



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

# School District Reexamination Report:

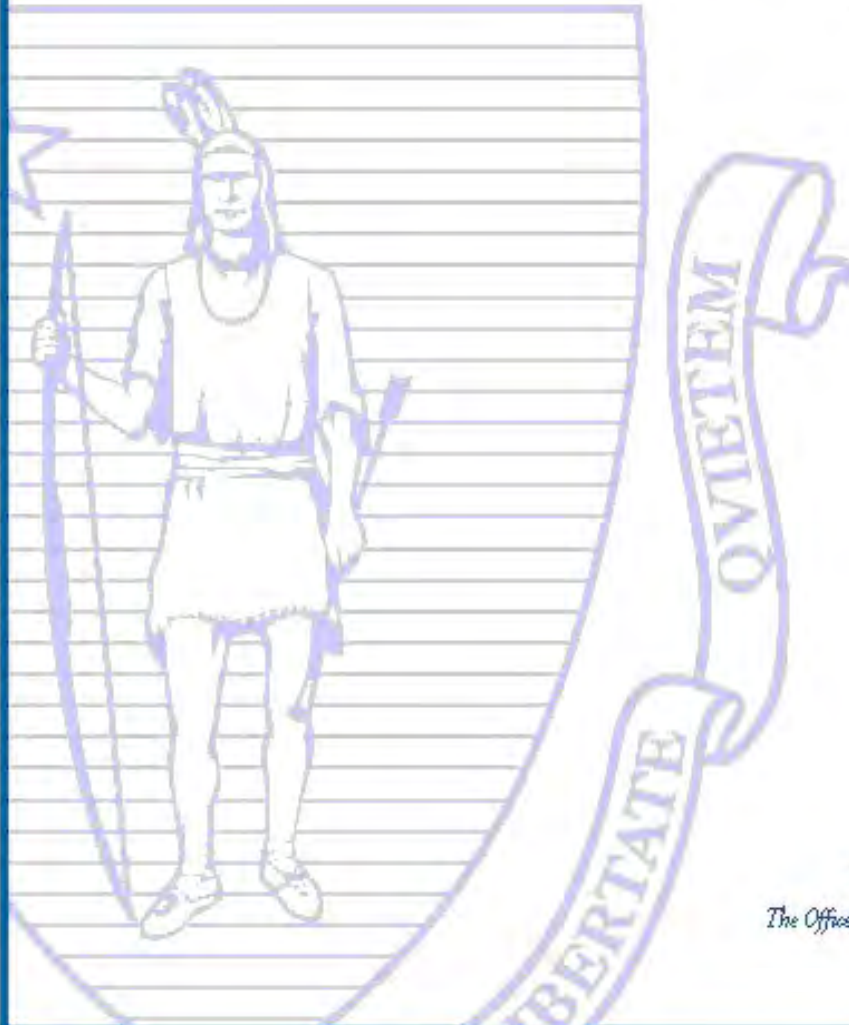
**Brockton  
Public Schools  
Technical Report**



*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 EMAC also voted to remove the District from ‘Watch’ status.**

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 Brockton Public Schools, Basan Nembirkow; the school department staff of the Brockton Public Schools; and the town officials in Brockton.

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## **Executive Summary**

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) reexamined the Brockton Public Schools in April 2007. With an average proficiency index of 68 proficiency index (PI) points in 2006 (75 PI points in English language arts and 61 PI points in math), the district is considered a 'Low' performing school system based on the Department of Education's rating system (found in Appendix A of this report), with achievement well below the state average. Less than two-fifths of Brockton's students scored at or above the proficiency standard on the 2006 administration of the MCAS tests.

### **District Overview**

The city of Brockton in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, an industrial community located on the Taunton River between Taunton and Fall River, had both agrarian and industrial roots. As industries in the region grew, immigrants from Italy, Ireland, England, and Canada came to the city to fill the manufacturing jobs. The Bridgewater Branch Railroad and trolley lines in the region stimulated further industrial growth. The region around Brockton has experienced rapid residential and commercial growth since World War II. Today, Brockton is a service center for the region; service is its biggest industry, providing more jobs than any other business sector. Following educational, health, and social services, retail trade and manufacturing are the next largest employment sectors. The rising prices for housing and commercial real estate in the greater Boston area have contributed to the attractiveness of and increasing property values in Brockton. Brockton has a Mayor-Council form of government.

The densely populated city is a comparatively low-income community with a diverse urban population. According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), Brockton had a median family income of \$46,235 in 1999, compared to the statewide median family income of \$63,706, ranking it 323 out of the 351 cities and towns in the commonwealth. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the city had a total population of 94,304 with a population of 20,722 school-age children, or 22 percent of the total. Of the total households in Brockton, 39 percent were households with children under 18 years of age, 20 percent were female-headed households with no husband present, 13 percent were female-headed households with children under 18 and no husband present, and 23 percent were households with individuals age 65 years or older. Forty-

five percent of households in Brockton rent their housing units. Fourteen percent of the population age 25 years or older held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33 percent statewide.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE), in 2005-2006 the Brockton Public Schools had a total enrollment of 15,896. The demographic composition in the district was: 47.1 percent African-American, 33.2 percent White, 13.9 percent Hispanic, 2.6 percent Asian, 0.8 percent Native American, 0.2 percent Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.2 percent multi-race, non-Hispanic; 11.0 percent limited English proficient, 66.2 percent low income, and 12.9 percent special education. Ninety-three percent of school-age children in Brockton attended public schools. The district does not offer school choice, although 31 students from other school districts attended the Brockton schools in 2005-2006. A total of 1,247 Brockton students attended public schools outside the district, including 756 students who attended Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School and 258 students who attended charter schools.

The district has 25 schools serving pre-kindergarten through grade 12, including three early learning centers serving pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, 13 elementary schools serving kindergarten through grade 5 or 6 and one serving kindergarten through grade 8, one middle school serving grades 6 through 8, three junior high schools serving grades 7 and 8, one high school (the largest in the state) serving grades 9 through 12, and three alternative schools serving grades 6 through 8 or 12. The administrative team consists of the superintendent, two directors of teaching and learning (one for grades preK-5 and one for grades 6-8), a director of pupil personnel services, a director of accountability, planning, and technology, a director of administrative services, a director of human resources, a director of communication, community schools, and development, and the principal of Brockton High School. The district has a nine-member school committee.

In FY 2006, Brockton's per pupil expenditure, based on appropriations from all funds, was \$11,418, compared to \$11,196 statewide, ranking it 121 out of the 328 school districts reporting data. The district did not meet its state requirement for minimum net school spending in FY 2004 and FY 2005, but exceeded it in FY 2006. From FY 2004 to FY 2006, net school spending increased from \$135,160,069 to \$144,447,238; Chapter 70 aid increased from \$106,909,135 to

\$110,310,059; the required local contribution decreased from \$32,562,026 to \$30,812,049; and the foundation enrollment decreased from 16,589 to 16,093. Chapter 70 aid as a percentage of actual net school spending decreased from 79 to 76 percent over this period. From FY 2004 to FY 2005, total curriculum and instruction expenditures as a percentage of total net school spending remained flat at 63 percent.

## **Context**

School districts examined by the Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) are placed in ‘Watch’ status if the EQA examination reveals several areas of poor or unsatisfactory performance. All ‘Watch’ districts are monitored by the EQA and its staff. In addition, districts may be placed in ‘Watch’ status if they were referred to the Board of Education for a “declaration of underperformance” but the board declined to make that determination. For the next one to two years, an experienced and trained senior EQA examiner monitors a district in ‘Watch’ status. After a reexamination by the EQA, either the district is removed from ‘Watch’ status or an EQA report is forwarded to the Board of Education with a recommendation to declare the district underperforming. Underperforming districts receive additional support and services from the state to improve student achievement.

The EQA first examined the Brockton Public Schools in March 2004, and the district was subsequently placed in ‘Watch’ status. The district was monitored by an EQA examiner, Michael Molongowski, and reexamined by a team of EQA examiners in April 2007. This reexamination report is the conclusion of the ‘Watch’ process, the purpose of which is to assess the progress the district has made since the prior examination.

The Brockton School Committee appointed a new superintendent of schools in 2004, and he is described by the EQA monitor as a change agent. In May 2005, the superintendent prepared a document containing a number of holistic and systemic changes that was approved by the school committee and presented to the mayor and city council. The recommendations included a three-year plan to address the underperformance of the students in the Brockton Public Schools. The plan also recommended adding more full-day kindergartens, as well as reorganizing the grade span at the junior high schools (grades 7-8) into middle schools (grades 6-8).

The district has been innovative in its attempts to improve student achievement through the use of formative assessments, and was the first district in the commonwealth to purchase and implement the EduSoft program in 2006. The system initiates benchmark assessments through a scanning/website/computerized process that generates scoring reports at individual schools within one hour. Staff training in use of the program has taken place, and implementation began during the 2006-2007 school year. In addition, the district is fully committed to the collection and analysis of data relating to all parts of the district. In 2005-2006, the district began to use e-Scholar. This data warehouse and tool compiles, analyzes, and reports on many different district data elements.

The district continues to have a persistent problem in recruiting minority staff. The human resources office continues to expand its recruitment efforts but still faces difficulty hiring minority teachers.

The district has been making progress in reorganizing the junior high schools to middle schools. Two new schools in the district are under construction, with grade levels to be determined. Regarding the school facilities in Brockton, the district's schools are "tired," and while not dirty are showing their age.

Trend data show that the district has made slight improvements in student achievement, but the district leadership contends that more time is needed for the changes that have already been implemented to show improvement in student achievement. As a result of developing a curriculum for the bilingual/English as a second language (ESL) program, the district made progress in the achievement of many English language learner (ELL) students. The superintendent posts each school's MCAS results on the walls of the superintendent's conference room, visible for all to see.

The superintendent, district administration, and staff have worked since the inception of the 'Watch' period to address the indicators rated as 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory' in the earlier EQA review. Interviewees stressed the need for improved student achievement and are committed to make it happen, but also stress that more time is needed.

## **The EQA Reexamination 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 April 24-27, 2007, the EQA conducted an independent reexamination of the Brockton Public Schools for the period 2004-2006, with a primary focus on 2006. This reexamination 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 on-site visit.

For the period under reexamination, 2004-2006, this report finds Brockton to be a 'Low' performing school district with an average proficiency index of 68 proficiency index (PI) points, marked by student achievement that was 'Moderate' in English language arts (ELA) and 'Very Low' in math on the 2004-2006 MCAS tests. Over this period, student performance was flat in ELA and improved by nearly four PI points in math, which narrowed the district's average proficiency gap by six percent.

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 reexamination.



## **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 Brockton 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, less than two-fifths of all students in Brockton attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, much less than that statewide. Less than half of Brockton students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), less than one-third of Brockton students attained proficiency in math, and less than one-fifth of Brockton students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE). Ninety-two percent of the Class of 2006 attained a Competency Determination.

- Brockton's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 68 proficiency index (PI) points, 10 PI points less than that statewide. Brockton's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 32 PI points.
- In 2006, Brockton's proficiency gap in ELA was 25 PI points, nine PI points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of slightly more than three PI points annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP). Brockton's proficiency gap in math was 39 PI points in 2006, 11 PI points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly five PI points per year to achieve AYP. Brockton's proficiency gap in STE was 48 PI points, 19 PI points wider than that statewide.

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

Between 2003 and 2006, Brockton's MCAS performance showed some improvement overall, in ELA, and in math, and a decline in STE.

- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories rose by five percentage points between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category decreased by four percentage points. The average proficiency

gap in Brockton narrowed from 38 PI points in 2003 to 34 PI points in 2006. This resulted in an improvement rate, or a closing of the proficiency gap, of 11 percent.

- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Brockton showed slight improvement, at an average of nearly one PI point annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of nine percent, a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.
- Math performance in Brockton showed more improvement, at an average of nearly two PI points annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of 12 percent, also a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Brockton had a decline in STE performance, decreasing by approximately one PI point over the two-year period.

### **Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?**

MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Brockton students. Of the 10 measurable subgroups in Brockton in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 34 PI points in ELA (non low-income students, LEP students, respectively) and 33 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).

- The proficiency gaps in Brockton in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, LEP students, Hispanic students, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program). Roughly one-tenth of students with disabilities and LEP students attained proficiency, and less than one-third of Hispanic, African-American, and low-income students did so.
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, and non low-income students. Roughly half the students in each of these subgroups attained proficiency.
- The proficiency gap for male students was wider than the district average in ELA but narrower in math, while the proficiency gap for female students was narrower than the

district average in ELA but wider in math. Roughly two-fifths of the students in both subgroups attained proficiency.

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

In Brockton, the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA narrowed from 52 PI points in 2003 to 36 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math narrowed from 39 to 34 PI points over this period.

- All student subgroups in Brockton except students with disabilities and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was LEP students.
- In math, all subgroups in Brockton showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in math also was LEP students.

## **Standard Summaries**

### **Leadership, Governance, and Communication**

Since the last EQA review, the leadership of the Brockton Public Schools undertook a number of initiatives, including adding more full day kindergarten classes in the elementary schools, beginning to reorganize the junior high schools (grades 7-8) into middle schools (grades 6-8), establishing a center (Gilmore Academy) for intermediate talented and gifted students, and implementing a technological model elementary school (Huntington School). The district leadership also reorganized the special education department, established the position of associate principal for curriculum and instruction at the junior high/middle schools, and developed a plan to attain adequate yearly progress (AYP). In addition, the district launched the EduSoft and e-Scholar programs to enhance student performance, developing benchmark assessments at the elementary and junior high/middle school levels in ELA and math, and modifying the schedules at the junior high schools to increase instructional time.

During the period under review, the district leadership revised and updated the District Improvement Plan (DIP). In April 2005, the school committee approved a new DIP, replacing the former 2001-2006 DIP. The district also revised both the Brockton Public Schools

Emergency Response Plan and the Classroom Emergency Procedures Guide. Even though the district had a defined recruitment and hiring process, the qualities for selecting teachers in its staff recruitment policy did not coincide with those qualities included on the interview sheets. District leaders acknowledged the need to recruit and hire more minority teachers. Furthermore, district leaders commented about the need to hire certified teachers and administrators, thereby reducing the number of requested waivers.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

The Brockton Public Schools had made progress in the development and revision of curricula since the 2004 EQA review. At the high school, the staff had written and implemented curricula across the content areas that addressed areas of need apparent in MCAS results such as answering open-response questions and reading graphs. At grades K-8 in English language arts (ELA) and math, administrators and teachers had correlated the state curriculum frameworks with the district's instructional resources, and they had written pacing guides to enable alignment and coverage of the curricula. In addition, they identified ELA and math essential skills at grades 1-8 and then created an item bank from which they could assemble benchmark assessments. The items in the bank and some of the formative assessments were limited in that they measured full achievement of the essential skills in the fall and winter when students might not yet have mastered them. However, the district planned to refine the content measured in future benchmark assessments. Beyond these benchmark assessments and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), introduced at grade 1 in 2006-2007, the district had limited assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery of the curriculum across the district.

The district maintained or improved staffing levels since the 2004 review. The superintendent chose to maintain class size in the primary grades at between 18 and 22 students after the class-size reduction grant was expended. To address low student achievement in the junior high schools, particularly in math, the district funded an associate principal for each junior high school whose sole responsibility was to address curriculum and instruction. In addition, each junior high school received an additional math teacher as well as an additional teacher to provide math MCAS prep in a new Star lab.

Finally, the district made progress in providing early intervention reading programs at the primary level. Teachers mapped the curriculum; teachers and specialists received training in the use of numerous interventions for students at risk; and the time allocated for English language arts instruction was significantly increased. At the same time, however, teachers lacked formative assessment information to measure their students' progress in attaining increasingly complex reading skills.

### **Assessment and Program Evaluation**

In a three-year plan, the district focused on initiatives to improve MCAS test participation rates and student results, including the reorganization of schools and program offerings, professional development for administration and professional staff, improved monitoring of student performance and assessment results, and analysis of test participation and student test results. During the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years, the school district regularly monitored student participation rates and found that student participation in the MCAS testing program met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement. During the 2005-2006 school year, only 10 students at Brockton High School did not participate in the MCAS tests, yielding a student participation rate of 99 percent.

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) for Brockton High School focused on improving its Competency Determination rate, and as a result 96 percent of students in the aggregate met the Competency Determination standard in 2004-2005. The rate decreased one percentage point to 95 percent in 2005-2006, yet despite the decrease, the district still met the state standard of 95 percent. Subgroup performance, however, did not meet the standard as the percentages of subgroup students attaining a Competency Determination fell considerably below 95 percent.

### **Human Resource Management and Professional Development**

The Brockton Public Schools had an active recruitment effort largely directed at recruiting teachers for hard to fill positions. As of October 2006, however, 29 early childhood/elementary teachers were unlicensed. There were several pools of potential candidates for early childhood and elementary vacancies including substitutes, student teachers, and unlicensed semi-professional and paraprofessionals. The occupants of these pools might not necessarily hold

licenses until offered full-time teaching appointments in any of the 17 elementary schools in the district.

The district had a positive retention record, with a teacher replacement rate of about seven percent. Most administrators, other than the superintendent of schools, were long-term employees of the district; and others went to school in Brockton and stayed as employees. There is a strong esprit de corps among the staff.

School committee policies contained standards for hiring teachers that were open-ended and lacked scoring rubrics; the standards did not necessarily reflect Brockton's preferences in skill level, experience, and professional knowledge among potential teacher candidates,.

Nine administrators and 88 teachers were unlicensed at the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic year, and many of these unlicensed teachers were hired as specialists or in hard to fill teaching areas. The district's human resources office had current records indicating teachers' licensing status, and most unlicensed teachers hired in early 2006-2007 had obtained licensure by May 2007. Despite consistent and attentive efforts to increase the ranks of minority teachers, few were hired. The district has an affirmative action policy and plan, an affirmative action officer empowered to recruit minority staff, and a goal to increase minority staff.

The EQA team discovered that 22 of 51 evaluation documents (43 percent) contained in administrative personnel files were timely for the period under review. Only 13 of these 22 were instructive and included references to SIP goals and AYP data related to the position. The human resources office published the dates of required evaluations for administrators in 2007 and included schedules back to 2001.

Of 48 teacher personnel files reviewed, 41 contained timely evaluations and the other seven teachers were newly hired. Examiners found that the evaluations generally were not informational. Only 15 evaluations (37 percent) were informational in their descriptions of observed teaching, and only four evaluations (10 percent) were instructive, containing ideas or recommendations for improved performance.

The district had not revised the teacher evaluation booklet since the mid-1970s. While its details minimally complied with CMR 35:00, it specified a three-year cycle that does not comply with

the required two-year cycle for professional status teachers. All performance ratings in evaluations of K-8 teachers were marked “effective.” At the grades 9-12 level, many more had “Needs Improvement” ratings. In interviews, teachers generally had favorable comments about their evaluations and about their mentors and supervisors.

Since the initial EQA review in 2004, the district consolidated several professional development procedures into one system with defined procedures for each track or layer and financial sources to support them. Districtwide training for new staff and training for veterans in new district initiatives and programs such as the John Collins Writing Program were scheduled in an annual calendar. At the building level, staff reviewed student achievement data and the School Improvement Plan to establish building needs for professional development. The district did not present a comprehensive document that delineated the processes and procedures of the various paths for professional development.

The district provided professional development at the district level for administrators, teachers, and other staff during the day, and provided substitutes for teachers who attended training. When the district implemented new programs or initiatives, administrators received training along with staff. In addition, administrators attended National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) leadership training and Lenses on Learning training to develop observational skills for use in supervising and monitoring mathematics classroom instruction. Literacy initiatives brought staff together from across the district for grade-level trainings and workshops several days throughout the year. Beginning in 2003-2004, the district initiated training in sheltered English immersion (using a train-the-trainer model) and in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) in conjunction with the Department of Education (DOE). Since then, the district trained cohorts of staff annually to meet the goal of training 350 staff by the end of 2006-2007. The state has approved the district as a provider of this training.

At the building level, each school drew upon two sources of funds for professional development, district funds from the budget and Challenge for Change grants. Additionally, many buildings obtained grants to secure funds for specific projects. The schools reviewed the achievement data, including the MCAS test data, of their students and, through EduSoft, used September and January benchmark data at grades 1-9. The administrative leadership team and staff at the

building level reviewed the needs identified by the data and any other needs identified by staff and developed professional development training and workshops for the year. Much of the professional development was provided by in-house providers and building staff. For example, middle school staff identified an issue regarding reading in mathematics for English language learners. The bilingual department staff met with middle school staff, studied the issue, and provided support through workshops to address it.

Four elementary schools received Reading First grants that brought with additional funds for professional development. They used a portion of these funds to hold summer institutes for instructional strategies and identified reading needs. Staff members could attend several workshop sessions over three days. The district had adopted Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) districtwide at grades K-1 and planned to expand its use, and these schools initiated training for staff in DIBELS at grades K-3.

The procedures for applying for professional development funds were clear. Building principals developed two professional development initiative budgets, one for the regular budget and one for the Challenge for Change grant, and forwarded them to the central office. However, approval was pro forma as the procedures and budget amounts were clearly defined.

At the high school, a restructuring committee comprised of 32 staff members representing all four houses had been formed under a Small Learning Communities grant several years ago and was retained using district funds when the grant ran out. The role of the committee in professional development has led to a strong in-house program. Faculty meetings were devoted to a whole-staff “faculty expo” for staff presentations, with two additional meetings each month either by department or house. Additionally, small interdisciplinary groups met to develop integrated lessons.

The district had initiated specific training for paraprofessionals using ParaPro software. Since beginning in 2004-2005, approximately 300 of the 450 paraprofessional have met the ‘highly qualified’ status of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.



## **Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support**

The Brockton Public Schools addressed the poor indicator ratings from the previous EQA examination, making progress on those in this standard. The school committee approved the superintendent's systemic changes to improve student achievement. The school district and each of its schools had clear operational policies, practices, and procedures that incorporated clear expectations. The central administration gave clear directives to principals about the need for improvement. The superintendent allowed the building principals to take the lead in accomplishing the goals set by the administration in the manner best suited to their respective schools.

The district implemented some measures to address attendance issues since the last EQA review, and during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years regularly monitored and evaluated student and staff attendance data. The district actively encouraged student attendance in conformity with its written policies and practices. The superintendent directed principals to improve upon expectations within their schools in the manner best suited to that school community. According to DOE data, average daily attendance in the district improved from 90.3 percent in 2002 to 93.0 percent in 2005, although the rate remained lower than the state requirement of 95 percent. According to documents and interviews, the district used software to track the number of absences and to look for patterns. Facilitators and liaisons contacted the homes of students with too many absences, and committees studied the causes and potential solutions. Attendance officers and school safety officers accompanied police looking for truant students, according to interviewees. The high school had an attendance policy that allowed students to "buy back" some unexcused absences and be eligible for summer school to make up a course. All the schools had their own unique ways to encourage good attendance, including prizes, meals, and ceremonies.

In 2005-2006, the teacher absenteeism rate in the district averaged 11.7 days including days out for professional development, and 11.2 days excluding professional development days, according to DOE data. Teachers were absent an average of 7.6 percent of the school year for short-term absences, compared to an average of 6.6 percent for 10 other urban districts. The district tracked teacher attendance using software to monitor number of days out and patterns of days absent, according to interviewees. Additionally, the central office purchased an automated

telephone computer system for recording staff absences at the high school. Teachers in the district could receive monetary incentives for good attendance annually and at retirement. Interviewees stated that teachers had faced disciplinary action for excessive absences, up to and including non-renewal of contracts for non-professional status teachers and counseling to retirement for professional status staff.

The district met the dictates of the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless and transient students. An administrator monitored these students and encouraged them to take high-level courses and participate fully in all other activities. The district had established committees to provide services and supplies, transportation, and community outreach for these students and their families, according to documents and interviews.

The district demonstrated sophisticated software to EQA examiners that it used to identify students who were not meeting grade-level expectations. As of May 1, 2007, teachers were required to use the programs to create formative and summative assessments at grades K-8 and for Algebra I at grade 9 to track student progress, using test questions provided or creating their own. Students not having success could access remedial services, according to documents and interviews. At the elementary level, all schools used the Reading First model of three-tiered interventions and flexible groupings. At the junior high level, the district provided a few math and ELA pilot remediation programs and extra periods per week of remediation for students requiring it. The high school and junior high schools used Plato computer labs, and the high school had a freshman academy for students requiring more support in a small group setting, according to documents reviewed and staff interviews.

### **Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Rather than reexamine the district only on those 2004 indicators on which the district was rated ‘Poor’ or ‘Unsatisfactory,’ the EQA conducted a full examination of the district on Standard VI covering the period 2004-2006. The EQA examiners gave the Brockton Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on ten and ‘Needs Improvement’ on three of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The budget process of the Brockton Public Schools was open and participatory. The district administration relied on principals and administrators with budget authority to develop the

budget. Administration reviewed budget requests, and the superintendent presented the budget to the school committee with three scenarios: needs based, level services based, and level funded. The district reviewed programs and staffing to reallocate resources, personnel, and programs to maximize funding. The district used student data in the budget development, and increased their use in recent years due to new technology and data warehousing initiatives in the district. The district allocated funding on a per pupil basis by elementary, junior high school, and high school levels. The district's supplemental programs relied primarily on grant funding. Resources were not adequate.

Although the city supported the district with minimum local contributions, it did support the district with the construction of two new schools that were under construction during the EQA site visit. The district's internal control structure was sound to ensure that procurement laws were followed, with levels of approval of purchasing, a bid review subcommittee of the school committee, and review by the city's procurement department, and that payroll was processed accurately. The district administration reported to the school committee and the superintendent on a regular basis regarding the status of the local budget.

The facilities varied regarding their condition. Overall, they were clean and well maintained. Capital planning occurred; however, funding limitations resulted in specific capital projects not being funded, although the city did have two new school facilities under construction.

# 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 Brockton 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 Brockton; 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.

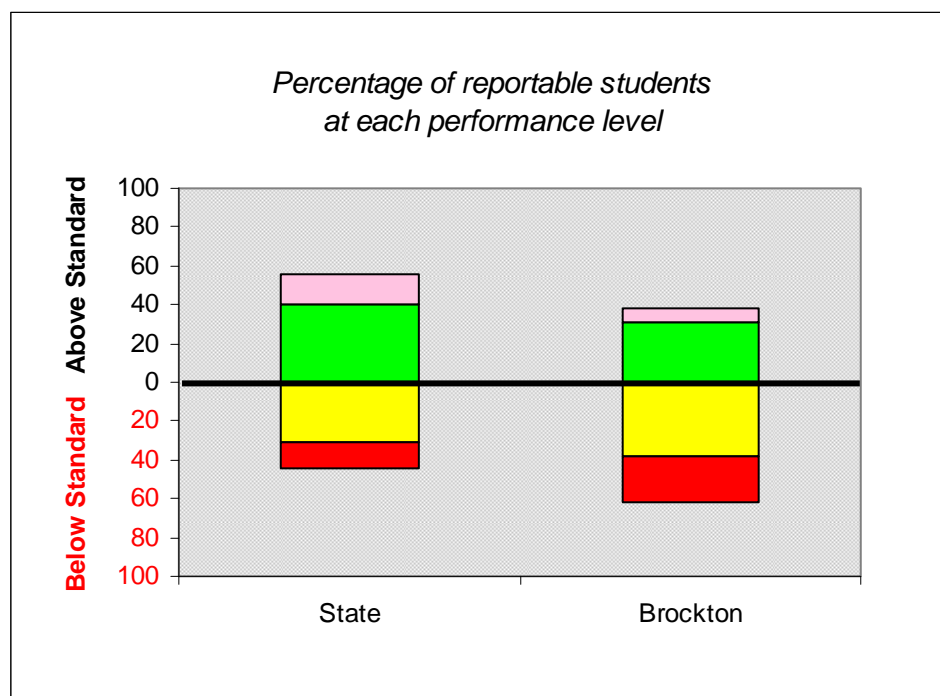
## **Achievement**

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

#### **Findings:**

- On average, less than two-fifths of all students in Brockton attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, much less than that statewide. Less than half of Brockton students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), less than one-third of Brockton students attained proficiency in math, and less than one-fifth of Brockton students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE). Ninety-two percent of the Class of 2006 attained a Competency Determination.
- Brockton's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 68 proficiency index (PI) points, 10 PI points less than that statewide. Brockton's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 32 PI points.
- In 2006, Brockton's proficiency gap in ELA was 25 PI points, nine PI points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of slightly more than three PI points annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP). Brockton's proficiency gap in math was 39 PI points in 2006, 11 PI points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly five PI points per year to achieve AYP. Brockton's proficiency gap in STE was 48 PI points, 19 PI points wider than that statewide.

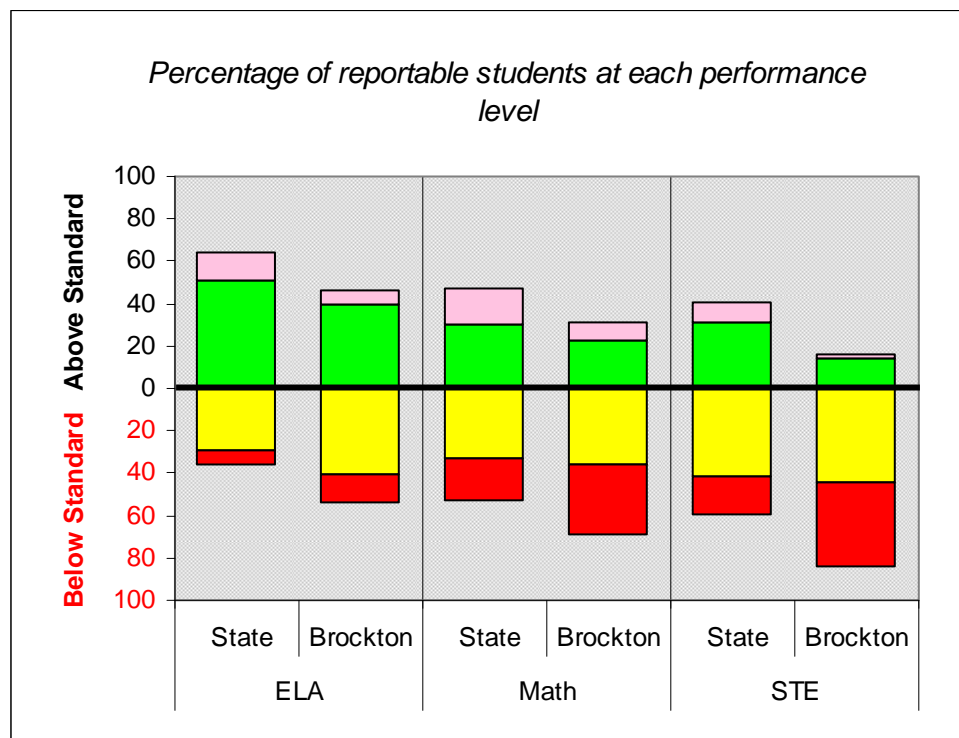
**Figure/Table 1: Student MCAS Test Performance, All Students, 2006**



		State	Brockton
	Advanced	15	7
	Proficient	41	31
	Needs Improvement	31	38
	Warning/Failing	14	23
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	56	38
	Average Proficiency Index (API)	78.3	67.8

In 2006, 38 percent of Brockton students attained proficiency on the MCAS tests overall, 18 percentage points less than that statewide. Twenty-three percent of Brockton students scored in the 'Warning/Failing' category, nine percentage points more than that statewide. Brockton's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 68 proficiency index (PI) points, 10 PI points less than that statewide. Brockton's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 32 PI points.

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



		ELA		Math		STE	
		State	Brockton	State	Brockton	State	Brockton
	Advanced	13	6	17	8	10	2
	Proficient	51	39	30	23	31	14
	Needs Improvement	29	41	33	36	42	45
	Warning/Failing	7	14	20	33	17	39
Percent Attaining Proficiency		64	45	47	31	41	16
Proficiency Index (PI)		84.3	75.0	72.3	60.6	71.4	52.1

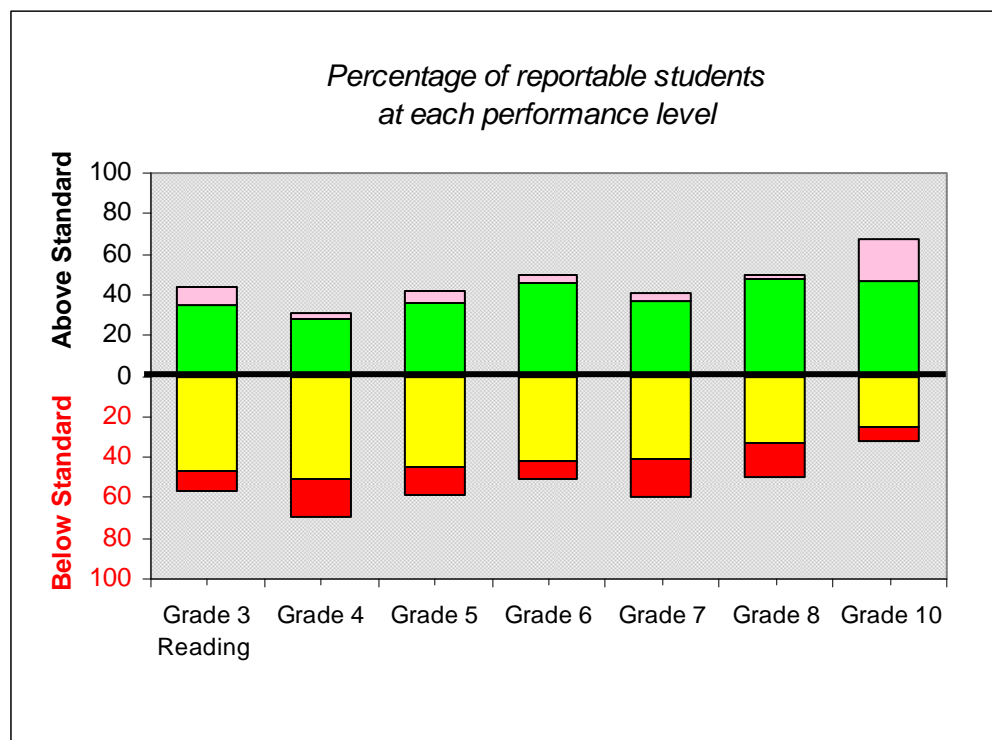
In 2006, achievement in English language arts (ELA), math, and science and technology/engineering (STE) was lower in Brockton than statewide. In Brockton, 45 percent of students attained proficiency in ELA, compared to 64 percent statewide; 31 percent attained proficiency in math, compared to 47 percent statewide; and 16 percent attained proficiency in STE, compared to 41 percent statewide.

Brockton students had stronger performance on the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA than in math and STE. The proficiency index for Brockton students in ELA was 75 PI points; in math, it was 61 PI points; and in STE, it was 52 PI points. These compare to the statewide figures of 84, 72, and 71 PI points, respectively.

The proficiency gap for Brockton students was 25 PI points in ELA, 39 PI points in math, and 48 PI points in STE. These compare to the statewide figures of 16, 28, and 29 PI points, respectively. Brockton's proficiency gaps would require an average annual improvement of approximately three PI points in ELA and nearly five PI points in math to meet AYP.



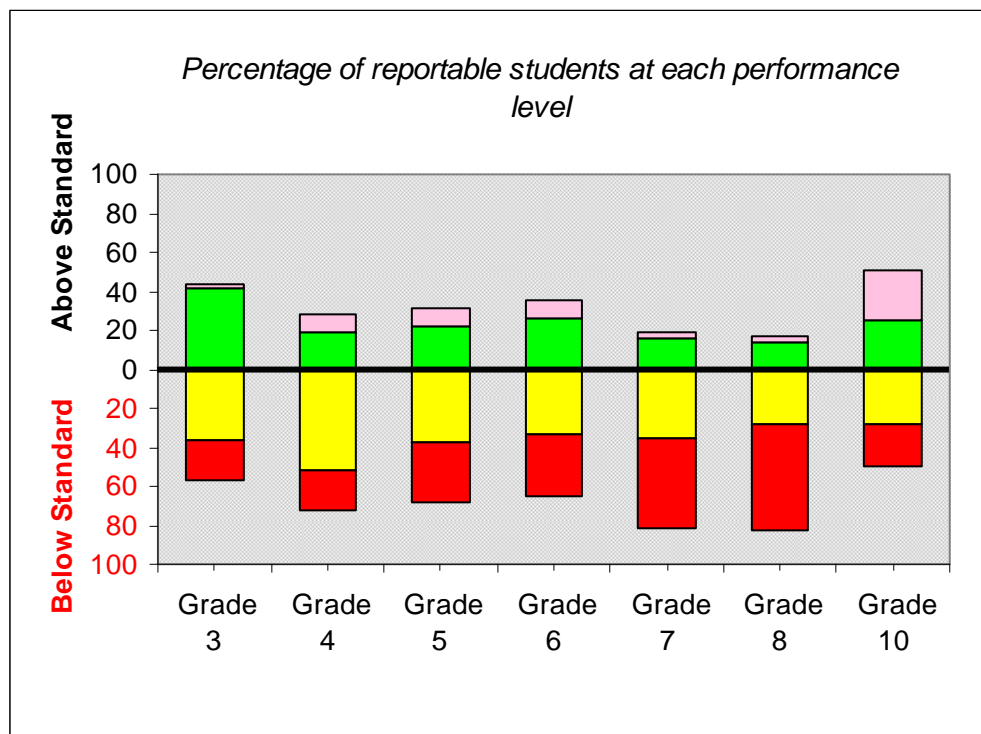
**Figure/Table 3: Student MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006**



		Grade 3 Reading	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
	Advanced	8	3	6	4	4	2	20
	Proficient	35	28	36	45	37	48	47
	Needs Improvement	47	51	45	42	41	33	25
	Warning/Failing	9	18	13	8	18	17	8
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	43	31	42	49	41	50	67

The percentage of Brockton students attaining proficiency in 2006 in ELA varied by grade level, ranging from a low of 31 percent of grade 4 students to a high of 67 percent of grade 10 students.

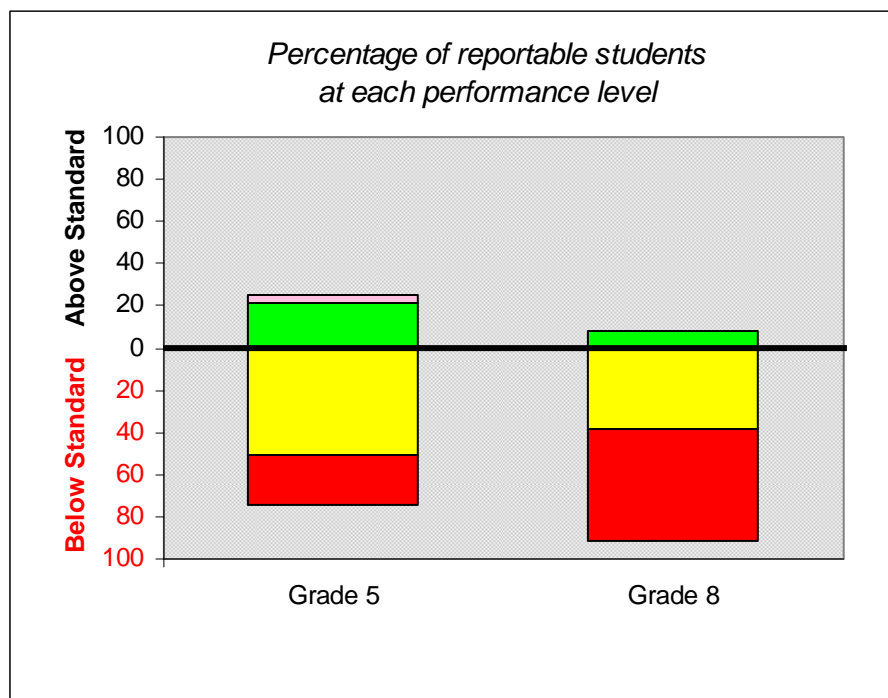
**Figure/Table 4: Student MCAS Math Test Performance, by Grade, 2006**



		Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
	Advanced	2	9	9	9	3	3	26
	Proficient	42	18	22	26	16	14	25
	Needs Improvement	36	52	38	33	36	28	28
	Warning/Failing	20	21	31	32	45	55	21
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	44	27	31	35	19	17	51

The percentage of Brockton students attaining proficiency in 2006 in math also varied by grade level, ranging from a low of 17 percent of grade 8 students to a high of 51 percent of grade 10 students.

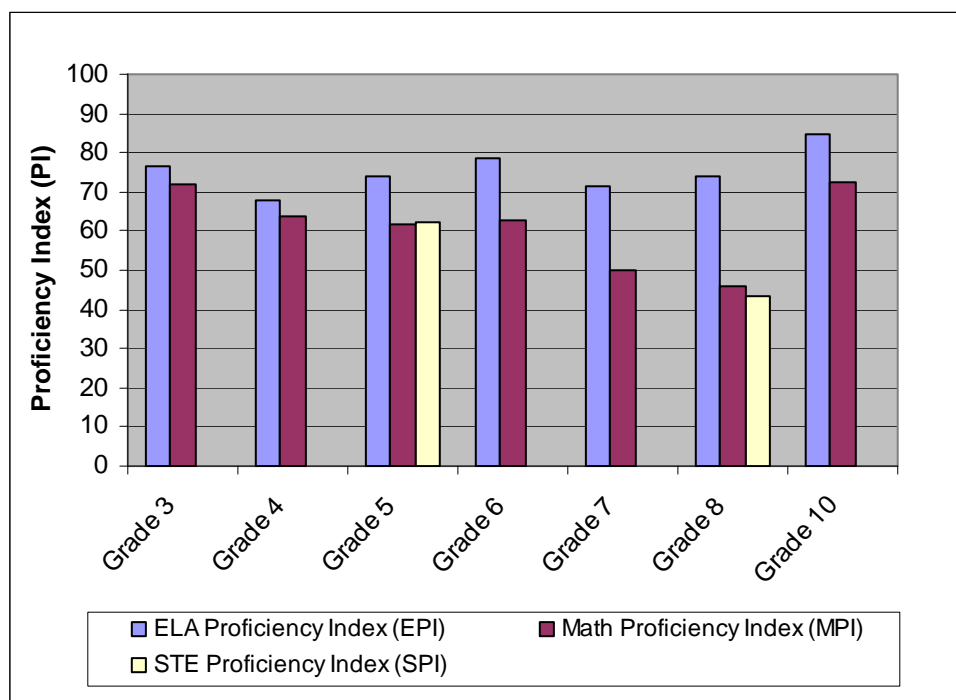
**Figure/Table 5: Student MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006**



		Grade 5	Grade 8
	Advanced	4	0
	Proficient	21	8
	Needs Improvement	51	39
	Warning/Failing	24	53
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	25	8

In Brockton in 2006, 25 percent of grade 5 students attained proficiency in STE, and eight percent of grade 8 students did so.

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

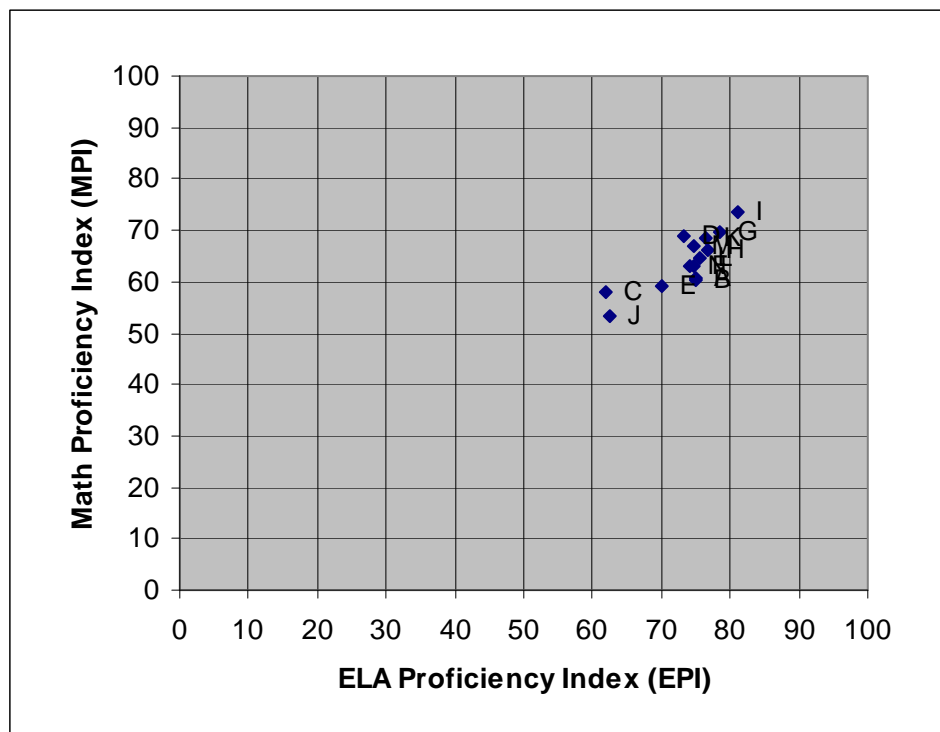


	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
ELA Proficiency Index (EPI)	76.5	67.9	74.1	78.7	71.2	74.1	84.9
Math Proficiency Index (MPI)	72.1	64.0	61.8	62.8	49.9	45.8	72.6
STE Proficiency Index (SPI)			62.2			43.3	

By grade, Brockton's ELA proficiency gap in 2006 ranged from a low of 15 PI points at grade 10 to a high of 32 PI points at grade 4. Brockton's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of 27 PI points at grade 10 to a high of 54 PI points at grade 8. Brockton's STE proficiency gap was 38 PI points at grade 5 and 57 PI points at grade 8.

**Figures/Tables 7 A, B: Student MCAS ELA Proficiency Index vs. Math Proficiency Index, by School, 2006**

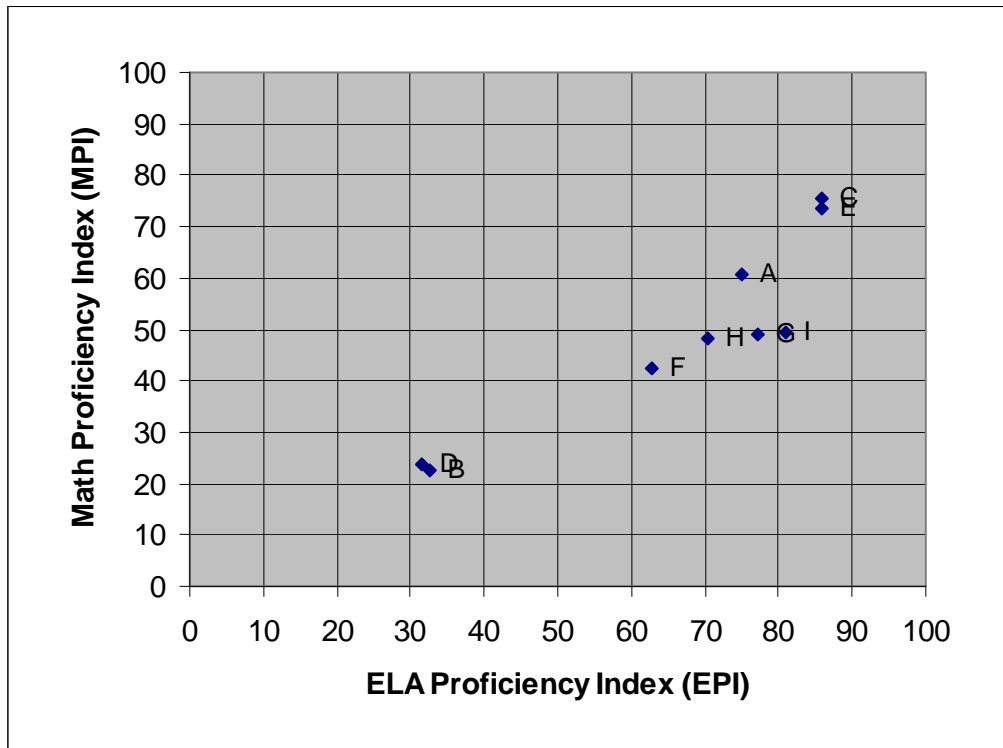
**A. Elementary Schools**



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Brockton	75.0	60.6	16,365
B	Ashfield Elementary	75.1	60.5	493
C	Belmont Street Elementary	62.0	58.0	488
D	Brookfield Elementary	73.4	68.9	702
E	Downey Elementary	70.2	59.3	676
F	Dr. W. Arnone Community	74.7	63.1	777
G	Edgar B. Davis Community	78.5	69.6	774
H	Franklin Elementary	76.7	66.2	359
I	Hancock Elementary	81.0	73.4	810
J	Huntington Elementary	62.4	53.3	404
K	John F. Kennedy Elem	76.5	68.6	736
L	Joseph F. Plouffe Elem	75.5	64.7	866
M	Louis F. Angelo Elem	74.7	67.0	838
N	Oscar F. Raymond Elem	74.2	62.9	625
O	Whitman Elementary	70.9	65.5	232

The ELA proficiency gap for Brockton's elementary schools in 2006 ranged from a low of 19 PI points at Hancock Elementary School to a high of 38 PI points at Belmont Street Elementary School and Huntington Elementary School. The math proficiency gap for elementary schools ranged from a low of 27 PI points at Hancock Elementary School to a high of 47 PI points at Huntington Elementary School.

## B. Middle/Junior High/High Schools



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Brockton	75.0	60.6	16,365
B	B. B. Russell Alternative School	32.7	22.7	137
C	Gilmore Academy	85.8	75.3	536
D	Ithaka/Lincoln School	31.6	23.6	69
E	Brockton High School	86.0	73.5	1,956
F	East Junior High School	62.8	42.3	1,158
G	North Junior High School	77.1	48.9	1,255
H	South Middle School	70.5	48.3	1,233
I	West Junior High School	81.0	49.3	1,241

The ELA proficiency gap for Brockton's middle and high schools in 2006 ranged from a low of 14 PI points at Gilmore Academy and Brockton High School to a high of 68 PI points at Ithaka/Lincoln School. Brockton's math proficiency gap for middle and high schools ranged from a low of 25 PI points at Gilmore Academy to a high of 77 PI points at B. B. Russell Alternative School.

## **Equity of Achievement**

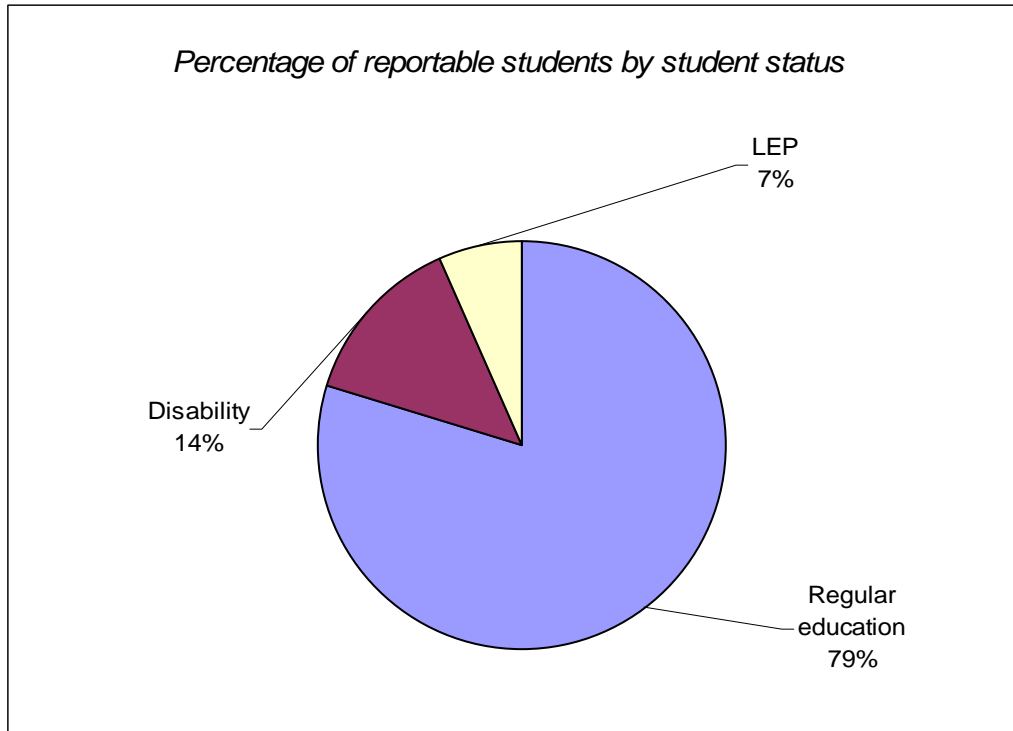
### **Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?**

#### **Findings:**

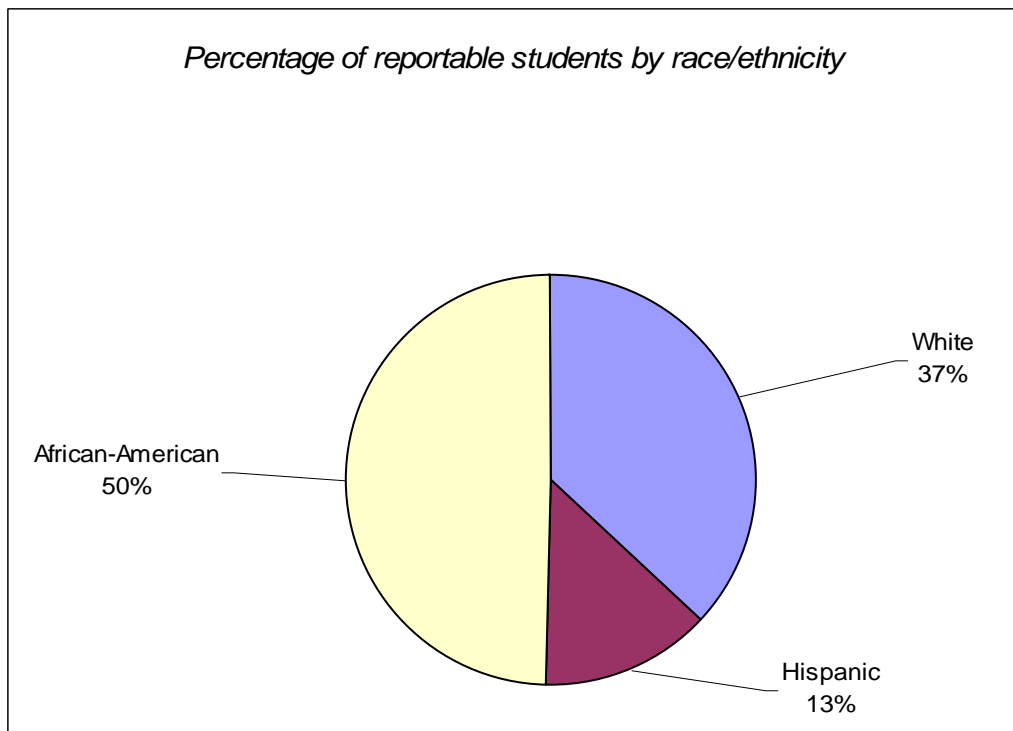
- MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Brockton students. Of the 10 measurable subgroups in Brockton in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 34 PI points in ELA (non low-income students, LEP students, respectively) and 33 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).
- The proficiency gaps in Brockton in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, LEP students, Hispanic students, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program). Roughly one-tenth of students with disabilities and LEP students attained proficiency, and less than one-third of Hispanic, African-American, and low-income students did so.
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, and non low-income students. Roughly half the students in each of these subgroups attained proficiency.
- The proficiency gap for male students was wider than the district average in ELA but narrower in math, while the proficiency gap for female students was narrower than the district average in ELA but wider in math. Roughly two-fifths of the students in both subgroups attained proficiency.

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

**A.**

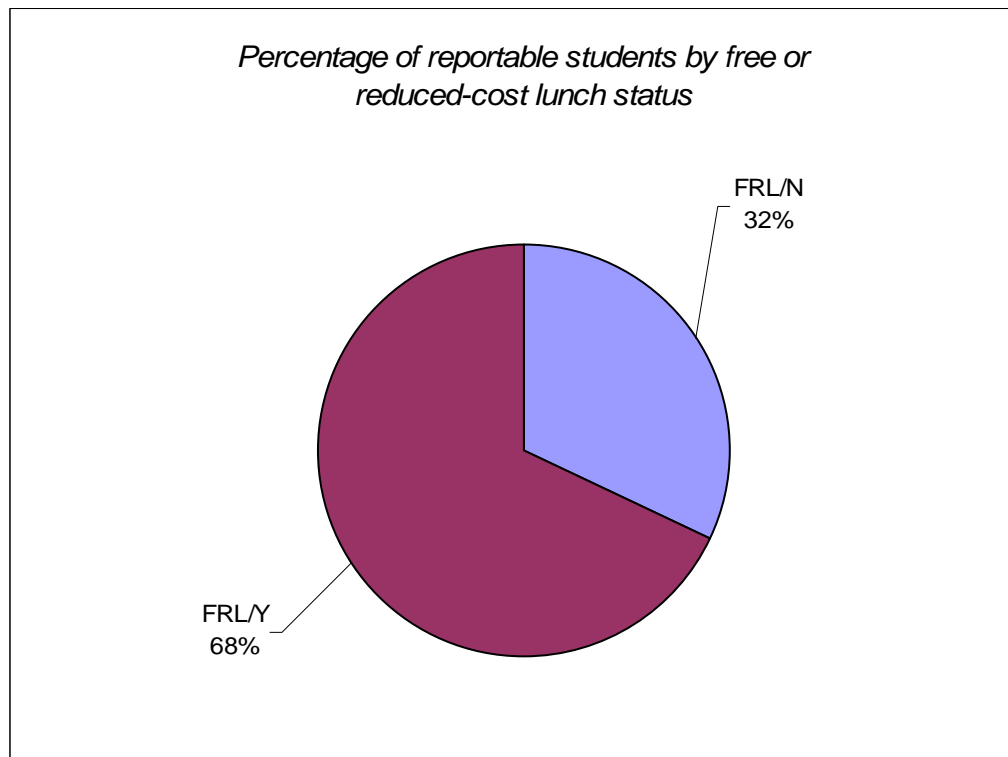


**B.**





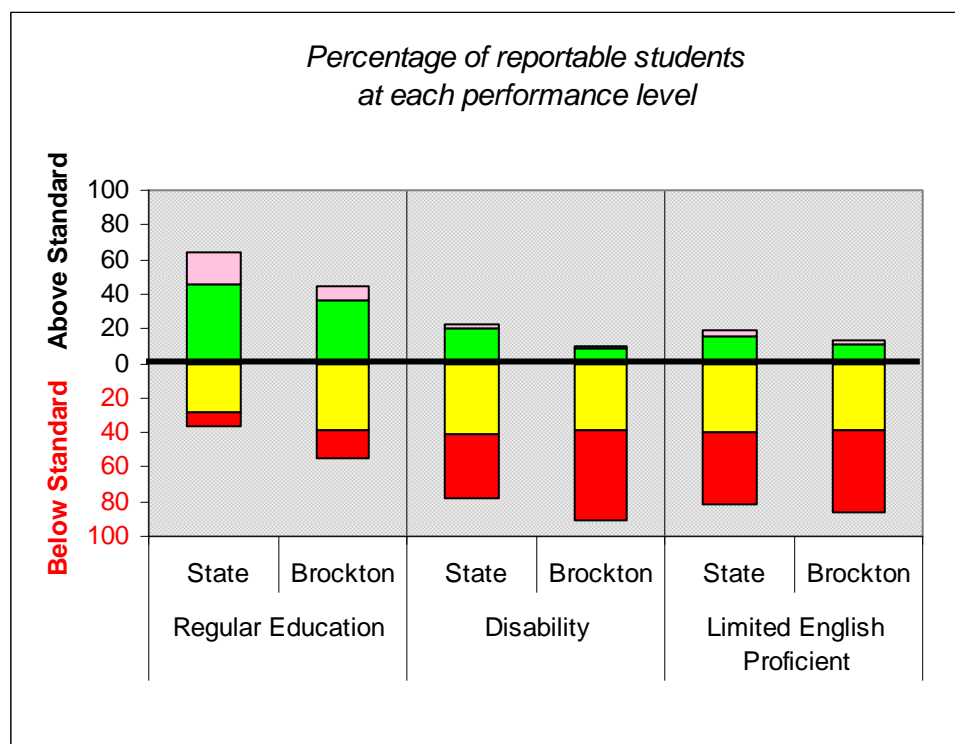
C.



	Subgroup	Number of Students
Student status	Regular education	6,651
	Disability	1,137
	LEP	548
Race/ethnicity	White	2,966
	Hispanic	1,067
	African-American	4,007
Free or reduced-cost lunch status	FRL/N	2,673
	FRL/Y	5,663

Brockton has large minority and low-income populations. In Brockton in 2006, 14 percent of the students were students with disabilities, seven percent were students with limited English proficiency (LEP), 63 percent were non-White students, and 68 percent were students participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

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

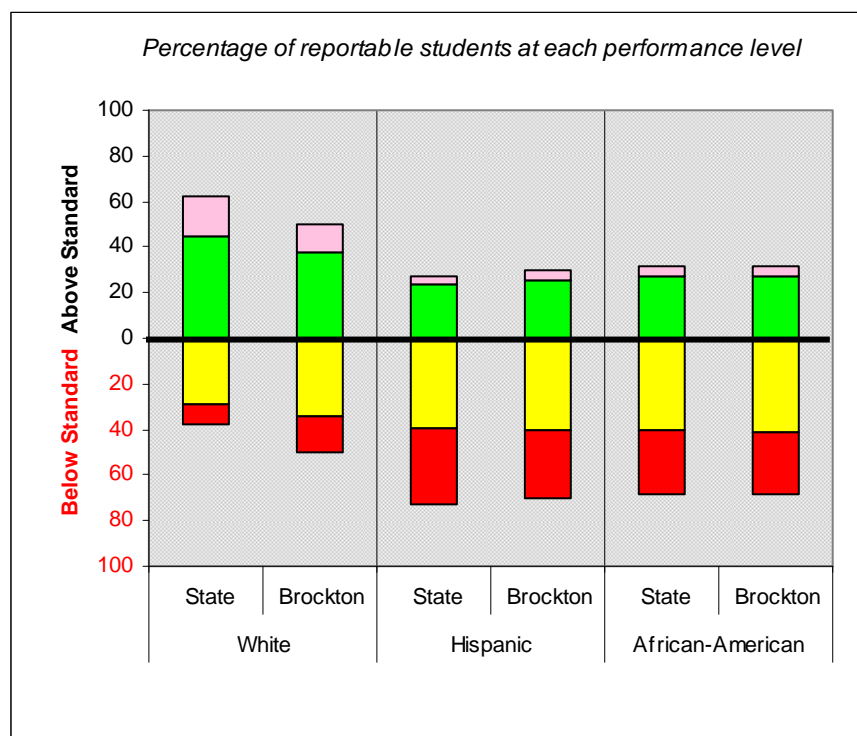


		Regular Education		Disability		Limited English Proficient	
		State	Brockton	State	Brockton	State	Brockton
	Advanced	18	9	2	1	3	2
	Proficient	46	36	20	8	16	11
	Needs Improvement	28	38	41	38	40	39
	Warning/Failing	8	17	36	52	42	48
Percent Attaining Proficiency		64	45	22	9	19	13
Average Proficiency Index (API)		84.0	73.1	55.9	44.4	52.0	47.4

In Brockton in 2006, the proficiency rate of regular education students was five times greater than that of students with disabilities and more than three times greater than that of students with limited English proficiency (LEP). Forty-five percent of regular education students, nine percent of students with disabilities, and 13 percent of LEP students attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests.

Brockton's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 27 PI points for regular education students, 56 PI points for students with disabilities, and 53 PI points for LEP students. The average performance gap between regular education students and students with disabilities was 29 PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it was 26 PI points.

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

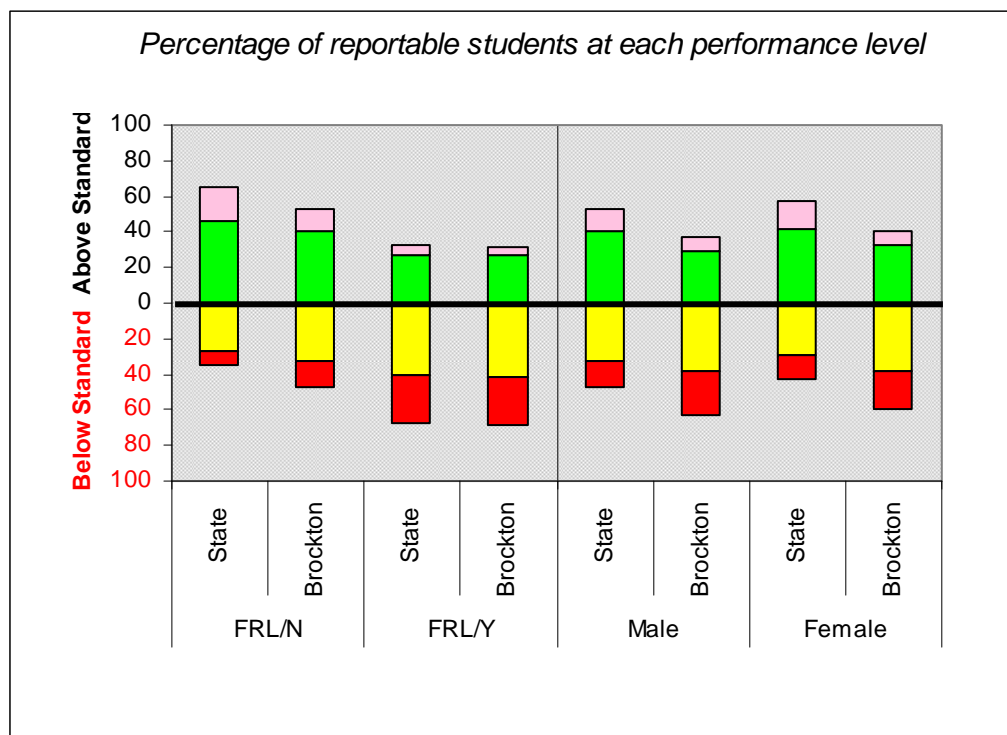


		White		Hispanic		African-American	
		State	Brockton	State	Brockton	State	Brockton
	Advanced	17	12	4	4	4	4
	Proficient	45	38	23	26	27	27
	Needs Improvement	29	34	40	41	40	41
	Warning/Failing	9	16	33	30	28	28
Percent Attaining Proficiency		62	50	27	30	31	31
Average Proficiency Index (API)		82.9	75.5	59.2	61.8	63.2	63.2

In Brockton in 2006, performance on the MCAS tests varied by race/ethnicity, as 50 percent of White students, 31 percent of African-American students, and 30 percent of Hispanic students attained overall proficiency.

Brockton's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 24 PI points for White students, 37 PI points for African-American students, and 38 PI points for Hispanic students. The average performance gap between White and African-American students was 13 PI points, and between White and Hispanic students it was 14 PI points.

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

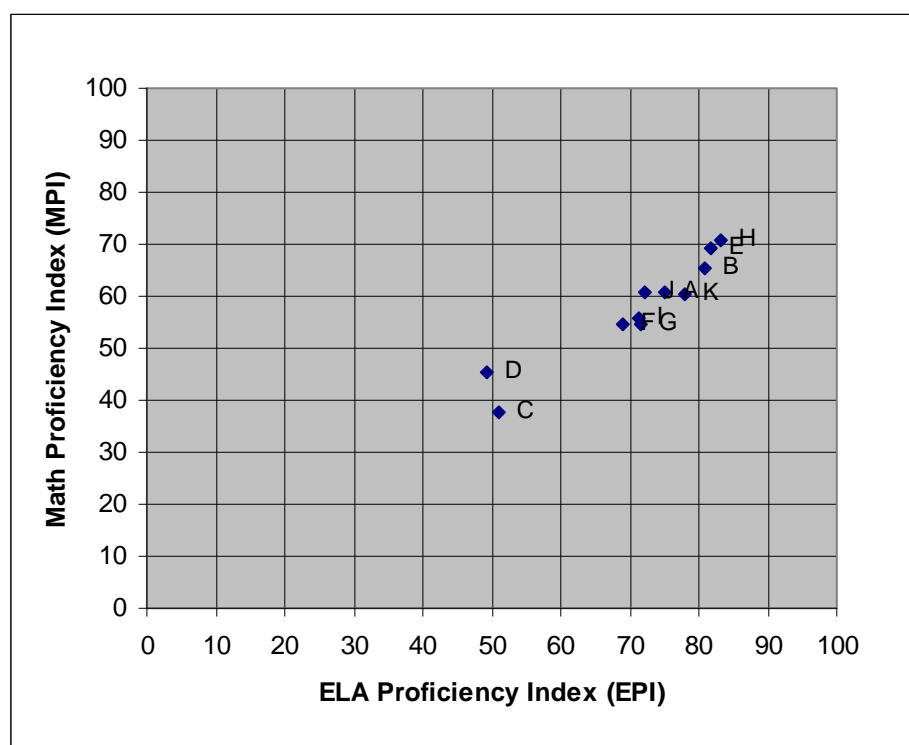


		FRL/N		FRL/Y		Male		Female	
		State	Brockton	State	Brockton	State	Brockton	State	Brockton
	Advanced	19	13	5	5	13	7	17	8
	Proficient	46	40	27	27	40	30	41	33
	Needs Improvement	27	32	40	41	32	39	29	38
	Warning/Failing	8	15	27	27	15	25	13	22
Percent Attaining Proficiency		65	53	32	32	53	37	58	41
Average Proficiency Index (API)		84.5	77.1	63.5	63.5	77.1	66.6	79.6	69.2

In Brockton in 2006, 32 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests, compared to 53 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The average proficiency gap was 36 PI points for low-income students and 23 PI points for non low-income students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was 13 PI points.

Performance on the 2006 MCAS tests was fairly comparable for male and female students in Brockton, with 41 percent of female students and 37 percent of male students attaining overall proficiency. The average proficiency gap was 33 PI points for male students and 31 PI points for female students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was two PI points.

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

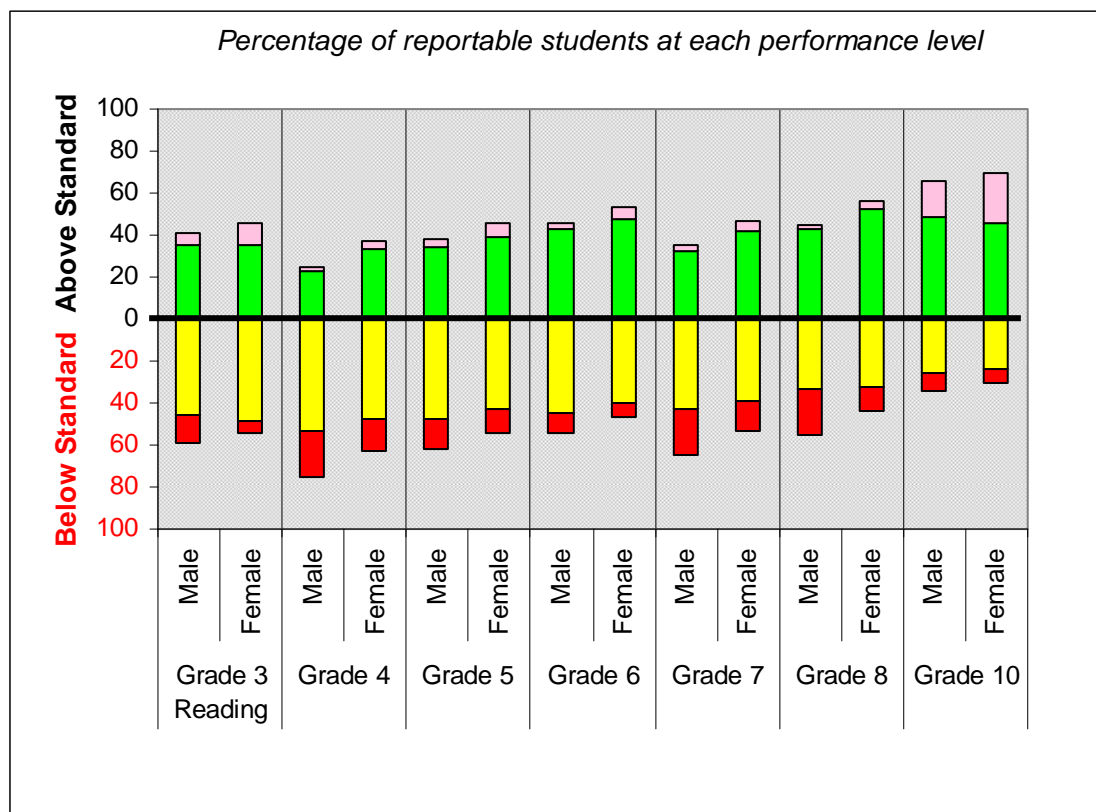


		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Brockton	75.0	60.6	16,365
B	Regular Education	80.8	65.3	13,259
C	Disability	50.9	37.8	2,008
D	LEP	49.4	45.4	1,098
E	White	81.6	69.4	5,821
F	Hispanic	69.0	54.6	2,100
G	African-American	71.5	54.8	7,860
H	FRL/N	83.2	70.9	5,277
I	FRL/Y	71.2	55.7	11,081
J	Male	72.3	60.8	8,371
K	Female	78.0	60.3	7,987

Of the 10 measurable subgroups in Brockton in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 34 PI points in ELA (non low-income students, LEP students, respectively) and 33 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).

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

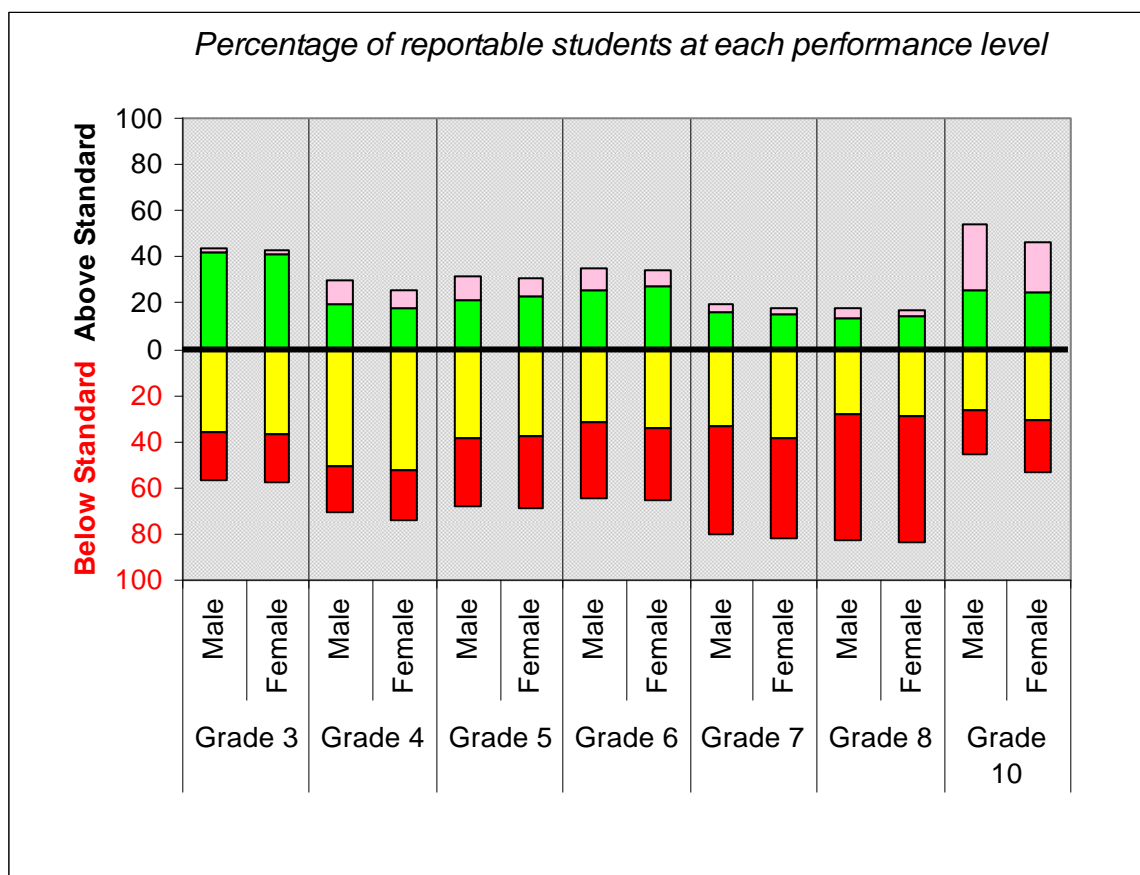
**Figure/Table 13: Student MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance, by Grade and Gender, 2006**



		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	7	10	2	4	4	7	3	5	3	5	1	4	18	23
	Proficient	35	35	23	33	34	39	43	48	33	42	43	52	48	46
	Needs Improvement	46	49	54	48	47	42	44	40	43	39	34	32	26	24
	Warning/ Failing	13	6	21	15	15	12	10	7	22	14	22	12	8	7
Percent Attaining Proficiency		42	45	25	37	38	46	46	53	36	47	44	56	66	69

In Brockton in 2006, female students outperformed male students on all grade-level ELA tests.

**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	1	2	10	9	10	8	10	8	4	3	4	2	29	22
	Proficient	42	41	20	17	21	23	25	27	16	15	14	15	25	24
	Needs Improvement	36	37	51	52	38	37	32	35	33	38	28	29	27	30
	Warning/ Failing	21	20	20	22	30	32	33	31	47	44	55	55	19	23
Percent Attaining Proficiency		43	43	30	26	31	31	35	35	20	18	18	17	54	46

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

## **Improvement**

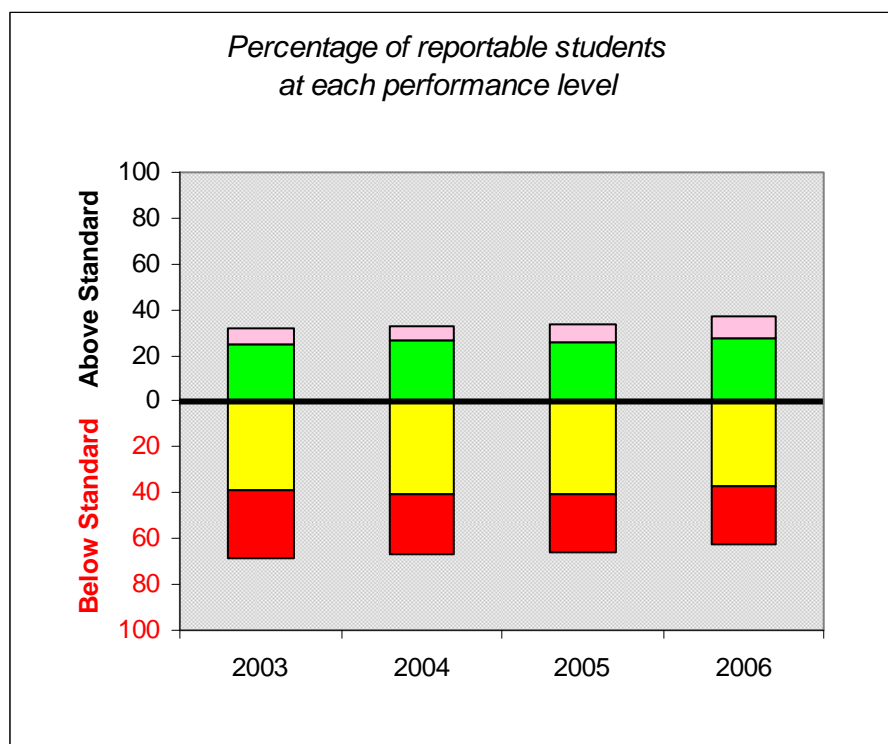
### **Has the district's MCAS test performance improved over time?**

#### **Findings:**

- Between 2003 and 2006, Brockton's MCAS performance showed some improvement overall, in ELA, and in math, and a decline in STE.
- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories rose by five percentage points between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category decreased by four percentage points. The average proficiency gap in Brockton narrowed from 38 PI points in 2003 to 34 PI points in 2006. This resulted in an improvement rate, or a closing of the proficiency gap, of 11 percent.
- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Brockton showed slight improvement, at an average of nearly one PI point annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of nine percent, a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.
- Math performance in Brockton showed more improvement, at an average of nearly two PI points annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of 12 percent, also a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Brockton had a decline in STE performance, decreasing by approximately one PI point over the two-year period.



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



**A.**

		2003	2004	2005	2006
	Advanced	7	7	8	10
	Proficient	25	26	26	27
	Needs Improvement	39	41	41	37
	Warning/Failing	29	26	25	25
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	32	33	34	37
	Average Proficiency Index (API)	62.1	64.1	64.6	66.2

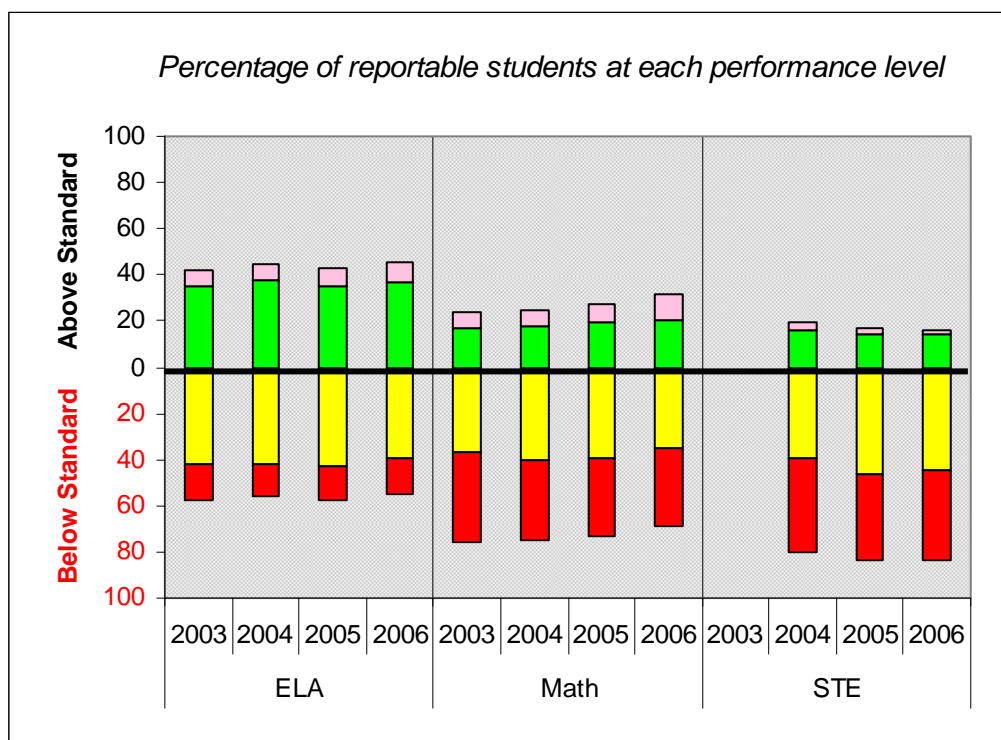
**B. n-values**

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Advanced	622	571	623	798
Proficient	2,166	2,226	2,110	2,239
Needs Improvement	3,436	3,463	3,326	3,044
Warning/Failing	2,553	2,213	2,068	2,081
Total	8,777	8,473	8,127	8,162

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 Brockton students attaining overall proficiency on the MCAS tests increased from 32 percent in 2003 to 37 percent in 2006. The percentage of students in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category decreased from 29 percent in 2003 to 25 percent in 2006. The average proficiency gap in Brockton narrowed from 38 PI points in 2003 to 34 PI points in 2006, resulting in an improvement rate of 11 percent.

**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	7	7	7	8	7	7	8	11		4	2	2
	Proficient	35	38	35	37	17	18	19	21		16	15	14
	Needs Improvement	42	42	43	40	37	40	39	35		39	46	45
	Warning/ Failing	16	14	14	15	39	35	34	33		41	37	39
Percent Attaining Proficiency		42	45	42	45	24	25	27	32		20	17	16
Proficiency Index (PI)		71.5	74.2	73.1	74.0	55.0	56.8	58.3	60.5		53.0	53.1	52.1

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 Brockton students attaining proficiency in ELA increased from 42 percent in 2003 to 45 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in ELA narrowed from 28 PI points in 2003 to 26 PI points in 2006, resulting in an improvement rate of nine percent, a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.

The percentage of Brockton students attaining proficiency in math increased from 24 percent in 2003 to 32 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in math narrowed from 45 PI points in 2003 to 39 PI points in 2006, resulting in an improvement rate of 12 percent, also a rate lower than that required to meet AYP.

The percentage of Brockton students attaining proficiency in STE decreased from 20 percent in 2004 to 16 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in STE widened from 47 PI points in 2004 to 48 PI points in 2006.

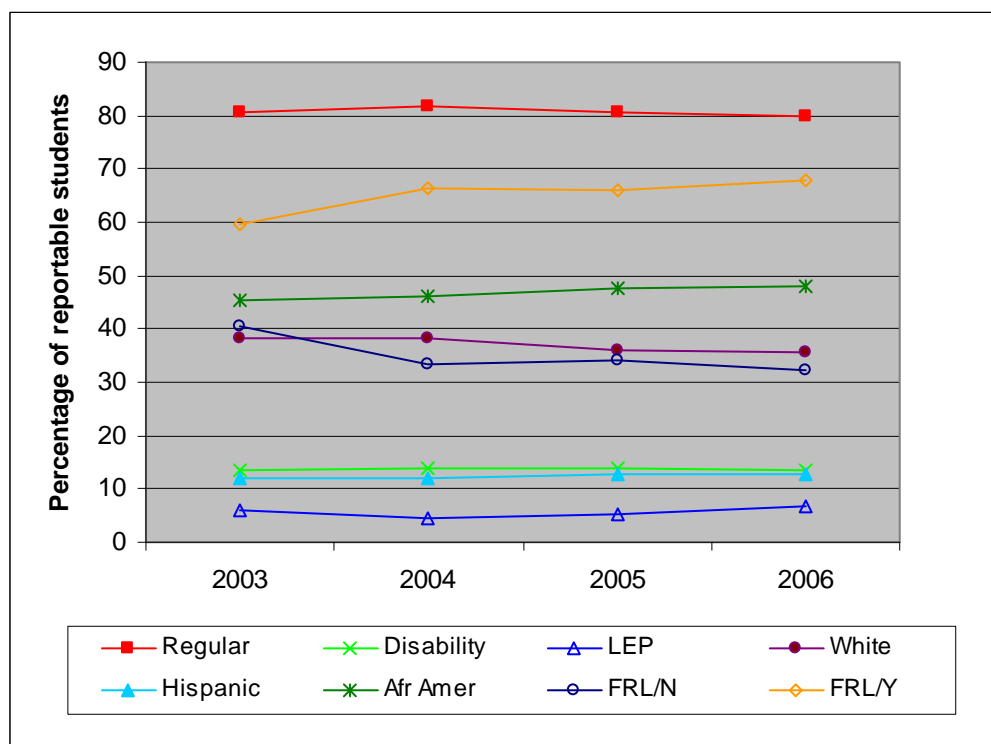
## **Equity of Improvement**

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

### **Findings:**

- In Brockton, all student subgroups except students with disabilities and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was LEP students.
- In math, all subgroups in Brockton showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in math also was LEP students.
- The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA narrowed from 52 PI points in 2003 to 36 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math narrowed from 39 to 34 PI points over this period.

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



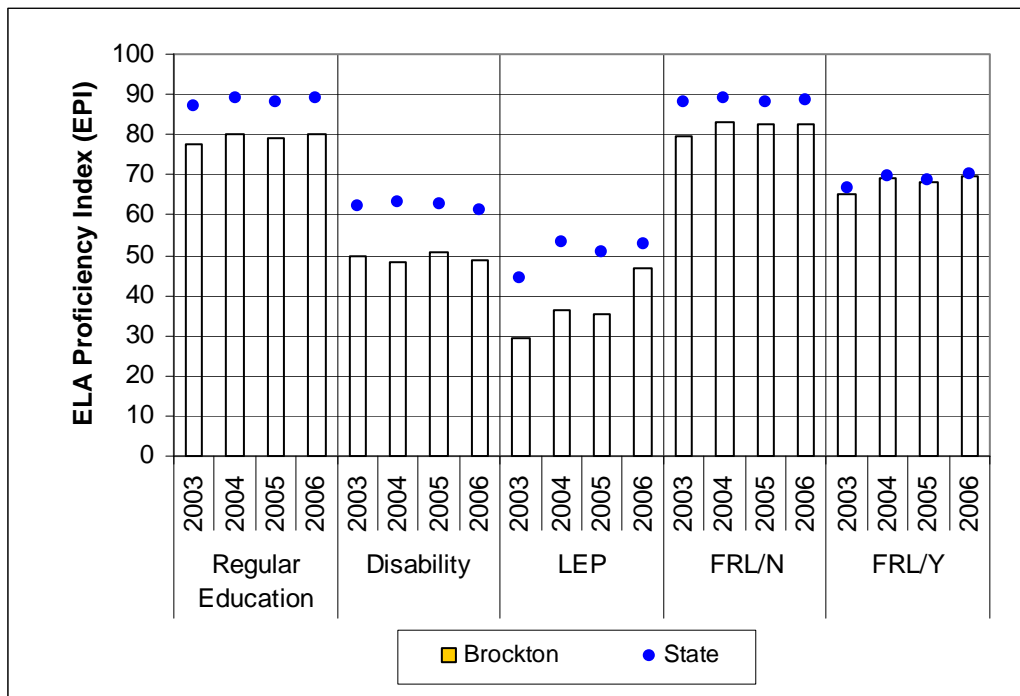
	Number of Students				Percentage of students			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
Brockton	6,512	7,433	7,126	8,336	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular	5,239	6,083	5,758	6,651	80.5	81.8	80.8	79.8
Disability	888	1,025	997	1,137	13.6	13.8	14.0	13.6
LEP	385	325	371	548	5.9	4.4	5.2	6.6
White	2,498	2,853	2,572	2,966	38.4	38.4	36.1	35.6
Hispanic	791	883	913	1,067	12.1	11.9	12.8	12.8
Afr Amer	2,953	3,426	3,391	4,007	45.3	46.1	47.6	48.1
FRL/N	2,628	2,493	2,421	2,673	40.4	33.5	34.0	32.1
FRL/Y	3,884	4,940	4,705	5,663	59.6	66.5	66.0	67.9

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.

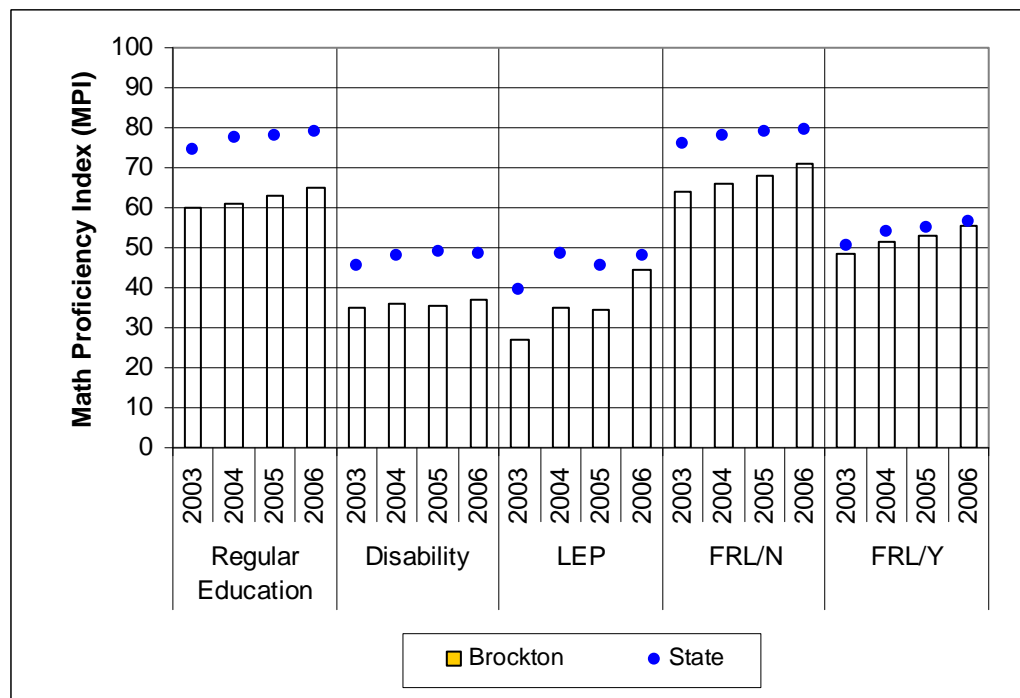
Brockton had a substantial increase in its proportion of low-income students between 2003 and 2006. During this period, the proportion of low-income (FRL/Y) students increased by more than eight percentage points, while that of students with disabilities stayed the same, that of LEP students and Hispanic students increased by less than one percentage point, and that of African-American students increased by nearly three percentage points.

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

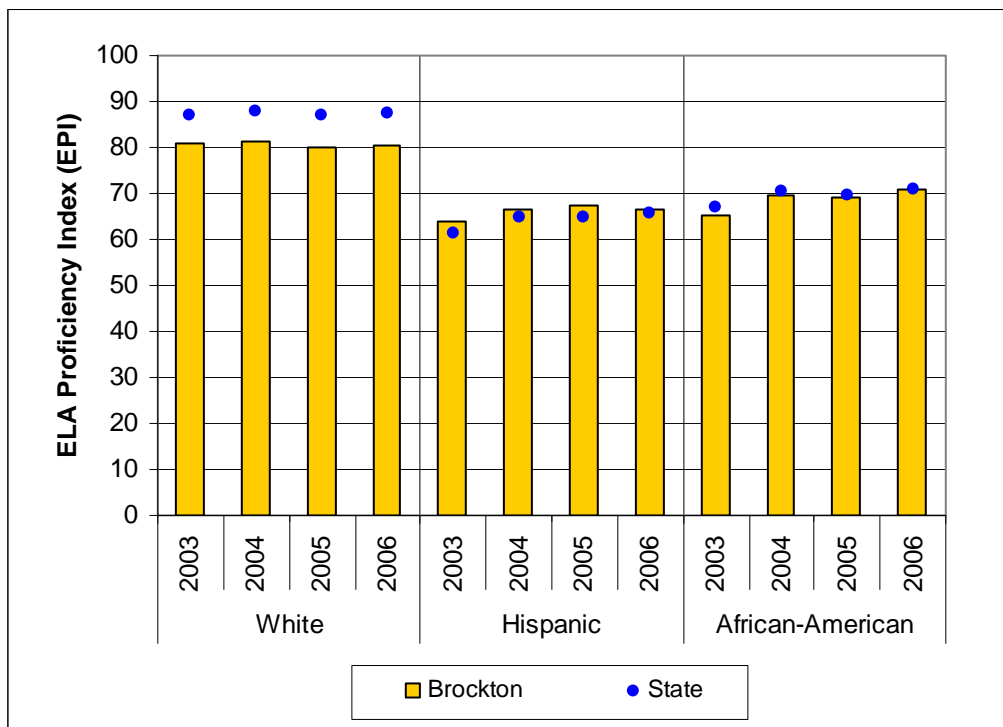
### A. ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



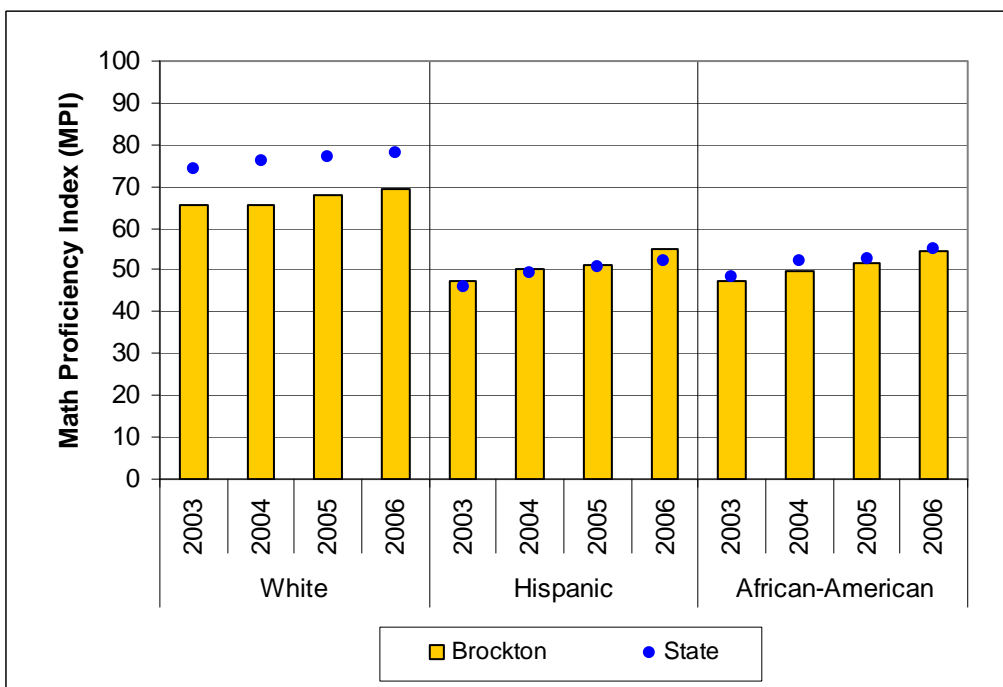
### B. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



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



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

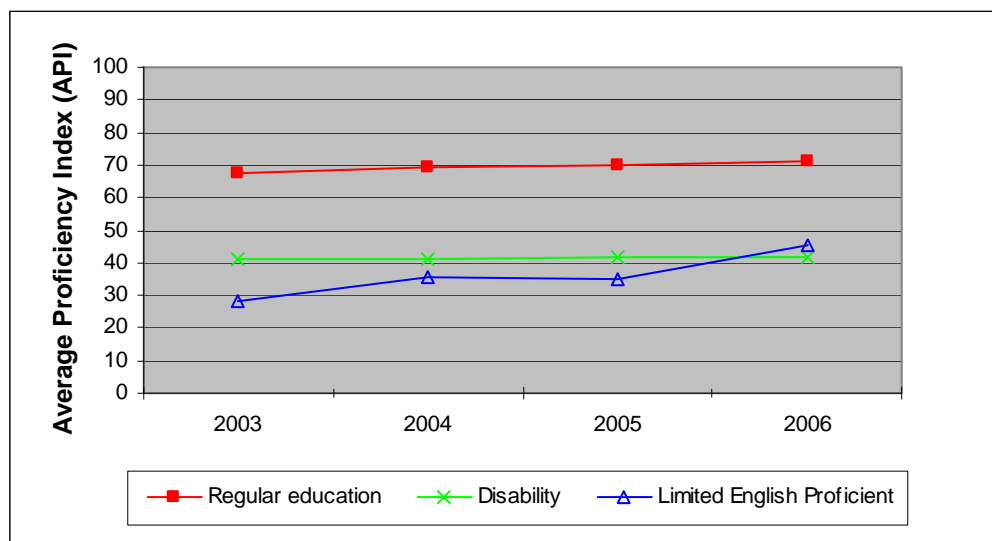


State				Brockton			
Subgroup	Year	EPI	MPI	Subgroup	Year	EPI	MPI
Regular Education	2003	87.3	74.7	Regular Education	2003	77.7	59.8
	2004	89.2	77.4		2004	80.1	61.2
	2005	88.3	78.2		2005	78.9	63.1
	2006	89.0	78.9		2006	80.0	65.2
Disability	2003	62.1	45.3	Disability	2003	49.6	35.1
	2004	63.3	47.9		2004	48.1	35.8
	2005	62.9	49.0		2005	50.5	35.7
	2006	61.2	48.4		2006	48.8	36.8
LEP	2003	44.4	39.6	LEP	2003	29.3	26.9
	2004	53.4	48.4		2004	36.5	34.8
	2005	50.9	45.6		2005	35.2	34.6
	2006	52.9	47.9		2006	46.6	44.4
FRL/N	2003	87.9	75.9	FRL/N	2003	79.7	64.2
	2004	88.9	78.1		2004	83.3	66.1
	2005	88.3	79.0		2005	82.5	68.1
	2006	88.6	79.7		2006	82.6	70.8
FRL/Y	2003	66.6	50.7	FRL/Y	2003	65.4	48.4
	2004	69.7	53.9		2004	69.0	51.3
	2005	68.8	55.0		2005	68.2	52.9
	2006	70.0	56.3		2006	69.7	55.3
White	2003	86.9	74.4	White	2003	81.0	65.7
	2004	87.7	76.2		2004	81.5	65.7
	2005	87.1	77.2		2005	80.2	67.8
	2006	87.4	77.8		2006	80.4	69.3
Hispanic	2003	61.4	45.7	Hispanic	2003	64.1	47.3
	2004	64.8	49.3		2004	66.5	50.3
	2005	64.6	50.6		2005	67.5	51.2
	2006	65.8	52.2		2006	66.4	54.9
African-American	2003	67.1	48.4	African-American	2003	65.1	47.3
	2004	70.5	52.3		2004	69.7	49.9
	2005	69.4	52.8		2005	69.0	51.9
	2006	70.9	55.2		2006	71.0	54.6

In Brockton, all student subgroups with the exception of students with disabilities and White students had improved performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in ELA was LEP students. In math, all subgroups in Brockton showed improved performance between 2003 and 2006. The most improved subgroup in math also was LEP students.

The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA narrowed from 52 PI points in 2003 to 36 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math narrowed from 39 to 34 PI points over this period.

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



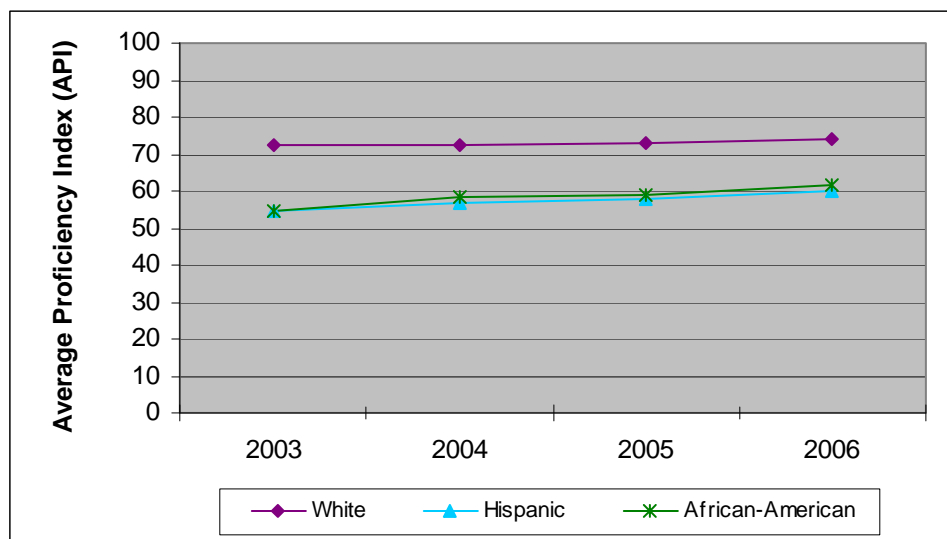
		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
Regular education	2003	67.5	77.7	59.8	49	28
	2004	69.1	80.1	61.2	52	29
	2005	69.8	78.9	63.1	50	31
	2006	71.5	80.0	65.2	53	36
Disability	2003	41.1	49.6	35.1	12	6
	2004	40.9	48.1	35.8	8	6
	2005	42.0	50.5	35.7	13	6
	2006	41.9	48.8	36.8	10	7
Limited English Proficient	2003	28.0	29.3	26.9	3	2
	2004	35.5	36.5	34.8	5	6
	2005	34.9	35.2	34.6	2	5
	2006	45.4	46.6	44.4	9	15

Regular education students and limited English proficient (LEP) students in Brockton had improved overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006, while overall performance of students with disabilities was relatively flat. The average proficiency gap for Brockton's regular education students narrowed from 32 to 28 PI points; for students with disabilities, it narrowed from 59 to 58 PI points; and for LEP students it narrowed from 72 to 55 PI points. These gains resulted in improvement rates of 12 percent for regular education students, one percent for students with disabilities, and 24 percent for LEP students.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between regular education students and students with disabilities widened by three PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it narrowed by 13 PI points.



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

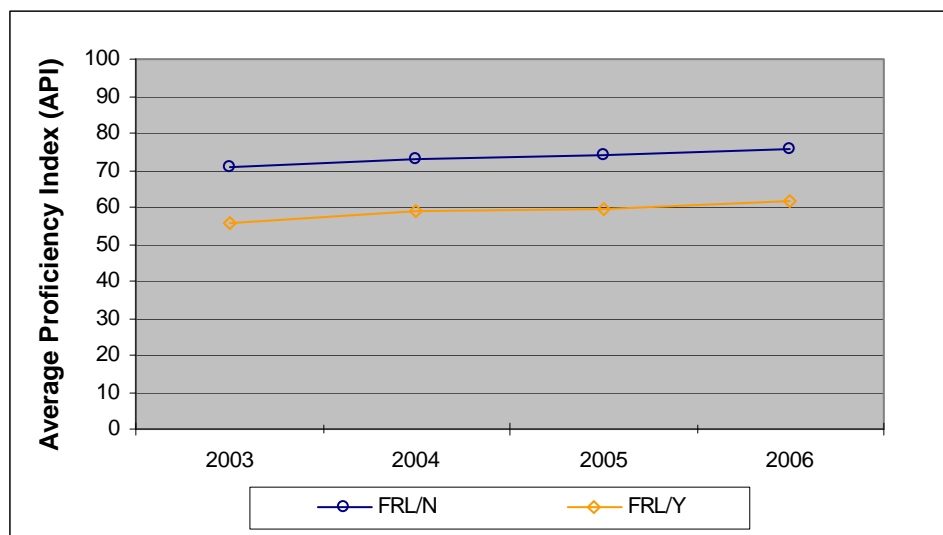


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
White	2003	72.3	81.0	65.7	56	36
	2004	72.3	81.5	65.7	57	35
	2005	73.1	80.2	67.8	55	39
	2006	73.9	80.4	69.3	55	44
Hispanic	2003	54.6	64.1	47.3	30	15
	2004	56.9	66.5	50.3	33	18
	2005	58.1	67.5	51.2	33	18
	2006	59.8	66.4	54.9	34	24
African-American	2003	54.8	65.1	47.3	32	15
	2004	58.3	69.7	49.9	37	16
	2005	59.2	69.0	51.9	35	19
	2006	61.6	71.0	54.6	40	23

All three racial subgroups in Brockton had improved overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006, although for White students it was slight. The average proficiency gap for White students narrowed from 28 to 26 PI points; for Hispanic students, it narrowed from 45 to 40 PI points; and for African-American students, it narrowed from 45 to 38 PI points. These gains resulted in improvement rates of six percent for White students, 11 percent for Hispanic students, and 15 percent for African-American students.

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

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

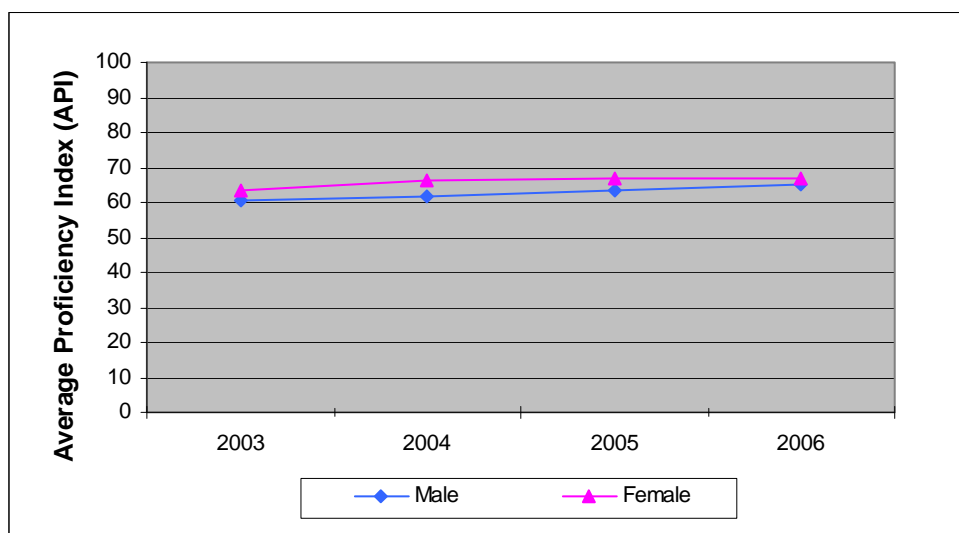


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
FRL/N	2003	70.9	79.7	64.2	55	34
	2004	73.2	83.3	66.1	61	36
	2005	74.1	82.5	68.1	60	39
	2006	75.8	82.6	70.8	60	45
FRL/Y	2003	55.6	65.4	48.4	32	17
	2004	58.8	69.0	51.3	35	18
	2005	59.5	68.2	52.9	34	20
	2006	61.4	69.7	55.3	37	25

Both the low-income (FRL/Y) and non low-income (FRL/N) subgroups in Brockton had improved overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006. The average proficiency gap for low-income students narrowed from 44 to 39 PI points, and for non low-income students it narrowed from 29 to 24 PI points. These gains resulted in improvement rates of 13 percent for low-income students and 17 percent for non low-income students.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between low-income students and non low-income students remained the same.

**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	60.5	68.8	54.3	37	23
	2004	61.9	69.7	56.4	37	25
	2005	63.4	70.8	57.8	38	28
	2006	65.4	71.3	61.0	40	33
Female	2003	63.6	74.4	55.6	47	25
	2004	66.3	78.8	57.2	52	25
	2005	66.7	77.0	59.3	48	27
	2006	67.1	76.9	59.9	50	30

Both gender subgroups in Brockton had improved overall performance between 2003 and 2006 on the MCAS tests. The average proficiency gap for male students narrowed from 39 PI points to 35 PI points, and for female students it narrowed from 36 to 33 PI points. These gains resulted in improvement rates of 12 percent for male students and 10 percent for female students.

During this period the average performance gap between male and female students narrowed by one PI point.

## **Participation**

### **Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?**

#### **Finding:**

- On the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA, math, and STE, eligible students in Brockton 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
Brockton	ALL LEVELS	8,195	8,170	2,457
	Advanced	520	673	47
	Proficient	3,232	1,862	350
	Needs Improvement	3,336	2,941	1,094
	Warning/Failing	1,107	2,694	966
Regular Education	Advanced	506	642	45
	Proficient	3,064	1,734	324
	Needs Improvement	2,581	2,496	951
	Warning/Failing	487	1,749	690
Disability	Advanced	9	16	2
	Proficient	109	61	21
	Needs Improvement	499	272	101
	Warning/Failing	390	652	178
Limited English Proficient	Advanced	5	15	0
	Proficient	59	67	5
	Needs Improvement	256	173	42
	Warning/Failing	230	293	98
White	Advanced	310	388	32
	Proficient	1,345	870	194
	Needs Improvement	1,027	969	420
	Warning/Failing	234	678	230
Hispanic	Advanced	28	53	1
	Proficient	353	186	28
	Needs Improvement	464	391	127
	Warning/Failing	205	420	147
African-American	Advanced	148	174	11
	Proficient	1,407	719	109
	Needs Improvement	1,745	1,501	516
	Warning/Failing	635	1,531	568
Asian	Advanced	30	55	2
	Proficient	92	62	12
	Needs Improvement	52	44	20
	Warning/Failing	17	30	11
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/No	Advanced	302	374	26
	Proficient	1,299	809	166
	Needs Improvement	834	877	364
	Warning/Failing	204	578	198
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/Yes	Advanced	218	299	21
	Proficient	1,931	1,052	184
	Needs Improvement	2,500	2,064	730
	Warning/Failing	901	2,116	768
Male	Advanced	205	383	29
	Proficient	1,538	952	196
	Needs Improvement	1,765	1,464	553
	Warning/Failing	685	1,379	506
Female	Advanced	315	290	18
	Proficient	1,692	909	154
	Needs Improvement	1,569	1,477	541
	Warning/Failing	420	1,315	460

### n-Values by Grade and Year, 2003-2006

Grade	Year	ELA	Math	STE
Grade 3	2003	1,322	0	0
	2004	1,248	0	0
	2005	1,218	0	0
	2006	1,084	1,085	0
Grade 4	2003	1,296	1,300	0
	2004	1,225	1,227	0
	2005	1,160	1,160	0
	2006	1,199	1,202	0
Grade 5	2003	0	0	0
	2004	0	0	1,279
	2005	0	0	1,204
	2006	1,143	1,140	1,142
Grade 6	2003	0	1,336	0
	2004	0	1,344	0
	2005	0	1,262	0
	2006	1,183	1,183	0
Grade 7	2003	1,415	0	0
	2004	1,330	0	0
	2005	1,346	0	0
	2006	1,261	1,246	0
Grade 8	2003	0	1,334	0
	2004	0	1,366	1,368
	2005	0	1,318	1,318
	2006	1,322	1,310	1,315
Grade 10	2003	1,044	1,052	0
	2004	992	989	0
	2005	950	931	0
	2006	1,003	1,004	0
All Grades	2003	5,077	5,022	0
	2004	4,795	4,926	2,647
	2005	4,674	4,671	2,522
	2006	8,195	8,170	2,457

## 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

Math: 4, 6, 8

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.

## Reexamination Findings

This section summarizes the conclusions of the EQA team's reexamination of the Brockton Public Schools. It reports on only those 2004 indicators that received a 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory' rating and that the EQA team reassessed. The table below displays the initial 2004 ratings and the 2007 reassessments. The narrative that follows presents the relevant 2004 indicators, followed by the ratings from 2004 and 2007 and corresponding evidence for the ratings. Because of the changes in the EQA standards and indicators, the 2004 indicators are organized according to the 2007 standards.

<b>Standard I: Leadership, Governance, and Communication</b>		
<b>Ratings ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Excellent</b>		
<b>Satisfactory</b>		<b>2007</b>
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>2007</b>	
<b>Poor</b>	<b>2004</b>	
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>		

### 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.

#### Findings:

- Although the Brockton Public Schools expanded its recruitment effort, it still had difficulties recruiting minority teachers and candidates in math, science, special education, and world languages.
- The categories on the district's applicant interview sheet did not correspond to the categories for the selection of teachers in the district's certified staff recruitment policy.



- During the latter part of the period under review, the district revised both its emergency response plan and its classroom emergency procedures guide.
- At the high school, 18 floor teachers assisted school police with safety and security.

### **Summary**

Since the last EQA review, the leadership of the Brockton Public Schools undertook a number of initiatives, including adding more full day kindergarten classes in the elementary schools, beginning to reorganize the junior high schools (grades 7-8) into middle schools (grades 6-8), establishing a center (Gilmore Academy) for intermediate talented and gifted students, and implementing a technological model elementary school (Huntington School). The district leadership also reorganized the special education department, established the position of associate principal for curriculum and instruction at the junior high/middle schools, and developed a plan to attain adequate yearly progress (AYP). In addition, the district launched the EduSoft and e-Scholar programs to enhance student performance, developing benchmark assessments at the elementary and junior high/middle school levels in ELA and math, and modifying the schedules at the junior high schools to increase instructional time.

During the period under review, the district leadership revised and updated the District Improvement Plan (DIP). In April 2005, the school committee approved a new DIP, replacing the former 2001-2006 DIP. The district also revised both the Brockton Public Schools Emergency Response Plan and the Classroom Emergency Procedures Guide. Even though the district had a defined recruitment and hiring process, the qualities for selecting teachers in its staff recruitment policy did not coincide with those qualities included on the interview sheets. District leaders acknowledged the need to recruit and hire more minority teachers. Furthermore, district leaders commented about the need to hire certified teachers and administrators, thereby reducing the number of requested waivers.

### **2004 Indicators**

10.5. The district has a process for the recruitment and hiring of staff that involves appropriate administrative and staff participation. The process is perceived as fair and open and focuses on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals for each position.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

## **EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

Although the district had a well-defined recruitment and hiring process overseen by the human resources department during the initial review period (2000-2003), the school system had problems recruiting both minority candidates and applicants in specialized fields such as math, science, special education, and world languages. In addition, at the secondary level, 49 of 168 teachers (30 percent) did not have licenses in those subjects.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2006), the district had a process for the recruitment and hiring of staff that involved appropriate administrative and staff participation. Although participants perceived the process as fair and open, it did not always focus on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individual for each position. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability's Attachment B, School District Teacher Licensure Survey, for Brockton, dated March 15, 2007, indicated that 88 of the 1,257 teachers had no license. Nine of the 110 administrators did not have licenses for the jobs they held. The district submitted another document entitled EQA Waivers 06-07 that listed 38 unlicensed secondary school teachers for whom the district requested waivers.

The first paragraph of policy file GCE-E, Certified Staff Recruitment states, "The selection of teachers for the Brockton Public Schools is based on the candidate's merit and promise of success in contributing to the education of the children who will be taught. Teachers should be selected by considering, but not be limited to, such qualifications as professional preparation and experience, interest and understanding of children, intelligence, personality, organization, and breadth of knowledge, both general and professional." However, the district's applicant interview sheet focused on the following categories: a) appearance, b) personality, c) ability to communicate, d) organization, e) innovative, f) classroom management, g) enthusiasm, h) professionalism, and i) academic average. The rating scale for these categories ranged from 1 (high) to 5 (low). In addition, the interview sheet provided space for comments about strengths and weaknesses and a section on options about recommendation: a) highly recommended, b) recommended, c) recommended with reservations, and d) not recommended.

The superintendent and other central office administrators mentioned that the district had made little progress in recruiting and hiring minority teachers and certified candidates in subject areas such as science, math, special education and world languages. However, the superintendent stated that the district recently hired some minority applicants for non-professional positions. Leadership personnel commented that the director of human resources had attended various job fairs during the period under review, including those sponsored by the Massachusetts Educational Recruitment Consortium (MERC) and the Rhode Island Consortium for Educators (RICE). Also, administrators indicated that the district utilized the New England Minority Network (NEMNET). Central office administrators reported that the district had conducted recruitment sessions at Boston area colleges and universities in addition to other institutions of higher learning such as Stonehill, Wheaton, UMass Dartmouth, and Bridgewater State College. Furthermore, interviewees stated that the district advertised its vacant positions in newspapers and online sites such as *The Boston Globe*, *The Enterprise* of Brockton, the *Quincy Patriot Ledger*, BostonWorks.com, and the Brockton Public Schools website (<http://www.brocktonpublicschools.com>).

Following the deadline for applications, the human resources office forwarded the materials submitted by applicants to the principal of the school with the vacant position. Administrators stated that the principal usually convened a screening committee consisting of an associate or assistant principal and a teacher (same grade level or subject area) to interview candidates. At the high school, a department head participated in the screening and interviewing process. At the conclusion of the interview process, the principal made his/her recommendation to the director of human resources who, after performing a Criminal Offender Information Check (CORI) check, notified the finalist of his/her hiring.

### **2007 Indicator**

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.

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

## **Evidence**

During the reexamination period under review, the district had developed a comprehensive safety plan in collaboration with the community, and representatives of the school, police, and fire departments periodically reviewed the plans, according central office administrators. In addition, upon receipt of a \$300,000 school safety grant in fiscal year 2006, the district contracted with a consultant who worked with representatives of the school, police, and fire departments to assess the safety and security needs of each school, according to the superintendent.

The district also established a safety committee to review and update the comprehensive master safety plan. According to leadership personnel, this committee included an executive director, the grant manager, a fire department captain, a police officer, the DARE coordinator, a principal, the facilities director, two guidance counselors who served on school crisis teams, and the consultant. The committee's work resulted in a Brockton Public Schools Emergency Response Plan. Among other things, the 86-page plan defined the purpose and scope, the key emergency contact, the emergency response team, and the incident management system. It also included incident flow charts, events aids, emergency phone lists, evacuation drawings, roles and responsibilities, and crisis communications. According to the superintendent, this new Brockton Public Schools Emergency Response Plan was at the printer at the time of the review and would be distributed to the principals and other key personnel in the school system upon completion.

The safety committee also updated the Brockton Public School System School Crisis Handbook. The Classroom Emergency Procedures Guide included steps to follow in the event of emergencies such as utility outage/failure, lost/missing child, medical emergency, weapon on school grounds, bomb threat/suspicious package, fire/explosion, evacuation, and intruder/lockdown. This guide was also at the printer at the time of the review, and in school year 2007-2008 it will replace the current school crisis handbook in use.

Administrators mentioned that the district had plans to prepare a movie on school safety and security as part of the training program for staff members to familiarize them with the emergency response plan and the classroom emergency procedures guide.

The district provided the EQA team with a Memorandum of Agreement for the Brockton Emergency Response and Crisis Management Partnership. The partnership agreement included the school department, the mayor's office, the police department, the fire department, the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health, the Brockton Board of Health, the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, and the Brockton Emergency Management Agency. The mission of this partnership is "To expand, improve, and strengthen the district and school emergency response and crisis management plan including mitigation and prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery in order to increase the safety of students, staff, and families."

Principals indicated that they had school safety plans, which they shared with members of the EQA team. They mentioned that an executive director in the central office had responsibility for aligning the school safety plans with the district safety plan.

Leadership personnel stated that the district had school police headquartered at the high school. The high school also had 18 floor teachers who taught two periods a day and walked throughout the school for safety and security purposes for the remainder of the day. The superintendent stated that the alternative school employed an all-day armed police officer and had a metal detector. Administrators indicated the junior high/middle schools each had a school resource officer. They commented about the locked exterior doors to schools with entry at the front door through a buzzer system monitored by a video camera. Visitors needed to sign in and out at the main office of the school and received a visitor's pass.

<b>Standard II: Curriculum and Instruction</b>				
<b>Ratings ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Excellent</b>				
<b>Satisfactory</b>				
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2004</b>	
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>				

## **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.

### **Findings:**

- Curriculum development and revision were underway during the reexamination period; however, the district for the most part lacked formative assessments to periodically measure the effectiveness of curriculum delivery as the school year progressed.
- The district had begun to assemble and use its own bank of test items for the formative and summative assessment of students' progress toward mastery of the curriculum.
- The district had sufficient staffing to deliver the curriculum.
- Despite the extensive support the district provided for early intervention reading strategies through increased instructional time, the development of district benchmark assessments, and the identification of and support for numerous intervention strategies, 57 percent of grade 3 students scored below the 'Proficient' level on the MCAS reading test in 2006.

### **Summary**

The Brockton Public Schools had made progress in the development and revision of curricula since the 2004 EQA review. At the high school, the staff had written and implemented curricula across the content areas that addressed areas of need apparent in MCAS results such as answering open-response questions and reading graphs. At grades K-8 in English language arts (ELA) and math, administrators and teachers had correlated the state curriculum frameworks with the district's instructional resources, and they had written pacing guides to enable alignment

and coverage of the curricula. In addition, they identified ELA and math essential skills at grades 1-8 and then created an item bank from which they could assemble benchmark assessments. The items in the bank and some of the formative assessments were limited in that they measured full achievement of the essential skills in the fall and winter when students might not yet have mastered them. However, the district planned to refine the content measured in future benchmark assessments. Beyond these benchmark assessments and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), introduced at grade 1 in 2006-2007, the district had limited assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery of the curriculum across the district.

The district maintained or improved staffing levels since the 2004 review. The superintendent chose to maintain class size in the primary grades at between 18 and 22 students after the class-size reduction grant was expended. To address low student achievement in the junior high schools, particularly in math, the district funded an associate principal for each junior high school whose sole responsibility was to address curriculum and instruction. In addition, each junior high school received an additional math teacher as well as an additional teacher to provide math MCAS prep in a new Star lab.

Finally, the district made progress in providing early intervention reading programs at the primary level. Teachers mapped the curriculum; teachers and specialists received training in the use of numerous interventions for students at risk; and the time allocated for English language arts instruction was significantly increased. At the same time, however, teachers lacked formative assessment information to measure their students' progress in attaining increasingly complex reading skills.

## **2004 Indicators**

### **4.4. Modifications and/or revisions to curricula are:**

- a. evaluated for their effectiveness in improving equitable student achievement for all student populations, and
- b. revised as necessary and disseminated to staff.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

## **EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

At the time of the initial EQA review, district curriculum leaders cited the adoption of the ELA Scott Foresman 2000 series as an example of effectively modifying district curriculum offerings to improve equitable student achievement for all student populations. In addition, analysis of MCAS test data had prompted the district to review the curriculum and time allotment for math at the junior high level. The MCAS test data in math had shown a weak link to the junior high school math curriculum. During the initial review period (2000-2003), the district made progress in the revision of curricula, but work remained regarding the development and adoption of tools to evaluate the effectiveness of those revisions in raising student academic performance.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2006), the district generated curriculum materials that created both alignment with the state frameworks and horizontal alignment across classrooms in the district, according to interviewees. In math and ELA at grades 1-8, the district documented the correlation of district instructional materials to each learning standard in the state frameworks. In addition, to ensure coverage of the ELA and math curricula at the elementary and middle school levels, staff produced pacing guides in most areas that mapped the period and the content to be covered at specific times during the school year. Staff also made available to teachers interventions for addressing individual or small group student needs.

In 2005-2006, interviewees reported, district teachers and administrators adopted sets of essential skills in ELA and math by grade level, which they posted on the website. These essential skills became the district's grade-level benchmarks at grades 1-8. Finally, using Edusoft software, teachers developed assessment items that measured the mastery of these essential skills. From these item banks, the district created formative benchmark assessments for administration to all students in grades 1-8 during the fall and winter.

The district intended to use such formative assessments to periodically determine the extent to which students achieved mastery of the curriculum. The limitation of these formative assessments was that the essential skills measured were summative in nature. As a result, they provided teachers with information concerning student mastery of a final skill. They did not periodically measure mastery of the sub-skills that would eventually lead to the mastery of the



essential skill. In addition, the skills measured were not always curriculum-specific. A final limiting factor was that the district did not begin full adoption of the DIBELS until its introduction in 2006-2007 at grade 1.

At the high school, several schoolwide curriculum revisions occurred during the period under reexamination. When MCAS test results revealed that district students were not doing well on open-response questions, although those same students scored well on the school's rubric, the high school revised its rubric to raise expectations for the quality of student writing. Then to ensure that the students had internalized these higher standards for writing, the school adopted a schedule so that each department focused on open-response questions at a specifically assigned time of the year. This resulted in a significant improvement in student scores on MCAS open-response questions. Similarly, in response to poor student achievement in graphing, a workshop for teachers on graphing was developed. Administrators required teachers in all disciplines to include a graphing lesson during the year.

In 2006-2007, the high school developed benchmarks for the algebra course and planned to do the same in other math courses in the future. In addition, administrators reported that the ELA curriculum needed revision at all levels, and some of those revisions were underway in 2006-2007.

Finally, during the period under reexamination, the district addressed the low achievement of limited English proficient (LEP) students by publishing a district curriculum for English as a second language (ESL) students. At the same time, there was extensive sheltered English immersion (SEI) training for classroom teachers, which resulted in improved student achievement of LEP students in 2006. Administrators also reported that during the period under reexamination, low achievement of special education and LEP students led to providing access to the mainstream curriculum to these student subgroups and the inclusion of special education teachers in general education department meetings.

Curriculum revisions were given to teachers in paper copies through faculty meetings, posted on the district website, and distributed on jump drives. Instructional resource specialists and reading resource teachers also educated staff about the curriculum revisions through direction and coaching.

4.6. Staffing levels are adequate to deliver the district's curriculum to all students and student subgroups.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

**Evidence**

At the time of the initial EQA review, elementary principals and teachers did not express concern about class size at the elementary level. However, secondary principals expressed a great deal of concern about large class sizes at grades 7-12 for many core academic areas. Instructional support personnel such as coaches, Title I teachers, and reading resource and instructional resource specialists helped to address some of the staffing needs.

During the reexamination period under review, the district had reduced class sizes at grades 1-3 to 18 to 22 students, according to interviewees and confirmed in the Brockton Public Schools Enrollment Report 03/01/07. The district achieved this initially through a class size reduction grant. However, when the grant ran out, the district chose to maintain the reduced class sizes through the regular budget. Class sizes at the upper elementary level were somewhat higher, but administrators felt the impact of this was somewhat lessened by the fact that teachers were departmentalized at that level. In addition, instructional time for ELA and math increased substantially during the period under reexamination. Teachers and administrators pointed to the classroom support available to teachers. Under the Three Tier model, reading resources specialists (RRSs), instructional resources specialists (IRSs), Title I staff, and special education staff worked in classrooms with small flexible groups to provide intervention support. In some inclusion classes, a regular education and a special education teacher were teamed for the delivery of instruction.

At the junior high schools during the period under review, already acceptable staffing levels were further decreased by increased instructional time in both ELA and math and by the appointment in each junior high school of an associate principal responsible only for addressing curriculum and instructional needs in each building. Schools received an additional math teacher in 2006-2007 to perform interventions through the Transitional Math program, as well as a Smart Lab staffed by a math teacher to provide all students with MCAS math support. At the high

school, class sizes were high, between 25 and the low 30s. However, teachers taught only three classes a semester, so their total class load was frequently fewer than 100 students.

When reminded that the percentage of students attaining overall proficiency on the MCAS tests increased from 32 percent in 2003 to 37 percent in 2006, administrators reported that many of the curriculum changes had been recent and that the district planned further changes to complete the process. In effect, staffing was not the issue for the slow rate of improvement in student achievement. Rather, more time and further development were required for curriculum changes to have an appreciable effect on student achievement.

8.6. Early intervention reading programs are provided at the primary level to ensure that by the end of Grade 3 students are reading at the Proficiency level on the MCAS test.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

**Evidence**

At the time of the initial EQA review, not all grade 3 students were reading at the ‘Proficient’ level due to a shortage of funds and of staff.

At the reexamination visit in April 2007, administrators acknowledged that 43 percent of grade 3 students were reading at the ‘Proficient’ level on the MCAS test in 2006. However, they referred to modifications in the early intervention reading programs which they expected to make a difference in the future. The district had designated essential skills in ELA at each grade and had developed benchmark assessments to measure attainment of those skills. Administrators also referenced the introduction of the DIBELS for all students at grade 1 in 2006-2007, as well as the mapping of the curriculum and the addition of numerous interventions for students at risk. Further, the district substantially increased its required instructional time in English language arts. These changes represented a road map to success to the administrators interviewed.

## **2007 Indicator**

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.

### **EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

#### **Evidence**

During the 2007 site visit, the EQA examiners observed 112 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 26 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching 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 25 schools as follows: 19 at the elementary schools, 60 at the junior high schools, and 33 at the high school. In total, the EQA examiners observed 45 ELA classrooms, 46 math classrooms, 18 science classrooms, and three classrooms of other subjects.

Classroom management refers to the maintenance of order and structure within the classroom. Positive indicators of classroom management were evident in 83 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 93 percent at the elementary level, 78 percent at the junior high school level, and 88 percent at the high school level. Examiners found students engaged in good learning routines in 84 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 85 percent at the high school level, but only 67 percent at the junior high 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. Instruction should be differentiated so that all learners are 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 70 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 81 percent at the elementary level, 65 percent at the junior high level, and 72 percent at the high school level. Examiners found that instruction aligned with the state frameworks in 99 percent of the observed classrooms districtwide. At the same time, they observed that the objectives of the lesson were clear to the students in 100 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 83 percent at the junior high level, and 73 percent at the high school level.

Expectations refers 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 59 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 72 percent at the elementary level, 57 percent at the junior high level, and 55 percent at the high school level. Classroom time was observed to be focused on challenging academic tasks in 79 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 67 percent at the junior high level, and 79 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 clearly evident. Indicators of positive student activity and behavior were evident in 59 percent of the

classrooms districtwide, with 66 percent at the elementary level, 54 percent at the junior high level, and 63 percent at the high school level. Examiners observed students to be actively engaged in the learning process in 89 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 53 percent at the junior high level, and 85 percent at the high school level. In contrast, examiners observed contributions of students to be valued and followed up by the teacher's questions and comments of other students in 68 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 72 percent at the junior high level, and 82 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 71 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 84 percent at the elementary school level, 72 percent at the junior high level, and 63 percent at the high school level. Examiners found the space was utilized to create a positive learning environment in 95 percent of the observed classrooms at the elementary level, 83 percent at the junior high level, and 84 percent at the high school level.

## Summary of Classroom Observations

	Number of Classrooms				Average Class Size      Average Paraprofs. per Class		Computers		
	ELA	Math	Science/ Social Studies	Total			Total Number	Number for Student Use	Average Students per Computer
<b>Elementary</b>	11	8	0	19	18.5	0.5	38	31	11.3
<b>Junior High</b>	22	21	17	60	18.0	0.3	134	105	10.3
<b>High</b>	12	17	4	33	19.8	0.0	53	42	15.6
<b>Total</b>	45	46	21	112	18.6	0.3	225	178	11.7

	Classroom Management	Instructional Practice	Expectations	Student Activity & Behavior	Climate
<b>Elementary</b>					
<b>Total checks</b>	71	139	55	75	48
<b>Maximum possible</b>	76	171	76	113	57
<b>Avg. percent of checks</b>	93%	81%	72%	66%	84%
<b>Junior High</b>					
<b>Total checks</b>	186	349	137	192	128
<b>Maximum possible</b>	240	536	239	357	179
<b>Avg. percent of checks</b>	78%	65%	57%	54%	72%
<b>High</b>					
<b>Total checks</b>	116	214	72	124	62
<b>Maximum possible</b>	132	297	132	198	98
<b>Avg. percent of checks</b>	88%	72%	55%	63%	63%
<b>Total</b>					
<b>Total checks</b>	373	702	264	391	238
<b>Maximum possible</b>	448	1004	447	668	334
<b>Avg. percent of checks</b>	83%	70%	59%	59%	71%

<b>Standard III: Assessment and Program Evaluation</b>		
<b>Ratings ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>Excellent</b>		
<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Needs Improvement</b>		
<b>Poor</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>		

### **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.

#### **Findings:**

- District initiatives focused on improving MCAS test participation and the analysis of student results.
- The district improved MCAS student participation, exceeding the state's 95 percent requirement in most years.
- Brockton High School succeeded in improving its overall Competency Determination rates and exceeded the state requirement in 2004-2005.
- Subgroup performance did not meet the 95 percent Competency Determination standard.

#### **Summary**

In a three-year plan, the district focused on initiatives to improve MCAS test participation rates and student results, including the reorganization of schools and program offerings, professional development for administration and professional staff, improved monitoring of student performance and assessment results, and analysis of test participation and student test results. During the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years, the school district regularly monitored student participation rates and found that student participation in the MCAS testing program met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement. During the 2005-2006 school year, only 10



students at Brockton High School did not participate in the MCAS tests, yielding a student participation rate of 99 percent.

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) for Brockton High School focused on improving its Competency Determination rate, and as a result 96 percent of students in the aggregate met the Competency Determination standard in 2004-2005. The rate decreased one percentage point to 95 percent in 2005-2006, yet despite the decrease, the district still met the state standard of 95 percent. Subgroup performance, however, did not meet the standard as the percentages of subgroup students attaining a Competency Determination fell considerably below 95 percent.

#### **2004 Indicators**

- 1.7. The district educates all of its student to meet or exceed the Competency Determination (CD) standard by their senior year.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

#### **Evidence**

During the initial period of review (2000-2003), the district struggled to educate all of its students to meet the Competency Determination standard. At the time of the review, 94.7 percent of the Class of 2003 met or exceeded the standard, while 83.7 percent of the Class of 2004 did so. The district focused its efforts on meeting the Competency Determination standard at the high school level. The SIP for the high school addressed meeting this standard as a priority.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2006), the percentage of students meeting the Competency Determination standard had increased to 96 percent in 2004-2005; although it then decreased to 95 percent in 2005-2006, the rate still met the state's 95 percent standard. The percentage of limited English proficient students who attained a Competency Determination was 90 percent in 2004-2005 and 88 percent in 2005-2006. The percentage of special education students who attained a Competency Determination was 78 percent in 2004-2005 and 73 percent in 2005-2006.

- 2.1. The district and each of its schools have clear policies, procedures, expectations, and practices that require all students to attend and participate in all mandatory and appropriate assessments.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

**Evidence**

During the initial period of review, the district did not meet the state requirement of 95 percent participation on the MCAS tests. The participation rates in math were 90 percent in 2000, 89 percent in 2001, and 90 percent in 2002. The participation rates in ELA were 88 percent in 2000, 89 percent in 2001, and 87 percent in 2002.

During the reexamination period, the Brockton Public Schools met the state requirement of 95 percent student participation in mandated MCAS testing for both the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years in both ELA and math, according to Department of Education (DOE) documents. Administrators reported to EQA examiners that only 10 students at Brockton High School did not participate in the MCAS tests during the 2005-2006 school year, yielding a student participation rate of 99 percent.

School and district administrators reported in interviews that the initiatives proposed by the superintendent and adopted by the school committee were being implemented. EQA examiners learned that the three-year plan included, but was limited to, the reorganization of schools and program offerings, professional development for administration and professional staff, improved monitoring of student performance and assessment results, and focused data analysis of test participation and student results.

<b>Standard IV: Human Resource Management and Professional Development</b>							
<b>Ratings ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.6</b>
<b>Excellent</b>							
<b>Satisfactory</b>			2007		2007	2007	2007
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	2007	2007		2007			
<b>Poor</b>	2004	2004			2004	2004	2004
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>			2004	2004			

## **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 who were successful in advancing achievement for all students.

### **Findings**

- Even though school committee policies required hiring licensed teachers, 88 teachers were unlicensed at the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic year, many of whom were hired as specialists or in hard to fill teaching areas.
- School committee policies and the district's affirmative action policies established a guideline for recruiting a diverse staff.
- The district had an Affirmative Action Plan and an affirmative action officer who assisted with recruiting and related affirmative action issues for the district, but the plan has not resulted in measurable progress over time in the hiring of licensed minority staff.
- Evaluation documents for professional status teachers were on file in schools, leading to the development of a confusing dual system for personnel filing for some employees.
- Central office administrators did not systematically conduct quality control monitoring of K-8 teacher performance evaluations, other than for teachers with instructional problems.
- The teacher performance evaluation system has been in effect since 1976 and did not comply with the standards of CMR 35:00. The human resources office controlled the master schedule for teacher evaluations, which did comply with the CMR 35:00 time requirements.
- The administrative performance evaluation system did not comply with the time requirements of CMR 35:00 as not all administrators were evaluated annually.

- The district wove its professional development paths into a structure having districtwide training as one path, administrator training as a second path, and building-based training as a third path. Data-driven training allowed individual building adoption of professional development that addressed building-level needs and preserved creativity in supporting improved instruction and achievement.
- The district lacked a comprehensive document or chart outlining all professional development processes, procedures, and responsibilities.
- The implementation of EduSoft and training of staff in its use created a vehicle for improved formative assessment to guide instruction.
- The development and monitoring of instructional strategies and initiatives at the high school through the collection and review of student work samples by individual departments and the administration built a culture of collaboration and support for increasing student achievement.
- The district continued to support an internal leadership academy as the administrative staff employed at the time of the reexamination attended training at the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL).

### **Summary**

The Brockton Public Schools had an active recruitment effort largely directed at recruiting teachers for hard to fill positions. As of October 2006, however, 29 early childhood/elementary teachers were unlicensed. There were several pools of potential candidates for early childhood and elementary vacancies including substitutes, student teachers, and unlicensed semi-professional and paraprofessionals. The occupants of these pools might not necessarily hold licenses until offered full-time teaching appointments in any of the 17 elementary schools in the district.

The district had a positive retention record, with a teacher replacement rate of about seven percent. Most administrators, other than the superintendent of schools, were long-term employees of the district; and others went to school in Brockton and stayed as employees. There is a strong esprit de corps among the staff.

School committee policies contained standards for hiring teachers that were open-ended and lacked scoring rubrics; the standards did not necessarily reflect Brockton's preferences in skill level, experience, and professional knowledge among potential teacher candidates,.

Nine administrators and 88 teachers were unlicensed at the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic year, and many of these unlicensed teachers were hired as specialists or in hard to fill teaching areas. The district's human resources office had current records indicating teachers' licensing status, and most unlicensed teachers hired in early 2006-2007 had obtained licensure by May 2007. Despite consistent and attentive efforts to increase the ranks of minority teachers, few were hired. The district has an affirmative action policy and plan, an affirmative action officer empowered to recruit minority staff, and a goal to increase minority staff.

The EQA team discovered that 22 of 51 evaluation documents (43 percent) contained in administrative personnel files were timely for the period under review. Only 13 of these 22 were instructive and included references to SIP goals and AYP data related to the position. The human resources office published the dates of required evaluations for administrators in 2007 and included schedules back to 2001.

Of 48 teacher personnel files reviewed, 41 contained timely evaluations and the other seven teachers were newly hired. Examiners found that the evaluations generally were not informational. Only 15 evaluations (37 percent) were informational in their descriptions of observed teaching, and only four evaluations (10 percent) were instructive, containing ideas or recommendations for improved performance.

The district had not revised the teacher evaluation booklet since the mid-1970s. While its details minimally complied with CMR 35:00, it specified a three-year cycle that does not comply with the required two-year cycle for professional status teachers. All performance ratings in evaluations of K-8 teachers were marked "effective." At the grades 9-12 level, many more had "Needs Improvement" ratings. In interviews, teachers generally had favorable comments about their evaluations and about their mentors and supervisors.

Since the initial EQA review in 2004, the district consolidated several professional development procedures into one system with defined procedures for each track or layer and financial sources

to support them. Districtwide training for new staff and training for veterans in new district initiatives and programs such as the John Collins Writing Program were scheduled in an annual calendar. At the building level, staff reviewed student achievement data and the School Improvement Plan to establish building needs for professional development. The district did not present a comprehensive document that delineated the processes and procedures of the various paths for professional development.

The district provided professional development at the district level for administrators, teachers, and other staff during the day, and provided substitutes for teachers who attended training. When the district implemented new programs or initiatives, administrators received training along with staff. In addition, administrators attended National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) leadership training and Lenses on Learning training to develop observational skills for use in supervising and monitoring mathematics classroom instruction. Literacy initiatives brought staff together from across the district for grade-level trainings and workshops several days throughout the year. Beginning in 2003-2004, the district initiated training in sheltered English immersion (using a train-the-trainer model) and in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) in conjunction with the Department of Education (DOE). Since then, the district trained cohorts of staff annually to meet the goal of training 350 staff by the end of 2006-2007. The state has approved the district as a provider of this training.

At the building level, each school drew upon two sources of funds for professional development, district funds from the budget and Challenge for Change grants. Additionally, many buildings obtained grants to secure funds for specific projects. The schools reviewed the achievement data, including the MCAS test data, of their students and, through EduSoft, used September and January benchmark data at grades 1-9. The administrative leadership team and staff at the building level reviewed the needs identified by the data and any other needs identified by staff and developed professional development training and workshops for the year. Much of the professional development was provided by in-house providers and building staff. For example, middle school staff identified an issue regarding reading in mathematics for English language learners. The bilingual department staff met with middle school staff, studied the issue, and provided support through workshops to address it.

Four elementary schools received Reading First grants that brought with additional funds for professional development. They used a portion of these funds to hold summer institutes for instructional strategies and identified reading needs. Staff members could attend several workshop sessions over three days. The district had adopted Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) districtwide at grades K-1 and planned to expand its use, and these schools initiated training for staff in DIBELS at grades K-3.

The procedures for applying for professional development funds were clear. Building principals developed two professional development initiative budgets, one for the regular budget and one for the Challenge for Change grant, and forwarded them to the central office. However, approval was pro forma as the procedures and budget amounts were clearly defined.

At the high school, a restructuring committee comprised of 32 staff members representing all four houses had been formed under a Small Learning Communities grant several years ago and was retained using district funds when the grant ran out. The role of the committee in professional development has led to a strong in-house program. Faculty meetings were devoted to a whole-staff “faculty expo” for staff presentations, with two additional meetings each month either by department or house. Additionally, small interdisciplinary groups met to develop integrated lessons.

The district had initiated specific training for paraprofessionals using ParaPro software. Since beginning in 2004-2005, approximately 300 of the 450 paraprofessional have met the ‘highly qualified’ status of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

## **2004 Indicators**

3.4. The District’s evaluation process for administrators is aligned with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

## **Evidence**

During the initial EQA examination, the team reviewed a random sample of 30 administrators’ evaluations and found that the district’s evaluation procedure for administrators aligned with the

requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act. Noted in the review was that one administrator's certification expired in 2001, one in 2003, and one in January 2004. One administrator had no certificate on file. No evaluations were found in personnel files for four administrators. Principals' evaluations were held by the deputy superintendent and were not in the principals' personnel files.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2006), not all administrators received annual evaluations prior to 2006-2007, as revealed in a multi-year evaluation schedule produced by the human resources division. In the central office, administrators remained on a biennial evaluation schedule; all other administrators had annual evaluations throughout the reexamination period.

In its review of 51 administrator personnel files, the EQA team that found 22 contained informative evaluations for the period under reexamination, nine were unsigned, and 13 contained constructive comments about improving performance. Two contained expired certificates and four contained no evidence of certification. Comments in some principals' files cited AYP goals and results and SIP goals. Most were very positive.

All administrators below the rank of principal and all central office administrators were exempt from membership in the collective bargaining group. The administrators below that level constituted Unit A and teachers constituted Unit B. Unit A administrators had the option of keeping their evaluations at their work site, which resulted in two personnel filing systems; licensing and other employment related information might be in either file.

The administrative evaluation form contained five areas of evaluation that roughly corresponded to most of the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership outlined in 603 CMR 35:07. In addition, one category included local employability criteria. No evaluation documents referenced the priority of hiring licensed staff, nor did they reference an evaluation of the administrators' hiring efforts assigned through the district's affirmative action policy. In reviewing the evaluations of administrators, the EQA team noted that most of the various evaluative criteria were rated "Very Effective" or "Effective." The team did not see unsatisfactory ratings in administrator performance.



3.5. The district's evaluation procedure for teachers is aligned with the requirements of the education Reform Act.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

**Evidence**

During the initial review period (2000-2003), the evaluation procedure for teachers was aligned with the state curriculum frameworks, as determined from a review of a random sample of 137 teacher evaluations. The EQA examiners noted that five teachers had no certificate on file, and four teachers had an expired certificate on file. Approximately one-third of the files had a blue evaluation form indicating that the teachers' evaluations were on file at the assigned school. The human resources executive director provided a list of all 1,400 teachers included on a roster that was being used to update the certification files. The union had agreed to establish a study group to rework its teacher evaluation system to be more in line with the requirements of CMR 35:00.

During the reexamination period (2004-2006), the off the table-agreement to establish a study group to rework the teacher evaluation system to align with the requirements of CMR 35:00 had not yet been implemented, as determined in interviews. The district continued to use the same evaluation documents that had been in use since the mid-1970s. The EQA team reviewed an up to date calendar of evaluation schedules for licensed staff that outlined the evaluation schedule for 1,356 teachers since 2001-2002 and included detailed notes about the professional status of teachers. The form did not align with the text requirements of CMR: 35; a crosswalk between the Brockton evaluation form and the recommended form in CMR: 35 revealed only partial alignment.

The Brockton form included six areas of competence. The instructional area included nine indicators. The booklet also included spaces for professional development references. It also included observation sheets (reflecting the nine instructional indicators) and space for a quarterly review of progress.

A total of 48 teacher files were provided for review to the EQA team. Seven were files of new employees. Of the 41 who had been evaluated, 100 percent were timely and their evaluation schedules corresponded to the master list provided by the human resources director. Of the 41

completed evaluations, 37 percent were informative, and only 10 percent included recommendations for improved instruction. Nearly all the recommendations for improvement were found at the high school. All the ratings of “needs improvement” were found in high school evaluations. All evaluations reviewed at levels below the high school showed ratings of “effective” on all observations and final documents. Only one evaluation document reviewed was incomplete as to ratings. It was the only one not signed.

The 30-year-old evaluation booklet cited a three-year cycle for evaluations. The district calendar for evaluations has trumped that requirement. At the request of a teacher, his/her evaluation document could remain at the work site. This created two personnel files. The EQA team had to request evaluations from the work sites when it became apparent that personnel files requested had evaluations as far back as the 1970s, with no recent ones on file. Central office staff quickly obtained the files from the school buildings for the EQA team. However, it was learned in interviews with district administrators that no annual centralized quality or compliance review of evaluations was conducted, other than for teachers with problems that could not be resolved at the school level. In addition, if a teacher transferred to another school, the past evaluations may or may not have followed.

No evaluations reviewed contained reference to student achievement scores. About 15 percent of the documents included references to professional development activities by the teacher. Only four folders lacked evidence of certification, but several folders from the field yielded up to date licensing information. The human resources division had master lists which it provided to the EQA team to show the unlicensed areas. Most were in hard to fill areas.

5.4. The district employs highly qualified teachers that are certified in the area(s) of their primary assignment or responsibility.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Unsatisfactory**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

#### **Evidence**

During the review of teacher personnel files at the time of the initial EQA site visit, five teachers had no certificates on file and four had expired certificates. In *The Enterprise* news article dated September 25, 2003, the superintendent was quoted as saying that 30 percent of the math and

science teachers at the district's four junior high schools and the high school were not licensed to teach those subjects. He also indicated that of 168 teachers teaching mathematics, science, special education, and world languages, 49 teachers at the junior high schools and high school were unlicensed.

At the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, district records indicated that 88 teachers were unlicensed (six percent of the teaching staff). Many of these unlicensed teachers were hired as specialists or in hard to fill teaching areas. In 2005-2006, the district hired 140 new teachers. In 2006-2007, it hired another 140 new teachers. Both years had many retirements. The district projected about 100 retirements for 2007-2008.

The department had budgeted funds for recruiting, and sent out teams of administrators to college placement offices and to job fairs such as the Massachusetts Educational Recruiting Consortium (MERC) job fair and the western Massachusetts college recruiting event. In addition, the district maintained working relationships with Stonehill College and Bridgewater State College, both nearby. The human resources office staff was experienced in recruiting and had many contacts in local and regional colleges and universities. The department also made minority recruitment trips to predominately black colleges in the south, but efforts to increase minority candidates have not been successful.

The district had several internal pools of potential teacher candidates comprised of paraprofessionals and semi-professionals, who over time could ascend into teaching positions. In addition, student teachers and long-term substitute teachers constituted a second pool of candidates. Administrators stated that the unlicensed elementary teachers in the district in the fall of 2006 included many who had recently graduated and had not taken the appropriate teacher test given by the DOE. They also included many teachers who had passed the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) but were among a seven-month backlog of applicants awaiting a DOE license. During the EQA review, the district affirmed that all 29 non-licensed elementary teachers noted in the October 2006 DOE report had received their license by March 2007.

The school committee approved vacancies for teaching positions through the budget as it created new programs and replaced teachers who left the system. Vacancies were posted internally and advertised at colleges and in BostonWorks in *The Boston Globe*. All applications went to the

human resources office, although it was revealed that in the recent past some candidates directly contacted the principal of the school hosting the vacancy. A screening took place in the human resources office and applicant papers were made available to supervisors of the vacant position. In addition, applications already processed were made available.

School committee policies outlined selection criteria to guide selection of teachers, but a review of screening and interviewing documents used in the district did not reflect the inclusion of all these criteria in the selection process. These criteria included professional preparation and experience, interest and understanding of children, intelligence, personality, organization, and breadth of knowledge, both general and professional. Some appeared in district selection materials for the screening and interviewing of candidates. They were rated, but there were no standards or rubrics guiding such ratings. Another criterion included in school committee policy GCE-E suggested that a candidate for a teaching position should be observed in a teaching position in one of the Brockton schools. This may account in part for the high number of non-licensed elementary teachers, many of whom came from the semi-professional pool (80 employees), the substitute pool, the student teaching pool, or the paraprofessional pool (450 employees).

The remainder of unlicensed staff employed during the period under reexamination were in hardship certification areas (science, math, special education, certain foreign languages, and the arts.) The human resources director indicated that the DOE requested a desk audit of some waiver requests. The district complied and the waivers were granted. The district's human resources administrator's process recommended candidates sent by principals, who, under education reform, were the hiring authority; there were 21 school-based hiring contact points in the district. The human resources and affirmative action staff were able to show through documents that they made principals aware of the district's need to hire licensed teachers and consider minority candidates,. A review of performance evaluations of all administrative staff yielded no supervisory comments about improving minority employee numbers at work sites, nor hiring only licensed new hires. The human resources office had responsibility for fulfilling policy guidelines in hiring, but had no regulatory power to ensure that the policies were carried out at the various schools.

5.5. District employment policies and practices identify and encourage skilled, highly qualified personnel to be appointed to and remain in the district's employ.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Unsatisfactory**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

During the initial EQA review, administrators indicated that early advertising and recruitment practices through the human resources office constituted the district's practices to attract highly qualified teachers. They also indicated that they attended college fairs to attract certified teachers and teachers with diverse backgrounds. However, the district had not been able to meet staffing needs at the secondary level in math, science, special education, and world languages by hiring certified teachers. It was reported that 30 percent of the district's secondary teachers in these areas were not certified. In addition, the district had not been successful in hiring teachers of diverse backgrounds. District administrators indicated that the district's professional development program, mentoring program, student diversity, and staff and administrative support were the major reasons for personnel to remain in the district.

During the reexamination period, the existing district policies for professional development of the district, the sharing of relevant test data with teachers, and the reorganization of some central office staff had strengthened the commitment of licensed staff to stay with the district, as discussed in interviews and focus groups. The human resources staff provided evidence of turnover of critical shortage area and minority teachers to higher paying positions in other districts, particularly Boston, which is five times larger in its teaching staff and offers higher salaries. However, it was obvious in interviews with teachers that they had high levels of excitement and satisfaction regarding the way they were treated as teachers in Brockton. "Better than it used to be" and "We are members of a school team" were comments by teachers. Of particular note by the EQA team was the efforts that the district has made to allow for all teachers of tested subject areas to quickly obtain clear data about the achievement of their students. This quick turnaround promoted a quick response to improve learning, which in turn became a positive reinforcer for teacher retention. The team observed a mix of experienced and less experienced teachers, along with some novices. Teachers noted that their evaluation process and mentoring system were a great help to them in staying connected to professional knowledge.

At the junior high school, an effort to team teachers to give common planning time was underway, as was an effort to convert the junior high school model into a middle school model. The district expected to hire 100 new teachers in 2007-2008 (seven percent turnover)..

7.1. The district ensures that every school in the district has identified its professional development needs. The district has developed and implemented a professional development plan to address these identified needs for all:

a. principals,

b. teachers, and

c. other professional staff, including paraprofessionals and teacher assistants.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

### **Evidence**

The professional development plan presented to EQA in the initial review covered certified staff only. The executive director of curriculum generated the basic plan. Student test data were used in the implementation of the district professional development plan, but were not the exclusive basis for development of the plan.

During the reexamination period under review, the district had clarified various components of professional development, creating a three-tiered structure that was a “distributive leadership” model, according to interviewees. The central office or district level professional development training set a calendar each year that addressed district level initiatives such as training in reading at each K-8 grade level. Substitutes were provided and all teachers of a grade level came together for professional development for a total of nine days during the course of the year. Each year, building principals and their staffs reviewed their respective School Improvement Plan, achievement data, and needs of the building to plan professional development to address the needs of their particular building. Professional development drew from two pools of money – district level and building level funding – plus an amount for high school departments, some for the steering committee and presenters. Challenge for Change district grants were used at the building level.

**a.)** During the period under reexamination, principals, instructional resource specialists, reading resource specialists, and coaches attended professional development for new programs or initiatives the district had implemented, as determined through review of the professional development calendar and interviews with administrators. Teachers attended Lenses on Learning, giving administrators specific skills for observing teaching of mathematics in the classroom. Training began, first with administrators and then all staff, in Edusoft, a web-based student assessment platform, and eScholar, the district's new data warehouse and tool. The district prioritized training for teaching ELL students, intending to infuse it into regular education. Administrators received training in structured English immersion (SEI) and Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and had additional training each year. The district had also provided National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) training to all administrators, as well as continuing support to an internal Leadership Academy.

**b.)** Interviewees reported that for the district layer of professional development, substitutes were provided for teachers to receive training to support new program implementation or pedagogy, such as three days for reading training for each elementary and middle school grade level during the year. The district supported the "train the trainer" model for most initiatives, sending staff to receive initial training such as in the Connected Mathematics Program (CMP) in Minnesota and Connecticut. In conjunction with the Department of Education, the district began in 2003-2004 to train staff for initiatives for ELL students with SEI and SIOP. This training continued as a district initiative during the period under reexamination using the train the trainer model to develop cohorts of teachers with these strategies. This has resulted in the training of approximately 450 staff by late 2006-2007. In addition, the bilingual/ESL department responded to the needs of requests to provide support for teaching mathematics to ELL students in conjunction with reading strategies. The department provided a 37.5-hour graduate course and school-based training on cognitive reading strategies and metacognition concerning problems of reading and language for ELL students. That support for mathematics and language was credited with increased student achievement on the MCAS tests, with the English proficiency index (EPI) improving from 29.3 PI points in 2003 to 36.5 PI points in 2004 to 35.2 PI points in 2005 to 46.6 PI points in 2006, closing the achievement gap by 16.3 PI points while the statewide gap narrowed by 8.5 PI points during the same period. The mathematics proficiency index (MPI) improved from 26.9 PI points in 2003 to 34.8 PI points in 2004 to 34.6 in 2005 PI points to 44.4

PI points in 2006, closing the achievement gap by 14.5 PI points while the statewide gap closed by 7.3 PI points during the same period. Brockton is an approved provider of SEI training.

At the high school level, administrators reported that the restructuring committee, comprised of 32 members representing all four houses, oversaw building level professional development. The committee began under a Small Learning Communities grant, and when funding ran out the district continued to support it. The high school literacy initiative, open-response questions combined with monitoring through looking at student work, graphing across disciplines, summarizers, and other initiatives have resulted from the work of the steering committee. Professional development within the high school occurred in three ways: 1) full faculty considered as a “faculty expo” for staff presentation; 2) small interdisciplinary groups, such as one investigating and developing plans for integrating graphing lessons into all disciplines; and 3) professional development once per month by house and once by department. Work was monitored by follow-up with student work samples submitted to the department chair for review, who then passed them on to the associate principal for further review.

A common rubric was developed to evaluate student work. In 2005-2006, the district revised the rubric and got staff “buy in” by rescoring older samples with the new rubric, dramatically demonstrating the need to use the new rubric to set expectations. Administrators reported a cycle that included an assignment for staff such as answering an open-response question that was completed with students; teachers provided feedback on the work and then turned in the work to department heads for review, who in turn gave the work to the associate principal for review. “Lots of interaction between administration, department heads, and teachers around student work.” According to an administrator, this was “vital to improved instruction,” and “data is student work.” An administrator reported that after the NEASC report criticized instructional strategies, the high school took action, analyzed practices, offered professional development on strategies, increased student voices, and all staff began to teach reading, writing, speaking, and reasoning. An examination of MCAS test data showed that the high school reduced the percentage of students in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category from 16 percent in 2003 to seven percent in 2006. Work on developing and piloting a co-taught bilingual class began during the 2006-2007 school year.



Administrators described the structure of middle level education in Brockton as in transition. At the time of the reexamination, the district had four junior high schools, with one moving to the middle school model, one middle school, and one grades K-7 school moving to grades K-8. Interviewees stated that all grades 6 to 8, regardless of building configuration, collaborated on and shared professional development during in-service days – meeting by department at two schools and by grade-level at two schools. In addition, the junior high/middle school buildings collaborated with high school departments, and the K-7 building collaborated with the elementary buildings.

Interviewees reported that professional development at the elementary level was mainly to improve pedagogy and support learning. Schools with Read First grants had additional monies to support professional development. Some was used for professional development during the day and some to develop two three-day summer institutes in each of the last four years. Attendance had approached 100 percent. A series of half-day workshops at the institutes were based on data and a districtwide teacher survey of needs. After teachers received Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) training, grade 1 students in one building moved from a 75 percent failure rate to a 75 percent proficiency rate. The district had completed DIBELS training for teachers of grades K-1 and some additional staff through grade 3. The district trained staff in the use of EduSoft and had begun to use its test development and data analysis features to track student progress and inform instruction. An administrator indicated that teachers felt a “heightened confidence” in the use of data as a result of professional development. Teachers took “pride” in comprehending how assessment analysis affects scores.

Administrators described field-based professional development that included the use of coaches and consultants. The district had trained all staff at grades 2-8 in the John Collins Writing Program several years ago. Each year, the district offered further professional development, and internal or external consultants provided teachers new to the district initial training, coaching, and modeling in their classrooms. Administrators reported that reliance had shifted during the period under reexamination to more development of internal consultants. Instructional resource specialists (IRSs) and reading resource specialists (RRSs) meet regularly to discuss building needs and develop professional development to bring back to the buildings. Peer coaching and visits were encouraged throughout the district.

Administrators described an additional professional development opportunity offered in collaboration with Bridgewater State College that involved the teacher monitors, college students doing their student teaching practicum in Brockton. Sponsoring teachers received vouchers and all seminar notices for the laboratory school on campus. January 2007 had the first cohort of 15 student teachers.

Administrators indicated that a district professional development committee still ultimately approved all offerings; however, the screening and approval process from the building level on up resulted in district approval being mostly pro forma. Administrators indicated that the layered structure of professional development using much in-house knowledge and skills was well received.

c.) Administrators reported that since the last EQA visit, the district had initiated specific professional development for paraprofessionals. Some was provided through Saturday courses for paraprofessionals using ParaPro software. Of 450 paraprofessionals, approximately 300 met the ‘highly qualified’ status. The training was tracked by the human resources department. In addition, the district encouraged paraprofessionals to attend workshops offered to licensed staff, e.g., special needs workshops. Central office used the professional days as an opportunity to train paraprofessionals and build on skills to assist students. One example was training in Early Reading Intervention (ERI). The bilingual department also offered paraprofessionals 10 hours of second language acquisition training to help ELLs with writing and to help newcomers. Interviewees reported paraprofessionals have been very receptive to the training.

7.4. The district’s Professional Development programs include training in the teaching of the curriculum frameworks, participatory decision-making, community and parental involvement, and other skills required for the effective implementation of education reform.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

### **Evidence**

During the initial period of review, the district planned, funded, and held comprehensive training in a new districtwide ELA offering by Scott Foresman. There were workshop offerings in the district professional development plan that dealt with the curriculum frameworks. However,

there were no identifiable programs in shared decision-making in the professional development plan, other than a program on mediation.

During the reexamination period, the district moved strongly to standards-based instruction, supported through the professional development tiered structure that resulted in constant training in and infusion of the curriculum frameworks standards and participatory decision-making. Planning for building-based professional development began with the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and MCAS test data to determine building level needs to promote data-driven instruction to improve student achievement.

Administrators at the high school reported that retention of the restructuring committee once the grant funds ran out had allowed the development of a strong participatory decision-making process for the staff. Standards were at the forefront supported by professional development to improve achievement. EQA examiners noted in 100 percent of classrooms observed that instruction at the high school aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Student objectives were now the standards. As an example, students in mathematics were graphing an open-response question. Interviewees indicated that the high school trained grade 9 staff in EduSoft at the beginning of 2006-2007. Many others were also using the system. Districtwide, all staff trained in EduSoft had to develop one test and analyze the results by May 1, 2007.

When interviewed, administrators stated that they expected examiners would see standards and agendas posted in classrooms and referred to by teachers. In over 100 classroom observations completed, while standards were often posted, agendas were more the daily schedule and teachers seldom referred to the standards or objectives during the portion of the lesson observed.

7.6. Administrators and Teachers advance their knowledge and skills on a regular basis by enrolling in courses that are directly related to their professional assignments.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

### **Evidence**

At the time of the initial EQA review, there was evidence of cohesive collaboration among staff in the leadership team model in place in schools. There was no collaboration in the development

or pursuit of teacher's individual professional development plan goals and objectives, and there was no internal regulation requiring disclosure of individually selected professional development activities after the principal signed off on the plan.

According to administrators, during the reexamination period under review, the district provided and supported many professional development offerings to allow teachers to regularly advance their knowledge and skills by enrolling in courses directly related to their professional assignments. Interviewees reported that the district offered many opportunities for teachers to become involved in train the trainer models such as Discrete Mathematic Ideas (DMI) in which teachers received training at summer institutes and gave workshops in house during the school year. Many bilingual and other offerings, such as Connected Mathematics Program (CMP), occurred in a similar fashion. Teachers were also able to select from the standards after-school workshop and study group offerings. At the high school, in addition to the full faculty meeting, two professional development meetings occurred each month, one by department and one interdisciplinary. Challenge for Change district grants helped to support the literacy initiative at the high school.

The district contracted for professional development courses taught in the district when it identified needs for them, paying up to \$250 per course per individual for in-house courses only. For example, the district offered a 37.5-hour graduate course with credit through Fitchburg State College to address reading issues in math for ELL students, addressing "How can we plan lessons?"

EQA examiners learned from administrators and through examination of personnel files that the Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDPs) of teachers aligned with the SIPs and DIP as well as professional development needed for recertification. Teachers developed their plans and submitted them to their principal or evaluator for review every two years.

The layered structure of professional development in the district encouraged and allowed staff to constantly renew and advance knowledge and skills at the building level and at districtwide sessions for quick implementation in the classroom. With the addition of EduSoft, teachers could now monitor student progress with benchmark testing at least twice a year and more frequently with their own assessments.

<b>Standard V: Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support</b>						
<b>Ratings ▼ Indicators ►</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Excellent</b>						
<b>Satisfactory</b>		2007			2007	2007
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	2007		2007	2007		
<b>Poor</b>	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>						

## **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.

### **Findings:**

- The district began to track attendance, and staffed committees and used incentives to improve attendance.
- According to DOE data, average daily student attendance in the district improved from 90.3 percent in 2002 to 93.0 percent in 2006, yet the rate was still lower than the state mandated 95 percent.
- The district provided monetary incentives for good staff attendance and claimed to have used disciplinary measures if problems arose.
- In 2005-2006, staff absenteeism averaged 11.7 days per year, or 11.2 days excluding professional development, according to DOE data.
- The district met all mandates of the McKinney-Vento Act regarding transient and homeless students, and assigned an administrator to assist the successful transition of these students into high-level academic and other programs.
- The district invested in two new statistical software packages to enable administrators and teachers to conduct data analysis that could generate results within one hour and to allow the district to calculate a correlation between staff attendance and student achievement.

- The district identified students in need of supplemental services and remediation through the analysis of student assessment data, looking for strengths and weaknesses in curriculum.
- The school committee approved the superintendent's systemic plan to reorganize schools to improve student performance.

### **Summary**

The Brockton Public Schools addressed the poor indicator ratings from the previous EQA examination, making progress on those in this standard. The school committee approved the superintendent's systemic changes to improve student achievement. The school district and each of its schools had clear operational policies, practices, and procedures that incorporated clear expectations. The central administration gave clear directives to principals about the need for improvement. The superintendent allowed the building principals to take the lead in accomplishing the goals set by the administration in the manner best suited to their respective schools.

The district implemented some measures to address attendance issues since the last EQA review, and during the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years regularly monitored and evaluated student and staff attendance data. The district actively encouraged student attendance in conformity with its written policies and practices. The superintendent directed principals to improve upon expectations within their schools in the manner best suited to that school community. According to DOE data, average daily attendance in the district improved from 90.3 percent in 2002 to 93.0 percent in 2005, although the rate remained lower than the state requirement of 95 percent. According to documents and interviews, the district used software to track the number of absences and to look for patterns. Facilitators and liaisons contacted the homes of students with too many absences, and committees studied the causes and potential solutions. Attendance officers and school safety officers accompanied police looking for truant students, according to interviewees. The high school had an attendance policy that allowed students to "buy back" some unexcused absences and be eligible for summer school to make up a course. All the schools had their own unique ways to encourage good attendance, including prizes, meals, and ceremonies.

In 2005-2006, the teacher absenteeism rate in the district averaged 11.7 days including days out for professional development, and 11.2 days excluding professional development days, according to DOE data. Teachers were absent an average of 7.6 percent of the school year for short-term absences, compared to an average of 6.6 percent for 10 other urban districts. The district tracked teacher attendance using software to monitor number of days out and patterns of days absent, according to interviewees. Additionally, the central office purchased an automated telephone computer system for recording staff absences at the high school. Teachers in the district could receive monetary incentives for good attendance annually and at retirement. Interviewees stated that teachers had faced disciplinary action for excessive absences, up to and including non-renewal of contracts for non-professional status teachers and counseling to retirement for professional status staff.

The district met the dictates of the McKinney-Vento Act regarding homeless and transient students. An administrator monitored these students and encouraged them to take high-level courses and participate fully in all other activities. The district had established committees to provide services and supplies, transportation, and community outreach for these students and their families, according to documents and interviews.

The district demonstrated sophisticated software to EQA examiners that it used to identify students who were not meeting grade-level expectations. As of May 1, 2007, teachers were required to use the programs to create formative and summative assessments at grades K-8 and for Algebra I at grade 9 to track student progress, using test questions provided or creating their own. Students not having success could access remedial services, according to documents and interviews. At the elementary level, all schools used the Reading First model of three-tiered interventions and flexible groupings. At the junior high level, the district provided a few math and ELA pilot remediation programs and extra periods per week of remediation for students requiring it. The high school and junior high schools used Plato computer labs, and the high school had a freshman academy for students requiring more support in a small group setting, according to documents reviewed and staff interviews.

## **2004 Indicators**

6.1. District and school policies and practices require all staff and students to be in attendance.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

Despite clear district policies regarding attendance for both students and staff, during the initial period of review (2000-2003) the district did not meet the state requirement of 95 percent attendance. The attendance rate for students was 92.3 percent in 2000, 92.1 percent in 2001, and 90.3 percent in 2002. The teacher attendance rate in 2003 was 93.5 percent (or 94.3 percent, if the number of days due to long-term illness were subtracted).

During the reexamination period (2004-2006), the average daily attendance rate for Brockton students improved to 93.0 percent in 2005, according to Department of Education documents. While this was an increase over prior years, it fell short of the 95 percent rate required by the state. The district had implemented measures to encourage good student attendance, according to staff interviewed by EQA examiners. When students were absent without an excuse, an automated phone call was made to the student's home. The district had 12 community relations facilitators and paid parent liaisons for each school who contacted the homes after three unexcused absences. Postcards were sent and calls were made. The messages were translated into six different languages. A group comprised of the school's principal, assistant principal, nurse, adjustment counselor used the STAR system to look at subgroup attendance and to look for patterns such as friends always missing the same days. If none of these measures were successful, the attendance officers got involved. They required specific forms and could seek with the involvement of the courts. The attendance officers reported to the director of community services and communications. They often accompanied police in unmarked cars to question school-age children not in school. The school safety officers also went out looking for students.

The high school attendance policy clearly stated that a student would fail after three unexcused absences. The students could "buy back" two of the days with perfect attendance for one week and all work made up. With improved attendance for a chronically absent student, the failing



student was able to attain a '59' failing grade instead of what he/she had actually attained. The junior high schools had no "buy back" program.

Counselors checked attendance weekly, and the schools' pre-referral teams known as education planning teams looked carefully at attendance. There were also separate attendance teams at the buildings. The district had helped connect parents to various agencies if help was required but had also filed 51As on uncooperative parents.

While there were no district incentive programs for student attendance, the individual schools had programs and awards often funded by business partners. The elementary schools used various incentives such as a wall of honor, award ceremonies, and lunches with the principal to encourage good attendance. The junior high schools had breakfast with the principal for the homeroom with the best attendance. The high school had arranged for students to get jobs translating at the local hospital if they had good attendance. The high school also gave daily awards to students who were present and wearing their IDs. The rules have been modified since the district recognized that seriously ill students should stay home to get better and not attend school and make others ill. Students out for long-term illnesses were provided with home tutors.

In 2005-2006, the 1,463 teachers in the Brockton were absent an average of 11.7 days, including days absent for professional development. They were absent an average of 11.2 days without counting days absent for professional development. The district tracked staff attendance using the Subfinder program. Principals met with their faculties and privately with staff members when they saw data provided by the program that pointed to patterns of absences. The director of human resources periodically ran lists of teacher absences to look for any patterns and high numbers. If administrators suspected a teacher used a sick day to go on vacation, they could require a medical note. According to interviewees, the district did not renew contracts for several non-professional staff members in the last three years partly due to poor attendance. In some cases, the district counseled professional status teachers with poor attendance to retire or to seek help if they had medical or personal issues affecting their attendance. The district planned to begin tracking student achievement as it related to staff attendance using new software that could calculate correlations and disaggregate data. The executive director for teaching and learning asked principals to match teacher attendance to grades each term. If a teacher had to be

absent for a long term, a cadre of trained people such as retired teachers and trained paraprofessionals was available to fill in for them.

Teachers could annually buy back up to four unused sick days at \$100 per day if their attendance was perfect, according to interviews. At retirement, teachers could get half pay for up to 130 days if they had worked for the district for 30 years. The district maintained a sick bank that it could grant or deny. The district also considered attendance when teachers applied for coaching or summer teaching positions.

6.5. The district has policies and programs in place to address the needs of transient or mobile students. These policies and programs promote transient student involvement in high quality and challenging programs.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

#### **Evidence**

During the initial period of review, the district did not have a specific system in place to deal with transient and homeless students. The district processed students in grades K-8 through the parent information office. Counselors at the high school enrolled high school students and helped facilitate their entry.

During the reexamination period, the district followed the dictates of the McKinney-Vento Act regarding transient and homeless students and assigned an administrator to oversee the population of over 250 students who were either homeless or living in various centers, according to administrators in interviews with EQA examiners. Contact was made through the Title I office. At the time of the review, 104 students received transportation via buses and taxicabs. An amended policy allowed the homeless students 100 days to obtain required immunizations. According to documents reviewed, the district worked with social services, churches and interfaith councils, and ethnic councils to help students and their families meet with success at school. A collaborative committee consisting of a collaborative coordinator, nurses, adjustment and guidance counselors, and parent liaisons met every six weeks to discuss the students. A citywide homeless committee met to deal with problems of the chronically homeless, providing homes and support services where it could. The schools sent parent information flyers to shelters

and after-school and summer YMCA programs. According to interviewees, the district encouraged transient and homeless students to fully participate in all activities, and the DOE offered scholarship aid of \$30,000. The community had donated clothes, shoes, and sporting equipment to the schools for the homeless. The homelessness administrator followed up as best as possible on where homeless students went if they left the schools.

8.5. Beginning at the Kindergarten level, the district uses data available from classroom teachers and standardized tests to\*:

- a. identify all students who are not meeting grade-level performance expectations; and
- b. provide these students with sufficient supplementary and/or remedial services.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

During the initial period of review, the district had established benchmarks starting in kindergarten to monitor student abilities and progress. Students who did not meet these benchmarks at prescribed times were placed into grade K plus and grade 3 plus programs. These were limited to 25 percent of students requiring the remediation services due to space and funding, and an analysis showed the services to be successful for students who participated.

During the reexamination period, the district purchased a sophisticated software program entitled EduSoft to track and analyze data on students and assessments. The schools with Reading First grants used a three-tiered model of remediation at grades K-3. This district also used the model at grades 4-5 even though they were not part of the grant, according to interviewees. An instructional resource specialist supported this program, met with teachers to assess data from the DIBELS testing, and determined which level of remediation was required. The faculty had 100 percent “buy-in” to participate in this grant funded program. The staff interviewed by EQA examiners stressed that it was a fluid process. However, they claimed success as 75 percent of grade 1 students labeled at risk in 2004 had attained benchmark levels by January 2007. The district scheduled data meetings, professional development concerning data analysis and instructional strategies, and data boards to track student progress. All elementary schools had

moved from 90 to 120 minutes of ELA instruction daily. All teachers – whether in Reading First schools or not – had received training in data analysis and on using data to change instruction.

At the junior high schools, staff had analyzed data to find students at risk and place them into a Trans Math program funded by an entitlement grant at every junior high. In this program taught by certified math teachers, six to eight students worked in groups to learn number sense and number skills. This was in addition to their regular math class, and students took this in lieu of foreign language. The district offered a prescriptive Soar to Success program in ELA for small groups of students as an alternative to the other reading classes. The district sent notes to parents of eligible students regarding these programs. An after-school program funded by the 21st Century grants included a tutoring component. There were school stores and checkbook programs where students learned practical aspects of math. There was a Plato lab for math and ELA that used material from MCAS and EduSoft, and interviewees said that all classes were required to participate regularly in these lab sessions.

At North Junior High, the school piloted Fast Math, a computer program to teach basic skills for 10 minutes three to five times per week for students needing extra help while the rest of the class was in the Plato lab. East Junior High was piloting the Read 180 program.

At the high school, English classes had to integrate the Plato lab into their classes. There had been a continuation of the freshman academy for those students identified in grade 8 as being able to benefit from smaller classes. This program, consisting of 80 to 100 students on two teams, according to interviews, incorporated an interdisciplinary math and English approach, team teaching, an innovative schedule, positive reinforcement, mentoring, help at the end of each day, and a large guidance component. The students focused on Seven Habits for Developing Effective Teens and focused on careers with field trips and assemblies with speakers. Interviewees told EQA examiners that longitudinal studies had tracked these students and they “seemed” to be doing better, but they had no quantitative data to share.

2.2. The district and all of its schools regularly monitor and evaluate data on student and staff attendance.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

## **EQA Rating for 2007: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

During the initial period of review, the district collected attendance data on a daily basis for both students and staff. Administrators evaluated attendance regularly. However, the district did not meet the state requirement of 95 percent attendance. The student attendance rates were 92.3 percent in 2000, 92.1 percent in 2001, and 90.3 percent in 2002.

During the reexamination period, the district still did not attain the state requirement of 95 percent average daily attendance. Student attendance increased from 90.3 percent in 2002 to 93.0 percent in 2006, an increase of 2.7 percentage points. The district and all of its schools regularly monitored and evaluated data on student and staff attendance. Building principals and central office administrators reported to EQA examiners that they used the Edusoft and e-Scholar programs to monitor and track both student and staff attendance. At the high school, the district budgeted monies to purchase an automated computerized phone program for recording teacher absences. Administrators reported that at the district's executive team meeting there were ongoing discussions about the use of data relative to staff and student attendance. They further reported that the superintendent directed each building principal to monitor and improve upon attendance for both staff and students.

Principals reported incorporating attendance data in teacher evaluations as warranted. The executive director for human resources reported working closely with building administrators to improve upon staff attendance. It was further reported that several staff members were "let go" for poor attendance. Central office administrators reported that the superintendent encouraged and directed principals to create practices that would accomplish the task of increasing student attendance. They stated that the superintendent was intent upon increasing attendance and less focused on how the principals accomplished the objective. Principals agreed with that sentiment, stating that the superintendent provided them with wide latitude to accomplish the task at their respective buildings.

2.4. The district actively encourages student attendance in conformity with their policies and expectations.

## **EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

## **EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

### **Evidence**

During the initial review period, the district included the attendance policy in all student handbooks and students were encouraged to attend school. Some schools gave rewards or pizza parties for good attendance. However, this was not cited as being a formalized or consistent practice in the district.

During the reexamination period, the district actively encouraged student attendance in conformity with its policies and expectations, and published school attendance policies in all school handbooks. The administrative team reported that, as a result of the previous EQA audit, each building principal was provided with student data disaggregated by subgroup population. At the high school, student attendance was reported by houses and teachers reported daily on student attendance. Teachers wrote up students missing from class. The next morning, the administration followed up on the absences. As of the 2006-2007 school year a paper and pencil process was used. Commencing in the 2007-2008 school year, the district will computerize the process and add it to the automated telephone system.

The district plan called for each school principal to create a plan tailored to the student population of that school. Administrators reported that the staff at each building was allowed to create a plan for rewarding improved attendance. Examples of reward incentive programs included daily random drawings for a reward/gift item, “Boxer of the Month” citizenship award tied to attendance, monthly honor roll assemblies with guest speakers focusing on being in school to achieve, gift certificates, and lunch opportunities with teachers and the principal. At some schools, classrooms with the highest attendance were given a breakfast with the principal. The school district also involved the community: school business partners donated rewards, school employees donated reward incentives, and a school custodian donated 25 sporting event tickets.

2.5. The district collects and uses data on:

- a. student attendance and evaluates the effects of student attendance on performance and achievement, and
- b. staff attendance and evaluates the effects of staff attendance on staff performance and student achievement.

**EQA Rating for 2004: Poor**

**EQA Rating for 2007: Satisfactory**

**Evidence**

During the period of the initial review, it was not the practice of the district to collect or analyze comprehensive staff or student attendance data; however, the district's management system for student information did include some attendance data, as well as assessment data, such as those from the MCAS tests.

During the reexamination period, the district collected and used data to assess student attendance and attempted to correlate attendance to student achievement. Initial attempts in gathering these data began during the 2003-2004 school year, but met with limited success since the data were aggregated. District assessment specialists reported to EQA examiners that the statistical software package was not sophisticated enough to analyze the relationship between student achievement and staff attendance. School principals recognized that school level data did not capture the relationship between staff attendance and student achievement.

Executive directors, central administration, and building principals told EQA examiners that they then purchased new software programs (e-Scholar and EduSoft) that would enable in-depth statistical analysis of student attendance data. District assessment specialists reported to EQA examiners that the new statistical package was sophisticated enough analyze the relationship between student achievement and staff attendance.

Central office administrators reported that building principals would receive monthly staff attendance data with notable staff absences highlighted. Principals were to use those data in their supervision of central office staff, especially with the notion of connecting staff evaluation and student achievement. They further reported that central office administrators would evaluate

principals in how well they utilized the data on staff attendance and student achievement in their assessment of principals' performance. All administrators interviewed stated that they had been trained in the use and application of the new statistical software programs. The district trained additional support staff in all buildings as well. The district planned to train teachers through the professional development program in the 2006-2007 school year.



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

Rather than reexamine the district only on those 2004 indicators on which the district was rated 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory,' the EQA conducted a full examination of the district on Standard VI covering the period 2004-2006.

## **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 budget process was open and participatory. The superintendent and administration presented district needs to all stakeholders, including city officials.
- Administration evaluated programs and personnel to realign and reallocate resources to best address the needs of the district.
- Resources in the district were inadequate, as the district relied on supplemental funding sources for support programs.
- The district had sound internal controls to ensure the budget was not overspent and expenses were processed accurately.

- The district and city shared the same financial accounting system as well as the chief financial officer. This organizational structure made the communication of financial information more efficient and effective.
- Reports regarding budget status and the status of grants were regularly communicated to administration and to the school committee.
- Facilities varied regarding their condition. Each school had a system in place for safety and security including cameras and locked doors.

### **Summary**

The budget process of the Brockton Public Schools was open and participatory. The district administration relied on principals and administrators with budget authority to develop the budget. Administration reviewed budget requests, and the superintendent presented the budget to the school committee with three scenarios: needs based, level services based, and level funded. The district reviewed programs and staffing to reallocate resources, personnel, and programs to maximize funding. The district used student data in the budget development, and increased their use in recent years due to new technology and data warehousing initiatives in the district. The district allocated funding on a per pupil basis by elementary, junior high school, and high school levels. The district's supplemental programs relied primarily on grant funding. Resources were not adequate.

Although the city supported the district with minimum local contributions, it did support the district with the construction of two new schools that were under construction during the EQA site visit. The district's internal control structure was sound to ensure that procurement laws were followed, with levels of approval of purchasing, a bid review subcommittee of the school committee, and review by the city's procurement department, and that payroll was processed accurately. The district administration reported to the school committee and the superintendent on a regular basis regarding the status of the local budget.

The facilities varied regarding their condition. Overall, they were clean and well maintained. Capital planning occurred; however, funding limitations resulted in specific capital projects not being funded, although the city did have two new school facilities under construction.

## **2007 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**

According to school administration, the district had a budget calendar that set specific dates for the budget development discussions to occur. The district administration relied on the principals and administrators with budget authority to develop the budgets. The administration developed the personnel budgets by addressing compliance issues, and the principals, program directors, and executive team reviewed the requests. The school committee's finance subcommittee reviewed the budget proposal. The superintendent presented the budget to the school committee with three scenarios: needs based, level services based, and level funded budgets.

The Proposed Budget Booklet for fiscal year 2007 included a letter from the superintendent dated April 27, 2006. This letter highlighted the fiscal year 2007 proposed budget, describing the commitment to expanding full-day kindergarten and middle school programming, implementing the second phase of the district's structural reorganization plan, and launching the district's first grades K-8 school. The superintendent wrote, "By maximizing efficiencies and redirecting resources, we will maintain our level of services... wherever possible, we have reduced or eliminated positions through attrition, minimizing the number of layoffs and separation costs."

The fiscal year 2006 budget section had a cover page with the amount voted by the school committee, an amount voted by the city council, and a revote of the school committee to the city council amount. It had a chart from 2003-2004 comparing Brockton per pupil expenditures, including regular day, special education, and district total. The next chart was an FY 2006 Line Item Budget Ordinary Maintenance Estimate that summarized information for fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 by "Ordinary Maintenance," "Personal Services," "Total Travel Out-Of-State," "Net School Spending Total W/Carryover," "Non-Net School Spending," a

“Grand Total Amount,” and the “Carryover Amount.” The next chart was FY 2006 Additional Personnel and Reductions, which described additional personnel requests with a rationale and estimated cost plus staff reductions with a rationale and amounts for certified and non-certified staff. The document included department budgets comparing fiscal year 2005 to fiscal year 2006. The next section was the fiscal year 2006 Budget Non-Net School Spending followed by budgets for each school that included school profile information, school philosophy, MCAS scores, goals and a description of goal attainment or progress, student demographics, academic support programs, and student enrichment programs. It also included facility descriptions and fiscal year 2004 utility costs. The next section had descriptions of personnel requests and reductions including rationales. The school profiles section had the salaries for locally funded personal services, comparing fiscal year 2005 to fiscal year 2006 and the number of positions, followed by the same information for grant funded positions. It included capital requests by school with reasons for the request such as legal, safety, health, security, and maintenance. The sections following were devoted to site budgets; the FY 2006 Personal Services Local Funded Staff Listing, a list of all personnel, their position, location, salary, longevity, early retirement, and total salary; and the FY 2006 Personal Services Grant Funded Staff Listing, with the same information plus the funding source (federal, state, revolving, etc.).

2. 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.

**Rating: Satisfactory**

#### **Evidence**

According to the fiscal year 2006 budget booklet, the school district allocated the budget on a per capita basis less bids: \$105 per capita for Brockton High School, \$90 per capita for the junior high schools, and \$84 per capita for the elementary schools. District administration stated that the MCAS performance of Brockton students determined the focus of budget needs. The district implemented remedial and intervention programs funded primarily through grants. According to the fiscal year 2006 budget booklet, the district will expand its full-day kindergarten program to all buildings, using grant funds through special education and Title I. In fiscal year 2006, the

school district created a position of associate principal for curriculum and instruction at each junior high school.

According to the district's 2006 budget booklet, the district allocated both local and supplemental resources to address student needs. Each school listed "Academic Support Programs" and "Student Enrichment Programs" offered. Brockton High School offered several academic support programs, including MCAS support classes both during and after school for students who did not pass the MCAS exams, an after-school special education mentoring program, Plato labs for reading and math, an SAT lab, an access center for all students during school, a Project Grads Teen Parent Program, and a summer school.

At the junior high level, each of the four schools offered a science fair, Project GREAT, and a National History Day. All but the North Junior High school offered a gifted and talented program and peer mediation and peer leaders. The South Junior High School also offered remedial and enrichment classes, the West Junior High School offered a Johns Hopkins program and the New England Math League, and the East Junior High School offered the Academic Advantage MCAS Tutoring Program. The North Junior High School offered PowerPoint MCAS Prep, tutors from Stonehill College, enrichment reading, Plato Lab, City Lab, Smart Lab, and instructional technology support.

All schools in the two-zone elementary system offered Title I services, peer leaders, and peer mediation. All but the Brookfield School and the John F. Kennedy School offered the Partners in Excellence Volunteer Program. The Second Step program, which teaches children how to deal with emotions, resist impulsive behavior, resolve conflict, solve problems, and understand the consequences of their actions, was offered at the Louis F. Angelo School, the Franklin School, the Hancock School, the Whitman School, the Downey School, the Huntington School, the John F. Kennedy School, the Eldon B. Keith School, and the Joseph F. Plouffe School. The Louis F. Angelo School and the Joseph F. Plouffe School offered a gifted and talented program. The Louis F. Angelo School, the Edgar B. Davis School, and the John F. Kennedy School all offered English immersion programs. The Louis F. Angelo School also offered an inclusion model program, and the John F. Kennedy School offered differentiated instruction, a Literacy Closet, a

Jewish Coalition for Literacy Volunteers, a science showcase, and a Savings Makes Cents program.

The Joseph F. Plouffe School also offered an inclusion program, Patriotic Poetry, the Franklin School offered a Book Bag Program and a Literature Day, the Oscar F. Raymond School offered the Primary Grades Phonic Program and a Student Incentive Board, the Whitman School had a Family Book Bag Program, the Downey School had inclusion classes, and the Huntington School had a Saving Makes Cents program. The Dr. William Arnone School offered inclusion and a gifted and talented program. The Belmont Street School offered inclusion, bilingual education, and Reach for the Stars – Motivational Program. The Gilmore School offered a Cape Verdean immersion program, Be a Star Reader Program, Leaps in Literacy Volunteer Program, Jewish Literacy Coalition, and morning math tutoring. The Eldon B. Keith School offered a grades K-1 adjustment class, K Plus, Three Plus, MCAS prep, a Book Bag Program, and Second Step.

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**

District administrators stated that the resources were not adequate. The focus of the budget was to ensure the district addressed the top goals of the schools' improvement plans. According to the fiscal year 2007 letter, the district reduced 10 elementary positions due to reduced enrollment and another 14 positions due to state education funding cuts. The grade 3 and 6 levels absorbed the impact of these cuts due to existing low student-teacher ratios. The superintendent explained that the district added 10 additional full-day kindergartens; a net loss of 14 K-6 teachers and 17 anticipated elementary retirements resulted in no layoffs.

The superintendent wrote, "Ordinary Maintenance spending has been cut from fiscal year 2006 levels: there are \$1.5 million in unfunded initiatives and programs, including a \$400,000

textbook adoption program, a \$256,300 cut to instructional technology, \$50,000 to facility maintenance and reductions in utilities and contract services.”

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: Satisfactory**

**Evidence**

According to the superintendent’s fiscal year 2007 letter, the high school restructured the administrative organization of the occupational education and business education departments, resulting in an estimated savings of \$200,000: “We have eliminated, consolidated, or not filled more than \$600,000 in administrative positions.” In fiscal year 2007, the district will continue to consolidate or eliminate administrative positions at central services for a savings of approximately \$150,000. The district will meet the fiscal year 2007 budget through the attrition of paraprofessional positions, monitor teacher assistants, and five parent liaisons.

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: Satisfactory**

**Evidence**

The city and school department had a formal written agreement for fiscal year 2005, dated and signed on June 3, 2004. This agreement also existed for fiscal year 2006. The city finance department provided backup to the district regarding the charges paid by the city on the district’s behalf.

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: Needs Improvement**

### **Evidence**

For fiscal years 2004 and 2005, according to Department of Education data, the Brockton school district did not meet minimum net school spending (NSS) requirements by \$4,311,092 (-3.1 percent) and \$2,144,749 (-1.5 percent), respectively. In fiscal year 2006, according to Department of Education data, the district exceeded the minimum NSS requirement by \$3,325,130 (2.4 percent).

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: Satisfactory**

### **Evidence**

According to the district administration, the school committee received monthly financial reports. The executive director of administration received biweekly reports on payroll. The principals and administrators with budget authority had access to the financial accounting system (MUNIS), and they received quarterly reports from the business office. On the first of the month, the superintendent received a report of the balances of the district's revolving accounts.

The district and city had several review levels to ensure accuracy of reporting. The district limited the number of "object accounts" to lessen the potential for errors. The city's auditing office reviewed the district information as another level of reconciliation. The district had a hierarchy for the review and approval of purchase orders. The school committee received grant proposals and voted to approve the grant pending receipt of funds. The End of Year Pupil and Financial Report, Final Financial Reports for grants, and the required audits and compliance reviews were timely.

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 MUNIS for its financial accounting system. All administrators had “view only” access to reports in the MUNIS system. The union salary schedules were in the MUNIS system. The system had checks to ensure that purchase orders would not over-expend a line item. The system aligned with the necessary Massachusetts Department of Education reporting requirements. Individuals in the school business office did forecasting of expenses such as payroll. The district had a hierarchy for the review and approval of purchase orders. According to administrators, the school committee and the mayor approved major transfers.

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 administration had a grants administrator and a grants accountant. The administrator actively pursued grants for the district. The school committee reviewed grant proposals and approved them pending receipt of funds. The business office monitored special revenue funds. The superintendent received monthly reports regarding the balances of the revolving accounts.

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**

The school district had a system in place to ensure compliance with procurement laws. The executive director of administration had the MCPPO certification. The city’s procurement office

reviewed all school bids and contracts. The mayor and city solicitor signed all contracts. The school committee had a bid review subcommittee which reviewed the bid recommendations. The school district's business office had sound systems in place regarding bid processes. The district had a bid review schedule for all bids in the district. The schedule tracked all advertisements either in the local newspaper or in the *Goods and Services Bulletin*. It tracked pre-bid conferences if used and the bid opening, review, and award dates. The district also had a procedure manual that included the regulations for soliciting quotes and bids. The district had a hierarchy for the review and approval of purchase orders.

The auditor for the city and school district for the prior 10 years was KPMG, LLP. According to city officials, there were no school-related findings in the management letter or single audit. A review of the compliance review of the End of Year Pupil and Financial report for fiscal year 2006 revealed the district filed necessary amendments.

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: Needs Improvement**

**Evidence**

The district's preventative maintenance, for HVAC services for example, was primarily through third party contracts with vendors. The district did employ a plumber and carpenter to handle as much in-house preventative maintenance as possible.

According to the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability Attachment E, Facilities Inventory, Brockton High School, grades 9-12, was constructed in 1970. It had an enrollment of 4,255 in fiscal year 2007 and was listed in "good" condition. The East Junior High School, grades 7-8, was constructed in 1958. It had an enrollment of 604 and was listed in "fair" condition. The North Junior High School, grades 7-8, was constructed in 1959. It had an enrollment of 533 and was listed in "fair" condition. The West Junior High School, grades 7-8, was constructed in 1952. It had an enrollment of 572 and was listed in "good" condition. The South Middle High School (formerly South Junior High), grades 6-8, was constructed in 1955

and renovated in 2002. It had an enrollment of 555 and was listed in “good” condition. The Gilmore Academy, grades 6-8, was constructed in 1965. It had an enrollment of 369 and was listed in “good” condition. The Lincoln Alternative School, grades 6-12, was constructed in 1895 and renovated in 1975. It had an enrollment of 62 and was listed in “fair” condition. The B.B. Russell Alternative School, grades 6-12, was constructed in 1925 and renovated in 1996. It had an enrollment of 80 and was listed in “fair” condition.

The Angelo Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1999. It had an enrollment of 708 and was listed in “good” condition. The Arnone Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 2001. It had an enrollment of 722 and was listed in “good” condition. The Ashfield Elementary School, grades 1-6, was constructed in 1965. It had an enrollment of 421 and was listed in “good” condition. The Davis School, grades K-8, was constructed in 1974. It had an enrollment of 865 and was listed in “good” condition. The Downey Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1971. It had an enrollment of 568 and was listed in “good” condition. The Franklin Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1898 and renovated in 1978. It had an enrollment of 298 and was listed in “fair” condition. The Huntington Elementary School, grades K-5, was constructed in 1889 and renovated in 1978. It had an enrollment of 415 and was listed in “good” condition. The Kennedy Elementary School, grades K-5, was constructed in 1965. It had an enrollment of 524 and was listed in “good” condition. The Plouffe Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1998. It had an enrollment of 712 and was listed in “good” condition. The Raymond Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1974. It had an enrollment of 696 and was listed in “good” condition. The Whitman Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1895 and renovated in 1998. It had an enrollment of 212 and was listed in “fair” condition. The Belmont Street School, grades 3-6, was constructed in 1995. It had an enrollment of 310 and was listed in “good” condition. The Hancock Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1963 and renovated in 1969. It had an enrollment of 668 and was listed in “good” condition. The Brookfield Elementary School, grades K-6, was constructed in 1963 and renovated in 1970. It had an enrollment of 738 and was listed in “good” condition.

The Goddard School serving kindergarten was constructed in 1881 and renovated in 1975. It had an enrollment of 158 and was listed in “good” condition. The Keith School, grades preK-K, was

constructed in 1916 and renovated in 1974. It had an enrollment of 417 and was listed in “fair” condition. The Howard Diagnostic Center, a preschool center, was constructed in 1890 and renovated in 1975. It had an enrollment of 160 and was listed in “good” condition.

On EQA walkthroughs, the examiners noted the following. The North Junior High School was locked. It had a bell and the door was unlocked remotely. The building was clean despite wear and tear due to usage. It was well lit and well maintained. The South Junior High School was clean and well lit. The door remained locked and staff controlled it remotely. It was renovated four years ago and was in good condition. The East Junior High School was well lit and overall it was clean. There were nine-inch tiles throughout that were chipped and/or broken. Some classrooms were held in non-educational spaces; an English class was held in a lobby and a computer lab was in the old shop area. The ceiling in the corridor between the kitchen and the boiler room had a leak repaired; however, it needed additional attention.

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**

The fiscal year 2006 budget booklet listed fiscal year 2006 capital improvement projects totaling \$16,014,587. The individual school sections in the fiscal year 2006 budget booklet included capital requests by school. According to district administrators, these capital projects did not receive funding. The city had two new schools under construction at the time of the EQA site visit.

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

**Rating: Satisfactory**

**Evidence**

District administration stated that the front doors of all schools had cameras and an intercom system to ensure safety. Some schools had additional cameras and other security devices. Staff

wore identification badges. Students at the high school wore identification badges. A security company monitored the school facilities. The school district had its own police department with 10 positions. In addition, it employed 18 teachers in the position of “floor teacher” who walked the corridors. The Brockton High School section of the 2006 budget booklet described the formation and continuous meetings of a safety committee, a yearly review of handbook policies, and awareness of discipline trends. According to the district organizational chart, dated November 18, 2005 and updated April 2007, the district had a manager for emergency response and crisis.

## 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, FY1997 – 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	14,630	4.6	96,302,825	7.4	19,519,466	65,947,832	16.9	85,467,298	12.1	85,852,502	11.5	385,204	0.5
FY98	15,290	4.5	104,034,719	8.0	21,184,914	75,875,296	15.1	97,060,210	13.6	97,753,459	13.9	693,249	0.7
FY99	15,594	2.0	108,406,901	4.2	21,998,113	83,922,521	10.6	105,920,634	9.1	105,512,049	7.9	-408,585	-0.4
FY00	16,390	5.1	113,989,422	5.1	23,838,596	92,108,653	9.8	115,947,249	9.5	117,695,011	11.5	1,747,761	1.5
FY01	16,801	2.5	122,533,043	7.5	24,527,390	98,005,653	6.4	122,533,043	5.7	125,269,140	6.4	2,736,097	2.2
FY02	16,702	-0.6	127,047,226	3.7	25,448,601	112,706,501	15.0	138,155,102	12.7	133,621,037	6.7	-4,534,065	-3.3
FY03	16,796	0.6	132,701,278	4.5	30,894,683	112,706,501	0.0	143,601,184	3.9	137,054,189	2.6	-6,546,995	-4.6
FY04	16,589	-1.2	132,924,166	0.2	32,562,026	106,909,135	-5.1	139,471,161	-2.9	135,160,069	-1.4	-4,311,092	-3.1
FY05	16,335	-1.5	133,451,829	0.4	31,747,318	106,909,135	0.0	138,656,453	-0.6	136,511,704	1.0	-2,144,749	-1.5
FY06	16,093	-1.5	138,977,359	4.1	30,812,049	110,310,059	3.2	141,122,108	1.8	144,447,238	5.8	3,325,130	2.4

	<u>Dollars Per Foundation Enrollment</u>			<u>Percentage of Foundation</u>			<u>Chapter 70 Aid as Percent of Actual NSS</u>
	Foundation Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY97	6,583	4,508	5,868	68.5	88.7	89.1	76.8
FY98	6,804	4,962	6,393	72.9	93.3	94.0	77.6
FY99	6,952	5,382	6,766	77.4	97.7	97.3	79.5
FY00	6,955	5,620	7,181	80.8	101.7	103.3	78.3
FY01	7,293	5,833	7,456	80.0	100.0	102.2	78.2
FY02	7,607	6,748	8,000	88.7	108.7	105.2	84.3
FY03	7,901	6,710	8,160	84.9	108.2	103.3	82.2
FY04	8,013	6,445	8,148	80.4	104.9	101.7	79.1
FY05	8,170	6,545	8,357	80.1	103.9	102.3	78.3
FY06	8,636	6,855	8,976	79.4	101.5	103.9	76.4

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.