District Review Report

Brockton Public Schools

Review conducted November 18-21, 2013

Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

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Brockton Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

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

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

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Brockton Public Schools was conducted from November 18-21, 2013. The site visit included 29.5 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 83 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, parents, students and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted three focus groups with 12 elementary school teachers, 8 middle school teachers, and 8 high school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, student performance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 125 classrooms in 23 schools. The team collected data using an instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

Brockton has a mayor-council form of government and the chair of the school committee is the mayor. There are eight members of the school committee including the mayor and one member elected from each the city's seven wards. They meet every other week.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 1, 2013, but has served in multiple capacities in the district for 37 years, starting as a special education teacher and most recently as director of community schools. The district leadership team includes the superintendent, deputy superintendent of schools and five executive directors: financial services, operations and school administration, human resources, pupil personnel services, teaching and learning, and the associate director of accountability. Each executive director is responsible for a central office professional staff ranging from as small as three in the human resources group to twelve in the teaching and learning group. The district has experienced cuts to the leadership team and central office staff in the last five years, including two executive director positions and five district math coach positions. The district has 24 principals leading 24 schools. There are over 50 other school administrators, including assistant principals, instructional resource specialists, reading resource specialists, district directors, coordinators, district department heads, housemasters, and high school department heads for core and non-core subjects; in addition, the assistant principals and housemasters are members of a bargaining unit. There are a total of 1064.5 teachers in the district.

As of the 2012-2013 school year, 16,595 students were enrolled in the district's 24 schools:

Table 1: Brockton Public Schools
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Barrett Russell Early Childhood Center	EES	K[1]	
Gilmore School Early Childhood Center	EES	PK-K	319
Brookfield Elementary School	ES	K-5	659
Downey Elementary School	ES	K-5	582
Dr. W. Arnone Community School	ES	K-5	799
Hancock Elementary School	ES	K-5	735
Huntington Elementary School	ES	K-5	529
John F. Kennedy Elementary School	ES	K-5	625

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[1]The Barrett Russell Early Childhood Center opened in September 2013 and is not included in school year 2012-2013 enrollments.

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Louis F. Angelo Elementary School	ES	K-5	823
Manthala George Jr. Elementary School	ES	K-5	861
Mary E. Baker Elementary School	ES	K-5	755
Goddard Alternative School	ESMSHS	4-12	53
Edgar B. Davis School	ESMS	K-8	1,114
Oscar F. Raymond School	ESMS	K-8	1,091
Ashfield Middle School	MS	6-8	478
East Middle School	MS	6-8	426
Joseph F. Plouffe Academy	MS	6-8	637
North Middle School	MS	6-8	505
South Middle School	MS	6-8	484
West Middle School	MS	6-8	598
B.B. Russell Alternative School	MSHS	7-12	62
Brockton Champion High School	HS	9-12	217
Brockton High School	HS	9-12	4,081
Edison Academy	HS	9-12	162
Totals	**24**	**PK-12**	**16,595**

*As of 2012-2013 school year and excluding enrollment of Barrett Russell Early Childhood Center, opened in September 2013

Between 2009 and 2013 overall student enrollment increased by 8.4 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared to the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 11 urban districts of similar size (8,000 to 26,000 students) in fiscal year 2012: $12,364 compared with $13,066 (see District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance). Actual net school spending

has been close to what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program in most years after 2008 as shown in Table B8 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

Brockton is a Level 3 district because its lowest performing schools are in Level 3. It is the largest urban Massachusetts district without a Level 4 school.

- The 2013 cumulative Progress and Performance Index (PPI)[2] for the district was 53 for all students and 56 for high needs students; the target is 75.

- Brockton has 12 Level 3 schools out of 18 schools with performance data. Of the Level 3 schools, 10 are in Level 3 for being in the 20th percentile or lower for their grade span and for not meeting their cumulative PPI targets for all students and high needs students in 2013. As for the other two Level 3 schools:

    - Ashfield Middle School is in the 24th percentile of middle schools but is in Level 3 because it has low MCAS participation for students with disabilities.

    - Brockton High School had a cumulative PPI of 88 for all students and 85 for high needs students and would be a Level 1 school but for persistently low graduation rates for students with disabilities, which led to its Level 3 classification.

In ELA and math, CPIs and proficiency rates in Brockton were below the state rate in every grade in 2013. In ELA, the gaps between the district and the state were most pronounced in grades 3 through 6 and narrowed as they approach the 10th grade. In math, the gaps between the district and the state were most pronounced in grades 3 through 7 and narrowed in the 8th and 10th grade. Science CPI and proficiency rates from 2010 to 2013 were relatively stable but well below state rates.

- Brockton's ELA CPI was 75.5 in 2013, lower than its 2010 CPI of 77.1, and was 11.3 points below the state CPI in 2013.

- The ELA proficiency rate for all students in the district was 47 percent in 2013, lower than its 2010 rate of 50 percent, and 22 percentage points below the state rate of 69 percent.

- ELA proficiency rates in 2013 were 25 to 30 percentage points lower than the state rate in grades 3 through 6 in 2013; they began to approach the state rates in higher grades. Grade 7 was 18 percentage points below the state. Grade 8 was 14 percentage points below the state. Grade 10 was 6 percentage points below the state.

- Brockton's math CPI was 68.8 in 2013, slightly higher than its 2010 CPI of 66.9; it was 12.0 points below the state CPI in 2013.

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[2] For information about PPI and other accountability measures, see the ESE website at http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/accountability/default.html.

- The math proficiency rate was 40 percent in 2013, higher than its 2010 rate of 38 percent; it was 21 percentage points below the state rate of 61 percent.

  - Math proficiency rates were higher in 2013 than 2010 by 3 percentage points in grade 3, 6 percentage points in grade 5, 8 percentage points in grade 8, and 7 percentage points in grade 10.

  - The only grade where math proficiency was lower in 2013 than in 2010 was the 7th grade.

- Math proficiency rates were 21 to 23 percentage points lower than the state rate in 2013 in grades 3 through 7; they began to approach the state rate in grades 8 and 10 with rates that were 16 and 15 percentage points respectively below the state.

- The science CPI for all students was 61.7 in 2010 and 63.7 in 2013, 15.3 points below the state's 2013 science CPI of 79.0.

- The science proficiency rate for all students was 26 percent in 2010 and 28 percent in 2013, 25 percentage points below the 2013 state rate of 53 percent.

  - The 5th grade science proficiency rate was 19 percent (state 51 percent).

  - The 8th grade science proficiency rate was 18 percent (state 39 percent).

  - The 10th grade science proficiency rate was 52 percent (state 71 percent).

The 10th grade has made the largest improvement in ELA proficiency in the district, and large improvements in math proficiency as well.

- The 10th grade's ELA proficiency rate was 85 percent in 2013, 18 percentage points higher than its rate in 2010 of 67 percent. In 2013 the 10th grade's median Student Growth Percentile[3] (SGP) for ELA was high at 73.0.

- The 10th grade's math proficiency rate was 65 percent in 2013, 7 percentage points higher than its rate in 2010 of 58 percent. The 10th grade's median SGP for math in 2013 was 52.0.

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[3] "Student growth percentiles" are a measure of student progress that compares changes in a student's MCAS scores to changes in MCAS scores of other students with similar performance profiles. The most appropriate measure for reporting growth for a group (e.g., subgroup, school, district) is the median student growth percentile (the middle score if one ranks the individual student growth percentiles from highest to lowest). For more information about the Growth Model, see "MCAS Student Growth Percentiles: Interpretive Guide" and other resources available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/growth/.

The four year cohort graduation rate was higher in 2013 than in 2010; similarly, the five year cohort graduation rate was higher in 2012 than in 2009. Both types of graduation rates were below state graduation rates, especially for students with disabilities.

- The four year cohort graduation rate was 73.8 percent in 2013, higher than the 2010 rate of 66.7 percent; it was 11.2 percentage points below the 2013 state graduation rate of 85.0 percent.

  o Students with disabilities had a four year cohort graduation rate in 2013 of 41.5 percent, 26.3 percentage points below the state rate of 67.8 percent.

- The five year cohort graduation rate was 79.3 percent in 2012, higher than the 2009 rate of 74.3 percent; it was 13.2 percentage points below the state graduation rate of 87.5 percent.

  o Students with disabilities had a five year cohort graduation rate in 2012 of 52.3 percent, 21.5 percentage points below the state rate of 73.8 percent.

- The annual grade 9-12 dropout rate for Brockton was higher than the state rate from 2010 to 2013 and was 3.8 percent in 2013 compared to 2.2 percent statewide.

  o The annual grade 9-12 dropout rate for students with disabilities in Brockton was 6.1 percent in 2013 compared to the state rate of 2.6 percent.

There was a high incidence of suspensions in Brockton compared to the state.

- The percentage of students who received out-of-school suspension at least once was two to three times higher than the state rate in each year from 2010 to 2013; it was 10.8 percent in 2013 compared to the state rate of 4.3 percent.

- The number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspension per 100 students in each year from 2009 to 2012 was three to four times the state rate. In 2012 the number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspension in Brockton was 43.5 incidents per 100 students compared to the state rate of 11.2 incidents per 100 students.

- The number of criminal, drug, or tobacco related and violent incidents resulting in out-of-school suspensions in Brockton was 3.2 per 100 students in 2012, above the state rate of 2.3 incidents per 100 students.

- The three-year out of school suspension rate[4] for the school years ending in 2012 varied by school and by grade span.

  o At K-5 schools, the three-year rate ranged from 2.6 percent to 8.9 percent.

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[4] This rate represents the percentage of students suspended one or more times during the school year, for the 2010, 2011, and 2012 school years.

- o At one K-8 school, the three-year rate was 8.8 percent; at the other K-8 school, it was 9.2 percent.

- o The three-year rate at the middle schools ranged from 7.4 percent to 16.7 percent.

- o Brockton High School's three-year rate was 30.8 percent.

Brockton Public Schools District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. **Under the leadership of the new superintendent, the district is openly and collaboratively engaging internal and external constituencies to help define a new vision and direction for the schools.**

   A. In previous years, the unifying and driving force for the district was provided by the 2011-2013 "Realigning Resources for Results" (R3) District Improvement Plan, which focused on goals and task forces.

      1. For example, a cross-curricular writing initiative from the R3 plan is still being successfully implemented throughout the district.

   B. During an interview, the new superintendent noted that she has already met with 500 parents in six different groups to discuss the needs of the Brockton Public Schools.

      1. Members of Parent Advisory Councils told the review team that, "…the new superintendent took ''listening tours,'" and described these as "a breath of fresh air and very well received."

      2. In an interview with school committee members, the team was told, "When Superintendent Smith visited all PACs, [it was] very well received. She brought people out in droves."

   C. The superintendent has created a community-wide superintendent's Transition Team to help develop a "roadmap for continued and accelerated improvement."

      1. The superintendent reported that she had brought in internal and external stakeholders to sit on five subcommittees, inviting college presidents, business people, and leaders of the city's ethnic groups to meet with internal stakeholders; she said that work was just starting to be concluded. She said that the subcommittees had met about four times, without her.

         a. The five subcommittees address Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness, Learning and Teaching, Culture and Context, Operations and Finance, and Youth Voice.

         b. Members of the Transition Team subcommittees represent a cross-section of the district's staff, professionals as well as academics from the larger Brockton community, former school leaders and employees, city officials, and representatives from the wider community beyond Brockton.

         c. The Transition Team subcommittees plan to engage union members, school and central office administrators, Parent Advisory Councils, Chamber of Commerce representatives,

students, support staff, retired school personnel, principals, managers and department heads, custodians, food service workers, teachers, and paraprofessionals.

D. The superintendent has created school zones, each with an academic council, in an effort to empower principals and housemasters. The superintendent plans to receive internal information about ongoing academic issues through the principals and other council members.

1. The superintendent reported that she is trying to empower the principals, noting that she divided the city into districts or zones—north, south, east, and west. She said that she has representation from every level in each zone "to talk about issues, solve problems." She told the review team that she would want to know by June 2014 "how many things have been solved."

Impact: The superintendent's efforts to engage internal and external communities in conversations about the future of the Brockton Public Schools can contribute to building a culture of collaboration that encourages all stakeholders to work together to support higher levels of achievement for all students. Such collaboration can foster stakeholder commitment to ensuring the mutual success of students, schools, and the community at large. The development of a commonly held vision of success for all students can enable the district to develop a strategy for accomplishing a clearly defined mission and goals and help focus staff time and resources on instructional improvement and student learning.

2. **Brockton High School has implemented a thoughtful, interdisciplinary approach to school improvement; it has been widely recognized for the steps it has taken to improve student achievement.**

   A. Brockton High School has implemented an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to school improvement focused especially on reading and writing. In 2013 the median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) for Grade 10 ELA was high at 73.0. The ELA proficiency rate increased from 67 percent in 2010 to 85 percent in 2013.

   1. A schoolwide literacy initiative has been in place for a number of years, led by a 30-member, interdisciplinary Restructuring Committee.

   2. An interviewee said that all subject area teachers, including science math, and arts teachers, are expected to incorporate reading and writing into lessons.

   3. An interviewee noted that two years ago it became clear that students were not effectively using visuals to answer test questions. In response, the school implemented a Reading Visual protocol and the entire faculty was trained in its use.

   4. Despite the absence of common planning time, teachers' available meeting time is maximized; for example, faculty and department meetings are used to implement schoolwide professional development initiatives.

   B. The school has received wide recognition for its programming and student outcomes.

1. It received four Bronze Medals (in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2013) as part of the Best High Schools Rankings by *US News and World Report*. It has also been recognized as a National Model School by the International Center for Leadership in Education for 11 consecutive years (2004-2014).

2. Brockton High School was cited in a report titled *How High Schools Become Exemplary: Ways That Leadership Raises Achievement and Narrows Gaps by Improving Instruction in 15 Public High Schools.*[5]

3. The school's professional development strategies and student outcomes have been featured in several media publications.

Impact: Thoughtful, systematic implementation of schoolwide improvement initiatives has led to coherence and a shared understanding of improvement goals and strategies. The hard work and commitment demonstrated by many Brockton High School teachers and school leaders has been recognized by researchers and the media, and has contributed to the district's and the community's sense of pride about the school.

Curriculum and Instruction

3. **Teachers and school leaders have developed a comprehensive K-8 mathematics curriculum that includes a cohesive and usable set of aligned curriculum materials.**

   A. Supported by a grant, initial work to revise the K-5 mathematics curriculum, aligning it to the 2011Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, began in 2011 with presentations on the new standards and the creation of the K-5 math steering committee.

   B. Development and documentation for the K-5 mathematics curriculum evolved over a two-year period with teachers and leaders collaboratively engaged in the process.

      1. New curriculum documents link the 2011Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to specific resources.

         a. In interviews, teachers and school leaders described new curriculum development beginning in 2011 when instructional resource specialists (IRSs) unpacked the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and divided mathematics content into four units. Teachers on the K-5 mathematics curriculum steering committees (created in 2011), under the leadership of the IRSs and the K-5 mathematics coordinator, decided

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[5] Ronald F. Ferguson, Sandra Hackman, Robert Hanna, and Ann Ballantine, June 2010. *How High Schools Become Exemplary: Ways that Leadership Raises Achievement and Narrows Gaps by Improving Instruction in 15 Public High Schools.* Report on the 2009 Annual Conference of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University.

to move away from a published mathematics program and select appropriate resources matched to standards. They aligned the standards to many resources and lessons using *Investigations* and *Envisions* (already in use in the district).

b. The K-5 mathematics steering committee created resource templates for each standard, which contain a compilation of the resources and lessons for that standard. They are organized by standard, progression, and suggested resources on the district's P drive.

c. The committee developed additional grade-level curriculum resources such as unit assessments and performance tasks, pacing guides, and teacher-created units using the Understanding by Design (UbD) format.

2. The district used IRSs to provide professional development and support the development of UbD curriculum units.

a. In interviews, the team was told that the K-5 mathematics coordinator had trained elementary IRSs in UbD and they, in turn, trained teachers to use UbD. Beginning in June 2012, and overseen by IRSs, teachers at each grade level and school had one day of professional development to use UbD to collaboratively plan and design Unit I with assessments. Teachers also collaborated in the development of the assessments.

b. At the start of each term, teachers worked with IRSs to complete additional units. In June of 2013 Unit I was revised to better align materials to assessment data. Interviewees told the review team that the units "look a little different across schools" because teachers are allowed to adjust for their students' specific needs. There is no specific unit to use districtwide. Teachers use and share the best examples.

c. In interviews teachers and school leaders told the review team that the UbD process has given the teachers ownership of the curriculum.

C. The math curriculum for grades 6-8 has been revised to align with the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and no longer relies on one published program for teaching materials.

1. Interviewees reported that math revisions began in the 2012 school year when the grade 6-8 math steering committee related the new standards to *Connected Math.* Then, rather than relying on one program, the committee shifted to multiple teaching resources including online sources as well as other programs to align with the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

2. Interviewees and a review of documents confirmed that there is a cohesive set of resources and curriculum materials for the grade 6-8 math curriculum: Math Curriculum Maps (pacing guides listing standards to address at specific times), unit frames listing the standard(s) for

each unit and the assessment window, resource templates listing the standard, suggested resources, and common unit assessments.

3. A review of district documents and interviewees confirmed that math teachers in grade 6-8 are also creating their own units using the UbD format.

Impact: The district has developed a cohesive teacher-created math curriculum aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts frameworks that focuses on giving students a deeper understanding of math. In so doing, the district is ensuring that all K-8 students have the benefit of a consistent plan for math instruction that lays the groundwork for student improvement. Teachers also now use assessment data to make more timely revisions to curriculum.

4. **The district has also engaged in extensive revisions to align K-8 ELA curricula to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.**

    A. Working in curriculum steering committees, the district has completed the alignment of ELA in kindergarten through grade 8 and created cohesive and clear curriculum materials in both subjects.

    B. The district began the process of aligning the K-8 ELA curriculum by making presentations of the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to K-8 teachers, emphasizing rigor, coherence, clarity and focus. Also in 2011, curriculum steering committees were formed; they conduct the formal review and revision of curriculum.

    C. In the summer of 2013, the K-5 ELA steering committee, with oversight from the Elementary Coordinator of Literacy and the Reading Resource Specialists (RRSs), compiled a variety of resources and curriculum materials aligned to the 2011 frameworks in *Literacy Resource and Professional Development Binders,* which were distributed to 700 teachers districtwide in the fall of 2013. Sections of the binder include reading, writing, speaking, and listening as well as assessment. The binders also contain pacing charts, resources, assessment schedules and writing rubrics.

        1. In interviews teachers and school leaders described the shift away from using a single program in ELA K-5 and the focus on standards.

        2. The district will continue to use components of *Reading Street (2008)* as a resource along with other materials to support greater rigor in ELA as reflected in the 2011 frameworks.

        3. A curriculum alignment mapping project for K-5 ELA was completed by an RRS who worked on the project as a district intern during the spring of 2013. RRSs serve as resource people for curriculum at each elementary school.

        4. Interviewees reported that although there is a blueprint for the development of UbD units aligned to Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

assessments, the absence of common planning time (CPT) at the elementary schools is an impediment to moving forward.

D. The grade 6-8 ELA curriculum has been revised to align with the 2011Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and includes a cohesive set of materials to guide instruction and assessment.

1. During the 2013 school year, the grade 6-8 steering committee, led by the grade 6-8 ELA coordinator, worked on revising curriculum by shifting away from a single text. The committee created "Common Unit Frames" for English and ELA in grades 6-8; for Language Art/Reading in grades 7-8 and READ 180 Replacement in grades 7-8. Revisions were completed in the summer of 2013 and include binders for each unit frame.

   a. Unit frames are based on the UbD model and include thematic units that focus on a particular genre in each unit. Reading and writing in each unit are closely aligned. The unit frames include objectives, themes, essential questions, possible texts, a common assessment with annotated answer sheets, and common resources for teachers to use to design units and lessons. A typical unit frame is more than 250 pages in length.

   b. Interviewees reported that the unit frames can help teachers collaboratively design units and lessons and also give teachers a degree of autonomy. Themes and units are universal across all schools but actual readings may vary.

   c. Although middle school teachers have CPT, interviewees told the team that recently much CPT was dedicated to educator evaluation and that there was a need for collaborative time for teachers to work across schools.

Impact: The district has laid the foundation for improving K-8 student achievement in ELA by creating a coherent plan for the delivery of the curriculum aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks; it has also linked curriculum to assessment practices.

5. **The district has developed and implemented a comprehensive cross-curricular K-12 writing initiative.**

   A. The 2012-2013 Brockton Public Schools (BPS) strategic goals for learning and teaching identified writing as a key instructional focus in response to student achievement data and in preparation for the transition to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

   1. In interviews, teachers described the writing initiative as being "systematic." Throughout the schools, the review team consistently observed the BPS PreK-12 Writing Overview prominently displayed in classrooms. The model used is based on the 6+1 Traits of Writing.

      a. School leaders told the review team that the district provided citywide professional development (PD) during the 2012-2013 school year. In interviews, teachers told the review team that they had "a lot of PD on writing" with teachers learning to use various modes of writing: narrative, expository, persuasive and research**.**

b. In interviews, teachers and school leaders described the writing initiative as having a unifying impact districtwide.

2. Teachers have access to curriculum resources, common writing assessments, and the instructional support needed to implement writing across disciplines.

a. ELA Literacy Binders (Summer 2013) for K-5 include writing standards, writing requirements and writing rubrics for K-5 along with pacing guides and other curriculum resources. For example, use of one of the four writing modes is required for each reading unit. Interviewees told the team that 700 literacy binders were distributed to teachers in the fall of 2013.

b. Teachers have writing resources in content areas. For example, the Science Writing Binder for grades 6-8 is a resource that includes writing standards, templates, explanations of the 6 + 1 Traits and writing resources for the four modes of writing, including rubrics and writing prompts.

c. An additional resource for teachers is the Brockton Performance Standards Project 2013, a collection of teacher-selected and annotated student writing samples in English, math, science and social studies for grades 6-8. The binder includes a BPS writing template with annotations on the strengths and weaknesses of the writing samples.

d. School leaders told the review team that student writing folders are collected and reviewed four times a year using grade-level rubrics designed for a specific mode of writing.

e. Interviewees told the review team that the high school has both a literacy initiative and a unified writing initiative. Once a year, teachers review student work in an interdisciplinary setting. In addition, the high school IRS gives new teachers professional development on school initiatives that include literacy and writing.

Impact: By using a research-based writing program districtwide that supports the changes in the 2011 frameworks, the district is ensuring that students are developing a common understanding of good writing, which can improve student achievement.

6. **Observed classrooms reflected a positive and respectful learning environment.**

A. The district's learning environment is positive and respectful with clearly communicated and achieved behavioral expectations.

1. A respectful tone between teachers and students is evident in the district.

a. In 84 percent of observed classrooms, the review team noted clear and consistent evidence of positive and respectful interactions between students and teachers.

b. At every level the review team saw consistent evidence of positive and respectful rapport between teachers and students.

2. Standards of behavior have been established and clearly communicated to students.

a. In 86 percent of observed classrooms the review team noted clear and consistent evidence of established behavioral standards that prevented interference with learning.

b. In every level in the district, the review team saw strong reinforcement of positive behaviors. For example, classroom rules and expectations were consistently observed. In a grade 4 math class, "10 ways to be a good student and 10 ways to treat each other" was posted. In a Grade 10 biology class, a poster entitled "Good Choices to Make in Biology" was prominently displayed. This was the norm throughout the district classrooms visited.

Impact: By establishing a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment in classrooms, the district has met an essential condition for learning. The groundwork has been laid to develop and enhance opportunities for students to collaborate in small groups, engage in more student-centered 21st century experiential and project-based activities, use technology to deepen their understanding, and engage in independent work in the classroom.

Assessment

7. **The district has developed and implemented common benchmark assessments and prioritized a more robust collection, analysis, dissemination, and use of assessment data to drive improvement.**

A. The 2011-2013 R3 District Improvement Plan identified assessment and data-driven initiatives to promote improvements and created working groups to realize those initiatives over two to four years.

1. One working group focused on the creation and use of common assessments for all students and all core subjects, K-12, to align instruction at each school.

a. The district has implemented common unit assessments in all subjects and is now revising some to align with new units.

b. The common assessments are teacher-designed, benchmarked, and administered four or five times a year to assess student progress in mastering standards addressed in newly developed curriculum units aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts frameworks.

2. Another working group addressed realigning resources to use student performance data and growth indicators to measure school performance and differentiate support. For example:

      a. One project was to redesign School Improvement Plans (SIPs) to make them data driven.

          i. Almost all SIPs are current to 2014[6] and include achievement data such as MCAS results, CPIs, and SGPs; demographic data; and other indicators to justify goal setting.

          ii. SIPs also identify specific assessments that indicate success in meeting goals and describe strengths and weaknesses related to goal attainment.

      b. Another project was to build staff ability and technological capacity to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data aligned to indicators of effective practice.

          i. Schools have trained lab managers to manage data, reports, and technology use, although more training is still needed.

          ii. Principals, associate principals, department heads, specialists and many teachers have been trained in data analysis and the use of Test Wiz.

3. Another working group concentrated on improving K-12 writing by strengthening curriculum, instruction, and the design and implementation of writing assessments.

4. District leaders credited the R3 improvement plan as the origin of the district's focus on collecting, analyzing and using data, especially data from common assessments.

B. Interviewees and documents described numerous district- and school-based leaders who lead data-based discussions with teachers and other leaders about assessment and student work.

1. At the district level, the executive director of teaching and learning for PK-5, coordinators of ELA/social studies for K-5 and 6-8, and coordinators of mathematics/ science for PK-5 and 6-8 attend and sometimes lead data meetings with leaders and teachers. Other subject coordinators also assume those responsibilities; for example, for art and music K-12 and for foreign language for grades 6-12.

2. At the elementary level, K-5 Reading Resource Specialists (RRSs) for ELA/social studies and Instructional Resource Specialists (IRSs) for math/science collect and analyze data and lead grade-level data meetings to discuss common benchmark assessments four times a year for mathematics and five times a year for ELA. They also lead discussions about student work and provide onsite professional development to improve instruction.

3. IRSs for mathematics/science assigned to two K-8 schools (David and Raymond) and three 6-8 middle schools (Plouffe, Ashfield, and East) perform similar roles.

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[6] An exception is the Brockton High School Improvement Plan, posted on school website, which is dated 2010.

4. With no IRSs at the other three 6-8 middle schools (North, South, West), associate principals are responsible for preparing math data analyses and leading data meetings to discuss common assessments during regularly scheduled common planning time. They also assume data leadership roles for ELA at all six middle schools.

5. High school department heads filter and share assessment data with teachers. Not all high school teachers have direct access to student achievement data. One interviewee noted that teachers are "more at ease" with data at the elementary and middle schools than at the high school

6. In addition to the use of common unit assessments described above, at all schools serving kindergarten through grade 8, STAR data coaches from Pearson Education support grade-level meetings several times a year to analyze and discuss results from STAR early literacy and early numeracy assessments (K-2), STAR reading comprehension assessments (grades 2-5 and 6-8), and STAR math assessments (grades 3-5 and 6-8). Elementary and middle school students have online access to their STAR assessment results.

7. Principals present MCAS results each year at faculty meetings. Follow-up MCAS discussions take place at grade-level and subject-level faculty meetings when possible. MCAS data analysis reports present five-year trends, item analysis, CPIs, and SGPs.

C. Interviewees described teams of leaders and teachers who collaborate to use data analysis to guide curricular and instructional improvements.

1. Subject-based steering committees at each school level, composed of leaders and teachers, access and analyze achievement data in order to collaboratively plan and implement various curricular and instructional initiatives.

   a. It was indicated in an interview with coordinators, principals, and other administrators that steering committees are the main change agents for curriculum at all school levels.

   b. For example, in the summer of 2013 the grade 6-8 ELA steering committee revamped the middle school writing assignments in the four core content binders.

2. At the high school, in addition to steering committees, interviewees described an interdisciplinary restructuring committee composed of housemasters, other leaders, and teachers, which meets monthly. It uses data analysis to discover teaching and learning issues and plans improvements for core and non-core subjects. For example, it identified the need to better engage students in critical thinking and initiated a process to plan, train, follow up and create exemplars to promote critical thinking in the high school program.

3. However, with little available meeting time at the high school, teachers' use of data needs to be better supported. Data analysis of test results at the high school was described by an interviewee as a "hit or miss approach"; it was said that "some teachers may have random

discussions." "Tests happen," it was noted, "but there is no time for teachers to talk [as a team]; they do so individually."

D. Interviewees described how the involvement of multiple levels of staff and the widespread collection, analysis, and use of data have generated a number of improvements.

1. K-8 leaders and teachers described how they use results from common benchmark assessments and STAR assessments to form student groups, adjust and/or plan differentiated instruction, identify the need for interventions, provide Title I support with leveled literacy instruction, and progress monitor individual students in reading.

2. At the high school, assessment results can help determine professional development topics. When MCAS results indicated that students did not use visuals well to respond to test questions, a reading visual tool was developed, teachers were trained to use it, and students then showed improvement in reading comprehension over time.

3. Common assessment data helped ensure horizontal alignment of curriculum and instruction.

4. Analyses of PPIs have made leaders and teachers look more closely at subgroup achievement.

E. Interviewees reported the school committee receives data including reports from benchmarked common unit assessments; MCAS results; data on student demographics; data on class size; and free and reduced lunch data. Interviewees noted the school committee used data to inform policy and prepare the budget.

Impact: Guided by improvement plan priorities, the district has demonstrated a heightened understanding of the uses and benefits of common assessments and a greater capacity to collect, analyze and use data for decision-making at all levels to help improve teaching and learning. Both leaders and teachers are well informed about student progress and achievement in meeting standards in the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. One key benefit is that Brockton's educators can now make more informed decisions about curricular and instructional improvements. By involving multiple personnel in the analysis and use of different types of data, the district is building a data-driven culture at all levels.

8. The district continues to improve its technology infrastructure and increase the staff's capacity to use technology more effectively for data analysis to improve teaching and learning.

A. The district continues to invest in improving its technology infrastructure.

1. A district leader noted that the district has huge data capacity in the form of internet-connected computers to enable powerful and quick reporting of data at every school.

2. In an address to staff at the opening of the current school year, the new superintendent noted that the district had just completed a five-year, three million dollar initiative to put projection and audio capacity in every classroom and about half were now interactive.

   a. The district has mounted SMART Boards in almost all elementary and many middle school classrooms. The absence of sufficient staff has slowed installation in the rest, although all hardware has been purchased.

   b. According to a district leader, the use of classroom technology varies within and across schools. K-8 schools are connected and use software such as digital textbooks and a web-based platform for science lessons.

3. The district is a pilot site for PARCC testing and recently purchased 12 laptop carts for use for the PARCC assessments.

4. The technology services department has initiated a video conferencing system to enable distance learning and virtual field trips.

5. The district identifies at-risk students on what is called a WISL (Warning Indicator Student List), using a five-criterion data search similar to ESE's Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS).

6. The district is in the process of integrating and connecting its databases in order to perform more robust data analyses to clarify the relationships among multiple school and student variables.

7. For five years before the review, the district and each school have managed basic administrative functions and monitored behavioral indicators using Infinite Campus (IC) software with graduated password security.

8. All K-5 and K-8 schools, which use the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) approach, use School-Wide Information System (SWIS) to monitor behavioral data and take appropriate action.

B. Staff members trained in the use of data and data management are located in every school, but more training is still needed.

1. There are experts in each school trained in data management and data analysis, such as the lab managers, the IRSs, the RRSs, the principals, the associate principals, and the teachers who have been trained in Test Wiz.

2. A district leader said that although there has been a great deal of training and support for teachers' use of data at all school levels, there is a need for more training and more time for training, noting, "No matter how much training lab managers or associate [principals] get, they can always get more."

3. Interviewees noted that not all high school teachers have access to Test Wiz. High school department heads analyze and share data reports with some teachers.

4. A district leader noted that although technology and data capacity is becoming powerful in the district, it has not kept pace with expanding data needs over the past two years and that staffing levels have not kept up with the demand.

Impact: The district is developing its use of data and technology to guide decision-making. Professional development has produced a core group of educators who are data literate. They use data to inform educational decisions and support colleagues who are learning to analyze data more skillfully. Overall, at the district level and at the school level, many leaders and some teachers can now quickly and easily access technology and data and use it to inform their daily and long-term educational decisions.

Student Support

9. The district has a range of internal and external partnerships to support students.

A. The district offers school-age and nontraditional students a range of options to complete their schooling with the possibility of obtaining a diploma.

1. Through the Pathways Program the district reaches out to students who have been out of school for many years. These students may subsequently enroll at the Edison or Russell Schools. The Edison school offers courses for students who are overage and lacking credits.

2. The B.B. Russell Alternative School enrolls students on the verge of expulsion because of offenses related to drugs, violence, or weapons or other serious offenses. The program offers students a continuing educational experience, educational and social/emotional testing, and, with appropriate behavior, a way to return to the traditional school environment to earn a diploma.

3. Brockton Champion High School, a diploma plus model, accepts students who are motivated and well behaved but who are more successful in a nontraditional school environment.

B. The district reaches out to parents through the Community Schools Program, the Parents Academy, which offers workshops of all kinds, and Coordinated Community and Family Engagement of Brockton.

C. Resources for homeless families listed in great detail on the Brockton Public Schools website include a variety of community social services. In addition, businesses and organizations such as Wal-Mart, W.B. Mason, Good Samaritan Hospital, and Stonehill College provide materials, services, and clothing for these families.

D. The district has established partnerships with outside agencies and businesses to support the work of the schools.

1. The special education department runs the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment (ICE) program with Bridgewater State University. Students with disabilities learn transportation routes to the college and audit classes there. (Interviewees noted that this program is funded by a grant that ends this year.)

2. The special education department also works with Job Force and Community Schools to find jobs for its students.

3. Through the Science, English and Technology for Transition (SEATT) grant from ESE, the bilingual department encourages English language learners to set post-graduation goals by teaming with Massasoit Community College and holds a high school transition summer school on that campus.

Impact: In developing special programs and establishing partnerships with the wider community, the district has been successful in providing for students with challenges and unique needs:

- Credit recovery programs have assisted many students who would not be able to graduate without alternative settings or extra opportunities to complete their requirements.

- Community partnerships provide supports for homeless students that help smooth their path as they continue their schooling in very difficult circumstances.

- Higher education partnerships enable students to plan for their long-term education and career goals.

Financial and Asset Management

10. **The district and municipality have taken some innovative steps to reduce spending in future years on energy and on health insurance.**

    A. The district's capital facilities were improved by taking advantage of a Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) grant.

       1. Two years ago, the district received a $36M grant from the MSBA for a Green Improvement program. The MSBA grant provided 80 percent of the cost of the project, or $30M, with the city providing the remaining 20 percent.

       2. The executive director of operations said in an interview that the one-time capital project enabled the district to make some improvements to facilities, such as repairing roofs and windows on several school buildings.

    B. In an interview with the district's executive director of finance, the review team was told that the city of Brockton is self-insured for health insurance. Increases in co-pays were recently negotiated.

Impact: Taking innovative steps to hold down costs for energy and healthcare will if successful enable the district and municipality to maintain or increase spending for program-related initiatives in the future.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

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

Leadership and Governance

11. **Although the district has received nearly $2,800,000 through the Race to the Top (RTTT) program to assist in these initiatives, it did not implement a new educator evaluation system in 2012-2013 as required for RTTT districts[7], and it has not completed the alignment of its ELA and math curricula to the new Massachusetts state standards, as expected for all districts by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.[8]**

    A. The district was obligated to have completed negotiations and to implement a revised educator evaluation system in school year 2012-2013. However, the performance rubrics negotiated were not consistent with state regulations, and revised rubrics have not been negotiated, making it impossible to implement the new evaluation system completely. (See Human Resources and Professional Development finding #20 below.)

        1. In an interview with middle school teachers, the review team was told: "Evaluation hasn't been done; [we are] still in [the] planning, training process." Another teacher said that their goals were in, noting that plans were due December 2nd. It was noted that observations could begin and theoretically had started, "but [they are] still negotiating and it's new." The team was told that the state and Brockton "are working on it and we're moving on in good faith." Teachers said that the true evaluations "haven't completely started yet."

        2. A district leader reported that the district negotiated educator evaluation in February 2013, noting that they were working on a model for months. The leader told the review team: "When we sent it in, it was not approved" and said: "ESE didn't like what we had; they sent it back and it is not finished." The leader also said the process that they negotiated "doesn't meet state regulations."

    B. The review team learned in interviews with district leaders and teachers and from a review of curriculum documents that the K-8 curriculum in ELA and math is aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (which incorporate the Common Core State Standards);

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[7] See 603 CMR 35.11(1)(b).
[8] See *Guidelines for Years 2 to 4 of Race to the Top*, p. 31, available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/rttt/district.html.

however, high school curriculum has not been fully aligned in either subject. (See Curriculum and Instruction finding #16 below.)

C. The district has spent approximately $1,021,000 of its RTTT funds in the first three years, and plans to spend its remaining amount (approximately $1,742,000) in fiscal year 2014.

Impact: By not meeting its obligations in these two areas, the district has delayed implementation of a robust educator evaluation system and much needed 21st century learning and teaching standards. This delay has hindered the ability of the district to improve educator effectiveness and student learning and achievement. Moreover, the district's difficulty in meeting these obligations after having received significant funding from the Race to the Top program could have a negative effect on the community's confidence in the efficacy of district improvement efforts.

Curriculum and Instruction

12. The district has not established a common vision or definition of effective 21st century instruction for Brockton students.

The team observed 125 classes throughout the district**:** 60 at nine elementary schools and an early childhood center; 35 in grades 6-8 at three middle schools and at the two K-8 schools; and 30 at the high school level, including 27 at Brockton High School and three at Russell Alternative High School. The team observed 45 ELA classes, 50 mathematics classes, and 30 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were eight special education classes, eight ELL classes, and three career/technical education classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented grade in Appendix C. At the district's request, the review team did not observe classes in the Downey Elementary School or East Middle School because each was about to participate in a Commissioner's District Evaluation the week after this district review.

A. In observations of instruction in 125 classrooms, evidence of multiple opportunities for higher order thinking and learning, such as the use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts, was not observed in 39 percent of classrooms overall; partial evidence was observed in 34 percent overall. At the high school, evidence of such opportunities for higher order thinking and learning was not observed in 23 percent of classrooms visited, with only partial evidence observed in 57 percent of classrooms visited.

1. Students were observed to be clearly and consistently engaged in challenging academic tasks in only 46 percent of visited classrooms overall. Evidence of engagement in challenging academic tasks was not observed in 22 percent of visited district classrooms.

2. Questioning by teachers was not generally designed to require students to elaborate about content and ideas. In 67 percent of observed classes, the review team did not see clear and

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consistent evidence of teachers using questioning techniques that required responses that demonstrated understanding. Clear and consistent evidence of students elaborating about content and ideas when responding to questions was observed in only 17 percent of classes overall. The team did not observe any evidence of students elaborating on their answers in 50 percent of elementary classrooms, 83 percent of middle school classrooms, and 60 percent of high school classes.

3. Student voices were infrequently heard in classrooms and students were seldom observed taking an active role in their learning and/or creating their own learning.

   a. In only 39 percent of observed classes was there clear and consistent evidence of students assuming responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs or in groups.

   b. Team members did not often see such 21st century teaching and learning strategies as the use of two-column notes, the analysis of text, "think-pair-share," group or pair work, self-assessment, project-based learning, student demonstrations, or exploratory learning.

B. A shared definition of effective 21st century instruction did not emerge from interviews and discussions with school leaders and teachers.

1. Department heads, coordinators and an associate principal were asked, "What is required in instruction?" Interviewees' responses varied widely. They included: "Lesson plans have to reference a standard from the curriculum frameworks"; "a literacy standard"; "an objective"; and "using an opener and closer." Some leaders described how lesson planning books are collected weekly; one said they sometimes give feedback "typically in reference to particular elements of the lesson plan." That leader described getting back to teachers if a closer and an objective are missing—but said that "it doesn't happen very often."

2. Another group of teachers was asked, "Does the district expect to see certain elements of instruction in every classroom?"

   a. The teachers said that "at the high school they want an opening and a closing in every lesson" and "at the middle school they want an objective for your lesson," adding that the objective has to be on the board but an opening and a closer are not required. Teachers' responses indicated that at the elementary level there has been an effort to define effective instruction and provide training on it. Teachers told the team that the elementary level is striving to have a common instructional model and has been having grade-level trainings across schools. They said that it has made a difference "because teachers aren't in a silo in their own building."

Impact: Without a districtwide, research-based instructional model that reflects best teaching practices, teachers and administrators do not have a shared understanding of good teaching that that can lay the foundation for discussions about teachers' practice and help ensure the delivery of effective instruction.

13. **Without a shared definition of good instruction, feedback from leaders during the supervision and evaluation process has not been sufficiently focused on common qualities of good teaching and instructional improvements needed to strengthen student performance across the district.**

    A. In general, reviewers found that the past evaluations of both teachers and administrators were not detailed and did not provide feedback designed to promote meaningful improvements in educators' practice.

        1. Written evaluations typically did not include instructional detail, such as methodology, pedagogy, or specific relevance to subject matter mastery.

    B. Based on interviews and a review of performance evaluations, principals have not conducted evaluations that identified staff needs, provided targeted feedback, or offered concrete recommendations designed to improve instruction and support teachers' professional growth.

        1. Middle school teachers told the team [that they had always had the formal evaluation process and that in the past evaluators would let them know that they were coming. They said that they "got a sheet with bubbles and a paragraph" and received feedback right on the spot or later that day. A teacher said about supervision, "I've always found it to be very shallow. It's walking through my room; it's not feedback that's very substantive. They miss huge opportunities to give me feedback and help me improve. I've always felt there wasn't a lot of feedback."

Impact: The district's past system for supervising and evaluating teachers did not produce specific information, thorough feedback, or effective recommendations to support teachers' ongoing professional growth. Because of this, a critical opportunity to have a meaningful impact on student learning and achievement was missed

14. **Classroom observations during the onsite did not reveal strong evidence of instructional practices to match the developmental and learning needs of the district's English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.**

    A. As evidenced by the results of the instructional inventory (see Appendix C), the strategic and consistent use of modifications for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities is not widely in place.

        1. The review team observed clear and consistent evidence of the use of appropriate accommodations for ELLs and students with disabilities in 32 percent of elementary classrooms, 14 percent of middle school classrooms and 10 percent of high school classrooms visited.

2. When such strategies were seen in classrooms, the review team was more likely to observe direct instruction in vocabulary—for example, as noted in a grade 7 math class where mathematics vocabulary words were posted and emphasized by the teacher. Instructional methods that encourage student discussion, such as turn and talk, were not often observed.

3. While the team observed examples of appropriate strategies, including grouping students according to learning needs and using explicit language objectives for ELLs, these practices were not widespread. The review team saw little use of differentiation of instruction in lessons at all school levels. When the review team did observe differentiation, it was more likely seen at the elementary level, as in the case of a grade 4 math class where students were organized into small groups to work at five learning stations. While students worked at the stations, the teacher and assistant teacher worked with specific students based on their learning needs.

Impact: Robust instruction designed to meet students' specific language and learning needs to bring ELLs and students with disabilities to higher levels of achievement is critical. This is particularly true in Brockton, with a relatively large ELL population and with a low graduation rate and high dropout rate for students with disabilities.[9]

15. **Instructional practices that encourage student expression and foster higher order thinking skills were not consistently observed districtwide**.

   A. At all school levels, observed lessons did not consistently offer students opportunities to express their thinking.

   1. The review team observed clear and consistent evidence of students articulating their thinking either orally or in writing in 35 percent of elementary classrooms, 40 percent of middle school classrooms, and40 percent of high school classrooms visited.

   2. The review team most often observed classrooms where the dominant mode of instruction was teacher centered (i.e., where the teacher's voice dominated lessons, with students passively listening and having limited opportunities to express themselves and explain their thinking). For example, in grade 10 ELA class, when a student attempted to explain an answer, the teacher cut him off and moved on with the lesson. In a grade 10 science class, students were asked many questions, but none of the questions required them to explain their answers. There were rarely follow-up questions to probe students' thinking.

      a. One positive example was a grade 5 math class in which the teacher required students not only to present their work to the class, but also to analyze and evaluate it.

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[9] See second to last finding in the Student Performance section above. In 2013, the four-year graduation rate for students with disabilities in Brockton was 41.5 percent, as compared with 67.8 percent for students with disabilities statewide.

3. The review team observed clear and consistent evidence of teachers using effective questioning techniques that require students to elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions in 20 percent of elementary classrooms, 14 percent of middle school classrooms and 13 percent of high school classrooms visited.

   a. In most classrooms the review team typically observed closed questioning techniques with students giving short answers and teachers not following up or requiring students to elaborate. Often the questions were focused on getting the correct answer. For example, in a grade 7 math class, students gave one-word answers to explain the multiplication process.

   b. The review team saw a few examples of teachers using open-ended questions that allowed students to elaborate about their ideas and content. In a grade 10 English class, students answered a prompt that required them to describe why they liked a piece of art, and in a grade 7 math class, the teacher consistently asked students to "explain" their reasoning.

B. Classroom practices generally did not provide multiple opportunities for students to use higher order thinking skills.

   1. The review team observed clear and consistent evidence of teachers providing students with multiple opportunities to use higher order thinking skills in 27 percent of elementary classrooms, 31 percent of middle school classrooms and 20 percent of high school classrooms visited.

      a. Although the team did not consistently observe teachers giving students opportunities to apply higher order thinking, there were some good examples seen throughout the district. In a grade 8 social studies class, students were given the task of analyzing and synthesizing multiple sources about a historical figure. In a grade 5 ELA class, students were working on a close reading of a text using analysis and evaluation. (See Appendix C for all data from Instructional Inventory tool.)

Impact: When the dominant teaching mode is teacher-centered, students have limited opportunities to develop and articulate their thinking and reasoning and deepen their understanding of content. When students are not consistently expected to explain their ideas and demonstrate their conceptual understanding, they are not developing the thinking skills that are essential for a deeper understanding of content and that are needed, for example, in higher level courses and in preparation for college and careers.

16. **The instructional technology available in classrooms is not being maximized to enhance teaching and to support student learning. Districtwide, students have limited access to technology as an instructional tool.**

   A. Although technology is available in classrooms, teachers are using it in limited ways.

1. While at every school level the review team saw classrooms equipped with technology resources including Smart Boards, LCD projectors, document cameras, computers and CD players with audio stations, the review team observed clear and consistent evidence of teachers using technology to support instruction in 38 percent of elementary classrooms, 29 percent of middle school classrooms and43 percent of high school classrooms visited.

2. In the review team's observations, the use of technology was often limited to SMART Boards and LCD projectors being used as overhead projectors to display visuals (e.g., worksheets, pages from a text book, graphic organizers, agendas, openers, or instructions for students).Technologies were generally not used to promote interaction, to represent information in new ways, or to engage students in critical thinking.

3. There were exceptions. In one elementary math class, the teacher used a SMART Board in an interactive way to do an item analysis for students, and in a high school math class a SMART Board was used to incorporate the use of a video that promoted an engaging class discussion.

B. The review team did not observe students using technology routinely as a tool for learning and understanding.

1. The review team observed clear and consistent evidence of students using technology as a tool for learning in 20 percent of elementary classrooms, in 14 percent of middle school classrooms and in 10 percent of high school classrooms visited.

    a. While according to the team's observations students overall had limited access to technology, an exception was observed in a grade 7 math class where each student was equipped with an iPad and was using graphing videos on Edmodo to complete a graphing assignment.

Impact: When technology is not used consistently to support and enhance classroom instruction, students are not benefiting from the district's investment in the 21st century tools required for future success both at school and in the workplace. They are also missing the opportunity technology affords for many students to engage actively in learning and experience academic improvement. In the case of students without access to technology at home, it is critical that they have access to technology in their classrooms.

17. **At the high school, alignment to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in English and mathematics is incomplete. Although it is a Race to the Top district, the district is behind on this commitment.**

    A. Interviews and a review of documents showed that not all curriculum documents for mathematics in grades 9-12 have been revised to reflect the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

1. Interviewees told the team that high school mathematics is in process of change and that the 2011 frameworks are "gradually being rolled in." The grade 9 mathematics curriculum is completely aligned to the 2011 frameworks, and in September 2014 the grade 10 curriculum will be completely aligned, according to district officials. An interviewee noted that "Current freshmen will [receive Common Core curriculum] all the way through their high school experience – they'll have a totally aligned experience."

2. A new algebra textbook for Grade 9—*Center for Math Education (CME)*, from Education Development Center (EDC)—has recently been selected. Interviewees reported that EDC is now doing professional development in math at the high school. A pacing guide, entitled *Algebra I/Math Common Core Pacing Guide*, is an additional resource used in grade 9.

3. Syllabi for various upper-level math courses were reviewed by the team. Dates for the documents ranged from 2006 to 2011. An additional document reviewed, *Curriculum Mapping for BHS Math Department*, listed each math course with texts and topics by month and was dated 2011-2012.

B. The English department does not have updated curriculum guides or pacing guides that reflect the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

1. In interviews, the review team was told that the English department is in the "early stages of alignment" to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

2. Interviewees reported that the high school is "set around our literacy frameworks," which contain language similar to that of the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and emphasize a cross-curricular approach to literacy.

3. The English department has spent time looking at the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and determining gaps in the curriculum.

4. Interviewees told the team that the next stage was for the English department steering committee to develop pacing guides.

C. All districts were expected to have aligned their ELA and math curricula to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. Race to the Top (RTTT) districts like Brockton received an orientation to the 2011 frameworks and resources to help them accomplish the alignment.[10]

1. However, Brockton did not fulfill the ESE expectation that districts would align their ELA and math curricula through grade 12 to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.

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[10] See *Guidelines for Years 2 to 4 of Race to the Top*, p. 31, available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/rttt/district.html.

D. Districts are also expected to incorporate into their curricula the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards for ELL students.[11]

1. In interviews, teachers and school leaders reported that work has begun to align the curriculum with WIDA standards.

    a. Study groups to train K-12 teachers who teach ELLs in the WIDA standards were formed during the 2012-2013 school year.

    b. During the current (2013-2014) school year, study groups are creating units linked to WIDA standards.

    c. Interviewees reported that WIDA elements are being "infused" into elementary UbD math units.

Impact: When the district has not ensured that all ELA and math curricula meet state requirements by being aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, it cannot guarantee that students benefit from the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed for college and career readiness.

Assessment

18. Except at the middle school level, common planning time (CPT) is limited, providing insufficient time for teachers to participate in organized professional learning communities (PLCs).

A. The new superintendent said that she would like to have PLCs in every school.

B. School principals organize the schedule for each school level—elementary, middle, and high school.

1. A district leader noted that "our contract gets in the way of teachers being a Professional Learning Community" and added that the district has not negotiated a new collective bargaining agreement in nine years.

2. Review of the collective bargaining agreement showed that Article V, on teaching hours and teaching load, contains a number of provisions as to the length of teachers' workday at each level (Section C); the number of preparation periods at each level (Sections C1, F, and G1); the amount of time teachers may be required to stay past dismissal (Section C2); the length of teachers' lunch periods (during which they may be assigned "no other duties") (Section D); the responsibility of elementary teachers for recess duty (off duty during recess every other day) (Section E); the number of periods per day and teaching periods per week middle school teachers may be assigned (Section F); and the number of academic classes per day

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[11] For information about WIDA, see http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida.html.

high school teachers may be assigned (Section G2). Section J provides, "Exceptions to the provisions of Section D, E, F, and G above may be made only if it is necessary to do so in the best interests of the educational process"; it goes on to provide that a disagreement over whether an exception is justified is to be subject to the grievance procedure. See http://educatorcontracts.doemass.org/view.aspx?recno=41

3. Elementary principals said that teachers have prep time but no regular CPT. An administrator said that it would be possible if there were more specialists for coverage of classes.

4. Only middle schools have regularly scheduled CPT for teachers.

5. At the high school, there is no formal CPT for teachers who teach the same subject/course either by house or grade level or between houses.

C. Time to meet on a regular basis in PLCs is limited and varies across the district.

1. Middle school teachers meet daily for one academic period by subject and grade level to talk about teaching methods, curriculum, standards, data analysis of common assessments, and lesson planning.

2. Elementary teachers have inconsistent common meeting time across and within schools.

   a. With no regular CPT at the elementary schools, some principals were described as being creative in finding CPT so that grade-level teachers can meet.

   b. Sometimes there are afterschool meetings and sometimes substitutes are hired to enable teachers to attend grade-level data meetings.

   c. Some elementary principals and other staff members take students to grade-level activities to give teachers time to collaborate—for example, to work on curriculum alignment.

   d. In one exception, a grant supports CPT for elementary grade-level teachers to use to collaborate on Understanding by Design units for mathematics. During this time, teachers are out of their classroom and substitutes or other colleagues must cover classes. In addition, the sustainability of the activity is in question because it is funded by a grant that will eventually end.

   e. At one K-8 school, every grade meets for one hour every three weeks and coverage is provided. Time is used to review data and for professional development.

   f. At the Huntington Elementary School, an extended learning time school supported by grant funding, there are now over 350 hours of additional instructional enrichment each year. CPT is built into the schedule for one hour each week; it was anticipated that an additional hour each week would be added beginning in January 2014.

g. At the Baker and Arnone Elementary Schools, there are educational partnerships that provide assistance for PLCs.

3. At the high school, a point of view expressed in an interview was, "there is never enough time at any school" and that the size of the high school precludes finding sufficient, regular time for teachers to discuss course-related data, curriculum, and student achievement.

   a. Steering committees analyze common assessment data at the high school but there is limited time for teachers to meet to discuss results. This was described in an interview as a "hit or miss approach," and it was reported that some teachers have "random discussions."

   b. Time for teachers to collaborate at the high school is accomplished in ways such as at the monthly meeting of the restructuring team; at training meetings for new staff; through the mentor program; at twice-a-month faculty meetings after school; and in conversations between teachers in the same department who are free the same period and who talk informally in the same office suite.

   c. High school teachers also noted two department meetings per month; yet, this year, interviewees noted that there has not been time to discuss curriculum and instruction because of the time spent on educator evaluation.

Impact: PLCs exist in the Brockton middle schools, in some elementary schools and in a few task-focused groups throughout the district such as steering committees and the high school restructuring committee. However, limited CPT means that some necessary collaborative work is not accomplished in a timely way. An example is the ongoing need to align the grade 9-12 English and mathematics curriculum to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

Teams of teachers working collaboratively in regularly scheduled CPT can engage in professional learning communities (PLCs) focused on improving teaching and learning. In addition to maintaining a continuous improvement effort, PLCs build a culture of professional learning. In Brockton, most teachers do not have the shared time for the activities that are the benefits of regularly scheduled CPT, such as:

- Determining improvements to teaching practice, curriculum, and assessments by sharing ideas and strategies in "real time";

- Regularly looking at student work samples and discussing the successful teaching strategies that produced excellence and then making needed adjustments to use proven strategies;

- Collaboratively examining assessment data and using data analyses to monitor student progress, plan differentiated instruction, and design interventions for at-risk students;

- Identifying and addressing topics for whole-school improvement initiatives; and

- Building and strengthening the collaborative school culture promoted when teachers' work focuses on professional conversations and team problem solving.

19. **The assessment system is conceptually well-designed and balanced. In classroom observations, the team found mixed evidence of a well-informed use of formative assessments to guide and modify instruction.**

   A. Several assessments are used throughout the district.

      1. Common assessments in all core subjects for all students K-12 are a recent and important component of the assessment system (see first Assessment finding in the Strengths section above). These are used to determine progress and achievement in mastering unit standards built on the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, especially in K-8.

      2. Interviewees and documents also described the use of STAR assessments, K-8, as key assessment tools in reading, literacy and mathematics.

   B. Formative assessments are considered an integral component of instruction in the district.

      1. In an interview, it was reported that there have been workshops on using quick formative assessments.

      2. Interviewees noted that teachers use formative assessments daily in classrooms, that "teachers are always cycling back to students [to check understanding]," and that teachers are "constantly checking in to see if students have mastered a particular concept or lesson."

      3. A review of curriculum unit frames showed a number of formative assessment tools such as "think-pair-share," and "student fishbowl," "two-column notes," and numerous graphic organizers to check and support students' understanding of lesson content and ideas.

   C. Classroom observations of 125 partial lessons showed that the use of formative assessments and the use of questioning techniques that required thoughtful responses demonstrating understanding were infrequent and not widely practiced teaching strategies.

      1. There was clear and consistent evidence that teachers conducted frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction in 36 percent of all observed lessons. Broken down by school level, the team found clear and consistent evidence of frequent formative assessments in 43 percent of observed elementary school lessons, 26 percent of observed middle school lessons, and 33 percent of observed high school lessons.

      2. Clear and consistent evidence that teachers used questioning techniques that required thoughtful responses that demonstrated understanding was found in 33 percent of all observed lessons. Broken down by school level, there was clear and consistent evidence that teachers used such questioning techniques in 43 percent of observed elementary

lessons, in 23 percent of observed middle school lessons, and in 23 percent of observed high school lessons.

Impact: Given the impetus in the district to develop an Understanding by Design framework for curriculum units, it is critical that teaching strategies promote and verify students' understanding of lesson content and ideas. One strategy to gauge understanding is to use multiple formats of formative assessments in lessons – an approach not demonstrated clearly and consistently in many of the 125 observed classrooms. Without taking advantage of the value of formative assessments, quickly and accurately determining what students know, can do, or understand becomes a challenge for teachers managing large groups of students. This limits their ability to quickly adjust lesson pace, content, and design to meet students' learning needs.

Human Resources and Professional Development

20. **The district does not have a history of a highly effective educator evaluation process. Past evaluations were often not performed when required, were generally not informative or instructive, and did not effectively promote professional growth for teachers or administrators. Teachers' expectations for the new educator evaluation model anticipate more useful and helpful guidance through the evaluation process.**

   A. Review team members examined the personnel folders of 54 faculty members selected randomly from across the school system, as well as those of all 40 of Brockton's current district and school administrators.

      1. Review of 52 randomly selected teachers' personnel folders showed that less than 50 percent of professional status teachers had been evaluated during the two years before the review, and that the evaluations that were completed were not detailed or thorough.

      2. The district employed formative and summative evaluation instruments that, according to district administrators, had been in use for decades. These forms were essentially a checklist format that provided little opportunity or incentive for narrative comments. Further, their evaluative categories were essentially generic and not aligned with the state's former Principles of Effective Teaching and Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership.

      3. Reviewers were told that the evaluations of professional teaching status (PTS) teachers were not kept at the central office but were instead housed in their respective school buildings. No district records could be provided to document when or if teachers were evaluated once they had achieved PTS status. While it is not required for districts to house personnel records at the central office, doing so is a way to ensure that district leaders can

effectively monitor the degree of implementation of educator evaluations and the quality of feedback and support that teachers are receiving throughout the district.[12]

4. Review of the personnel folders of all 40 current administrators showed that less than 20 percent of administrators had been evaluated during the two years before the onsite.

5. A senior administrator noted in an interview that before the new educator evaluation system, principals were evaluated by one of three district leaders, and evaluations included classroom observations and progress toward SIP goals.

B. In interviews, teachers and administrators acknowledged significant weaknesses in the quality of past evaluation policies, practices, and procedures across the district's schools, but expressed optimism about the new educator evaluation system.

1. Interviewees indicated that supervisory practices varied widely across the district.

2. Documentation and interviewees suggested that evaluations may have been produced with more regularity at Brockton High School.

3. A teacher said that the previous evaluation system was "worthless." This teacher expressed the hope for "betterment from the new model" and said that there was much more administrative visibility in classrooms now than in the past.

4. In a discussion with elementary school teachers, one said that the new educator evaluation system would be a "huge shift for Brockton," saying that teachers expected "not to hit the highest category" and that "everyone used to have 'effective' checked on evaluations and now the whole system is in a shift."

Impact: Without a track record of assiduous attention to evaluation procedures, district leaders have much ground to cover to make the new educator evaluation system successful. In the past, not making effective and appropriate use of evaluative tools and practices has influenced how well the district has been able to hold teachers and leaders accountable for performance, change ineffective practices, cultivate continuous improvement in student achievement, and establish the culture of a learning organization.

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[12]Wherever teachers' official personnel records are kept, their performance evaluations must be included in them. See G.L. c. 149, s. 52C.

21. Brockton did not implement a new educator evaluation system in the 2012-2013 school year as required of Race to the Top districts. A collective bargaining agreement (CBA) was ratified in February 2013 and submitted to ESE, but its performance rubrics were found to be inconsistent with state requirements and were returned to the district by ESE for revision. At the time of this review, the district had not negotiated the revisions indicated and the issue remained unresolved.

A. Brockton did not ratify a new CBA with new language on educator evaluation until February 2013 and did not submit its educator evaluation system to ESE for review until March 2013.

B. After reviewing the language of the Brockton CBA, ESE identified areas of the performance rubrics that were inconsistent with the new state educator evaluation regulations and advised the district of necessary revisions in April 2013. At the time of the review, the needed changes had not been made and evaluations could not be completed.

C. In interviews, district administrators explained that progress has been slowed by a combination of factors.

    1. One of the most significant factors was the negative effect on communication and continuity within the negotiating process of the departure of the former superintendent in December 2012.

    2. Conflicting approaches to key contract language among the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), the Brockton Education Association (BEA), and ESE were also cited as having been problematic.

D. The new superintendent expressed concern about the current status of the district's educator evaluation plan and indicated that addressing these problems would be a very high priority. District administrators explained that a new joint committee of teachers, BEA representatives, and school leaders was currently being formed whose purpose would be to negotiate the alignment of all performance rubrics with the state model.

E. Although the rubrics were still to be negotiated, the district had nevertheless begun to implement the initial components of the new state system. For example, interviews and a document review showed that:

    1. All administrators and teachers had been provided with the number of hours and types of training required under the new state model, including those dealing with self-assessment, SMART goals, and evidence gathering.

    2. All teachers and administrators were in the process of completing the first steps required by the new evaluation cycle: self-assessment, goal setting and plan development, and implementation of the plan.

    3. Both teachers and administrators noted increased classroom supervision and observations by evaluators, as a means of collecting evidence of progress toward goals. Because the

process was only in its very early stages, formative documentation had not been generated. Reviewers noted general agreement among interviewees that the district's evaluation culture was slowly beginning to improve.

4. The district had developed an "Educator Evaluation Timeline" for 2013-2014 that imposes a clear and detailed framework for the implementation of the remaining components of the new evaluation system.

5. Administrators indicated that in an effort to accelerate the process, the district planned to evaluate all teachers, both with and without PTS, as well as all school level and district administrators, during 2013-2014.

6. Administrators also indicated the recognition that there would need to be additional and ongoing training for evaluators.

Impact: It is cause for concern that Brockton did not meet the timelines required of Race to the Top districts and that it submitted an educator evaluation model that was not sufficiently aligned with ESE requirements. Needed changes in the district's supervision and evaluation policies and practices have been delayed for a full school year. The potential of the state's new educator evaluation model to improve feedback; enhance the skills and effectiveness of teachers and administrators; and link district and school priorities, educator evaluation, and professional development is considerable. Without full and prompt alignment and implementation of all key components of that model, the substantial improvements it promises in learning opportunities and academic outcomes for all district students will continue to be delayed.

22. **Despite the concerted efforts and commitment of many, professional development in the district is not aligned with priorities in the District Improvement Plan, and suffers from limited amounts of K-12 coordination, allocated time and resources, and formal teacher input and collaboration.**

   A. The review team found some elements of the district's Professional Development (PD) programming praiseworthy. For instance:

   1. PD in the district focuses on helping to promote student learning goals and support student learning needs.

   2. Faculty members are encouraged to develop and deliver workshops and training activities for colleagues on specific instructional strategies and model programs.

   3. PD leadership responsibilities and authority are largely decentralized and school-based, and are distributed among a number of personnel, including central office administrators, principals, instructional specialists and curriculum coordinators (K-8), and department heads (9-12).

   4. The district partially compensates for the absence of embedded and common districtwide PD released time or uniform common planning time (CPT) by developing alternative

opportunities for collaboration such as "citywide trainings," which provide time for horizontal grade-level teacher meetings through the use of substitutes.

B. The district's PD program is not fully coordinated between levels or among schools. In addition, teachers and administrators do not formally collaborate in designing and implementing a strategic approach to professional development that is aligned with and focused on goals and priorities articulated in the District Improvement Plan (DIP).

1. Interviewees described the district's individual schools as "silos" or "islands" within the context of PD. A number of factors underlie this perception.

   a. The most significant is the absence of a central leadership structure and unified K-12 coordination of PD programming that could ensure that PD in the district is aligned to district priorities, that it is delivered efficiently, and that it promotes coherence between grade levels.

   b. Although administrators indicated that a newly developed organizational chart might create such a position, they acknowledged that at the time of the review the district did not have a single individual, organizational structure, or representative committee responsible for the planning and coordination of K-12 PD programming.

2. PD planning in the district is not a collaborative endeavor. Teachers reported that they did not have any meaningful or systematic input into the planning, design, or implementation of a PD calendar, programs, or services.

3. Although there is some linkage to individual School Improvement Plans, PD programming is not clearly or directly aligned with priorities in the District Improvement Plan. This has contributed to the challenge of coordinating PD programs districtwide to maximize effectiveness.

4. The R3 District Improvement 2011-2013 plan called for the expansion of the current one-year teacher induction/mentoring program to a three-year program. At the time of the review action had not had been taken to implement that goal.

C. The allocation of resources, including funding and time, also affects the district's ability to provide a coherent, effective professional development program.

1. The challenge of coordinating a focused PD program is reinforced by a funding structure that distributes PD monies to each of the district's schools based on a student enrollment and faculty size formula, rather than allowing funding to also take into account specific prioritized programs or identified needs at the district or school levels.

2. Teachers and administrators reported that regularly scheduled common planning time is consistently provided for staff only at the middle school level. Further, the amount of PD release time in the school calendar is limited and varies by level. There are no common PD

release days across the district, and so no opportunity to use those days for vertical meetings and articulation among elementary, middle, and high school staffs.

Impact: Limited district-level coordination has had an impact on the coherency of Brockton's professional development program. It is not clearly evident that the programs, structures, and services needed to promote educators' sustained professional growth are robust enough to support educators sufficiently in improving the learning of all students.

Student Support

23. **Interviews and observations of 125 classrooms suggested that instruction for students with disabilities may not be sufficiently supported by professional development, advantageous class sizes, or additional services.**

   A. Based on the review team's observations, instructional practices in the general education classroom do not support high need students sufficiently.

   1. Classroom observations showed that many instructional practices desirable for all students were demonstrated clearly and consistently in less than 50 percent of observed classrooms. Practices particularly important for high need students include frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction, pacing the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs, and making available multiple resources to meet all students' diverse learning needs.

   2. A discrepancy was noted between teachers' and administrators' belief that differentiation takes place in classrooms (as stated in interviews) and the instruction that was observed throughout the district. In 60 percent of classrooms visited, appropriate instructional strategies for English language learners and students with disabilities were not clearly and consistently evident; they were only partially evident in another 18 percent of visited classrooms. See indicator 10 in the instructional inventory in Appendix C.

   3. As the result of the district's philosophy and approach to classifying students with disabilities, a high proportion of students with disabilities are fully included in general education classrooms (in 2011-2012, 65.7 percent compared with 58.1 percent statewide).[13] In addition, the district's student population has a high proportion of high needs students— 82 percent compared with 48 percent statewide (see Table B1b in Appendix B). Consequently, instructional practices that meet the needs of diverse learners in the general education classroom are especially critical.

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[13] See School/District Profiles on the ESE website (Special Education Data, Indicator 5).

   a. Administrators and teachers said that the district strives to meet students' needs in the classroom whenever possible rather than place them in special education classes.

   b. In 2013, students receiving special education services made up 13.2 percent of the district's school population, considerably less than the state proportion of 17 percent.

B. General education teachers reported having received limited professional development on teaching students with disabilities.

   1. Interviewees noted that professional development specific to teaching students with disabilities is voluntary.

   2. A teacher said that at the elementary level, there was PD "a while ago" on how to differentiate.

   3. An interviewee said that it had been years since she had had PD on special education strategies as a regular classroom teacher.

   4. A teacher noted that at the middle school level, core subject teachers receive more professional development than specialists on teaching students with disabilities and English language learners, although specialists teach students in those subgroups.

   5. Professional development provided by the district on teaching students with disabilities emphasizes strategies for meeting students' social-emotional needs. The review team did not find evidence of professional development focused on instructional strategies for students with disabilities.

      a. In interviews, when asked what additional support general education teachers had for teaching students with disabilities, staff often mentioned training for students who are emotionally impaired or disruptive and social/emotional/behavioral programs such as PBIS and Second Step.

C. The inclusion model for students with disabilities takes place in an environment that does not ensure that all students are exposed to the full advantages of the mainstream curriculum with additional services as needed.

   1. Observations and interviews confirmed that in inclusion classes, students with disabilities made up approximately half of the enrollment. These classes were not generally smaller than the large general education classes observed by the team.

   2. Class sizes were routinely observed to be over 25 students and often over 30.

D. The review team did not find evidence that a full range of Tier 2 supports are available for students, or that interventions are part of a coordinated, districtwide system.

1. Interviewees said that each school was different and had different needs so that services and practices varied.

2. The district's Title I Department uses leveled literacy in the elementary and K-8 schools. It provides services to students in grades 1 and 2 primarily, although on occasion these will extend through grade 4. Special education and bilingual staff provide some Title I services.

    a. The Arnone School uses Reading Recovery as an intervention.

3. The Instructional Resource Specialists and Reading Resource Specialists have few hours to devote to Tier 2 support. They lead professional development, work with data teams, provide Tier 3 support, mentor teachers, administer MCAS, and in some cases model instruction for colleagues.

4. At the middle school, the enrichment period is often used to reinforce reading or math skills for all students. In some cases, students with disabilities receive additional services during homeroom period.

5. Staff frequently mentioned student study groups or peer tutoring as part of the support system for students at the middle and high school levels.

6. An intervention mentioned by staff was the programs designed for individual students by lab managers using math software.

7. Students with disabilities in seven schools in the district receive instruction in an inclusion setting staffed by a dually certified teacher, a degreed teaching assistant, and a paraprofessional. Students in these classes may receive supplementary services from a special education teacher who goes into the classroom and may be offered other services that are available to the student body at large.

Impact: Without teachers who are fully trained in strategies to reach all learners, it is difficult for students in general education and inclusion classrooms to reach their full potential. Large inclusion classrooms in which a large proportion of the students are in need of specialized services make it challenging to provide all students with the necessary exposure to the mainstream curriculum. Although not completely separate, these classrooms are not truly inclusionary. Without a comprehensive, coordinated set of interventions, the district risks providing struggling or at-risk students with an intervention based on its availability rather than on the degree to which it targets individual students' needs. Peer tutoring can be useful, but is not a substitute for professional accommodations and teacher training.

24. **The district's disciplinary code results in the loss of time on learning and credits and do not proactively engage students' families.**

    A. Disciplinary practices often result in students missing educational time in the middle and high schools.

1. The district's middle schools have high rates of out-of-school suspension (OSS).

    a. The Ashfield, East, North, South and West Middle Schools as well as the Raymond K-8 school had OSS rates in excess of 10 percent in 2012-2013.

2. Teachers say that the suspension of younger children is a result of principals' attempts to limit disruptions in the school, enforce the handbook rules, and involve parents by having them come to the school to help address misbehaviors. One teacher said that principals perceive a lack of options for addressing students' misbehavior, and that they therefore use suspension as a way to try to drive the importance of behavior issues home to parents.

3. Administrators described the need to use out-of-school suspension rather than in-school suspension (ISS) because of there being no space in the school for a dedicated ISS room. In 2012-2013 ISS rates were lower than OSS rates in every school in Brockton except Plouffe Academy and Brockton High School, and were multiple times lower in almost all of those schools.

4. The high school has a system of demerits, referrals, and credit recovery for students with multiple disciplinary infractions.

    a. Staff interviews and documentation indicated that in the past a minor infraction might push a high school student past the limit so that suspension would result even if the infraction was small. The current system of demerits is softened by the opportunity to "buy back" demerits.

    b. The suspensions create absences that trigger academic consequences and the need for credit recovery.

5. Brockton suspends students at rates two to three times higher than the state.

    a. The out-of-school suspension rate was 10.8 percent in 2013 compared to the state rate of 4.3 percent.

    b. The number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspension per 100 students in each year from 2009 to 2012 was three to four times the state rate.

    c. In 2012 the number of incidents resulting in out-of-school suspension in Brockton was 43.5 incidents per 100 students compared to the state rate of 11.2 incidents per 100 students.

B. The district's work to engage families has not resulted in a sufficient partnership around limiting suspensions or in reliably accessible two-way communication.

1. The superintendent said that there was a need to improve parent involvement.

2. Interviewees reported that parent involvement is low although the district offers a number of events at each school and through the Parent Academy, and parents receive messages from the school through *ConnectEd*.

3. Although staff said that student handbooks have been translated into languages spoken by community members, translated documents or information was not available on the district website.

Impact: The current discipline policies and practices lead to students spending time out of the classroom and increase the rate of failing grades, which cannot be fully remedied with credit recovery programs. Without more effective communication with and engagement of students' families, the district has limited its ability to receive feedback and to work more proactively to achieve its behavior and attendance goals for students.

Financial and Asset Management

25. The link between district goals and budget development was unclear to the review team. District budget documents do not provide comprehensive, transparent information about how resources were allocated to support district goals.

A. The budget document does not have a narrative section that includes goals from the District Improvement Plan and explains the alignment of resource allocations to the district's goals.

1. The budget book does not provide any information on sources of revenue supplemental to the approved annual budget, including state and federal grants and local revolving accounts.

2. The budget book is a compilation of lists of accounts with various degrees of specificity, such as a list of every contracted services vendor.

B. The budget document does not reflect an agreement defining municipal spending in support of the district, although there is an agreed-upon annual procedure by which expenditures are reviewed by the mayor, the superintendent, and the executive director of financial services.

Impact: Without a clear link between the District Improvement Plan and the budget, it is difficult to understand the financial implications of the district's decisions. The budget's current format also makes it difficult to assess the impact of supplemental sources of revenue and of the municipality's spending on the school system. The budget document does not provide the school committee and community with a cohesive description of how the budget supports academic programs and how these allocations have changed from the previous year.

26. **The district did not meet required net school spending in fiscal year 2013, and it will not meet required net school spending in fiscal year 2014, which will cause a substantial carryover into fiscal year 2015.**

    A.   Brockton has historically spent close to required net school spending (but above it), but has come in slightly under its requirement in some years (including fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2005).

    B. Brockton's 2013 EOYR as of January 30, 2014, showed that the district did not meet its spending requirement in fiscal year 2013, although it had projected spending 0.1 percent above the requirement. Subsequently, the district submitted an amended EOYR (dated March 25, 2014) that showed a reduced net school spending shortfall.

        1. Brockton's 2013 required net school spending was $183,057,594. Reported net school spending as of January 30 was $182,428,351, which was $629,243 (0.34 percent) below the required amount.

        2. Brockton's 2013 EOYR (as of January 30, 2014) showed fiscal year 2014 budgeted net school spending of $183,836,159, which is $10,918,725 or 5.62 percent below the required amount, including the $629,243 carryover from fiscal year 2013. This shortfall would have caused the district to be penalized by a reduction from the district's fiscal year 2015 Chapter 70 aid of the amount exceeding five percent (or $1,212,443).

        3. The commissioner of elementary and secondary education sent a letter on January 30, 2014 (see Appendix D), notifying the district that its fiscal year 2013 shortfall would be added to its fiscal year 2014 spending requirement and that the district would be penalized for the fiscal year 2014 shortfall.

        4. The district amended its reported expenditures to reduce its net school spending shortfall in fiscal year 2013 to within 1 percent of required net school spending. As of March 25, 2014, reported net school spending was $182,908,343, which is $149,251 (0.08 percent) below the required amount.

        5. This shortfall is modest (it falls within the five percent range allowed by law), and results only in a carryover amount added to the district's fiscal year 2014 spending requirement.

        6. Brockton's amended 2013 EOYR (dated March 25, 2014) shows fiscal year 2014 budgeted net school spending of $185,898,475, which is $8,376,418 or 4.31 percent below the required amount, including the $149,251 carryover from fiscal year 2013.

        7. The district projects its net school spending to be less than 5 percent below required, meaning there will not be a penalty reducing Chapter 70 aid. However, the district will still have a significant carryover into fiscal year 2015, meaning that expenditures in that year will have to be over $8M higher just to meet required net school spending.

8. Of the $11M increase in Brockton's foundation budget from fiscal year 2013 to fiscal year 2014, almost 90 percent was supported through an increase in Chapter 70 aid.

Impact: Without a long term plan to consistently meet annual net school spending requirements, the district will continue to deal with potentially large carry-over amounts that make budget planning more difficult and unpredictable.

27. **The district does not have a long-term plan for capital needs for buildings and equipment, for long-term maintenance, or for managing projected increases in school enrollment.**

    A. Both the school executive director of operations and the city chief financial officer said that the district does not have a multi-year capital plan, only a list of needs kept by the executive director of operations.

    B. All elementary schools are at full capacity. Several schools currently use modular classrooms. At least one of the modular units at the Kennedy Elementary School is fifteen years old; it was observed to be in poor condition.

Impact: With no long-term plan for meeting the school district's capital needs, the district does not have a systematic approach to addressing the list of capital needs, which is growing every year. Especially because of projected enrollment increases, there will be further constraints on classroom space.

Brockton Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. **The school committee, new superintendent, and other stakeholders, including teachers, should carry out the plan to collaboratively develop a clear vision and mission for the district, and should communicate these to a wide range of stakeholders. The vision and mission should be used to develop District and School Improvement Plans, which should drive the work of the district.**

   A. The superintendent has charged each of the five sub-committees of the recently created and well-organized transition team to "provide a roadmap for continued and accelerated improvement…and short-and long-range recommendations." Those recommendations could help the district's leadership begin to develop a vision and mission.

      1. The district's vision should outline what leaders want Brockton students to achieve while making the purpose and values of the district clear. It should be a student-centered statement about what the community believes its schools should accomplish for the city's young people, based on data about their needs.

      2. The mission should state how the district will achieve the vision.

      3. The vision and mission should be shared with educators and the community at large in order to create and foster a common understanding of the school district's overall goals and approach.

   B. Once developed, the vision and mission should serve as the basis for a three-year District Improvement Plan (DIP) that aligns policies, actions and resources to priorities in the plan.

      1. The DIP should include elements such as objectives, measurable benchmarks, action steps, person/people responsible, resources and timelines.

      2. The school committee should publicly review and approve the DIP and it should then be shared by the superintendent with school staff and the community.

      3. The district should designate administrators or staff with primary responsibility for monitoring progress toward DIP benchmarks and tracking the implementation of the planned initiatives.

      4. The superintendent should make periodic reports to the school committee on the district's progress toward DIP benchmarks.

   C. All schools should develop their School Improvement Plans (SIPs) in alignment with the DIP.

      1. Schools should continue to develop data-driven SIPs. All SIPs should include SMART goals (Specific and Strategic; Measureable; Action-Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-

focused; and Timed and Tracked), based on analysis of current and relevant performance data. SIPs should also include the assessment/measurement tools that will be used to gauge progress toward goals and the action steps that will lead to success.

2. SIPs should form a framework for raising student achievement. They should address the diverse needs of students at all performance levels.

3. SIPS should also address the ways in which the school will enhance effective communication with and engagement of students' families.

4. Professional development at the school level, in alignment with the DIP, should be described in each school's SIP.

   a. Following a review by the superintendent and/or her designee, the school committee should review all School Improvement Plans.

5. It is recommended that each principal and school council present public progress reports on their SIP to the school community, including teachers.

6. Principals' educator evaluation plans should include goals related to school improvement priorities, in alignment with their School Improvement Plans.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's District Self-Assessment (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/review/district/district-self-assessment.pdf) is a tool for districts to assess their systems and processes as part of an ongoing cycle of inquiry for continuous improvement.

- *Focused Planning for Accelerating Student Learning* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/FocusedPlanning.pdf) provides guidance for Level 3 districts to accelerate achievement for all students through the development of a focused, actionable and sustainable District Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP).

  District Accelerated Improvement Planning - Guiding Principles for Effective Benchmarks (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level4/AIP-GuidingPrinciples.pdf) describes different types of benchmarks to guide and measure district improvement efforts.

Benefits: By developing a DIP and SIPs in alignment with the district's overall vision, and by frequently communicating progress toward key goals, the district will help to ensure that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of where the district aims to be in the future and of their specific roles in helping the district to achieve its vision on behalf of students.

Curriculum and Instruction

2. The district should develop and communicate clear, shared expectations for instruction in Brockton and provide guidance and support for teachers to meet these expectations.

A. Instructional leaders should work together to identify common research-based best instructional practices that constitute the expectations for good teaching in Brockton.

1. The district's instructional expectations should be informed by input from district leaders, principals, associate principals, coordinators, IRSs, RRSs, department heads, and teachers. The expectations should build on examples of best practices that are already in place, with the goal of augmenting them and ensuring that they are consistently implemented throughout the district.

B. As the district develops curriculum using the UbD model, it must also ensure that pedagogy and assessments supporting student understanding are consistently implemented throughout the district's classrooms. Classroom instructional practices should give students multiple opportunities to articulate and elaborate their thinking and to use higher order thinking skills to demonstrate and deepen understanding.

1. The district's approach to instruction should include teachers' use of real-time formative assessments to continually gauge understanding and adapt instruction based on students' understanding.

C. The instructional expectations should include strategies for teaching English language learners and students with disabilities.

D. The district's shared vision of instruction should also include the use of technology to support and enhance students' learning.

E. Embedded professional development in the district should prioritize building teachers' capacity to use the identified teaching practices, appropriate to subject and level.

1. Faculty meetings should include opportunities to share best practices and exemplars, while school-based specialists should reinforce the instructional models and examples in classrooms and in grade-level and subject-level meetings.

2. The district should provide opportunities to instructional leaders, including teachers, to conduct shared observations across the district's schools to align instructional practices districtwide.

Recommended resources:

- *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* **(**http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/mathclass_char.doc) and *An Effective Standards-Based Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom*

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

- ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a learning walkthrough process in a school or district.

Benefits: Clear, rigorous, shared instructional expectations will strengthen consistency throughout the district. By explicitly requiring pedagogy that cultivates higher order thinking and that meets students' diverse learning needs, the district will help to ensure that all Brockton students receive high-quality instruction. When technology is used to enhance instruction and when students can personally use technology to support their learning, they are more likely to engage actively in learning and experience academic improvement. Importantly, a common definition of effective instruction will provide a foundation for discussions about teachers' practice, which will increase opportunities for educators' collaboration and continuous improvement.

3. **In order to ensure that curriculum materials at all levels are aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and are of high quality, the review team recommends that the district develop a system for K-12 curriculum development and provide curriculum oversight at the high school level.**

   A. The district should develop a coherent plan for K-12 curriculum development, implementation, and revision that includes unit design models (such as UbD), recommended instructional strategies (based on districtwide expectations as described above), assessments, and suggested resources and technology.

      1. The district should establish opportunities for collaboration across levels in the district, K-5, 6-8 and 9-12, to align curriculum vertically and horizontally and to update and revise curriculum.

      2. The plan should include a systematic approach to implementing WIDA standards districtwide to ensure full implementation at all levels in a timely manner.

   B. The district should provide curricular guidance, support, and monitoring at the high school level.

      1. The district should ensure that the English curriculum in grades 9-12 is effectively aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Updated curriculum documents and resources should be developed in a timely manner.

      2. Support should be provided as needed to ensure that implementation of the plan to align the mathematics curriculum in grades 10-12 continues.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Model Curriculum Units* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/files.html) provide exemplars that can be useful as the district continues to develop, align, and update curriculum. Supplemental presentations (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/resources/) provide more information about the units.

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

- *Model Curriculum Maps: Raising the Rigor of Teaching and Learning* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf) is a presentation that provides definitions and examples of curriculum maps.

- The PARCC *Model Content Frameworks* (http://www.parcconline.org/parcc-model-content-frameworks) support implementation of Common Core State Standards, and link them to the PARCC assessments.

- *Diving Deeper* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/ELADivingDeeper.pdf) provides information and resources to support implementation of the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for ELA and Literacy and the PARCC Model Content Frameworks.

- *WIDA Implementation Guidance, Part I* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/Guidance-p1.pdf) provides general information about the WIDA ELD standards framework, expectations for district implementation, and available support.

- Presentations from WIDA discussions with district personnel (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/2013-03MathLiaisons-ELLDirectors.pdf and http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/2013-01LiteracyLeaders-ELLDirectors.pdf) provide information about developing and using Model Performance Indicators to support instruction.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will help the district to ensure that all ELA and math curricula are aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (which incorporate the Common Core), incorporate appropriate WIDA standards, and are systematically revisited and updated. This will provide students throughout the district with access to a consistent, high-quality curriculum, which will promote student achievement. In particular, high school students will be better prepared for the ELA MCAS, which now assesses standards from the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

Assessment

4. To enable teachers and instructional leaders to collaborate frequently in professional learning communities to improve teaching and learning, the district should take the steps necessary so that staff at all schools can have frequent, structured common planning time (CPT).

A. To maximize effectiveness, CPT for teachers to work in professional learning communities (PLCs) should facilitate sustained and collaborative work on thoughtfully planned and structured tasks that can improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to improve student achievement. There are a variety of options to make CPT useful. For example, PLCs can use CPT to:

   1. Examine student work, guided by specific protocols, so that teachers can explore the best practices that produced good work and can analyze the degree to which students have mastered unit standards and lesson objectives.

   2. Examine assessment data and use data analyses to plan modifications to curriculum, instruction, and assessments that more effectively meet students' diverse learning needs.

   3. Collaborate on schoolwide or districtwide improvement priorities and initiatives, such as expanding the writing curriculum by creating additional writing prompts and rubrics; developing Understanding by Design curriculum units; or sharing best practices related to the district's instructional expectations.

   4. Identify students who are struggling, who are at risk of failing classes, or who have behavioral or social-emotional challenges, and develop strategies or interventions tailored to their needs.

B. CPT can enable groups of high school teachers who teach the same or sequential courses to collaborate more effectively and deliberately on curricular and instructional coordination and innovation, and can provide opportunities to analyze and discuss assessment data.

C. The district should provide targeted support to make CPT as successful as possible.

   1. The district should consider whether it is possible to designate professionally equipped meeting rooms for CPT with technology, internet access, and other useful resources.

   2. Teachers and leaders should agree upon norms and productive routines to support successful collaboration. For example, they should ensure that PLCs have clear goals and objectives, document work and results, have adequate time to complete tasks, and make provisions to pilot and share results.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's professional learning communities resources (*Guidance*: http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/PLCguidance.pdf; *Stages at a Glance:*

http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/PLCstages.pdf) are reference tools to frame the work of developing and strengthening instructional teams at the school level.

- The *Common Planning Time Self-Assessment Toolkit* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/CPTtoolkit.pdf) is a guide to help districts raise student achievement by building districts' capacity to support effective teacher instructional teams.

- *Issue Brief: Collaborative Planning in Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Schools* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/2013-06ELTcollabplanning.pdf) describes key themes identified by schools about the implementation of CPT, including scheduling CPT, determining groupings of teachers, and ways to make CPT useful.

Benefits: When CPT and PLCs are a districtwide practice, all Brockton teachers will have the opportunity to engage in systematic and focused discussions about how to improve curriculum, instruction, assessment, and student achievement. Frequent, structured CPT will encourage reflection, promote inquiry, and increase educators' collaboration to accomplish school and district goals.

Regular and designated Common Planning Time can help the district to redirect the financial resources allocated for substitutes when teachers attend grade-level data meetings. Replacing data meetings with regularly scheduled CPT would also decrease the amount of time that teachers need to leave their classrooms while classes are in progress.

5. **The district should refine and expand its assessment practices to ensure that formative assessments are more constructively and consistently used in daily lessons.**

   A. The district has already identified a number of summative and formative assessments that are used to assess mastery or proficiency, or to monitor progress and diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses. These include the benchmarked common assessments, STAR assessments, the DRA, lab reports, essays, projects, and various quizzes and tests .

   B. Building on this system, the district should help teachers to expand their capacity to use formative classroom assessments to provide immediate feedback and make real-time changes to instruction. For example:

      1. It is recommended that teachers use questioning techniques that require students to demonstrate understanding by explaining their thinking and/or applying knowledge and concepts to real-world contexts.

      2. It is recommended that students use more student-initiated assessment tasks such as "think-pair-share," peer assessments, and self-assessments. These enable students to articulate their thinking, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and identify areas in which they need to improve.

3. It is recommended that teachers develop and implement more "low-stakes" assessments that do not influence grades but that demonstrate students' understanding throughout the lesson.

C. The district should provide guidance and support, such as professional development and common planning time structures, to help teachers to continually improve their ability to modify instruction based on students' needs.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include more student-centered lessons in which teachers and students will know how well students understand relevant concepts and can demonstrate particular skills. Increased use of ongoing, real-time formative assessments will help teachers to adjust their instruction and follow up with appropriate on-the-spot support or longer-term reteaching that meets the learning needs of individual students. By providing expectations, support, and supervision related to teachers' formative assessment practices, the district will promote higher quality instruction and increased student achievement.

Human Resources and Professional Development

6. **The district is urged to correct the inconsistencies identified by ESE in its educator evaluation rubrics so that it can implement a comprehensive plan that is fully aligned with the requirements of the new Massachusetts model.**

A. Under the leadership of the new superintendent, the recently formed joint committee should immediately undertake the task of negotiating revisions to the district's performance rubrics in order to meet the requirements articulated in the state's educator evaluation regulations.

1. The district should continue to move forward with implementation of those elements of its educator evaluation proposal that have been identified by ESE as being aligned with the new educator evaluation system.

2. The district is encouraged to provide ongoing training for both teachers and administrators in support of the new state requirements.

B. The district should continue with its implementation of the educator evaluation system.

1. Implementation should correspond with the district's Educator Evaluation Timeline document, and should include evaluation of all teachers and administrators in the current school year.

2. Ongoing training should be provided as needed, to ensure that the district culture around evaluation continues to shift and that educator evaluation becomes an embedded, consistent, and sustainable system.

C. Original copies and complete records of all evaluation documents should be maintained in the official personnel folder of each educator and housed at the central office.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's Educator *Evaluation Rubrics* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/rubrics/) includes the four ESE model rubrics, guidance on how to develop role-specific Indicators, examples of role-specific Indicators, and other support documents related to using the rubrics.

- *Building Trust and Collaboration through Effective Communications and Engagement* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/convening/2013spr-ReadingLessons.pdf) is a presentation developed and presented by the Reading Public School District that shares reflections about the initial planning and implementation of the new educator evaluation system. While this represents the perspective of only one district, it might be useful to reference that district's "lessons learned" at this stage in the educator evaluation process.

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

- ESE's *Performance Rating Guidance* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/implementation/RatingEdPerformance.pdf) is a supplemental guidance document intended to be a useful resource for districts and evaluators in the determination of Summative Performance Ratings that meet the regulatory requirements.

Benefits: By negotiating revised performance rubrics and continuing the momentum it has established with training and classroom observations, Brockton will be able to fully implement the Massachusetts educator evaluation system. This system has been designed to make fundamental and comprehensive improvements to both teaching and learning. When fully implemented, the system has the potential to:

- Systematically promote the professional growth of both teachers and administrators

- Place student learning at the center of the evaluation process, using multiple measures of student progress and achievement

- Recognize and promote excellence in both teaching and leading

- Set a higher bar to earn professional status

- Hold all educators accountable to rigorous professional performance standards

In order for Brockton to achieve the maximum potential benefit and effectively promote a professional culture based on growth-oriented supervision, evaluation, and student academic achievement, the

district must implement its evaluation system in a manner that is fully consistent with all of the performance rubrics, requirements, and timelines contained in the state model.

By maintaining personnel records with all evaluation documents at the central office, the district will be able to monitor the implementation of all key components of the new evaluation system and ensure both that timelines are met and that the system is being used to its full potential.

7. **The district is strongly encouraged to create a unified and collaborative professional development leadership structure and to provide the resources needed to adequately support the professional growth of staff, promote district priorities, and significantly improve the academic achievement of students.**

   A. The district should demonstrate a clear commitment to sustained professional development (PD) programs and supports that are aligned with its improvement goals. The development of a sufficiently broad and deep understanding of educational practices and the capacity of professional staff to employ them effectively requires a long-term prioritization of time and resources.

      1. PD programming should be fully aligned with and supportive of well-defined district priorities and goals. SIPs should be carefully aligned with the DIP so that school-based PD programs can support and advance core district goals more efficiently and effectively.

      2. Although different schools have different needs, PD should be coordinated at the district level to ensure a degree of consistency and coherence among schools and grade levels, and to maximize the use of resources in support of PD.

      3. As recommended above, common planning time should be provided for educators at all levels in order to facilitate ongoing, embedded professional development.

      4. The district should consider the priorities outlined in the DIP, as well as the particular PD needs of each school, when allocating funding for PD.

   B. The district's professional development   program should be informed by input from teachers and should provide opportunities for teacher leadership.

      1. A well-defined, unified, and collaborative leadership structure, such as a joint committee of administrators and teacher representatives, should be responsible for planning and implementing sustained and integrated K-12 PD programs and services.

      2. Teachers should become formally involved in identifying specific PD needs, determining how they might best be met, and subsequently, in designing and evaluating PD practices, systems, and structures.

      3. Under the new educator evaluation regulations, "Educators whose summative performance rating is exemplary and whose impact on student learning is rated moderate or high shall be

recognized and rewarded with leadership roles, promotion, additional compensation, public commendation or other acknowledgement." 603 CMR 35.08(7). The district is encouraged to support teacher growth by creating or expanding opportunities for exemplary staff to exercise instructional leadership. These opportunities could include modeling best classroom practices and serving as data coaches, as mentors, and as trainers/facilitators to support the new educator evaluation system.

4. The district should implement its plan to expand the induction/mentoring program to three full years. The program should be designed to meet the needs of both teachers and administrators and should be differentiated to properly support both first year educators and those new to the district.

Recommended resources:

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

- ESE's *Educator Induction Programs* web page (www.doe.mass.edu/educators/mentor) includes guidelines and resources for teacher and administrator induction programs.

- *PBS LearningMedia* (http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/) is a free digital media content library that provides relevant educational resources for PreK-12 teachers. The flexible platform includes high-quality content tied to national curriculum standards, as well as professional development courses.

Benefits: The creation of a clear and unified PD leadership structure will ensure that all resources, including personnel, time, funding, and other supports, are organized and deployed in a more coordinated, systematic, and proactive manner. This will result in significant improvement in overall efficiency, effectiveness, and communication, and will help to align PD programming with well-defined district priorities. The direct involvement and formal collaboration of teachers in PD planning and delivery will promote their sense of ownership, and will help to ensure that PD throughout the district is informed by students' learning needs.

Student Support

8. **The district should ensure that instruction, professional development, and interventions meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities.**

   A. The district should put practices in place to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with instruction and supports that meet their needs.

1. As part of its coordinated approach to professional development, the district should provide ongoing, high-quality training to teachers focused on instructional strategies that are desirable for high needs students, including students with disabilities. These strategies should include techniques to differentiate instruction while providing an appropriate level of challenge for all students; differentiated instruction should be more frequently implemented throughout the district.

2. The district should monitor the proportion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms so that they receive sufficient attention and support.

B. The district should examine and augment its approach to providing additional supports to students, with the goal of establishing a coordinated, districtwide system of tiered interventions.

1. The district should identify existing Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions and, if needed, clarify the difference between the two tiers.

2. It should use student performance data to determine additional interventions that are necessary in order to more directly address students' needs.

3. The district should identify the staff and resources available to deliver additional Tier 2 interventions. In cases where insufficient resources exist, the district should consider reallocating resources in future budget planning to fill these gaps.

4. All interventions provided in the district should be documented and communicated districtwide to ensure coordination and consistency.

Recommended resources:

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Blueprint* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/blueprint/) is a tool for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The *MTSS Self-Assessment* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/sa/) accompanies the MTSS blueprint for schools/districts to use to assess their current status in each of the core components.

- The *2013 Resource Guide to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html) is a resource designed to ensure that all students receive instruction in the Common Core State Standards (plus a small number of unique standards approved for Massachusetts students) at levels that are challenging and attainable for each student. It is also intended to serve as a guide for teachers who work with students with more significant disabilities, who are participating in the MCAS alternate assessment.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will enhance the school system's ability to address the needs of all of its students. The teaching staff will become more effective as they improve their skills at delivering instruction that is differentiated and that helps each student achieve his or her full potential. Staff will have a shared understanding of Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions, and students will have access to interventions that target their specific needs. Finally, students with disabilities will benefit from a learning environment that provides specific services and full access to the curriculum, to advance their learning and help them succeed.

9. **The district should review its discipline policies and practices for the purpose of developing a more proactive plan for addressing disciplinary issues.**

   A. The district should use the data it collects to investigate the reasons for discipline problems for the purpose of developing policies that will limit these problems to the extent possible.

   B. The district should consider revising its policies and practices so that they do not unnecessarily remove students from the classroom or set off a frequently repeating cycle of credit loss and recovery.

      1. The district is encouraged to seek student and teacher input as to possible changes to policies and practices that would promote improved behavior and fewer removals from the classroom.

   C. The district should make a stronger effort to connect with families, inform them of expectations for students, and bring them into partnership with the schools for the benefit of their children.

      1. The district must find a way to engage all parents and guardians, especially those of its at-risk students, in their children's education.

      2. The district is encouraged to establish policies and expectations based on best practices regarding family engagement and two-way communication with families (see resources below).

      3. The district should consider which community resources might help them to achieve this goal. The Community Schools and Parent Academy are two possible sources of help that have funding and personnel to supplement the schools' efforts. In addition to working on their own goals, these organizations may be able to work together with the district in making connections with families.

   Recommended resources:

   - *Youth Voices - How High Schools can Respond to the Needs of Students and Help Prevent Dropouts* ([http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/YouthFocusGroup.pdf) is a](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/YouthFocusGroup.pdf) report based on youth focus groups across the Commonwealth who shared their insight about what they liked most and least about school; why students drop out; and how schools should be improved.

- *Family and Community Engagement Standards*
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/PCEIstandards.pdf): Developed by the
  Parent and Community Education and Involvement Advisory Council, this document defines
  each of the six Family and Community Engagement Standards and includes a rubric for each. A
  related self-assessment (http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf) is
  also available.

- ESE's *Title I Family Engagement* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/titlei/parta/family-
  engagement/?section=FE) includes links to family engagement policies, toolkits, research,
  presentations, and other resources.

- ESE's *Family and Community Involvement* web page
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/FamComm/f_involvement.html) provides links to several resources,
  including ESE's *Guide to Parent, Family, and Community Involvement*.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will result in disciplinary policies that help to preserve
students' learning time and credit accumulation. The schools will be able to anticipate problems and
avoid situations that push students out of the classroom. Increased communication with and
engagement of students' families will result in a more collaborative and effective approach to
minimizing behavioral issues.

Financial and Asset Management

10. **The superintendent and district finance leaders should develop a comprehensive and transparent
    budget document to present to the school committee and general public.**

    A. The administration should look to outside guidance such as the Massachusetts Association of
       School Business Officials (MASBO) for examples of good budget documents in other school
       districts.

    B. Regardless of the chosen model, the revised budget book should include a summary of the
       objectives in the District Improvement Plan and should outline the budget initiatives that
       support those objectives.

    C. The revised budget book should include expenditures budgeted from revenue sources such as
       state and federal grants and local revolving funds.

       1. Since grant amounts for the next year are not known at budget time, the current year
          amounts and usage should be listed with appropriate caveats. This section of the budget
          should also reference the district's improvement plans and objectives.

2. The balance sheet for every revolving account should show the previous fiscal year opening balance, the revenues and expenditures for that year, and the closing balance, which becomes the opening balance for the new year.

D. The revised budget book should include descriptions of the capital needs of the school district and should reference the city's budgeted capital expenditures.

1. The budget book should also include descriptions of proposed equipment purchases for the next year as well as equipment needs for future years.

E. A new municipal agreement in writing for municipal costs attributed to the district and to net school spending should be developed based upon the currently used annual spreadsheet. This agreement should be included in the revised budget book so the school committee and general public can see how the city calculates budget items in support of the school district.

Recommended resource:

- *Smart School Budgeting* **(**http://www.renniecenter.org/research/SmartSchoolBudgeting.pdf**)** is the Rennie Center's summary of existing resources on school finance, budgeting, and real-location.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will enable the school committee and the general public to better understand the details of the proposed budget and supplemental revenues and how these support student learning and the educational needs of the school district.

11. **The district and the city should work together closely to meet or exceed net school spending requirements, with a particular emphasis on funding for key district improvement objectives.**

Benefit: By working with the city to develop a long term plan to consistently meet annual net school spending requirements, the district will continue to benefit from significant state aid, and will prevent large carry-over amounts that make budget planning more difficult and unpredictable. Prioritizing funding for district improvement objectives will help to ensure that the necessary resources are in place to support the district's continuous improvement.

12. **The school district and the city should develop a multi-year capital plan with annual appropriations separate from the school operating budget.**

A. The list of capital needs currently developed by the executive director of operations should be prioritized with targets for appropriation identified over the next five year period.

B. Pre-K to grade 12 enrollment projections for the next five- and ten-year period should be compared with the existing building capacity of schools at each level.

1. If the existing building capacity is not sufficient, as at the elementary schools, a multi-year plan should be developed to meet the projected student enrollments, even if only by the addition of more modular classroom units.

2. Existing classroom modular units, which have been in existence longer than their anticipated lifespan and are showing wear and tear, should be replaced.

Recommended resource:

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

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will help the district meet its maintenance and long term facilities needs. Appropriate building capacity to meet projected enrollments will help to prevent class sizes from rising because of overcrowding.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from November 18-21, 2013 by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Richard Silverman, Ed. D., leadership and governance

2. Suzanne Kelly, curriculum and instruction

3. Linda L. Greyser, Ed. D., assessment and review team coordinator

4. Frank Sambuceti, Ph. D., human resources and professional development

5. Kathleen Lopez-Natale, Ph. D., student support

6. Gerald Missal, Ed. D., financial and asset management

7. Laura Richane, ESE/CDSA staff member, also participated in the review team.

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: executive director of financial services, executive director of operations and school administration, city of Brockton chief financial officer, budget and requisition manager, accountant.

The team conducted interviews with six members of the School Committee, including the mayor and chair.

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

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: superintendent, deputy superintendent of schools, executive director of financial services, executive director of operations and administration, executive director of human resources, executive director of teaching and learning PK-8, executive director of pupil personnel services, assistant director of special education, associate director of accountability and planning, department head of bilingual education, department head of therapeutic services, coordinator of mathematics and science PK-5, coordinator of Title 1, director of bilingual education, coordinator of literacy K-5 and social studies K-5, coordinator of mathematics and science 6-8, supervisor of human resources.

The team visited the following schools: Barrett Russell School (K), Dr. W. Arnone Community School (K-5), Louis F. Angelo Elementary School (K-5), Baker Elementary School (K-5), Hancock Elementary School

(K-5), Huntington Elementary School (K-5), John F. Kennedy Elementary School (K-5), North Middle School (grades 6-8), South Middle School (grades 6-8), Edgar B. Davis School (grades K-8), Oscar F. Raymond School (K-8), Joseph F. Plouffe Academy (grades 6-8), B. B. Russell Alternative School (grades 9-12), Brockton High School (grades 9-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with 11 principals and focus groups with 12 elementary school teachers, 8 middle school teachers, and 8 high school teachers.

The team observed 125 classes in the district: 30 at the high school and at an alternative high school program, 35 at 2 middle schools and at middle school grades in the 2 K-8 schools, and 60 at 7 elementary school and 1 early childhood center.

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

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

o   Data on the district's staffing and finances.

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

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

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

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 11/18/2013	Tuesday 11/19/2013	Wednesday 11/20/2013	Thursday 11/21/2013
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers' association; and visits to Barrett Russell School, Plouffe Academy for classroom observations.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; interview with teachers' association and visits to Brockton High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with town or city personnel; interviews with district and school leaders; interviews with school committee members including the mayor/chair; visits to Angelo Elementary School, B. B. Russell Alternative School, Kennedy Elementary School, Hancock Elementary School, Baker Elementary School, David School, Arnone Elementary School, for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Brockton High School, Raymond School Huntington Elementary School, North Middle School, South Middle School for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and several principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

Table B1a: Brockton Public Schools
2012-2013 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	8954	54.0 %	81806	8.6 %
Asian	415	2.5 %	56517	5.9 %
Hispanic	2384	14.4 %	156976	16.4 %
Native American	74	0.4 %	2292	0.2 %
White	4098	24.7 %	630150	66.0 %
Native Hawaiian	41	0.2 %	1020	0.1 %
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	629	3.8 %	26012	2.7 %
All Students	16595	100.0 %	**954773**	**100.0 %**

Note: As of October 1, 2012

Table B1b: Brockton Public Schools
2012-2013 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	2205	16.2 %	13.3 %	163921	35.5 %	17.2 %
Low Income	12803	94.1 %	77.1 %	353420	76.5 %	37.0 %
ELLs and Former ELLs	3284	24.1 %	19.8 %	73217	15.8 %	7.7 %
All high needs students	13611	100.0 %	82.0 %	462272	100.0 %	48.4 %

Notes: As of October 1, 2012. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	1264	74.2	67.9	68.6	67.1	83.3	-7.1	-1.5
	P+	1264	40.0 %	33.0 %	36.0 %	27.0 %	57.0 %	-13.0 %	-9.0 %
4	CPI	1265	66	63.5	61.6	62.1	78.9	-3.9	0.5
	P+	1265	31.0 %	28.0 %	28.0 %	27.0 %	53.0 %	-4.0 %	-1.0 %
	SGP	1157	44	39	42	42	49	-2	0
5	CPI	1250	74	74	68.5	70.1	84.7	-3.9	1.6
	P+	1250	44.0 %	46.0 %	37.0 %	39.0 %	66.0 %	-5.0 %	2.0 %
	SGP	1134	46	46	46	53	52	7	7
6	CPI	1297	75.1	75.5	71.8	72.1	85.1	-3	0.3
	P+	1297	48.0 %	45.0 %	43.0 %	42.0 %	67.0 %	-6.0 %	-1.0 %
	SGP	1147	45	43	43	46	52	1	3
7	CPI	1235	81.4	82.1	82.4	81.9	88.4	0.5	-0.5
	P+	1235	58.0 %	56.0 %	57.0 %	54.0 %	72.0 %	-4.0 %	-3.0 %
	SGP	1107	50	54	56	57	48	7	1
8	CPI	1234	82.8	86	86.5	84.6	90.1	1.8	-1.9
	P+	1234	63.0 %	67.0 %	68.0 %	64.0 %	78.0 %	1.0 %	-4.0 %
	SGP	1091	52.5	58	58	52	50	-0.5	-6
10	CPI	1047	86.7	89.8	92.5	94.6	96.9	7.9	2.1
	P+	1047	67.0 %	76.0 %	79.0 %	85.0 %	91.0 %	18.0 %	6.0 %
	SGP	758	70	69	69	73	57	3	4
All	CPI	8592	77.1	76.6	75.5	75.5	86.8	-1.6	0
	P+	8592	50.0 %	49.0 %	49.0 %	47.0 %	69.0 %	-3.0 %	-2.0 %
	SGP	6394	50	50	52	53	51	3	1

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

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	1267	68.5	68.3	64.5	71.4	84.3	2.9	6.9
	P+	1267	41.0 %	38.0 %	38.0 %	44.0 %	66.0 %	3.0 %	6.0 %
4	CPI	1273	67.8	61.6	61.6	66.4	80.2	-1.4	4.8
	P+	1273	30.0 %	22.0 %	22.0 %	30.0 %	52.0 %	0.0 %	8.0 %
	SGP	1158	51	39	40.5	52.5	54	1.5	12
5	CPI	1250	64.1	63.3	61.8	67.2	80.6	3.1	5.4
	P+	1250	33.0 %	34.0 %	32.0 %	39.0 %	61.0 %	6.0 %	7.0 %
	SGP	1133	37	39	52	60	54	23	8
6	CPI	1299	65.7	63.3	64.8	67.3	80.3	1.6	2.5
	P+	1299	38.0 %	33.0 %	36.0 %	38.0 %	61.0 %	0.0 %	2.0 %
	SGP	1150	35	35	44	51	50	16	7
7	CPI	1238	63.9	60.1	62.8	61.7	74.4	-2.2	-1.1
	P+	1238	34.0 %	31.0 %	30.0 %	31.0 %	52.0 %	-3.0 %	1.0 %
	SGP	1107	40	46	51	50	46	10	-1
8	CPI	1231	61.6	62.1	62.8	67.9	76	6.3	5.1
	P+	1231	31.0 %	32.0 %	32.0 %	39.0 %	55.0 %	8.0 %	7.0 %
	SGP	1089	46	48	54	63	50	17	9
10	CPI	1026	78.2	80	83.3	81.9	90.2	3.7	-1.4
	P+	1026	58.0 %	61.0 %	66.0 %	65.0 %	80.0 %	7.0 %	-1.0 %
	SGP	777	44	49	59	52	51	8	-7
All	CPI	8584	66.9	65.1	65.4	68.8	80.8	1.9	3.4
	P+	8584	38.0 %	35.0 %	36.0 %	40.0 %	61.0 %	2.0 %	4.0 %
	SGP	6414	42	42	50	54	51	12	4

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

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
5	CPI	1250	59.1	56.6	56.6	57.6	78.5	-1.5	1
	P+	1250	19.0 %	19.0 %	21.0 %	19.0 %	51.0 %	0.0 %	-2.0 %
8	CPI	1232	54.1	53.7	55.6	57.6	71	3.5	2
	P+	1232	18.0 %	16.0 %	19.0 %	18.0 %	39.0 %	0.0 %	-1.0 %
10	CPI	949	75.4	76.2	80.6	79.8	88	4.4	-0.8
	P+	949	48.0 %	50.0 %	55.0 %	52.0 %	71.0 %	4.0 %	-3.0 %
All	CPI	3431	61.7	61.1	62.6	63.7	79	2	1.1
	P+	3431	26.0 %	26.0 %	29.0 %	28.0 %	53.0 %	2.0 %	-1.0 %

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

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	7161	73.1	72.9	72	72.9	-0.2	0.9
		P+	7161	43.0 %	42.0 %	43.0 %	42.0 %	-1.0 %	-1.0 %
		SGP	5241	48	50	51	53	5	2
	State	CPI	237163	76.1	77	76.5	76.8	0.7	0.3
		P+	237163	45.0 %	48.0 %	48.0 %	48.0 %	3.0 %	0.0 %
		SGP	180087	45	46	46	47	2	1
Low Income	District	CPI	6838	73.8	73.4	72.2	73.1	-0.7	0.9
		P+	6838	44.0 %	44.0 %	43.0 %	43.0 %	-1.0 %	0.0 %
		SGP	5020	49	50	51	53	4	2
	State	CPI	184999	76.5	77.1	76.7	77.2	0.7	0.5
		P+	184999	47.0 %	49.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %	3.0 %	0.0 %
		SGP	141671	46	46	45	47	1	2
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	1284	55.5	57.5	58	59.5	4	1.5
		P+	1284	11.0 %	13.0 %	14.0 %	14.0 %	3.0 %	0.0 %
		SGP	761	42	44	48	50	8	2
	State	CPI	88956	67.3	68.3	67.3	66.8	-0.5	-0.5
		P+	88956	28.0 %	30.0 %	31.0 %	30.0 %	2.0 %	-1.0 %
		SGP	64773	41	42	43	43	2	0
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	2193	59.4	60.4	59.9	61.8	2.4	1.9
		P+	2193	23.0 %	25.0 %	26.0 %	27.0 %	4.0 %	1.0 %
		SGP	1561	48	50	53	55	7	2
	State	CPI	46676	66.1	66.2	66.2	67.4	1.3	1.2
		P+	46676	32.0 %	33.0 %	34.0 %	35.0 %	3.0 %	1.0 %
		SGP	31672	51	50	51	53	2	2
All students	District	CPI	8592	77.1	76.6	75.5	75.5	-1.6	0
		P+	8592	50.0 %	49.0 %	49.0 %	47.0 %	-3.0 %	-2.0 %
		SGP	6394	50	50	52	53	3	1
	State	CPI	496175	86.9	87.2	86.7	86.8	-0.1	0.1
		P+	496175	68.0 %	69.0 %	69.0 %	69.0 %	1.0 %	0.0 %
		SGP	395568	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	7157	62.5	60.9	61.3	65.7	3.2	4.4
		P+	7157	31.0 %	29.0 %	29.0 %	35.0 %	4.0 %	6.0 %
		SGP	5265	41	42	49	55	14	6
	State	CPI	237745	66.7	67.1	67	68.6	1.9	1.6
		P+	237745	36.0 %	37.0 %	37.0 %	40.0 %	4.0 %	3.0 %
		SGP	180866	46	46	46	46	0	0
Low Income	District	CPI	6835	63.1	61.3	61.5	65.8	2.7	4.3
		P+	6835	32.0 %	29.0 %	30.0 %	36.0 %	4.0 %	6.0 %
		SGP	5044	42	42	49	55	13	6
	State	CPI	185392	67.1	67.3	67.3	69	1.9	1.7
		P+	185392	37.0 %	38.0 %	38.0 %	41.0 %	4.0 %	3.0 %
		SGP	142354	47	46	45	46	-1	1
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	1276	47.3	47.4	48.2	52.3	5	4.1
		P+	1276	9.0 %	9.0 %	9.0 %	11.0 %	2.0 %	2.0 %
		SGP	765	38	36.5	44	50	12	6
	State	CPI	89193	57.5	57.7	56.9	57.4	-0.1	0.5
		P+	89193	21.0 %	22.0 %	21.0 %	22.0 %	1.0 %	1.0 %
		SGP	65068	43	43	43	42	-1	-1
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	2193	52.5	52.2	52	56.4	3.9	4.4
		P+	2193	21.0 %	21.0 %	18.0 %	24.0 %	3.0 %	6.0 %
		SGP	1569	44	43	51.5	58	14	6.5
	State	CPI	47046	61.5	62	61.6	63.9	2.4	2.3
		P+	47046	31.0 %	32.0 %	32.0 %	35.0 %	4.0 %	3.0 %
		SGP	31986	54	52	52	53	-1	1
All students	District	CPI	8584	66.9	65.1	65.4	68.8	1.9	3.4
		P+	8584	38.0 %	35.0 %	36.0 %	40.0 %	2.0 %	4.0 %
		SGP	6414	42	42	50	54	12	4
	State	CPI	497090	79.9	79.9	79.9	80.8	0.9	0.9
		P+	497090	58.0 %	58.0 %	59.0 %	61.0 %	3.0 %	2.0 %
		SGP	396691	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	2820	57.2	57.1	58.5	60.5	3.3	2
		P+	2820	20.0 %	21.0 %	24.0 %	23.0 %	3.0 %	-1.0 %
	State	CPI	96902	64.3	63.8	65	66.4	2.1	1.4
		P+	96902	28.0 %	28.0 %	31.0 %	31.0 %	3.0 %	0.0 %
Low Income	District	CPI	2684	57.4	57.7	58.6	60.4	3	1.8
		P+	2684	20.0 %	22.0 %	24.0 %	23.0 %	3.0 %	-1.0 %
	State	CPI	75485	63.6	62.8	64.5	66.1	2.5	1.6
		P+	75485	28.0 %	28.0 %	31.0 %	32.0 %	4.0 %	1.0 %
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	489	46.1	47.5	49.4	53.4	7.3	4
		P+	489	6.0 %	7.0 %	5.0 %	7.0 %	1.0 %	2.0 %
	State	CPI	37049	59	59.2	58.7	59.8	0.8	1.1
		P+	37049	19.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	20.0 %	1.0 %	0.0 %
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	865	43.4	45.7	46.9	49.3	5.9	2.4
		P+	865	8.0 %	10.0 %	12.0 %	11.0 %	3.0 %	-1.0 %
	State	CPI	16179	51.8	50.3	51.4	54	2.2	2.6
		P+	16179	16.0 %	15.0 %	17.0 %	19.0 %	3.0 %	2.0 %
All students	District	CPI	3431	61.7	61.1	62.6	63.7	2	1.1
		P+	3431	26.0 %	26.0 %	29.0 %	28.0 %	2.0 %	-1.0 %
	State	CPI	209573	78.3	77.6	78.6	79	0.7	0.4
		P+	209573	52.0 %	52.0 %	54.0 %	53.0 %	1.0 %	-1.0 %

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

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

	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	5.5	6.0	4.4	3.8	-1.7	-30.9%	-0.6	-13.6%	2.2

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

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

Group	Number Included (2013)	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
		2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	1030	64.0%	67.2%	72.6%	71.3%	7.3	11.4%	-1.3	-1.8%	74.7%
Low income	1011	64.8%	67.9%	73.3%	71.8%	7.0	10.8%	-1.5	-2.0%	73.6%
Students w/ disabilities	159	32.9%	32.9%	44.9%	41.5%	8.6	26.1%	-3.4	-7.6%	67.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	251	58.9%	62.3%	66.5%	61.0%	2.1	3.6%	-5.5	-8.3%	63.5%
All students	1203	66.7%	69.4%	74.5%	73.8%	7.1	10.6%	-0.7	-0.9%	85.0%

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

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

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	1002	71.8%	67.4%	71.6%	77.5%	5.7	7.9%	5.9	8.2%	78.9%
Low income	967	72.2%	68.1%	72.5%	78.3%	6.1	8.4%	5.8	8.0%	77.5%
Students w/ disabilities	176	50.0%	36.6%	41.9%	52.3%	2.3	4.6%	10.4	24.8%	73.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	245	71.0%	65.4%	73.3%	76.3%	5.3	7.5%	3.0	4.1%	68.5%
All students	1155	74.3%	70.0%	73.4%	79.3%	5.0	6.7%	5.9	8.0%	87.5%

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

Table B6: Brockton Public Schools

Attendance Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	93.5%	93.7%	94.4%	94.2%	0.7	0.7%	-0.2	-.2%	94.8%

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

Table B7: Brockton Public Schools

Suspension Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
In-School Suspension Rate	10.5%	9.8%	10.9%	7.0%	-3.5	-33.3%	-3.9	-35.7%	2.2%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	16.3%	16.6%	15.4%	10.8%	-5.5	-33.7%	-4.6	-29.9%	4.3%

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

Table B8: Brockton Public Schools

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

	FY11		FY12		FY13	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	$138,303,950	$142,659,310	$146,440,786	$154,027,081	$159,120,551	$156,394,079
By municipality	$40,234,748	$46,948,145	$46,004,361	$46,955,460	$45,003,990	$48,635,946
Total from local appropriations	$178,538,698	$189,607,455	$192,445,147	$200,982,541	$204,124,541	$205,030,025
From revolving funds and grants	--	$24,382,063	--	$20,232,952	--	$21,794,634
Total expenditures	--	$213,989,517	--	$221,215,494	--	$226,824,659
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	$130,000,851	--	$139,582,640	--	$148,088,586
Required local contribution	--	$33,764,690	--	$34,080,582	--	$34,969,008
Required net school spending**	--	$163,765,541	--	$173,663,222	--	$183,057,594
Actual net school spending	--	$164,985,242	--	$177,743,313	--	$182,908,343
Over/under required ($)	--	$1,219,702	--	$4,080,091	--	-$149,251
Over/under required (%)	--	0.7 %	--	2.3 %	--	-0.1%

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

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

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

Data retrieved : April 11, 2014

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

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012	2013
Administration	$429	$451	$478	$430.86
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$1,061	$941	$1,097	$1,111.77
Teachers	$4,703	$4,982	$5,272	$5,351.93
Other teaching services	$723	$632	$676	$653.17
Professional development	$205	$216	$62	$69.56
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	$509	$235	$347	$276.00
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$420	$399	$437	$441.96
Pupil services	$564	$736	$776	$718.75
Operations and maintenance	$1,114	$1,202	$931	$971.61
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	$2,067	$2,195	$2,289	$2,371.89
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$11,795	$11,988	$12,364	$12,397

Sources: Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website
Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding.

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive and respectful.	ES	0	7%	93%	#	1	19	105
	MS	3%	20%	77%	%	1 %	15 %	84 %
	HS	0 %	27 %	73 %	---	---	---	---
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	ES	0 %	7 %	93 %	#	1	17	107
	MS	3 %	17 %	80 %	%	1 %	14 %	86 %
	HS	0 %	23 %	77 %	---	---	---	---
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	0 %	12 %	88 %	#	2	27	96
	MS	3 %	17 %	80 %	%	2 %	22 %	77 %
	HS	3 %	47 %	50 %	---	---	---	---
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	ES	13 %	8 %	78 %	#	23	17	85
	MS	26 %	20 %	54 %	%	18 %	14 %	68 %
	HS	20 %	17 %	63 %	---	---	---	---
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	8 %	28 %	63 %	#	32	39	64
	MS	51 %	26 %	23 %	%	24 %	29 %	47 %
	HS	23 %	33 %	45 %	---	---	---	---

(Please see next page)

		Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
Teaching	**Grade Span**	**None**	**Partial**	**Clear & Consistent**		**None**	**Partial**	**Clear & Consiste**
		(0)	**(1)**	**(2)**		**(0)**	**(1)**	**(2)**
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	5 %	12 %	83 %	#	6	12	107
	MS	9 %	3 %	89 %	%	5 %	10 %	86 %
	HS	0 %	13 %	87 %	---			
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	22 %	25 %	53 %	#	28	40	57
	MS	29 %	34 %	37 %	%	22 %	32 %	46 %
	HS	17 %	43 %	40 %	---	---	---	---
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	ES	12 %	32 %	57 %	#	30	35	60
	MS	34 %	20 %	46 %	%	24 %	28 %	48 %
	HS	37 %	30 %	33 %	---	---	---	---
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	ES	12 %	25 %	63 %	#	20	45	60
	MS	26 %	43 %	31 %	%	16 %	36 %	48 %
	HS	13 %	50 %	37 %	---	---	---	---
10. The teacher uses appropriate modifications for ELLs and students with disabilities such as explicit language objective(s); direct instruction in vocabulary; presentation of content at multiple levels of complexity; and differentiation of content, process, and/or products.	ES	43 %	25 %	32 %	#	75	23	27
	MS	83 %	3 %	14 %	%	60 %	18 %	22 %
	HS	67 %	23 %	10 %	---	---	---	---
11. The teacher provides multiple opportunities for students' to engage in higher order thinking such as use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	40 %	33 %	27 %	#	49	43	33
	MS	51 %	17 %	31 %	%	39 %	34 %	26 %
	HS	23 %	57 %	20 %	---	---	---	---

Teaching (continued)	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consiste
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	30%	27%	43%	#	46	38	41
	MS	54%	23%	23%	%	37%	30%	33%
	HS	30%	47%	23%	---	---	---	---
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a learning environment where students can take risks—for instance, where they can make predictions, make judgments and investigate.	ES	33%	22%	45%	#	48	25	52
	MS	54%	11%	*34%*	%	38%	20%	42%
	HS	30%	27%	43%	---	---	---	---
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	ES	20%	32%	48%	#	30	47	48
	MS	43%	31%	26%	%	24%	38%	38%
	HS	10%	57%	33%	---	---	---	---
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	20%	37%	43%	#	37	43	45
	MS	46%	29%	26%	%	30 %	34%	36%
	HS	30%	37%	33%	---	---	---	---
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	38%	23%	38%	#	55	24	46
	MS	57%	14%	29%	%	44 %	19%	37%
	HS	40%	17%	43%	---	---	---	---

Learning	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consisten
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	17 %	32 %	52 %	#	27	40	58
	MS	40 %	17 %	43 %	%	22 %	32 %	46 %
	HS	10 %	50 %	40 %	---	---	---	---
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	42 %	23 %	35 %	#	54	24	47
	MS	51 %	9 %	40 %	%	43 %	19 %	38 %
	HS	37 %	23 %	40 %	---	---	---	---
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	52 %	22 %	27 %	#	56	32	32
	MS	43 %	23 %	33 %	%	47 %	27 %	27 %
	HS	40 %	40 %	20 %	---	---	---	---
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	50 %	30 %	20 %	#	77	27	21
	MS	83 %	3 %	14 %	%	62 %	22 %	17 %
	HS	60 %	27 %	13 %	---	---	---	---
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	38 %	27 %	35 %	#	56	34	35
	MS	63 %	20 %	17 %	%	45 %	27 %	28 %
	HS	37 %	37 %	27 %	---	---	---	---
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	67 %	13 %	20 %	#	94	11	20
	MS	83 %	3 %	14 %	%	75 %	9 %	16 %
	HS	83 %	7 %	10 %	---	---	---	---
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	40 %	18 %	42 %	#	43	33	49
	MS	46 %	26 %	29 %	%	34 %	26 %	39 %
	HS	10 %	43 %	47 %	---	---	---	---
24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	45 %	35 %	20 %	#	57	42	21
	MS	67 %	17 %	17 %	%	48 %	35 %	18 %
	HS	33 %	53 %	13 %	---	---	---	---

Appendix D: January 30, 2014, Letter from ESE Commissioner to Brockton Superintendent
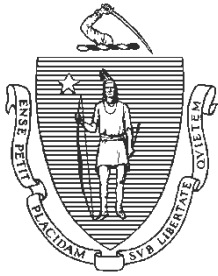
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

January 30, 2014

Kathleen A. Smith, Superintendent
Brockton School District
43 Crescent Street
Brockton, MA, 02301-4376

Dear Superintendent Smith:

As you know, the Commonwealth's school finance statute, Chapter 70 of the General Laws, establishes an annual minimum local contribution requirement for each Massachusetts school district. This local contribution, when added to a district's Chapter 70 aid, equals its "net school spending requirement." Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the loss of Chapter 70 aid, delays in the approval of your municipal tax rate by the Department of Revenue, and/or enforcement action by the Attorney General.

Brockton's End-of-Year Financial Report shows that the district **did not** meet its spending requirement in FY13. Its required net school spending was $183,057,594. Reported net school spending was $182,428,351 which was **$629,243 below the required amount**. This shortfall falls within the five percent range allowed by law, and will be added to the district's FY14 spending requirement.

Brockton's FY14 requirement—including the $629,243 carryover—is $194,754,885. Schedule 19 budget data show that the district plans to spend $183,836,159 which is **$10,918,725 or 5.62% below the required amount.**

If a district has a net school spending deficit, Section 11 of Chapter 70 authorizes carryover of up to five percent of its Chapter 70 formula spending requirement into the subsequent year. Any shortfall greater than five percent results in an aid reduction. If the numbers reported on

Schedule 19 were to hold true for FY14, Brockton would see $9,706,282 carried forward into FY15. The $1,212,443 amount that exceeds five percent would be subtracted from the district's monthly FY15 Chapter 70 local aid distributions. If there is a way to supplement your current year's school budget, I urge you and other local officials to work toward doing so.

If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact Melissa King in the School Finance unit at (781) 338-6532 (mking@doe.mass.edu).

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

c: Bill Carpenter, Mayor
Jay Sullivan, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Enc: