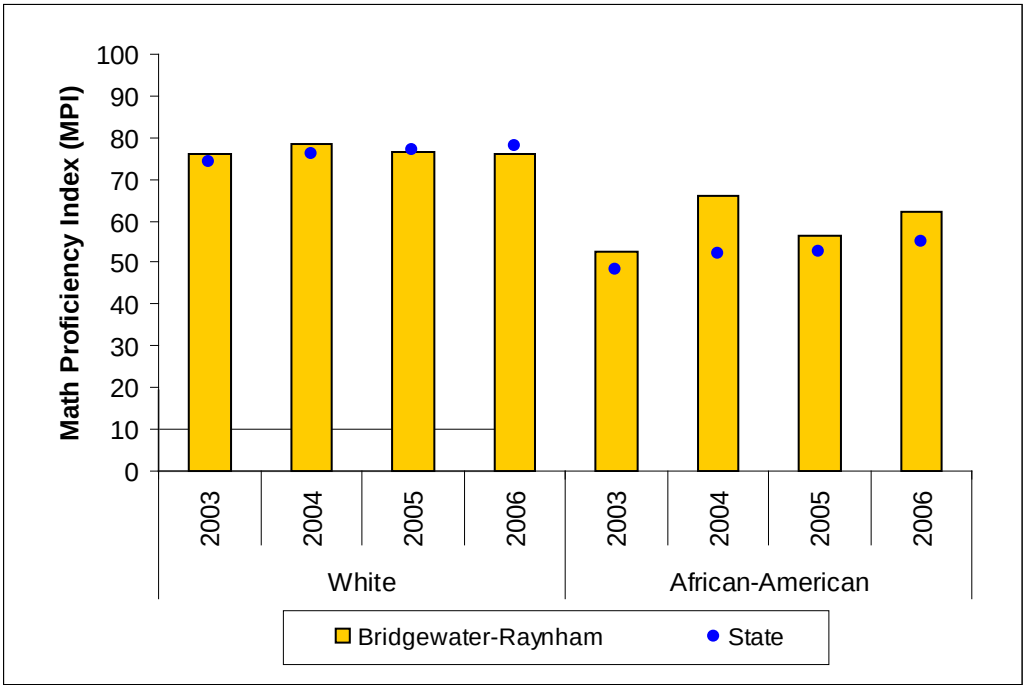
B. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



C. ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup



D. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup

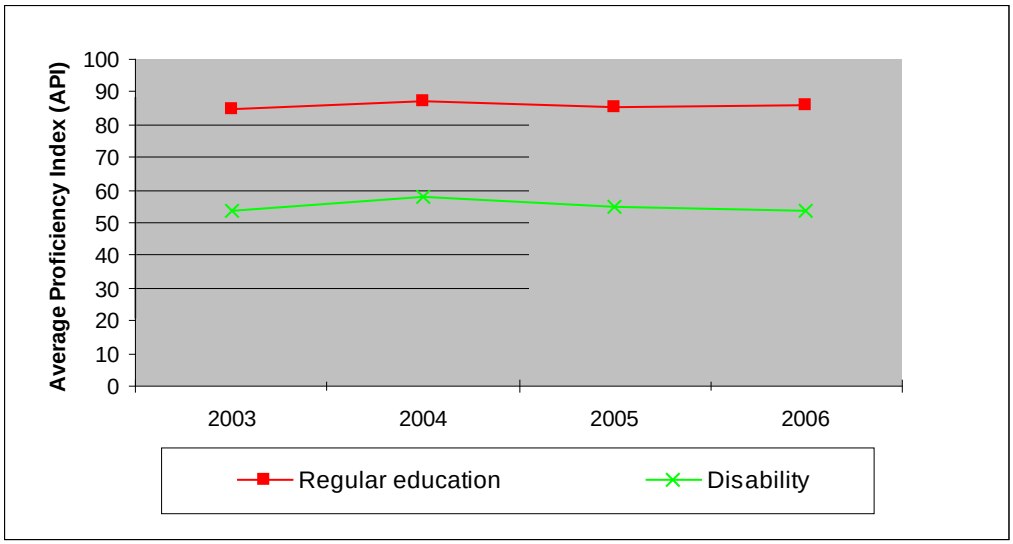


State				Bridgewater-Raynham			
Subgroup	**Year**	**EPI**	**MPI**	**Subgroup**	**Year**	**EPI**	**MPI**
Regular Education	2003	87.3	74.7	Regular Education	2003	91.6	79.8
	2004	89.2	77.4		2004	92.9	82.6
	2005	88.3	78.2		2005	92.7	80.0
	2006	89.0	78.9		2006	93.2	80.4
Disability	2003	62.1	45.3	Disability	2003	64.4	46.7
	2004	63.3	47.9		2004	68.4	49.7
	2005	62.9	49.0		2005	65.2	47.7
	2006	61.2	48.4		2006	64.0	46.1
FRL/N	2003	87.9	75.9	FRL/N	2003	89.0	76.7
	2004	88.9	78.1		2004	90.4	79.4
	2005	88.3	79.0		2005	90.0	77.3
	2006	88.6	79.7		2006	90.1	76.7
FRL/Y	2003	66.6	50.7	FRL/Y	2003	80.8	61.9
	2004	69.7	53.9		2004	77.2	58.7
	2005	68.8	55.0		2005	81.0	62.3
	2006	70.0	56.3		2006	78.2	59.9
White	2003	86.9	74.4	White	2003	88.8	76.1
	2004	87.7	76.2		2004	89.6	78.4
	2005	87.1	77.2		2005	89.9	76.7
	2006	87.4	77.8		2006	89.4	75.9
African-American	2003	67.1	48.4	African-American	2003	80.8	52.5
	2004	70.5	52.3		2004	73.6	65.9
	2005	69.4	52.8		2005	79.3	56.3
	2006	70.9	55.2		2006	78.9	62.3

In Bridgewater-Raynham, regular education students, non low-income (FRL/N) students, and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was regular education students. In math, only regular education students and African-American students showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006, with African-American students showing greater improvement.

The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 27 PI points in 2003 to 29 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 33 to 34 PI points over this period.

Figure/Table 19: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Student Status Subgroup, 2003-2006

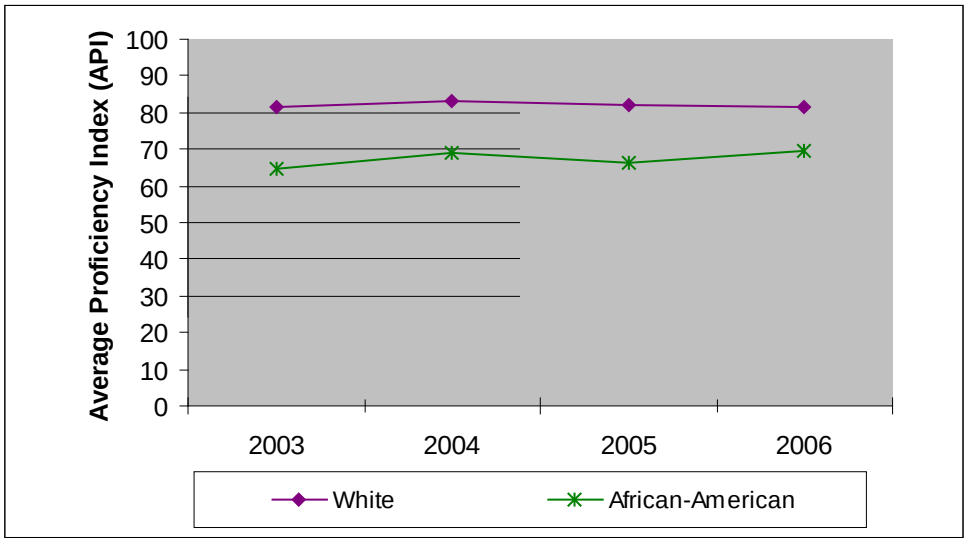


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
Regular education	2003	84.8	91.6	79.8	76	54
	2004	87.0	92.9	82.6	79	58
	2005	85.3	92.7	80.0	80	56
	2006	85.9	93.2	80.4	80	56
Disability	2003	53.7	64.4	46.7	28	13
	2004	57.9	68.4	49.7	25	15
	2005	54.9	65.2	47.7	22	12
	2006	53.6	64.0	46.1	31	13

In Bridgewater-Raynham, regular education students showed slight improvement in overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006, while the performance of students with disabilities was relatively flat. The average proficiency gap for Bridgewater-Raynham's regular education students narrowed from 15 to 14 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of seven percent. For students with disabilities, the average proficiency gap remained at 46 PI points.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between regular education students and students with disabilities widened by one PI point.

Figure/Table 20: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup, 2003-2006

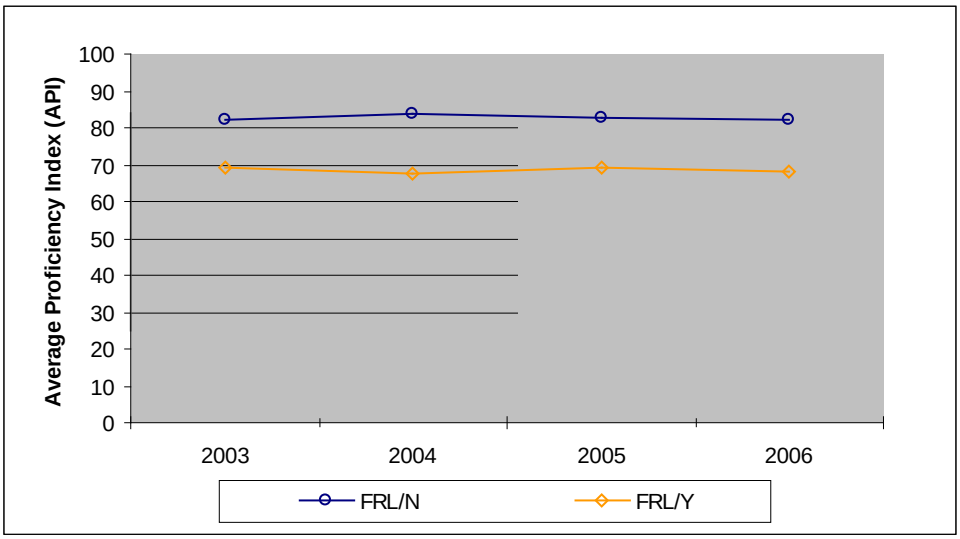


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
White	2003	81.4	88.8	76.1	71	50
	2004	83.2	89.6	78.4	72	53
	2005	82.2	89.9	76.7	73	51
	2006	81.7	89.4	75.9	73	50
African-American	2003	64.6	80.8	52.5	47	20
	2004	69.1	73.6	65.9	32	29
	2005	66.4	79.3	56.3	54	21
	2006	69.5	78.9	62.3	60	32

Both racial subgroups in Bridgewater-Raynham had improved overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006. The average proficiency gap for White students narrowed from 19 to 18 PI points, and for African-American students it narrowed from 35 to 30 PI points. These gains resulted in improvement rates of two percent for White students and 14 percent for African-American students.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between White and African-American students narrowed by four PI points.

Figure/Table 21: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Socioeconomic Status Subgroup, 2003-2006

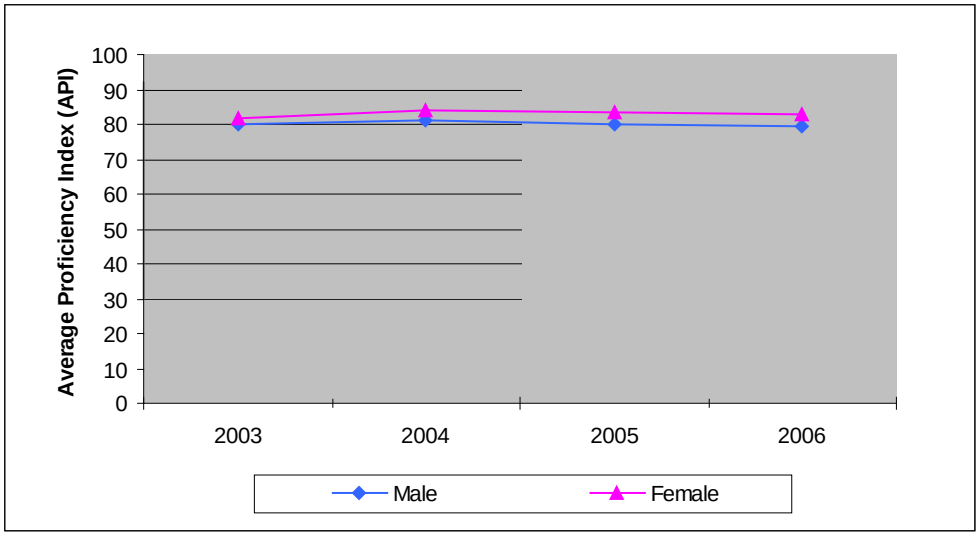


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
FRL/N	2003	81.9	89.0	76.7	72	50
	2004	84.0	90.4	79.4	73	54
	2005	82.7	90.0	77.3	74	52
	2006	82.4	90.1	76.7	75	52
FRL/Y	2003	69.1	80.8	61.9	53	35
	2004	67.5	77.2	58.7	48	26
	2005	69.1	81.0	62.3	56	34
	2006	68.0	78.2	59.9	50	28

The low-income (FRL/Y) subgroup in Bridgewater-Raynham had a decline in overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006, while the performance of the non low-income (FRL/N) subgroup remained relatively flat. The average proficiency gap for low-income students widened from 31 to 32 PI points, and for non low-income students it stayed at 18 PI points.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between low-income students and non low-income students widened by one PI point.

Figure/Table 22: Student MCAS Test Performance, by Gender Subgroup, 2003- 2006



		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
Male	2003	80.2	85.9	76.1	66	50
	2004	81.3	86.5	77.4	66	52
	2005	79.7	86.9	74.5	67	48
	2006	79.4	86.1	74.4	67	48
Female	2003	81.8	91.1	75.1	76	48
	2004	84.0	91.7	78.3	76	52
	2005	83.6	92.0	77.7	78	53
	2006	82.6	91.7	75.8	78	50

Male students in Bridgewater-Raynham had a decline in overall performance between 2003 and 2006, while the performance of female students showed an improvement during this period. The average proficiency gap for male students widened from 20 to 21 PI points. For female students the average proficiency gap narrowed from 18 to 17 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of four percent.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between male and female students widened by two PI points.

Participation

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

Finding:

- On the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA, math, and STE, eligible students in Bridgewater-Raynham participated at levels that met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement.

n-Values by Subgroup and Performance Level, 2006

Subgroup	Performance Level	ELA	Math	STE
Bridgewater-Raynham	ALL LEVELS	**3,152**	**3,145**	**940**
	Advanced	494	446	107
	Proficient	1,815	1,055	384
	Needs Improvement	750	1,168	376
	Warning/Failing	93	476	73
Regular Education	Advanced	487	437	106
	Proficient	1,672	996	353
	Needs Improvement	500	983	303
	Warning/Failing	17	256	40
Disability	Advanced	7	9	1
	Proficient	143	59	31
	Needs Improvement	249	183	72
	Warning/Failing	75	220	32
Limited English Proficient	Advanced	0	0	0
	Proficient	0	0	0
	Needs Improvement	1	2	1
	Warning/Failing	1	0	1
White	Advanced	478	425	105
	Proficient	1,714	1,008	368
	Needs Improvement	697	1,106	346
	Warning/Failing	77	421	61
Hispanic	Advanced	2	2	0
	Proficient	18	8	1
	Needs Improvement	9	10	5
	Warning/Failing	6	16	4
African-American	Advanced	4	9	1
	Proficient	58	18	7
	Needs Improvement	27	39	18
	Warning/Failing	10	31	7
Asian	Advanced	9	10	1
	Proficient	20	17	7
	Needs Improvement	14	10	7
	Warning/Failing	0	6	1
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/No	Advanced	470	426	104
	Proficient	1,658	983	365
	Needs Improvement	629	1,037	334
	Warning/Failing	75	382	59
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/Yes	Advanced	24	20	3
	Proficient	157	72	19
	Needs Improvement	121	131	42
	Warning/Failing	18	94	14
Male	Advanced	201	228	56
	Proficient	911	535	213
	Needs Improvement	439	593	196
	Warning/Failing	65	256	42
Female	Advanced	293	218	51
	Proficient	904	520	171
	Needs Improvement	311	575	180
	Warning/Failing	28	220	31

n-Values by Grade and Year, 2003-2006

Grade	Year	ELA	Math	STE
Grade 3	2003	460	0	0
	2004	499	0	0
	2005	484	0	0
	2006	462	464	0
Grade 4	2003	508	505	0
	2004	449	448	0
	2005	426	425	0
	2006	490	487	0
Grade 5	2003	0	0	0
	2004	0	0	495
	2005	0	0	452
	2006	481	479	481
Grade 6	2003	0	502	0
	2004	0	496	0
	2005	0	486	0
	2006	462	458	0
Grade 7	2003	485	0	0
	2004	506	0	0
	2005	479	0	0
	2006	467	470	0
Grade 8	2003	0	511	0
	2004	0	480	480
	2005	0	491	379
	2006	459	460	459
Grade 10	2003	388	389	0
	2004	403	402	0
	2005	370	369	0
	2006	331	327	0
All Grades	2003	1,841	1,907	0
	2004	1,857	1,826	975
	2005	1,759	1,771	831
	2006	3,152	3,145	940

Notes

Trend data include grades for which testing was administered for each subject in all four years. The following grades are included in the trend data for 2003-2006 reported in Figures/Tables 15-22 and in the table of n-values by grade and year:
English language arts (ELA): 3, 4, 7, 10
Math: 4, 6, 8, 10
Science and technology/engineering (STE): 5, 8

Data for science and technology/engineering (STE) are not included in computing overall proficiency and the average proficiency index (API); they will be included beginning in 2007 when STE becomes a graduation requirement.

The highest performance level for grade 3 reading in 2006 is Advanced/Above Proficient; this level did not exist in prior years, when the highest level was Proficient.

Subgroup inclusion is based on the number of students and the number of schools in the district. To be included as reportable, a subgroup must have at least 10 times the number of schools in the district. Subgroup inclusion for all years of the trend data is based on the 2006 data.

N-values represent the number of tests taken unless otherwise specified.

Rounded values may result in slight apparent discrepancies.

Standard Findings and Summaries

Standard I: Leadership, Governance, and Communication														
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**Total**
Excellent														
Satisfactory		✓		✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	**6**
Needs Improvement	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			**7**
Unsatisfactory														

I. Leadership, Governance, and Communication

School committee, district leadership, and school leadership established, implemented, and continuously evaluated the cost effectiveness and efficiency of policies and procedures that were standards-based, focused on student achievement data and designed to promote continuous improvement of instructional practice and high achievement for all students. Leadership actions and decisions related to the attainment of district and school goals were routinely communicated to the community and promoted public confidence, financial commitment and community support needed to achieve high student and staff performance.

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- The school committee and the superintendent annually approved an educationally sound budget. The committee and superintendent advocated strongly for adequate funding, and the district exceeded the minimum net school spending requirement two out of the three years of the period under review.
- School committee members expressed satisfaction with their knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities under the Education Reform Act. Committee members stated that they had a desire for students to be better educated.
- School committee members participated in a variety of meaningful professional development activities. New and returning school council members received limited training, however.

- The district's leadership regularly reported progress on the strategic plan and the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) regarding student achievement to the school committee and the community.
- The "gifting" to the school system by the town of Raynham did not promote equity. "Gifting" provided additional resources to the K-8 program in Raynham but did not consider Bridgewater K-8 needs.
- School leadership did not use disaggregated student assessment data effectively. For example, according to interviewees, subgroups did not participate in honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes.
- School leaders did not monitor student achievement throughout the year. The school district lacked a system to effectively evaluate student achievement and lacked a system to evaluate educational programs.

Summary

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District lacked adequate funding to staff classrooms, school supervisory positions, and the central office despite support from the school committee for educationally sound budgets. The lack of funding created a situation in which Raynham "gifted" the school district additional funds. As a result, inequities occurred between the Raynham Middle School and the Williams Middle School in Bridgewater, such as the existence of library services in the former but not the latter. The district did not use student achievement data to inform budget development and policy changes.

Participating communities did support the construction of a new high school, the renovation and conversion of the current high school to a middle school, and the renovation of the Williams Middle School. The school district provided educational facilities for its students that EQA examiners found to be in 'very good' to 'excellent' condition. The district planned its future space requirements and developed a building program to satisfy its space needs into the near future.

The school committee and superintendent spent considerable time each year meeting with all stakeholders in the district. Through the use of cable television, the local radio, municipal

offices, parent meetings, newsletters, and newspapers, the administration disseminated meaningful information.

During the period under review, the district received guidance from two strategic plans, one for 1999-2005 and one for 2006-2011. Clear mission and vision statements provided the foundation for these plans. Staff, parents, and community members provided input into the strategic plans. The district developed eight core values and five goals as part of its 2006-2011 strategic plan. The eight core values and five goals were clearly communicated to all stakeholders.

Each school had an approved School Improvement Plan (SIP). Through the use of a Strategic Action Plan Status Report template, the district attempted to align its SIPs to the District Improvement Plan (DIP) or strategic plan. The superintendent directed principals and directors to tie budget requests to the SIPs and DIP; however, this initiative did not always occur. Each principal and/or school council reported to the school committee on the progress of the school's SIP.

During the period under review, the district lacked a system-wide plan to monitor student achievement throughout the year, other than through the MCAS test data. It did use student achievement data to make changes to its educational programs, such as the employment of additional staff to provide remediation for students in need. The district used little disaggregated data other than data received from the Department of Education (DOE). Budget constraints placed severe restrictions on the district's ability to move all students into the proficiency range on the MCAS tests. During this time, the evaluations of the superintendent, central office personnel, and principals were not linked to improving student achievement.

Indicators

1. The district and school leaders had a clearly understood vision and/or mission, goals, and priorities included in the District Improvement Plan (DIP). The standards-based plan and the analysis of student achievement data drove the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District had a strategic plan for the period 1999-2005 and a strategic plan for 2006-2011. Both plans had clear vision and mission statements. The following mission statement appeared in the strategic plan for the period under review: "The mission of the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District is to provide quality educational experiences for all students in an environment that values individuals while fostering good citizenship." To accomplish this mission the district spent over a year developing eight core values. Posting of the mission statement and vision statement occurred throughout the district.

The district's strategic plan consisted of five goals with three objectives listed under each goal. Although the plan listed goals and objectives, it did not include the persons responsible or evidence of completion. The template did not include a completion date or a means of measuring progress. Each central office administrator assumed responsibility for one goal. For example, the superintendent assumed the responsibility for Goal #4, "Provide Safe and Appropriate Facilities for All Students," and the director of special education assumed the responsibility for Goal #2, "Institute Systemic Channels of Communication." Each responsible administrator convened a committee that met twice a year and discussed progress toward the goal.

However, the district developed a template entitled Strategic Action Plan Status Report that clearly aligned the SIPs to the strategic plan and included action steps, persons responsible, timeline, indicators of success, projected expenses, funding sources, and goal status. Principals used the Strategic Action Plan Status Report when updating the school committee and superintendent on the progress of their respective school's SIP.

Interviews with district administrators informed the EQA examiners that the superintendent wanted principals to connect budget requests to the district's strategic plan. Administrators then reported the progress on goals and objectives in January and in June when principals presented the SIPs to the school committee. Principals also communicated progress toward the DIP and the SIP goals to parents. The superintendent stated that the district needs to do a better job communicating its goal accomplishment.

Leadership personnel indicated that data from kindergarten screening, the MCAS tests, graduating seniors' college selections, AP tests, and the SAT provided measures of student achievement. Administrative interviewees informed the EQA examiners that the district modified its educational programs using data analysis. For example, the district added MCAS remediation classes to support its high school math curriculum, and in addition added remedial tutors to assist high school students and middle school students. Also, the Williams Middle School, by revamping its instructional schedule, gained over 100 instructional hours annually. Study Island, a web-based software program available to students at school and at home, enabled students to participate in MCAS-like instruction in math and English language arts (ELA) that contained a pre- and post-test component and assignments that could be monitored by the classroom teacher.

2. School committee members were informed and knowledgeable about their responsibilities under the Education Reform Act, and relied on student achievement data and other educationally relevant data as the foundation of their policy-making and decision-making.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The school committee members expressed satisfaction with their knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities under the Education Reform Act. The members received annual training by the district's attorney. The school committee members said that new members attended the "On Board" training provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). In addition, committee members attended the MASC/Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) annual joint conference as well as "The Day on the Hill" sponsored by the MASC.

Committee members stated that student achievement data served as the basis for decision-making and goal setting. For example, they stated that student achievement would improve if they could reduce class sizes below the average of 28-30 students per class. In fact, they rated reducing class size as the committee's top priority. They added that they had a desire for students to be better educated.

3. The district was highly effective at data selection, data generation, data gathering and interpretation, data use, and data-driven decision-making.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Administrators informed the EQA examiners that the following standardized tests and programs assessed student achievement: the MCAS tests; the Preliminary SAT (PSAT); the SAT; Advanced Placement (AP) tests; exams; the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA); running records; preschool screening; kindergarten screening; Study Island; and the Gates-MacGinitie tests.

Examples of district assessment tools given included: chapter tests; common end of the year exams in algebra and Spanish; MCAS practice tests; weekly vocabulary and spelling tests; teacher assessment portfolios; and alternative assessments. The examiners learned through interviews that a consultant disaggregated the MCAS data for the district by school, grade, class, and subgroup. Assessment teams in each school received these disaggregated data and met monthly to discuss student improvement.

Educational decisions based solely on data results lacked an evaluation methodology to measure the effectiveness of these decisions.

The superintendent and other administrators mentioned that curriculum revision followed a five-year cycle and included the analysis of student assessment data. Discussion with teachers revealed that curriculum revision, while occurring on paper, lacked implementation due to a lack of funding.

4. Each school used an approved School Improvement Plan (SIP) that was aligned with the DIP and was based on the analysis of student achievement data. (Only for multi-school districts)

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During each of the years of the period under review, each school in the district had an approved SIP. All the SIPs were aligned with the strategic plan through the Strategic Action Plan Status Report. Most plans focused on academics and included district goals within the body of the plan.

For example, a goal in the Williams Middle School Improvement Plan stated the school would promote the increase of parent volunteers. This plan aligned to the district strategic plan's Goal #2, "institute systemic channels of communication," and also Strategic Objective #2, "to develop effective communication within the school community."

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District provided limited training for new and returning school council members. Council training mainly consisted of the school principal discussing school council roles and responsibilities and the watching of a video.

5. The district leadership promoted equity by treating schools' populations and allocations differently and allocating more and better resources to their students and schools with greater needs.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Lack of funding resulted in the town of Raynham "gifting" the Raynham K-8 schools and the regional high school in fiscal year 2005 and fiscal year 2006. This "gifting" created an inequity between the K-8 educational programs of the towns of Raynham and Bridgewater. Specifically, in fiscal year 2005 Raynham gifted the district $1.2 million for K-8 programs plus $92,232.66 for the regional high school. The town of Raynham in that fiscal year identified specific positions for funding. Then, in fiscal year 2006 the town of Raynham "gifted" the district $344,995. This specified "gifting" resulted in the Raynham Middle School's providing library services for its students while the Williams Middle School in Bridgewater lacked a library.

District leadership reported that the school system took steps to address equity issues. The district budgeted for remedial tutors at the high school to support those students with the greatest academic needs. The district also employed remedial teachers at the middle schools to support students most in need. Additionally, the funds from entitlement grants supported student learning. The district supported needy populations through the 94-142 Federal Special Education Entitlement Grant; Title I Federal Grant; Special Education Early Childhood Entitlement Grant; Academic Support Grant; Title II A and Title II D Grants; Title V Grant; Community Partnership Grant; Special Education Electronic Portfolio Grant; Essential Health

Services Grant; Bridgewater State College Stem-Pipeline Grant; Service Learning Grant; and the Special Education Corrective Action Grant.

Administrators reported that classes averaging 28-30 students existed at all grade levels throughout the district, and reducing class size would support student learning.

6. The superintendent annually recommended and the school committee annually approved educationally sound budgets based primarily on the analysis of student achievement data and advocated for these budgets with the appropriating authority and community.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Administrative interviews informed the EQA examiners that all stakeholders were involved during the budget process. Principals prepared their respective school's budget, listing its priorities, and then forwarded it to central administration. The superintendent of schools reviewed the budgetary requests from the building principals and program administrators to ensure compliance with state and federal mandates. Budget requests received input from the faculty, school councils, and program staff. School budgets reflected the implementation of additional staff to reduce class size, open the middle school library, address the recommendations of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and purchase curriculum revision materials. The budget development process began in November of the previous school year.

The finance subcommittee of the school committee worked closely with school administration to ensure the budget reflected the major needs of the school district. The school committee reviewed the budget throughout the winter and met with town officials. The school committee considered the recommended budget reductions. The superintendent and school committee stated that this often stimulated considerable debate. The final budget approval occurred in May at the annual town meeting of the member communities. For the period under review, town meetings approved budgets that were less than recommended, and that sometimes required additional reductions.

District leadership stated that the school committee advocated a sound budget each year for the period under review. Administrators met with staff and school councils. The district used its website, local media, and many meetings with stakeholders in both Raynham and Bridgewater to communicate its need to town officials and the community at large.

7. The leadership periodically reported to the school committee, staff, and community on the extent of its attainment of the goals in the DIP and the SIPs, particularly regarding student achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The school committee members said that the superintendent and his staff provided the committee with progress reports in January and June to show progress toward attainment of the goals in the strategic plan and SIPs. Also, they mentioned that during the year they received reports from administrators on the results of tests such as the MCAS tests, SATs, PSATs, and AP tests. Leadership personnel confirmed these statements.

Furthermore, leadership reported that annually during the period under review the principals and/or the school councils presented the respective SIP for their school in June to the school committee at one of its regularly scheduled meetings. The superintendent reported the MCAS results to the committee in November, and principals reported plans for improvement in June. Administrators disaggregated results by school, grade, discipline, and class. The superintendent stated that major findings revealed by the 2006 MCAS data indicated that the special education and students participating in the free or reduced-cost subgroups did not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) for math in grades 3-8.

8. District and school leadership used and effectively implemented practices that required all staff to regularly use aggregated and disaggregated student assessment data to improve instructional programs and services for all student populations.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Administrative interviews indicated that the Bridgewater-Raynham district used several tests to monitor student progress and improve instruction. Some administrators used the TestWiz program to analyze student performance on the MCAS tests. School assessment teams analyzed data across the district. SIPs used these data for their respective school.

TestWiz allowed for the disaggregation of data from the MCAS tests. The district used aggregated data often and mentioned the use of disaggregated data in interviews. However, the district lacked an effective methodology for using disaggregated data effectively and relied upon a consultant to provide aggregated and disaggregated data.

9. District and school leaders monitored student achievement data throughout the year, considered the goals identified in the DIP and the SIPs, and implemented or modified programs, policies, and services as required.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Other than the MCAS tests, the district lacked a system-wide plan to monitor student achievement throughout the year. However, the strategic plan provided a link to student achievement. The superintendent provided the EQA team with information on programs modified for the period under review. Administrators confirmed these changes.

Some examples of implemented and modified programs included the following. Modifications were made to the foreign language program at the middle school where students received two years of full-time instruction in Spanish at grades 7 and 8. A technology program offered CAD/CAM to Raynham middle school students. Remedial math teachers supported math instruction at the middle school. Also at the Williams Middle School, scheduling changes increased instructional time from 900 to 1,050 annual hours. The high school added a full-time social studies teacher in order to offer additional electives recommended by the NEASC visitation committee. Additional AP courses increased the available number of AP courses to nine.

Administrators solicited faculty input for professional development each school year. School principals surveyed school staff. Data gleaned from the survey served as the foundation for professional development and program improvement.

10. The performance of the superintendent, administrators, and principals was annually evaluated based on MCAS results, other student achievement data, and the attainment of the goals in the DIP and the SIPs.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The school committee stated that it completed the superintendent's evaluation annually. The superintendent stressed that he evaluated principals, the assistant superintendent, and other central office administrators annually. Interviews informed the EQA examiners that the performance evaluation of the superintendent, principals, and other administrators did not consider the MCAS test results or other student achievement data. A review of all administrative personnel files confirmed these statements. The evaluation instrument for the superintendent did not follow the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership. A review of 11 of 17 administrator files indicated that while seven of the evaluative instruments modeled the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership, four did not. The district used the approved teacher's evaluation instrument to annually evaluate assistant principals' performance.

11. The superintendent effectively delegated the educational and operational leadership of the schools to the principals and program directors and used student achievement data to assess the success of their leadership.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The superintendent delegated the educational and operational leadership of the schools to principals and directors. He did not use student achievement data to assess the performance of principals and directors.

A delegated responsibility mentioned by principals involved their screening and hiring of staff. Principals considered all applicants for a vacant position, and usually with the assistance of a

screening committee screened and interviewed candidates. Principals stated that they forwarded the recommendation of one candidate to the superintendent, who, in turn, interviewed the candidate and, if acceptable, hired the candidate. Other delegated responsibilities included the development of the school budget, communication with parents, codes of conduct for students, staffing patterns, supervising volunteers, and collaborating with the school council.

12. The school committee and superintendent created a culture of collaboration and developed contracts and agreements that encouraged all stakeholders to work together to support and sustain improved student achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviewees commented to the EQA examiners that the school committee and the superintendent introduced a number of initiatives to bring all stakeholders together to support and improve student achievement. School committee members and the superintendent developed employment contracts for all employees.

According to the superintendent, the district developed the current five-year strategic plan with input from parents, staff, and community members from both towns. Also, administrators mentioned the collaboration that took place with the police and fire departments in the development and annual maintenance of safety plans for the district and schools.

Under the guidance of the school committee and superintendent, the district convinced voters to support more than $100 million to construct and renovate school facilities. Thus, the district planned to open a new $70 million regional high school in September 2007. Additionally, the current high school was scheduled to be remodeled into a middle school at a cost of $10 million and was scheduled to open in 2008, and $25 million was slated to upgrade the Williams Middle School.

Several budget meetings with stakeholders in both communities increased the credibility of the school system. A regional agreement with Bridgewater State College regarding the use of the Burnell Elementary School had been previously negotiated. The district participated in Project Contemporary Competitiveness, a program that provided enrichment-learning experiences for

eligible grade 8 and 9 students during the summer. In addition, the high school and Bridgewater State College participated in a dual enrollment program. Monthly reports to the school committee on budget and student achievement earned coverage in the local press, including the *Taunton Daily Gazette*, Brockton's *The Enterprise*, the *Bridgewater Independent*, radio station WPEP, and the district educational cable channel.

13. The superintendent created and disseminated a comprehensive safety plan in collaboration with the community and plans were reviewed annually with the police and fire departments prior to each school year. School and district safety plans were aligned.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The superintendent stated, and a review of documents indicated, that the development of the district safety plan occurred in fiscal year 1995 and was updated in fiscal year 1999 when a committee of 21 administrators and community members formulated the district's Crisis Response Protocol. At that time three subcommittees addressed prevention, intervention, and response. The school principal activated the crisis response team (student support team). The district security team met annually with representatives from the police and fire departments.

The evaluation of all safety issues occurred annually. Agenda items included cutting risks; creating a positive school environment; identifying risk factors; noting early warning signs; and suggesting intervention strategies. "A Guide to Crisis Intervention," located in each school, included sample letters and procedural guidelines. In addition, the school committee adopted a "safe schools" policy.

The superintendent indicated that for safety and security purposes, all outside doors except the front doors remained locked during school hours. Electronic door buzzers allowed visitors access to the main office. At the high school a security guard remained on duty inside the front door during school hours, and all visitors were required to log in and out at all schools. Additionally, the district maintained an "instant alert phone system" to address rumors and notify parents.

Standard II: Curriculum and Instruction											
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**Total**
Excellent											
Satisfactory	✓		✓	✓						✓	**4**
Needs Improvement		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		**6**
Unsatisfactory											

II. Curriculum and Instruction

The curricula and instructional practices in the district were developed and implemented to attain high levels of achievement for all students. They were aligned with components of the state curriculum frameworks and revised to promote higher levels of student achievement.

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- Teachers in grades preK-12 used district-developed curriculum guides in ELA, math, and science.
- Significant budget reductions in 2004 resulted in the elimination of the seven-member curriculum office that had been responsible for curriculum oversight for the district.
- During the last two years under review, department heads for ELA, math, and science were responsible for curriculum oversight preK-12 and for writing observations of subject area teachers in grades 6-12. These responsibilities were in addition to their teaching duties at the high school.
- A multi-year curriculum review cycle used by the district provided direction for the review and revision of curriculum during the period under review.
- The district primarily used the results from the MCAS tests to monitor student achievement.
- Educational technology was available in the district, but sustained and consistent technology integration into the curriculum was lacking.

Summary

During the period under review, the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District had aligned curricula in the core subjects of English language arts, math, and science. The district developed

curriculum guides for use by teachers in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. Documents contained objectives, expected student outcomes, instructional strategies, resources, and assessments. The district also developed benchmarks in ELA, science, and math at the high school level and planned to complete benchmark documents in the core subject areas for pre-kindergarten through grade 8 by June 2007.

In 2004, the district experienced significant budget reductions that impacted the system through the loss of key personnel. These cuts resulted in the elimination of the district's seven-member curriculum department and reduced it to one central administrator. As a result, the structure for curriculum oversight changed. Department heads for ELA, math, and science at the high school became responsible for preK-12 curriculum articulation in addition to their regular teaching duties and their responsibility for teacher observations in grades 6-12 in their particular subject areas. Scheduling differences between schools as well as structures within schools for meetings made it difficult to continue the degree of horizontal and vertical articulation that had been present with the existence of the district curriculum office.

The district had designed a multi-year curriculum review plan that began in 2002. During the period under review, the district developed extensive curriculum documents for ELA, math, and science. Additionally, a revision of the science guide occurred during the cycle. However, numerous factors hampered the district's ability to adhere completely and effectively to the multi-year curriculum review plan. Limited funding impacted the acquisition of needed textbooks and resource materials for multiple grade levels, resulting in the revision of implementation timelines. Further, difficulty in recruiting outside educators for visiting teams responsible for reviewing the existing curriculum affected the review process. Educators in the district identified concerns about the lack of program analysis to determine the effect on student achievement. In addition, the district lacked a process for evaluating the effectiveness of time allotment changes on student achievement.

Educational technology in the district was available and included multiple resources for student use and for teachers to enhance instruction. Study Island, a software program used to improve math and ELA achievement for students in grades 3-8, allowed teachers, administrators, students, and parents to track student progress. Teachers at the middle and high school levels

used their school network to record and report students' grades. Some schools had daily attendance reported by teachers through e-mail. The district purchased HomeworkNOW, a program to help parents and students access homework assignments online, but only some teachers used it. Although educational technology was available and used for particular purposes, the district did not require mandatory teacher training in its application, nor was there a system-wide initiative to integrate educational technology into the curriculum. Interested teachers signed up for technology offerings through the district's professional development program and shared their knowledge informally with fellow teachers. Those who were not as confident did not use the educational technology available and did not avail themselves of the professional development technology offerings. Further, classroom observations by the EQA examiners revealed technology integration in only 18 percent of classrooms at the elementary level, 10 percent at the middle school level, and none at the high school level.

Classroom observations of 66 classes disclosed positive and safe classroom climates in which students and teachers exhibited positive relationships and students treated peers with respect. Teachers planned lessons based on the state curriculum frameworks. Observations revealed that students were made aware of the lesson objectives in 97 percent of classrooms observed, and teachers used classroom time effectively in 94 percent of classrooms observed. Students were actively engaged in their learning, and classroom management was excellent. Teachers used questioning techniques that encouraged elaboration, thought, and broad involvement in 80 percent of the observed classrooms. However, observations revealed that in only 28 percent of the classrooms did the teacher plan multiple tasks and use a variety of resources to engage all levels of learners. Additionally, elements of effective instruction that were not observed to any great degree included the use of differentiated instruction (23 percent), student use of technology (nine percent), multiple resources to address diverse learners (52 percent), and high expectations for student work (41 percent).

Indicators

1. The district implemented curricula for all grade levels in tested core content areas that clearly addressed all the components of the state curriculum frameworks. The curricula document contained, at a minimum, components that addressed: objectives, resources, instructional strategies, timelines, articulation maps, and measurable outcomes or assessments.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district implemented curricula at all grade levels in ELA, math, and science that contained objectives, resources, instructional strategies, timelines, measurable outcomes, and assessments. Articulation maps were available but not contained in the curriculum guides.

Teams, whose membership consisted of the director of curriculum, elementary and secondary curriculum specialists, and teachers from each grade level preK-12, developed the ELA and math curriculum guides. The school committee approved the guides in the spring of 2003. In the spring of 2004, the district reviewed and revised the science curriculum guide (2001-2002) to reflect the new science curriculum framework.

The introductory section of each guide consisted of a table of contents, preface, purpose, philosophy, mission statement, state framework guide identifying the standards applicable to each grade level, and supportive research documents. The main components of each guide included grade-level objectives, instructional strategies and techniques, resources, and assessments. Administrators and teachers confirmed that the pacing of the curriculum was embedded in the documents since the information on standards and objectives was broken down by grade level. In addition, scope and sequence documents were present in the ELA guide. Further, interviewees indicated that articulation relating to timelines and pacing was ongoing through weekly departmental meetings at the high school level, monthly staff meetings at the middle and elementary schools, and weekly grade-level meetings run by lead teachers at both levels. All documents contained objectives for student accomplishments, and the guides listed measurable outcomes for satisfying them. Each outcome in the math curriculum guide was coded using I for Introduce, R for Reinforce, and M for Mastery. In interviews, the previous director of curriculum and district department heads indicated that curriculum maps for each core

content area existed but were not in the guides. They verified the use of maps for two purposes: to monitor curriculum implementation, and as a resource during the curriculum review cycle. Specific assessments were present in the science curriculum guide and aligned with each major concept taught at each grade level. Assessments in the ELA guide were in a separate section and included running records, guided reading, a writing continuum, and rubrics. Math assessments were evident in the form of sample MCAS questions. High school science benchmarks existed for Standard I (S1), Standard II (S2), and Honors courses in Earth Science, Physics, and Biology. Math benchmarks aligned with S1, S2, Honors, and AP courses in all math subjects including computer applications for grades 11-12 at the S1 level. In ELA, benchmarks were developed for S1, S2, and Honors courses in English (grades 9-10), American Literature, British Literature, AP Language and Composition (grades 11-12), and Creative Writing (grades 11-12). Writing rubrics for five-paragraph essays and research papers were also included in the ELA benchmark documents. Benchmarks in science and math were phrased, "What students should know and be able to do," and in ELA, "What students will be able to do by the end of each term." The EQA team found that the district had plans to complete benchmarks in ELA, math, and science for kindergarten through grade 8 by June 2007.

Interviews with principals and department heads indicated that new teachers received the appropriate curriculum materials, textbooks, and resources when they were hired. During the late summer orientation, each new teacher received a mentor and the expectation was that mentors engaged in frequent discussions with new teachers regarding the use of curriculum materials, pacing, and assessment. Additionally, teachers confirmed that informal communication within and between grade levels enhanced the understanding of new teachers about the curricular expectations.

2. <u>The district's curricula in all tested areas were aligned horizontally and vertically.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Districtwide budget reductions in 2004 prevented the effective horizontal and vertical alignment of the curricula as the structure for the oversight of the district's curriculum changed significantly. Interviews with the previous assistant superintendent of curriculum and one

administrator indicated that during the first year under review, the district had a curriculum office with seven staff members. The department included the director of curriculum; two secretaries; curriculum specialists for the elementary and secondary levels, a gifted and talented specialist; and a physical education/health specialist. In 2004-2005, budget reductions resulted in the elimination of the curriculum office and the director of curriculum title changed to assistant superintendent of curriculum. Minimal clerical staff supported this position. Curriculum oversight became the responsibility of the principals and department heads. Department heads had to take on the responsibility of curriculum oversight for preK-12 in ELA, math, and science in addition to their regular teaching duties at the high school and conducting classroom observations in grades 6-12. At the high school level, department heads assumed responsibility for vertical and horizontal alignment at departmental meetings and then reported to the high school principal. But interviewees reported that effective articulation among schools was a problem. Efforts made by department heads to meet with their middle school counterparts were complicated by varying schedules. Further, the responsibilities of the department heads prevented sustained communication. Interviewees expressed a variety of difficulties with the new curriculum oversight arrangement, and one department head reported having "little or no communication with the elementary schools and very limited at the middle schools." Additionally, the EQA found no evidence that teachers from the four elementary schools were talking with one another about the curriculum. One elementary principal stated that he felt "isolated" and expressed frustration that over a six-year period, no new textbook materials were purchased for his school, nor was there a formal means to articulate the strengths or weaknesses observed in programs.

3. Each school in the district had a curriculum leader who oversaw the use, alignment, consistency, and effectiveness of delivery of the district's curricula that focused on improvement for all of its students.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Each school in the district had a curriculum leader who oversaw the use, alignment, consistency, and effectiveness of the district's curricula that focused on improvement for all of its students. In 2004, the district experienced financial difficulties that led to the elimination of the seven-

member curriculum office as well as numerous other personnel reductions across the district. As a result, curriculum leadership at the building level became the responsibility of the building principals. Principals reported that in addition to supervision and evaluation of teachers, they used structures within their schools that included staff and grade-level meetings and assessment teams to help them with curriculum oversight. At the high school level, the principal met once every seven days with each department head in the core subject areas in order to receive information related to subject-specific curriculum and instruction. The high school principal reported a reliance on the department heads to be the curriculum leaders for the school in each specific subject area. At the middle and elementary levels, principals reported that they used the information derived from grade-level meetings through lead teachers and staff. Teachers confirmed that grade-level and staff meetings provided opportunities for discussions related to curriculum. Common planning time for teachers at the middle school was scheduled by team rather than by grade level. This made it difficult for subject area teachers to meet together within the same grade or adjoining grade levels. However, teachers in the middle school teacher focus group reported that at one middle school their bimonthly content meetings provided time for subject area teachers to meet, but that no monitoring mechanisms were in place. In most schools, an assessment team was in place whose membership included the building principal and representatives from each grade level. Some teams had representation from special education. The teams reviewed the MCAS test results for their own buildings, developed actions plans based on the scores, and provided specific information to teachers at each grade level.

In addition to supervision and evaluation, several principals reported that classroom walk-throughs and reviews of teachers' plan books during classroom observations assisted them with curriculum oversight. One elementary principal reported meeting one-on-one with each individual teacher during the first term to discuss curriculum pacing, individual students, and report cards.

4. Each school provided active leadership and support for effective instructional strategies, techniques, and methods grounded in research and focused on improved achievement for all students.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviews with teachers and administrators indicated that formal structures for communication were in place at each building in the form of regularly scheduled staff and grade-level meetings, departmental meetings at the high school, and assessment teams. They reported that at staff, grade-level, and departmental meetings discussions focused on issues related to curriculum, the MCAS test data analysis, and instructional strategies to improve student performance. Teachers at grades 1 and 2 reported that they received grade 3 MCAS data at their staff meetings. Each school had an assessment team that met with varying frequency. Elementary teachers reported that their teams met four times a year at their buildings. The current assistant superintendent of curriculum said that Raynham Middle School's assessment team met once a month. A consultant hired by the district analyzed the MCAS test results, prepared aggregated and disaggregated data by school, and met with assessment teams to review the information. Responsibilities for assessment teams involved the review of the MCAS test results for the students in their schools and developing action plans to address areas of weakness. When asked what kind of instructional modifications had been made from assessment team recommendations to assist all students, teachers reported that some initiatives included the software program Study Island for use by all students in grades 3-8, the MCAS book purchases at the middle school level, and emphasis on open-response writing at all levels.

The director of special education and the director of pupil services reviewed the MCAS test results for special needs students and met with special education teachers to share the scores and strategize ways to improve student achievement. The Mitchell Elementary School implemented the Bridge summer program to help remediate students identified by test data. Special education students also participated in a summer program. Although not related to the MCAS results, the director of pupil services reported that the district hired a person to make home visits to families with autistic three- and four-year-old children in order to assist them when dealing with agencies. The document review and interviews did not show evidence of great use of disaggregated data.

Mentoring procedures for the support of new teachers began during the period under review. A formal orientation took place in late August for new teachers to become acquainted with the curriculum materials and district expectations. Additionally, mentors trained by the district were assigned to assist the new teachers throughout their first year in the district. Teachers reported

that informal communication among teachers also helped new teachers. The district required new teachers to attend the Beginning Teacher Institute offered through North River Collaborative. The district paid the tuition for this program. New teachers attended 12 sessions from September through February. Some topics included planning and lesson development responsive to the state frameworks, standards-based instruction and assessment, maintaining high classroom expectations, classroom management, and engaging in productive interactions with parents.

5. The district had an established, documented process for the regular and timely review and revision of curricula that was based on valid research, the analysis of the MCAS test results, and other assessments, and focused on improved achievement for all subgroups.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district had an established, documented process for the regular review and revision of curricula based on valid research. Budget restrictions affected the timeliness of curriculum implementation. The EQA team was unable to determine a clear linkage between the curriculum review cycle and the use of the MCAS or other assessment data or improved achievement for all subgroups.

The curriculum review cycle used by the district began in 2002-2003. Oversight of the curriculum review process was the responsibility of the assistant superintendent of curriculum. The format consisted of six stages that included information gathering, outside team visitations, review and response to the visiting team report, first year implementation, second year implementation, and third year implementation. Descriptions of actions at each stage were aligned with each stage. For example, the first stage, information gathering, included conducting internal assessments of programs; surveying staff, administrators, parents, and students; reviewing the curriculum guide for alignment; identifying needs and proposed goals; and making preliminary preparations for a visiting team. During the second stage of the curriculum review cycle, members for visiting teams were recruited by department heads for the subject area in review. A visiting team protocol for membership and responsibilities was developed. Interviews with district department heads and other administrators indicated that the logistics of organizing

visiting teams made it difficult to find representation from each of the recommended constituencies.

With the elimination of the curriculum office in 2004, the previous assistant superintendent of curriculum organized two councils responsible for curriculum at the elementary and secondary levels. These councils included the assistant superintendent of curriculum, principals, lead teachers, and department heads, where appropriate. Both councils met once a month to share information on progress made in the curriculum cycles, professional development, use of materials, and other pertinent curriculum information. The councils' review of the curriculum review cycles also took place at stage three. The central team received a report on progress related to timelines, action plans, and budget implications. The current assistant superintendent of curriculum reported that the curriculum review cycle used in the district was "a good thing," "beneficial," and involved "a lot of work."

Administrators and teachers reported that the district had procedures for the analysis of the MCAS data and that they were the primary assessment data used by the district. A consultant hired by the district analyzed the MCAS data, presented the information to the central team, and then met with building-based assessment teams to review the findings. Assessment team members reviewed the MCAS analysis information at each grade level and subject area in the aggregate and for subgroups and developed action plans based on the data. A District Assessment Planning Team (DAPT), organized in 2003-2004, met four times a year. Each school's assessment team was accountable to the DAPT to report progress and accomplishments related to the MCAS action plans, provide input into the budget, and help create a link between the school and the assistant superintendent of curriculum. After a review of documents and interview responses, the EQA team could find little evidence regarding the use of MCAS analysis and other assessment data analysis in the curriculum review process.

Interviews with the superintendent, the previous assistant superintendent of curriculum, and department heads confirmed that disaggregated data for the special needs subgroup population led to the revision of curriculum and instruction to enhance student achievement. In 2003-2004**,** the special needs subgroup did not meet AYP in grade 3 reading. As a result, the district added offerings in the professional development plan to include best practices for special needs

teachers. Reference sheets helped all students with vocabulary and graphic organizers. This practice enabled special needs students to be able to use particular reference sheets when taking the MCAS tests. Specific software purchases included Study Island for all students in grades 3-8, Lexia reading software for special needs students, and the Kurzweil software program that translates text to speech. Even with the modifications made to improve instruction and provide specialized materials, the MCAS test scores in the district remained relatively flat for all subgroups for the period under review.

The curriculum review cycle used by the district provided direction for the review and revision of curriculum. But interviews with administrators revealed some concerns with the implementation of the process related to budget restrictions, choice of materials, and input. Limited funding prevented the purchase of grade 5 and grade 8 social studies textbooks for the newly developed curriculum. Instead, the district was only able to purchase books for grade 7. One administrator said that the Connected Math program was "dropped" into schools with very little input from staff or administrators. Another felt that the elementary levels did not benefit from the curriculum review cycle because their input regarding program weaknesses was not sought.

6. <u>The district analyzed student achievement data and allocated instructional time in the tested core content areas that focused on improved rates of proficiency for all students.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district analyzed MCAS data and allocated instructional time in the tested core content areas. However, at the high school level some students did not receive the full allocation of instructional time that their counterparts received. Although the district made decisions to alter instructional time in a variety of ways to affect student achievement, no formal program evaluation data were available to determine the specific outcomes resulting from these changes.

The assistant superintendent of curriculum coordinated the review of data which was then shared with the central team and the assessment team at each building. Principals and department heads received TestWiz training to assist them in the analysis of the test data. During the last two years under review, the DAPT received the data and served as a conduit between the assessment teams

and the assistant superintendent of curriculum. Although the district administered other summative assessments including the Gates-MacGinitie test in grade 2 in 2004-2005 and in grades 1 and 2 in 2005-2006, administration of the test was not consistent throughout the system, and little evidence was provided to the EQA examiners that the results were analyzed systemically or used to make decisions regarding curriculum or instruction. Further, interviews with the superintendent and administrators verified that the district relied primarily on the MCAS assessment data to gauge student achievement.

All schools in the district, with the exception of the high school, met and in some cases exceeded the state requirements for instructional time. At the high school level, instructional time calculations indicated 1,030 hours, but a review of 16 random student schedules by the EQA team revealed that eight incorporated the use of study halls for one period and in some cases two periods. Student schedules indicated that some, but not all, students at the high school were receiving 1,030 hours of instructional time during the year.

The building principals, department heads, and teachers all said that the superintendent decided to allocate more instructional time to improve student achievement. They made schedule changes at the Mitchell Elementary School and Raynham Middle School so students could access the computer program Study Island, a web-based MCAS preparation program for grades 3-8. They also made revisions to the Williams Middle School schedule, increasing its 42-minute periods to 58 or 67 minutes, depending on the day, and also arranging a 57-minute remediation block which was scheduled for once every two weeks for those students in grades 6-8 who had scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category on the MCAS tests. The district increased its number of AP courses to nine and added a full-time high school social studies teacher to offer additional electives, as recommended by the NEASC visitation committee.

7. Appropriate educational technology was available and used as an integral part of the instructional process.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Although educational technology was available in the district, the integration of it into instruction was inconsistent, and no mechanism was in place to evaluate its effectiveness. The

EQA examiners observed 66 different classrooms over a four-day period and only found evidence of technology use by students in nine percent of the classrooms.

Appropriate educational technology was available at various levels depending on the school. Interviews with teachers and the department head for technology/media indicated that computer technology was available within classrooms and/or outside classrooms in computer labs at all levels. Classroom observations completed by the EQA team during the site visit confirmed an average of 1.7 computers per classroom. In addition to computers, other kinds of equipment available for instructional purposes included classroom projectors, InFocus projectors, video converters, DVD players, VCRs, CD players, scanners, AlphaSmarts, laptops, magnifiers, touch screens, and SmartBoards. All schools had at least one computer lab for student use except Merrill Elementary School (preK-1). A proctor and/or media specialist staffed computer labs at the elementary level. The proctors were certified teachers hired by the district "like a long-term sub." At that level, teachers collaborated with the proctor or media specialist for time in the lab for lessons, activities, and special projects. The Mitchell Elementary School and both middle schools scheduled their students into the lab for instruction with varying frequency. All grade 6 students received instruction on the keyboard. The department head for technology/media was responsible for monitoring the technology curriculum at the middle school level. At the high school level, the business department primarily used computer labs, although the librarian used one in the library/media center for instruction. Through the library/media center, all grade 9 students received instruction on how to use MassONE and learned what resources and programs were installed on computers.

The technology department in the district, called the Tech Team, consisted of three members, the department head for technology/media, a network administrator, and a technician. Interviews with the department head for technology/media and teachers confirmed that decisions to purchase major software and hardware for the district were the responsibility of the Tech Team with input from principals and the assistant superintendent of business. For example, the district purchased Study Island for use by all grade 3-8 students to help improve their MCAS scores in ELA and math. Each student in grades 3-8 received an individual username and password. Students in danger of failing the MCAS tests were provided additional time during the school day to access Study Island in the computer lab. Additionally, students and parents had access to

this program on their home computers. The district purchased HomeworkNOW for teachers to use to record homework assignments for their students. Parents and students could access the information outside of school to verify the assignment. Although some teachers used the HomeworkNOW program, others shared concerns about its use. One teacher reported that she posted assignments in advance, and when expected progress in the class changed, it created confusion for students and parents if the online assignment was different. Others felt that students become better learners when teachers held them responsible for recording and tracking the completion of their own assignments. Concerns about parent expectations were also cited.

The district offered professional development for teachers to learn about equipment and its usefulness in supplementing instruction, but did not require teachers to participate. Interviews with the department head for technology/media and teachers confirmed that those teachers who were interested in technology tended to be the ones who signed up for these professional development offerings. Further, teachers with a comfort level in the use of technology used the computers in their classrooms while others did not. The district required teachers in grades 6-12 to use the network grading system, and in some schools teachers used e-mail to report student attendance.

8. <u>District and school leaders actively monitored teachers' instruction for evidence of practices that reflected high expectations for students' work and mastery.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

District and school leaders actively monitored teachers' instruction, but the EQA team did not observe evidence of practices that reflected high expectations for students' work and mastery.

Administrators reported that active monitoring of teachers' performance occurred during walk-throughs, classroom observations, and the review of plan books while observing lessons. It was not clear to the examiners if the walk-throughs or review of plan books was a districtwide practice for all administrators. Interviews with principals and department heads indicated that the number of observations/evaluations created a problem. One elementary principal reported that he was responsible for close to 50 observations and about 45 summative evaluations. Department heads reported that each of them was responsible for an average of 20 to 25

observations each year. Several administrators reported they received training or were currently receiving training in evaluation and supervision practices through Research for Better Teaching (RBT). No interviews with administrators confirmed that a consistent or uniform application of effective evaluation strategies was being used districtwide.

The EQA team observed 66 classrooms during the site visit. In the area of instructional practice, examiners found evidence of teachers planning multiple tasks that engaged all levels of learners in 28 percent of classrooms observed, and in only 23 percent did they find evidence that the teacher engaged students in a variety of instructional techniques. Additionally, 69 percent of the classrooms did not reveal that student work was of high quality, modeled, displayed, or evident in the classroom. In 68 percent of the classrooms, time was focused on challenging academic tasks.

The EQA team members reviewed 55 folders of teachers and concluded from the review that administrators wrote descriptive narratives, not prescriptive or instructive ones. Interviews with administrators, principals, and teachers confirmed that the evaluation instrument did not mention student achievement nor was it used to offer suggestions for improving instructional practices. Although district and school leaders monitored teachers' instruction, the examiners found little evidence that observations of instructional practices that reflected high expectations for students' work and mastery served as a basis for the summative evaluations. A review of randomly selected teacher evaluations indicated that no references to recommendations or student achievement were evident. Some evaluations had exactly the same wording from year to year for the summative write up. None of the teacher or administrator evaluations reviewed included references to student academic progress as a standard for measurement of performance.

Although supervision and summative evaluations were the responsibilities of the all principals, department heads for ELA, math, and science wrote observations for subject area teachers in grades 6-12. Observations written by department heads for grades 6-12 only included content knowledge. No comments regarding the effectiveness of the instruction, recommendations, commendations, or judgments were permitted. Interviews with the union representative and department heads indicated that they were represented by the Unit A bargaining unit, and, therefore, they had no authority to evaluate instruction. Discussions between principals and the

department heads were helpful in communicating information about the effectiveness of the delivery of instruction. However, interviews with principals and department heads indicated a frustration with these limitations.

9. Through the ongoing use of formative and summative student assessment data, the district monitored the effectiveness of teachers' instruction and provided resources, professional development, and support to improve and maintain high levels of instructional quality and delivery.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district used the MCAS tests as its primary source of student achievement data. Although many and varied formative assessments were used by teachers throughout the system, neither the district nor individual schools had systematic procedures in place to use the data to monitor the effectiveness of instruction. Funding sources were limited, which affected the acquisition of curricular and other summative assessment materials.

Interviews with the superintendent and the current assistant superintendent of curriculum verified that the district relied on the MCAS data to assess the effectiveness of its instructional programs. However, interviews with the previous assistant superintendent of curriculum and elementary principals revealed that the district used the Gates-MacGinitie test for grade 2 students in 2004-2005 and for grade 1-2 students in 2005-2006. Teachers who administered the Gates-MacGinitie had to correct the tests, and a grievance was filed with regard to teachers correcting the assessment. This resulted in the inconsistent administration of the assessment within the district. The purpose of the testing was to provide baseline data on students. The Burnell Elementary School used the results to modify instruction and identify students in need of support. During the last two years under review, Title I and special needs teachers at each building were trained to administer the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and interviewees reported that Title I teachers used this assessment to check on the progress of students. Although interviewees verified that the district used other summative test results, they were either discontinued or only used to monitor the progress of those students requiring support, and the district provided no documented evidence that the results were used to improve instruction.

While interviewees reported that many formative assessments were teacher developed and used at some sites, others were required throughout the district. Two elementary principals and the former assistant superintendent of curriculum said that the district mandated the use of running records at the elementary schools, but that the number required per year varied. In addition, interviewees said that the First Steps writing continuum was required to be completed at the elementary level by the end of each school year and passed on to teachers in the next grade level. Principals also indicated that teachers gave chapter tests from the Houghton Mifflin math program entitled Math Central, and gave unit tests for the Harcourt Brace Signatures basal reading program. They added that teachers were not required to report assessment data to their building administrators. At the high school level, the principal and department heads reported that they administered midyear and final exams to all students, and that they used the results to make curriculum decisions.

The district purchased resources to improve and maintain high levels of instructional quality and delivery. The district purchased Study Island, a software program for use by students in grades 3-8 to prepare for the MCAS tests. Students at the middle school level received MCAS preparation materials. The high school added remediation courses in math to help those students whose MCAS scores were low. Yet, administrators and teachers indicated that limited funding prevented the purchase of many materials. For example, textbooks for grades 5, 7, and 8, chosen for the revised social studies curriculum, could not be purchased for all three grades, so a decision was made to provide books for grade 7 and wait to purchase books for grades 5 and 8. A review of the SIPs and interviews verified that administrators in the district agreed that the Stanford 10 should be administered in grades 5 and 8 to measure student progress at the middle level. However, lack of funding prevented the district from purchasing the assessment.

Interviewees indicated that the district provided support for new teachers through the mentoring program. In addition to providing mentors for new teachers, the district provided a one-day orientation in August, and required that new teachers attend the Beginning Teacher Institute sponsored by North River Collaborative. The district paid all new teachers to attend the 12-session institute.

The district provided professional development opportunities to improve and maintain high levels of instructional quality and delivery. Professional development modules focused on either subject matter or grade-level topics in addition to general offerings. New teachers who needed it received training in First Steps. All special needs and Title I staff received training in the use of the DIBELS assessment. Teachers who were not required to participate in a particular module could choose one of interest.

10. Random observations of classrooms revealed that teachers used a variety of effective techniques and strategies to address differences in learning style, and that instruction was student-focused, reflected high expectations, and called for engaged learning and participation on the part of students.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the site visit, the EQA examiners observed 66 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 26 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching. The attributes were grouped into five categories: classroom management, instructional practice, expectations, student activity and behavior, and climate. The EQA examiners checked the attributes that they observed in each of the five categories during their time spent in the classroom. Observations were conducted at the district's four elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. In total, the EQA examiners observed 26 ELA classrooms, 31 math classrooms, nine science classrooms, and no social studies classrooms.

Classroom management refers to the maintenance of order and structure within the classroom. Positive indicators of classroom management were evident in 96 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 100 percent at the elementary level, 98 percent at the middle school level, and 90 percent at the high school level.

Instructional practice was the largest category reviewed by the examiners. Effective instructional practice is considered evident when the teacher's questions transcend direct recall and include open-ended questions that require the use of higher order thinking skills. Students should be encouraged to go beyond their initial responses, to analyze, to synthesize, to compare and contrast, and to explain their own thinking. Class time should be focused on student learning.

Students who have finished their work should be provided with other appropriate tasks; students who are off-task should be redirected to their task. The work should engage all students; it should be age-appropriate, and attuned to many learning modalities, including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. The pace of the class should be appropriate, challenging, and engaging for all students. All learners should be challenged. The lesson should be clearly aligned with the state curriculum frameworks and either posted on the board or cited in the teacher's planner. The lesson's objectives should be clear and explicitly articulated. The teacher should use standards-based instruction to set objectives, to plan activities, to assess the effect of the lesson, and to measure progress for all learners. Positive indicators of instructional practice were evident in 77 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 88 percent at the elementary level, 75 percent at the middle school level, and 71 percent at the high school level.

Expectations refer to the maintenance of high standards for students by teachers. Evidence of high expectations could include recent examples of high quality student work posted in the classroom. In addition, high quality work should be evident through rubrics that may sometimes be generated by students. Tasks should be challenging for all students, and all students should have access to the same curriculum, although the instruction and strategies may be adapted to the needs of students. The teacher should clearly maintain and communicate high expectations for student work during class time. All students should be expected to be on task and engaged in the lesson. High expectations for students were evident in 67 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 92 percent at the elementary level, 54 percent at the middle school level, and 63 percent at the high school level.

Positive student activity and behavior are considered evident when students are actively engaged in the learning process. They must show a clear understanding of the objective of the lesson and interact with the teacher and each other in accomplishing the tasks at hand. They should be attentive and responsive. While the environment may be busy and constructive, it must also be controlled and orderly. There should be few distractions, and the learning process must be evident. Indicators of positive student activity and behavior were evident in 74 percent of the classrooms districtwide, with 84 percent at the elementary level, 71 percent at the middle school level, and 69 percent at the high school level.

Finally, the concept of *climate* is considered evident when the classroom is welcoming, and the teacher is an active listener and treats all students with respect. Students should listen attentively to and be respectful of all other students. Many resources and means beyond the textbook should be available for learning; these may include technology, manipulatives, cassettes, visuals, overhead projectors, and a classroom library. Positive indicators of climate were evident in 81 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 96 percent at the elementary school level, 78 percent at the middle school level, and 71 percent at the high school level.

Summary of Classroom Observations

	Number of Classrooms				Average Class Size	Average Paraprofs. per Class	Computers		
	ELA	Math	Other	Total			Total Number	Number for Student Use	Average Students per Computer
Elementary	8	10	0	18	22.7	0.4	54	46	8.9
Middle	10	15	6	31	24.7	0.3	91	60	12.8
High	8	6	3	17	20.2	0.2	17	3	114.7
Total	26	31	9	66	23.0	0.3	162	109	13.9

	Classroom Management	Instructional Practice	Expectations	Student Activity & Behavior	Climate
Elementary					
Total observations	72	140	66	90	52
Maximum possible	72	159	72	107	54
Avg. percent of observations	100	88	92	84	96
Middle					
Total observations	121	210	67	132	73
Maximum possible	124	279	124	186	93
Avg. percent of observations	98	75	54	71	78
High					
Total observations	61	108	43	70	36
Maximum possible	68	153	68	102	51
Avg. percent of observations	90	71	63	69	71
Total					
Total observations	254	458	176	292	161
Maximum possible	264	591	264	395	198
Avg. percent of observations	96	77	67	74	81

Observations of specific attributes indicated that teachers used questioning techniques that encouraged elaboration, thought, and broad involvement in 80 percent of the classrooms. Evidence that the teacher planned multiple tasks that engaged all levels of learners was observed in 28 percent of the classrooms, with varied instructional techniques only observed in 23 percent.

Classroom time focused on challenging academic tasks was noted in 68 percent of the observed classrooms. In conclusion, classroom observations found evidence that most classroom teachers used effective questioning techniques, but that strategies and techniques that addressed diverse learners were not often observed.

Classroom observations yielded evidence that classrooms were student focused. Orderly classrooms that were conducive to learning were observed in 98 percent of classrooms. In 97 percent of the classrooms, students took responsibility for their work. Teachers made objectives clear to students in 97 percent of observed classrooms, and in 94 percent of the classrooms students showed an awareness and understanding of the lesson objectives. Positive and respectful student-teacher interactions were observed in 95 percent of the classrooms.

Classroom observations focused on practices that reflected high expectations. Evidence that instruction was aligned with the state curriculum frameworks was observed in 92 percent of the classrooms. Seventy-one percent of observed classroom teachers communicated expectations of high quality work from students. Evidence that student work was of high quality, modeled, displayed, and evident in the classroom was seen in 41 percent of classrooms.

Students engaged in their learning was another attribute observed in classrooms. Classroom observations revealed students were actively engaged in the learning process in 94 percent of the classrooms, and active listening, courtesy, fairness, and respect were observed in 95 percent of the classrooms. The teachers used classroom time effectively in 94 percent of the classrooms and paced instruction that kept students engaged in learning in 88 percent. Students were attentive in 97 percent of the classrooms observed.

Standard III: Assessment and Program Evaluation									
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**Total**
Excellent									
Satisfactory	✓	✓							**2**
Needs Improvement			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**6**
Unsatisfactory									

III. Assessment and Program Evaluation

The district and school leadership used student assessment results, local benchmarks, and other pertinent data to improve student achievement and inform all aspects of its decision-making including: policy development and implementation, instructional programs, assessment practices, procedures, and supervision.

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- The district had no policy regarding assessment but many assessment practices were in place, including use of school assessment teams made up of teachers, team leaders, department heads, and principals.
- The district realized the importance of data analysis and hired an outside consultant 10 years ago to assist in data analysis and its dissemination to staff.
- The use of formative assessments was not systemically driven but rather was limited to individual school assessment preferences. Benchmarks were in place at the high school but no benchmarks were available at grades preK-8. The district's goal was to develop these preK-8 benchmarks in the future.
- Informal practices were in place for the evaluation of programs in the district, but no formal evaluation program was in place.
- Student assessment data were not used to assign staff.
- The district had high participation rates on student assessments.

Summary

The Bridgewater-Raynham school district had many assessment practices in place even though the school committee did not have a policy regarding student assessment. The district realized the importance of data analysis and hired a consultant to assist it in data analysis 10 years ago. After receiving the data, the consultant not only analyzed them but also disseminated them to staff. District administrators, principals, and teachers continued to improve their data analysis skills, and in 2004-2005 the district established building assessment teams at each school in the district. The primary function of each building assessment team was not only to analyze and disseminate MCAS data to the school's staff but also to develop a building-based MCAS Improvement Plan.

During the 2004-2005 school year, school assessment teams met on a quarterly basis with the district's assessment team to discuss progress made toward the goals in each building's MCAS Improvement Plan. The functioning of the district and building assessment teams was curtailed as a result of the budget cuts that the district sustained in 2004. At that time, the district's curriculum team suffered a severe reduction that resulted in one district curriculum administrator remaining. As a result, in 2005-2006 the school assessment teams met irregularly with the assistant superintendent for curriculum to discuss progress on the MCAS Improvement Plans.

Budget limitations also impacted the number of summative and formative assessments available within the district. Therefore, the systemic use of formative assessments was limited. The MCAS tests were the only standardized tests given during the 2005-2006 school year. In the past, the district administered the California Achievement Test (CAT). In addition, at the elementary level the Gates MacGinitie, the Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) were used to measure students' progress, and a writing development continuum and running records were in place for these students. Their use varied from school to school, based on the preference of the principal.

The district used a variety of ways to communicate student achievement data to the community, including televised presentations to the school committee. The MCAS scores were also available on the district's website. The high school provided aggregate data on its students' SAT and AP

scores to the local newspapers and through its website. The superintendent presented an annual written report on student achievement to the community.

The high school developed benchmarks for the core content areas but the EQA team received conflicting evidence as to their use. No benchmarks existed at grades preK-8, although their development was a district goal for the future.

A review of student assessment results showed that the skills in the Math Central Program were not aligned with those in the state curriculum frameworks. Teachers who used the program were forced to develop their own supplementary materials to cover these skills as funds were not available to purchase additional materials.

Based on the MCAS test results, the high school created MCAS remediation courses, which developed into mandatory credit courses. A remediation program was also implemented at the middle school level. The district purchased the Study Island program to help all students in grades 3-8 prepare for the MCAS tests.

The district did not have a formal evaluation plan. With the exception of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) evaluation and a mandated Department of Education Coordinated Program Review (CPR), the district did not engage in voluntary external or internal evaluations. Informal discussions of school or grade-level programs did occur at staff meetings throughout the district.

Indicators

1. District assessment policies and practices were characterized by the continuous collection, analysis, and use of student assessment results by district and school leadership.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of the district's policy manual showed that the district had no policy regarding assessment, but in interviews the EQA team learned of many assessment practices already in place in the district during the period under review.

When the MCAS data arrived in the district, the central office team, consisting of the superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of special education, and the business manager, first viewed them. The district hired a data analysis consultant 10 years ago and, after central office staff reviewed the data, the consultant analyzed the MCAS data, and not only shared the results of the analysis with central office staff but also met with building administrators and their assessment teams to share the data and make recommendations regarding their use.

Each school in the district had an assessment team, comprised of teachers, team leaders, and department heads who volunteered their time. The team's primary role was to look at the MCAS data rather than at any formative assessment data. The teams met with teachers, either at grade-level meetings, building-level staff meetings, or at departmental meetings, to share the MCAS data. From the discussions that took place at these meetings, each assessment team developed an MCAS Improvement Plan for its respective school. Although not all assessment team members received training in TestWiz, principals and some teachers in the district received such training.

During the 2004-2005 school year, building assessment teams met with the district assessment team on a quarterly basis to discuss the MCAS Improvement Plans. However, these meetings were curtailed because of budget cuts. During the 2005-2006 school year, the school assessment teams met with the assistant superintendent to assess progress being made within the buildings, but not on a regular basis.

The assistant director of special education shared disaggregated data for subgroups, such as special education students, with all special education staff. According to information received during interviews, data regarding all special education students in inclusion classes were made available to both regular and special education staff. One administrator stated in an interview that special education staff needed to be a "bigger part of schools' assessment teams." At the high school, special education staff joined the math department to discuss problems.

The classroom teachers performed data analysis relating to the use of formative assessments, and some sharing of the analyses took place at grade-level and departmental meetings.

2. District and school leadership required all students to participate in all appropriate assessments.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of the data provided to the EQA team showed that the participation rate for all students on the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA was 99.5 percent; in math, it was 99.4 percent; and in STE, it was 99.7 percent. District and school staff told the EQA team that participation in student assessments had never been a problem in the district. School administrators stated that they sent home to parents announcements of when the MCAS testing would take place, which included a request that students have a good breakfast, and stressed the importance of students' attendance during the administration of the MCAS tests. Further, guidance personnel were involved in any cases in which attendance might be an issue for a student. The high school student handbook listed the schedules for the MCAS tests. School leaders said that they did not hold pep rallies or other participation motivating activities.

3. Through the use of district-generated reporting instruments and report cards, district and school leaders implemented assessment systems to measure the attainment of goals, progress, and effectiveness. These assessment reports were focused on student achievement and were communicated to all appropriate staff and community members.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

In addition to sending home individual No Child Left Behind (NCLB) school reports, the assistant superintendent reported the MCAS test results to the community through a presentation on the district's cable television station. Interviewees stated that schoolwide MCAS data were also shared not only through parent mailings but also at open houses at all levels. The MCAS results were also presented to the school committee, and these presentations, as well as the NCLB reports, were available on the district's website.

Each school sent home periodic report cards that reported on students' progress in all content areas. The high school shared its aggregate SAT and AP scores through the local newspapers as well as through the district's website.

A standards-based report card was developed five years ago for all students in grades 1 and 2, but in interviews the EQA team was told that the report card still needed revisions. Report cards for other levels at the elementary and middle schools varied by town. For example, students at the Raynham Middle School had a different report card from the students who attended the Williams Middle School, which served mostly Bridgewater students.

The superintendent did not present an annual written report on the MCAS results and other assessment achievements to the community.

4. In addition to the MCAS test, the district and school leadership regularly used local benchmarks and other assessment tools to measure student progress and analyzed and disseminated the results in a timely manner to appropriate staff.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

District and school staff members stated that the systemic use of formative assessments was limited in the district, and that they wanted to have more formative assessment data made available. The only standardized tests the district administered during the 2005-2006 school year were the MCAS tests. Previously, the district administered the CAT, but limited funding curtailed its use.

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Gates MacGinitie test was administered to students in grades 1 and 2 in March. The DIBELS was used by special education teachers as well as Title I teachers and the reading specialists to determine Title I students' progress. In addition, the DRA was used in grade 1. Teachers were required to keep running records but the principal determined the number of times per year; according to an administrator, there was nothing systemic in the district's requirement of these assessments.

The district maintained a writing development continuum for all students in grades K-4. This continuum showed any progress achieved on key indicators on each student's Individual Student Profile. At the end of the year, teachers passed the completed portfolio on to the student's next teacher. The district also administered a Phonemic Awareness Inventory at the end of

kindergarten and passed the results along to grade 1 teachers. Other formative assessments included end-of-level tests as well as end-of-chapter tests in textbooks.

While benchmarks for content areas were developed for the high school, none were in place for grades preK-8, although this was a goal for the future. Interviewees said that the only common exams in place at the high school were for algebra and foreign languages. In addition, they stated that it was difficult to have common exams in English as budget constraints prohibited all students' accessibility to the same texts. The high school had developed curriculum maps, but there was conflicting evidence presented in interviews regarding their use.

Students in grade 8 who were taking Algebra I took the high school exam at both midyear and the end of the year.

5. The district and school leadership used student assessment results and other pertinent data to measure the effectiveness of instructional and support programs.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Teachers in focus groups, as well as district and school staff, reported that a review of math assessment results at the elementary level showed that the skills in the Math Central Program were not aligned with those in the state curriculum frameworks. As a result, teachers who used the program developed supplemental instructional materials in order to compensate for this deficiency. All noted that some teachers used the 1998 edition of the program and that, due to budgetary constraints, the acquisition of a more recent program was not possible.

Further, interviewees reported that the math program used at the middle school did not cover basic facts that students needed. As a result, teachers at the middle school also provided supplementary instructional materials. At the middle school, teachers and administrators determined that a change in the number of "math books" introduced at grade 5 provided students with skills tested on the MCAS test at that level. The elementary level teachers at grade 4 changed the order of chapters presented in their math program.

Interviewees at the high school level stated that, after looking at the MCAS data, they implemented MCAS remediation classes. Initially, attendance was voluntary for grade 8

students who were entering grade 9. The class evolved into a credit course in which attendance was mandatory.

For students at the middle school who scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category of the MCAS tests, a 57-minute remediation program was scheduled for once every two weeks.

Students were also required to participate in the web-based program Study Island, which was accessible to students from school or home via the Internet. For students who did not have Internet access, worksheets were generated. Study Island had two parts, language arts and math. Each subject had 20 topics, all based on the state standards. Students took a pre-test and made progress through the lessons.

6. The district and school leadership regularly engaged in internal and external audits or assessments to inform the effectiveness of its program implementation and service delivery systems. The data from these assessments were provided to all appropriate staff.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district engaged in only state-mandated audits. These included the NEASC evaluation and the CPR. The NEASC placed the district on probation due to the lack of satisfactory space at the high school. The probationary status remained in effect during the period under review. In September 2007, the district planned to open a new high school, which would allow the district to meet the space requirements cited in the NEASC report. The district engaged in other mandated audits, such as the early childhood program review as well as the CPR in special education.

Interviewees confirmed that no voluntary internal or external audits had taken place during the period under review.

7. The district and school leadership annually reviewed student assessment results and other pertinent data to maximize effectiveness in assigning staff, prioritizing goals, and allocating time and resources.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

When assigning staff, the district typically did not use the analysis of data. Interviewees told the EQA team it would be difficult to reassign teachers, even if a teacher's instructional strengths could be better used in another classroom, because of contractual language. A school administrator also added that the same teacher had been teaching AP courses in the math department over a relatively long period of years.

The district did not mandate instructional time allotments for math and ELA. Rather, it was left to each building administrator to set the times. In a focus group, teachers reported that while there was no mandate regarding instructional time, most teachers were teaching 90 minutes of ELA and 60 minutes of math. In interviews, two building principals confirmed this.

At the Williams Middle School, the principal had rearranged the schedule during the past few years. Previously, the duration of a period was 42 minutes. The newer schedule allowed for two blocks of 58 minutes and two days with a 67-minute block.

In an effort to improve student achievement, the district purchased the Study Island program, which allowed students in grades 3-8 to gain math and ELA skills for the MCAS tests through the computer program, which was accessible from both home and school. Because of the lack of funding, the district was not able to purchase social studies textbooks for all grades and decided to purchase social studies textbooks for only grade 7 students.

8. <u>District and school leadership routinely used program evaluation results to initiate, modify, or discontinue programs and services to continuously improve the delivery of instruction and student achievement.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During all interviews with district and school staff, the EQA team was told that the district had no formal evaluation program in place. While the district did have a five-year curriculum cycle evaluation, no results from this curriculum review were available to the EQA team.

Interviewees pointed out that while there were no formal evaluation practices in place, discussions regarding programs took place during departmental and grade-level meetings. A

district administrator said that she was not “aware of anything specific or formal,” and added that there were some informal practices in place, such as the above-mentioned meetings as well as presentations made to the school committee.

Another school-level administrator said that in the past there had been a leveling system for students entering the middle schools from the elementary schools. Students leaving the elementary schools received a designation of either level one or two. The curriculum for each level was different. With the advent of the MCAS tests, this type of tracking was not effective. The issue, brought to the school committee, resulted in all students receiving the same curriculum.

Standard IV: Human Resource Management and Professional Development														
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**Total**
Excellent														
Satisfactory	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓								**5**
Needs Improvement					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	**8**
Unsatisfactory														

IV. Human Resource Management and Professional Development

The district identified, attracted and recruited effective personnel, and structured its environment to support, develop, improve, promote and retain qualified and effective professional staff that was successful in advancing achievement for all students.

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District followed an established process in recruiting and hiring the best candidates for its professional vacancies, and most professional staff members held appropriate licenses.
- The district provided no specific additional financial support to teachers seeking appropriate certification; however, principals monitored the progress of such individuals and encouraged them to actively pursue their licensure.
- The district funded and reinstituted its induction program for first-year teachers starting in 2004, and continued to successfully operate the program throughout the period under review. Experienced mentors met regularly with their mentees throughout the school year.
- The district offered professional development opportunities for its teachers primarily in grade-level and/or subject matter areas. None of the offerings provided training in data analysis. Additionally, adequate funding was not available for professional development.
- District administrators evaluated teachers in a timely fashion, following the components of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, but wrote only informative and/or descriptive comments in the summative evaluations.

- Immediate supervisors evaluated district administrators in a timely fashion, and in most cases the instrument used in the process followed the components of education reform. Improving student achievement scores was not included as part of the evaluations.
- Each school in the district followed prescribed safety procedures, and crisis management teams and written protocols were in place.

Summary

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District followed an established process in recruiting and hiring its professional staff. Although the process of paper screening and interviewing potential candidates varied slightly from one principal to the next, all principals felt that their first choice for a vacancy had been chosen by the central administration the vast majority of the time. In some cases, financial limitations had been placed on the hiring process. Principals reported that they consistently made teaching assignments for their new personnel, trying to assign the new teacher where his/her strengths were the greatest.

When administrative positions were vacant, a wider posting would take place and screening committees of teachers, parents, and community members would interview potential candidates and assist in the hiring process.

The percentage of the district's teachers and administrators who held appropriate licensure was 98.5 percent (384 of 390), and more than half of the district's 104 paraprofessionals were "highly qualified." The few teachers who had been hired on waivers were expected to actively work toward becoming certified, and the central office expected their respective principals to closely monitor their licensure progress.

The district offered a comprehensive orientation program to its new teachers and also reinstated, during the period under review, the mentoring program that had existed in the past. All the district's first-year teachers were assigned veteran teacher mentors. Both the district's administrators and teachers deemed the program very helpful and successful. No formal mentoring program existed for new administrators, but their colleagues informally provided guidance.

Professional development opportunities for the district's teachers took place during the equivalent of four professional development days (two full days and four half days) during each school year. The district's teachers stated that they had input into professional development offerings. In the absence of many districtwide professional development initiatives, the school district offered a number of professional development "modules" to teachers focused on subject matter and grade-level topics; however, none of these "modules" dealt with developing data analysis skills or differentiated instruction. All interviewees, administrators, and teachers alike agreed that adequate funding was not available for proper professional development during the period under review.

Both teachers and administrators in the district had been observed and evaluated by their supervisors in a timely fashion, and the instruments used in most cases followed the standards required by the Education Reform Act. The most significant exception to this was the superintendent's evaluation. It was found to be a compilation of comments made by school committee members on specific areas of expertise rather than a document following the tenets of the Education Reform Act.

The EQA team examined 55 randomly selected summative evaluations of teachers and found that all included informative and/or descriptive comments but none included instructive and/or constructive statements. The administrators' evaluations included no mention of improving student achievement scores, and only 35 percent (six of 17) of the evaluations had instructive comments. Administrators expressed satisfaction with the evaluation process followed by their superiors.

The district had in place a crisis management team that included members of the town's police and fire departments. The team met regularly throughout the period under review to go over procedural protocols. Each classroom in the district had an easily accessible Crisis Flip Chart for teacher and/or substitute teacher use, and the procedures within the document were reviewed regularly by the respective building principals.

Indicators

1. The district's policies and practices for the identification, recruitment, and selection of professional staff resulted in the employment of an effective teaching force that advanced student achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Bridgewater-Raynham followed an established process in recruiting and hiring the best possible candidates for the professional vacancies that existed during the period under review. This process resulted in the district having an effective teaching and supervisory staff.

The school district policy manual, in the section entitled "Professional Staff Recruiting," indicated that the superintendent assumed the responsibility of determining the personnel needs of the school system, and principals had the responsibility of identifying the staffing needs of their respective schools. During the interview process, the principals all agreed that the hiring philosophy of the district was to acquire the best possible person for the job with varying financial constraints depending on the type of vacancy. For example, principals had a little more flexibility in hiring an individual with several years of experience for a foreign language, special needs, or chemistry teaching vacancy than they would for an English, social studies, or elementary teaching position.

Once a vacancy was determined, the district advertised locally and in *The Boston Globe* and *Providence Journal*, and notified college placement offices. When the application deadline passed, the respective principals, with the assistance of department heads and/or teachers, examined the paperwork and selected the candidates for interviews.

At the elementary schools, the principals typically formed interview teams made up of grade-level teachers and/or specialists. The teams paper screened and then interviewed the candidates they thought would be the best fit for their school, eventually sending the names of the top three candidates to the superintendent. Middle school principals often used their assistant principals and/or lead teachers to assist them in the paper screening and interview process. At the high school, the department heads initially paper screened the candidate pool and then interviewed promising candidates. The principal and respective department head would then interview the

top candidates before sending the names of the top three candidates to the central office in order of preference. The selection process continued through another set of interviews at the central office with the assistant superintendent and then the superintendent. When asked if the district's principals had the authority to hire the teachers they felt would be the best fit in their respective buildings, all of the district's principals answered affirmatively. Principals stated that teaching assignments were based on the strengths of the new teachers.

Central administrators told the EQA team that when an administrative vacancy existed in the district, a wider posting took place. Then, a screening committee of parents, teachers, community members, and the superintendent interviewed potential candidates. The committee developed a set of questions to be used for each candidate and rating sheets for each interviewee. After selecting the top two or three candidates, a second round of interviews took place before choosing the finalist.

2. All professional staff had appropriate Massachusetts licensure.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district data on the certification of its professional staff indicated that during the 2006-2007 school year, 367 of the 373 teachers in the district possessed appropriate Massachusetts licensure.

At the beginning of the school year, the district applied for and received appropriate waivers for five teachers and one administrator from the DOE. Through interviews with the superintendent and other central office administrators, the EQA examiners learned that principals continually monitored the progress of those individuals on waivers in their respective buildings to make sure that the necessary work toward certification was completed.

The district employed 104 instructional aides or paraprofessionals in its schools during the 2006-2007 school year, and 55 of them met the federal definition of "highly qualified."

3. In the event of unfilled positions, professional staff were hired on professional waivers and were provided mentoring and support to attain the standard of substantial annual progress toward appropriate licensure.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district provided mentors for first-year teachers hired on professional waivers, and the building principal assumed the responsibility of closely monitoring those individuals' attainment of substantial annual progress toward appropriate licensure. Interviewees stated that regular correspondence took place throughout the school year between the principal and the teacher working to attain his/her license.

The district did not provide any specific financial support to the teachers on professional waivers other than the tuition reimbursement stipends offered to all teachers. The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District contract stipulated that a reimbursement of $600 was available annually for any teacher taking and passing graduate level courses.

4. The district provided teachers and administrators who were new to the district or their assignments with coaches or mentors in their respective roles and included an initial orientation that addressed the importance of the assessment and use of student data.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The 2003 NEASC report of the high school evaluation indicated that the "induction program that had existed in the district should be funded and implemented as soon as possible." As a result, the district reinstated its mentoring program the following year.

The district provided an initial orientation program and induction program for teachers new to the district, but no official induction program existed for new administrators. All interviewed administrators, mentors, and mentees agreed that the comprehensive new teacher program was effective and successful, and that collegiality existed throughout the process.

Veteran teachers could volunteer to participate in a mentoring training program either during the summer or through a program offered during the district's professional development days. Upon

successful completion of the program, they would wait for an assignment from their principal. Teachers assigned a mentee for a particular school year received a stipend of $500. Forty-six veteran teachers (21 elementary teachers, 12 middle school teachers, and 13 high school teachers) were trained as mentors for the 2005-2006 school year.

The aim of the new teacher mentoring program, according to the district mentoring handbook, was to increase teacher learning and retention. The district was of the opinion that this could be accomplished by creating an environment where new teachers can learn and receive support from experienced, trained teachers on a one-on-one basis. In addition to the mentoring program, the district's new teacher program contained other components. These included a day-long comprehensive orientation to the district in August and a 12-session course entitled Beginning Teacher Institute specifically designed for new teachers offered through the North River Collaborative. The institute covered topics such as classroom management procedures, establishing and maintaining high student expectations, and developing positive connections and interactions with parents.

Although a new administrator mentoring program did not officially exist during the period under review, the examiners learned that, unofficially, district administrators volunteered to take a new colleague "under their wing" and assist him/her through the transition year in any way that they could. An example of this practice existed during the EQA visit. A middle school principal was mentoring a new elementary school principal since the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year.

5. <u>The district's professional development programs included development of data analysis skills and the use of item analysis and disaggregated data to address all students' achievement.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

An examination of the professional development offerings and evidence received during the interviews with district administrators confirmed that the district did not provide its teachers with professional development opportunities in developing data analysis skills.

Building-level assessment teams, made up of the principal, several teachers, and/or department heads, analyzed student achievement data. After the process was completed, the teams disseminated the information to their respective teachers through schoolwide faculty meetings and/or grade-level or departmental meetings. Principals, department heads, and some teachers received training in data analysis using the TestWiz program and utilized those skills in analyzing the achievement scores of their students.

Teachers in focus group meetings at all three levels indicated that they felt comfortable with their knowledge of student achievement scores, even though they had no professional development in data analysis. Further, they stated that they knew where the weaknesses existed in their instructional practices and curriculum.

6. The district's human resources policies and practices encouraged professional growth and recognition and placed high priority on retaining effective professional staff and on creating promotional opportunities for effective teachers.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviewees stated that the district placed high priority on retaining an effective professional staff throughout the period under review.

The EQA team learned that the district's annual teacher turnover rate was low, and interviewees indicated that most of those leaving the district were teachers who were retiring. During the various interview sessions, interviewees agreed that teachers who worked in the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District tended to remain for many years, some throughout their careers. Teachers stated that pleasant teaching conditions and collegiality existed at all the district's schools, and that the district had a very competitive salary schedule as well as an excellent benefits package. The district paid between 86 and 88 percent of an employee's medical insurance.

The district did not keep any formal data or records in recent years on individuals promoted from within, but administrators and teachers stated that promotional opportunities existed, and several administrative positions were filled by promoting from among the teaching ranks.

7. The district's professional development program was informed by most or all of the following: the instructional program content; student, teacher, and administrator needs as indicated by program assessments; research-based practices; the staff evaluation process; and student achievement data.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the teacher focus group interviews at all three levels, teachers agreed that they had significant input on their professional development opportunities for the following year. The district distributed teacher interest surveys each spring, and teachers indicated the type of professional development offerings they wanted to participate in during the next academic year. According to interviewees, the central office implemented most of the suggestions and created the professional development "modules" that ran throughout the following year.

The district annually embedded the equivalent of four professional development days (two full days and four half days) into its school calendar, and required teachers to select the types of professional development opportunities that would benefit their instructional practices. An examination of the 2005-2006 school year's professional development opportunities indicated that the 49 offerings were varied.

In the absence of districtwide professional development initiatives, the modules offered by the school district focused on either subject matter or grade-level topics with a few offerings that were general in nature. The district's professional development booklet for the 2005-2006 school year included a number of modules in each of these major categories. Subject matter offerings included: Strategies and Methods for High School Math Teachers, Computer Use in Guidance, Types of Assessment in Foreign Languages, Art in the Classroom for Elementary Teachers, and Science Curriculum Integration at the Middle and High School. Opportunities in grade-level topics included: Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum Alignment, Assessment Tools in Grade 3 Language Arts, Middle School Inclusion for Special Education Teachers, and Kindergarten Thematic Units. Opportunities in general topics included: Classroom Management Techniques, Creating a Peaceful School Community, Using Excel in the Classroom, and Using SMART Boards and VES (Virtual Education Space).

The district's professional development programs were not developed as a result of the staff evaluation process and/or student achievement data. Additionally, the list of professional development opportunities open to the district's teachers over the last two years did not include offerings in instructional strategies in teaching elementary or middle school mathematics.

8. Changes in the expectations for programs and practice were monitored and supported by changed supervision and evaluation standards and in the professional development plans of professional staff.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The EQA team found through both the review of district documents and from interviews with district administrators and teachers that the district did not regularly monitor and evaluate its academic programs or initiate changes reflecting systemic shifts to those programs during the period under review.

Building principals assumed the responsibility of monitoring the individual professional development plan of each of their teachers, and they met annually with each teacher to review his/her plan. However, in their review of a random sample of 55 teacher personnel files, the EQA examiners found no evidence that administrators included professional growth comments in the summative evaluations.

9. The district's evaluation procedure for administrators' performance was aligned with the requirements of the Education Reform Act and was informative and instructive, and used to promote individual growth and overall effectiveness. Compensation and continued employment were linked to evidence of effectiveness, as measured by improvement in student performance and other relevant school data.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

District administrators stated that their evaluation process began with an annual goal setting conference in the fall with the superintendent, and concluded with an evaluation conference at

the end of the school year. At the year end conference, a principal's goals as well as the student achievement data from the MCAS tests for that particular school were reviewed.

The EQA team found that during the period under review the Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District used an evaluation instrument for most administrators that aligned with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act. The instrument listed each of the five major administrative standards, and each standard had a number of indicators embedded within it. Each summative evaluation also included a narrative of the overall performance of the individual administrator.

However, there were two significant exceptions to this process. The EQA examiners found that the superintendent's evaluation did not follow the standards of education reform. The evaluation was a compilation of comments made by school committee members on specific areas of expertise that they selected. In addition, the evaluation instrument for assistant principals was the same as the instrument used for teachers.

In the review of the entire complement of 17 administrative personnel files, the EQA examiners found that immediate superiors evaluated central office administrators, building principals, and assistant principals in a timely fashion using the instruments described above.

The review of the administrative folders revealed that all summative evaluations contained informative and/or descriptive comments, and six evaluations included instructive comments for the overall effectiveness of those individuals. The examiners found no evidence in the administrative folders that there was a link between student achievement scores and salary increases and/or continued employment in the district.

Administrators expressed general satisfaction with the evaluation procedure used by the superintendent and other supervisors and they indicated that the process was fair and objective.

10. The district's evaluation procedure for teachers' performance was aligned with the requirements of the Education Reform Act and was informative and instructive and used to promote individual growth and overall effectiveness. The district provided opportunities for additional professional development and support to struggling teachers. After following due process, the district took action against persistently low-performing teachers.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The EQA team reviewed 55 randomly selected teacher personnel files during its visit, 43 of professional status teachers and 12 of non-professional status teachers. Examiners found that the district's supervisors observed and evaluated the majority (48) of the teachers in the sample in a timely fashion. Supervisors evaluated non-professional status teachers annually, and they observed and evaluated professional status teachers at least once since the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year. Building administrators, principals, and assistant principals accomplished this even though contractually the district's department heads could only observe their respective teachers for coverage of "content area" and could not make suggestions on improving instructional practices.

A close examination of the teacher folders revealed that all the summative evaluations included the components of the Education Reform Act of 1993; however, the comments written by supervisors in the evaluations were only informative and/or descriptive in nature. None of the 55 summative evaluations reviewed by the EQA team included instructive and/or constructive comments or statements relative to how individuals could improve their professional growth and/or overall effectiveness. Although a number of principals stated during the interview sessions that many of their evaluations included instructive comments, the personnel folders of district teachers examined by the EQA team show no evidence of those claims.

11. Administrators in the district used effective systems of supervision to implement district/school programs and goals for improving student achievement in their respective assignments, and used these systems to address the strengths and needs of assigned staff.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

In the review of the evaluations of the district administrators, the EQA examiners found no evidence that principals were held accountable for improving student achievement scores. Similarly, principals did not include the improvement of student achievement scores or student performance as part of the process they used in writing the summative evaluations of their teachers.

Administrators stated that although they wanted the achievement scores of their students to show steady improvement, it was not a direct factor in their evaluation of their respective teachers nor was it a factor in their own evaluations prepared by the superintendent.

12. The district's employment (human resources), supervision, and professional development processes were linked and supported by appropriate levels of funding.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Central administrators and principals stated that professional development and the supervision of the district's teachers received insufficient funding. The uncertain financial situation that the district experienced during the last several years directly affected both areas.

The high school, with more than 1,400 students, functioned with only two assistant principals. The district cut central administrators during the period under review, and the large Mitchell Elementary School in Bridgewater with a student population of 1,146 (over 1,400 students counting the grade 5 students housed there in "Central House") functioned with only one housemaster or assistant principal for several years.

Interviewees indicated that professional development funding was not sufficient. The district offered many professional development modules during the last two years by having district teachers and/or administrators prepare and instruct the "courses" without receiving financial compensation for their services. Instructors earned double the amount of professional development points that the participants earned in a given offering. According to the annual financial reports of the district, the total amounts expended for professional development,

"stipends, providers and expenses," was $44,949 in fiscal year 2005 and $84,370 in fiscal year 2006.

13. The district provided ongoing and regular training in dealing with crises and emergencies to all staff, provided procedures for substitutes, student-teachers, and volunteers responsible for students, and provided opportunities to practice emergency procedures with all students.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional School District had in place for a number of years a Crisis Management Team that included school personnel as well as fire and police representatives from both towns. This team met several times a year to review procedural protocols. In addition to the Crisis Management Team, each school had a crisis team and followed a prescribed protocol to deal with certain crises and/or emergencies. The exact composition of the school teams varied from school to school; however, all teams consisted of the school administrators, guidance personnel, school nurses, and custodians, as well as some teachers.

District principals annually reviewed the safety, emergency, and evacuation procedures for their respective buildings with all of their teachers, including a review of the district's Crisis Flip Chart. Teachers received instructions to place this chart in easily accessible locations in their classrooms. The district also annually provided its professional staff with training and/or retraining of restraint procedures.

All schools conducted fire drills and school evacuations on a regular basis, and recently the high school simulated and practiced a school lockdown.

Interviewees stated that substitute teachers, student teachers, and parent volunteers had not been included in the crisis/emergency training sessions and/or reviews.

Standard V: Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support											
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**Total**
Excellent											
Satisfactory				✓		✓	✓		✓		**4**
Needs Improvement	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	**6**
Unsatisfactory											

V. Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support

The district provided quality programs for all students that were comprehensive, accessible and rigorous. Student academic support services and district discipline and behavior practices addressed the needs of all students. The district was effective in maintaining high rates of attendance for students and staff and retained the participation of students through graduation.

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- The district hired additional teachers to provide math remediation for grade 7 and 8 students. The district also introduced Study Island, a web-based software program accessible to students from both home and school, that provided all grade 3-8 students with remedial support and enrichment in ELA and math.
- The EQA examiners found little evidence of formative assessment data analysis. The district relied primarily on summative MCAS test data to identify students who failed to meet expectations.
- The high school attendance rate of 92.8 percent in 2005-2006 was below the state average of 94.5 percent. High school students averaged 12.2 percent absenteeism compared to the state average of 9.4 percent. The rate of chronically absent grade 12 students approached 25 percent. The administration did not analyze absenteeism by subgroup.
- The night school Excel program served as a dropout prevention program. It provided a safety net for students with children, retained students, and students who worked 40 to 50 hours per week.

- The district did not collect or analyze data regarding subgroup representation in Advanced Placement (AP) or accelerated courses. The examiners found no evidence that the school personnel encouraged subgroups to participate in these courses.

Summary

The district provided access to all educational programs for all students. Assessment results revealed that students in grades 6-8 in the aggregate failed to meet AYP in math. As a result, the district hired additional math teachers to provide math remediation to students in those grades. Students in grades 9 and 10 identified as at risk by their math teachers received additional math classes. Implementation of the Study Island program provided ELA and math support to students in grades 3-8. Building assessment teams created individual student success plans (ISSPs) for those students who scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category on the MCAS tests.

The preK-4 schools used formative assessments to measure student progress, mainly in literacy. However, the schools lacked consistency in their use of the formative assessments. Districtwide, the use of aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to make changes to support at-risk students was limited.

The district did not have policies, procedures, or practices in place to increase subgroup representation in AP or accelerated courses. No students were excluded from such courses, but there was no formal program to attract students from underrepresented groups into these courses.

The Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School student absenteeism rate exceeded the state average. According to the student handbook, students were allowed absences totaling 15 days. This allotment was a decrease from 45 to 25 days to the current 15 days over the last 15 years. A team comprised of the high school attendance officer, school resource officer, nurse, and guidance counselors monitored daily attendance and followed up with telephone calls to parents or guardians of chronic absentees. Students lost credits based on their number of absences.

According to district data, teachers were absent on average 10.4 days per year excluding professional development days, and 11.7 days per year including professional development days. This resulted in attendance rates of 94.3 and 93.7 percent, respectively. Policies and procedures were in place when a teacher was absent to ensure consistency in the delivery of curriculum. The

teachers' contract language provided an incentive for the buyback of unused sick days upon their retirement.

During the period under review, difficult budgetary decisions resulted in increased class sizes and staff cuts. In addition, a school adjustment counselor position was eliminated from the high school. During the same period, the new high school administration tightened the enforcement of the disciplinary code. This resulted in increased disciplinary violations.

The district encouraged students to make up failed or missed classes during summer school and retentions were infrequent. Bridgewater-Raynham had a dropout rate that was below the state's dropout rate for each year of the review period. The implementation of the Excel night program for students who may otherwise have dropped out of school provided an opportunity for these students to complete their high school education.

Indicators

1. The district administration and staff used aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data on student participation and achievement to adjust instruction and policies for at-risk populations and provided additional programs and supports to assist their progress and academic achievement.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, the district administration provided some additional remedial support for students in grades 8-10, but used limited aggregated and disaggregated student data on student participation and achievement to adjust instruction and policies for at-risk populations.

At the district level, a consultant who has worked with the district for the past 10 years presented an analysis of the MCAS data using TestWiz software. The consultant disaggregated the data and gave an overview of the district and each school's results to the district assessment team that consisted of central office personnel. This district assessment team met regularly to analyze the data. The consultant then met with building assessment teams consisting of principals, department heads, and teachers. While few teachers had formal training in the TestWiz software

and in the analysis of data, the district assessment team provided aggregated and disaggregated analyses of student data by school to the building assessment teams. These building assessment teams met once a month to analyze the present and past data disaggregated by subgroup. Teachers and department heads received item analyses, and data analysis was used to develop each school's MCAS Improvement Plan.

The directors of special education and pupil services examined the test scores of the special education subgroup and recommended modifications for curriculum delivery based on trends or patterns revealed in student test results. They met with special education teachers to discuss the results and to strategize necessary changes for improvement. The pupil personnel services department created an extended year summer program, and the Bridge summer program at the Mitchell Elementary School provided remediation for students identified as in need by test data.

School building assessment teams created ISSPs for students who scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category of the MCAS tests. The high school entered student ISSPs in the Administrator's Plus software program for view by administrators and teachers within four days after the receipt of the MCAS test results.

MCAS review and remediation math classes provided support for students in grades 9 and 10 identified as needing the support based on their MCAS test results at grade 8 and on teacher recommendations. Students who had not passed the grade 10 MCAS tests received individual tutoring help in grades 11 and 12. Once a student failed the test twice, counselors recommended remedial help in the Excel night school program. Department heads at the high school analyzed data and used teacher recommendations to create honors and AP courses.

The district's MCAS math proficiency index at grade 5 dipped below the state average for the following subgroups: students not participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program, students with disabilities, and White students. This led to an analysis of the Connected Math Program that had been in place for the past five years at the middle schools.

At the Williams Middle School and the Raynham Middle School, principals and guidance counselors created ISSPs for struggling students and asked parents to sign them. An academic support block provided these students remediation in math and ELA weekly. Additional teachers

were hired to provide math assistance to underperforming middle school students in grades 7 and 8. The Wilson Reading system provided support in ELA. The Study Island software program provided all students in grades 3-8 an opportunity for remedial support as well as enrichment in ELA and math. This web-based program was accessible from home and classrooms and libraries at school.

At the primary school level, the Title I program provided students in grades 1-4 with literacy support. Three elementary schools, with the exception of the Burnell Elementary School, had the Title I program. The Burnell Elementary School used Reading Recovery strategies. Kindergarten teachers recommended students to the Title I program and used the Phonemic Awareness survey to help identify students who would benefit from the program. The four elementary schools administered the Gates-MacGinitie reading assessment at grades 1 and 2. Although some interviewees indicated that differences in time use and discretion existed, the DRA test results, running records, and guided reading information on students provided data for Title I support in literacy. The district used the DIBELS in Title I and special education to track student progress. There was no consistency in the use of these formative assessments among the schools.

Honors breakfasts held after each quarterly report card distribution celebrated student achievement. The district mailed the MCAS test results home to parents.

2. <u>At each grade level, the district used formative assessments and summative data to identify all students who did not meet expectations and provided these students with supplementary and/or remedial services that resulted in improved academic achievement and MCAS test proficiency.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

According to DOE data, during the period under review the achievement of students in grades 6-8 in the aggregate did not meet AYP in mathematics. Also, the special education and low-income subgroups in grades 3-5 and 6-8 failed to meet AYP.

The examiners found little evidence of formative assessment data being used in the district to identify all students who did not meet expectations. The district primarily relied on summative

data from the MCAS tests for students in grades 3-12. Teachers often relied on chapter tests and teacher-generated tests.

At the preK-4 schools, teachers used a variety of literacy formative assessments, but they were not consistently used among the schools. Assessments in the elementary schools included the DRA, the Yopp-Singer Phonemic Awareness test, and running records to measure reading accuracy for placement and diagnostic purposes.

At the middle schools, teachers primarily relied on the MCAS summative data with the exception of an algebra examination in grade 8 that, combined with teacher recommendations, was used for placement. Teachers used chapter tests as the primary formative assessments.

The high school administered midterm and final examinations as well as a few common assessments in algebra and foreign language. In addition to the MCAS tests, the high school administered the PSAT, SAT, and AP exams. Few English language learner (ELL) students were enrolled in the district during the period under review. However, new students that might qualify for ELL services took the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA).

Elementary schools issued report cards three times a year, and the middle and high school issued quarterly reports for students in grades 5-12. Local newspapers printed honor rolls of students in grades 5-12. At the high school, the principal held an academic excellence night to recognize student achievement. Parents attended open houses twice at the middle schools each year to discuss student achievement. Guidance counselors met individually with students at risk to review results and to create or adjust ISSPs.

3. Early intervention programs in literacy were provided at the primary education level to ensure that all students were reading at the 'Proficient' level on the MCAS test by the end of Grade 4.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The 2006 AYP report for grades 3-5 in ELA indicated a composite proficiency index (CPI) of 87.8 for the aggregate. District administrators indicated that early intervention programs existed at the primary education level to ensure that all students were reading at the 'Proficient' level on

the grade 4 MCAS ELA test. Despite the early intervention programs, the average results on this test for the period under review indicated that 37 percent of grade 4 students still did not attain proficiency in 2006.

During the period under review, the district's early intervention programs in literacy included half-day kindergarten that included special education students who received the equivalent of a full-day program. Kindergarten teachers recommended early intervention programs for students in need of literacy support and remediation. The Burnell School identified students for the Reading Recovery program. The Title I program serviced students in grades 1-4 at the Merrill, LaLiberte, and Mitchell Elementary Schools. Four certified reading teachers served the students in the Title I program. Kindergarten teachers used letter sound phonemic awareness instruments to identify students in need of support. In some of the schools, teachers received training in the use and interpretation of the DRA. Running records reading data also helped staff create reading groups.

4. District administration and staff helped all students make effective transitions from one school, grade level, or program to another. This assistance was focused on maintaining or improving levels of student performance.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district's administration and staff helped all students make effective transitions from one school, grade level, or program to another. Some students were involved in up to four transitions between pre-school and graduation from high school. Step-up programs began during the period under review, which even included the kindergarten to grade 1 transition. According to district interviewees, step-up days reduced some of the anxiety that students had about moving to the next grade and/or to another school.

The district held open houses for parents and guardians in the pre-school, kindergarten, middle schools, and the high school. Grade 4 students visited the middle schools at the end of the school year. Grade 8 students likewise visited the high school at the end of their school year. The high school principal, guidance counselors, and a few seniors met with grade 8 parents at the middle schools to explain the high school program and to answer questions. Counselors visited middle

schools in May or June to meet individually with students and made individual student schedules for grade 9. The high school held a cookout for the new grade 9 students early in September. Grade 8 students who were interested in attending the vocational school visited the school to learn about curriculum and programs.

5. The district had fair and equitable policies, procedures, and practices to reduce discipline referrals, grade retention, suspension, and exclusion.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, the district had fair and equitable policies, procedures, and practices aimed at the reduction of discipline referrals, grade retentions, suspensions, and exclusions. Each school had a written school handbook that contained a code of conduct with detailed sanctions. There was consistency in the writing of the handbooks. The discipline guidelines of each school outlined the policies, expectations, and procedures with accompanying punishments.

The EQA team asked the district interviewees for a possible explanation of the large increase in discipline infractions during the period under review. They indicated that student discipline had become a much bigger problem in 2003-2004. Due to budget cuts, many class sizes increased dramatically and students in some cases were dismissed at 1:15 p.m. and told to return at 2:45 p.m. for extra help or to attend clubs, sports, or activities.

School year 2004-2005 represented the second year of a new administration. The high school principal began to tighten up discipline that year. For instance, an area across the street from the high school provided the students with a place to hang out, smoke, and potentially get into trouble before and after school. The principal eliminated the loitering problem by urging the town to extend the district's jurisdiction to that geographic area. During the period under review, a school resource officer began to work with high school officials to serve proactively in reducing disciplinary problems.

The district indicated that retention was an uncommon practice within the district. At the high school, summer school programs enabled students who failed more than two subjects to obtain enough credits to continue without retention.

Although the Department of Education reports that the district had in-school suspensions during the review period, the district claimed that it had no in-school suspension program.

During the period under review, 39.4 percent of grade 8 students left the district before entering grade 9. That percentage compared to 25.8 percent in 2005, 22.6 percent in 2004, and 15.4 percent in 2002. According to interviewees, this sharp increase in students leaving the district may have been the result of drastic budgetary cuts in 2004.

6. The district had policies, procedures, and practices to prevent or minimize dropping out, and to recover dropouts and return them to an educationally appropriate placement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district had procedures and practices to prevent or minimize students dropping out of school. However, the district did not have written policies to prevent students from dropping out of school. The district provided no evidence of a dropout recovery program. The dropout rate in the district between 2003 and 2005 was less than 1.3 percent.

Originally, the night school Excel program, created 10 years ago, was to serve as a dropout prevention program. It started with the help of a grant in conjunction with the Bridgewater Police Department. Over time, the program expanded and served as a net for students who did not fit in socially. Students with children, retained students, and students who worked 40 to 50 hours a week had what the program called “a second chance” to get to the next phase of their lives.

The high school counselors monitored daily attendance and identified potential dropouts. They spoke with students considering dropping out and tried to direct them toward the Excel program.

The counselors advocated for and were successful in getting students to make up time in summer school, to gain credits back in study skills, current events, and up to 10 credits without having to take the course that they failed.

Nursing personnel said that during the period under review over 90 percent of students who visited the nurse's office remained in school. Information from counselors and nursing personnel indicated that the nurses in all the schools saw a large increase of students with emotional problems in the last five years since the September 11 tragedy. During the period under review, 15 students were taken by ambulance to hospitals for emotional problems.

7. The district implemented policies and programs that addressed the needs of transient and homeless students and provided them with timely and equitable access to quality programs.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

In a review of documents, written policies that addressed the needs of transient and homeless students under the McKinney-Vento Act were in the draft stages and slated for approval by the school committee in the 2006-2007 school year. The district attendance officer served also as the homeless student liaison for the district. The assistant superintendent oversaw the program and the pupil personnel director handled transportation issues. The nursing department coordinated issues related to immunizations.

Principals and support staff developed ISSPs when needed, and student assistance and support teams worked with staff to ensure smooth transitions.

8. District and school policies and practices promoted the importance of student attendance, and attendance was continuously monitored, reported, and acted upon.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

A review of the DOE data showed that in 2005-2006 the attendance rate for the district was 95.2 percent, compared with the state average of 94.5 percent. The elementary and middle school attendance rates above the state averages for K-8 schools. However, at the high school the rate was 92.8 percent, compared to the state average of 94.5 percent. The high school students were absent an average of 12.2 percent of the time, compared to the state average of 9.4 percent. Chronically absent grade 12 students approached 25 percent of the class. The district did not evaluate absenteeism by subgroup during the period under review.

Over the last 15 years the high school handbook allotted 45 days of absence, then 27 days, and then 15 days, which was the allotment in the most recent high school handbook reviewed by the EQA team.

All student handbooks in the system addressed the importance of regular attendance and set expectations in policy and procedures for the reporting of absences. School committee policy emphasized the importance of good attendance and the correlation between good attendance and high academic achievement. Student handbooks in the elementary and middle schools required parents to call their child's school and to send a note to the school explaining the absence. The principal's office sent letters to parents after five, 10, and 15 days of student absence. In addition, credits were lost based on the amount of class time lost. Counselors called chronically ill or excused absent students to the office to speak with them.

The main office staff, nurses, counselors, and the attendance officer had access to student attendance information. In spite of the attention to attendance by several people in different offices, the attendance rate of high school students lagged behind the state average for high school students.

9. District and school policies and practices promoted and tracked the importance of staff attendance and participation, and appropriate provisions were made to ensure continuity of the instructional program.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

All principals monitored teacher attendance in their respective buildings. Teachers were contractually entitled to 15 sick days and two personal days per year. The district reported to the EQA team that teachers were absent an average of 10.4 days per year, or 5.7 percent, not including professional development days. This number increased to 11.7 days, or 6.3 percent, when professional development days were included. Interviewees reported that there was a procedure outlined in the staff manual for teachers to contact school officials to report an absence. School personnel then contacted substitute teachers to ensure continuity of the instructional program. All teachers were also required to have a substitute folder for up to three days on top of their desks and five days of lesson plans accessible to the substitute. Teachers'

contract language included monetary incentives for teachers to accrue sick leave buyback time. Administrative interviewees reported to the EQA team that abuse of sick leave was not an issue.

10. District and school leadership implemented policies, procedures, and practices to increase proportionate subgroup representation in advanced and/or accelerated programs, in order to close the achievement gap.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Although the high school offered numerous AP courses, interviewees reported that they did not conduct any analysis of data with regard to subgroup representation in the advanced or accelerated programs. The district provided no evidence that indicated that subgroups were encouraged to take accelerated or advanced courses. Guidance counselors and department heads provided input for advanced and accelerated course selection. Parents had the opportunity to override teacher recommendations by signing the appropriate form. Eighty-three percent of the students who took the AP exams scored a 3 or higher, potentially allowing them to qualify for college credit. High school students were given the opportunity to participate in dually registered courses at Bridgewater State College after the regular school day. During the period under review, 25 to 30 students took advantage of this opportunity. All but two students earned an ‘A’ or ‘B’ in these college courses.

Standard VI: Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency														
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**Total**
Excellent														
Satisfactory	✓				**N/A**	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		**7**
Needs Improvement		✓	✓	✓			✓						✓	**5**
Unsatisfactory														

VI. Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

The district engaged in a participative, well-documented, and transparent budget process that used student achievement as a factor in the overall budget. The district acquired and used financial, physical, and competitive capital resources to provide for and sustain the advancement of achievement for all students enrolled in the district. The district regularly assessed the effectiveness and efficiency of its financial and capital assets and had the ability to meet reasonable changes and unanticipated events.

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The district had an open and participatory budget process in which stakeholders had input. The openness of the budget development process resulted in increased town involvement, support, and trust.
- The district did not conduct an evaluation-based review process to determine the cost effectiveness of its instructional programs.
- The district did not receive adequate funding to provide for effective instructional practices and to provide for adequate operational resources, and the district failed to meet the net school spending requirement in fiscal year 2005.
- The presence of tax-exempt, state-owned properties in the town of Bridgewater represented a loss of significant revenue, while economic growth in the town of Raynham increased its revenue.
- The district undertook a new construction and renovation project at the Williams Middle School and a construction project for a new regional high school.

- The schools had systems in place to ensure student safety that differed from building to building.

Summary

School committee members, town officials, and administrators described the budget development process as open and participatory. Principals and department heads sought input from staff and school councils and, along with district administrators, prepared and submitted to the school committee a recommended budget for their respective schools that they considered necessary to continue the existing educational programs and to add new programs and staff. The district began to make some budget decisions based on student performance data during the last year of the period under review. The district did not conduct evaluation-based reviews to determine the cost effectiveness of its instructional programs, but did conduct cost-effectiveness reviews of non-instructional programs, such as its transportation programs.

At four information sessions scheduled in March, the superintendent presented each of the following topics: curriculum and instruction, special education, transportation, and fixed costs. At each session, the superintendent provided a line item explanation of the chosen topic of the evening. The school committee adopted an annual budget which the school district treasurer certified in April and sent to the selectmen in each town for voter approval at the respective town meetings in May. The openness of the budget development process resulted in additional town involvement and support, and the cessation of rumors about district bank accounts with sizeable balances.

The district did not receive adequate funding to provide for effective instructional practices and to provide for adequate operational resources. Officials from both Raynham and Bridgewater indicated support for the school district budget. The officials from the town of Bridgewater believed they had been responsive in supporting the budget during the period under review, but the town had limited financial resources available. Bridgewater lacked business and had not experienced economic growth. No viable locations existed in the town for commercial development. The existence of the tax-exempt state college, state prison, and other state-owned properties represented a loss of significant revenue. The town relied heavily on revenue received from the state. The school budget was not acted upon at the May town meeting but was voted in June after the final state aid figure was available.

Economic growth in Raynham continued during the period under review. At the May town meeting, the voters approved the school budget as presented. The approval of a smaller school budget at the Bridgewater town meeting in June affected Raynham's apportioned assessment. When the school committee adjusted the budget and approved a lower amount based on the Bridgewater vote, the town of Raynham "gifted" the remainder of the funds already approved for the school budget at its May town meeting.

The district maintained revolving accounts for only the school lunch program and the athletic fees collected. The district included all other receipts and state aid in the calculation of the apportionment of assessments to the member towns and also appropriated funds from its excess and deficiency account. Administrators and staff successfully pursued partnerships with local businesses and received revenue from donations as well as additional revenue in the form of mini-grants from Bridgewater State College and the North River Collaborative. The district had not been successful in obtaining new federal or state grants. The district failed to meet the net school spending requirement in fiscal year 2005.

The district had a written preventive maintenance plan. A long-term school facilities master plan and plan of anticipated projects existed that clearly reflected the future capital development and improvement needs, including educational and program facilities of adequate size. The district undertook a new construction and renovation project at the Williams Middle School and a construction project for a new regional high school. Once the new high school opens, planned for September 2007, the district would schedule the current high school for renovation for use as a middle school. The EQA team determined the district had educational and program facilities that were in very good condition, clean, and well maintained.

The school buildings had systems in place to ensure student safety that differed from building to building. Each school had crisis plans in addition to the district crisis plan.

Indicators

1. The district's budget was developed through an open, participatory process, and the resulting document was clear, comprehensive, complete, current, and understandable. The budget also provided accurate information on all fund sources, as well as budgetary history and trends.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviewees indicated that district management ran the budget prior to the period under review. They stated the budget development process lacked openness and rumors persisted that the school maintained bank accounts with sizeable balances. They stated the development of the budget by the current superintendent during the period under review included an open process, which dispelled such rumors.

The current superintendent assumed his position at the beginning of the period under review and developed the fiscal year 2005, fiscal year 2006, and fiscal year 2007 budgets. The assistant superintendent of business indicated the superintendent distributed in October budget development guidelines and timelines to principals and department heads who met with staff and school councils for input. Prioritized budget requests corresponded to items in the strategic plan. Principals and department heads met with the superintendent, the assistant superintendent of curriculum for matters related to curriculum redevelopment and staffing, and the assistant superintendent of business for matters related to procurement and business. A budget subcommittee of the school committee participated in budget discussions. The entire school committee, prior to the adoption of a preliminary budget in mid-February, reviewed the recommended budget, which the administration considered necessary to continue the existing educational programs. The school committee, in its review, considered the adoption of new programs, employment of additional staff, and expansion of existing programs. The budgetary impact of each was kept separate and identifiable.

The district made the document available to the press and posted it on the website. The assistant superintendent of business stated the administration enlisted help from individuals in both towns in order to ascertain what the public wanted to know. The administration divided the proposed budget into four sections: curriculum and instruction, special education, transportation, and fixed

costs. The district scheduled four information sessions in March during which the superintendent used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the line item costs of the evening's selected topic. Administrators and school committee members attended the information sessions. Following a public hearing, the school committee adopted an annual budget which the school district treasurer certified in April and sent to the selectmen in each town for voter approval at the respective town meetings in May.

In interviews with the EQA examiners, administrators and town officials praised the openness of the budget development process. The town officials stated town involvement and support of the budget increased. The mystery of the budget and rumors about bank accounts with sizeable balances ceased.

The proposed fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2007 budget documents included clear, understandable accompanying materials and budgetary history in addition to information on the calculation of assessments to member towns and estimated receipts.

2. <u>The budget was developed and resources were allocated based on the ongoing analysis of aggregate and disaggregated student assessment data to assure the budget's effectiveness in supporting improved achievement for all student populations.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district did not allocate resources based on the ongoing analysis of aggregate and disaggregated student assessment data.

In an interview with the EQA examiners, the assistant superintendent of business stated class size, staffing, and the NEASC recommendations influenced budget decisions and the allocation of resources during the period under review. He stated the district began to make some budget decisions based on student performance data analysis during the last year, but not as many as the administrators would have liked to see. The district allocated its resources based primarily on reviews of MCAS math and ELA test scores which indicated a need to focus on math when making budget decisions. The district allocated funds to purchase the Study Island software program, supplemental math materials, and additional materials for special needs students. It

provided funds for MCAS remediation at the middle and high schools and for a consultant who analyzed MCAS data and worked with assessment teams.

3. The district's budget and supplemental funding were adequate to provide for effective instructional practices and to provide for adequate operational resources. The community annually provided sufficient financial resources to ensure educationally sound programs and facilities of quality, as evidenced by a sufficient district revenue levy and level of local spending for education.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Interviewees indicated the school district did not receive adequate funding to provide for effective instructional practices and to provide for adequate operational resources.

In an interview with the EQA examiners, town officials from both towns indicated support for the school budget. Officials from both towns stated that each town attempted to make an honest effort to fund education.

Town officials from Bridgewater stated there was a difference between support and financial ability. They believed they had been responsive in supporting the regional school district budget during the period under review, but stated the town had limited financial resources available. Bridgewater lacked business and had not experienced economic growth. No viable locations existed in the town for commercial development. The presence of the tax-exempt state college, state prison, and other state-owned properties represented a loss of significant revenue. The town officials indicated the state procrastinated in the payment of its bills, and the town aggressively pursued the state for late payments due the town for services delivered to the college and the prison. The Town of Bridgewater had a $9.60 unified tax rate. Residential taxes amounted to 90 percent of the amount raised through taxation. During the period under review, the Town of Bridgewater relied on revenue received from the state. The town virtually depleted free cash and stabilization funds. The lack of appropriate resources affected all town budgets. Town officials stated that the town was notified that its bond rating had been downgraded to BAA1. The regional school district budget was not acted upon at the town meeting which was held the first Saturday in May. The finance committee waited until final state aid figures became

available in June before the town's meeting to vote on the regional school district budget. The Bridgewater town officials stated the voters approved an override for the construction of the new high school on the second attempt. During the period under review, there had been little support for an override vote; however, the town officials indicated that might change when the new high school is completed and occupied.

Economic growth in Raynham continued during the period under review. Commercial development along Route 44 increased. Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and car dealerships built their businesses along the heavily trafficked road. Raynham had a dual tax rate. Revenue raised from the taxation of commercial property amounted to 25 percent of the total collected. The town had approximately $2,000,000 in the stabilization fund and approximately $1,000,000 in free cash. Raynham town officials acknowledged the town's good fortune. Members of the finance committee and selectmen reviewed the regional school district budget certified by the district treasurer and provided input. At the town meeting held the third Monday in May, voters approved the budget as presented. The Town of Raynham in fiscal year 2005 "gifted" $1,292,232.66 to the school district to fund specific positions that had been eliminated the prior fiscal year. The funds were to be applied in the amounts of $1,200,000 to the Raynham K-8 schools and $92,232.66 to the high school. In fiscal year 2006, the town of Raynham "gifted" $344,995.88 to the Raynham schools. The "gifting" to the Raynham K-8 schools created inequities among the district's K-8 schools. The assistant superintendent of business stated the school district requested that future "gifts" not specify the use of funds.

Raynham town officials described the source of the "gift." Voters approved the regional school budget at the May town meeting. When the voters of Raynham approved the municipal budget at the town meeting, they voted the amount for the schools. When the school committee adjusted the regional school budget and voted a lesser amount based on the Bridgewater vote in June, the apportioned assessment of each town was affected. The approval of a lesser budget at the Bridgewater town meeting reduced Raynham's apportioned assessment. Faced with a lower apportionment than that approved at the annual town meeting, the town of Raynham "gifted" the remainder of the amount the voters had already approved for the schools.

The district maintained revolving accounts for only the school lunch program and the athletic fees collected. The district included all other receipts and state aid in the calculation of the apportionment of assessments to the member towns. The district also appropriated funds from its excess and deficiency (E & D) account each year during the period under review.

4. The district, as part of its budget development**,** implemented an evaluation-based review process to determine the cost effectiveness of all of its programs, initiatives, and activities. This process was based, in part, on student performance data and needs.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Interviewees stated that during the period under review no process existed to determine the cost effectiveness of instructional programs. A review of the documents provided by the district confirmed the information. A lack of evidence existed to demonstrate that the district used an evaluation-based review process to determine the cost effectiveness of its instructional programs, initiatives, and activities.

The assistant superintendent of business indicated the district conducted several reviews during the period under review to determine the cost effectiveness of non-instructional programs. A full review of transportation services resulted in a reduction of three regular bus runs, the privatization of special education transportation, and a collaboration with West Bridgewater and Middleboro to transport students to vocational schools. Regular reviews of special education transportation costs resulted in further cost savings by the contracting of selected in-district routes by the daily rate rather than the route rate. The district evaluated the cost effectiveness of district versus privatized snow plowing and grounds and equipment maintenance, and continued with services provided by district personnel. The district evaluated the school lunch program. An examination of the full production cost of items such as pizza and subs took place. As a result of the findings, in fiscal year 2006 the district issued an invitation to bid and awarded a contract for cafeteria management services to a private vendor. The district evaluation of costs associated with the drivers' education program resulted in the privatization of the program.

The assistant superintendent of business described an in-depth study of academic achievement in relation to participation in extra-curricular programs. The district collected two years of end-of-

year GPA scores from over 1,350 grade 11 and grade 12 Bridgewater-Raynham students and correlated the data to other studies conducted. The results indicated that students who participated in extra-curricular programs showed higher GPA scores at the end of the school year, and those who participated in more than one activity scored even higher. In fiscal year 2006 the district, as a result, offered after-school programs at the elementary and middle school levels and reduced the athletic user fee from $500 per sport to $250 in order to increase participation.

5. The district and community had appropriate written agreements and memoranda related to 603 CMR 10.0 that detailed the manner for calculating and the amounts to be used in calculating indirect charges levied on the school district budget by the community.

Rating: N/A

Evidence

Bridgewater-Raynham is a preK-12 regional school district. This indicator does not apply to regional school districts.

An agreement existed whereby the town of Bridgewater maintained and prepared the fields at Legion Field for use by the school district. During the period under review, the district paid $18,000 annually to the town of Bridgewater.

An agreement existed whereby the town of Raynham maintained the grounds at Raynham Middle School, South School, LaLiberte School, and Merrill School. During the period under review, the district paid $18,000 annually to the town of Raynham. The town of Raynham also billed the school district in June for the plowing, salting, and sanding of parking lots and entryways at $1,000 per occurrence.

6. The combination of Chapter 70 Aid and local revenues, considering justified indirect charges, met or exceeded the Net School Spending (NSS) requirements of the education reform formula for the period under examination.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Actual net school spending declined during the period under review. A review of the DOE document entitled Chapter 70 Trends, FY98 Through FY07 (updated as of 12/29/2006) indicated the district exceeded the net school spending requirement in fiscal year 2004 by $808,748 but failed to meet the requirement for fiscal year 2005. Actual net school spending in that fiscal year amounted to $661,120 less than the required $39,641,495.

The assistant superintendent of business stated in an interview that district central office administrators along with representatives from each town met with DOE personnel in order to address and resolve the deficiency. Discussion centered on the components of net school spending and the explanation of the exclusion of capital expenditures and transportation expenditures. In fiscal year 2006, according to the available DOE Chapter 70 trend data, the district exceeded the net school spending requirement by $1,736,409.

7. Regular, timely, accurate, and complete financial reports were made to the school committee, appropriate administrators and staff, and the public. In addition, required local, state, and federal financial reports, and statements were accurate and filed on time.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The appointment of the current superintendent at the beginning of the period under review began a period of openness and improved communication. Interviewees indicated school committee members and appropriate administrators did not receive reports and had difficulty obtaining timely information from the office of the prior superintendent.

The assistant superintendent of business stated in an interview that school committee members and the superintendent received a monthly line item financial report on the status of the budget. The EQA team reviewed the reports provided by the district and found them to be timely and informative. The treasurer prepared a monthly trial balance report, which school committee members also received. Principals received monthly financial reports of their building budgets, which included a list of open purchase orders.

Inaccuracies and omissions occurred in end-of-year financial reports filed by the school district in each of the years under review. A review of the documents provided no evidence that these inaccuracies and omissions were addressed and that the required amendments were filed. The assistant superintendent of business and the treasurer indicated the treasurer compiled the financial data to complete Schedules 1 and 19, while other district personnel compiled information to complete the other schedules.

A process existed for central office personnel to input the information and review the completed document. The assistant superintendent and the treasurer did not verify the accuracy of the information prior to the submission of the report to the DOE. End-of-year documents reviewed indicated discrepancies in both reported revenues and expenditures. For example, the district reported E & D fund appropriations in fiscal years 2003, 2004, and 2006 and none in fiscal year 2005. The treasurer provided evidence that E & D funds were appropriated in fiscal year 2005.

The district filed the end-of-year report with a DOE-approved 30-day extension during the years under review. In a review of the fiscal year 2005 federal and state grant final financial forms, the EQA examiners noted an April 6, 2006 date of submission. The assistant superintendent indicated the departure of both the former assistant superintendent for curriculum and grants and the secretary resulted in an oversight. The treasurer completed the forms when the situation became evident.

8. The district used efficient accounting technology that integrated the district-level financial information of each school and program, and the district used forecast mechanisms and control procedures to ensure that spending was within fiscal budget limits. District administrators were able to regularly and accurately track spending and other financial transactions.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district used a fund-based accounting system that complied with all financial reporting requirements. The computer software system provided not only total budget reports but also individual school reports by DOE function code.

Documents provided by the district and interviewees indicated the district regularly used forecast mechanisms to ensure spending was within fiscal budget limits. The financial budget system allowed for encumbrance of salary and other financial obligations prior to the expenditure of funds. The district encumbered contracted salary obligations into the expenditure ledger. The monthly budget report detailed all funds expended and encumbered to date. The assistant superintendent of business monitored the accounts. Principals and directors approved requisitions sent to the business office. The assistant superintendent of business approved purchase orders. The district treasurer reviewed purchase order requests for proper classification and verification of available funds prior to processing requests. The district treasurer's office controlled all funds, including revolving and grant funds and student activity funds.

Principals received monthly financial reports of their building budgets, which included a list of open purchase orders. The assistant superintendent of business described a software program that created, tracked, and monitored individual budgets. The program had been developed by one of the administrators and was made available to other administrators who wished to use it.

9. The district had a system in place to pursue, acquire, monitor, and coordinate all local, state, federal, and private competitive grants and monitored special revenue funds, revolving accounts, and the fees related to them to ensure that they were managed efficiently and used effectively for the purposes intended.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district employed an assistant superintendent of curriculum and grants, whose responsibilities included the pursuit of new grants. Central office administrators stated that they accessed the DOE website to look for new grants. Evidence provided did not demonstrate the district had successfully obtained new federal, state, or private grants and indicated the district needed to put more effort into obtaining additional grant funds. During the period under review, the amount the district received in federal and state grants declined. In fiscal year 2004, the amount totaled $1,603,575; in fiscal year 2005, the amount totaled $1,627,393; and in fiscal year 2006, the amount totaled $1,578,922. Title I funds declined from $263,618 in fiscal year 2004 to

$193,966 in fiscal year 2006, while the special education 94-142 allocation increased from $1,017,772 to $1,200,887 in fiscal year 2006.

Administration and staff successfully pursued partnerships with local businesses and received revenue from donations as well as additional revenue in the form of mini-grants from Bridgewater State College and the North River Collaborative.

The school committee sought new avenues for revenue and at the June 2006 meeting voted to participate in school choice in fiscal year 2007. The school committee created a committee during the period under review to meet with representatives from the town of Berkley in order to discuss the attendance of Berkley students at the new Bridgewater-Raynham High School on a tuition basis.

The treasurer processed payroll and vendor warrants. The treasurer reviewed all warrants to ensure appropriate expenditures for general expenses, grants, and revolving funds. Adequate internal controls existed in the business and treasurer's offices to ensure the district adhered to procurement laws and processed payroll correctly.

The district's fund-based accounting system segregated supplemental sources of revenue. The district accounted for federal, state, private, and other categories separately with DOE function codes within the major fund accounts. During the period under review, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and grants monitored grant expenditures to ensure compliance with grant requirements. The district maintained a formal purchase order process for the purchase of all goods and services. The business office processed all payments. According to the assistant superintendent of business, no payment occurred unless an approved purchase order was issued.

The district deposited all revolving monies into accounts under the control of the treasurer. The treasurer also controlled all student activity funds. The district had measures in existence to assure that complete and accurate deposits were used for the purposes intended. Procedures existed for the handling of cash and for preparing and processing student activity deposits.

In September 2005, fundraising activity guidelines were established. The district approved fundraising for only the American Red Cross, the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, and Save the Children. All other fundraising activities required prior approval by the school committee.

10. The district had a system in place to ensure that state procurement laws were followed, that appropriate staff had MCPPO credentials, and that all assets and expenditures were monitored and tracked to insure efficient and maximum effective utilization. The district also competitively procured independent financial auditing services at least every five years, shared the results of these audits, and consistently implemented their recommendations. All procurement, tracking, monitoring systems, and external audits were accurate, current and timely.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

An examination by the EQA team of purchase orders and bid specification documents for the period under review indicated that the district followed state procurement laws. In an interview the assistant superintendent of business indicated that the district required three quotes for items costing $5,000 and above and formally bid goods and services costing above $25,000. The district also participated in cooperative purchasing with surrounding communities and procured goods from state contracts.

The assistant superintendent was a certified school business administrator with MCPPO credentials. The full-time treasurer, who had been in the district for 16 years and was appointed annually by the school committee, also had MCPPO credentials.

Thevenin, Lynch, Bienvenue, LLP, the audit firm used during the period under review, had been the firm used prior to the period under review without a bidding process. The district had no management letter findings or single audit findings for grants during the period under review. In the Financial Report Pursuant to OMB Circular A-133 for the Year Ended June 30, 2005, the auditors noted in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs that "The School District was determined to be a low-risk auditee."

11. The district had a formal preventative maintenance program to maximize and prolong the effective use of the district's capital and major facility assets, to ensure that educational and program facilities were clean, safe, well-lit, well-maintained, and conducive to promoting student learning and achievement.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district had a written preventive maintenance plan and contracted each year for boiler, HVAC, generator, elevator, fire alarm, and fire extinguisher preventive maintenance. The district employed a plumber, electrician, and maintenance personnel. Custodians and maintenance personnel electronically monitored or physically checked all buildings on non-school days. A custodial cleaning schedule for all facilities prioritized the areas and listed the general daily/year round, vacation, and summer responsibilities of the custodial staff.

During the period under review, the district undertook a new construction and renovation project at the Williams Middle School and a construction project for a new regional high school. Both projects remained on schedule and within budget.

After visiting all district buildings, the EQA examiners determined the district had educational and program facilities that were in generally very good condition, clean, and well maintained by an adequate in-house custodial and maintenance staff, plumber, and electrician. The Facilities Inventory submitted by the district described the general condition of the current high school as "very good;" however, the EQA team described the facility as "fair." The district scheduled the current high schedule for renovation for use as a middle school once students occupied the new high school in September 2007.

12. The district had a long-term capital plan that clearly and accurately reflected the future capital development and improvement needs, including educational and program facilities of adequate size. The plan was reviewed and revised as needed with input from all appropriate stakeholders.

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of documents by the EQA examiners determined the district had a long-term school facilities master plan and plan of anticipated projects that clearly reflected the future capital development and improvement needs, including educational and program facilities of adequate size.

13. The schools were secure and had systems to ensure student safety.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The schools had systems in place to ensure student safety that differed from building to building. Each school had a crisis plan in addition to the district plan.

All buildings had locked exterior doors during the school day. Visitors and late students gained entrance to the building via a buzzer system and reported to the office to sign in once access was granted. Visitor badges were not distributed at all schools. No video cameras were visible to the EQA team, although interviewees stated that school buildings did have video cameras.

At the high school, the exterior doors were locked and a security guard was posted inside the entrance. Once a visitor gained access, the security guard signed the individual in and directed him/her to the appropriate location. The Burnell Elementary School also posted a security guard inside the entrance to sign in visitors.

Documents submitted by the district included only the procedures for the Mitchell Elementary School. The document stated identification badges were to be worn; however, the EQA examiners noted staff without identification badges.

Appendix A: Proficiency Index (PI)

The proficiency index is a metric used to measure and compare all schools and school districts regarding their performance on the MCAS tests. The proficiency index is a measure of the level of achievement a district, school, grade, or subgroup has made in relation to the 'Proficient' achievement level on the MCAS tests. There are four indices: the Average Proficiency Index (API), the English Language Arts Proficiency Index (EPI), the Math Proficiency Index (MPI), and the Science and Technology/Engineering Index (SPI). The API currently is a weighted average of the EPI and MPI; the SPI will be included beginning in 2007, when passing the STE test becomes a graduation requirement.

The proficiency index is calculated as follows:

Percentage of students scoring 200-208 on test	x	0 = A
Percentage of students scoring 210-218 on test	x	25 = B
Percentage of students scoring 220-228 on test	x	50 = C
Percentage of students scoring 230-238 on test	x	75 = D
Percentage of students scoring 240 or more on test	x	100 = E

The proficiency index equals the sum of A + B + C + D + E = PI

Example: The Anywhere High School had the following results on the 2006 MCAS tests:

12 percent of all students scored 200-208; therefore,	12 percent	x 0 =	0
15 percent of all students scored 210-218; therefore,	15 percent	x 25 =	3.75
21 percent of all students scored 220-228; therefore,	21 percent	x 50 =	10.5
34 percent of all students scored 230-238; therefore,	34 percent	x 75 =	25.5
18 percent of all students scored 240 or more; therefore,	18 percent	x 100 =	18.0

The average proficiency index is calculated by adding: 0 + 3.75 + 10.5 + 25.5 + 18 = 57.75

The average proficiency index (API) for the Anywhere High School would be 57.75.

The EPI would use the same calculation using the ELA results for all students taking the ELA exam. The MPI would use the same calculation using the math results for all students taking the math exam. The SPI would use the same calculation using the STE results for all students taking the STE exam.

The 100 point proficiency index is divided into six proficiency categories as follows: 90-100 is 'Very High' (VH), 80-89.9 is 'High' (H), 70-79.9 is 'Moderate' (M), 60-69.9 is 'Low' (L), 40-59.9 is 'Very Low' (VL), and 0-39.9 is 'Critically Low' (CL).

Appendix B: Chapter 70 Trends, FY 1997 – FY2006

	Foundation Enrollment	Pct Chg	Foundation Budget	Pct Chg	Required Local Contribution	Chapter 70 Aid	Pct Chg	Required Net School Spending (NSS)	Pct Chg	Actual Net School Spending	Pct Chg	Dollars Over/Under Requirement	Percent Over/ Under
FY97	5,209	0.8	29,046,514	6.2	14,054,794	14,003,397	7.1	28,058,191	5.9	28,088,553	1.0	30,362	0.1
FY98	5,380	3.3	30,906,305	6.4	14,744,018	15,209,194	8.6	29,953,212	6.8	28,959,043	3.1	-994,169	-3.3
FY99	5,484	1.9	30,854,007	-0.2	16,883,639	16,599,931	9.1	33,483,570	11.8	32,190,122	11.2	-1,293,448	-3.9
FY00	5,564	1.5	31,164,800	1.0	17,974,595	16,599,931	0.0	34,574,526	3.3	33,015,146	2.6	-1,559,380	-4.5
FY01	5,655	1.6	32,954,125	5.7	18,913,361	17,589,556	6.0	36,502,917	5.6	36,421,117	10.3	-81,800	-0.2
FY02	5,890	4.2	36,333,058	10.3	18,711,121	18,684,258	6.2	37,395,379	2.4	39,852,078	9.4	2,456,699	6.6
FY03	5,860	-0.5	37,356,288	2.8	19,495,255	18,684,258	0.0	38,179,513	2.1	40,143,214	0.7	1,963,701	5.1
FY04	5,918	1.0	38,991,376	4.4	20,240,325	18,751,051	0.4	38,991,376	2.1	39,800,124	-0.9	808,748	2.1
FY05	5,836	-1.4	39,641,495	1.7	20,648,291	18,993,204	1.3	39,641,495	1.7	38,980,375	-2.1	-661,120	-1.7
FY06	5,801	-0.6	40,912,576	3.2	22,546,085	19,283,254	1.5	41,829,339	5.5	43,565,748	11.8	1,736,409	4.2

	Dollars Per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			Chapter 70 Aid as Percent of Actual NSS
	Foundation Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY97	5,576	2,688	5,392	48.2	96.6	96.7	49.9
FY98	5,745	2,827	5,383	49.2	96.9	93.7	52.5
FY99	5,626	3,027	5,870	53.8	108.5	104.3	51.6
FY00	5,601	2,983	5,934	53.3	110.9	105.9	50.3
FY01	5,827	3,110	6,441	53.4	110.8	110.5	48.3
FY02	6,169	3,172	6,766	51.4	102.9	109.7	46.9
FY03	6,375	3,188	6,850	50.0	102.2	107.5	46.5
FY04	6,589	3,168	6,725	48.1	100.0	102.1	47.1
FY05	6,793	3,254	6,679	47.9	100.0	98.3	48.7
FY06	7,053	3,324	7,510	47.1	102.2	106.5	44.3

Foundation enrollment is reported in October of the prior fiscal year (e.g. FY06 enrollment = Oct 1, 2004 headcount).
Foundation budget is the state's estimate of the minimum amount needed in each district to provide an adequate educational program.
Required Net School Spending is the annual minimum that must be spent on schools, including carryovers from prior years.
Net School Spending includes municipal indirect spending for schools but excludes capital expenditures and transportation.