



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

School District Examination Report:

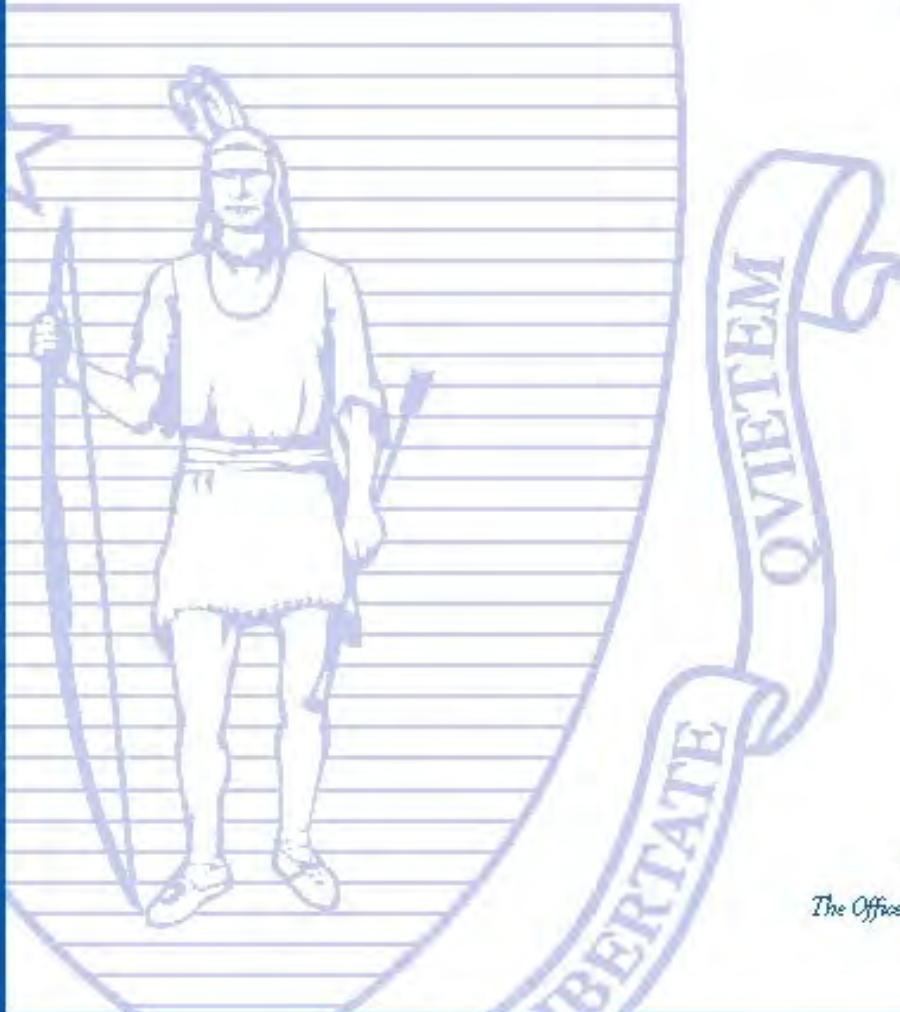
**Foxborough
Public Schools
Technical Report**



data driven

standards based

learner centered →



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

2004 - 2006

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Educational Quality and Accountability

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

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability would like to acknowledge the professional cooperation extended to the audit team by the Department of Education; the Superintendent of the Foxborough Public Schools, Jan Norton; the school department staff of the Foxborough Public Schools; and the town officials in Foxborough.

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Executive Summary

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) examined the Foxborough Public Schools in January 2007. With an average proficiency index of 86 proficiency index (PI) points in 2006 (92 PI points in English language arts and 79 PI points in math), the district is considered a ‘High’ performing school system based on the Department of Education’s rating system (found in Appendix A of this report), with achievement substantially above the state average. More than two-thirds of Foxborough’s students scored at or above the proficiency standard on the 2006 administration of the MCAS tests.

District Overview

The town of Foxborough is located in Norfolk County in eastern Massachusetts. Foxborough strives to balance its growth with the preservation of its small town and rural characteristics. The town’s population is relatively wealthy and well educated. The largest sources of employment within the community are educational, health, and social services; manufacturing; and retail trade. The town is governed by a Board of Selectmen/Town Administrator/Open Town Meeting form of municipal government.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), Foxborough had a median family income of \$78,811 in 1999, compared to the statewide median family income of \$63,706, ranking it 73 out of the 351 cities and towns in the commonwealth. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the town had a total population of 16,246 with a population of 3,334 school-age children, or 21 percent of the total. Of the total households in Foxborough, 37 percent were households with children under 18 years of age, and 23 percent were households with individuals age 65 years or older. Thirty-eight percent of the population age 25 years or older held a Bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 33 percent statewide.

According to Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) data, in 2005-2006 the Foxborough Public Schools had a total enrollment of 2,991. The demographic composition in the district was: 93.6 percent White, 2.6 percent African-American, 1.8 percent Asian, 1.5 percent Hispanic, 0.2 percent Native American, 0.2 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 0.0 percent multi-race, non-Hispanic; 0.6 percent limited English proficient (LEP), 8.0 percent low income, and 18.5 percent special education. Approximately 95 percent of school-age children in Foxborough attended

public schools. The district does not offer school choice; 50 students from Boston attended the Foxborough schools in 2005-2006 through the METCO program. A total of 176 Foxborough students attended public schools outside the district, including 25 students who attended Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, 13 students who attended Norfolk County Agricultural High School, and 136 students who attended charter schools.

The district has five schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 12, including one elementary school serving pre-kindergarten through grade 4, two elementary schools serving kindergarten through grade 4, one middle school serving grades 5 through 8, and one high school serving grades 9 through 12. Foxborough Public Schools' administrative team consisted of a superintendent, an assistant superintendent, a business administrator, and a special education director. Each elementary school had a principal; the middle school and the high school each had a principal and two assistant principals. The district has a five-member school committee.

In FY 2005, Foxborough's per pupil expenditure, based on appropriations from all funds, was \$9,147, compared to \$10,626 statewide, ranking it 233 out of the 328 school districts reporting data (charter schools not included). The district exceeded the state net school spending requirement in each year of the review period. From FY 2004 to FY 2006, net school spending increased from \$23,611,861 to \$25,125,163; Chapter 70 aid increased from \$5,687,603 to \$6,200,106; the required local contribution increased from \$13,945,345 to \$15,487,944; and the foundation enrollment increased from 2,880 to 2,964. Chapter 70 aid as a percentage of actual net school spending increased from 24 to 25 percent over this period. From FY 2004 to FY 2005, total curriculum and instruction expenditures as a percentage of total Schedule 1 net school spending reported in the End of Year Pupil and Financial Report decreased from 64 to 61 percent.

Context

The Foxborough Public Schools faced and survived a major challenge during the period under review. In 2004-2005, an investigation into allegations of the misuse of e-mail and other actions by administrators led to the retirement or resignation of nine administrators. Ultimately, no charges were filed, and the district reported the incident to the Massachusetts Department of Education. The former superintendent, who resigned in the fall of 2006 because of philosophical

differences with the school committee, hired all of the administrators who retired or resigned. Interviewees indicated that morale suffered during this period of administrative turnover and turmoil. They also indicated that teachers “soldiered on” and student achievement in the district remained solid.

During the period under review, the district suffered from the lack of strategic leadership documents to drive district strategy and policy. For example, the district did not have a District Improvement Plan (DIP), a district crisis and emergency plan, or an updated school committee policy manual. The district did have School Improvement Plans (SIPs), but schools did not explicitly include measurable goals in the SIPs. All schools had school safety and crisis management plans, although they did not all include the same components. The district has developed a strategic plan and the school committee has approved a draft DIP, and the school committee was investigating the possibility of using the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to help it develop an updated manual. The district also developed a SIP for the middle school to serve as a model for use by other schools in the district.

The EQA Examination Process

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

From January 29 through February 1, 2007, the EQA conducted an independent examination of the Foxborough Public Schools for the period 2004-2006, with a primary focus on 2006. This examination was based on the EQA’s six major standards of inquiry that address the quality of educational management, which are: 1) Leadership, Governance, and Communication; 2) Curriculum and Instruction; 3) Assessment and Program Evaluation; 4) Human Resource Management and Professional Development; 5) Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support; and 6) Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency. The report is based on the source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the

representatives from the school committee, the district leadership team, school administrators, and teachers, and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not consider documents, revised data, or comments that may have surfaced after the onsite visit.

For the period under examination, 2004-2006, this report finds Foxborough to be a 'High' performing school district with an average proficiency index of 86 proficiency index (PI) points in 2006, marked by student achievement that was 'Very High' in English language arts (ELA) and 'High' in math on the 2004-2006 MCAS tests. Over this period, student performance improved by less than one PI point in ELA and declined by close to one PI point in math, which closed the district's average proficiency gap by slightly more than two percent.

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

Summary of Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

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

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

On average, more than two-thirds of all students in Foxborough attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, much more than that statewide. Nearly four-fifths of Foxborough students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), more than half of Foxborough students attained proficiency in math, and more than two-fifths of Foxborough students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE).

- Foxborough's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 86 proficiency index (PI) points, eight PI points greater than that statewide. Foxborough's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 14 PI points.
- In 2006, Foxborough's proficiency gap in ELA was eight PI points, eight points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of one PI point annually to achieve adequate yearly progress

(AYP). Foxborough's proficiency gap in math was 21 PI points in 2006, seven points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly three PI points per year to achieve AYP. Foxborough's proficiency gap in STE was 22 PI points, seven PI points narrower than that statewide.

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

Between 2003 and 2006, Foxborough's MCAS performance showed a decline overall and in ELA, and was relatively flat in math and in STE.

- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories fell by one percentage point between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category increased by two percentage points. The average proficiency gap in Foxborough widened from 11 PI points in 2003 to 13 PI points in 2006.
- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Foxborough decreased by two PI points.
- Math performance in Foxborough showed a decline of one PI point over this period.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Foxborough had an increase of nearly two PI points in STE performance, although the percentage of students attaining proficiency in STE declined by one percentage point.

Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Foxborough students. Of the eight measurable subgroups in Foxborough, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 21 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 37 PI points in math (regular education students, African-American students, respectively).

- The proficiency gaps in Foxborough in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program). For these subgroups, two-fifths or fewer of the students attained proficiency.

- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, and non low-income students. For each of these subgroups, more than two-thirds of the students attained proficiency.
- The proficiency gap for female students was the same as the district average in math but narrower in ELA. The proficiency gap for male students in both ELA and math was wider than the district average. More than two-thirds of female students and nearly two-thirds of male students attained proficiency.

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

The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 15 PI points in 2003 to 20 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 26 to 38 PI points over this period.

- In Foxborough, all subgroups of students had decreased performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006, with low-income students and African-American students showing the greatest declines.
- In math, all subgroups with the exception of non low-income students had decreased performance between 2003 and 2006. African-American students also showed the greatest decline in math performance.

Standard Summaries

Leadership, Governance, and Communication

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of 'Needs Improvement' on this standard. They rated the district as 'Satisfactory' on two, 'Needs Improvement' on nine, and 'Unsatisfactory' on two of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The former superintendent resigned in the fall of 2006 due to philosophical differences with the school committee. During the period under review, nine of 10 administrators left the district. Many of these positions were filled permanently, but the district had limited continuity of administrative leadership during the period under review. In spite of the turnover in school

administration and the subsequent lowered teacher morale, the teachers in the district focused on the needs of the students, and student achievement remained high. The superintendent hired new administrators to replace those who resigned or retired. Interviewees indicated they felt the district had administrative stability, although the present superintendent, who was formerly the assistant superintendent, served in an “acting” capacity in school year 2006-2007. The school committee decided to send administrators to the Center for Creative Leadership to learn and improve administrative skills to strengthen the district’s administration for the future.

The district recently began updating the strategic plan that expired in 1998 to create a new District Improvement Plan (DIP). The district began a process to create a DIP in April 2004 and hoped to finalize the DIP in the near future. Without a DIP to guide the district’s strategy for improvement, the district did not set measurable goals related to student achievement data. School Improvement Plans (SIPs) were in place at all schools, but only the one for the middle school was standards based and connected to student achievement results. Principals reported to the school committee on the progress of the goals in their respective SIPs. The district relied on practices and procedures without written guidelines and policies for many areas of the school system’s administration. The district recently investigated eliciting assistance from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to update district policies.

School administrators gathered and interpreted student achievement data, and the district made some decisions based on these data. For instance, the school committee adopted a new reading curriculum for grades K-6 based on an English language arts (ELA) program review in 2005. In addition to program evaluations, evidence suggested that the district and schools used student achievement data to drive modifications in curriculum, programs, and instruction. The district used test data to institute MCAS remediation, to emphasize particular curriculum strands, and to offer SAT preparation courses. The school committee did not explicitly use student achievement data as a measure against which to evaluate the superintendent, nor did the superintendent use them when evaluating principals.

The district did not have a district safety and crisis management plan that was coordinated with the police and fire departments and aligned with the school plans. However, all schools in the

district had safety plans as well as crisis management plans in place. The elementary schools had identical plans and the high school had a more extensive plan.

Curriculum and Instruction

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on six and ‘Needs Improvement’ on four of the ten performance indicators in this standard.

The district’s curriculum documents addressed most components of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Work on curriculum during the period under review included development of grade-level benchmarks to address the lack of consistent measurable outcomes and assessments. The district had an established curriculum review process in place, but gaps occurred in the timing of reviews due to the large turnover in administrative positions during the review period.

The district analyzed data from the MCAS tests and other assessments and began a full review of the ELA program for grades K-6 in 2005-2006. The district modified the core ELA program and added to it over time. The district felt the core program itself needed strengthening. As a result, the district selected a new core reading program, Harcourt Brace Trophies, for implementation in 2006-2007. The mathematics program, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1997, was not aligned with the 2000 curriculum frameworks, but the district addressed this through compacting units and supplementing materials. The curriculum committee had reviewed the mathematics program in 2002-2003. Horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, while addressed within the elementary, middle, and high school levels, was more tentative at transition points between schools. When K-8 curriculum directors were in place, the middle school curriculum had stronger articulation with the high school curriculum. The high school addressed curriculum work during the summer, as time was not provided for this during professional development days. Principals were the curriculum leaders in the schools and received support from assistant principals, K-8 directors, and high school department heads.

The district used formal and informal classroom walk-throughs to monitor instruction and evaluate teacher effectiveness. However, protocols for walk-throughs and lesson plan formats were inconsistent. At the elementary level, principals looked for teachers working with

individual students and using best practices. They expected to see the goals and objectives of the lesson clearly stated and that students understood them. At the high school, the principal's council, made up of the principal and department heads, met regularly to monitor teachers' implementation of the curriculum and their use of best practices. The district supported several professional development initiatives for middle school mathematics teachers. For example, some teachers took part in Discrete Mathematical Ideas (DMI) institutes to strengthen understanding of concepts and building activities. Another group took part in an Educational Development Center (EDC) lesson study program. These groups worked together to develop new lessons. Professional development also was provided when data revealed a need for staff to learn additional instructional strategies or models, such as that provided for elementary teachers in guided reading.

The district analyzed and used student assessment data to inform instruction, align curriculum, and develop additional program materials; however, it did not use assessment data to monitor teacher effectiveness. The EQA examiners reviewed a random sample of 38 teacher personnel files, which showed summative evaluations were informative but in general did not include recommendations for improvement. Elementary principals used data at staff meetings to address the modification and adjustment of curriculum. At the middle school and high school, the mathematics programs were adjusted to allow students who were not prepared to take a full-year Pre-Algebra course at grade 7 or a full-year Algebra I course at grade 9 to take the course over a two-year duration. Integrated mathematics courses were phased out and all grade 7 and 8 students took Pre-Algebra or Algebra I. Some special needs students were able to take alternative classes in the core content areas that taught the same curriculum at a slower pace.

The high school did not meet the DOE requirement of 990 hours of instructional time because the school placed some students in directed study classes that had no curriculum. The district provided teachers at all levels with technology for their use in the instructional process and in ELA, math, and science courses in which integration was evident.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on six and ‘Needs Improvement’ on two of the eight performance indicators in this standard.

District and school leaders had put in place a comprehensive formative and summative assessment program by the end of the period under review. In addition to the MCAS tests, leaders and teachers monitored students’ development of basic skills through the TerraNova test, administered to all students in grades 2-9, and the PSAT, required of all grade 10 students. Diagnostic literacy tests informed teachers and parents about reading readiness and literacy strengths and weaknesses at entry and in the early elementary years for both regular and special education students. Teachers administered the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in grades 1-4 to sustain diagnostic tracking of student reading abilities and to place students in appropriate reading groups or classes. At the middle school, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) provided additional information regarding students’ literacy.

The district disaggregated and analyzed data from the formative and summative assessments to meet the particular needs of subgroups, such as the special education subgroup. These analyses led to the implementation of MCAS remediation programs offered during the school day and in the summer for students at all levels who were at risk of failing or who failed the MCAS tests, and the restructuring of math and science courses to better meet the needs of both more advanced and less advanced students. During district professional development days, teachers learned to administer and use the results of the DRA and to use data from standardized tests to drive instruction.

Although the district analyzed and used data gleaned from standardized tests as well as from classroom-based assessments, several impediments prevented an optimum analysis and use of data to improve student achievement. First, a number of critical leadership positions left unfilled during the early part of the review period delayed some analysis and implementation of improvement strategies, according to interviewees. Second, many classroom teachers did not fully use student achievement data to inform instruction and set student goals at all levels, according to a review of curriculum documents. Finally, without a DIP or standards-based SIPs,

the use of achievement data to measure educational progress and modify curriculum and instruction was fragmented.

By the end of the review period, the district had restructured the schedule for its internal curriculum review cycle and had codified the procedures professional staff would use to conduct internal curriculum reviews. These revisions stemmed from a comprehensive curriculum review of the K-6 ELA program conducted in the last year of the review period. One result of that review was the implementation of a new reading program in the 2006-2007 school year. The district also performed a review of the elementary Spanish language program and its John Collins Writing Program. However, other curriculum reviews targeted for midway through the period under review did not take place, mainly due to vacancies in key academic leadership positions, according to interviewees.

Several required external reviews took place during the review period, such as the Department of Education Coordinated Program Review (CPR) and a Title I review. In addition, high school professional staff submitted the two-year and five-year reports addressing recommendations from the re-accreditation report completed in 2001 by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). No other external reviews assessed the effectiveness of instructional or support programs. District and school leaders used information from internal and external audits and program reviews to improve instruction, prioritize goals, define professional development, allocate time and resources, and initiate or discontinue programs and services.

Human Resource Management and Professional Development

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on nine and ‘Needs Improvement’ on four of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The district actively recruited candidates for teaching and administrative positions and had hiring procedures in place to establish an effective teaching force. The district advertised positions in *The Boston Globe* and on the district website and posted positions in the schools and central office. The district used a collaborative approach in hiring with applications vetted by principals and department chairs. The schools used interviewing committees, and the district formed interviewing committees when hiring administrators. The district had low teacher turnover and

interviewees speculated that selectivity in the hiring process produced low turnover. Teachers cited the mentor program, the five days of professional development, course reimbursement, the collegial environment, and in-house promotional opportunities as their incentives for working in the district. Interviewees indicated that the district did not have any financial barriers to hiring teachers or administrators. The district provided licensure data to EQA examiners that indicated all but two teachers who were working on waivers and all administrators had the appropriate licensure. The central office tracked when staff licenses would expire and monitored the progress of staff members who were working toward licensure.

The district had professional development and mentoring programs in place during the period under review and funded them substantially. The mentoring program for teachers was a two-year program and the district had trained approximately 100 mentors and provided them to all new teachers in the district, including those with experience in other districts. Principals assigned mentors based on recommendations from department chairs or the special education director and tried to assign mentors with roles similar to those of the new teachers. For struggling new teachers, the mentor and the teacher's supervisor recommended courses, professional development, and/or the observation of another teacher's class. No formal mentoring program was provided for district administrators, but administrators indicated that they had a strong, informal support system.

The district had a professional development team that coordinated professional development offerings in the district, and the district had five professional development days annually. Analysis of student achievement data, teacher evaluations, and research-based practices informed the professional development program, according to interviewees and a review of documents. For example, the district had trained many staff in TestWiz, and staff received training in the use of data associated with the TerraNova assessment. Workshops were also offered in instructional strategies for teachers using the John Collins Writing Program, for middle school math teachers, and for special education teachers. In FY 2004 through FY 2006, the district provided approximately \$470,000 for mentors, professional development, and tuition reimbursement.

District administrators received training in Research for Better Teaching (RBT) evaluation methods, and teachers received training in *The Skillful Teacher* methods. The district did not

hold administrators and teachers explicitly accountable for student achievement. Principals conducted regular and detailed formative classroom evaluations, but the protocols for the informal walk-throughs were not standardized. Interviewees indicated that staff conducting walk-throughs looked for things such as student engagement and higher order questioning. A review of 38 randomly selected teacher personnel files showed that evaluators did not conduct timely evaluations in 10 cases. Although many formative and summative teacher and administrative evaluations were performed, most in the sample reviewed by EQA examiners did not include recommendations for improvement. Interviewees indicated that evaluators provided oral feedback on what they saw in the classroom and had pre- and post-conferences with teachers and administrators who received evaluations.

Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on nine and ‘Needs Improvement’ on one of the ten performance indicators in this standard.

The district provided a range of academic services and supplementary programs to meet student needs and improve achievement. A comprehensive array of special education supports, including early intervention, after-school, and summer programs, were established or enhanced during the period under review. The district increased the use of formative and summative assessments to identify and/or remediate students performing below grade level. At the middle and high schools, courses were adjusted to provide academic levels appropriate to all learners. Both co-taught and alternative classes were offered for special education students to support them without the use of special education services. The district’s historically low proportions of limited English proficient, transient, and homeless students had increased in the past few years, and a recent Department of Education Coordinated Program Review report acknowledged the district’s efforts to serve these populations better. The district provided early intervention programs to help students attain proficiency on the grade 4 MCAS ELA test, and 69 percent of grade 4 students scored at or above the proficient level in 2006.

The district monitored student academic progress in order to provide interventions and supports when needed. Administrators, guidance staff, and special education personnel met each spring to

discuss the needs of students transitioning from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school. As part of the district's curriculum review cycle, district and school leaders focused on course alignment and sequence in order to assist students in making successful transitions from grade to grade.

Although the district allowed students who did not meet qualifying criteria and prerequisites to select honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses and encouraged them to do so, very few students from the three major subgroups (special education, low income, African-American) in the district enrolled in these classes. Consequently, subgroups were underrepresented in all higher-level academic programs throughout the period under review.

Attendance policies and practices were developed and monitored at the individual building levels and were informally coordinated among the district's three elementary schools. Excessive absences at the high school led to the loss of course credit, and students needed a prescribed number of course credits to be promoted to the next grade. Attendance rates for the district averaged 95.4 percent throughout the review period, almost two percentage points above the state average during the same period. The schools did not conduct systematic disaggregated analyses of student attendance data and were unaware of any subgroup anomalies or patterns of chronic absenteeism. A review of DOE attendance data showed spikes in chronic absenteeism, or missing at least 18 days of school, at grades 6, 7, 11, and 12, and 13.2 percent of students in grades 6-12 were chronically absent in 2005-2006. On average, all Foxborough students missed approximately 8.2 days of school in 2005-2006. School and district administrators monitored staff attendance during the period under review, and the district used substitute teachers as the primary method of assuring continuity of instruction. On average, teachers missed 9.8 days of school, excluding professional development days, in 2005-2006.

The frequency of disciplinary infractions and suspensions within the district was relatively low throughout the period under review. Although suspension rates at both the middle school and the high school increased during the past three school years, they remained below state averages. Administrators reported that improvements to the structure and operation of Building Based Support Teams (BBSTs), greater stability of building leadership after a period of high administrative turnover, and the addition of a second full-time assistant principal at the high

school have all contributed to improvements in school climate, consistency of expectations, and enforcement of positive student behaviors. A review of DOE dropout data indicated that 6.4 percent of students in the cohort that graduated in 2006 had dropped out.

Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

The EQA examiners gave the Foxborough Public Schools an overall rating of ‘Satisfactory’ on this standard. They rated the district as ‘Satisfactory’ on eight and ‘Needs Improvement’ on five of the thirteen performance indicators in this standard.

The budget process for the period under review did not involve all stakeholders. During the period under review, the town directed the school district to level fund supplies and materials and to not add new positions. A bylaw existed in the town that required all departments to submit operating budgets on or before December 1 each year. The presentation of the budget to the school committee occurred in January. Budgets, once submitted, could only be reduced. Budget documents presented a clear, complete, and comprehensive picture of revenues and expenditures but lacked integration with the town. The district’s financial accounting system used Excel spreadsheets, and the system lacked efficiency and appropriate data analysis capability and prevented the district from providing timely financial reports to the school committee.

The school district exceeded the net school spending (NSS) requirement each year for the period under review. Adequate funding during that time supported the school district’s educational initiatives. In FY 2006, the district returned \$493,000 to the town. A review of financial support for the period under review revealed that although the district exceeded net school spending requirements, the percentage over the requirement declined each year. Although administrators expressed an inadequacy of funding, teachers stated they had sufficient supplies and materials.

The district performed evaluation-based reviews to determine the cost effectiveness of its special education, cafeteria, and transportation programs. These reviews resulted in the return of out-of-district students and programs to the district, the adjustment of cafeteria prices, and the saving of \$22,000 by outsourcing transportation for the METCO program to a private contractor. The business manager had forecast mechanisms and control procedures in place to ensure spending was within fiscal limits.

Each school had a maintenance manual prepared by a consultant. The format of the manuals fulfilled the requirement of the Department of Education for a description of scheduled maintenance, a plan of administration, and a system of checks and requisite record keeping. The organization of the manuals included the site, the building envelope, the interiors of the building, and mechanical and electrical conditions. The school district developed a five-year capital plan in conjunction with the town. In FY 2005 and FY 2006, the district received \$670,000 and \$440,200, respectively, for capital improvements. During walk-throughs, the EQA examiners found all schools to be clean, safe, well lit, and well maintained. The exterior doors to the schools were locked during the school day, including the main entrances which employed door buzzers, to promote the safety of the schools. Each school had an emergency team that met regularly to assess the safety of the school, to receive training, and to conduct safety drills with faculty and students.

Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

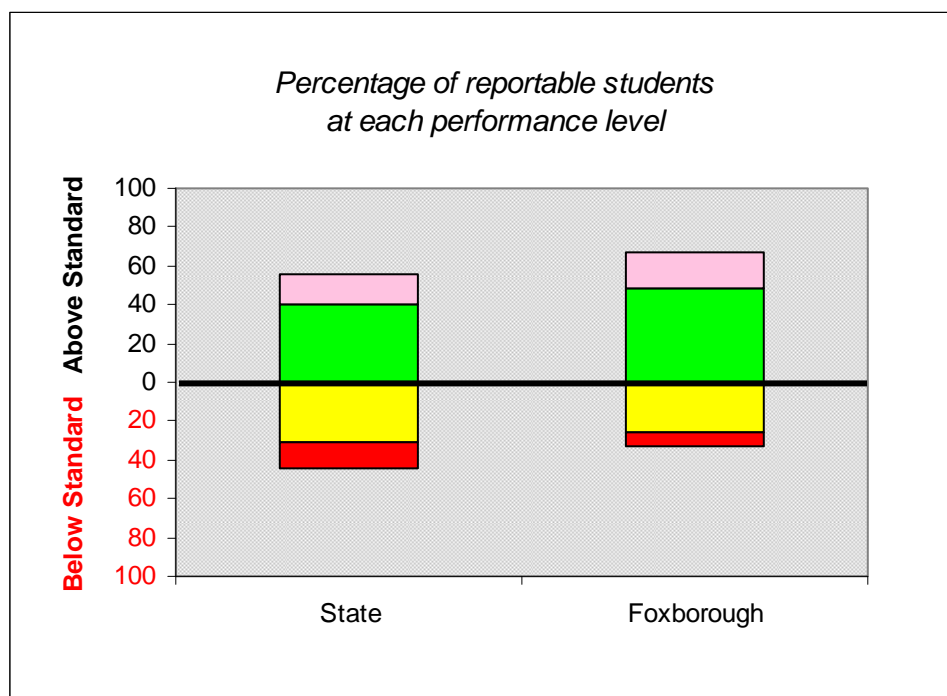
Achievement

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

Findings:

- On average, more than two-thirds of all students in Foxborough attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS tests, much more than that statewide. Nearly four-fifths of Foxborough students attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA), more than half of Foxborough students attained proficiency in math, and more than two-fifths of Foxborough students attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE).
- Foxborough's average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 86 proficiency index (PI) points, eight PI points greater than that statewide. Foxborough's average proficiency gap, the difference between its API and the target of 100, in 2006 was 14 PI points.
- In 2006, Foxborough's proficiency gap in ELA was eight PI points, eight points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of one PI point annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP). Foxborough's proficiency gap in math was 21 PI points in 2006, seven points narrower than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly three PI points per year to achieve AYP. Foxborough's proficiency gap in STE was 22 PI points, seven PI points narrower than that statewide.

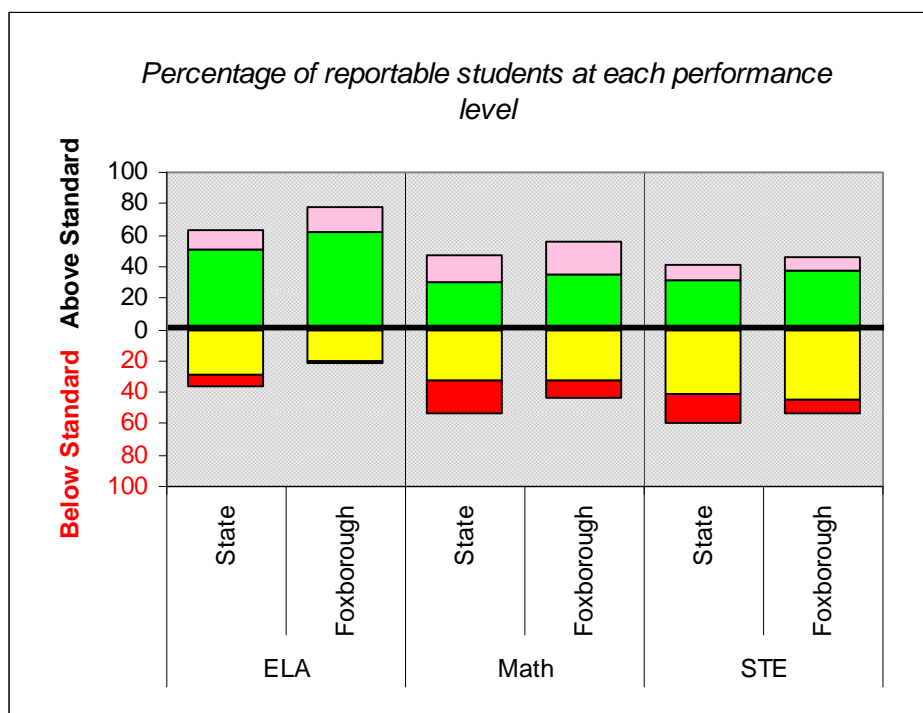
Figure/Table 1: Student MCAS Test Performance, All Students, 2006



		State	Foxborough
	Advanced	15	19
	Proficient	41	49
	Needs Improvement	31	26
	Warning/Failing	14	7
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	56	68
	Average Proficiency Index (API)	78.3	85.6

In 2006, 68 percent of Foxborough students attained proficiency on the MCAS tests overall, 12 percentage points more than that statewide. Seven percent of Foxborough students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category, seven percentage points less than that statewide. Foxborough’s average proficiency index (API) on the MCAS tests in 2006 was 86 proficiency index (PI) points, eight PI points greater than that statewide. Foxborough’s average proficiency gap in 2006 was 14 PI points.

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



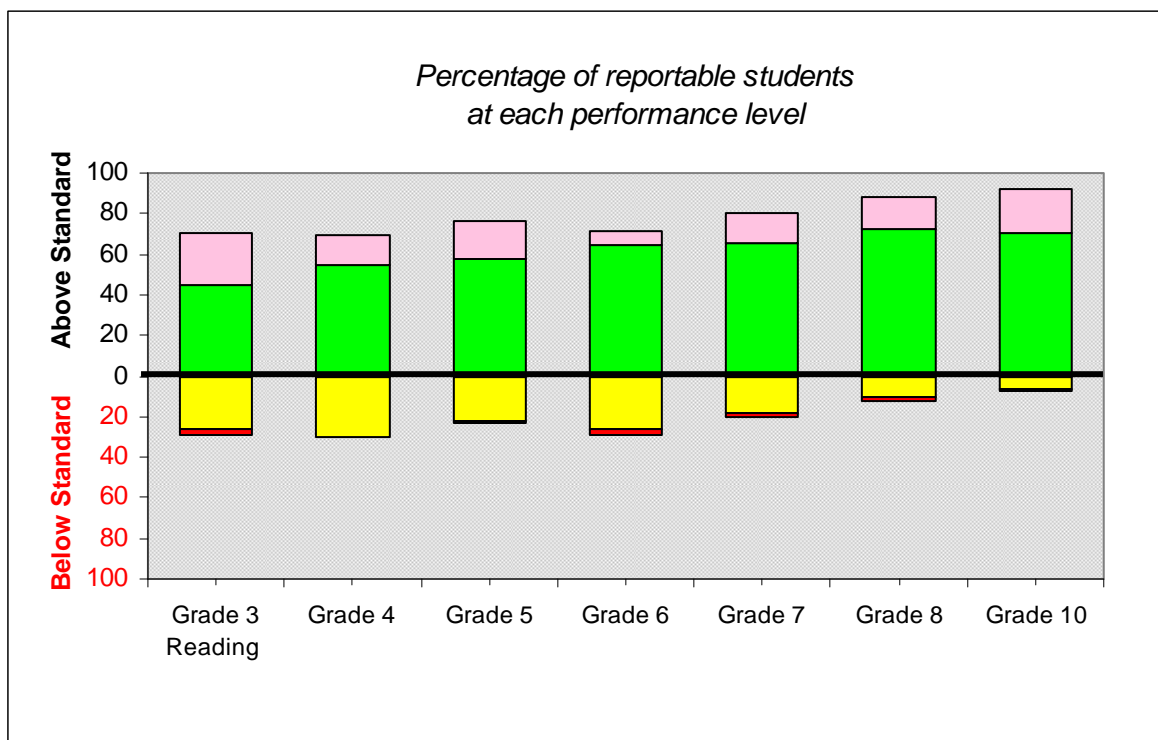
		ELA		Math		STE	
		State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough
	Advanced	13	17	17	20	10	9
	Proficient	51	62	30	36	31	37
	Needs Improvement	29	20	33	32	42	45
	Warning/Failing	7	2	20	12	17	9
Percent Attaining Proficiency		64	79	47	56	41	46
Proficiency Index (PI)		84.3	92.2	72.3	79.1	71.4	77.6

In 2006, achievement in English language arts (ELA), math, and science and technology/engineering (STE) was higher in Foxborough than statewide. In Foxborough, 79 percent of students attained proficiency in ELA, compared to 64 percent statewide; 56 percent attained proficiency in math, compared to 47 percent statewide; and 46 percent attained proficiency in STE, compared to 41 percent statewide.

Foxborough students had stronger performance on the 2006 MCAS tests in ELA than in math and STE. The proficiency index for Foxborough students in ELA was 92 PI points; in math it was 79 PI points; and in STE it was 78 PI points. These compare to the statewide figures of 84, 72, and 71 PI points, respectively.

The proficiency gap for Foxborough students was eight PI points in ELA, 21 PI points in math, and 22 PI points in STE. These compare to the statewide figures of 16, 28, and 29 PI points, respectively. Foxborough's proficiency gaps would require an average annual improvement of one PI point in ELA and nearly three PI points in math to meet AYP.

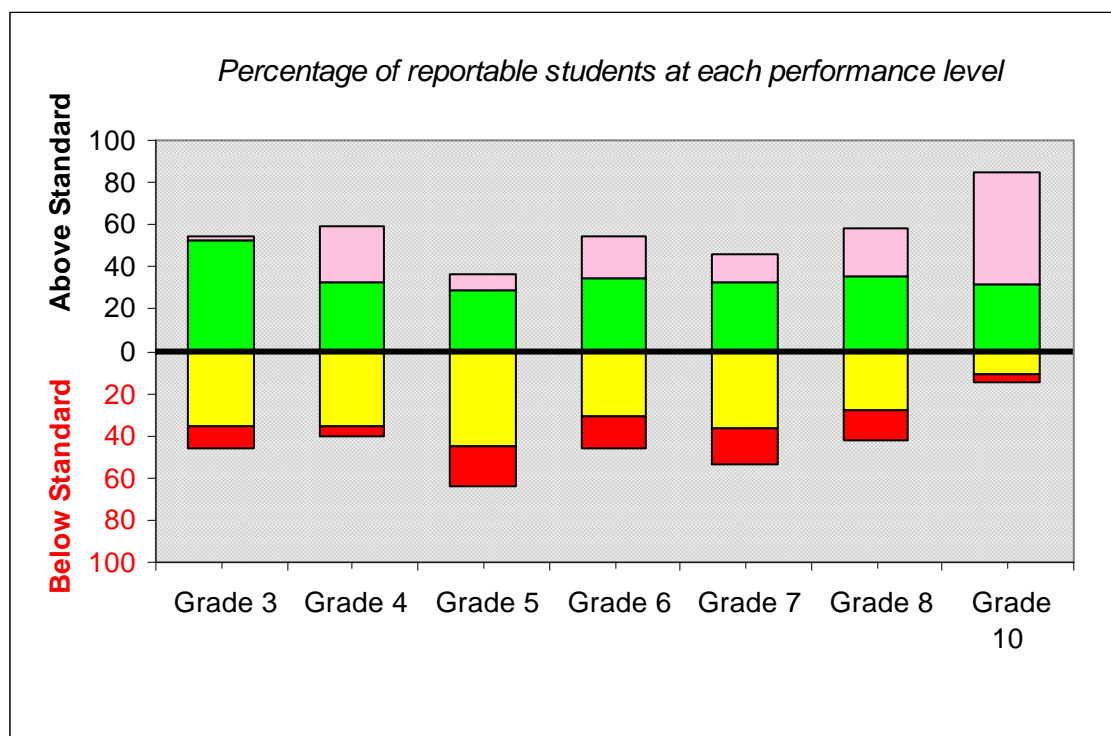
Figure/Table 3: Student MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



		Grade 3 Reading	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
	Advanced	26	15	18	6	15	16	23
	Proficient	45	54	58	65	66	72	70
	Needs Improvement	26	30	22	26	18	10	6
	Warning/Failing	3	0	1	3	2	2	1
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	71	69	76	71	81	88	93

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining proficiency in 2006 in ELA varied somewhat by grade level, ranging from a low of 69 percent of grade 4 students to a high of 93 percent of grade 10 students.

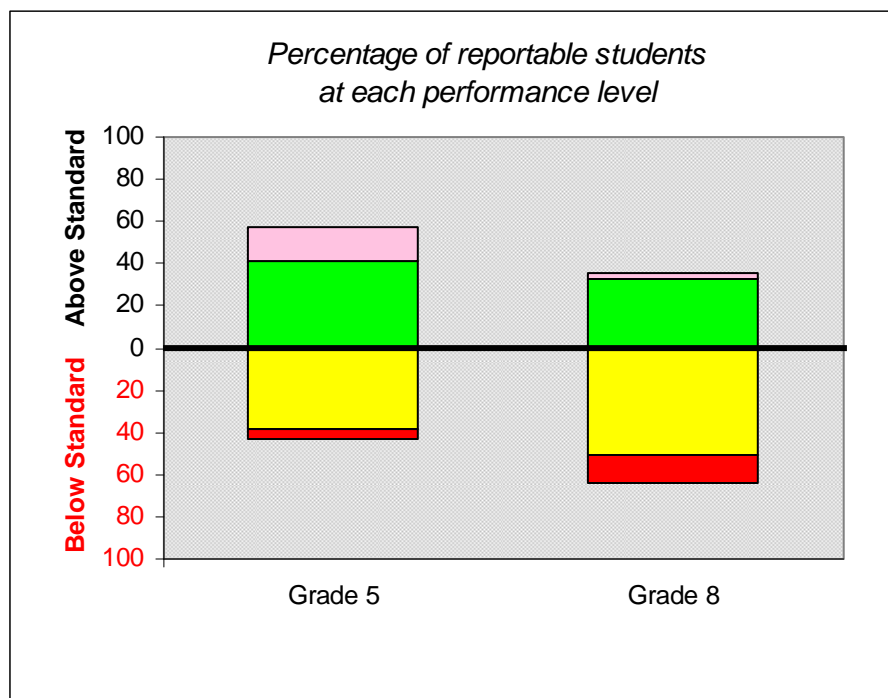
Figure/Table 4: Student MCAS Math Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



		Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
	Advanced	2	27	7	19	14	22	54
	Proficient	52	33	29	35	32	36	32
	Needs Improvement	36	36	45	31	36	28	10
	Warning/Failing	10	4	19	15	18	14	4
Percent Attaining Proficiency		54	60	36	54	46	58	86

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining proficiency in 2006 in math varied greatly by grade level, ranging from a low of 36 percent of grade 5 students to a high of 86 percent of grade 10 students.

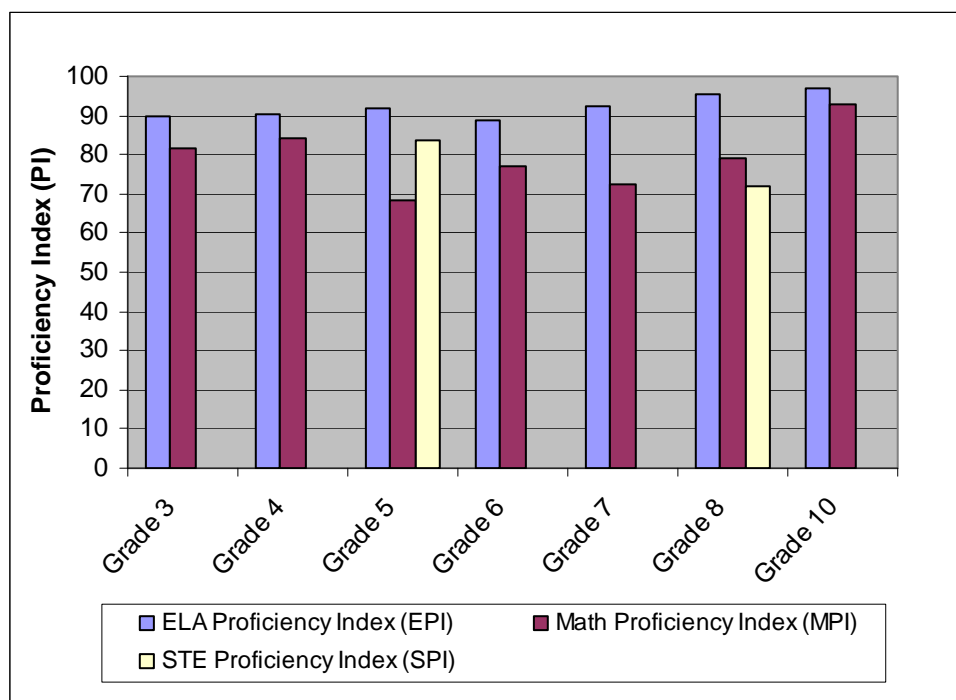
Figure/Table 5: Student MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance, by Grade, 2006



		Grade 5	Grade 8
	Advanced	16	3
	Proficient	41	32
	Needs Improvement	39	51
	Warning/Failing	4	13
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	57	35

In Foxborough in 2006, 57 percent of grade 5 students attained proficiency in STE, and 35 percent of grade 8 students did so.

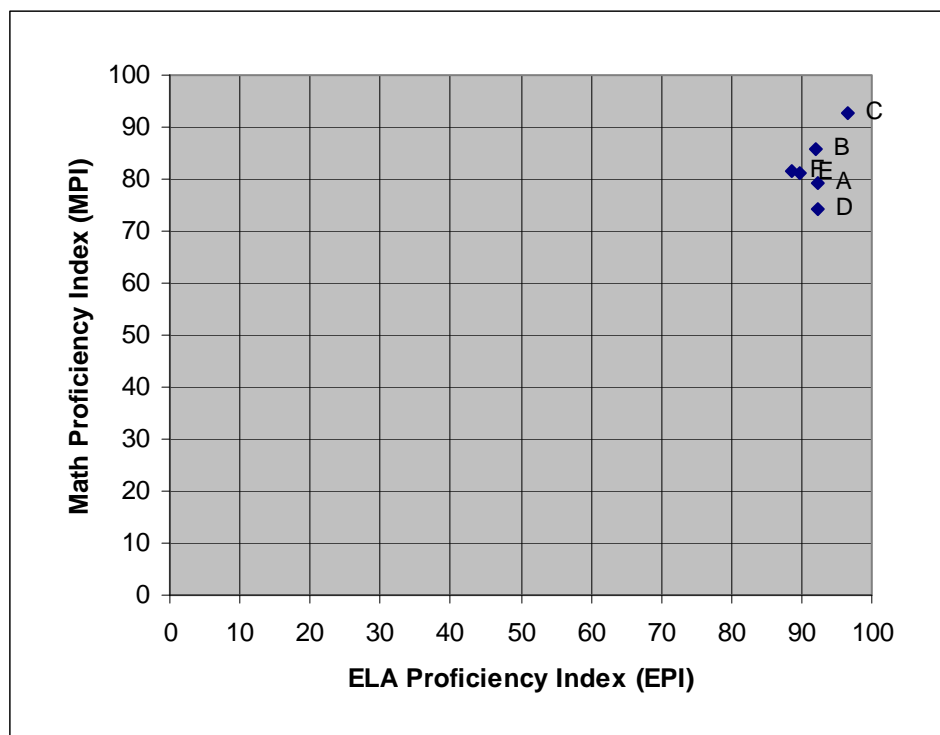
Figure/Table 6: Student MCAS Proficiency Indices, by Grade and Subject, 2006



	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
ELA Proficiency Index (EPI)	89.6	90.4	91.7	89.0	92.5	95.3	96.7
Math Proficiency Index (MPI)	81.4	84.0	68.4	76.9	72.5	78.9	92.8
STE Proficiency Index (SPI)			83.8			71.8	

By grade, Foxborough's ELA proficiency gap in 2006 ranged from a low of three PI points at grade 10 to a high of 11 PI points at grade 6. Foxborough's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of seven PI points at grade 10 to a high of 32 PI points at grade 5. Foxborough's STE proficiency gap was 16 PI points at grade 5 and 28 PI points at grade 8.

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



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Foxborough	92.2	79.1	3,094
B	Charles Taylor Elem	92.1	85.7	249
C	Foxborough High	96.7	92.8	424
D	John J. Ahern Middle	92.2	74.2	1,821
E	Mabelle M. Burrell Elem	89.8	81.1	254
F	Vincent M. Igo Elem	88.7	81.6	346

By school, achievement was highest in both ELA and math at Foxborough High School. Foxborough's ELA proficiency gap in 2006 ranged from a low of three PI points at Foxborough High School to a high of 11 PI points at Vincent M. Igo Elementary School. Foxborough's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of seven PI points at Foxborough High School to a high of 26 PI points at John J. Ahern Middle School.

Equity of Achievement

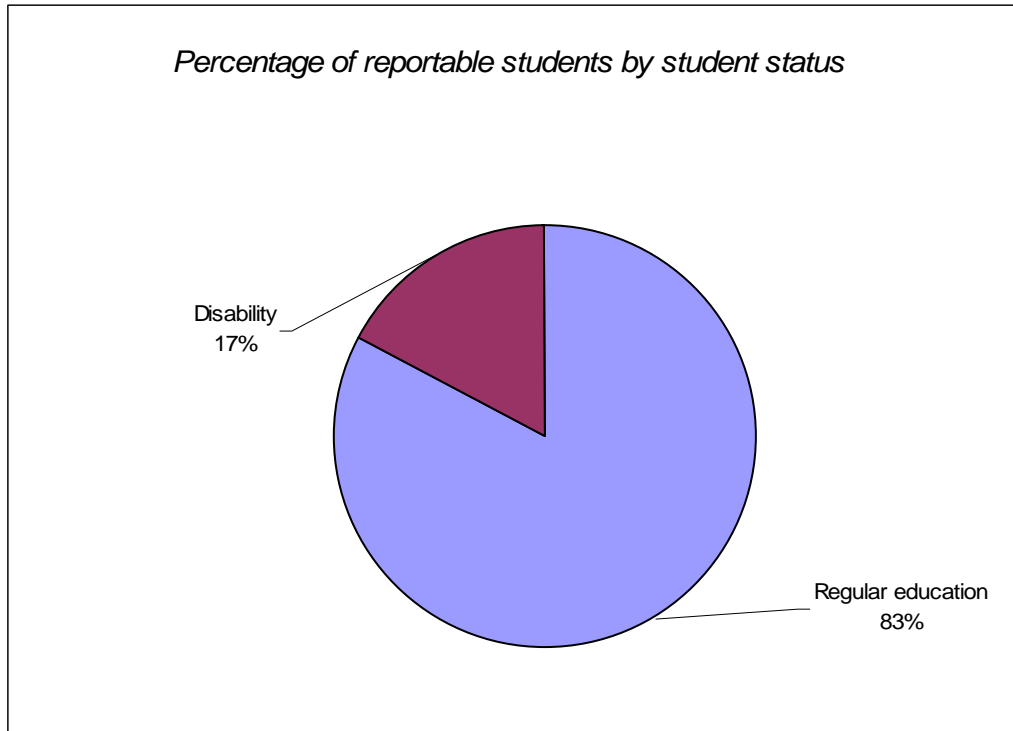
Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

Findings:

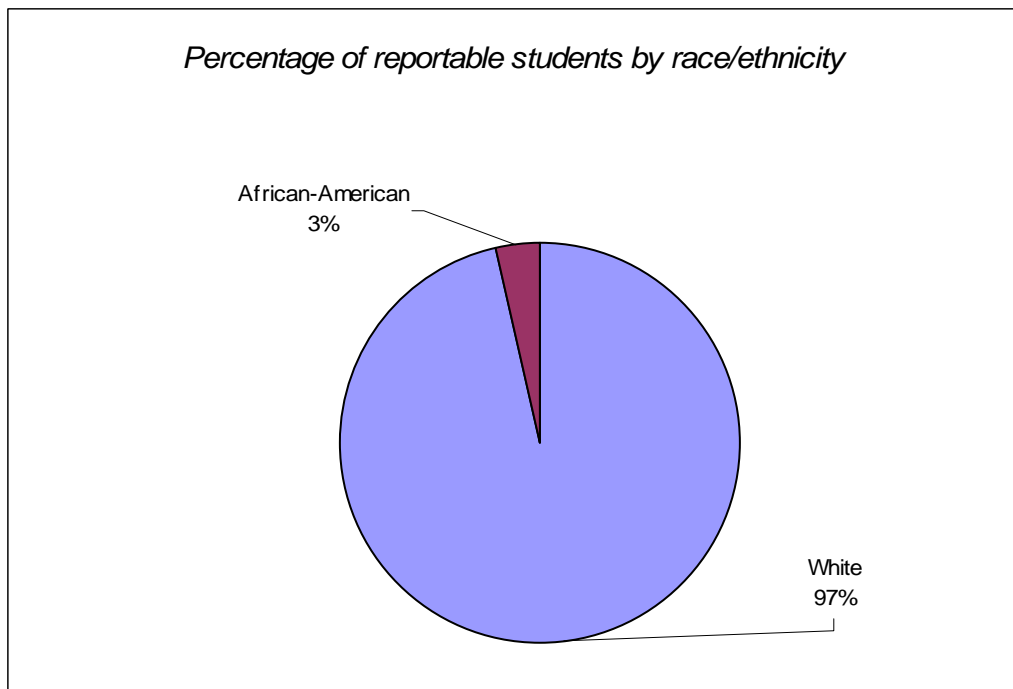
- MCAS performance in 2006 varied substantially among subgroups of Foxborough students. Of the eight measurable subgroups in Foxborough, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 21 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 37 PI points in math (regular education students, African-American students, respectively).
- The proficiency gaps in Foxborough in 2006 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program). For these subgroups, two-fifths or fewer of the students attained proficiency.
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, and non low-income students. For each of these subgroups, more than two-thirds of the students attained proficiency.
- The proficiency gap for female students was the same as the district average in math but narrower in ELA. The proficiency gap for male students in both ELA and math was wider than the district average. More than two-thirds of female students and nearly two-thirds of male students attained proficiency.

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

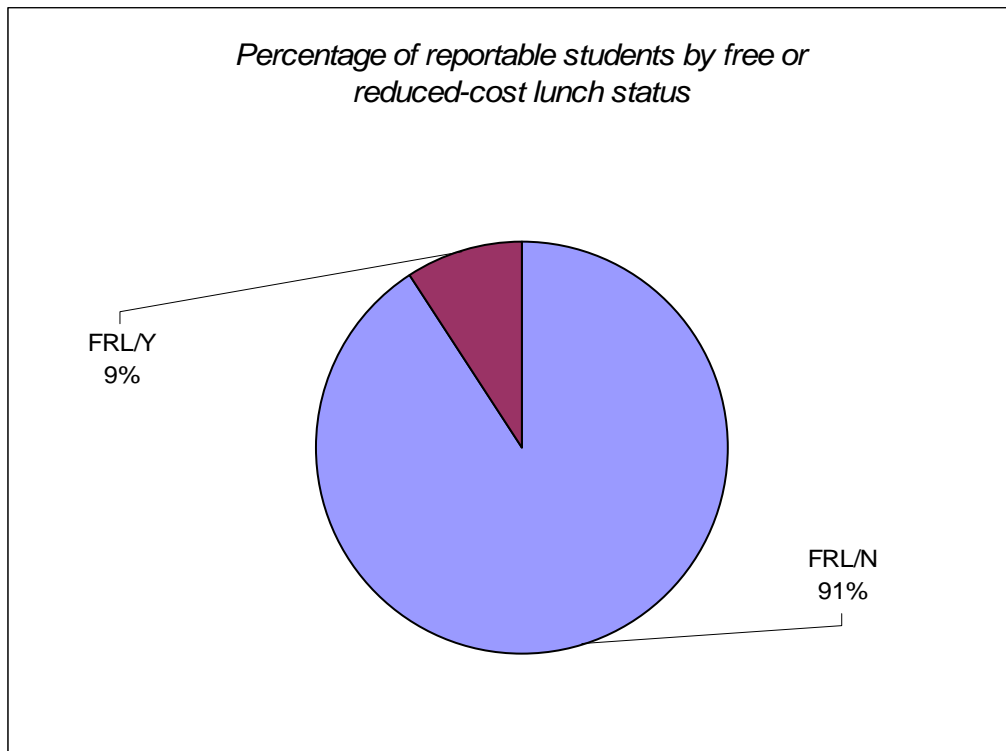
A.



B.



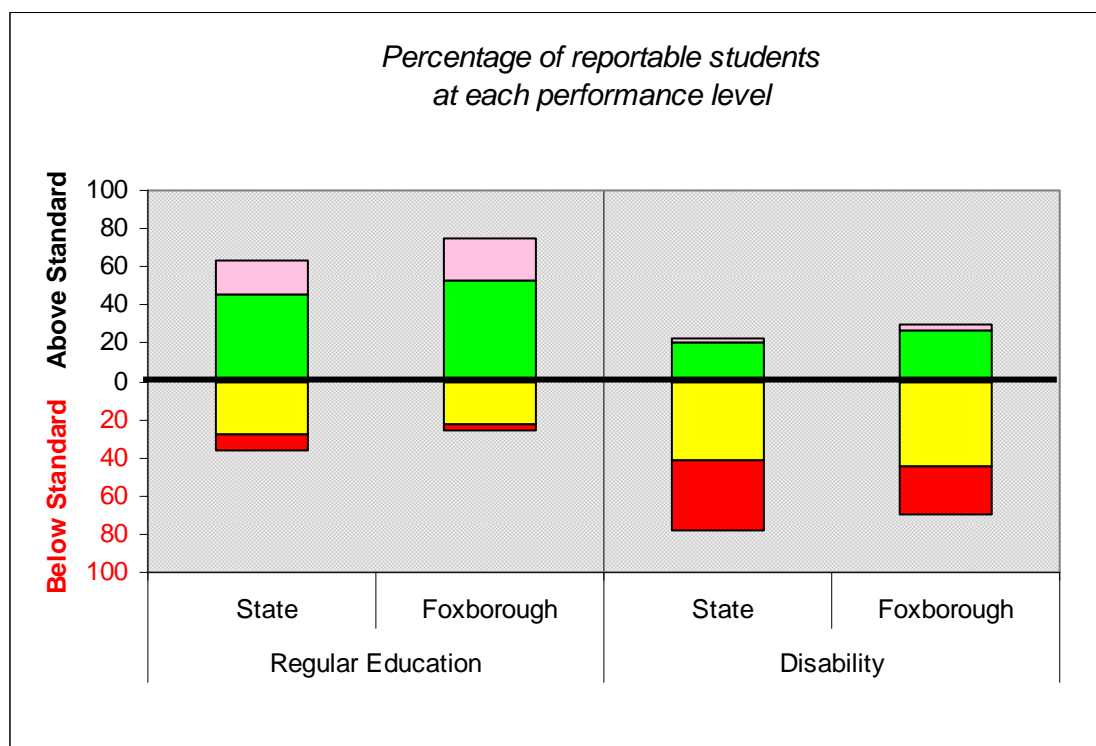
C.



	Subgroup	Number of Students
Student status	Regular education	1,288
	Disability	267
Race/ethnicity	White	1,465
	African-American	53
Free or reduced-cost lunch status	FRL/N	1,417
	FRL/Y	144

In 2006, Foxborough students with disabilities constituted 17 percent of the student population, non-white students constituted three percent, and students participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program constituted nine percent.

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

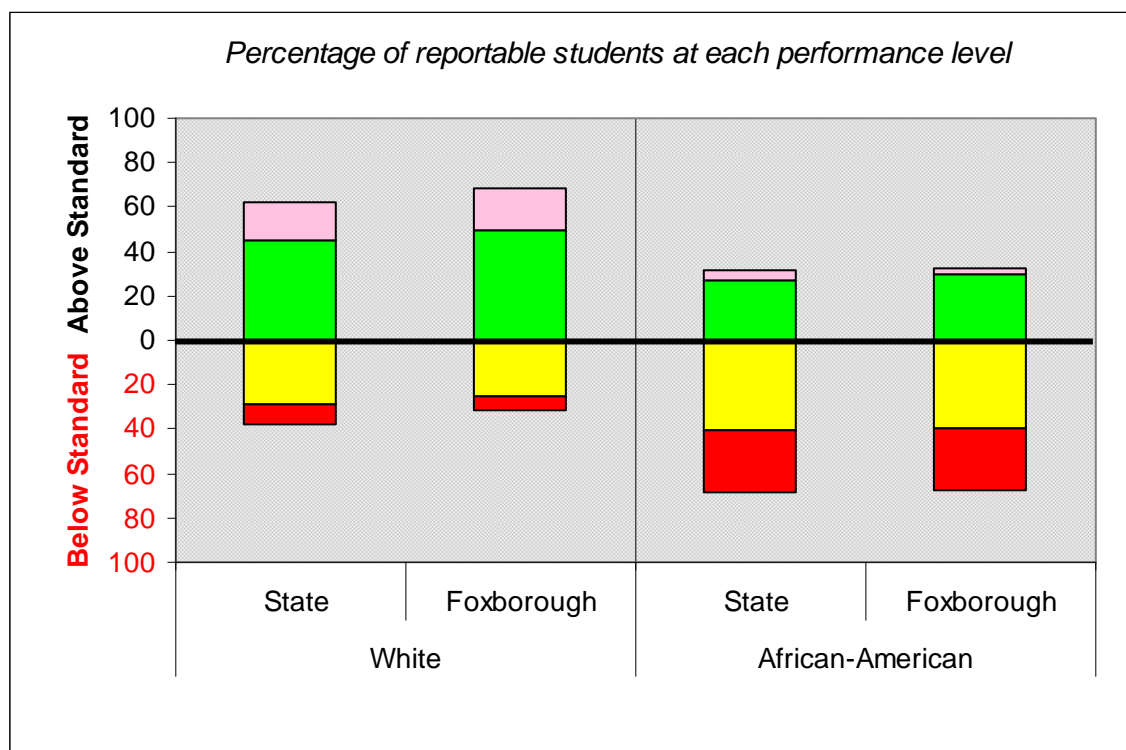


		Regular Education		Disability	
		State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough
	Advanced	18	22	2	3
	Proficient	46	53	20	27
	Needs Improvement	28	22	41	44
	Warning/Failing	8	3	36	25
Percent Attaining Proficiency		64	75	22	30
Average Proficiency Index (API)		84.0	89.9	55.9	64.1

In Foxborough in 2006, the proficiency rate of regular education students was two and one half times greater than that of students with disabilities. Seventy-five percent of regular education students and 30 percent of students with disabilities attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests.

Foxborough's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 10 PI points for regular education students and 36 PI points for students with disabilities. The average performance gap between regular education students and students with disabilities was 26 PI points.

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

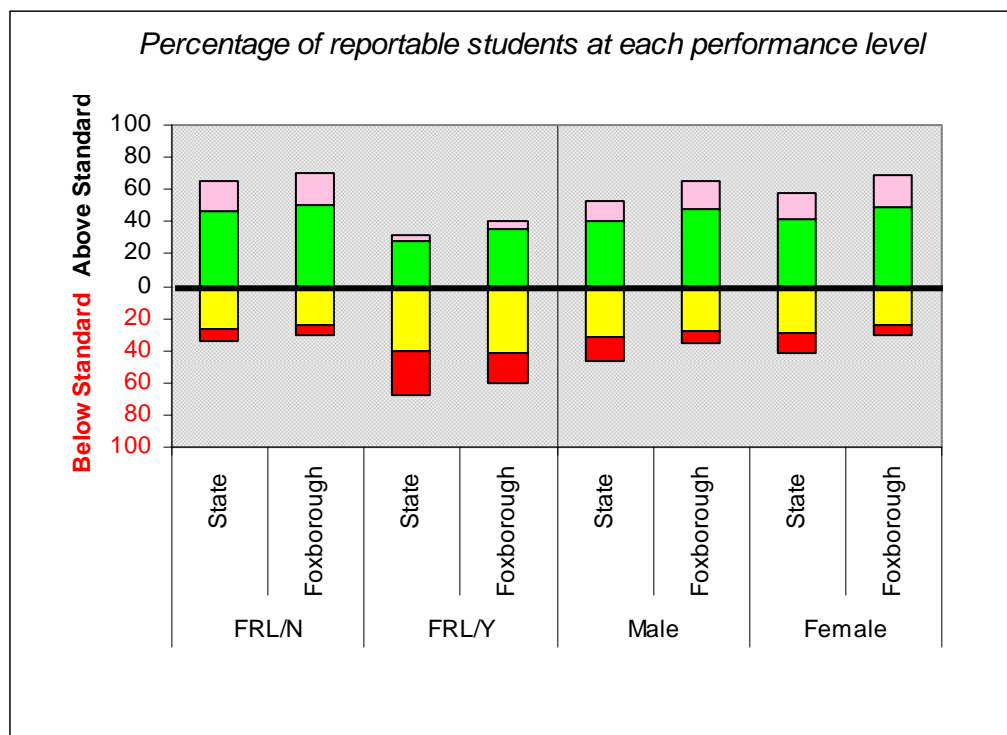


		White		African-American	
		State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough
	Advanced	17	19	4	3
	Proficient	45	49	27	30
	Needs Improvement	29	25	40	39
	Warning/Failing	9	6	28	28
Percent Attaining Proficiency		62	68	31	33
Average Proficiency Index (API)		82.9	86.4	63.2	63.7

In Foxborough in 2006, the proficiency rate of White students was more than two times greater than that of African-American , as 68 percent of White students and 33 percent of African-American students attained overall proficiency.

Foxborough's average proficiency gap in 2006 was 14 PI points for White students and 36 PI points for African-American students. The average performance gap between White and African-American students was 22 PI points.

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

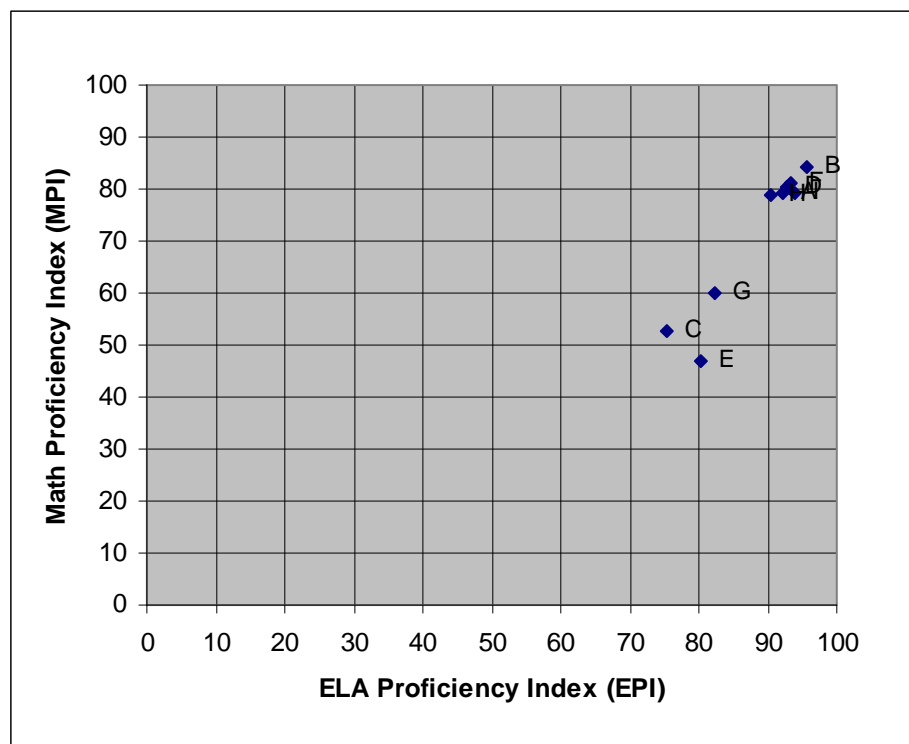


		FRL/N		FRL/Y		Male		Female	
		State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough	State	Foxborough
	Advanced	19	20	5	4	13	17	17	21
	Proficient	46	50	27	36	40	48	41	49
	Needs Improvement	27	24	40	42	32	27	29	24
	Warning/Failing	8	6	27	18	15	8	13	6
Percent Attaining Proficiency		65	70	32	40	53	65	58	70
Average Proficiency Index (API)		84.5	87.1	63.5	71.1	77.1	84.7	79.6	86.5

In Foxborough in 2006, 40 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained overall proficiency on the MCAS tests, compared to 70 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The average proficiency gap was 29 PI points for low-income students and 13 PI points for non low-income students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was 16 PI points.

Performance on the 2006 MCAS tests was comparable for male and female students in Foxborough, with 70 percent of female students and 65 percent of male students attaining overall proficiency. The average proficiency gap was 13 PI points for female students and 15 PI points for male students, and the average performance gap between the two subgroups was two PI points.

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

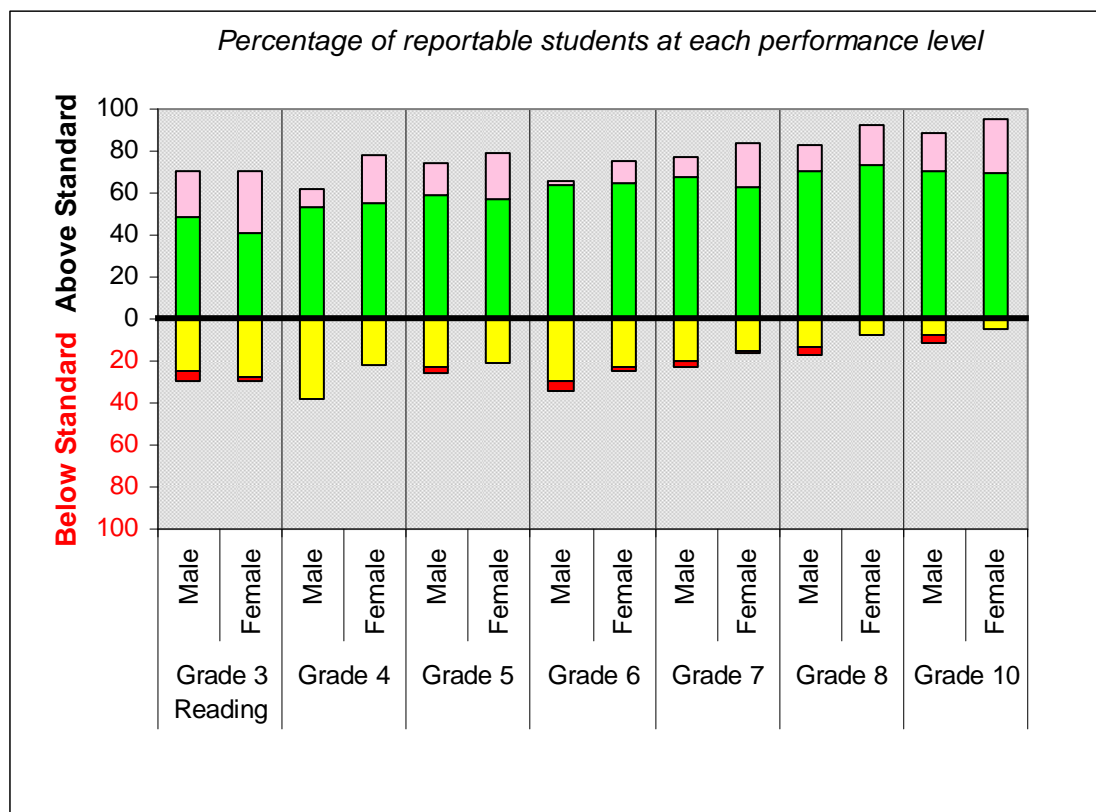


		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Foxborough	92.2	79.1	3,094
B	Regular Education	95.6	84.2	2,572
C	Disability	75.3	52.8	511
D	White	92.7	80.2	2,905
E	African-American	80.3	47.1	104
F	FRL/N	93.2	81.0	2,812
G	FRL/Y	82.4	60.1	282
H	Male	90.4	79.0	1,535
I	Female	94.0	79.1	1,559

Of the eight measurable subgroups in Foxborough in 2006, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 21 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 37 PI points in math (regular education students, African-American students, respectively).

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

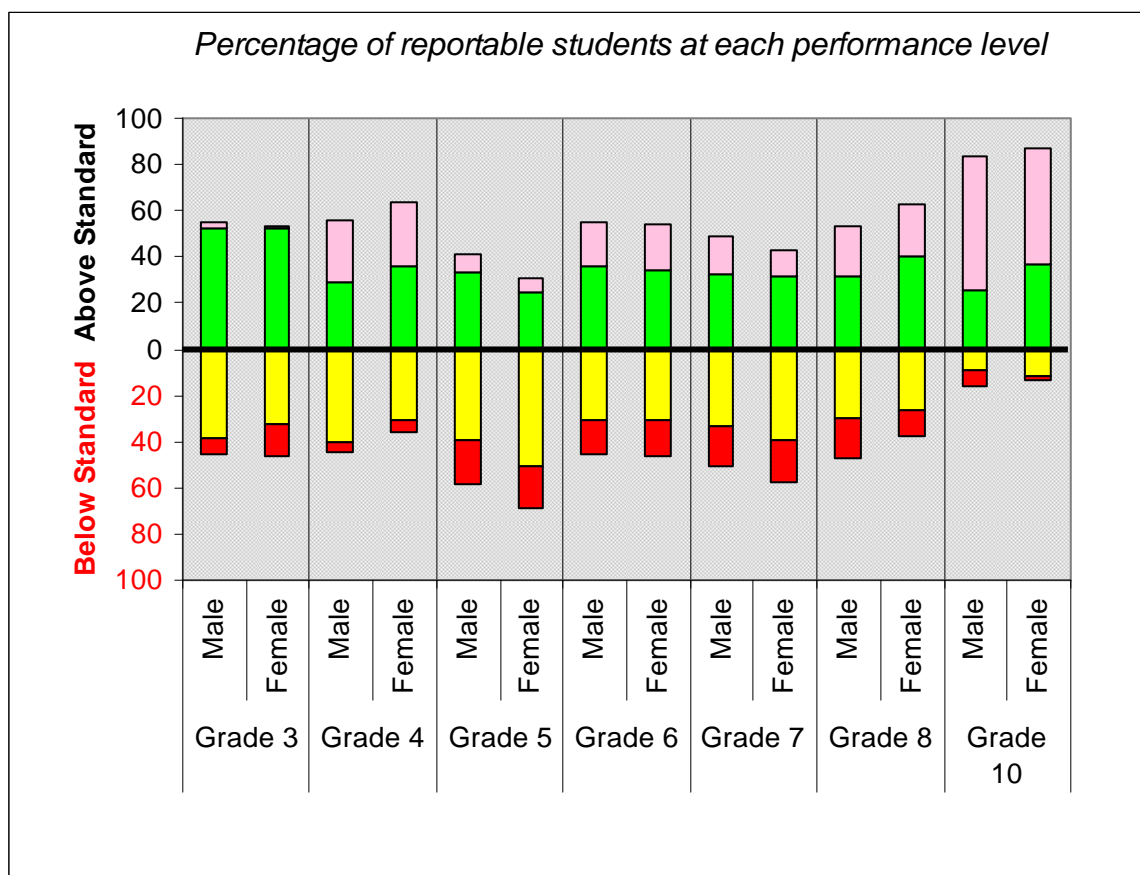
Figure/Table 13: Student MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance, by Grade and Gender, 2006



		Grade 3 Reading		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 10	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Advanced	22	30	9	23	16	21	2	10	10	20	12	19	18	26
	Proficient	49	41	53	56	59	58	64	65	67	63	71	73	71	69
	Needs Improvement	25	27	38	22	23	21	29	23	20	16	14	8	8	4
	Warning/ Failing	5	2	0	0	3	0	5	2	2	1	4	0	3	0
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	71	71	62	79	75	79	66	75	77	83	83	92	89	95

In Foxborough in 2006, female students outperformed male students on all grade-level ELA tests except at grade 3, where the two subgroups performed at the same level.

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



		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 10	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
	Advanced	3	1	26	28	8	6	19	20	16	11	22	23	58	50
	Proficient	52	53	29	36	33	25	36	34	33	32	31	40	26	37
	Needs Improvement	39	33	41	31	39	50	31	30	34	39	30	27	9	12
	Warning/ Failing	6	14	4	5	19	19	14	16	17	18	17	11	7	2
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	55	54	55	64	41	31	55	54	49	43	53	63	84	87

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

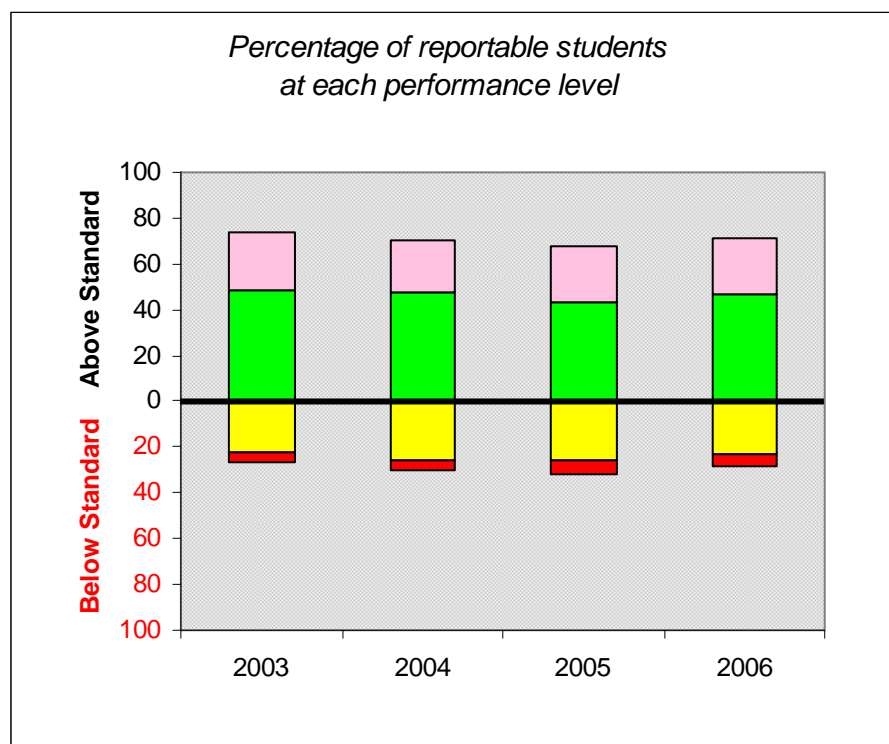
Improvement

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

Findings:

- Between 2003 and 2006, Foxborough's MCAS performance showed a decline overall and in ELA, and was relatively flat in math and in STE.
- The percentage of students scoring in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories fell by one percentage point between 2003 and 2006, while the percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category increased by two percentage points. The average proficiency gap in Foxborough widened from 11 PI points in 2003 to 13 PI points in 2006.
- Over the three-year period 2003-2006, ELA performance in Foxborough decreased by two PI points.
- Math performance in Foxborough showed a decline of one PI point over this period.
- Between 2004 and 2006, Foxborough had an increase of nearly two PI points in STE performance, although the percentage of students attaining proficiency in STE declined by one percentage point.

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



A.

		2003	2004	2005	2006
	Advanced	25	22	24	25
	Proficient	48	48	44	47
	Needs Improvement	22	25	26	23
	Warning/Failing	4	5	7	6
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	73	70	68	72
	Average Proficiency Index (API)	89.1	87.7	86.0	87.4

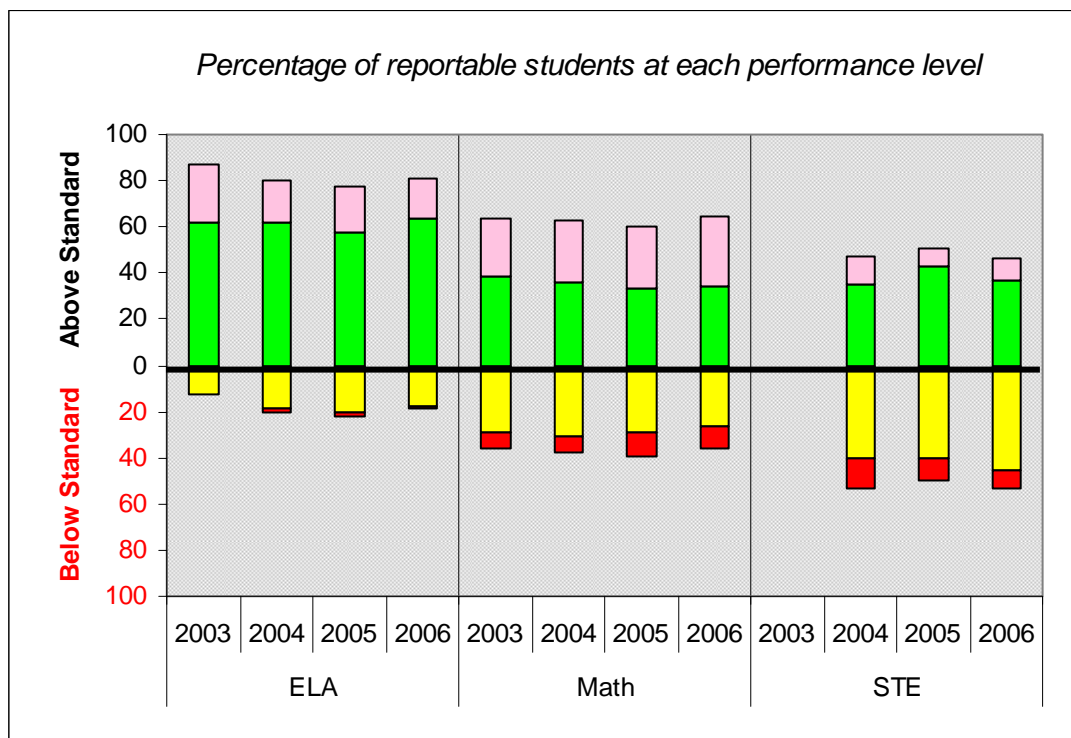
B. n-values

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Advanced	386	341	379	377
Proficient	740	726	683	707
Needs Improvement	337	387	401	346
Warning/Failing	67	73	106	89
Total	1,530	1,527	1,569	1,519

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

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining overall proficiency on the MCAS tests decreased from 73 percent in 2003 to 72 percent in 2006. The percentage of students in the 'Warning/Failing' category increased from four percent in 2003 to six percent in 2006. The average proficiency gap in Foxborough widened from 11 PI points in 2003 to 13 PI points in 2006.

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



		ELA				Math				STE			
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
	Advanced	25	17	20	17	25	26	27	30		12	8	9
	Proficient	62	62	58	63	39	36	33	34		35	43	37
	Needs Improvement	12	19	21	18	29	30	29	26		40	41	45
	Warning/Failing	1	2	2	1	7	7	10	9		13	9	9
	Percent Attaining Proficiency	87	79	78	80	64	62	60	64		47	51	46
	Proficiency Index (PI)	95.4	92.7	91.7	93.3	84.4	83.8	81.8	83.0		75.8	79.1	77.6

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

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining proficiency in ELA decreased from 87 percent in 2003 to 80 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in ELA widened from five PI points in 2003 to seven PI points in 2006.

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining proficiency in math was 64 percent in both 2003 and 2006. The proficiency gap in math widened from 16 PI points in 2003 to 17 PI points in 2006.

The percentage of Foxborough students attaining proficiency in STE decreased from 47 percent in 2004 to 46 percent in 2006. The proficiency gap in STE, however, narrowed from 24 PI points in 2004 to 22 PI points in 2006.

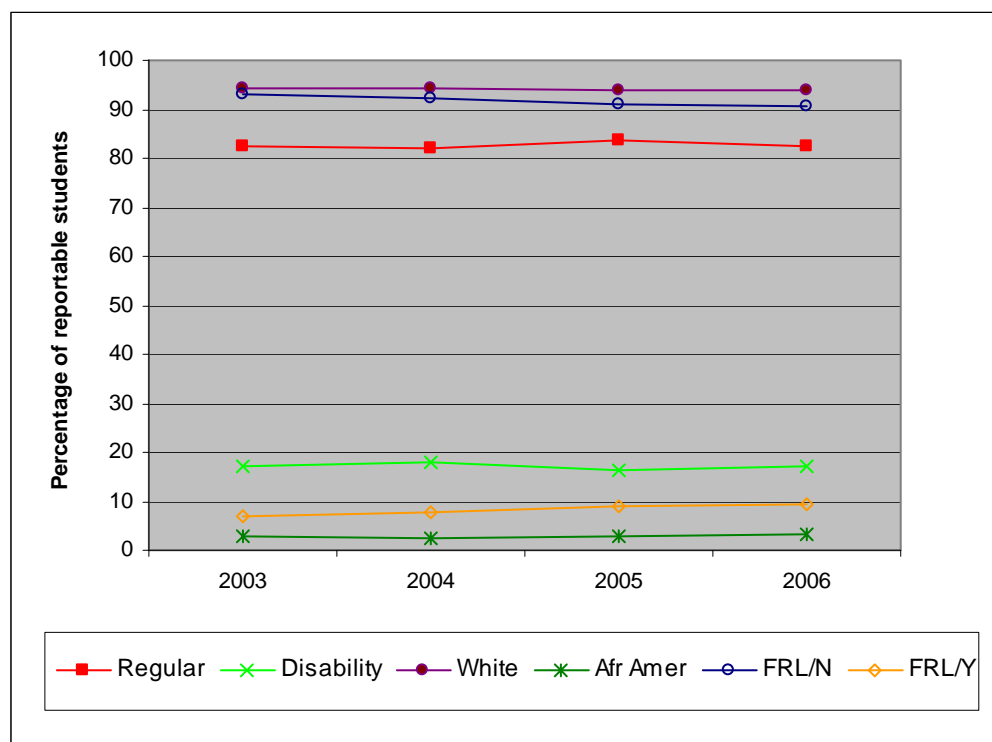
Equity of Improvement

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

Findings:

- In Foxborough, all subgroups of students had decreased performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006, with low-income students and African-American students showing the greatest declines.
- In math, all subgroups with the exception of non low-income students had decreased performance between 2003 and 2006. African-American students also showed the greatest decline in math performance.
- The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 15 PI points in 2003 to 20 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 26 to 38 PI points over this period.

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



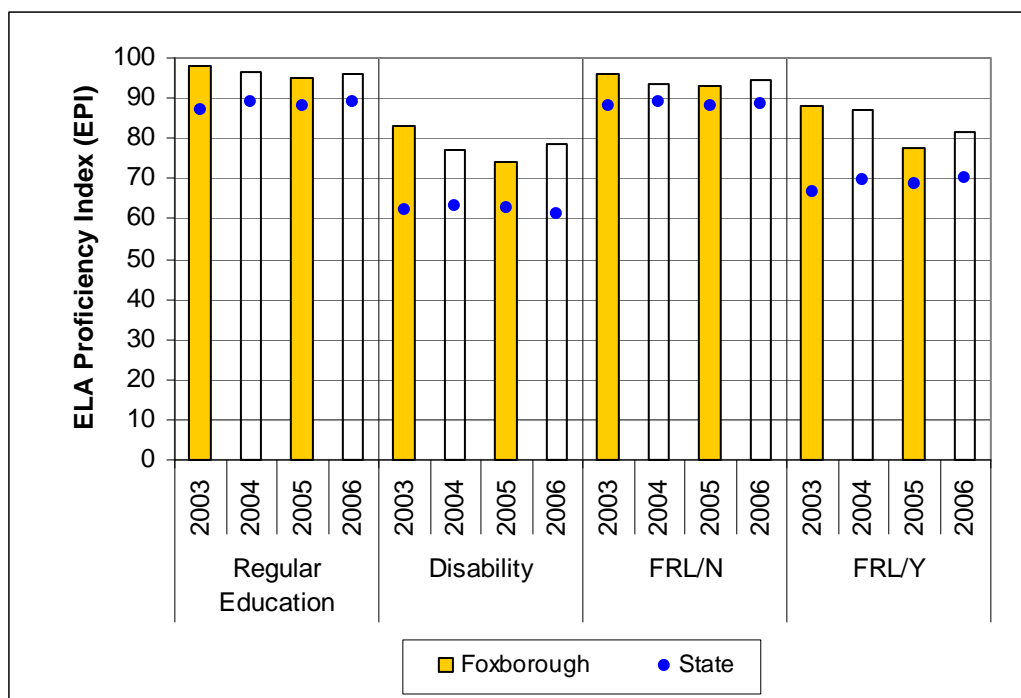
	Number of Students				Percentage of students			
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2003	2004	2005	2006
Foxborough	1,106	1,317	1,313	1,561	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular	913	1,080	1,096	1,288	82.5	82.0	83.5	82.5
Disability	188	237	214	267	17.0	18.0	16.3	17.1
White	1,042	1,243	1,234	1,465	94.2	94.4	94.0	93.9
Afr Amer	30	33	38	53	2.7	2.5	2.9	3.4
FRL/N	1,030	1,215	1,195	1,417	93.1	92.3	91.0	90.8
FRL/Y	76	102	118	144	6.9	7.7	9.0	9.2

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

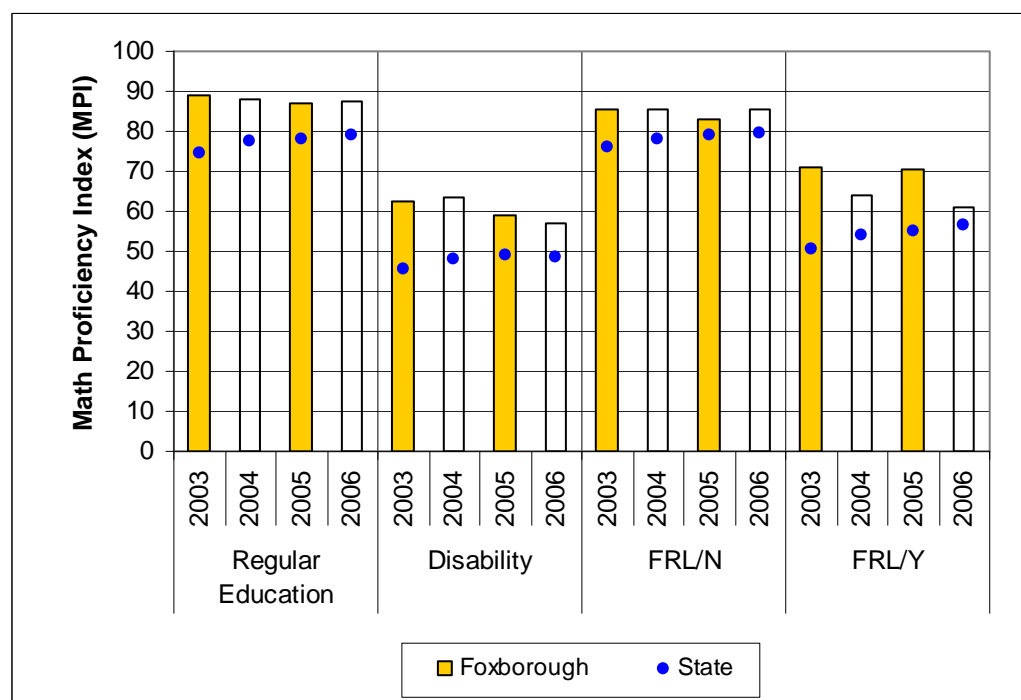
The makeup of the Foxborough student population did not change much between 2003 and 2006. The proportion of low-income (FRL/Y) students increased by over two percentage points and the proportion of African-American students increased by less than one percentage point.

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

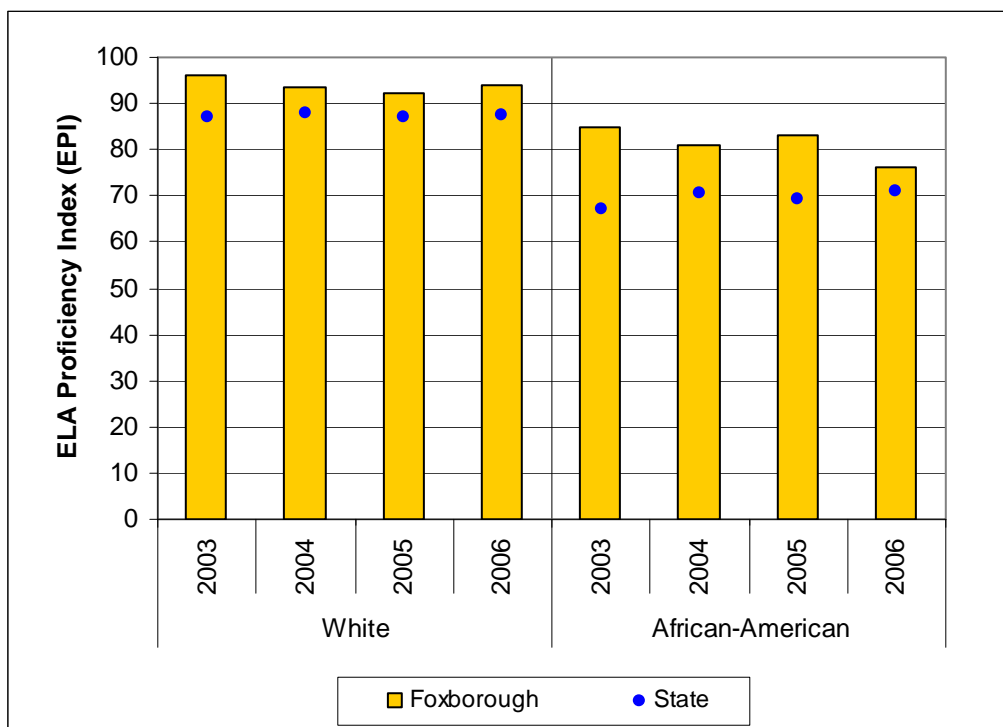
A. ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



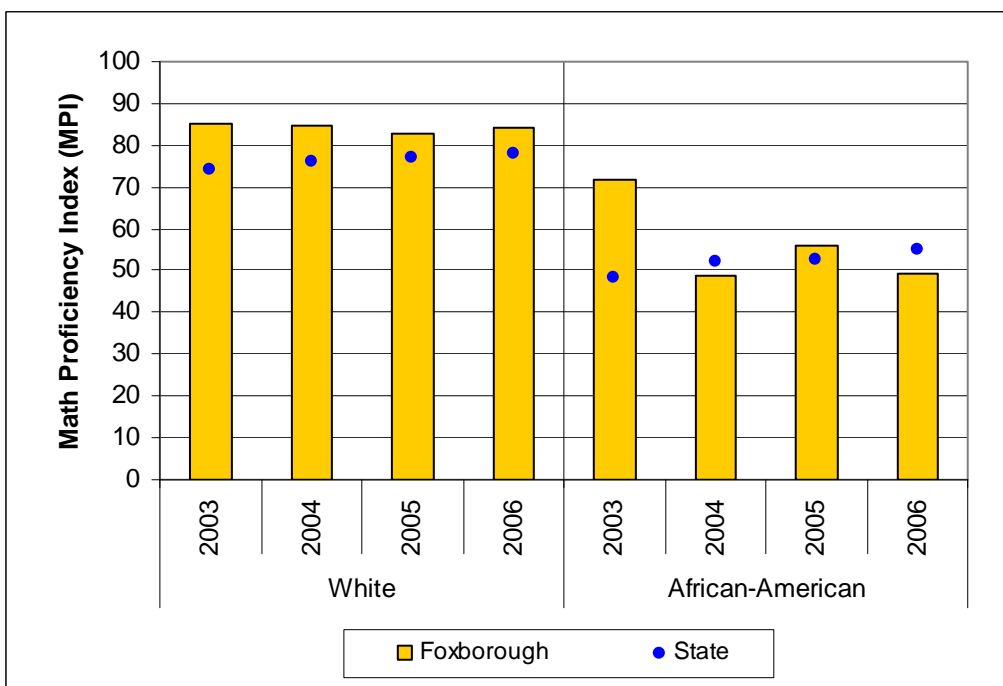
B. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



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



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

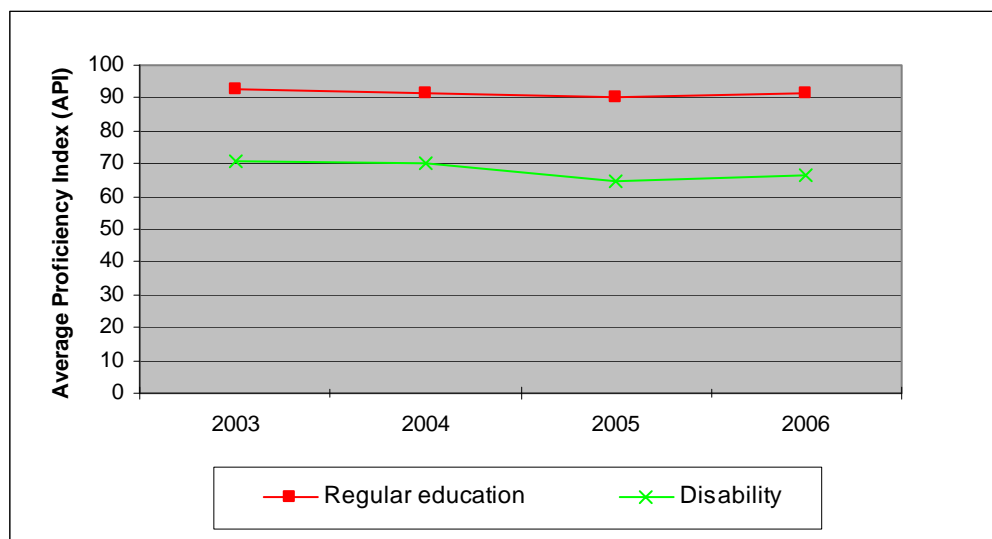


State				Foxborough			
Subgroup	Year	EPI	MPI	Subgroup	Year	EPI	MPI
Regular Education	2003	87.3	74.7	Regular Education	2003	97.8	88.9
	2004	89.2	77.4		2004	96.6	87.8
	2005	88.3	78.2		2005	95.2	86.9
	2006	89.0	78.9		2006	96.2	87.6
Disability	2003	62.1	45.3	Disability	2003	83.2	62.7
	2004	63.3	47.9		2004	76.9	63.4
	2005	62.9	49.0		2005	74.0	59.0
	2006	61.2	48.4		2006	78.4	57.1
FRL/N	2003	87.9	75.9	FRL/N	2003	95.9	85.3
	2004	88.9	78.1		2004	93.4	85.6
	2005	88.3	79.0		2005	92.9	82.8
	2006	88.6	79.7		2006	94.4	85.4
FRL/Y	2003	66.6	50.7	FRL/Y	2003	88.2	71.2
	2004	69.7	53.9		2004	87.0	63.9
	2005	68.8	55.0		2005	77.6	70.5
	2006	70.0	56.3		2006	81.7	60.9
White	2003	86.9	74.4	White	2003	96.0	85.2
	2004	87.7	76.2		2004	93.5	84.9
	2005	87.1	77.2		2005	92.4	83.0
	2006	87.4	77.8		2006	93.8	84.4
African-American	2003	67.1	48.4	African-American	2003	85.0	71.6
	2004	70.5	52.3		2004	80.8	48.6
	2005	69.4	52.8		2005	83.3	55.8
	2006	70.9	55.2		2006	76.3	49.2

In Foxborough, all subgroups of students had decreased performance in ELA between 2003 and 2006, with low-income (FRL/Y) students and African-American students showing the greatest decreases. In math, all subgroups, with the exception of non low-income (FRL/N) students, also showed decreased performance between 2003 and 2006. African-American students also showed the greatest decrease in performance in math.

The performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA widened from 15 PI points in 2003 to 20 PI points in 2006, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 26 to 38 PI points over this period.

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

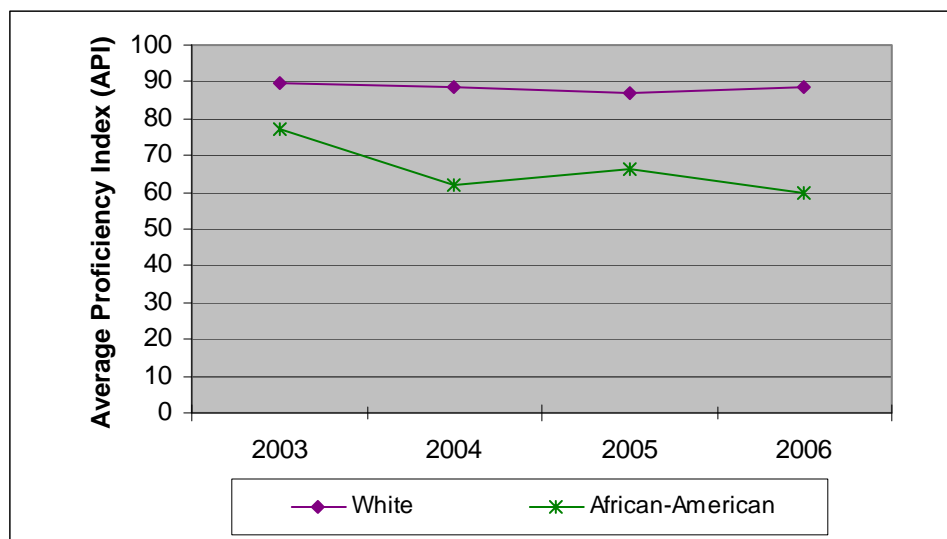


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
Regular education	2003	92.7	97.8	88.9	92	71
	2004	91.5	96.6	87.8	89	69
	2005	90.4	95.2	86.9	86	68
	2006	91.3	96.2	87.6	88	72
Disability	2003	70.9	83.2	62.7	58	28
	2004	69.9	76.9	63.4	41	29
	2005	64.9	74.0	59.0	35	25
	2006	66.6	78.4	57.1	47	23

Both students with disabilities and regular education students in Foxborough had decreased overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006, with students with disabilities showing a slightly greater decrease. The average proficiency gap for Foxborough's regular education students widened from seven to nine PI points; for students with disabilities, it widened from 29 to 33 PI points.

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

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

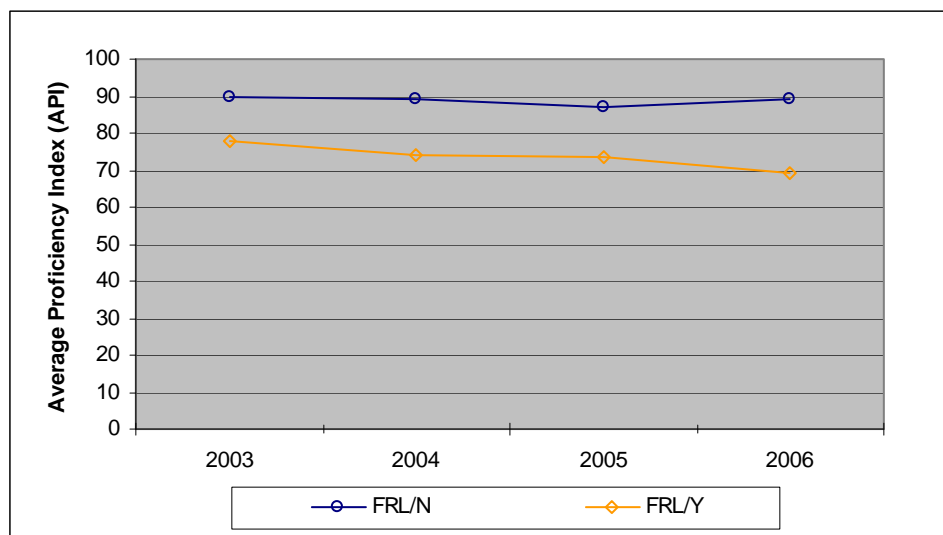


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
White	2003	89.8	96.0	85.2	88	65
	2004	88.6	93.5	84.9	81	64
	2005	87.0	92.4	83.0	79	62
	2006	88.4	93.8	84.4	82	66
African-American	2003	77.1	85.0	71.6	60	38
	2004	62.1	80.8	48.6	46	11
	2005	66.1	83.3	55.8	39	27
	2006	60.0	76.3	49.2	45	13

White students in Foxborough had slightly decreased overall performance and African-American students had substantially decreased overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006. The average proficiency gap for White students widened from 10 to 12 PI point, and for African-American students it widened from 23 to 40 PI points.

Between 2003 and 2006, the average performance gap between White students and African-American students widened by 15 PI points.

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

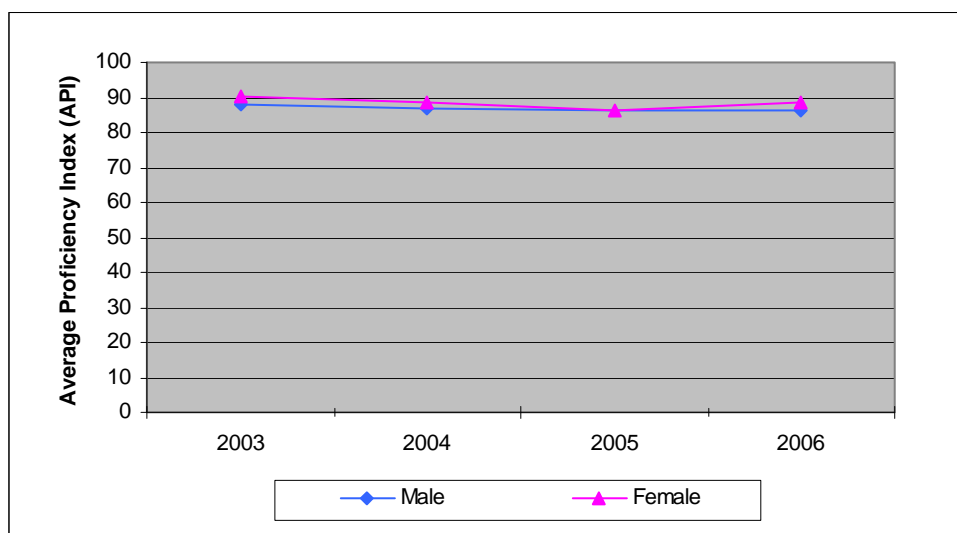


		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
FRL/N	2003	89.8	95.9	85.3	88	65
	2004	89.0	93.4	85.6	81	65
	2005	87.1	92.9	82.8	80	62
	2006	89.3	94.4	85.4	84	68
FRL/Y	2003	77.6	88.2	71.2	69	41
	2004	74.0	87.0	63.9	67	33
	2005	73.4	77.6	70.5	45	44
	2006	69.4	81.7	60.9	48	29

Both the low-income (FRL/Y) and non low-income (FRL/N) subgroups in Foxborough had decreased overall performance on the MCAS tests between 2003 and 2006. The average proficiency gap for low-income students widened from 22 to 31 PI points, and for non low-income students it widened from 10 to 11 PI points.

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

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



		API	EPI	MPI	Percent Attaining Proficiency ELA	Percent Attaining Proficiency Math
Male	2003	88.1	94.3	83.8	84	63
	2004	86.7	90.3	83.9	75	64
	2005	86.1	90.6	82.8	73	63
	2006	86.0	91.2	81.9	76	61
Female	2003	90.1	96.5	85.1	90	64
	2004	88.6	94.9	83.8	84	60
	2005	86.2	93.1	81.2	83	58
	2006	88.8	95.4	84.0	86	67

Both male and female students in Foxborough had decreased performance between 2003 and 2006. The average proficiency gap for male students widened from 12 to 14 PI points, and for female students it widened from 10 to 11 PI points.

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

Participation

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

Finding:

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

Notes

Trend data include grades for which testing was administered for each subject in all four years. The following grades are included in the trend data for 2003-2006 reported in Figures/Tables 15-22 and in the table of n-values by year:

English language arts (ELA): 3, 4, 7, 10

Math: 4, 6, 8, 10

Science and technology/engineering (STE): 5, 8

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

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

The participation rates of limited English proficient (LEP) students reported here differ from those reported by the Department of Education in its Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reports, as the latter includes students who formerly had LEP status but no longer did at the time of testing.

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

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

Rounded values may result in slight apparent discrepancies.

Standard Findings and Summaries

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

I. Leadership, Governance, and Communication

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

Standard Rating: Needs Improvement

Findings:

- Central office and building leadership changed dramatically during the period under review. Although it appeared that the culture of the schools and the emphasis on teaching and learning remained constant, this instability of leadership made it more difficult for the district to remain focused on student achievement.
- The district did not have a District Improvement Plan (DIP) during the period under review. The lack of a blueprint for the district left the district without measurable goals to communicate to the community regarding educational success and improved student achievement.

- Without a DIP, School Improvement Plans (SIPs) lacked direction and did not use a standards-based format that incorporated student achievement data to set goals and to promote continuous improvement.
- The district was effective in data generation, gathering, and interpretation that resulted in data-driven decisions. Evidence existed that the district made some data-driven decisions based on analysis of student achievement.
- The district did not use student achievement data to evaluate the superintendent or principals. The district did not assess the effectiveness of administrative leadership to raise student achievement.
- The district did not have a district safety and crisis management plan coordinated with the police and fire departments and aligned with school plans. However, all schools in the district had safety and crisis management plans.

Summary

The former superintendent resigned in the fall of 2006 due to philosophical differences with the school committee. During the period under review, nine of 10 administrators left the district. Many of these positions were filled permanently, but the district had limited continuity of administrative leadership during the period under review. In spite of the turnover in school administration and the subsequent lowered teacher morale, the teachers in the district focused on the needs of the students, and student achievement remained high. The superintendent hired new administrators to replace those who resigned or retired. Interviewees indicated they felt the district had administrative stability, although the present superintendent, who was formerly the assistant superintendent, served in an “acting” capacity in school year 2006-2007. The school committee decided to send administrators to the Center for Creative Leadership to learn and improve administrative skills to strengthen the district’s administration for the future.

The district recently began updating the strategic plan that expired in 1998 to create a new District Improvement Plan (DIP). The district began a process to create a DIP in April 2004 and

hoped to finalize the DIP in the near future. Without a DIP to guide the district's strategy for improvement, the district did not set measurable goals related to student achievement data. School Improvement Plans (SIPs) were in place at all schools, but only the one for the middle school was standards based and connected to student achievement results. Principals reported to the school committee on the progress of the goals in their respective SIPs. The district relied on practices and procedures without written guidelines and policies for many areas of the school system's administration. The district recently investigated eliciting assistance from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to update district policies.

School administrators gathered and interpreted student achievement data, and the district made some decisions based on these data. For instance, the school committee adopted a new reading curriculum for grades K-6 based on an English language arts (ELA) program review in 2005. In addition to program evaluations, evidence suggested that the district and schools used student achievement data to drive modifications in curriculum, programs, and instruction. The district used test data to institute MCAS remediation, to emphasize particular curriculum strands, and to offer SAT preparation courses. The school committee did not explicitly use student achievement data as a measure against which to evaluate the superintendent, nor did the superintendent use them when evaluating principals.

The district did not have a district safety and crisis management plan that was coordinated with the police and fire departments and aligned with the school plans. However, all schools in the district had safety plans as well as crisis management plans in place. The elementary schools had identical plans and the high school had a more extensive plan.

Indicators

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

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, the district did not have a District Improvement Plan (DIP). Some school committee members interviewed indicated that the committee did not update the district strategic plan that expired in 1998. The school committee indicated that an initiative to revive and update the old strategic plan to include a DIP began in April 2004 with the help of a consultant. The EQA team did not find a completed strategic plan for the period under review, but did learn that the school committee approved a subcommittee draft of a new DIP in January 2007. The district, for the past 10 years, published a district and school vision statement, mission statement, and core beliefs. All of the school handbooks included the mission and vision statements and core beliefs. Lacking a DIP, the district did not have a method to measure progress toward goals, or to measure teaching and decision-making effectiveness. In addition, the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) were not standards based and lacked uniformity across the district during the review period. At the end of the final year of the period under review, middle school administrators developed a standards-based SIP which district leaders adopted as a new template for other schools to follow.

During the period without a DIP, some present and former school committee members indicated that they focused on the need to improve test scores and improve guidance support at the high school. As a result, the district implemented TerraNova testing and expanded its use in 2004-2005 to grades 2-9. Additionally, the district administered the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) to all students in grade 10 at the district's expense; the school committee felt that students' SAT scores

were below community expectations and students needed more testing experience. Some committee members felt that the guidance department at the high school needed to increase expectations for students considering post-secondary education. In 2002, the committee supported the addition of a career counselor at the high school. During the period under review, the district used achievement data from the MCAS tests, the TerraNova, the PSAT, the SAT, and Advanced Placement (AP) examinations to provide direction for some budgetary decisions.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Although some school committee members obtained training regarding their responsibilities under the Education Reform Act, the committee did not use student achievement data and other educationally relevant data as the foundation of its policy- and decision-making. Some present and former school committee members interviewed indicated that new school committee members received varied amounts of training. Some reported attending the MASC “On Board” training; others attended “On the Hill” sessions; and another reported 16 hours of training during the first year as a member. Some school committee members reported that the former superintendent met with newly elected members to provide an orientation.

Education reform statute holds school committees responsible for the hiring and firing of the superintendent, maintaining district policy, and overseeing the district budget. The school committee lacked a systematic method of reviewing and updating policies. The district had many practices in place, but procedures and policies did not exist or were outdated. The district had no DIP, no district crisis management policy, and no finance policy outlining guidelines and procedures for running the financial business of the district. The school committee voted on and included in the policy manual required new policies, such as a wellness policy and harassment

policy. If a policy issue developed, the school committee reviewed or amended an existing policy. The school committee recently investigated the possibility of using the MASC to help it update the district policy manual.

Administrators presented to the school committee student achievement data, including results from the MCAS tests, the TerraNova, the PSATs, the SATs, and the AP exams during the period under review. Additionally, the school committee tracked cohort groups of students over three years. According to some school committee members, few members asked for additional detailed student achievement data. Analysis of MCAS test data resulted in the school committee hiring remedial specialists in math and ELA for grades K-8 beginning in 2007-2008. During the period under review, based on the MCAS test data, the school committee hired remedial teachers for grades 9 and 10, adopted a new K-6 ELA curriculum, and provided remedial support in math and ELA after school for students who had failed or were at risk of failing the MCAS tests. In addition, the district established an SAT review course in an attempt to improve SAT scores. The requirement that all grade 10 students take the PSAT test at district expense was implemented to improve SAT scores as well.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district was effective at data generation, data gathering, data interpretation, data use, and data-driven decision-making. School leaders informed the EQA team that the district administered a number of assessments, and analyzed and used data from formative and summative assessments to inform instruction and to make decisions about how to improve student achievement at all levels, during the period under review. The MCAS and TerraNova tests served as the primary assessments in the district. Students in grades 2-9 took the TerraNova. The TerraNova testing began at the middle school in 2001, and the district

introduced it at other grade levels as the budget allowed. The TerraNova served in grades 2-9 as a check against the MCAS tests as the district correlated the TerraNova results with the MCAS test results. Grade-level teams used the TerraNova data to identify skill set weaknesses and make lesson adjustments.

The district administered other diagnostic tests and formative assessments at all levels. Examples included the Clay Observation and Print Concepts, Yapp Rhyme and Yapp Singer Phoneme Blending assessments, Running Records, the John Collins Writing portfolios, and the Ekwel-Shanker Phoneme Blending assessment to diagnose and assess ELA student progress. The grades 1-4 elementary schools administered the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). At the middle school, grade 5 and 6 students took the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). The district administered math benchmark assessments four times each year to elementary students. During the period under review, curriculum leaders also instituted math benchmark testing at the middle school. According to interviewees, middle school staff analyzed open-response questions and disaggregated math data. Teachers reviewed data over three years for patterns and examined changes in cohort assessment data. Directors worked with staff on question strengths and weaknesses and analyzed student performance by strand and framework.

The district provided MCAS test remediation in math and ELA for all students in grades 9 and 10. Students targeted for MCAS remediation at the high school received remedial support through grade 11 or until they passed the exams. Through examination of the SAT, PSAT, AP, and TerraNova results, high school math teachers targeted strands and concepts in need of remediation, according to interviewees. At the high school, teachers administered common final exams and indicated movement toward common midterm assessments. Curriculum directors and leaders used TestWiz to analyze data and provided teachers with the analyses of the data.

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

Rating: Unsatisfactory

Evidence

Because the district did not have a DIP in place during the period under review, the schools did not have SIPs that were aligned with the district's measurable goals. School councils, with direction from principals, developed the SIPs, but the plans did not include measurable academic achievement goals. The SIPs were not standards based, appeared to be passive, reflective documents rather than proactive documents, and did not follow the education reform protocol for SIPs. During the last year of the period under review, the middle school developed a template for its SIP for the year 2006-2007 that used student achievement data and contained measurable goals. This template would serve in the future as a model for the other schools in the district to follow. Although the district used student achievement data to modify instruction and make programmatic changes, schools did not use student achievement data as an integral part of goal development for the SIPs.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, the town directed all town departments to build level-funded budgets with no additional staff. That directive impeded the ability of district leadership to provide allocation of better or more resources for students with greater need for remedial services. Although the district collected and analyzed student achievement data, the district did not have a standards-based DIP that linked student achievement to the allocation of resources to students and schools with the greatest need, such as schools with higher percentages of special education students or higher percentages of students scoring in the 'Needs Improvement' or 'Warning/Failing' categories of the MCAS tests. For example, the ELA proficiency rate on the MCAS tests of one elementary school lagged behind those of the other two elementary schools by 15 percentage points, yet the district did not directly allocate resources to close this gap.

The district did provide services to students in need, such as Title I, special education, and English language learner (ELL) students. The Coordinated Program Review (CPR) conducted by the Department of Education (DOE) during the period under review commended the district for its high quality Title I reading support program at the elementary schools. The district offered a full range of programs to students with limited English proficiency (LEP), and trained five teachers to administer the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O). The district identified and provided services to students who needed remediation based on their MCAS ELA and math scores. The EQA team found other evidence of resource allocation in the interests of raising student achievement. The district participated in the METCO program and maintained a late bus for students to participate in sports or after-school activities. An after-school grant funded a tutoring program that provided academic support for METCO students. Some special needs kindergarten students attended full-day kindergarten programs. District leaders felt that the extra time would increase the students' readiness for grade 1. The district also funded the PSAT for all grade 10 students.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The superintendent and business manager developed the budget with limited input from administrators, and made budget presentations to the school committee and the town advisory committee, during the period under review. The district did not allocate budget resources based on student achievement data. Interviewees indicated the district built the budget conservatively with positioning for downward adjustments. Interviewees indicated that the budget presented at the town meeting was adequate, but some indicated that the school system could use more money.

The school committee voted in January of each year on the budget's bottom line. The town met net school spending (NSS) requirements for the period under review, but it decreased each year for the three years of the review period. The town had lost nine previous override attempts. However, there have been several successful debt exclusions. Each year, the superintendent would evaluate the town's ability to pay and submit a budget for approval by the advisory committee and the selectmen. The superintendent would gather input from principals, curriculum leaders, and the special education director regarding class size and special education needs. The business manager indicated that professional development resources were included in the budget preparation. The past few years, the selectmen had given directions for town departments to create "level service budgets" with no additional staff. Interviewees indicated that little time was spent on the budget process given those guidelines. The district did not fill some positions budgeted for, which resulted in a budget surplus of \$480,000 during FY 2006 that was refunded to the town. Interviewees indicated that the superintendent gave the school committee the budget on a Friday in January and expected its vote of approval at the following Monday night school committee meeting. The school committee would vote the bottom line budget in January and would readjust it in May based on additional information about state aid. The chairs of the school and advisory committees developed a pattern of negotiating the budget agreement before the town meeting.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The examiners found no evidence of a DIP during the period under review. The former superintendent at the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year shared her personal goals with the school committee and district leadership. Although the SIPs met the requirements of the law, the SIPs were more of "state of the schools" documents. The SIPs were not standards based

containing measurable goals and, for the most part, did not relate to student achievement. The principals presented the SIPs to the school committee and the school committee accepted the plans, but they were not a driving force for instruction and the formulation of goals. The district made hard copies of the SIPs available and posted some of them on the school websites. Some principals included their respective SIP in their monthly newsletters to parents. Each principal reported to the school committee at the end of the school year on the progress of the SIP and future SIP goals.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

According to interviewees, once the district received the MCAS test data, the curriculum director sorted the data and distributed the MCAS test results to the principals. The curriculum director, the K-8 ELA and math coordinators, and the high school department heads analyzed the aggregated and disaggregated student assessment data. The curriculum director and district curriculum leaders met with principals to share and review the data. Most of the principals, as well as a few guidance counselors, had training in the use of TestWiz. The principals shared the data with the entire staff at faculty meetings and with teachers at grade-level meetings. At all levels, teachers worked with student achievement data on a regular basis and used the data to improve instructional programs and services for all student populations. Administrators and teachers reviewed aggregated and disaggregated results from the MCAS tests, the TerraNova tests, and the PSAT, and used the analysis to assess trends and inform the effectiveness of programs and the curriculum. The 2005-2006 ELA curriculum review conducted by an internal team noted that some elementary staff did not fully use student achievement data to inform instruction and/or set student achievement goals.

The district did make program and instructional modifications using student achievement data during the period under review. The K-6 ELA program review in 2005-2006 resulted in the selection and adoption of a Harcourt Brace Trophies core balanced literacy program. The high school principal reviewed the MCAS test data with department heads and developed action plans for each department. Math teacher leaders at the high school analyzed data and reviewed curriculum pacing. Math teachers at the high school reported that data analysis provided for the identification of the curricular strands/concepts that required greater attention and reinforcement to improve student achievement. The high school implemented MCAS test review classes for students who scored below 240 on the MCAS ELA and/or math tests. These support classes provided three more classes per six-day cycle for student support. The high school modified the math curriculum for at-risk students. In the new model, the first half of Algebra I was taught at grade 9. The school taught Geometry at grade 10. The school taught the second half of Algebra I at grade 11 and Math for Life Skills at grade 12. At the elementary level, school leaders changed the school schedule to provide morning remedial instruction for students at risk of failing the MCAS tests. At the middle school, 20 minutes of extra help were added for students at risk as well.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district lacked a DIP, and the SIPs were not standards based with measurable goals. However, the district did monitor data and implemented some changes in programs and the delivery of services during the period under review. Because of the K-6 ELA program review in 2005-2006, the K-8 ELA director initiated the implementation of common assessments and benchmarks. Data reviewed at grade-level and staff meetings led to a change in the sequence of teaching fractions. The results of the TerraNova assessment in grade 2 identified weaknesses in

the area of editing. Teachers gave students daily exercises in editing, grammar, and phonetics. Also, the schools provided students who did not do well on the math portion of the TerraNova assessment with extra math instructional time.

The high school principal produced an annual report card for parents including scores from the AP, PSAT, SAT, MCAS, and TerraNova tests. The high school offered after-school MCAS remediation classes based on the analyses of the MCAS test and TerraNova assessment results. The district introduced SAT review courses and school personnel encouraged students to take the SAT examinations; during the period under review, the number of students taking the test as well as the scores of those who took the test increased.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The school committee evaluated the superintendent two of the three years of the period under review. The interviewees described a process of evaluation in which the superintendent wrote goals unrelated to a DIP because the district did not have one. The superintendent wrote goals for the upcoming school year in August and reported on her accomplishment of those goals in a written statement to the school committee in May. The school committee members would make written comments and send them to the school committee chair who wrote a narrative based on the comments. The school committee did not evaluate the superintendent's performance based explicitly on student achievement results or on the attainment of district improvement goals.

A review of 19 administrator personnel files showed that approximately half the administrators were evaluated annually as required by statute. All were signed and were informative. Most were not instructive in that they did not include recommendations for improvement. Most did not

follow the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership, but followed a hybrid, narrative format that included some of the components. Measurable goals linked to student achievement were not evident. In January 2006, the superintendent asked administrators to submit goals related to student achievement. The assistant superintendent approved the goals and presented them to the superintendent for approval. The assistant superintendent evaluated the administrators at the end of the year on those goals. These evaluations were not explicitly related to student achievement.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The superintendent delegated the educational and operational leadership to the principals and program directors in the district but did not use student achievement data in any systematic way to gauge their success in leadership. The district had department heads and principals trained in Research for Better Teaching (RBT) and formative evaluation strategies. Most principals interviewed indicated they had received TestWiz training. Principals managed their buildings, supervised all staff in their buildings, prepared a school budget, recommended the hiring of personnel, and served as leaders of the school councils. However, the superintendent did not use student achievement data in the writing of their summative annual evaluations. The superintendent met with principals and reviewed their annual goals early in the school year, but their summative evaluations did not link student achievement in their respective buildings to their compensation. Instead, the superintendent measured a principal's success against a broad range of criteria.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The previous superintendent described herself as a collaborative leader, but resigned in the fall of 2006 due to philosophical differences with the school committee. In 2004-2005, a well-documented administrative crisis occurred in the district and nine of 10 administrators left the district. The large turnover consisted of four retirements and five resignations stemming from investigations and allegations about the misuse of e-mail and other actions in the district. This crisis combined with philosophical differences between the superintendent and district administrators resulted in the administrative turnover. Some school committee members indicated that the administrative team fell apart and five members left the district. Although an investigation revealed that some administrators misused e-mails, no formal charges were filed, but the district reported the incidents to the DOE. A review of district hiring showed that the former superintendent hired all of the administrators who replaced the administrators who retired or resigned.

In spite of high administrative turnover, student achievement remained at high levels of proficiency. Teachers “soldiered on” and academic achievement did not suffer measurably. Elementary teachers reported that the crisis had a negative impact on staff morale. They also indicated that it was hard to build good climate and culture in such a controversial environment. During the period under review, the school committee made a commitment to send all administrators to the Center for Creative Leadership to learn and improve administrative skills in an effort to protect the district from a future similar crisis.

After difficult negotiations, the district reached agreements with the Foxborough Education Association (FEA) teachers, assistants, nurses, and secretaries. Union leaders reported that a

respectful relationship existed between the school committee and the FEA. Town officials indicated that they had a good working relationship with the central office and schools. The superintendent met annually with the police and fire chiefs to discuss the schools' crisis and safety plans.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Interviewees indicated the district did not have a district safety and crisis plan, but each school had a crisis management and safety plan. The schools periodically reviewed the plans with the police and fire departments. A sign-in book for visitors existed at each school. The middle school had four cameras connected to the main office monitors. The high school and the Igo School also had cameras. The three elementary schools and the middle school had identical safety and crisis management plans, and the high school plan contained all the elementary school plan components with the addition of several other drills and procedures. The elementary school and middle school classrooms contained red emergency binders that included information on fire drills, bomb threats, evacuations, lock-down drills, and threats of an intruder. The high school folders had the same information as the elementary schools with the addition of protocols for an assault, missing child, hostage, and severe weather. Schools lacked consistency in their use of identification badges. Buzzers existed at all schools. All schools held practice fire and evacuations drills. Designated staff attended restraint training annually through their professional development. School councils reviewed school safety policies during the period under review. During interviews, parents expressed concerns about safety plans and the lack of consistency districtwide.

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

II. Curriculum and Instruction

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The district had curricula in the core content areas that addressed the components of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks; however, horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment for grades K-12 was limited by gaps in the curriculum review process.
- Although the district analyzed student assessment data and used the data to inform instruction, the district did not use assessment data to monitor the effectiveness of teacher instruction.
- District administrators conducted informal classroom walk-throughs. The district did not have a consistent protocol for walk-throughs or a mechanism for providing feedback to improve instruction.
- The district provided resources for the integration of technology into math teaching and learning at grades 7-12 through the purchase of graphing calculators for all math classes, and provided multiple technology tools.

- The high school did not meet time on learning requirements due to student enrollment in study halls that had no curriculum and for which students received no grades.

Summary

The district's curriculum documents addressed most components of the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Work on curriculum during the period under review included development of grade-level benchmarks to address the lack of consistent measurable outcomes and assessments. The district had an established curriculum review process in place, but gaps occurred in the timing of reviews due to the large turnover in administrative positions during the review period.

The district analyzed data from the MCAS tests and other assessments and began a full review of the ELA program for grades K-6 in 2005-2006. The district modified the core ELA program and added to it over time. The district felt the core program itself needed strengthening. As a result, the district selected a new core reading program, Harcourt Brace Trophies, for implementation in 2006-2007. The mathematics program, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1997, was not aligned with the 2000 curriculum frameworks, but the district addressed this through compacting units and supplementing materials. The curriculum committee had reviewed the mathematics program in 2002-2003. Horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment, while addressed within the elementary, middle, and high school levels, was more tentative at transition points between schools. When K-8 curriculum directors were in place, the middle school curriculum had stronger articulation with the high school curriculum. The high school addressed curriculum work during the summer, as time was not provided for this during professional development days. Principals were the curriculum leaders in the schools and received support from assistant principals, K-8 directors, and high school department heads.

The district used formal and informal classroom walk-throughs to monitor instruction and evaluate teacher effectiveness. However, protocols for walk-throughs and lesson plan formats were inconsistent. At the elementary level, principals looked for teachers working with

individual students and using best practices. They expected to see the goals and objectives of the lesson clearly stated and that students understood them. At the high school, the principal's council, made up of the principal and department heads, met regularly to monitor teachers' implementation of the curriculum and their use of best practices. The district supported several professional development initiatives for middle school mathematics teachers. For example, some teachers took part in Discrete Mathematical Ideas (DMI) institutes to strengthen understanding of concepts and building activities. Another group took part in an Educational Development Center (EDC) lesson study program. These groups worked together to develop new lessons. Professional development also was provided when data revealed a need for staff to learn additional instructional strategies or models, such as that provided for elementary teachers in guided reading.

The district analyzed and used student assessment data to inform instruction, align curriculum, and develop additional program materials; however, it did not use assessment data to monitor teacher effectiveness. The EQA examiners reviewed a random sample of 38 teacher personnel files, which showed summative evaluations were informative but in general did not include recommendations for improvement. Elementary principals used data at staff meetings to address the modification and adjustment of curriculum. At the middle school and high school, the mathematics programs were adjusted to allow students who were not prepared to take a full-year Pre-Algebra course at grade 7 or a full-year Algebra I course at grade 9 to take the course over a two-year duration. Integrated mathematics courses were phased out and all grade 7 and 8 students took Pre-Algebra or Algebra I. Some special needs students were able to take alternative classes in the core content areas that taught the same curriculum at a slower pace.

The high school did not meet the DOE requirement of 990 hours of instructional time because the school placed some students in directed study classes that had no curriculum. The district provided teachers at all levels with technology for their use in the instructional process and in ELA, math, and science courses in which integration was evident.

Indicators

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Examination of district curriculum documents and interviews with administrators showed that during the period under review, the district implemented curricula at all grade levels in tested core content areas that addressed components of the state curriculum frameworks. The elementary curriculum guide format listed learning standards, skills and strategies, suggested instructional activities, graphic organizers, materials and resources, performance assessment tasks (new in 2006-2007), and connections to other disciplines. Curriculum groups completed a general list of grade-level benchmarks in the summer of 2006. These would appear at the front of each grade-level guide. During the period under review, the guides did not consistently include measurable outcomes or assessments; however, work began in the summer of 2006 in these areas and continued into the 2006-2007 school year.

The review process for the ELA curriculum for grades 1-6 began in the 2005-2006 school year and continued into the 2006-2007 school year. As a result, the district purchased a new core reading program, Trophies, from Harcourt Brace at the end of 2005-2006. The district planned implementation of this program for school year 2006-2007.

Interviewees reported that for both ELA and mathematics at the elementary level, the core program, McGinn for reading and Silver Burdett Ginn for math, had been added to and modified over time to the point where the core program itself needed strengthening. Administrators pointed to this as one of the issues that may have contributed to relatively flat MCAS test scores during the period under review. The district had not determined the alignment of its core math

text with the 2000 mathematics framework. An administrator stated, “The program was good for developing conceptual understanding, but not ... skills for MCAS.” The district supplemented the core text to achieve alignment. This strategy included “compacting units” where staff assessed students at the beginning and end of a unit through pre- and post-tests designed by staff. If students scored 90 percent or better, they would go to an alternate unit.

At the high school, the format of curriculum guides consisted of scope and sequence; benchmarks (new in 2006-2007); curriculum by grade and level that listed date/unit/focus/texts; learning standards/core knowledge/core vocabulary; instructional activities; and assessments. Interviewees indicated that the district had added rubrics for academic expectations because of recommendations in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) report. Administrators reported that the district addressed pacing and mapping of the curriculum through workshops in the summer of 2006 for addition to curriculum documents for 2006-2007. The science department developed a two-year sequence for biology and added AP Biology.

2. The district’s curricula in all tested areas were aligned horizontally and vertically.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, the district did not consistently align the curricula in all tested areas horizontally and vertically. There were gaps in the formal curriculum review cycle due to administrative vacancies during the period under review. According to administrators, analysis of data and modification of curriculum continued at each level; however, a full K-12 program review did not occur in the period described in the district review cycle. Mathematics and science had received a complete review in 2002-2003. Social studies received a complete review in 2005-2006. ELA’s review began in 2005-2006 for grades K-6 with grades 7-12 planned for 2006-2007. Because of the 2005-2006 review, the district purchased a new core literacy program, Harcourt Brace Trophies, scheduled for implementation in 2006-2007. During this time administrators indicated that K-8 directors would communicate with high school department

heads to review course work for transitions to the high school. Administrators reported that when a K-8 position was vacant, principals made efforts to see uniform policies and practices in place. Elementary schools used grade-level meetings to align curricula within the elementary grades. Alignment between levels was tentative.

During the period under review, administrators realigned math courses at grades 7-12, eliminated the integrated mathematics program, and instituted Pre-Algebra and Algebra for all grade 7 and 8 students, Geometry or Algebra I at the high school, and combinations of courses to support special needs students and students at risk of failing the MCAS tests. The K-8 directors of ELA and math took part in course articulation and sequencing activities both for middle to high school and elementary to middle school. According to administrators, the high school performed curriculum work during summer workshops, as the district did not provide time during professional development days. A principal stated, “Participants must make sure the curricula are vertically aligned and that teachers who will have to teach it are actively involved in writing it.” Staff noted the teachers rotated teaching courses and taught all levels.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Administrators and staff indicated in interviews that the principals were the curriculum leaders who oversaw the use, alignment, consistency, and effectiveness of delivery of the curricula that focused on improvement for all students. Assistant principals, the K-8 directors of ELA and math, and department heads at the high school were an integral part of the principals’ oversight of curriculum. Administrators indicated that at the high school, the principal’s council, made up of the principal and department heads, met weekly to discuss how teachers delivered the curriculum and used best practices. Department chairs were responsible for reviewing and

updating curriculum and assessments based on data analysis. To address concerns about the MCAS test scores of students with disabilities, the principal met with the special needs teachers during the 2005-2006 school year to brainstorm ways to improve the achievement of this subgroup. The district provided special needs paraprofessionals with training in math strategies. In addition, two special needs math teachers attended all regular math departmental meetings, and a special needs English teacher did the same with the English department. Administrators indicated that the district provided training in *The Skillful Teacher* and *The Skillful Leader* for all administrative staff. At the high school, department heads conducted walk-throughs to note whether teachers showed a depth of knowledge and good management skills, and to note their use of classroom routines, such as starting on time, being on task, and having strategies that correlated with the purpose of the lesson.

At the middle school, the principal met once in a five-week cycle with the faculty of each content area regarding curriculum. No supervision/coordination structure for core subject areas existed at the middle school. There was a director for K-8 ELA/social studies and one for math/science. The principal would cover a class so that a teacher could observe and reflect with colleagues.

At the elementary level, administrators reported that monitoring and oversight of classes occurred during walk-throughs. They would observe and evaluate whether teachers were working with individual students and using best practices. Principals presented achievement data at staff meetings, and schools used grade-level meetings to discuss how to modify and adjust curriculum.

As reported by administrators, the district had some staff members trained in the Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process during 2005-2006. The district planned to provide this training to all administrators in 2006-2007 for use in developing SIPs.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, interviewees indicated that each school provided active leadership and support for effective instructional strategies, techniques, and methods grounded in research and focused on improved achievement for all students. Each year the district analyzed data from the MCAS tests and other assessments, such as the DRA, the SRI, and formative assessments from the literacy and mathematics programs. The district used the data to review the curriculum, modify instruction, develop additional materials for the program, and check for alignment to the frameworks. In spite of work modifying and enriching core reading and math programs, the district's MCAS test scores remained above the state average, but were flat during the review period. The achievement gap between regular education students and students with disabilities did not narrow.

The core literacy program was McGraw Hill, which the district implemented in 1999, and the core math program was Silver Burdett Ginn, which the district implemented in 1997. Over time, the district had modified and supplemented these programs to the extent that a full curriculum review was required to bring consistency to the programs. Administrators felt that part of the flat performance in the MCAS test scores during the period under review, especially for the students with disabilities subgroup, was due to program inconsistencies. After careful review and research, the district selected a new core program, Harcourt Brace Trophies, for ELA in grades K-6. The program addressed elements of balanced literacy and provided interventions for students at risk and for ELL students, and included differentiated instruction methodologies. Assessments and benchmarks were an integral part of the program. The program incorporated the Six Traits of Writing; however, the district had used the John Collins Writing Across the Curriculum program for many years. As a result, the district planned to work with the Harcourt

and Collins representatives to integrate the programs. The district planned implementation of the Harcourt Trophies program for September 2006. Harcourt Brace would provide two days of professional development prior to the start of school.

In interviews, administrators reported that the district would address similar findings for the mathematics core program at grades K-6 through a full mathematics curriculum review during 2006-2007 with adoption of a new core program the following year. At the middle school, administrators reported that the district had trained four teachers in DMI during 2004-2005. Another group of teachers began working with EDC on lesson study. During lesson studies, teachers collaborated on viewing student work and building plans integrating mathematical concepts and ideas. This three-year project began during the period under review. Collaboration between the two groups resulted in new lesson development. Teachers trained in DMI presented a summer math camp for staff to explore mathematical ideas and activities.

According to principals, during the period under review, the middle school special needs model was 97 to 99 percent inclusion. The district implemented the mathematics program for grades 7 and 8 in a way that allowed students who were not ready for a full-year Pre-Algebra course at grade 7 to take the course over two years. The same option became available at the high school, where a student might take Algebra I part A in grade 9, Geometry essentials in grade 10, and Algebra I part B in grade 11.

At the elementary level, interviewees reported staff meetings included less administrative activity and more Looking At Student Work (LASW). By contrast, elementary teachers met monthly once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Teachers used the morning session to discuss grade-level concerns and used the afternoon session for vertical curriculum meetings.

Administrators reported that following the NEASC recommendations, high school department heads and staff developed graduation expectations for each course, and during the summer of 2006 developed common rubrics for graduation expectations.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The examiners' review of documents and interviews with staff revealed that the district had an established, documented process for the regular and timely review and revision of curricula based on valid research and the analysis of the MCAS test and other assessment results which focused on improved achievement for all subgroups. The curriculum review cycle document revealed a six-year process that included review and evaluate in year one, study and produce in year two, implement in years three and four, and support in years five and six. The district posted curriculum committee positions when a curriculum review began. The assistant superintendent, principals, K-8 directors, high school department heads, and special needs representatives comprised the committee. During the period under review, several central office and building-level administrators left the district and some K-8 director positions were vacant. Analysis of the MCAS test results continued at all levels and curriculum work continued through grade-level and departmental meetings and summer curriculum workshops.

Between 2002 and 2005, no K-12 reviews took place; however, the district did an elementary foreign language review. The district aligned the social studies curriculum to the new framework for grades K-12 in 2005-2006. Also during 2005-2006, the district initiated a K-6 ELA review, researched literacy programs and practices, and analyzed the MCAS, TerraNova, DRA, SRI, and other formative assessment results to support selection of a new core balanced literacy program. The district selected Harcourt Brace Trophies.

Administrators reported the elementary curriculum format changed during the period under review to add a column for assessments for all content areas, with work on mapping and pacing taking place during the summer of 2006. Interviewees indicated that at the high school a shift in

the format of the curriculum had also taken place. Previously, departments moved from addressing the topic to matching it to standards. Under the new format, the standards were the primary focus with the topics addressing them listed. Standards drove curriculum revisions in the last year of the period under review.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Through interviews and examination of documents, the examiners found that the district analyzed student achievement data and allocated instructional time in the tested core content areas that focused on improved rates of proficiency for all students. However, a review of time on learning indicated that the district did not meet time on learning at the high school. The high school placed students in directed study classes that had no set curriculum or grading. This reduced the time on learning at the high school to 936 hours, below the 990-hour requirement. Administrators reported and documents showed that the high school had 55-minute classes with a seven-period day in a six-day cycle, with one class dropped each day. This provided more continuous class time blocks. The math curriculum review in 2002-2003 resulted in the adoption of new math materials and realignment of courses in grades 7-12. The district offered Algebra I at grade 9 and the district discontinued integrated mathematics as students completed that level. The district selected the Prentice Hall program for all levels of mathematics courses in grades 7-12.

Administrators described the following ways in which they allocated instructional time. The district created alternative classes in each of the core content areas for special needs students only. Teachers covered the regular curriculum with these students, but at a slower pace more appropriate to their level.

The high school added MCAS test review classes. During the period under review, the district encouraged students who scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ or ‘Needs Improvement’ categories to take MCAS review classes for ELA and/or math. These courses for MCAS I and II at grades 9 and 10, respectively, provided an additional three periods of math each cycle. An MCAS III class was provided for students who failed the MCAS tests. All grade 9 students took a three-period MCAS review class for ELA.

Administrators reported that at the middle school they added a Geometry elective to the grade 7 curriculum as enrichment. In addition, the school developed a pre-algebra Jump Start program to help lower- and middle-level students in Pre-Algebra with three additional periods in math. Based on analysis of the MCAS test data for grade 6, staff realigned the science topics to create an additional mathematics class.

At the elementary level, interviewees stated that students received 90 minutes of literacy instruction and 60 minutes of mathematics instruction. Title I students received double the time for literacy daily.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, an examination of documents and interviews with staff showed that appropriate educational technology was available and used as an integral part of the instructional process, especially in mathematics. At the high school, according to the 2005 NEASC Special Progress Report, teachers in the English department were required to integrate technology for instruction and assessment. The department used the writing center for research; for creative, expository, and journal writing assignments; to produce PowerPoint presentations; to prepare for the MCAS and SAT tests through Internet sites; and to review grammar.

The mathematics department had 250 graphing calculators for use by students, 10 TI 84+ overheads, and LCD panels. The use of the graphing calculators was integral to the math program. The district purchased a new mathematics series that included Internet access for student assistance and the ability to access textbooks online. All teachers had access to a computer lab that contained FATHOM, computer software used in the statistics classes, and Geometer's Sketchpad IV for geometry classes.

Science classes used LCD projectors to enhance instruction through PowerPoint presentations. Examiners observed during classroom visits that science labs were old, and the district was looking to the capital improvement plan to upgrade the labs.

Technology at the middle school included four to five computers in each classroom, LCD panels, and computer labs. The district purchased a computer web-based program entitled Study Island during the period under review. The program took students from remediation through enrichment, and students could access the program at school, home, or anywhere where Internet access was available. To improve math fact fluency, the middle school added a software program in which students used a Jeopardy format to answer questions.

According to interviewees, the elementary schools used AlphaSmarts for writing and Lexia software for phonics, and students in grade 2 were able to use Study Island.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Interviews with administrators indicated the district and school leaders used informal practices and formal evaluations to monitor teachers' instruction. A review of 38 teacher evaluation files showed classroom observation forms to be informative but only occasionally instructive. The files did not indicate the district held teachers accountable for student achievement. The district

had no formal, consistent process or protocol for walk-throughs. According to interviewees, the district provided training in *The Skillful Teacher* and *The Skillful Leader* for principals and department chairs. An outside consultant provided *The Skillful Leader* course on site during 2003-2004.

Administrators reported that they conducted informal walk-throughs of five to 15 minutes duration on a regular basis. Feedback provided was oral, in a note, or in an e-mail. In a walk-through, administrators were looking for consistency, level of rigor, student engagement, higher-order questioning, alignment, pacing, and strategies. High school department heads and K-8 directors conducted observations but did not write summative evaluations. Recommendations and suggestions were often oral and not put into writing in the evaluation instrument.

Elementary administrators expected to see that the goal and objectives of the lesson were clearly stated and that the students knew and understood them. Walk-throughs occurred at different times to see the beginning, middle, or end of classes with administrators talking to students asking, “What are you doing?” Administrators and staff described a mentoring program that fostered high expectations through support of teachers new to teaching or new to the district. A review of staff handbooks along with administrator interviews showed that plan books were not monitored for content or standards unless an observation was about to happen, a walk-through was occurring, or a substitute teacher was scheduled in the classroom. The district did not have a protocol for lesson plan criteria. Examiners found individual professional development goals an integral part of personnel files with an expectation that teachers would meet those goals.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, administrators indicated that the district used ongoing formative and summative student assessment data to inform instruction and professional development but not to monitor the effectiveness of teachers' instruction. The district provided resources and support to improve and maintain high levels of instructional quality and delivery. Evaluations/observations did not use formative data nor were student achievement data linked to teacher evaluations.

Administrators reported the ongoing review and analysis of formative and summative assessment data to inform instruction and professional development. The principal and K-8 directors received the MCAS and TerraNova results and reviewed them with department heads and staff. They also analyzed data from formative assessments, the DRA and SRI, and other assessments and used them to inform curriculum and instruction.

The district provided professional development to staff when data analysis showed a need for additional instructional strategies or models. All grade 2-9 teachers received instruction from the company that produced the TerraNova test on basic statistics, data provided by the test, and how to use the data to drive instruction more effectively.

Administrators described a situation two years ago when elementary staff were struggling with guided reading. The K-8 ELA director spent a full week with grade 1 and 2 teachers. During the first week the district provided substitute coverage so that all teachers were able to watch the process. Teachers spent the second week in conferences with the consultant followed by a week of coaching in classrooms.

Interviewees indicated the district had a strong mentoring program. The district assigned mentors to new teachers or teachers new to a position in the district. The program provided two years of support, with mentors and mentees meeting frequently in the first year and less frequently in the second. The district had approximately 100 trained mentors.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the site visit, the EQA examiners observed 42 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 26 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching. The attributes were grouped into five categories: classroom management, instructional practice, expectations, student activity and behavior, and climate. The EQA examiners checked the attributes that they observed in each of the five categories during their time spent in the classroom. Observations were conducted at Foxborough's five schools as follows: 21 at the elementary schools, nine at the middle school, and 12 at the high school. In total, the EQA examiners observed 22 ELA classrooms, 17 math classrooms, three science classrooms, and no social studies classrooms.

Classroom management refers to the maintenance of order and structure within the classroom. Positive indicators of classroom management were evident in 96 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 100 percent at the elementary level, 92 percent at the middle school level, and 92 percent at the high school level.

Instructional practice was the largest category reviewed by the examiners. Effective instructional practice is considered evident when the teacher's questions transcend direct recall and include open-ended questions that require the use of higher-order thinking skills. Students should be encouraged to go beyond their initial responses, to analyze, to synthesize, to compare and contrast, and to explain their own thinking. Class time should be focused on student learning. Students who have finished their work should be provided with other appropriate tasks; students who are off task should be redirected to their task. The work should engage all students; it should

be age-appropriate, and attuned to many learning modalities, including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. The pace of the class should be appropriate, challenging, and engaging for all students. Instruction should be differentiated so that all learners are challenged. The lesson should be clearly aligned with the state curriculum frameworks and either posted on the board or cited in the teacher's planner. The lesson's objectives should be clear and explicitly articulated. The teacher should use standards-based instruction to set objectives, to plan activities, to assess the effect of the lesson, and to measure progress for all learners. Positive indicators of instructional practice were evident in 78 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 89 percent at the elementary level, 70 percent at the middle school level, and 66 percent at the high school level.

Expectations refers to the maintenance of high standards for students by teachers. Evidence of high expectations could include recent examples of high quality student work posted in the classroom. In addition, high quality work should be evident through rubrics that may sometimes be generated by students. Tasks should be challenging for all students, and all students should have access to the same curriculum, although the instruction and strategies may be adapted to the needs of students. The teacher should clearly maintain and communicate high expectations for student work during class time. All students should be expected to be on task and engaged in the lesson. High expectations for students were evident in 80 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 87 percent at the elementary level, 75 percent at the middle school level, and 73 percent at the high school level.

Positive student activity and behavior are considered evident when students are actively engaged in the learning process. They must show a clear understanding of the objective of the lesson and interact with the teacher and each other in accomplishing the tasks at hand. They should be attentive and responsive. While the environment may be busy and constructive, it must also be controlled and orderly. There should be few distractions, and the learning process must be evident. Indicators of positive student activity and behavior were evident in 76 percent of the

classrooms districtwide, with 86 percent at the elementary level, 71 percent at the middle school level, and 63 percent at the high school level.

Finally, the concept of *climate* is considered evident when the classroom is welcoming, and the teacher is an active listener and treats all students with respect. Students should listen attentively to and be respectful of all other students. Many resources and means beyond the textbook should be available for learning; these may include technology, manipulatives, cassettes, visuals, overhead projectors, and a classroom library. Positive indicators of climate were evident in 87 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 100 percent at the elementary school level, 85 percent at the middle school level, and 67 percent at the high school level.

Summary of Classroom Observations

	Number of Classrooms						Computers		
	ELA	Math	Science	Total	Average Class Size	Average Paraprofs. per Class	Total Number	Number for Student Use	Average Students per Computer
Elementary	10	10	1	21	18.2	0.5	95	83	4.6
Middle	4	4	1	9	18.9	0.3	50	47	3.6
High	8	3	1	12	19.5	0.1	11	3	0.3
Total	22	17	3	42	18.7	0.3	156	133	5.9

	Classroom Management	Instructional Practice	Expectations	Student Activity & Behavior	Climate
Elementary					
Total checks	84	166	84	107	63
Maximum possible	84	189	72	126	63
Avg. percent of checks	100	89	87	86	100
Middle					
Total checks	33	55	27	36	23
Maximum possible	45	81	45	54	27
Avg. percent of checks	92	70	75	71	85
High					
Total checks	44	70	35	42	24
Maximum possible	48	108	48	72	36
Avg. percent of checks	92	66	73	63	67
Total					
Total checks	161	291	134	185	110
Maximum possible	168	378	168	252	126
Avg. percent of checks	96	78	80	76	87

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

III. Assessment and Program Evaluation

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The district had a formative and summative assessment system in place by the end of the period under review, and district and school leaders relied on the results of the MCAS tests at all appropriate grade levels, the TerraNova at grades 2-9, and the PSAT at grade 10 to measure student achievement and to inform decision-making.
- Although the district scheduled regular internal program reviews to inform the effectiveness of its academic programs during the period under review, reviews were inconsistent due to leadership position turnover and vacancies and lack of program review procedures.
- In the last year of the review period, the district conducted a comprehensive internal review of the ELA program for grades K-6, and launched a new elementary ELA curriculum in school year 2006-2007.
- After completion of the K-6 ELA curriculum review, the district codified program review procedures into new guidelines to define future internal reviews.

- District and school leaders communicated data and other pertinent information about student achievement to all appropriate staff members and the community in a timely manner.
- The district's students had high rates of participation on all assessments.

Summary

District and school leaders had put in place a comprehensive formative and summative assessment program by the end of the period under review. In addition to the MCAS tests, leaders and teachers monitored students' development of basic skills through the TerraNova test, administered to all students in grades 2-9, and the PSAT, required of all grade 10 students. Diagnostic literacy tests informed teachers and parents about reading readiness and literacy strengths and weaknesses at entry and in the early elementary years for both regular and special education students. Teachers administered the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in grades 1-4 to sustain diagnostic tracking of student reading abilities and to place students in appropriate reading groups or classes. At the middle school, the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) provided additional information regarding students' literacy.

The district disaggregated and analyzed data from the formative and summative assessments to meet the particular needs of subgroups, such as the special education subgroup. These analyses led to the implementation of MCAS remediation programs offered during the school day and in the summer for students at all levels who were at risk of failing or who failed the MCAS tests, and the restructuring of math and science courses to better meet the needs of both more advanced and less advanced students. During district professional development days, teachers learned to administer and use the results of the DRA and to use data from standardized tests to drive instruction.

Although the district analyzed and used data gleaned from standardized tests as well as from classroom-based assessments, several impediments prevented an optimum analysis and use of data to improve student achievement. First, a number of critical leadership positions left unfilled during the early part of the review period delayed some analysis and implementation of

improvement strategies, according to interviewees. Second, many classroom teachers did not fully use student achievement data to inform instruction and set student goals at all levels, according to a review of curriculum documents. Finally, without a DIP or standards-based SIPs, the use of achievement data to measure educational progress and modify curriculum and instruction was fragmented.

By the end of the review period, the district had restructured the schedule for its internal curriculum review cycle and had codified the procedures professional staff would use to conduct internal curriculum reviews. These revisions stemmed from a comprehensive curriculum review of the K-6 ELA program conducted in the last year of the review period. One result of that review was the implementation of a new reading program in the 2006-2007 school year. The district also performed a review of the elementary Spanish language program and its John Collins Writing Program. However, other curriculum reviews targeted for midway through the period under review did not take place, mainly due to vacancies in key academic leadership positions, according to interviewees.

Several required external reviews took place during the review period, such as the Department of Education Coordinated Program Review (CPR) and a Title I review. In addition, high school professional staff submitted the two-year and five-year reports addressing recommendations from the re-accreditation report completed in 2001 by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). No other external reviews assessed the effectiveness of instructional or support programs. District and school leaders used information from internal and external audits and program reviews to improve instruction, prioritize goals, define professional development, allocate time and resources, and initiate or discontinue programs and services.

Indicators

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Although the district lacked policies related to the collection, analysis, and use of assessment data, information gathered from documents and interviews indicated that by the end of the period under review, district and school leaders used multiple assessment results for a variety of purposes.

In addition to specific classroom-based assessments, district and school leaders and teachers analyzed and used aggregated and disaggregated results from the MCAS tests, the TerraNova in grades 2-9, and the PSAT in grade 10. They used them to gauge broad and specific trends in student achievement and to inform the effectiveness of program content, the delivery of the curriculum, and to plan professional development. The 2005-2006 ELA curriculum review conducted by an internal team noted that all elementary staff did not fully use student achievement data, such as the MCAS and TerraNova test results, to inform instruction and/or set student achievement goals.

By the end of the review period, school administrators and teachers used an array of literacy diagnostic tests including the DRA at grades 2-9 and the SRI at the middle school to track and assess students' strengths and weaknesses and for placement. The district administered the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O) at grades K-12 and the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) at grades 3-12 to discern language ability and measure progress toward proficiency for all LEP students.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

For the period under review, the district showed strong participation rates on all appropriate assessments. Data from the Merrimack Education Collaborative (MEC) indicated that more than 99 percent of all students participated in the MCAS ELA and math tests in 2006. For the STE test, 99 percent of regular education students and 98.7 percent of special education students participated. The district also required all students in grade 10 to participate in the PSAT. In interviews, teachers and administrators stated that many students also retook the PSAT in grade 11 for additional practice before taking the SAT Reasoning Test. As for other district-based formative and summative assessments, educators and parents revealed in interviews that the district's culture underscored the importance of testing programs, and high participation rates existed at all schools on these assessments.

The district included special education students in appropriate classroom- and school-based testing programs and disaggregated and separately analyzed results from those tests. School psychologists conducted other testing for special education students using a variety of instruments appropriate to Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Testing for Title I students, especially at grades 1-4, met all requirements.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Based on information from documents and interviews, the EQA examiners determined that school leaders used district-generated reporting instruments as well as report cards to report student achievement; however, the lack of a DIP to articulate annual goals represented a weakness in the district's accountability system. Without a DIP during the entire review period, district and school leaders, teachers, parents, and the community lacked an important means to acknowledge shared goals, to measure progress toward or the attainment of those goals, or to assess effectiveness of teaching and decision-making. In addition, the district's SIPs, which could have aligned each school's academic goals with the district's goals if a DIP were present, were not standards based and lacked consistency in how they were developed, articulated, and applied across schools during the review period. At the end of the final year of the period under review, the middle school administrators developed a well documented, standards-based SIP which district leaders adopted as a new template for other schools to follow in the future.

Documents and interviews with administrators, teachers, and parents indicated that several other reporting instruments were in use. School handbooks for each school described all grading and reporting procedures. For grades K-12, interim progress reports and quarterly report cards represented opportunities for students and families to learn about student progress and achievement. Teachers used a range of appropriate formative and summative assessments as well as other indicators to formulate grades. Among those cited by educators during interviews, apart from standardized tests, were quizzes, exams, homework assignments, writing exercises, oral discussions, projects, collaborative group work, portfolios, and labs.

The elementary school parent councils supported a review and revision of the report card format during the review period. After study and research, a task force of elementary teachers designed a standards-based report card that featured power standards drawn from ELA, math, science, and social studies curricula and aligned to the state curriculum frameworks. The new report card also included standards for work habits and conduct. In addition, teachers participated in professional

development to become more proficient in writing more effective and informative comments on report cards. At the elementary level, teachers conducted parent conferences annually to communicate information about student achievement.

At the middle school, report cards and progress reports informed students and families about student achievement. In addition, at the middle school math teachers correlated placement tests with achievement data and sent home placement information and recommendations for parental approval. High school report cards evaluated students quarterly using traditional letter grades and teacher comments. High school teachers also evaluated students at midyear and issued written progress reports. High school students took common final exams in full- and half-credit academic courses which counted for 20 percent of course final averages, and final exam grades were recorded on report cards. The high school parent council successfully promoted a new system to calculate grade point averages (GPAs) tied to course levels, e.g., AP, Level I-Honors, and Level II-College Placement, that took effect in September 2005 for the class of 2007. In addition to these reporting instruments, teachers sent appropriate and timely progress reports home for all special education and Title I students.

Evidence from documents and interviews indicated that district leaders reported to appropriate staff and the community on student achievement through a number of instruments. District and school leaders presented an overview analysis of standardized summative test results such as those from the MCAS tests and the TerraNova at faculty meetings and at televised school committee meetings. The district posted the MCAS results on the district's website. In 2004, with consultant help from the Educational Research, Testing and Evaluation Consultants (ERTEC), and after more district and school staff experienced professional development in TestWiz training, reports to the school committee grew more complex and comprehensive. In addition to aggregated and disaggregated data and summary analysis, school committee presentations outlined areas in need of improvement and how parents could help their children improve.

Principals' newsletters communicated information about the MCAS test results to parents of students at the elementary and middle schools. Toward the end of the review period, the high school posted an "annual report card" on its website. The "report card" informed parents about key high school data, including SAT results. Another link on the high school website directed viewers to the high school's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) report card, which included all aggregated and disaggregated proficiency data from the grade 10 MCAS tests.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, district and school leaders used a variety of assessment tools in addition to the MCAS tests to measure student progress and disseminated results in a timely manner to appropriate staff; however, the use of benchmarks was limited at the district level mainly due to the absence of a DIP and was inconsistent across grade levels. Rubrics for writing did not exist uniformly and the high school began to develop them in the summer of 2006. An initiative to develop and use benchmarks began in August 2006 for academic programs in grades K-8.

While the analysis and use of student achievement data by leaders and teachers varied somewhat across schools and grade levels, district and school leaders made a focused effort to use a variety of assessment tools to measure and analyze student achievement and to disseminate the results of that analysis. Once the district filled vacant administrative positions, the assistant superintendent, the K-8 director for ELA/social studies, the K-8 director for mathematics/science, school principals, some guidance counselors, and several high school department heads analyzed the MCAS test results using TestWiz. They looked at data disaggregated by regular and special education student status, by gender, by participation in the

free or reduced-cost lunch program, for African-American students, by item, by strands in math, and by performance and proficiency levels. The analyses prompted discussions and recommendations for improvement for individual schools, grade levels, departments, and courses. As the review years progressed, leadership highlighted items for which fewer than 70 percent of the students responded correctly and identified students scoring below the state average. Late in the review period, the K-8 directors worked with staff to design MCAS test improvement plans that consisted of a checklist of program recommendations, specific classroom strategies, and suggestions for parents such as working through math problems with their children.

A matrix of tests administered in the last year of the review period indicated that the district used a number of other assessments in addition to the MCAS tests to diagnose and measure ELA development and achievement and for placement at the elementary and middle schools. From this matrix, the EQA examiners learned that students in early elementary grades took the Clay Observation and Print Concepts, Yopp Rhyme, Yopp Singer Phoneme Blending, and Ekwel-Shanker Phoneme Blending assessments to demonstrate ELA readiness and fluency. Using the DRA, the district tested all students in grades 2-4 in September and June and all at-risk students in grades 2-9 in September, January, and June. Interviewees indicated that some middle school teachers opted to test all students using the DRA to take advantage of its diagnostic capability. Students in grades 5 and 6 also took the SRI. Students in grades 1-3 and 5-8 experienced twice-yearly writing assessments. In addition to the math assessment provided by the MCAS tests, the TerraNova, and classroom-based tests and pre-tests, the district administered locally-developed math placement tests to students in grades 6 and 7. Although the district communicated the results of these tests to all appropriate staff and used them to refine programs, pedagogy, and professional development, information in the 2005-2006 ELA program review indicated that all staff did not fully use data from the MCAS and TerraNova tests to inform instruction and set achievement goals. Furthermore, the review noted that a weakness in the DRA did not allow the district to conduct a consistent analysis and application of the informal DRA tool. The ELA

report recommended that these items be addressed, and district and school leaders began to address them in August 2006.

With the multiple changes of leadership at the high school during the period under review, practices and procedures for reviewing analyses of student achievement data varied from principal to principal. In 2002, district leadership required all grade 10 and 11 students to take the PSAT at district expense to offer students practice in test-taking skills in preparation for the SAT. In 2005-2006, high school students also took AP tests in 10 subjects. The high school administrative team, comprised of the principal, assistant principals, and department heads, examined results from the MCAS tests and re-tests as well as scores from the PSAT, SAT, and AP tests. Interviewees commented that those analyses were more informal during the review years and that a more systematic and rigorous analysis, particularly of the MCAS results, took place at departmental and course-level meetings. There, department heads conducted more directed discussions with teachers. High school leaders and faculty discussed the MCAS test and re-test results at whole school faculty meetings. Although not called benchmarks, high school leaders noted that in ELA and math, specific skill levels for individual courses were clearly articulated and linked to graduation expectations stated in the student handbook. Limited data or measures of attainment of these graduation expectations existed other than letter grades on report cards and an analysis of the MCAS test results.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, district and school leadership used, although sometimes inconsistently due to administrative turnover, student assessment results and other assessment data to measure the effectiveness of instructional and support programs. Information from documents and interviews indicated that for intermittent periods, when key academic leadership

positions were vacant, the superintendent temporarily took on additional academic leadership, and high rates of leadership turnover existed at the school levels. Despite administrative turnover, district and school leaders introduced program modifications in mathematics such as the decision to discontinue integrated mathematics at the middle school and realign math courses in grades 7-12. The district instituted Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1 for all grade 7 and 8 students followed by Geometry or Algebra 1 at the high school. Through a “Jumpstart” process that added three additional periods per week, middle school teachers supported low-achieving math students. The math department also restructured the math sequence for students in the high school’s alternative classes.

By end of the review period, with the appointment of a full complement of leadership personnel, the examiners found documented improvement in the use of assessment results and other achievement data to measure program effectiveness. For example, teams of teachers met often with the principal or a department head during in-service time or common planning time to review achievement results, assess program effectiveness, and make adjustments. Professional development focused on program improvement by offering workshops and training on specific program weaknesses. Late in the review period, leaders and teachers at the elementary level began to include measurable outcomes or assessments in curriculum guides for ELA, mathematics, social studies, and science. They also initiated curriculum mapping and pacing work that would continue in 2006-2007. The high school English department began to develop writing rubrics in the summer of 2006. The district conducted an ELA program review for grades K-6 and implemented a new ELA curriculum in 2006-2007.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the period under review, district and school leaders irregularly conducted internal curriculum reviews to inform the effectiveness of program implementation and to recommend program improvements. The district engaged in required external reviews or audits. Although a school committee policy approved in 1988 required internal curriculum reviews, that policy vaguely defined review procedures and did not reflect the rigors of a standards-based curriculum and accountability system. In addition, the district's review cycle was interrupted when several critical positions remained unfilled in the early part of the review period. From 2003 to 2005, no internal K-12 curriculum reviews took place in the district, although program recommendations and revisions took place within departments and within schools. However, district leaders made some progress during the review period, specifically in the ELA program for grades K-6. For all internal and external reviews, district and school leaders communicated results to all appropriate staff and to the school committee.

During the 2005-2006 school year, a 10-member team conducted an internal review of the K-6 ELA program to complete the first two phases of a four-phase curriculum review cycle, i.e., review/evaluate, study/produce, implement, and support. The report indicated that the first two phases of the cycle involved a review of all aspects of the ELA program, analysis of data from student assessments, teacher surveys, meetings with colleagues, and analysis of scientifically-based research on core reading programs. The committee considered program materials, professional development, and instructional time in its report. District and school leaders began to implement the report's recommendations in August 2006. In November 2006, the district adopted an updated procedure for its curriculum review cycle based on the procedure used for the 2005-2006 K-6 ELA program review.

From 2003 to 2005, a nine-person team reviewed the elementary Spanish language program offered in grades 1-4. Its report offered recommendations related to time in class, textbook selection, curriculum development, assessment, professional development, student support, and

communication with parents and the community. In addition, teachers collaborated with representatives from the John Collins Writing Program to review that program during the review period.

Several required external reviews took place during the review period to inform both the effectiveness of specific programs and service delivery systems. The DOE conducted a CPR for special education services. CPR review activities included a self-assessment, the initial 2003 report, a mid-cycle review, and a report on the mid-cycle review. By the end of the review period, the special education department had completed nearly all DOE recommendations to improve special education services, including testing and reporting. The district only partially met English language learner (ELL) program requirements related to curriculum, exit criteria, parent involvement, and documentation. School and district leadership produced the two- and five-year reports required to respond to recommendations from the 2001 accreditation report conducted by the NEASC.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, district and school leaders reviewed student assessment results and other pertinent data and used them formally and informally to prioritize goals and allocate time and resources. They informally considered assessment results and other pertinent data to assign staff to specific grade levels, courses, or programs.

Several examples drawn from a review of documents and interviews illustrate how district and school leaders reallocated time and resources to meet instructional goals and improve student achievement. Because of the curriculum review conducted for the K-6 ELA program in school

year 2005-2006, district and school leaders recommended a new elementary school reading program to begin in the 2006-2007 school year. To prepare for implementation, they prioritized new goals and allocated resources for professional development during the summer of 2006 and the next school year. Starting in August 2006, district and school leaders and teachers met to learn to implement the new program, wrote academic benchmarks for ELA, wrote benchmarks as well for mathematics, science, and social studies, and made other revisions to curriculum documents.

In terms of allocating time, at the elementary level school leaders restructured the school schedule during the review period to accommodate time for morning remediation for at-risk students in grades 2-4. In addition, the district instituted a voluntary, fully-funded, five-week part-time summer Math Camp for students in grades 3-8. The middle school added a 20-minute period after lunch for extra help and included more time for academic support during the band/chorus/enrichment block for low-achieving students, especially those grade 7 and 8 students at risk of failing the MCAS tests, to receive additional help.

After reviewing MCAS and other achievement data, the high school created a three-tiered MCAS remediation program for students at risk of failing or who had failed the MCAS tests. MCAS I and MCAS II remediation courses targeted grade 9 and 10 students by offering them three additional math periods per six-day cycle. MCAS III was for high school students in grades 11 and 12 who had not yet passed the MCAS tests. For grade 10 students not at risk of failing, teachers allotted time in class, usually 15 to 20 minutes, for them to work in booklets designed by math strand to practice MCAS test questions. The high school science department adjusted the course sequence for biology, chemistry, and physics to support students aiming to take advanced science courses and to support special education students in the alternative classes.

Student assessment results, especially the MCAS test scores and other achievement data for ELA, mathematics, and science, set priorities for a number of professional development

activities during the period under review offered during the district's five professional development days. Teachers spent professional development time learning to administer and use the DRA to identify student strengths and weaknesses, set specific student literacy goals, and ensure more effective instruction. The district offered required professional development workshops on standardized testing and using data to drive decision-making. Teachers used in-service time to share strategies and learn how to teach students to respond more effectively to open-response questions. High school mathematics teachers prioritized the goal of working on appropriate assessments, both traditional and alternative, for honors and college preparation math courses.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, based on information from documents and interviews, district and school leadership used program evaluation results and student assessment data to initiate, modify, and discontinue programs and services with the goal of continuously improving the delivery of instruction and student achievement.

At the end of the period under review, district and school leaders had a clearer sense of potential instructional improvement in the elementary ELA program after completing the first two phases of the K-6 ELA curriculum program review and began to implement the review's recommendations in August 2006. School and district leaders also addressed recommendations from the CPR for the special education and ELL programs. In addition, at the high school district and school leaders continued to address recommendations outlined in the 2001 NEASC accreditation report as described in the district's two-year and five-year update reports.

District and school leaders also initiated, modified, and discontinued programs based on their analysis of student assessment data, particularly the MCAS test results. For example, the elementary schools added time for remediation in the school day and instituted a five-week, three half-days per week summer reading program for K-2 at-risk students. The voluntary program was fully funded using Title I funds and a special education grant. At the middle school, school leaders discontinued the integrated math course and extended the opportunity for students to gain academic support and content enrichment during the band/chorus/enrichment block.

The high school also modified and initiated programs to improve instruction and student achievement. School leadership instituted MCAS test support programs that met multiple times during a six-day cycle for students in all grades at risk of not passing the MCAS tests or for those who had failed the tests. School leaders redesigned the math sequence for the alternative math class to offer Algebra and Geometry in two separate courses. In the new sequence, students in alternative classes took the first half of Algebra in grade 9, Geometry in grade 10, the second half of Algebra in grade 11, and Math Skills in grade 12. The science department reconfigured the sequence of AP, honors, and college-level science courses to meet the needs of students who wanted to choose advanced level courses. The science department also adjusted the course sequence for special education students enrolled in the alternative courses.

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

IV. Human Resource Management and Professional Development

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The district had professional development and mentoring programs and funded them at appropriate levels. The district determined professional development needs based on the analysis of achievement data, teacher and program evaluations, and research-based practices.
- The district had hiring practices and procedures in place for teachers and administrators and applied for waivers from the Department of Education when needed.
- The district provided mentors to all new teachers, including teachers new to the district, and had trained approximately 100 mentor teachers.
- Although administrators performed formative and summative teacher evaluations, most in a random sample reviewed by the EQA did not include recommendations for improvement and some were not timely. Administrators performed informal walk-throughs of classrooms, but administrators did not have standardized classroom evaluation protocols.

- The district did not have a districtwide standard crisis and emergency plan. Schools provided crisis and emergency training based on individual, non-standardized school crisis and emergency plans.
- The district did not evaluate administrators annually and hold them explicitly accountable for student achievement results.

Summary

The district actively recruited candidates for teaching and administrative positions and had hiring procedures in place to establish an effective teaching force. The district advertised positions in *The Boston Globe* and on the district website and posted positions in the schools and central office. The district used a collaborative approach in hiring with applications vetted by principals and department chairs. The schools used interviewing committees, and the district formed interviewing committees when hiring administrators. The district had low teacher turnover and interviewees speculated that selectivity in the hiring process produced low turnover. Teachers cited the mentor program, the five days of professional development, course reimbursement, the collegial environment, and in-house promotional opportunities as their incentives for working in the district. Interviewees indicated that the district did not have any financial barriers to hiring teachers or administrators. The district provided licensure data to EQA examiners that indicated all but two teachers who were working on waivers and all administrators had the appropriate licensure. The central office tracked when staff licenses would expire and monitored the progress of staff members who were working toward licensure.

The district had professional development and mentoring programs in place during the period under review and funded them substantially. The mentoring program for teachers was a two-year program and the district had trained approximately 100 mentors and provided them to all new teachers in the district, including those with experience in other districts. Principals assigned mentors based on recommendations from department chairs or the special education director and tried to assign mentors with roles similar to those of the new teachers. For

struggling new teachers, the mentor and the teacher's supervisor recommended courses, professional development, and/or the observation of another teacher's class. No formal mentoring program was provided for district administrators, but administrators indicated that they had a strong, informal support system.

The district had a professional development team that coordinated professional development offerings in the district, and the district had five professional development days annually. Analysis of student achievement data, teacher evaluations, and research-based practices informed the professional development program, according to interviewees and a review of documents. For example, the district had trained many staff in TestWiz, and staff received training in the use of data associated with the TerraNova assessment. Workshops were also offered in instructional strategies for teachers using the John Collins Writing Program, for middle school math teachers, and for special education teachers. In FY 2004 through FY 2006, the district provided approximately \$470,000 for mentors, professional development, and tuition reimbursement.

District administrators received training in Research for Better Teaching (RBT) evaluation methods, and teachers received training in *The Skillful Teacher* methods. The district did not hold administrators and teachers explicitly accountable for student achievement. Principals conducted regular and detailed formative classroom evaluations, but the protocols for the informal walk-throughs were not standardized. Interviewees indicated that staff conducting walk-throughs looked for things such as student engagement and higher order questioning. A review of 38 randomly selected teacher personnel files showed that evaluators did not conduct timely evaluations in 10 cases. Although many formative and summative teacher and administrative evaluations were performed, most in the sample reviewed by EQA examiners did not include recommendations for improvement. Interviewees indicated that evaluators provided oral feedback on what they saw in the classroom and had pre- and post-conferences with teachers and administrators who received evaluations.

Indicators

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district implemented practices and procedures for the identification, recruitment, and selection of teaching staff. The school committee had contracts in place relative to: staff hiring, evaluation, resignation, suspension, and dismissal; support staff contracts, compensation, and fringe benefits; support staff recruiting and hiring, and the posting of support staff vacancies; summer hiring; and support staff assignments, transfers, suspensions, and dismissals. The policy manual of the school committee referred readers to negotiated contracts, which were in place for teachers and some administrators, for more information about personnel policies, procedures, and practices.

Interviewees indicated that in the spring, when anticipated vacancies opened, the appropriate personnel visited colleges to recruit. The district placed advertisements in *The Boston Globe* and contacted professional organizations. The district posted positions on its website. By agreement with the teachers' association, the district had to post vacancies at schools prior to posting them on the website or in the newspaper, except in the summer. Interviewees indicated that this practice was to change in 2008 when all postings would go immediately to the webpage.

At the elementary level, all principals reviewed all applications and interviewed selected candidates since the district might assign teachers to different buildings as the need arose. In addition, elementary principals and the middle school principal would look at applicants for positions shared by their respective grade levels. At the high school level, the department chair screened the applications first and then sent them on to the principal. The chair and principal conducted the interviews and the principal forwarded the names of one or possibly two

candidates to the superintendent. The department chair called the prospective candidates in and conducted a separate interview after the interview with the principal. No other teachers or parents were on the interview committees. The district formed committees when an administrative opening was available. The superintendent deferred to the principal when hiring a teacher, but would assist in the selection process when the school had two candidates or when the district hired an administrator. The district kept applications in the central office.

Interviewees indicated that there were limited financial constraints put upon hiring decisions. They stated that they were highly selective and had many applicants for each position. They experienced low teacher turnover but there had been high administrative turnover during the period under review because of conflict among some administrators. Interviewees felt that this latter situation had affected morale but that things seemed to be better at the time of the EQA site visit. Due to low teacher turnover, a well-articulated curriculum base, and a focus on children, the district was able to maintain high achievement levels despite the high administrative turnover.

Interviewees indicated that the reasons cited by applicants for wanting to work in the district included the mentor program, the impressive district website, 50 percent reimbursement for college courses, five days of in-house professional development, the online mentor handbook, high MCAS test scores, staff collegiality, and many in-house promotional opportunities. The pay range was competitive, and the district paid 50 percent of Blue Cross/Blue Shield premiums and 70 percent of the health maintenance organization (HMO) premiums.

2. All professional staff had appropriate Massachusetts licensure.

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

A review of teacher and administrator licensure information provided to the EQA team indicated that, for the period under review, 206 out of 208 teachers and all administrators had the

appropriate license. The two teachers not certified were reading specialists on waivers who had completed programs but not the complete licensure process. By the end of the year, one of these had left the district and another had completed licensure. However, during the period under review, special education teachers at the high school taught four major subjects to special education students exclusively. While these teachers did have special education certification, they lacked proper content certification in the subject field(s).

Seventy-five of the district's 76 paraprofessionals were "highly qualified" according to the NCLB standard. One paraprofessional who lacked the designation worked at the middle school, which was not designated a Title I school, and, therefore, was eligible to work in that capacity. The district provided tutoring and the opportunity to take the ParaPro examination online. The one paraprofessional in the district who was not highly qualified had difficulty taking online tests and the district directed the paraprofessional to locations offering a traditional paper-and-pencil test. The district kept licensure data in the business office. In the spring of each year, the district e-mailed teachers whose licenses were about to expire as a reminder, and the district made follow-up reminder calls.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

According to interviewees, the district applied for and received waivers from the DOE for the two unlicensed teachers. Non-licensed staff had the same access to mentoring and support and professional development opportunities as licensed staff. Every spring, the assistant superintendent e-mailed and called staff regarding licensure progress.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

603 CMR 7:12 requires districts to provide an induction program for new teachers. Districts are required to provide a new teacher orientation program, assign a trained mentor to a new teacher within two weeks, assign a support team of an administrator and a mentor, and provide release time for the mentor and new teacher to observe classrooms and conduct other mentoring activities. According to the interviewees, the district provided all teachers new to the district or to a new role in the district, even if they had experience in other districts, with mentors. The training for mentors began in 1999 with a steering committee. In 2001, the district brought in representatives from Teachers 21 and Simmons College to give summer training to the trainers. They returned and gave four more workshops in which they trained 80 mentor teachers. The next year two training workshops occurred, and the following year one occurred. In all, the district had trained approximately 100 teachers to serve as mentors. The mentor program in the district was a two-year process. The district paid mentors an \$800 stipend for the first year they served as mentor and \$500 for the second. Principals assigned the mentors to the new staff based upon recommendations by department chairs at the high school. The principal in conjunction with the special education director made special education mentor recommendations. Mentors must have competency in their field, engage in effective instructional practices, have positive staff relationships and good attitude, be accessible to the mentee, and have had like roles, when possible. Mentors met frequently with their mentees in the first year and less frequently in the second year. The mentors met together alone, and mentees had regular meetings together. Peer coaching occurred, and mentors conducted formal observations of the mentees. If a new teacher had problems, supervisors and mentors recommended courses, professional development, and/or observation of another teacher's class. At the end of the year, the district provided separate

mentor and mentee surveys to evaluate the program. Mentors and mentees kept logs and the district provided mentors with a handbook, both online and in hard copy.

The district had no formal mentor program for administrators, and interviewees felt that this was a weakness. Assistant principals received support from principals. Principals interviewed felt that they had had a good, informal support system with other principals and with the superintendent. The special education director received assistance from a retired special education director from another district.

New teachers received an orientation prior to the start of school and before the initial professional development days and convocation. The district provided them with general information about the district and employee benefits. Representatives from the teachers' association spoke to them about their benefits. There was a bus tour of the town, and the district provided a luncheon to make the new staff feel welcomed. New staff received documents including assessment information and was required to attend departmental, grade-level, schoolwide, and professional development meetings dealing with assessment.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The professional development plan in place in the district during the period under review provided workshops relative to the development of data analysis skills and the use of item analysis and disaggregated data to address student achievement. Interviewees indicated that the district trained all principals, assistant principals, middle and high school counselors, K-8 directors, the superintendent, and the assistant superintendent in TestWiz. In addition, the district began using the TerraNova assessment in grades 2-9 during the period under review and

provided training in the analysis of TerraNova data at an August 2005 professional development workshop. The mandatory training for teachers included instruction on basic statistics, and how to use the TerraNova results to drive effective instruction. In addition, the professional development committee reviewed the MCAS test and TerraNova data to inform professional development needs. In addition to the TestWiz and TerraNova data analysis training, teachers participated in a number of other voluntary and/or mandatory workshops provided during districtwide professional development days. Examples included workshops on Standardized Testing-Data Driven Decision-Making, the DRA, and Data Analysis for School Improvement – The Development of the Science Department Action Plan.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviewees indicated that the district had established hiring practices and procedures for teachers, principals, and other administrators. The district established mentoring and professional development programs for teachers, and administrators had access to professional development opportunities. The district had supervisory and evaluation procedures in place to support and evaluate administrators and teachers. The district had an administrative structure that included an assistant superintendent, principals, program directors, and department heads to support teachers and monitor the implementation of instructional practices.

The district provided opportunities for professional growth. Examples consisted of professional development and mentoring programs and workshops including five professional development days; opportunities to serve on committees; course reimbursement; and stipended positions, such as mentors and extracurricular advisors. Teachers had multiple opportunities to “move up” as directors and department chairs. Interviewees indicated that a number of the present

administrators, including principals, had served as teachers in the district. In FY 2004, the district provided approximately \$166,760 for mentors, professional development, and tuition reimbursement; in FY 2005, the district provided approximately \$145,722; and in FY 2006, the district provided approximately \$158,166. Interviewees indicated that the district attracted teachers for a number of reasons including a collegial atmosphere, competitive pay, and the mentor and professional development programs.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of documents and information provided by interviewees indicated the district had a professional development plan during the period under review. According to statute, a district must adopt a professional development plan for all principals, teachers, and other professional staff, paraprofessionals, teacher assistants, and members of school councils. A review of the professional development plan as well as information provided by principals, directors, and department chairs indicated the district had made a major commitment to providing professional development support and training to teachers.

The district provided the EQA with the 2005-2006 professional development handbook that included the district educational philosophy, vision, mission, beliefs, and goals. A professional development team coordinated professional development activities in the district. The district had professional development priorities, including differentiated instruction, special education, using achievement test results, assessment, improvement of instruction, and technology integration. The district had five professional development days, but professional development also took other forms, such as study groups, administrative days, curriculum workshops, after-

school institutes, mentoring, college courses, and out-of-district workshops and conferences. The district developed professional development programs based on teacher needs, student achievement data, staff evaluations, and research-based practices. For example, the district provided administrators training in RBT evaluation methodologies, principals linked individual professional development goals to the teacher evaluation process, and the district provided training to staff in TestWiz and TerraNova data analysis. Teachers received training in *The Skillful Teacher* methods. In addition, a recent external program evaluation of the special education department led to the scheduling of professional development sessions for special education staff in the district.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, the district provided teachers with professional development offerings to develop and improve the skills needed to effectively deliver changes in programmatic offerings. Administrators reviewed professional development goals as part of the teacher evaluation process, and interviewees indicated that teachers should choose offerings aligned to professional development goals. Administrators and mentors supervised the implementation of professional development practices in the classroom using methods that included formal classroom observations and informal walk-throughs to look at classroom rigor and student work. A review of professional development documents provided by the district and information provided by interviewees indicated that the district had provided a substantial amount of professional development programs during the period under review. The need to change instructional programs sometimes determined the need for professional development programs. For example, based on analysis of student achievement data, the district held workshops on sentence structure, grammar, and measurement. On a district professional

development day in January 2006, the district offered workshops in the Collins Writing Program, middle school math strategies, and crisis intervention training, as well as a number of other offerings. In February 2006, examples of full- and half-day workshops included a session on the Gray Oral Reading Test and a full-day workshop on motivating students toward higher achievement using career-training methodologies. During the period under review, the district offered ParaPro training to paraprofessionals to meet the NCLB requirement to have highly qualified paraprofessionals in schools receiving Title I funds.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Administrator contracts reviewed by the EQA included evaluation procedures that required an annual review in writing; however, a review of the evaluations of 19 administrators, including the former superintendent, employed in the district during the period under review indicated that the district evaluated eight administrators annually, as required by contract and M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38. The district used a hybrid and dated version of the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership as the evaluation tool for administrators, and interviewees stated the superintendent used the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership to set goals. The EQA examiners found the evaluations informative and about half were instructive in that they included recommendations for improvement. All personnel files included up-to-date administrative certifications. Examiners found two evaluations were not signed and two administrators had no evaluations in their personnel files. Some interviewees indicated that evaluations did not always occur annually. Interviewees described a process of meeting with the superintendent at the beginning of the year to set goals; however, the district did not hold administrators explicitly

accountable for student achievement nor was student achievement related to compensation. Administrators indicated that poor performance would likely lead to the non-renewal of a contract, and that the superintendent measured performance against a number of factors including student achievement.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The teachers' contract between the school committee and the FEA in place during the period under review included evaluative procedures for professional and non-professional status teachers, including the number and timing of formative and summative evaluations; the evaluation tool, Principles of Effective Teaching; teacher evaluation forms and checklists; individual professional development plans; and plans of assistance for struggling teachers. Professional status teachers were evaluated on a four-year cycle which included a checklist that followed the Principles of Effective Teaching in year two and a more extensive teacher evaluation form in year four which also followed the Principles of Effective Teaching. Non-professional status teachers followed a cycle which included three observations and a comprehensive summative evaluation each year. A review of the evaluations of a random sample of 38 professional and non-professional status teachers showed that the district inconsistently aligned evaluations with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 38, in that evaluators did not consistently conduct a summative evaluation every two years for a teacher with professional status or every year for a teacher with non-professional status. Ten files did not include timely summative evaluations; one file included no summative evaluations after 2003. The district did not link evaluations to improved student achievement. Evaluators and teachers signed all of the

evaluations, and the evaluation tool followed the Principles of Effective Teaching. Personnel files contained detailed and lengthy formative evaluations of classroom observations; however, while both formative and summative evaluations were informative, most did not include recommendations for improvement. Interviewees indicated that recommendations and feedback occurred at the post-conference meeting between the evaluator and the teacher. Interviewees indicated that evaluators conducted a minimum of three formal classroom observations each year and the formative evaluation process included pre- and post-conferences. Evaluators reviewed individual professional development plans with teachers and discussed how the plans could be used to improve teaching methodologies, according to interviewees. Interviewees indicated the district had consequences for ineffective teaching, but could not recall the termination of a professional status teacher for ineffective performance. Interviewees indicated that serious discussions occurred among administrators before a teacher received professional status, and the district had reassigned some struggling staff and put them on improvement or reservation plans as outlined in the teachers' contract. The teachers' contract included an article with a section that noted, "no employee will be disciplined, reprimanded, or reduced in rank or compensation without good cause."

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district had provided all administrators with evaluation training. Administrators used the contractually negotiated formative and summative evaluation process as the principal method of evaluating teachers, and supplemented the formal observation process with informal classroom walk-throughs. Administrators had similar practices and procedures in place to supervise teachers and address strengths and weaknesses, but did not have a standardized protocol for informal classroom walk-throughs. Evaluators also reviewed and addressed individual

professional development goals as part of the evaluation process. A review of a random sample of teacher evaluations indicated that most of the contractually negotiated formative and summative evaluations did not contain recommendations for improvement, and many of the teacher evaluations were not conducted in a timely manner. Interviewees indicated that informal verbal feedback occurred at post-conference meetings related to improving performance.

According to interviewees, principals, directors, and department chairs conducted regular classroom walk-throughs and addressed observed problems when they developed. Administrators indicated that during the walk-throughs they reviewed student work and talked to students about what they were learning. Elementary principals meet weekly to discuss the professional development needs of teachers, and high school department chairs went into classrooms and reviewed teaching methods and materials. Interviewees indicated that during walk-throughs they looked for such things as rigor, student engagement, higher order questioning, pacing, and learning strategies. Principals also looked at report cards to measure grading consistency among teachers.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district linked employment, supervision, and professional development and supported them with appropriate levels of funding. According to information provided by the district, in FY 2004, the district provided approximately \$166,760 for mentors, professional development, including in- and out-of-district workshops, and tuition reimbursement. In FY 2005 and FY 2006, the district provided approximately \$145,722 and \$158,166, respectively, for mentors, professional development, and tuition reimbursement. Grant funding accounted for approximately 15 percent of this funding. In addition, the district provided substitute teachers when classroom teachers attended professional development sessions. Teacher personnel files

included information on individual teacher professional development plans, including short- and long-term goals, and interviewees stated that teacher evaluators monitored the implementation of professional development strategies in the classroom, although the district did not have standardized evaluative protocols in place. A review of DOE financial information showed the district met net school spending requirements during the period under review. Spending on instructional services increased from approximately \$15,079,111 in FY 2004 to approximately \$15,971,593 in FY 2006, according to a review of DOE financial information. The district had an administrative structure to supervise teachers and programs, although the district had a large number of administrators retire or resign during the period under review due to leadership conflict. During the period under review, the district had two superintendents, three high school principals, two middle school principals, three ELA directors, two math directors, two out-of-district supervisors, two special education directors, and multiple new assistant principals. Interviewees indicated that this resulted in lower teacher morale, but student achievement did not suffer as interviewees indicated teachers “soldiered on.” The administrative structure in 2005-2006 included a superintendent, an assistant superintendent, a school business administrator, five principals, and a director of special education, high school department heads, and K-8 program specialists.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

According to interviewees and a review of documents, the district did not have a districtwide crisis plan in place during the period under review; however, each of the five schools had school crisis and safety practices, procedures, and plans and provided training to staff and other individuals who regularly accessed the school. The superintendent met annually with the police and fire chiefs to discuss the schools’ crisis and safety plans. A review of professional

development workshops provided by the district during the period under review indicated one workshop offered related to crises and emergencies, entitled Crisis Intervention Training-Recertification. Interviewees stated the superintendent and nurses attended workshops and brought information back to the district. Interviewees indicated the district had medical crisis and restraint teams, and the teams offered training in these areas to staff who wanted it. According to interviewees, the schools held fire drills regularly as determined by the fire department, and the schools held lock-down and evacuation drills. Interviewees stated some schools practiced evacuations from the auditorium and cafeteria. The high school, middle school, and elementary schools had similar plans, in that the emergency binders included information on sudden death, threat of an intruder, fire drills, bomb threats, evacuations, and lock-downs. The high school plan had additional procedures for assault, missing child, hostage, and severe weather. The schools had the crisis plans located in each classroom in a red book. The schools had the plans available for substitute teachers, and the district administrators discussed emergency procedures during new teacher orientation sessions in the summer.

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

V. Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The district made increased use of formative and summative assessments to identify students not meeting academic expectations. However, a review of data revealed that elementary and middle school special education subgroups failed to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) in both ELA and mathematics in both 2004-2005 and 2005-2006.
- Overall student attendance rates throughout the district was 95.4 percent, above the state average. Over 13 percent of grade 6-12 students were chronically absent in 2005-2006, having missed at least 18 days of school. On average, each student in the district missed 8.2 days of school in 2005-2006.
- The district had policies and procedures related to discipline and behavior, and the district's suspension rates remained below state averages; however, the in-school suspension rate at the middle school almost doubled between 2004 and 2006. The high school, which did not utilize in-school suspension resources, reported its out-of-school suspension rate rose from 2004 to 2006.

- The district had procedures and practices in place to monitor staff absenteeism, which averaged less than 10 days, excluding professional development days, in 2005-2006.
- Sixty-nine percent of grade 4 students attained proficiency on the 2006 MCAS ELA test, and no students scored in the ‘Warning/Failing’ category. The district had provided early intervention programs in literacy to assist students in attaining proficiency.
- Of the 220 students in the cohort that graduated in 2006, 90.4 percent graduated in four years, while 6.4 percent dropped out. Graduation rates for the special education and low-income subgroups were somewhat lower; 84.1 percent of special education students and 82.6 percent of low-income students graduated in four years, while 4.5 percent of special education students and 8.7 percent of low-income students dropped out.

Summary

The district provided a range of academic services and supplementary programs to meet student needs and improve achievement. A comprehensive array of special education supports, including early intervention, after-school, and summer programs, were established or enhanced during the period under review. The district increased the use of formative and summative assessments to identify and/or remediate students performing below grade level. At the middle and high schools, courses were adjusted to provide academic levels appropriate to all learners. Both co-taught and alternative classes were offered for special education students to support them without the use of special education services. The district’s historically low proportions of limited English proficient, transient, and homeless students had increased in the past few years, and a recent Department of Education Coordinated Program Review report acknowledged the district’s efforts to serve these populations better. The district provided early intervention programs to help students attain proficiency on the grade 4 MCAS ELA test, and 69 percent of grade 4 students scored at or above the proficient level in 2006.

The district monitored student academic progress in order to provide interventions and supports when needed. Administrators, guidance staff, and special education personnel met each spring to

discuss the needs of students transitioning from elementary to middle school or middle school to high school. As part of the district's curriculum review cycle, district and school leaders focused on course alignment and sequence in order to assist students in making successful transitions from grade to grade.

Although the district allowed students who did not meet qualifying criteria and prerequisites to select honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses and encouraged them to do so, very few students from the three major subgroups (special education, low income, African-American) in the district enrolled in these classes. Consequently, subgroups were underrepresented in all higher-level academic programs throughout the period under review.

Attendance policies and practices were developed and monitored at the individual building levels and were informally coordinated among the district's three elementary schools. Excessive absences at the high school led to the loss of course credit, and students needed a prescribed number of course credits to be promoted to the next grade. Attendance rates for the district averaged 95.4 percent throughout the review period, almost two percentage points above the state average during the same period. The schools did not conduct systematic disaggregated analyses of student attendance data and were unaware of any subgroup anomalies or patterns of chronic absenteeism. A review of DOE attendance data showed spikes in chronic absenteeism, or missing at least 18 days of school, at grades 6, 7, 11, and 12, and 13.2 percent of students in grades 6-12 were chronically absent in 2005-2006. On average, all Foxborough students missed approximately 8.2 days of school in 2005-2006. School and district administrators monitored staff attendance during the period under review, and the district used substitute teachers as the primary method of assuring continuity of instruction. On average, teachers missed 9.8 days of school, excluding professional development days, in 2005-2006.

The frequency of disciplinary infractions and suspensions within the district was relatively low throughout the period under review. Although suspension rates at both the middle school and the high school increased during the past three school years, they remained below state averages.

Administrators reported that improvements to the structure and operation of Building Based Support Teams (BBSTs), greater stability of building leadership after a period of high administrative turnover, and the addition of a second full-time assistant principal at the high school have all contributed to improvements in school climate, consistency of expectations, and enforcement of positive student behaviors. A review of DOE dropout data indicated that 6.4 percent of students in the cohort that graduated in 2006 had dropped out.

Indicators

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the period under review, the district made increased use of aggregated and, to a lesser extent, disaggregated student achievement data to support the academic performance of at-risk populations. At the elementary level, administrators reported using assessments that included the TerraNova, the DRA, and the MCAS tests. In addition, the middle school employed the SRI and the Lexia Quick Test to help identify students with reading and phonics difficulties. At the high school, diagnostic data included TerraNova data for all freshmen, as well as PSAT, SAT, and AP data. Interviewees at all grade levels indicated that the district reviewed assessment data and implemented revisions in programs and support services when needed. Interviewees reported that staff analyzed and disseminated data at the building level. Principals, K-8 curriculum directors, grade-level teacher teams, guidance personnel, and department heads at the high school processed the data and distributed them to classroom teachers and other student support staff. The district had provided some training for teachers in both TerraNova and MCAS test data analysis, but teachers indicated they needed additional training. The district disaggregated

the MCAS data of special education and low-income students, and administrators noted that the district had allocated resources to examining achievement data and developing appropriate remedial programs and support services. Interviewees cited a number of examples of these efforts including the use of student success plans, fully funded after-school and summer programs, a 10-week in-school tutorial with benchmarked pre- and post-testing, a grade 6 remedial math lab, the elimination of the integrated mathematics program, the introduction of a more challenging grade 7 and 8 algebra-based mathematics curriculum, and a pre-algebra Jump Start program that provided students in grades 7 and 8 with three extra periods of mathematics support each week. At the high school, a series of sequenced MCAS test remediation classes for underperforming students, as well as alternative courses in all core academic areas, were available for students with identified learning needs. Central office and building administrators reported that the process of aggregating and disaggregating student participation and achievement data was part of the K-12 curriculum review process.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Despite numerous assessments and supplementary programs, elementary and middle school special education students failed to meet AYP in both ELA and mathematics for the last two years of the review period. Furthermore, low-income students in grades 6-8 did not meet AYP in mathematics in 2005-2006. The district made increased efforts to use both formative and summative assessments to identify underperforming students and provide them with appropriate support services. At the elementary level, administrators reported that all students were administered the DRA and benchmark tests four times per year. Students through grade 6 received math compacting with pre- and post-tests, and teachers used writing prompts with

rubrics in the fall and spring. Title I students received a variety of additional interventions including intensive remediation based on DRA data, literacy assessments, and an additional three to four periods of tutoring and study skills each week. The district initiated Title I service referrals and/or accommodations based on teacher-identified student learning needs. Additionally, the district provided a summer reading program and an MCAS camp for students at the primary grade levels. High school staff explained that students in grades 9-12 had access to a range of courses, academic levels, and supports designed to meet diverse learning needs. These included MCAS remediation classes and both co-taught and alternative classes for special education students, which were delivered at a slower pace but provided the same comprehensive college preparation curriculum and credits available to all students. These classes were smaller so that teachers, tutors, and aides could provide the extra support and individualized attention students required. The district promoted students based on their earning a predetermined number of credits per year in core courses that were required for graduation.

At all three levels, BBSTs responded to teacher concerns relative to student progress. The BBSTs proposed a wide variety of regular education accommodations and academic modifications and supports so that students could master the state curriculum frameworks without the need for special education services. Interviewees reported that there was a continuous flow of information among the BBSTs, guidance counselors, and classroom teachers. High school administrators and staff expressed the opinion that the lack of chairpersons in both the guidance and special education departments was an impediment to the systematic coordination of services and efficient and effective collaboration among student support specialists.

A review of the DOE CPR documents and NEASC follow-up reports confirmed that the district had responded appropriately to recommendations relative to supplementary programs, remedial services, academic accommodations, and curriculum revisions. Administrators reported, for example, that the district used data from the MCAS tests, the TerraNova, and numerous other

sources to inform instruction and improve student achievement at all grade levels. Administrators, curriculum directors, and classroom teachers shared data and used them to develop programs and pedagogical strategies, and to revise the curriculum to improve the MCAS test results. The systematic identification of at-risk grade 7 and 8 students, the addition of MCAS test remediation classes at the high school, and the analysis of K-12 curriculum strands/concepts requiring increased attention or reinforcement were among the most notable examples cited.

The population of LEP students in the district was small. DOE data for 2005-2006 reported the district's LEP population as less than one percent, below the state average of 5.3 percent. Administrators reported that during the past two years the number of LEP students in need of services had begun to increase. As this population grew, the district's efforts to serve these students, coordinated by the director of special education, expanded. An examination of the district's CPR report indicated that the district had remedied or was in the process of remedying a number of noncompliance concerns.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Early intervention programs have become a priority in the district. A review of the district's comprehensive curriculum review document revealed that the district established early intervention plans that ensured all students reached benchmark MCAS test scores by grade 4. A review of the 2006 grade 4 MCAS ELA scores showed that 69 percent of the students attained proficiency and all students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' category or above; no students failed the grade 4 ELA test. The district's new K-6 ELA program, introduced in 2006-2007, incorporated a full battery of assessment and diagnostic testing at the primary grades. These

included fall and spring reading and writing tests, Title I assessments, literacy and mathematics tutoring, and a range of support programs offered during and after school as well as in the summer. In addition, interviewees reported that the elementary schools sponsored a variety of parent workshops that focused on literacy issues and related home school collaboration.

Administrators expressed awareness that special education and low-income student subgroups in grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 failed to achieve AYP in 2005-2006. They expressed a commitment to closing this achievement gap and cited efforts to achieve this goal. A common strategic objective in elementary SIPs was to conduct data analyses of grade 3 reading and grade 4 ELA MCAS test scores in order to: a) develop appropriate instructional revisions and provide targeted tutorial services for students determined in need of support; b) better utilize building learning centers and remedial services; and c) acquire and better utilize computer software tutorial programs that provide enhanced support for individual students. Administrators acknowledged that while district MCAS test results remained above state averages in all categories, scores have remained essentially unchanged during the period under review. Those interviewed indicated their resolve to improve the achievement of not only the targeted student subgroups but the district's overall student population, as well as to examine disparities in MCAS test performance of the three elementary schools.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Although the district did not have formal, written policies for student promotion and grade retention, administrators reported that schools at each level had developed policies and practices. A review of DOE data revealed that the district retained virtually no K-8 students during the period under review. The middle school principal indicated that the district had developed a

tentative plan that would require grade 8 students in 2006-2007 to pass both their mathematics and ELA courses to be eligible for promotion to grade 9. At the high school, in order for students to advance from one grade to the next, they must pass prescribed courses and earn a specific number of credits each year. These policies and procedures were contained and clearly explained in the high school program of studies. The retention rate for freshmen averaged approximately five percent from 2003 to 2006 and dropped to zero percent by the time students reached their senior year.

District administrators reported that student academic progress was carefully monitored at all grade levels and when needs were identified, appropriate interventions and academic supports were introduced. A review of SIPs confirmed the district's intentions to improve curriculum alignment; implement uniform, high quality reading, writing, and computational strategies; and promote professional communications between grade levels. Additionally, the district revised the curriculum review cycle in order to improve course scope, sequence, and articulation, thus facilitating student academic transitions across grade levels and between schools. Administrators, guidance staff, and special education personnel reported meeting each spring to review the transition needs of students moving from elementary to middle school as well as from middle to high school. Interviewees explained that these discussions were highly detailed at the grade 4-5 and grade 8-9 transition points in order to ensure that students were placed in appropriate academic levels and/or that identified learning needs were systematically addressed. Student writing portfolios followed the students between grades 4 and 5. The district held orientation programs for students, as well as the parents of those students, moving from the elementary to middle school and from the middle to high school. Middle and high school staff expressed concerns that the lack of adequate guidance department staffing and leadership impeded communication and made an efficient student transition process more difficult to attain.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Although the district had not developed formal, system-wide written policies relative to discipline referrals, grade retentions, suspensions, and exclusions, a review of student handbooks revealed that relevant policies, procedures, and practices were established, maintained, and communicated at the individual building levels. Both the middle and high schools employed out-of-school suspension as a disciplinary tool. The middle school also used in-school suspension, but the high school did not. According to DOE data, during the period under review in-school suspension rates at the middle school increased from 2003-2004 to 2005-2006. Out-of-school suspension rates at the high school rose during the same period. However, despite relatively high districtwide rates for serious disciplinary infractions, the district remained below state averages in aggregate categories during the period under review. All student handbooks were clear and comprehensive and were distributed to all families and students. Administrators explained that the three elementary principals endeavored to coordinate and align their policies. The middle school implemented programs such as “Steps To Respect” and peer mediation to improve school climate and reinforce positive student behaviors. Interviewees believed these programs were beneficial to the school community and were liked by students, parents, and staff.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district had not developed formal, written policies, procedures, or practices relative to dropout prevention and recovery during the period under review, but practices were in place to prevent and limit dropouts. The number of dropouts at the high school historically was small. A

review of DOE data for the class of 2006 cohort showed 6.4 percent of 220 students dropped out and 90.5 percent graduated in four years. Nine percent of males dropped out and 3.7 percent of females did so; 84.1 percent of special education students graduated in four years and 4.5 percent dropped out; 82.6 percent of low-income students graduated in four years and 8.7 percent dropped out. Interviewees indicated that the district did not conduct disaggregated subgroup data analysis of dropouts because data for the small student subgroup populations lacked statistical significance. Instead, the district introduced interventions for at-risk students on a case-by-case basis. Administrators and guidance staff monitored attendance patterns, which served as an effective indicator of students in need of support. Administrators and staff asserted that the high school responded proactively to students with serious academic and/or disciplinary problems in order to prevent them from withdrawing from school. BBSTs coordinated interventions. The BBSTs, composed of administrators, special education teachers, guidance counselors, the school psychologist, the school nurse, and classroom teachers, developed a wide range of individualized support services and/or academic modifications for at-risk students. Additionally, administrators cited a variety of alternative classes, programs, and counseling services available at the high school and used to prevent dropouts.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Although the district had not developed formal, written system-wide policies regarding transient and homeless students, administrators reported that practices and procedures required by the McKinney-Vento Act were in place in the district. Those interviewed explained that the schools have had a very small population of students in these categories. They noted that this population had begun slowly to grow during the past few years and that district programs and services had begun to expand as a result. A review of DOE data showed that homeless and transient students constituted less than .05 percent of district enrollment during school year 2005-2006. The

director of special education coordinated programs for these students. Interviewees indicated that the district endeavored to provide homeless and transient students with all the services and entitlements that state and federal law required. These included Title I and special education services, as well as extensive formal communication with parents, foster parents, and various state agencies, including the Department of Youth Services (DYS) and the Department of Social Services (DSS). District administrators stated that the district placed homeless and transient students in appropriate courses and classes and enrolled them in a timely manner.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Attendance and tardiness policies and procedures within the district were developed and monitored at the individual building level. Administrators indicated that the district made efforts to align attendance policies and practices at the three elementary schools. The district published policies in student handbooks, which the schools used as one method of communication to members of each school community. Attendance rates at all grade levels across the district exceeded 95 percent throughout the period under review and were consistently above state averages for all subgroups. Chronic absenteeism, defined by the DOE as missing at least 18 days of school, averaged 9.4 percent across the district and 13.2 percent at the secondary level. In 2005-2006, on average, each student missed 8.2 days of school. Teachers took attendance, and school leaders monitored it in all buildings using the district's Starbase computer software system. School administrators and guidance staff monitored attendance and distributed attendance reports to all classroom teachers. Interviewees stated that regular student attendance was a priority in the district and that much effort was devoted to promoting it. The schools maintained a high level of communication with parents and guardians. Attendance letters, phone calls, and parent conferences were among the attendance strategies employed in the schools. At the high school, loss of academic credit was a potential consequence for students who exceeded

14 unexcused absences in a full-year course. The schools did not disaggregate attendance data. Administrators acknowledged that they were not aware of student subgroup anomalies or patterns of chronic absenteeism at specific grade levels.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Although the district did not have a formal staff attendance policy, principals indicated that they did monitor and promote teacher attendance and that the central office provided them with detailed computer printouts to assist them in doing so. They further explained that the administrative council discussed issues related to staff attendance, and principals were encouraged to speak with any teachers who had excessive absence patterns. Teacher focus groups confirmed this practice. The procedures teachers followed for calling in sick were included and described in detail in faculty handbooks. The central office hired and scheduled substitute teachers. Administrators at the elementary and middle schools and department heads at the high school worked closely with substitutes, and facilitated the efforts of substitutes to implement lesson plans and maintain the continuity of instruction. Substitutes were required to have a Bachelor's degree and the district had recently developed a revised handbook for substitutes. Teachers interviewed indicated that it was common to have an insufficient number of substitutes available to cover classes. They expressed hope that the district's plan to increase substitute teacher salaries would improve the situation. Administrators stated that they did not consider staff absenteeism to be a problem within the district. Attendance data provided by the district showed that in 2005-2006, on average, 208 teachers missed 10.7 days of school, including days absent for professional development. Excluding professional development days, teachers missed, on average, 9.8 days.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Administrators reported that the district introduced leveled classes in mathematics at grade 7 and added a grade 8 honors-level Algebra class during school year 2005-2006. The honors curriculum expanded in grades 9-12 to include classes in all core areas. AP courses were available to high school juniors and seniors. Student handbooks and the program of study included the criteria for admission to higher-level and accelerated courses. They included grades earned in previous classes, scores on standardized tests, teacher and counselor recommendations, and parent requests. Administrators at both the middle and high schools indicated that students who wished to enroll in the more rigorous programs were allowed to do so, even if they did not meet all academic prerequisites. Guidance counselors encouraged all students to select the most challenging classes. Scores on the exams for the 10 AP courses offered at the high school remained consistently above average during the period under review. Administrators acknowledged that disaggregated data analysis of subgroup participation in honors and AP classes was not a systematic or regular practice. Consequently, they could not accurately describe how closely subgroup enrollment and achievement rates paralleled population proportions. A review of data provided by the College Board revealed that, with the exception of Asian students, very little student subgroup representation existed in any of the AP courses offered. Minority subgroups comprised approximately five percent of student enrollment and low-income students approximately eight percent.

Administrators explained that the district offered a wide range of programs, services, and interventions across all grade levels designed to provide academic supports for underperforming students. For example, the elementary schools focused much attention and substantial resources on remediation in both ELA and mathematics. The middle school's Jump Start program provided substantial additional instruction to students who were performing below grade level in mathematics. The high school offered courses at a variety of ability levels to meet student learning needs. Additionally, a full range of alternative classes in all core academic areas were

available to those special education students whose educational plans required them. The district provided METCO students with additional tutorial support, and administrators and the METCO program director encouraged these students to enroll in the higher-level academic programs.

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

VI. Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- Limited participation in the development of the school budget occurred during the period under review. During this time, the town directed the school district to level fund supplies and materials and to not add new positions.
- The district did not use analysis of student achievement data in the budget development process.
- Funding of the district's budget was adequate for the period under review. However, a review of net school spending (NSS) indicated the amount the district received in excess of NSS dropped from 20 to 16 percent during the period under review. For 2006-2007, the excess reported declined to nine percent.
- The district developed a comprehensive maintenance plan for all schools and contracted with a consultant in 2001 to prepare maintenance manuals.
- The district formulated a five-year capital plan that the district reprioritized each year and incorporated into the town's capital plan.

- The district developed a central purchasing system that complied with state procurement laws. Internal controls provided current balances and prevented overspending.
- The district's financial accounting system lacked integration with the town's.
- The district lacked a written agreement with the town for determining indirect costs. The town finance director developed a cost analysis sheet for determining indirect costs; however, these figures lacked school committee discussion and approval.

Summary

The budget process for the period under review did not involve all stakeholders. During the period under review, the town directed the school district to level fund supplies and materials and to not add new positions. A bylaw existed in the town that required all departments to submit operating budgets on or before December 1 each year. The presentation of the budget to the school committee occurred in January. Budgets, once submitted, could only be reduced. Budget documents presented a clear, complete, and comprehensive picture of revenues and expenditures but lacked integration with the town. The district's financial accounting system used Excel spreadsheets, and the system lacked efficiency and appropriate data analysis capability and prevented the district from providing timely financial reports to the school committee.

The school district exceeded the net school spending (NSS) requirement each year for the period under review. Adequate funding during that time supported the school district's educational initiatives. In FY 2006, the district returned \$493,000 to the town. A review of financial support for the period under review revealed that although the district exceeded net school spending requirements, the percentage over the requirement declined each year. Although administrators expressed an inadequacy of funding, teachers stated they had sufficient supplies and materials.

The district performed evaluation-based reviews to determine the cost effectiveness of its special education, cafeteria, and transportation programs. These reviews resulted in the return of out-of-district students and programs to the district, the adjustment of cafeteria prices, and the saving of \$22,000 by outsourcing transportation for the METCO program to a private contractor. The business manager had forecast mechanisms and control procedures in place to ensure spending was within fiscal limits.

Each school had a maintenance manual prepared by a consultant. The format of the manuals fulfilled the requirement of the Department of Education for a description of scheduled maintenance, a plan of administration, and a system of checks and requisite record keeping. The organization of the manuals included the site, the building envelope, the interiors of the building, and mechanical and electrical conditions. The school district developed a five-year capital plan in conjunction with the town. In FY 2005 and FY 2006, the district received \$670,000 and \$440,200, respectively, for capital improvements. During walk-throughs, the EQA examiners found all schools to be clean, safe, well lit, and well maintained. The exterior doors to the schools were locked during the school day, including the main entrances which employed door buzzers, to promote the safety of the schools. Each school had an emergency team that met regularly to assess the safety of the school, to receive training, and to conduct safety drills with faculty and students.

Indicators

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Through interviews and document reviews, the EQA examiners found that the budget development process for FY 2004 through FY 2006 did not include all stakeholders; however, a review of the budget documents for the period under review indicated the budget documents provided clear, comprehensive, complete, current, and understandable data for all sources of revenues and expenditures as well as budget history and trends. Because during the period under review the budget was to maintain the funding from the prior year, central office administrators made most budget decisions and shared them with principals.

During the period under review, the town finance committee placed fiscal constraints on the school district. The financial restraints required the district to level fund all expenses and allowed for no new staff positions, and the district had limited budget increases and some decreases during the period under review. For example, in FY 2004 the budget decreased 3.2 percent

because of a reduction in state aid. The district level funded the budget in FY 2005 and FY 2006. The superintendent and the business manager met with principals in November to begin developing a budget. The business manager adjusted salaries to accommodate movement on the salary schedule and expense requests by principals. Fiscal restraints and predetermined budget increases limited the input of principals, teachers, and school council members into the budget process.

Although a bylaw existed that required all departments to submit their budgets to the town administrator by December 1, the presentation of the school district budget to the school committee occurred in January. The school committee approved the operating budget for the next year and submitted it to the town administrator. Town bylaws allowed the budget to decrease but not increase after submission by the school committee. School committee input increased substantially between January and May as the school district reduced the operating budget to comply with the advisory committee's guidelines. The school committee met with the town finance committee several times during the winter and discussed the budget at every meeting between January and May. Prior to town meeting, the school committee reached agreement with the town finance committee on school district funding. Approval of the budget by town meeting members occurred with little discussion.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

Information revealed by interviews and confirmed by a review of the documents showed that budget development lacked consideration of aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data. Budget reductions in FY 2004 and level funding in FY 2005 and FY 2006 minimized the use of student achievement data in budget construction. Although the district utilized the MCAS test and the TerraNova test results to measure student achievement, little evidence existed that student achievement data drove budget decisions. According to interviewees, due to the lack of financial resources, the district only addressed class size in the budget. In FY 2005, the budget

increased to its FY 2003 level. In FY 2006, the district operating budget increased by \$471,899, or 3.5 percent.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of the district's budget documents and supplemental funding indicated that the district's budget exceeded net school spending (NSS) requirements during the period under review. The Department of Education End of Year Pupil and Financial Reports indicated the following. In FY 2004, NSS of \$23,611,861 exceeded the required NSS of \$19,632,948 by \$3,978,913, or 20.3 percent. In FY 2005, NSS increased by 3.2 percent to \$24,377,532. This amount exceeded the required NSS of \$20,441,030 by \$3,936,502, or 19.3 percent. In FY 2006, NSS increased by 3.1 percent to \$25,125,163. This amount exceeded the required NSS of \$21,688,050 by \$3,437,113, or 15.8 percent. There were inconsistencies expressed by district administrators, teachers, and principals as to whether the budget provided adequate funding.

The EQA examiners learned that the town did not attempt an operational override during the period under review. The district leaders informed the examiners that the town received and kept all Medicaid receipts even though the district paid an organization to gather and submit the required documentation needed to obtain the revenue. A review of financial documents indicated the district maintained and monitored the following revolving accounts and special funds: circuit breaker, extended day, off-duty transportation, tuition revolving, adult education, summer school, music revolving, gift/donation account, lost books, food service, athletic, and building usage. During FY 2006, circuit breaker reimbursement totaled \$617,000, and the district projected it to decrease in FY 2007 to \$434,000 because of returning out-of-district students and programs to the district. In addition, the district returned to the town \$493,000 in

surplus funds in FY 2006. In addition, teachers and principals interviewed confirmed the adequacy of teaching and instructional supplies.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district, as part of its budget development process, implemented an evaluation-based review process to determine the cost effectiveness of a number of its programs. The district implemented or continued to implement a number of initiatives during the period under review to determine cost effectiveness. The district evaluated special education programs, which resulted in out-of-district students and programs returning to the district. The district completed an analysis of the cafeteria program resulting in the adjustment of prices. An evaluation of the transportation program determined that the present system of school ownership and operation of school buses resulted in the greatest cost effectiveness. A review of METCO transportation costs resulted in the award of this service to a private contractor resulting in a \$22,000 savings over three years. The evaluation of the following programs or services also occurred during the period under review: an evaluation of gate receipts at athletic events, copy machines, summer school, the extended-day program, and adult education tuition costs.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

A review of district documents and administrator interviews indicated the district lacked the appropriate written agreement regarding indirect costs. The town finance director prepared a document entitled Foxborough Education Spending-Summary of Related Expenses. In FY 2006, this document defined indirect costs categories as follows: Administration and Finance=\$220,719; Pensions=\$800,381; Unemployment Compensation=\$40,414; Workers

Compensation=\$108,451; General Insurance=\$83,554; Public Works=\$261,030; Capital Outlay=\$0; Debt Service=\$891,537; and Health and Life Insurance=\$2,902,566. The costs totaled \$5,308,652. This document lacked school committee approval.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of documents indicated that through the combination of Chapter 70 aid and local revenues, the district met net school spending requirements for the period under review. The End of Year reports during the period under review indicated the following: in FY 2004 the district's actual NSS of \$23,611,861 exceeded the required NSS of \$19,632,948 by \$3,978,913, or 20.3 percent. In FY 2005, the actual NSS increased by 3.2 percent to \$24,377,532. This amount exceeded the required NSS of \$20,441,030 by \$3,936,502, or 19.3 percent. In FY 2006, the actual NSS spending increased by 3.1 percent to \$25,125,163. This amount exceeded the required NSS of \$21,688,050 by \$3,437,113, or 15.8 percent. Increased fixed costs and contractual spending requirements absorbed some of the NSS increases.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

A review of school committee minutes and interviews with school officials verified that the school committee, during the period under review, did not review regular financial reports. A review of the school committee policy manual revealed that the committee lacked formal policies to govern the transfer of funds from one account to another during the school year. As a result, the superintendent realigned the budget when necessary.

A review of financial reports and interviews with city and school officials verified the accuracy and timeliness of filing state and federal grant financial reports. The town employed the firm of R.E. Brown & Company of Mendon, MA to perform the required single audit. In FY 2004, the auditor reported seven findings: a comparison of total salaries reported on Schedule 1 to payroll; expenditures in the school's accounting ledger differed by \$135,466; expenditures reported as non-payroll expenditures on Schedule 1, line 1661; employer retirement contributions for \$85,438; the remaining balance of \$50,008 could not be located; the Governor's Alliance Grant totaling \$15,000 failed to be reported; and the district lacked a methodology for calculating the transportation costs of regular education and special education students. In FY 2005, the auditor reported the incorrect use of encumbrances between July 1 through August 31, the reporting of extraordinary maintenance, and the incorrect reporting of transportation expenditures. During FY 2004 and the first half of FY 2005, the previous superintendent served as superintendent, curriculum director, and business manager. The current business manager started in middle of FY 2005 and stated that he corrected all findings and filed appropriate amendments.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district used enhanced Excel spreadsheets as its financial accounting system. Interviewees stated that this system lacked efficiency and prevented the district from appropriate data analysis. The district also lacked purchasing guidelines for principals and program directors.

Interviewees indicated that the district processed payroll biweekly and transmitted payroll information to the Automated Data Processing (ADP) Company, which calculated the deductions, processed the checks, and forwarded checks and register printouts to the town treasurer. Reconciliation of transmitted data between the town and the district for payroll and purchasing ensured accuracy.

The EQA examiners reviewed the district payroll ending June 15, 2006 and the payroll period ending September 14, 2006. The EQA examiners compared payroll rosters to staff rosters. No discrepancies existed. The district's documents indicated the payroll warrants contained appropriate information as to an employee's name and identification number, payroll type, rate of pay, gross and net pay amounts, taxes, pension, dental, annuity, and other specified deductions.

During the period under review, the district developed internal controls and specific business procedures in order to unify financial data. For example, all purchases required a purchase order, and prior to purchasing the business office checked account balances to confirm sufficient funds. The business manager used forecast mechanisms and control procedures to ensure that spending did not exceed budget limits. The business manager and/or the superintendent signed all purchase orders.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of the DOE End of Year Grant Summary indicated the district had a system to pursue, acquire, monitor, and coordinate local, state, federal, and competitive grants and monitor special revenue and revolving accounts. The district in FY 2006 received \$1,006,058 for four federal grants and \$788,560 for eight state grants. Four of the 12 grants received required competitive grant writing. A further review of the district's financial reports for federal and state grants indicated that the district returned a total of \$8,602 to grantors.

The principal, grant coordinator, and department head or supervisor prepared and coordinated the management of grants in the district. Efficient management of all grants and special revenue accounts occurred using the district's financial accounting system. The business manager signed grant reporting documents forwarded periodically to the DOE.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of district documents and interviews with district administrators and town officials indicated that the town had a centralized purchasing system to ensure that the district followed all procurement laws. Interviews and a review of personnel files revealed the professional certification of the business manager. The business manager lacked MCPPO certification. According to the district and town officials, the town contracted with the independent auditing firm of R.E. Brown & Company, Mendon, MA, for auditing services to conduct the single audit required by statute. The firm audited the school and town finances for the entire period under review. Town officials stated that the town competitively procured independent financial auditing services in FY 2002.

A review of district documents indicated that in FY 2004 and FY 2005, the district received audit reports listing seven findings for FY 2004 and five findings for FY 2005. The business office addressed the audit findings for FY 2004 and FY 2005. Interviews with school officials and a review of district documents indicated that district purchasing procedures conformed to M.G.L. Chapter 30B, Uniform Procurement for Supplies and Services and Real Property under M.G.L. Chapter 687, Section 4B. The purchasing procedures indicated all school district purchases for supplies and services conformed to state statute. Interviewees indicated the district lacked a purchasing procedures document.

The purchasing procedures for the school district indicated that all purchases by the school district required an approved purchase order. The district purchasing protocol indicated that for

purchases between \$5,000 and \$25,000, the district must obtain three quotes, written or verbal. Purchases over \$25,000 required specifications and followed a formal bid process.

The business office filed all quotes, contracts, and purchase orders. The EQA examiner reviewed 10 district vendors that received \$25,000 in FY 2006. The examiner also reviewed 10 vendors paid between \$5,000 and \$25,000 during the same period. The district appropriately filed all bid documents. All documents contained all required elements for M.G.L. Chapter 30B.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Interviews with school officials indicated the district had a formal preventative maintenance plan to maximize and prolong the effective use of all schools. In 2001, the district contracted with Habib & Associates Architects, Inc., for the development of preventative maintenance plans for all schools. Manuals developed served as a tool for use at each school. The information contained within the manuals represented a listing of daily, monthly, quarterly, and yearly maintenance needs and recording procedures to monitor date(s) and person(s) performing service.

The manuals described the recommended frequency and scope of maintenance recommended for each task. The development of the manuals recommended by the DOE fulfilled the requirements for descriptions of scheduled maintenance, a description of the administration of the plan, and a description of system checks and requisite record keeping requirements. Items maintained with the maintenance plan included life safety, code requirements, equipment life cycle, and energy-efficient items. The organization of preventative manuals fell into five disciplines: site, building envelope, building interiors, mechanical, and electrical. In addition, the district followed an integrated pest management plan, received annual inspections from the building department, re-inspected all buildings for identified asbestos, received fire inspection reports, annually

conducted emergency generator inspections, and annually completed fire alarm testing for all schools.

Walk-throughs of the schools by the EQA examiners revealed that all schools were clean, safe, well lit, and well maintained educational environments conducive to promoting student learning and achievement. According to information provided to the EQA by the district, district facilities were as follows: the Burrell Elementary School, built in 1967, appeared to be in fair condition; the Taylor Elementary School, built in 1964, appeared to be in fair condition; the Igo Elementary School, built in 1927, added onto in 1952 and renovated in 1994, appeared to be in good condition; Ahern Middle School, built in 1963 and renovated in 2001, appeared to be in excellent condition; and Foxborough High School, built in 1972, appeared to be in fair condition. Administrators indicated the budget process addressed preventative maintenance issues.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

A review of the district documents indicated the district had a long-term capital plan within the town capital plan. Administrative interviewees stated that a five-member committee comprised of the town manager, the town finance director, the superintendent, and two other town department supervisors ranked all capital projects for consideration.

The district developed a five-year capital plan prior to the period under review. Each fiscal year, interviewees revealed, the capital project list extended for an additional year and committee members reprioritized capital items. In addition, the school committee developed a capital plan for 2008-2011 for building improvements totaling \$1,710,000.

In FY 2004, the school district received \$7,126.56 for payment of copier leases. In FY 2005, the district received \$670,000 for facility improvements, building systems, and buses and vans. In FY 2006, the district received \$440,200 for the following capital items: the purchase of three

school buses; repairs to the girls' locker room at the high school; removal of an oil tank at an elementary school; replacement of cross members on football field lights at the middle school; and the purchase of 44 computers for grade 2 classrooms.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

Administrator interviews and a review of documents indicated that, during the period under review, each school had developed and implemented a personalized school safety plan referred to as the evacuation plan or the crisis management plan. Although the school district lacked a district safety plan, school plans contained similar elements. Each classroom received a copy of the school safety plan. The school safety plan detailed procedures to follow in case of emergencies, such as a fire, an earthquake, and a bomb scare. Each school had an emergency team, which met regularly to assess the safety of the school environment, receive training, and conduct safety drills with students and faculty. Participation in training took place at the beginning of the school year. Teachers, volunteers, and substitute teachers participated in the training and emergency drills conducted throughout the school year. School safety plans received annual reviews by the police and fire departments at the beginning of each school year. Visits to schools by the EQA examiners revealed that schools locked all outside doors during the school day. Entering the school by the main entrance required the use of a door buzzer. Visitors signed a logbook that requested name, time in, time out, and reason for visit. Faculty and staff lacked identification badges. Each school required visitors to display a visitor's badge. The high school, the middle school, and one elementary school used video cameras.

Appendix A: Proficiency Index (PI)

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

The proficiency index is calculated as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix B: Chapter 70 Trends, FY 1997 – FY2006

	Foundation Enrollment	Pct Chg	Foundation Budget	Pct Chg	Required Local Contribution	Chapter 70 Aid	Pct Chg	Required Net School Spending (NSS)	Pct Chg	Actual Net School Spending	Pct Chg	Dollars Over/Under Requirement	Percent Over/Under
FY97	2,632	4.2	14,983,154	6.1	9,746,840	4,054,832	20.4	13,801,672	4.9	16,294,777	12.0	2,493,105	18.1
FY98	2,674	1.6	15,652,419	4.5	10,526,993	4,616,406	13.8	15,143,399	9.7	17,767,727	9.0	2,624,328	17.3
FY99	2,741	2.5	16,564,632	5.8	11,046,568	5,294,118	14.7	16,340,686	7.9	18,651,087	5.0	2,310,401	14.1
FY00	2,872	4.8	17,395,134	5.0	11,740,060	5,891,493	11.3	17,631,553	7.9	19,798,372	6.2	2,166,819	12.3
FY01	2,888	0.6	18,202,973	4.6	12,331,728	6,396,893	8.6	18,728,621	6.2	21,038,629	6.3	2,310,008	12.3
FY02	2,877	-0.4	18,971,055	4.2	12,822,203	6,556,337	2.5	19,378,540	3.5	22,946,263	9.1	3,567,723	18.4
FY03	2,833	-1.5	19,057,589	0.5	13,105,094	6,699,937	2.2	19,805,031	2.2	23,873,927	4.0	4,068,896	20.5
FY04	2,880	1.7	19,632,948	3.0	13,945,345	5,687,603	-15.1	19,632,948	-0.9	23,611,861	-1.1	3,978,913	20.3
FY05	2,894	0.5	20,253,158	3.2	14,753,427	5,687,603	0.0	20,441,030	4.1	24,377,532	3.2	3,936,502	19.3
FY06	2,964	2.4	21,688,050	7.1	15,487,944	6,200,106	9.0	21,688,050	6.1	25,125,163	3.1	3,437,113	15.8

	<u>Dollars Per Foundation Enrollment</u>			<u>Percentage of Foundation</u>			<u>Chapter 70 Aid as Percent of Actual NSS</u>
	Foundation Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	
FY97	5,693	1,541	6,191	27.1	92.1	108.8	24.9
FY98	5,854	1,726	6,645	29.5	96.7	113.5	26.0
FY99	6,043	1,931	6,804	32.0	98.6	112.6	28.4
FY00	6,057	2,051	6,894	33.9	101.4	113.8	29.8
FY01	6,303	2,215	7,285	35.1	102.9	115.6	30.4
FY02	6,594	2,279	7,976	34.6	102.1	121.0	28.6
FY03	6,727	2,365	8,427	35.2	103.9	125.3	28.1
FY04	6,817	1,975	8,199	29.0	100.0	120.3	24.1
FY05	6,998	1,965	8,423	28.1	100.9	120.4	23.3
FY06	7,317	2,092	8,477	28.6	100.0	115.8	24.7

Foundation enrollment is reported in October of the prior fiscal year (e.g. FY06 enrollment = Oct 1, 2004 headcount).

Foundation budget is the state's estimate of the minimum amount needed in each district to provide an adequate educational program.

Required Net School Spending is the annual minimum that must be spent on schools, including carryovers from prior years.

Net School Spending includes municipal indirect spending for schools but excludes capital expenditures and transportation.