



# **Dedham Public Schools Review of District Systems and Practices Addressing the Differentiated Needs of English Language Learners**

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# Overview

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## **Purpose**

The Center for District and School Accountability (CDSA) in the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is undertaking a series of reviews of school districts to determine how well district systems and practices support groups of students for whom an achievement gap exists. The reviews will focus in turn on how district systems and practices affect each of four groups of students: students with disabilities, English language learners, low-income students, and students who are members of racial minorities. Spring 2010 reviews aim to identify district and school factors contributing to relatively high growth for limited English proficient (LEP) student performance in selected schools, to provide recommendations for improvement on district and school levels to maintain or accelerate the growth in student achievement, and to promote the dissemination of promising practices among Massachusetts public schools. This review complies with the requirements of Chapter 15, Section 55A, to conduct district audits in districts whose students achieve at high levels relative to districts that educate similar student populations. The review is part of ESE's program to recognize schools as "distinguished schools" under section 1117(b) of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which allows states to use Title I funds to reward schools that significantly closed the achievement gap. Districts and schools with exemplary practices identified through the review process may serve as models for and provide support to other districts and schools.

## **Selection of Districts**

ESE identified 36 Title I schools in 14 districts where the performance of students with limited English proficiency (LEP students) exceeds expectations. All Massachusetts schools receiving Title I funds were eligible for identification, with the exception of reconfigured schools or schools that did not serve tested grades for the years under review. ESE staff analyzed MCAS data from 2008 and 2009 to identify schools that narrowed performance gaps between LEP students and all students statewide. The methodology compared the MCAS raw scores of LEP students enrolled in the schools with the predicted MCAS raw scores of LEP students statewide. The methodology also incorporated whether LEP students improved their performance from 2008 to 2009. "Gap closers" did not have to meet AYP performance or improvement targets, but did have to meet 2009 AYP targets for participation, attendance and high school graduation, as applicable. Districts with gap closers were invited to participate in a comprehensive district review to identify district and school practices associated with stronger performance for LEP students, as part of ESE's distinguished schools program (described above), "Impact of District Programs and Support on School Improvement: Identifying and Sharing Promising School and District Practices for Limited English Proficient Students."

## ***Methodology***

To focus the analysis, reviews explore five areas: **Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Student Support**. The reviews seek to identify those systems and practices that are most likely to be contributing to positive results, as well as those that may be impeding rapid improvement. Systems and practices that are likely to be contributing to positive results were identified from the ESE's District Standards and Indicators and from a draft report of the English Language Learners Sub-Committee of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Committee on the Proficiency Gap<sup>1</sup>. Reviews are evidence-based and data-driven. Four to eight team members preview selected documents and ESE data and reports before conducting a two-day site visit in the district and a two-day site visit to schools. The team consists of independent consultants with expertise in each of the five areas listed above, as well as English language learner education (to collect evidence across all areas).

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<sup>1</sup> *Halting the Race to the Bottom: Urgent Interventions for the Improvement of the Education of English Language Learners in Massachusetts and Selected Districts*, December 2009

# Dedham Public Schools

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The site visit to the Dedham Public Schools was conducted from June 7-10, 2010. The site visit included a visit to the Avery School (1-5), which was identified as a “gap closer” for its limited English proficient students, as described above. Further information about the review and the site visit schedule can be found in Appendix B; information about the members of the review team can be found in Appendix A.

## ***District Profile<sup>2</sup>***

The Dedham Public Schools had an enrollment of 2,910 during the 2009-2010 school year. Enrollment has averaged 2,893 students since 2005. Students attend seven schools: The Early Childhood Center (pre-K-K); Riverdale (1-5); Avery (1-5); Greenlodge (1-5); Oakdale (1-5); Dedham Middle School (6-8); and Dedham High School (9-12).

As Table 1 below shows, Dedham students represent several races and ethnicities; white is the predominant race in the district, constituting over 79 percent of the population. English is not the first language of 10.3 percent of the students, and 21.8 percent of the students were identified as special education students. While only 14.2 percent of the students in the district were identified as English Language Learners (ELL) or First Language not English, almost 40 percent of the students enrolled at the Avery School, the school the review team visited for this review, were identified as ELL (17.7 percent) or First Language not English (22.1 percent). As a result, the Avery School is the only school in the district with a full-time ESL teacher.

**Table 1: Dedham Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity & Selected Populations 2009-10**

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Total	Selected Populations	Percent of Total
African-American	6.7	First Language not English	10.3
Asian	2.8	Limited English Proficient	3.9
Hispanic or Latino	9.1	Low-income	21.8
Native American	0.3	Special Education	21.8
White	79.1	Free Lunch	17.5
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0.0	Reduced-price lunch	4.3
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	2.0		

Source: School/District Profiles on ESE website.

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<sup>2</sup> Student demographic data derived from ESE’s website, ESE’s Education Data Warehouse, or other ESE sources.

The district has a small administrative team consisting of a superintendent, an assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment, an assistant to the superintendent for business affairs, and an interim director of special education. The ELL director is not part of the central office team, and the superintendent has delegated responsibility for programs related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development to the assistant superintendent. The assistant to the superintendent for business affairs is responsible for human resources and finance. Resources for ELL students are, for the most part, allocated based on enrollment at each school; however, if the need for additional support is needed, ESL teachers and principals can access additional resources. The literacy needs of ELL students at the Avery school are addressed with strategies appropriate for all struggling students. Under this collaborative model, all students receive support from teachers, special education and Title I teachers, and ESL tutors. All students, including ELL students, are assessed with the district's regular education program assessments, including state-mandated assessments, and ELL students are assessed with state-mandated assessments for ELL students, too.

### ***Student Performance<sup>3</sup>***

In 2009, Dedham students made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate in English Language Arts (ELA), but not mathematics. Not all subgroups, however, made AYP in ELA and mathematics. In both ELA and mathematics, the special education subgroup did not make AYP in grades 3 through 5, 6 through 8, and 9 through 12. In grades 6 through 8, the white and low-income subgroups also did not make AYP in mathematics, and, in grades 9 through 12, the low-income subgroup also did not make AYP in ELA. The district's performance rating was high in ELA and moderate in mathematics. The district had no aggregate accountability status under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for mathematics, but is in Improvement Status Year 1 in ELA for subgroups.

Table 2 below shows consistent improvement in district MCAS test performance from 2007 to 2009. With the exception of grade 7 mathematics and grade 4 mathematics, there have been increases in the proficiency rates in ELA and mathematics in all grades. The largest increase was 33 percentage points in grade 8 mathematics, rising from 25 percent in 2007 to 58 percent in 2009.

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<sup>3</sup> Data derived from ESE's website, ESE's Education Data Warehouse, or other ESE sources.

**Table 2: Dedham Student Proficiency Rates on the MCAS Test: 2007-2009**

Grade and Subject	2007	2008	2009	Difference
Grade 10 ELA	75	76	81	+6
Grade 10 Math	81	80	87	+6
Grade 8 ELA	79	84	84	+5
Grade 8 Math	25	50	58	+33
Grade 7 ELA	65	72	70	+5
Grade 7 Math	45	50	39	-6
Grade 6 ELA	71	77	74	+3
Grade 6 Math	57	55	62	+5
Grade 5 ELA	71	76	73	+2
Grade 5 Math	53	65	65	+12
Grade 4 ELA	57	46	62	+5
Grade 4 Math	51	42	49	-2
Grade 3 ELA	61	61	66	+5
Grade 3 Math	65	66	69	+4

Source: School/District Profiles on ESE website.

2009 proficiency rates for LEP/FLEP (formerly limited English proficient) students were 49 percent in ELA and 40 percent in mathematics. Due to low subgroup numbers, median Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs) were not available by subject by grade; however, Dedham LEP and FLEP students are showing moderate growth in the aggregate. The median SGP in ELA was 60 for LEP students, and 58 for FLEP students. In mathematics, the median SGP was 54 for LEP, and 48 for FLEP students.

MCAS test data for both district and Avery ELL students shows that they have scored substantially above the statewide scores for ELL students in each year since 2005. For ELA, ELL students at Avery achieved a CPI of 83.1 in 2009, compared with the statewide CPI for



ELL students of 57.2. In mathematics, ELL students at Avery achieved a CPI of 75.0 in 2009 compared with the statewide CPI for ELL students of 53.1. See Tables 3 and 4 below.

**Table 3: Comparative Avery School, Dedham, and State CPIs in ELA:  
LEP Students 2005-2009**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Avery— number of students</b>	<b>Avery CPI</b>	<b>Dedham— number of students</b>	<b>Dedham CPI</b>	<b>State— number of students</b>	<b>State CPI</b>
2005	10	87.5	32	76.6	12,405	54.0
2006	18	70.8	58	69.8	21,785	52.8
2007	22	64.8	51	70.6	21,822	54.6
2008	26	72.1	57	71.5	22,150	54.1
2009	31	83.1	58	78.9	24,008	57.2

Source: ESE data

**Table 4: Comparative Avery School, Dedham, and State CPIs in Mathematics:  
LEP Students 2005-2009**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Avery— number of students</b>	<b>Avery CPI</b>	<b>Dedham— number of students</b>	<b>Dedham CPI</b>	<b>State— number of students</b>	<b>State CPI</b>
2005	<10	---	26	69.2	10,516	44.0
2006	18	66.7	59	64.0	21,858	47.0
2007	22	64.8	50	67.0	21,916	50.4
2008	26	75.0	59	68.2	22,444	51.9
2009	31	75.0	58	75.4	24,378	53.1

Source: ESE data

## ***Findings***

### **Leadership and Governance**

**The district has a strategic plan designed to improve the educational experience of all students. This plan does not contain any specific guidelines for developing, implementing and modifying the ELL program.**

Through a review of the five-year 2008-2013 Dedham Strategic Plan and interviews with the superintendent and principals, the review team found that the district has a comprehensive strategic plan to drive improvement. In 2006, a steering committee began to develop foundational statements of the district's core values, mission, and vision. Two surveys were conducted to solicit input from the public. The core values approved by the school committee include academic excellence; positive learning environment; respect; and support and open communications. The district's mission is to promote excellence in learning, self-discipline, and motivation; and the district vision is for each graduate to continue self-learning and exhibit socially responsible decision-making. A three-year district improvement plan (DIP) within the five-year strategic plan addresses each of the core values with objectives, strategies, timelines, resources, measurable outcomes, and persons responsible. Presentations are made to the school committee periodically to report progress.

The district strategic and improvement plans do not specifically address the ELL program. Almost all of the schools' two-year school improvement plans (SIPs) are closely aligned to the DIP and include strategies unique to each school for addressing the district core values. Only the Avery School (SIP) contains a goal directly related to ELL students; specifically, to increase the participation of ELL families in school events.

Central office administrators told the review team that school principals are responsible for identifying and addressing the needs of ELL students. There are no standardized, documented districtwide practices for meeting the needs of ELL students. Staffing is determined by enrollment and principal advocacy. The methodologies used to meet ELL students' needs are determined by principals, classroom teachers, and ESL teachers and tutors. According to interviews with the principals, teachers and ESL staff, ELL students receive pull-out intensive literacy instruction in the early school years, as well as individual tutoring. The aggressive delivery of literacy instruction in the early years is a priority. All staff at the Avery School have taken advantage of the ELL category training provided by the district. Principals recognize the ELL director as a knowledgeable and experienced ESL teacher who provides instructional expertise on a limited basis due to her individual teaching responsibilities.

The parent focus group at the Avery School was made up of parents of ELL students; however, only one parent acknowledged being the parent of an ELL student. The principal indicated, however, that all focus group members were parents of ELL students. Parents stated that they value education and praised all of the teachers, including the ESL teacher and tutor. They went on to say that all of the staff support all of the students. The parents cited several needs, including cultural understanding in the area of child-rearing, extracurricular activities, and

support to enable parents to better assist their children with educational matters. One parent had served on the school council; however, the principal told the review team that no ELL parents were currently serving. The principal reported an improvement in ELL parent participation in school events toward fulfillment of the goal in the Avery school improvement plan, although more outreach was needed.

In the judgment of the review team, the foundation of an effective district strategic plan has been established. Schools are aligned with the district core values, mission, and vision. The absence of districtwide strategies in the district improvement plan defuses the efforts to improve the ELL program. Without a documented linkage of district and school priorities the value of periodic assessment and evaluation of the program is reduced, resulting in an inconsistent approach to meeting the needs of ELL students.

**Although the ELL director is the administrator who oversees ELL students and their instructional needs, she is not a member of the district administrative team.**

Central office administrators stated that the district makes educational decisions based on the needs of all students rather than individual groups of students. The district considers the ELL program a curriculum area under the jurisdiction of the principal, with oversight provided by the assistant superintendent. The district provides staffing at each school based on ELL enrollment, and the principal determines how to meet student needs in consultation with ESL staff. In fiscal year 2010, the district allocated \$26,400 in a budget line item entitled English as a Second Language for supplies, textbooks, professional development, and contracted tutorial services. These funds are administered by the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment and the assistant to the superintendent for business affairs, and principals told the review team that they made requests to the central office to access these funds. Title III of the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act has provided approximately \$23,000 for similar expenses, except in fiscal year 2010 when the district under-reported the number of ELL students and did not qualify. In order to qualify for funding, the number of students in the district receiving services must total at least 100. The district reported 98 students in 2008-2009, although there were an additional 8 ELL students in the Early Childhood Center. This resulted from a miscommunication among district administrators, the Early Childhood Education Center principal, and the ELL director about student eligibility. Nevertheless, the principals and ESL teachers told the team that there were sufficient funds and resource materials to meet all ELL student needs. The district supplemented funding to make up the difference needed to meet the needs of the students. This miscommunication, also cited in the ESE Coordinated Program Review (CPR), resulted in the loss of \$24,000 in possible funding for 2009-2010.

In interviews, the superintendent, other central office administrators, and school principals told the review team that twice-monthly administrative team meetings are scheduled in the superintendent's office. These two-hour meetings are attended by the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, the assistant to the superintendent for business affairs, seven principals, the director of special education, the director of elementary special education, the director of secondary special education, the director of guidance, and the director of

technology. The meeting agenda is established by the superintendent and includes items suggested by other participants. No formal meeting minutes are kept. Interviewees stated that the meetings provide daily operational information. Meeting topics from a review of the agendas from September 2009 to June 2010 included MCAS test results, ELL and special education enrollment, budget projections, professional development activities, school committee preparation, curriculum discussion, and policy implementation. Operational updates consisted of principal reports, budget schedules, due dates for principals' goals, Title III ELL enrollment count, emergency code review, bullying prevention assemblies, and personnel evaluation timelines. Other than monthly special education meetings, there are no other regularly scheduled districtwide, grade-level, or programmatic meetings.

The district organizational chart dated October 2007 describes the structure of essential centralized functions. These include curriculum and instruction; finance and human resources; pupil services; technology services; and school administration. Those responsible for these functions report directly to the superintendent. Central office administrators and principals told the review team that they are expected to keep the superintendent informed and to collaborate with each other by sharing successful practices.

The position of ELL director is not included on the organizational chart as a member of the administrative team. This is because the director is primarily a teacher with instructional responsibilities who is given a stipend for addressing ELL instructional issues. According to a review of job descriptions, the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment is responsible for oversight of the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The superintendent expects the assistant superintendent to present ELL program issues at the administrative team meetings. The district leadership expects the ELL director to oversee ELL students and their instructional needs. The ELL director describes the position as that of a full-time teacher with additional responsibility for supporting ESL teachers and reviewing ELL instructional plans, assessments, and placements. The director lacks the time for periodic meetings, and makes contact through emails and telephone calls in order to fulfill the position's responsibilities and ensure the delivery of services. The ELL director is evaluated as a teacher by the principals, but not as the director of the program.

In the judgment of the team, the fragmentation of duties and responsibilities for the ELL program reduces the ability of the district to provide effective oversight.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

**The district has not developed its own general or ESL curriculum. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF) constitute the district curriculum and the English Language Proficiency Benchmark Outcomes (ELBPO) serves as the ESL curriculum**

Through a review of documents and interviews with staff, the review team found that the district uses standards-based curriculum maps consisting of the MCF in a table format for each content area and grade; but they are not a full curriculum as they do not contain instructional strategies,

measurable outcomes or assessments. According to an administrator, “We’re working on it.” There has been recent curriculum work at the middle school and elementary levels to more fully develop curriculum components, but this is a work in progress. The district has adopted and implemented Everyday Mathematics in grades K through 4 over the past two years and will finish the implementation through grade 5 in 2010-2011. The district reviewed the MCF for science and selected a new program and sequence from Houghton-Mifflin for grades 4 and 5 aligned with the framework, to be implemented in the fall of 2010. Interviewees told the review team that a curriculum committee comes together to review and adopt programs, and would soon begin work on elementary reading. The review team found no formal protocol for a districtwide curriculum cycle of review and modification. Principals and department heads review MCAS test data with staff to determine trends across the school and from year to year, and within schools individual data is examined to determine individual instructional needs; however, limited disaggregated data is examined. The district looks at the needs of students in the aggregate to determine the strengths and weaknesses to be addressed. According to principals and administrators, principals are responsible for overseeing curriculum in the schools. The district has contracted with an outside consultant for a three-year professional development program that works with teachers on instructional strategies and with administrators on supervision and evaluation. During 2009-2010, the first year of the training, the district trained 30 teachers. This training will continue in 2010-2011 and 2010-2012. Administrators are now working with tools and strategies they learned during training to ensure the consistent use and effective delivery of instruction. High school teachers commented that common examinations have brought attention to the lack of pacing guides to ensure that standards are addressed in a timely fashion.

According to administrators and staff, the ESL teacher ensures that the ELPBO are integrated into the curriculum; however, the team did not observe ELPBO objectives posted in rooms at Avery School. The ESL teacher also monitors students as they progress from Level 1 to Level 5. Language development programs to support ELL students include Avenues at the elementary level and High Point at the secondary level. These are aligned to ELBPO and are provided to ESL teachers; however, they are not required to use them.

This lack of comprehensive vertical and horizontal curricula affects consistency of implementation, pacing of courses, and use of formative assessments to inform instruction. As a result, each school acts independently with regard to curriculum strategies, implementation, review and modification. Since data is not disaggregated by subgroup, but viewed in the aggregate, specific changes to support subgroups are not identified and acted upon.

**The district allocates resources to support identified student populations and emergent needs; the multiple resources allocated to the Avery School contribute to success for ELL students and other students in the school.**

In interviews with administrators and staff, review team members were told that the principal of each school addresses instructional needs and strengths. The district allocates staff to meet emergent needs. To support the programs located at the Avery School, there are special education services, Title I services, ELL services, reading teachers, a speech pathologist, a

school psychologist, an adjustment counselor, and numerous special needs and instructional aides. The programs and staff work collaboratively to support the achievement of all students.

Interviewees stated that services to ELL students in the district are provided by 3.5 ESL teachers and two part-time tutors. One ESL teacher splits her time between middle school and high school, spending two days a week at the middle school and three days at the high school. Another splits her time between two elementary schools, and a third works part-time at an elementary school and the Early Childhood Center. There are a full-time ESL teacher and a part-time tutor (19 hours a week) at the Avery School. Part-time tutors provide some services to support ELL students when ESL teachers are not in a building. According to interviewees, many of the high school ELL students are new arrivals, or have moved within the country. The teacher provides ESL services when possible, and students go to a Strategies for Success class everyday; however, there are no ESL services on the days the teacher is not there. At the middle school, most ELL students who have come through the district schools are at Level 4 or 5; however, any new arrivals receive only two days a week of ESL services. The district has received funding for ELL services through Title III in each of the past several years, except for the current year, 2009-2010, when the district did not qualify due to under-reporting.

Through interviews with administrators and staff, a review of staffing resources at the Avery School, and observations in classrooms, the review team found that all students in the school, including regular education, special needs, ELL, and low-income students receive support from several sources. Most classes have three or more adults working with individual students, or breaking students out into small groups. The reading program for grades 1 through 3 is Literacy Place from Scholastic, which is used as a basal twice a week. According to an administrator, "... the heart of the program is guided reading." Teachers administer the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and place students in leveled readers. The administrator also stated that reading instruction is rendered in guided reading groups in 45-minute blocks. Reading is shared with an adult reading buddy.

The review team observed small reading groups working with a teacher or aide. Staff told the review team that in all subjects three or four adults are in the classroom working with students, not only those students they were specifically assigned to help, but with all students who could benefit from additional help. The only exceptions were one-to-one student aides in special education. Three of four students from a special needs behavioral class were able to be integrated into the regular classroom because of the multiple supports. Title I teachers, the two reading teachers, the speech pathologist, and the ESL teachers all work to support all students. When asked what accounted for the achievement of ELL students at Avery, administrators and staff responded: Avery is like a family; the Responsive Classroom program assists with social skills and provides hands-on activities; there are great teachers across the school; the principal and teachers all know every student's name; the classes are small; teachers teach all students; there is very little pull-out instruction; families value education; there is a strong focus on literacy instruction.

The review team found that the teachers have sufficient resources and materials. The team observed that each room has plentiful reading materials, manipulatives, workbooks, and other teaching aids for use by the teachers and paraprofessionals. Technological assistance was also apparent. Each classroom in the school is equipped with four desktop computers for student use, and the team was told that each teacher has several easily accessible software programs to assist students who need extra help. FASTT Math is mainly used by the primary teachers to help students learn mathematics facts and the Math Acuity series is used extensively by the grade 3 through 5 teachers. Lexia, an educational software program, is regularly used by all the school's teachers to assist students in ELA. Certain special education and ELL students also use a supplementary ELA program entitled Dragon Naturally Speaking.

The team determined that the instructional model in place at the Avery School provides strong support for all students. Multiple teachers and support staff, focused on the success of each student, provide many and varied opportunities for support, remediation, and re-teaching, which results in improved student achievement.

**The district does not meet instructional time recommendations for ESL instruction for students at MEPA Levels 1-5; for instance, elementary students at Levels 1 and 2 in some cases receive only an hour a day of ESL instruction, while middle and high school students at those levels receive ESL instruction only two or three days out of the week.**

In interviews, administrators and staff told the review team that the district does not have a documented model for an ELL program that includes descriptions of the ELL services, the service delivery model, materials and resources, and time allocations. According to interviewees, students at MEPA Levels 1 and 2 receive 1.5 hours of instruction daily in some elementary schools.

While the district does not provide the recommended number of hours of ESL instruction by a licensed ESL teacher, the ESL teachers and tutors strive to deliver 1 to 1.5 hours a day of instruction to new ELL students. At the Avery School, the ESL tutor works with grades 1 and 2 students. The tutor goes into each of the classrooms for 30 minutes, and then pulls students out for ELD instruction; however, the Avery tutor's schedule includes some time at another school. The ESL teacher works with grades 3 through 5 mainly in the sheltered content classroom. Those students are at MEPA Levels 3 through 5.

The review team found a lack of consistency regarding time for ESL instruction across the district. While the Avery School has multiple resources for support, it still did not meet the recommended guidelines for instructional time for ELL students at MEPA Levels 1-5. At the middle and high schools, students, including students at the lower levels, usually receive services two or three days out of five. Without the recommended amount of time for ESL instruction, ELL students in the district may have difficulty in understanding the content instruction they receive and may fall behind their English-speaking peers.

**Observations in 13 classrooms at the Avery Elementary School showed partial or solid evidence of effective instructional design and delivery in 83 percent of classrooms.**

During the site visit, review team members observed 13 classrooms, and recorded the presence or absence of 15 characteristics grouped into two categories: Organization of the Classroom and Instructional Design and Delivery. Review team members recorded whether evidence related to examples of practice for each characteristic was solid, partial, or not observed for each standard within the two categories during their time spent in the classroom. Typically, review team members observed classroom instruction for 25 to 60 minutes at the beginning, middle, or end of class. Results from the observations were represented as percentages calculated by summing the number of classrooms receiving a partially observed or solid rating for each characteristic in each category, and dividing this number by the total number of classrooms rated in that category.

*Organization of Classroom* has three characteristics, including classroom climate, the presence of learning objectives, and how the teacher maximizes the use of classroom time. Team members observed the tone of the classroom as well as the behavior of students, and whether the teacher maintained order and structure. Team members also looked for verbal or written reference to learning objectives or goals for the class. In 100 percent of classrooms visited, there was partial or solid evidence of a classroom climate characterized by respectful behaviors, routines, tone, and discourse. In 100 percent of classrooms visited, there was partial or solid evidence that available classroom time was maximized for learning.

*Instructional Design and Delivery* has 12 characteristics oriented toward the quality of teaching and learning. Team members observed areas such as levels of teacher content knowledge, instructional techniques, depth of student questioning, pacing of the lesson, differentiation of instruction, in-class assessment, and whether opportunities were provided for students to apply their knowledge. Partial or solid evidence of the 12 characteristics of effective instructional design and delivery was observed in 83 percent of classrooms. Examples of effective instructional practice include teacher implementation of instructional strategies that activate prior knowledge, students drawing on existing knowledge to inform their learning, teacher response to a students' ability and or individual needs, or use of varied instructional strategies to target learning objectives. Observers found partial or solid evidence of questions requiring students to engage in a process of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in 85 percent of classrooms, while in 92 percent observers saw partial or solid evidence that students had the opportunity to apply new knowledge and content embedded in the lesson.

In the judgment of the team, the high quality instruction at the Avery School indicated by the high percentage of its classrooms where the team found partial or solid evidence of effective instructional design and delivery, as well as effective classroom organization, contributes to the strong performance of ELL students at the school as compared to ELL students across the state.



## **Assessment**

**The system of administering formative assessments and using the results to modify instruction is in the developmental stage in the district.**

According to a district administrator, there is limited assessment in the district, but the district is striving to become more data-driven and to provide more assessments. Principals and department heads have been trained in how to use the ESE Education Data Warehouse (EDW), but although teachers were previously trained in TestWiz, they have not yet been trained in EDW. There are no data teams in the schools. According to a district administrator, a few principals in the district are highly efficient in using data from the available assessments. The review team was also told that the superintendent is “always looking at data.”

All ELL students in the district are assessed using the same assessments as students in the regular education program. In addition, ELL students are assessed using state mandated assessments. These include the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) that assesses ELL students’ proficiency in reading and writing at grades K through 12. ELL students in grades K through 12 are also assessed for proficiency in listening and speaking using the Massachusetts English Language Assessments-Oral (MELA-O). Students entering the district participate in the mandated Home Language Survey, which is used to identify students and determine placement in the ELL program. The IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) is also administered to identify ELL students and determine placement in the ELL program. At the elementary level, the DRA is used to assess accuracy, fluency, and comprehension for students in grades K through 3, but is mainly a summative assessment. According to a district administrator, the DRA is used primarily to measure growth, and not to plan instruction. Formative assessments, including Running Records and Concepts of Print, are also used for those students who are just beginning to learn to read. ELL students with insufficient English language proficiency are also assessed with informal teacher assessments. Despite the extensive data retrieved from these assessments, a district administrator stated that reading groups were not as flexible as they could be. End-of-level tests are used with the Everyday Mathematics program in grades 1 through 4, and will be introduced in grade 5 in the 2010-2011 school year.

The district added the computer-based Acuity program to its formative assessment program in 2009-2010. This program is an assessment of mathematical skills in grades 3 through 8. Students are assessed four times throughout the year, and are able to develop skills in customized mathematical programs designed for individual use. According to teachers, this program allows teachers to obtain not only individual student scores, but also group scores, and adjust instruction to fit student needs.

The district’s summative assessments include the common examinations in English and mathematics developed at the middle and high school levels. Work is progressing in science. In 2009-2010 a performance assessment using the Density program was piloted in grades 6 and 7, and the results were outstanding according to the science coordinator. At this level, only students in grade 6 are administered the Stanford 9, and according to interviewees the results are used for

placement, not instruction. Department coordinators said that common mid-term and finals are given. While their use does not affect instruction in the short term, it does provide information on what was taught and learned during the semester. The curriculum maps do not include any assessments. In interviews, district administrators and staff stated that assessments will be included as staff continue to work on developing these maps. .

The team determined that the district is actively working to develop more formative assessments. An interviewee indicated that elementary teachers are effective in using the data from assessments to modify instruction because they do it more frequently, but that secondary teachers still have “a way to go.” The common assessments that are in use at the middle school and high school are having an impact on what is being taught, but as yet their use for modifying instruction in the short term needs to be developed.

**Data is collected from a variety of assessments administered to ELL students at the Avery School; however, this data, including MCAS, MEPA, and MELA-O data, is not always disseminated to classroom teachers.**

The review team conducted a focus group of teachers at the Avery School. Many of these teachers had ELL students in their classrooms and were responsible for their academic progress and success. Avery School ELL students’ achievement on the 2009 MCAS tests showed that they scored well above ELL students statewide in ELA and mathematics.

Teachers at the Avery school stated they attributed the success of the ELL students to a very dedicated teaching staff with there being a “lot of staff in and out of classrooms” and “always someone to help facilitate.” ELL students at the Avery School participate in a variety of assessments that are administered to all students in the district. In addition to the assessments administered to all students, the ESL staff in the district assesses all ELL students with language-dominated assessments that include the MEPA and the MELA-O. According to the ELL director, the results of these assessments are discussed with the student’s classroom teacher, and then placed in the student’s folder at school.

When classroom teachers were questioned about the kind of assessment information they receive, some said they that they never saw MEPA scores and were unaware of the test. They went on to say that they would like to know when the MEPA was given and the student results. The ELL director stated that when the ESL teachers meet as a group, they do review the results of the MEPA and the MELA-O. It was also her understanding that ESL teachers met with classroom teachers to discuss these assessments.

Teachers at the Avery School also said that they do not see disaggregated MCAS test scores and were unaware until two months ago that the ELL students in their school had achieved so well on the MCAS tests. They said that in the fall their principal reviewed MCAS test scores, but only in the aggregate; they did not see the subgroup scores. This response was in accordance with the statement of a district administrator who said, “We have a lot of data at our fingertips but we don’t look specifically at ELL.”

In the judgment of the team, it is important for teachers to see all student assessment results, especially those concerning expressive and written language proficiency of ELL students. Without this information teachers are relying only on informal assessments to make important decisions regarding ELL students.

## **Human Resources and Professional Development**

**The district has in place a comprehensive professional development program to support its staff, and the schools and the district provides sufficient time, personnel, and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program.**

Information provided by interviewees and a review of documents indicated that the district had a five-page written professional development plan, and that the programs developed for the 2009-2010 school year were in response to the CPR conducted by ESE. The district plan included a professional development calendar and a list of professional development programs available to staff. The professional development letter in the plan included the name of the instructor, the location of the training, the dates and times of the training, the target audience, and the equipment needed. Professional development is offered on six in-service release days and during after-school and Saturday workshops. The district also sponsors graduate courses. Staff may also attend courses outside the district with approval.

The district has used technology to enable teachers and other staff to access professional development. The district has a portal on the district website that allows staff to select and register for professional development programs. The district's website provided a complete description of the 2009-2010 school year professional development courses offered as well as the topics for in-service days, after-school workshops, and staff meetings. For example, during in-service days, the published offerings included ELL category 1 and 3 training, lesson planning, and scientific inquiry. Examples of after-school workshops included category 2 training for elementary teachers and Everyday Mathematics.

Information provided by interviewees, and a review of fiscal year 2007, 2008, and 2009 district expenditures provided by ESE and the district, show that the district has consistently and substantially funded professional development. In 2007, \$537,891 was provided for professional development, in 2008 the district provided \$567,218, and in 2009, the district provided \$610,504. This funding included grants obtained by the district. The professional development per-staff expenditure has also increased each year since 2007. The average staff expenditure was \$2,106 in 2007; \$2,560 in 2008; and \$2,730 in 2009. Statewide, the average staff expenditures for the same years were \$2,860, \$2,881, and \$2,779.

In the judgment of the team, school and district leaders have implemented and supported an organized professional development plan to meet the needs of all staff, and have embedded professional development as the primary resource to implement numerous strategies in the district's five-year strategic plan. The district's overview of professional development displayed

on the website states that the goals of the strategic plan are being implemented through professional development strategies.

**The district provides professional development to help all staff meet the needs of ELL students. The district provides all four categories of training.**

A major factor in the academic success of the ELL students at the Avery School is the level of category training that its classroom teachers have received. One of the district's main professional development initiatives during the last several years has been to have its classroom teachers trained in the ELL categories. When the teachers at the Avery School were asked to indicate the ELL categories they had been trained in, all but one of the classroom teachers responded that they had been trained in at least one category, and several said that they had been trained in as many as three categories. A central administration record of the number of category training sessions the district's faculty had participated in provided confirmation. In the Avery School teacher focus group, the teachers agreed that the category training they had participated in had been very helpful and had improved the quality of instruction for all students, including ELL students.

The assistant superintendent responsible for professional development stated that ELL category training has been a priority for the past few years in the district. Information about the importance of ELL category training was included in the professional development overview on the district's website. The overview noted that continued training in category 1 and category 2 is embedded in the district's professional development program. It also noted that all educators working with ELL students in Massachusetts must be trained to teach ELL students.

Category 2 training was offered during release days, and in 2009-2010 this training was also offered after school. Category 3 training was provided to elementary teachers at the end of the 2009 school year by the ELL director. Ten secondary staff have taken category 4 training through the local collaborative, and the collaborative was to offer it to elementary teachers during the summer of 2010. The district has also engaged an external professional development provider to conduct category 4 training in the fall of 2010.

A review of information provided by the district and teachers at the Avery school showed that the district has provided category training to 133 of 248 district staff, including all staff at the Avery school. Most instructional staff at the school have received at least category 1 and 2 training, and approximately one-third have received category 3 training. Two were identified as having received category 4 training.

In the judgment of the team, as more teachers receive category training, instructional strategies that support ELL students become more integrated throughout the district, leading to stronger and more consistent instructional strategies.

**The district has implemented a mentoring program and made a commitment to retain and support high-quality new teachers. Teachers new to the district are provided with an orientation, mentoring, and support.**

According to interviewees and a review of documents provided by the district, a successful two-year mentoring program is in place in the district. The team reviewed a description of the mentoring program as well a mentoring binder that included mentor/mentee meeting schedules and attendance sheets as well as descriptions of professional development programs attended by new teachers.

According to information provided by the district, the program is a collaborative model with a mentor with a professional license working with a new teacher. The goals of the program are to orient the new teacher to district procedures and practices and improve student learning. To accomplish these goals, the program focuses on curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and provides classroom management strategies.

According to a description provided to the review team, the mentoring program is designed to assist new teachers with professional growth. Within two weeks of joining the district, a mentor is assigned to a new teacher; the district tries to match new teachers with mentors teaching the same grade or subject. In the second year of the program, the teacher is matched with a teacher at the same school. First- and second-year teachers attend a workshop and orientation in August before school starts, and receive best practice updates. Monthly meetings are held between the mentors and mentees during the school year, and classroom observation and consultation schedules are developed. These schedules were available to the review team.

The program has a director and a coordinator. In school year 2009-2010, the district had 25 mentors. Mentors received a stipend of \$861. In addition, the program director received a stipend of \$2,000 and the program coordinator received a stipend of \$1,532.

The team determined that the implementation and support of the district's mentoring program has strengthened the district's ability to retain high-quality teachers. The district has consistently supported the program with both human and financial capital assets.

**The district has in place a policy for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness, and the teacher evaluation policy follows the Principles of Effective Teaching. Teachers are evaluated formatively through classroom observations by principals.**

A review of the 2009-2010 Avery School Staff Handbook, the 2005 Teacher Evaluation Handbook, and the school committee policy manual showed that the district has evaluation systems in place for administrators and teachers. According to the evaluation handbook, teachers are evaluated with differentiated procedures for beginning teachers, teachers new to the district, experienced teachers, and teachers in need of improvement. New teachers and teachers new to the district receive three formal classroom observations during the year and a summative evaluation at the end of the year. Experienced teachers are evaluated in a two-year cycle. In the first year, they are evaluated through classroom observations, and in the second year, they are evaluated against professional development goals, using a summative evaluation format. For

teachers in need of improvement, a plan of action with objectives is developed and monitored closely. In addition, a timetable is developed for classroom observations.

The Avery School Staff Handbook describes the procedures used by the principal to conduct evaluations. The school committee policy manual outlines the requirements for staff evaluations and references relevant education law and regulations pertaining to evaluations. According to interviewed principals and teachers, ESL teachers are evaluated by school principals. For ESL teachers who are responsible for students in multiple schools, principals collaborate to write the evaluation. All but one of the ESL teachers interviewed stated that they had been evaluated by the principal.

According to information provided by the superintendent, the principals are accountable to her and she evaluates them based on the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership. She told the review team that all of the principals were strong. One principal's evaluation provided to the review team was informative, but not instructive. This evaluation described areas of strength, such as strong data analysis skills, but lacked any recommendations. The superintendent stated that all principals set goals annually. For example, the high school principal had a goal to increase enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and in the last two years AP enrollment in the high school has increased from 99 to 180 students. Another goal of this principal was to implement a summer school in 2010, and the high school principal confirmed that for the first time in many years, the high school would offer a summer school session in 2010.

In the judgment of the team, it is important that all administrators are provided a yearly evaluation aligned with the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership that focuses on individual goals and objectives aligned with the DIP/Strategic Plan and/or SIP. It is also important that every evaluation be informative and instructive and contain both commendations and recommendations for improvement.

## **Student Support**

**The district system of academic support is school-based, with programs and staff determined by school leaders based on the needs of individual students.**

The district curriculum accommodation plan (DCAP) states that the district is "committed to continuous evaluation and development of appropriate support services for all its students" and that each school has "a student support team to recommend interventions to address apparent difficulties with accessing, or succeeding with the curriculum." Central office interviewees stated that the district's philosophy is to support the academic needs of its students through individual school-based plans rather than districtwide initiatives. The district budget includes, however, line items for academic student support programs, including ELL support. The district also has in place appropriate personnel and instruments to assess student progress. The district administers the MEPA, MELA-O and IPT, as well as the MCAS tests, to ELL students at the appropriate times.

Principals told the review team that their individual school student academic support plans are largely determined by the needs of the students enrolled. Each elementary school has a full-time reading specialist to support the classroom teachers with reading and writing initiatives. The Title I schools in the district, Avery, Riverdale, and the Early Childhood Center, have Title I teachers to provide classroom assistance in both ELA and mathematics. In addition, ESL teachers and tutors are available to work with ELL students, although interviewees all agreed that at both the middle school and the high school, where one ESL teacher divides her time between the two schools, more help is needed to meet the needs of the ELL students.

Individual schools also offer review sessions after school during the weeks prior to the administration of the MCAS tests. The high school has an academic support center staffed by a full-time teacher as well as a long-standing after-school tutoring program staffed by National Honor Society members. Recently, the high school initiated an online credit recovery program that has been used by many students. For the first time in many years, the high school was to offer a summer school session in 2010 for credit-deficient students.

**The Avery Elementary School uses a collaborative instructional model that includes all students. This collaborative model has had an impact on the academic success of ELL students.**

For the last several years, the CPI scores for ELL students at Avery have been substantially higher than those for the statewide subgroup. For example, in 2008-2009 the CPI for Avery's ELL students in ELA was 83.1 as compared with the statewide CPI of 57.2, and the CPI for Avery's ELL students in mathematics was 75.0 as compared with the statewide CPI of 53.1. When the review team asked central office administrators how they accounted for the excellent performance of the district's ELL students, particularly those at the Avery School, they responded that while they were very happy with the performance level, they did not have specific reasons for it because the district does not address student needs categorically.

It was evident to the review team that ELL students at the Avery School succeed through good instruction by numerous teachers and aides using a collaborative approach to instruction and support. The district's ESL personnel can not provide services to all ELL students in accordance with ESE requirements. Specifically, the district employs 3.5 ESL teachers and two part-time tutors for approximately 120 ELL students. The Avery School has one full-time ESL teacher and a part-time tutor for 41 ELL students constituting 17.7 percent of the school enrollment.

The review team found, however, that the Avery School's extensive support staff, along with its philosophy that all the adults working in the school assist in the learning process for all students, contribute to the success of ELL students. In interviews, the Avery School principal, teachers, and ESL support staff stated that the collaboration of all instructional providers to support all students was effective. The ESL staff felt a part of the school and provided a connection to families and the neighborhood. In addition to the 11 classroom teachers and the 1.6 ESL staff at the Avery School, there are 3 special education teachers, 2 reading teachers, 3 Title I teachers, 2 speech and language specialists, and a total of 12 special education paraprofessionals (6 inclusion aides and 6 special education aides). In the full inclusion model that the school

employs, team members observed classes that often had as many as four, and in one case, five adults working with small groups of students. It was rare to see fewer than three adults in the classroom. This collaborative instructional approach was prevalent throughout the school, and it was evident to the review team that the ELL students were benefiting from it. It was the opinion of the team after observing the classes that teachers held high expectations for all students, conditioning them for success.

**Before- and after-school support programs and the cohesiveness of the Avery School's extended community have also contributed to the success of its ELL students.**

Another factor in the success of the ELL students is the opportunity to receive extra help before and after school hours through a number of organized and informal programs staffed by teachers and paraprofessionals. Examples of these programs include MCAS test review sessions offered both before and after school two days per week prior to the administration of the MCAS tests; Homework Club offered throughout the year after school; and one-to-one tutoring provided by members of the high school's National Honor Society. The uniqueness of the Avery School's extended community and neighborhood also contribute to the success of ELL students. There was no doubt that the Avery School's student population is diverse, and numerous primary languages are spoken in the homes of its students. Yet interviewees at the school, particularly those staff members who have worked at the Avery School for many years, told the review team that the neighborhood containing most of the school's students is unusually cohesive. They stated that the parents, although diverse in languages and culture, all seem to have high expectations for their children, and the desire for them to speak English fluently as quickly as possible. These parents do all that they can to ensure the academic success of their children. According to interviewees, it is not unusual for neighbors to help neighbors with schoolwork. Interviewees said that this community spirit and neighborliness has had a positive effect throughout the school and helped ELL students to succeed.

Interviewees went on to say that the Dedham Education Partnership (DEP) also embodies the community spirit. The DEP annually provides the funds necessary to translate and print the school's handbook, pamphlets, newsletters and other important documents in three languages: Spanish, Haitian Creole and Arabic. Everyone at the school agreed that these efforts have improved communication and promoted good relations between the school and the many families whose first language is not English.

The review team found that these factors help to produce very positive results for ELL students at the Avery School. In a slight variation on the often used phrase, "It takes a village to raise a child," it might be said that "It takes the entire school community to educate the students." It is the judgment of the review team that the support programs available to Avery School students and the community spirit in the neighborhood to which most belong have contributed to the high level of performance of the school's ELL students.



**The district has initiated procedures to encourage more students, including ELL students, to select and participate in Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses.**

Interviewees told the review team that the district was awarded a Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative (MMSI) grant in 2009 to encourage more students to take higher-level courses, including AP courses. The high school guidance counselors have encouraged as many students as possible to register for and actively participate in higher level courses, including ELL students.

The district has traditionally paid the fees for all grade 10 students to take the PSAT examination. The PSAT exam recently added a new metric, the AP predictor. Through an analysis of the PSAT results and AP predictor, high school counselors can advise their students about the chances for success if they choose to challenge themselves by selecting a higher level course.

The high school essentially eliminated the prerequisites for AP courses, and the results have been encouraging. In 2008-09, there were approximately 100 students enrolled in the high school's eight AP courses. In 2009-2010, following the receipt of the MMSI grant, there was an increase of more than 40 students in AP courses, and administrators told the review team that nearly 185 students will be enrolled in AP courses for the 2010-2011 school year. The district has taken an important step in ensuring that ELL students are prepared and encouraged to participate in AP courses and other accelerated programs, such as honors courses.

## **Recommendations**

**The district leadership should consider expanding the current district strategic plan to include ELL strategies that will clearly drive the development, implementation and modification of the ELL program.**

Because Dedham considers the ELL population to be a part of the general student population, it gives limited specific consideration to the needs of ELL students and their parents. The current strategic plan, including the district's core values, mission, and vision, clearly drives the district's improvement process. Including specific strategies directly affecting the delivery of ELL program services within this framework would align district and school practices and bring consistency and focus to the district's efforts to provide effective ELL services to meet the needs of these students and their families. The district could use the existing planning procedure to provide strategies and specific resources and designate the persons responsible for implementation of the program and for assessing its effectiveness with measurable outcomes.

**The district leadership should develop a formal feedback mechanism to make sure that its decisions are adequately informed and shaped by the expertise and involvement in day-to-day educational issues of the ELL director.**

The ELL program has representative leadership on the district administrative team. The ELL director reports to the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, and assessment, who is a member of the district administrative team. The superintendent expects the assistant superintendent to present ELL program issues at the administrative team meetings.

The review team found that personnel in each school determine the needs of ELL students and how to address these needs. The ELL director provides direct support to ESL teachers within time limitations. In order for the district to be well-informed about daily operational ELL matters and avoid miscommunications, the assistant superintendent and ELL director must have clearly delineated responsibilities and a formal feedback mechanism to ensure effective communication. These would bring focus to the district's efforts to provide ELL services. An annual performance evaluation of these individuals would provide the necessary accountability to the district.

**The district should continue to develop the curriculum by adding assessments, instructional strategies, timelines (pacing guides) and measurable outcomes, where not already in place. Additionally, the district should develop an ESL curriculum and integrate ELBPO standards into the existing district curriculum.**

The district uses standards-based curriculum maps consisting of the MCF in tabular format for each content area by grade level. Work has been done to add components in ELA at the middle school level, and in science in grades 4 and 5. High school teachers commented that common examinations have brought attention to the lack of pacing guides to ensure that standards are addressed in a timely fashion. The addition of assessments, instructional strategies, pacing guides, and measurable objectives would provide cohesiveness to the implementation and monitoring of curriculum.

Review team members found no ESL curriculum. Administrators indicated that teachers use the ELPBO as their curriculum guide. A written ESL curriculum would guide consistent delivery of services for ELL students and help them develop their English language proficiency across all four language domains.

**The district should increase ESL services to ELL students to meet the recommended guidelines for sufficient ESL instruction by a teacher with an ESL license.**

Students at the Avery Elementary School receive support through the full inclusion model with multiple adults in the classroom working with all students. An ESL tutor for grades 1 and 2 provides services for beginners and intermediate ELL students through classroom content support and pull-out time. While ELBPO objectives are used during pull-out time, the amount of instructional time does not meet the guidelines for ESL instruction by a teacher with an ESL license: at least 2.5 hours per day for MEPA Levels 1 and 2; 1-2 hours per day for Level 3; and 2.5 hours per week for Levels 4 and 5. At the elementary level elsewhere in the district, students receive services from part time ESL teachers assigned to the schools based on ELL enrollment.

One ESL teacher divides her time between the middle and high schools, with three days at the high school and two days at the middle school. According to interviewees, many of the high school ELL students are new arrivals, or have moved within the country. The teacher provides ESL services when possible, and students go to a Strategies for Success class everyday; however, there are no ESL services on the days the teacher is not there. At the middle school, most ELL students who have come through the district schools are at Level 4 or 5; however, any new arrivals receive only two days a week of ESL services.

By increasing ESL instructional time to recommended guidelines, acquisition of English for ELL students will be accelerated and the achievement of ELL students in the district further increased.

**The district should continue to develop formative assessments in order to provide student information to classroom teachers that will enable them to plan instruction to meet the needs of their students.**

The district has some formative assessments in place, but many of its assessments are summative, generally providing information that is used to place students and to show growth. Formative assessments will help to provide information that will guide teachers in planning instruction to meet student needs in the short term. The district recognizes this and is continuing its work on developing curriculum maps that include assessments to inform classroom instruction and further increase the achievement of the students in the Dedham Public Schools.

**The district should implement procedures at the Avery School to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to review student assessment results, including disaggregated subgroup data and MEPA results.**

In a focus group, teachers at the Avery Elementary School said that they were not provided with opportunities to review the MEPA levels of their students. They also said that they did not see MCAS test disaggregated data, and did not know how the subgroups in their school performed. They did say that the principal shared the MCAS test results in the aggregate with them. Teachers would benefit from reviewing disaggregated MCAS data, so as to know how the subgroups in the school perform. They would also benefit from reviewing student MEPA scores to learn of their students' language proficiency. In the absence of this information, they have only their informal assessment of a student's ability to write and read in English, without reference to the standards established in the MEPA. In addition, sharing the pre and post scores of the MEPA provides added information regarding student progress throughout the year. This invaluable information is used to determine whether a student exits or remains in the program. Classroom teachers need to be informed of these results as they participate in this discussion.

**The district should continue to focus on ELL category training for all teaching and support staff.**

The district has made a commitment to provide category training to educators who work with ELL students. The district has provided category training for 133 of 248 district staff, including all staff at the Avery school. As noted on the district's website, however, all educators who work with ELL students must receive category training. Continuing to provide category training and retraining to teachers and aides will lead to continued growth in achievement for ELL students.

**The district should consider expanding to its other schools the collaborative student support model the Avery School has in place to assist all of its students, including ELL students.**

The Avery School's inclusive, collaborative instructional model uses an extensive student support staff to assist all students in the learning process. This model has contributed to the growth of ELL students as measured by assessment results exceeding those of ELL students statewide. Other factors contributing to success include category-trained classroom teachers, well-provisioned classrooms, before- and after-school help, and a cohesive school community.

The Avery School should continue to use its collaborative model, and the district should analyze the Avery School's student support system to determine what components might be replicated in the district's other schools. Expanding the instructional model used at the Avery School in combination with continued category training for all district staff will likely lead to growth of ELL student achievement in all district schools.

## Appendix A: Review Team Members

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The review of the Dedham Public Schools was conducted from June 6-June 10, 2010, by the following team of educators, independent consultants to Class Measures, Inc, an educational consultancy firm engaged by ESE and CDSA to conduct this review.

Dr. Wilfred Savoie, Leadership and Governance

Joanne Grenier, Curriculum and Instruction

Dolores Fitzgerald, Assessment

James L. Hearn, Human Resources and Professional Development

William Wassel, Student Support

James L. Hearn served as review team coordinator

## Appendix B: Review Activities and Site Visit Schedule

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### Review Activities

The following activities were conducted as part of the review of the Dedham Public Schools.

The review team conducted interviews and focus groups with the following representatives from the Dedham Public Schools central office administration: the superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, and assessment, the assistant to the superintendent for business affairs, the ELL director, four elementary school principals, the middle school principal, the high school principal, the interim director of special education, and the ESL teachers.

The review team visited the following schools in the Dedham Public Schools: Avery School-Grades 1-5.

- During the school visit, the review team conducted an interview with the school principal, teachers, and parents.
- The review team conducted 13 classroom visits for different grade levels and subjects across the one school visited.

The review team reviewed the following documents provided by ESE:

- District profile data
- District Analysis and Review Tool
- Latest Coordinated Program Review Report or follow-up Mid-cycle Report
- Teacher contracts
- Reports on licensure and highly qualified status
- Long-term enrollment trends
- End-of-year financial report for the district for 2009
- List of the district's federal and state grants
- Municipal profile

The review team reviewed the following documents at the district and school levels:

- Organization chart
- Strategic Plan
- School Improvement Plans
- School committee policy manual
- Curriculum information

- High school program of studies
- Calendar of formative and summative assessments
- Copies of data analyses/reports used in schools
- Descriptions of student support programs
- Student and Family Handbooks
- Faculty Handbook
- Professional Development Plan and program/schedule/courses
- Teacher evaluation tool
- Job descriptions (for central office and school administrators and instructional staff)
- Principal evaluations
- Procedures and assessments to identify LEP students and assess their level of English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

## Site Visit Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
June 7 Orientation meeting with district leaders; interviews with district staff and principals; review of documents	June 8 Interviews with district staff and principals; review of documents	June 9 School visit to the Avery School; interviews with school leaders; classroom observations; teacher team meetings; teacher and parent focus groups	June 10 Follow-up interviews; team meeting; closing meeting with district leaders