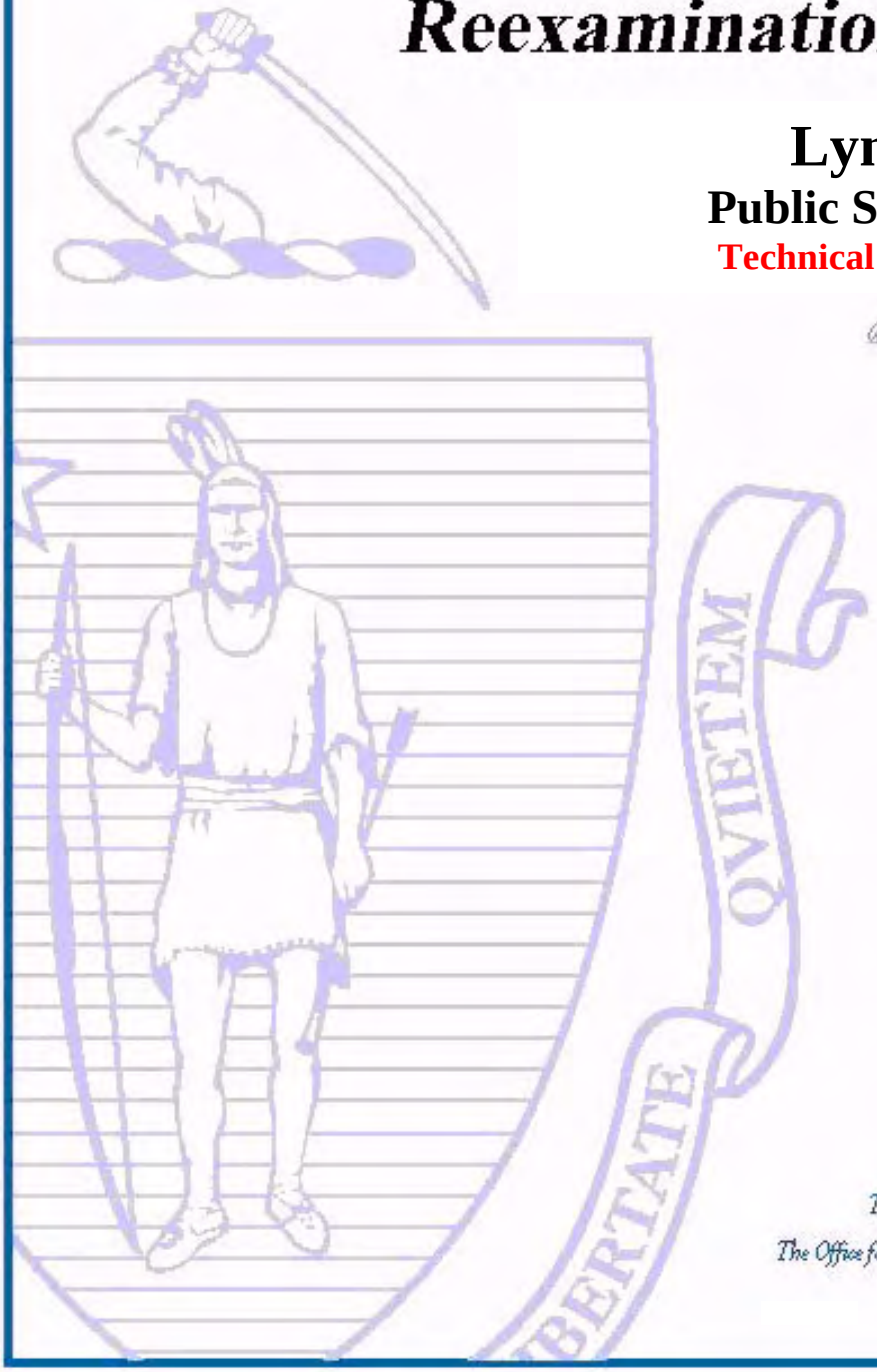
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

School District *Reexamination Report:*

Lynn
Public Schools
Technical Report

data driven
standards based
learner centered



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

2004-2007

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of Educational Quality and Accountability

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After reviewing this report, the Educational Management Audit Council voted to accept its findings at its meeting on March 7, 2008, and to remove Lynn from 'Watch' status with a letter of commendation and concerns.

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 Lynn Public Schools, Nicholas P. Kostan; the school department staff of the Lynn Public Schools; and the town officials in Lynn.

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Executive Summary

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) conducted a reexamination of the Lynn Public Schools in October 2007. With an English language arts proficiency index of 77 proficiency index (PI) points and a math proficiency index of 67 PI points based on the 2007 MCAS test results, the district is considered a 'Moderate' performing school system based on the Department of Education's rating system (found in Appendix A of this report), with achievement below the state average. On the 2007 MCAS tests, 49 percent of Lynn's students scored at or above the proficiency standard in ELA and 40 percent did so in math.

District Overview

The coastal city of Lynn is located in Essex County in eastern Massachusetts. The city grew considerably from a small farming and shell fishing community to an industrial one. Iron works, tanneries, and later shoe factories were the main industries, allowing the city to expand. Manufacturing remains important in the city, with the largest sources of employment being educational, health, and social services; manufacturing; and retail trade. The city is governed by a Mayor-City Council.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR), Lynn had a median family income of $45,295 in 1999, compared to the statewide median family income of $63,706, ranking it 331 out of the 351 cities and towns in the commonwealth. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the city had a total population of 89,050, with a population of 18,723 school-age children, or 21 percent of the total. Of the total households in Lynn, 36 percent were households with children under 18 years of age. Sixteen percent of the population age 25 years or older held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 33 percent statewide.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE), in 2006-2007 the Lynn Public Schools had a total enrollment of 13,619. The demographic composition in the district was: 42.4 percent Hispanic, 30.2 percent White, 13.3 percent African-American, 10.4 percent Asian, 0.3 percent Native American, and 3.4 percent multi-race, non-Hispanic; 23.3 percent limited English proficient (LEP), 75.1 percent low income, and 16.3 percent special education. Ninety percent of school-age children in Lynn attended public schools. The district does not participate in school choice. A total of 389 Lynn students attended public schools outside the district, including 59

students who attended vocational or agricultural technical high schools and 294 students who attended charter schools.

The district has 28 schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 12, including 19 elementary schools serving grades pre-kindergarten through 8, four middle schools serving grades 6 through 8, and five high schools serving grades 9 through 12. The administrative team consists of a superintendent, two deputy superintendents, a school business manager, an executive director of curriculum, and a director of equity/program support. Each school has a principal, and the Ford NASA Explorer School, Ingalls Elementary School, and Pickering Middle School each have a vice-principal as well; the Breed Middle School has two vice-principals and the Lynn Classical High School has two vice-principals and an academic dean. The district has a seven-member school committee.

In FY 2007, Lynn's per pupil expenditure (preliminary), based on appropriations from all funds, was $12,221, compared to $11,789 statewide, ranking it 98 out of the 302 of 328 school districts reporting data. The district exceeded the state net school spending requirement in each year of the review period. From FY 2005 to FY 2007, net school spending increased from $128,354,160 to $140,285,536; Chapter 70 aid increased from $97,648,202 to $103,751,349; the required local contribution increased from $28,851,969 to $31,653,289; and the foundation enrollment decreased from 14,221 to 13,762. Chapter 70 aid as a percentage of actual net school spending decreased from 76 to 74 percent over this period. From FY 2005 to FY 2006, total curriculum and instruction expenditures as a percentage of total net school spending decreased from 60 to 56 percent.

Context

School districts examined by the Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA) are placed in 'Watch' status if the EQA examination reveals several areas of poor or unsatisfactory performance. All 'Watch' districts are monitored by the EQA and its staff. For the next one to two years, an experienced and trained senior EQA examiner monitors a district in 'Watch' status. After a reexamination by the EQA, either the district is removed from 'Watch' status or an EQA report is forwarded to the Board of Education with a recommendation

to declare the district underperforming. Underperforming districts receive additional support and services from the state to improve student achievement.

The EQA first examined the Lynn Public Schools in March 2004, and the Educational Management Audit Council (EMAC) subsequently placed the district in 'Watch' status in July 2004. An EQA examiner, John Kulevich, monitored the district and an EQA examination team reexamined the district in October 2007. This reexamination report is the conclusion of the 'Watch' process, the purpose of which is to assess the progress the district has made since the prior examination.

During the course of the reexamination, the issue of "bidding and bumping" was a concern expressed by virtually all interviewees—from teachers to principals to school committee members. Most felt the procedure negatively impacted the delivery of educational services in the district and was counter to the spirit of education reform.

Like many school districts in Massachusetts, the Lynn Public Schools balanced limited funds with the educational needs of the children and families it served. This challenge was exacerbated with an approximately 24 percent rate of transience in the district and a policy that children could continue attending a school even if they move to a part of Lynn not normally served by that school. To counter the large numbers of students who migrate in and out of and within the district, the district connected the budget, human resources, and Parent Information Center functions. This led, for the most part, to high levels of efficiency and the appropriate allocation of resources.

The district faced another challenge: the poor physical condition of many of its schools and the lack of capital funds to pay for construction or renovations. The district took action to become more efficient in caring for the schools, including transferring the custodial function to the city's inspectional services department. In addition, the district commissioned studies to determine the condition of the schools and has applied for school building assistance funds. The Lynn public schools include 19 elementary schools, four middle/junior high schools, and five high schools. Three of the high schools underwent a major renovation, additions, and/or facility replacement with proceeds from $95.6 million in bonds issued in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Each of the projects is receiving 90 percent of approved project costs and interest from the state. Authorized and

unused debt for school construction existed in the amount of $94.5 million. The use of these monies was contingent upon the receipt of 90 percent reimbursement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The district also faced problems with the Lynn Classical High School, which is sinking. The district received a large insurance settlement from the architect, but was forced to place the students who should be attending that school at other schools.

Recommendations

As a result of its reexamination, the EQA arrived at recommendations for the district, which were presented to the superintendent subsequent to the reexamination. They are as follows.

- Develop and implement a long-range school safety plan supported with appropriate funding.
- Address schools not meeting minimum standards of occupancy in the long-range building plan.
- Develop and implement a building plan to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and building code standards. Most schools do not conform to expectations of the ADA for meeting the needs of disabled individuals, and life systems including sprinklers, fire alarms, exit signs, and emergency upgrades are not adequate by today's standards.
- The impact of contractual "bidding and bumping" language delays hiring practices and has resulted in hiring a greater number of teachers on waivers.

The EQA Reexamination Process

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

From October 15-18, 2007, the EQA conducted an independent reexamination of the Lynn Public Schools for the period 2004-2007, with a primary focus on 2007. This reexamination was based on the EQA's six major standards of inquiry that address the quality of educational

management, which are: 1) Leadership, Governance, and Communication; 2) Curriculum and Instruction; 3) Assessment and Program Evaluation; 4) Human Resource Management and Professional Development; 5) Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support; and 6) Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency. The report is based on the source documents, correspondence sent prior to the on-site visit, interviews with the representatives from the school committee, the district leadership team, school administrators, and teachers, and additional documents submitted while in the district. The report does not consider documents, revised data, or comments that may have surfaced after the on-site visit.

For the period under reexamination, 2004-2007, Lynn Pubic Schools is considered to be a 'Moderate' performing school district, marked by student achievement that was 'Moderate' in English language arts (ELA) and 'Low' in math on the 2007 MCAS tests. Over the reexamination period, student performance improved by one PI point in ELA and four PI points in math, which narrowed the district's proficiency gaps by five percent in ELA and 11 percent in math.

The following provides a summary of the district's performance on the 2007 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests and the findings of the EQA reexamination.

Summary of Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

On the 2007 MCAS tests in ELA, math, and STE, eligible students in Lynn participated at levels that met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement.

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

On average, nearly half the students in Lynn Public Schools attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA) on the 2007 MCAS tests, two-fifths of Lynn students attained proficiency in math, and slightly more than one-fifth attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE). Eighty-nine percent of the Class of 2007 attained a Competency Determination.

- Lynn's ELA proficiency index on the 2007 MCAS tests was 77 proficiency index (PI) points. This resulted in a proficiency gap, the difference between its proficiency index and the target of 100, of 23 PI points, nine points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA.

This gap would require an average improvement in performance of more than three PI points annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

- In 2007, Lynn's math proficiency index on the MCAS tests was 67 PI points, resulting in a proficiency gap of 33 PI points, nine points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly five PI points per year to achieve AYP.
- Lynn's STE proficiency index in 2007 was 57 PI points, resulting in a proficiency gap of 43 PI points, 15 points wider than that statewide.

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

Between 2004 and 2007, Lynn's MCAS performance showed slight improvement in English language arts, more improvement in math, and a slight decline in science and technology/engineering.

- Over the three-year period 2004-2007, ELA performance in Lynn improved slightly, at an average of approximately one-third PI point annually. This resulted in an improvement rate, or a closing of the proficiency gap, of nearly five percent, a rate lower than that required to achieve AYP. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in ELA increased from 45 percent in 2004 to 48 percent in 2007.
- Math performance in Lynn showed more improvement over this period, at an average of close to one and one-half PI points annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of slightly more than 11 percent, also a rate lower than that required to achieve AYP. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in math rose from 29 percent in 2004 to 39 percent in 2007.
- Between 2004 and 2007, Lynn had a slight decline in STE performance of less than one PI point over the three-year period, resulting in a widening of the proficiency gap by almost two percent. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in STE decreased from 25 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2007.

Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

MCAS performance in 2007 varied considerably among subgroups of Lynn students. Of the nine measurable subgroups in Lynn, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-

performing subgroups was 30 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 34 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).

- The proficiency gaps in Lynn in 2007 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, limited English proficient (LEP) students, Hispanic students, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program).
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, Asian students, and non low-income students.

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

In Lynn, the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA narrowed from 36 PI points in 2004 to 31 PI points in 2007, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 33 to 36 PI points over this period.

- All student subgroups with the exception of students with disabilities, non low-income students, and African-American students had improved performance in ELA between 2004 and 2007. The most improved subgroups in ELA were limited English proficient and Asian students.
- In math, the performance of all student subgroups in Lynn improved between 2004 and 2007. The most improved subgroups in math were White and Asian students.

Fidelity of Implementation

A characteristic of effective educational organizations (schools and districts) is the strong alignment of goals, plans, processes, and actions—from the policymakers to the classroom. Therefore, the EQA has developed a protocol for assessing the alignment of these elements. The *fidelity of implementation* is an indicator of the consistency of execution of a district's expectations: its stated goals, plans, curricula, and various processes, down to the level of instruction. When these various components are consistent and highly aligned, a high level of fidelity of implementation exists. When these are inconsistent and poorly aligned, a low or poor

level of fidelity of implementation exists. The classroom observation protocol is designed to collect evidence of district and school goals, plans, and expectations in the instructional setting.

During the period under reexamination, the district adopted a District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA), which served as the District Improvement Plan (DIP). The DIPCA had mission and vision statements, goals, and action steps, and it identified budget requirements, responsible persons, and the professional development needed to make progress toward DIPCA goals. The district primarily used the Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process to develop the goals of the DIPCA, which identified improving student achievement in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics as the principal instructional priorities for the district. District and school leaders communicated the goals of the district and schools in several ways, such as at school committee, school council, faculty, staff, and PIM team meetings. The district also used a district newsletter to communicate school and district goals.

The DIPCA had a system-wide goal of improving adequate yearly progress (AYP) in ELA and mathematics for the aggregate student population and for student subgroups at all grades. All specific district and school goals were measurable and directly related to improving student achievement in ELA and math. School PIM teams, consisting of school council members, parents, teachers, principals and other administrators, worked to align the goals in School Improvement Plans (SIPs) with the goals in the DIPCA. Central office administrators reviewed SIPs to ensure alignment with the DIPCA. The district supported the fidelity of implementation of school and district goals with substantial professional development offerings and by solidifying a curriculum and instruction team that placed an emphasis on standards-based instruction, improving vocabulary and reading comprehension, and providing ELA and mathematics early intervention programs.

The district monitored fidelity of implementation in a number of ways including analysis of student achievement data and observation of teachers formally and informally in the classroom. All administrators were trained in the use of TestWiz, and school PIM teams modified SIPs and developed action plans to improve student achievement based on analysis of student achievement data.

During the site visit, classroom observations were conducted in 13 of the district's 28 schools: 41 at the elementary level, 37 at the middle school level, and 16 at the high school level. At the 13 schools, EQA examiners observed instruction in 94 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 33 attributes, grouped into five categories: classroom management; instructional practice; expectations; student activity, work, and behavior; and classroom climate for learning. As part of the classroom observation process, examiners interviewed 13 principals and approximately 30 teachers to determine the depth of the fidelity of implementation of the district and school goals. EQA examiners asked nine questions to determine the degree of linkage between district and school priorities in areas including curriculum development, professional development, use of student achievement data, and supervision and evaluation. Interviewees generally confirmed that the district focused on improving ELA and math achievement during the period under reexamination and affirmed that the PIM process and the concomitant analysis of student achievement data were the primary methodologies used to determine and monitor school and district priorities. Interviewees also confirmed that school and district goals, for the most part, were communicated effectively by district and school leaders at school committee, faculty, school council, and PIM team meetings, and the district supported and provisioned the implementation of strategies to improve ELA and math achievement with professional development and budgetary resources.

During classroom observations in 32 ELA and 40 math randomly selected classrooms, EQA examiners looked for a number of attributes that would indicate whether the teacher implemented instructional strategies that reflected school and/or district priorities and would likely lead to improved student achievement in ELA and math. The classroom observations showed that the fidelity of implementation of district and school goals to improve student achievement in Lynn was variable, ranging from moderate to high depending on the attribute observed. Positive indicators of instructional practice were evident in 70 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 75 percent at the elementary level, 68 percent at the middle school level, and 59 percent at the high school level. Examiners found that the teacher implemented instructional strategies that reflected school and/or district priorities in 83 percent of the classrooms observed, and they saw that the teacher checked for understanding and corrected misunderstandings in 84 percent of the classrooms observed. They noted that the teacher made learning goals clear to students in 76 percent of the classrooms observed, and the

teacher allocated and used instructional time effectively in 74 percent of the classrooms observed. Examiners also found that the teacher used a variety of questioning techniques that encouraged elaboration, thought, and broad involvement in 54 percent of the classrooms observed, and that the teacher increased the level of learning by using a variety of instructional techniques in 42 percent of the classrooms observed.

Standard Summaries

Leadership, Governance, and Communication

The superintendent and the school committee of the Lynn Public Schools have adopted a District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) that prioritizes a system-wide goal of making adequate yearly progress (AYP) in both ELA and math for students in the aggregate and for all student subgroups at all grade spans. With the addition of two new deputy superintendents, a cohesive curriculum and instruction team has worked to place districtwide emphasis on standards-based instruction, to improve vocabulary and reading comprehension at all grade levels, and to provide early intervention programs in ELA and math. Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) teams, in all district schools except one, addressed the goals of individual School Improvement Plans (SIPs) which aligned with the goals of the district's corrective action plan. The superintendent and the two deputy superintendents have implemented new initiatives and made modifications to appropriately address those indicators rated 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory' in the district's initial EQA review. The Department of Education (DOE), in recognizing district progress in addressing the goals of the corrective action plan and seeing improvement in student achievement, has moved the district from the performance classification of Category I to Category II.

Contractually, principals were defined as the instructional school leaders of their respective buildings. The district provided training in assessment procedures such as TestWiz to strengthen the data analysis process. To support established district and school goals, central administration approved a professional development plan for 2005-2006 and budgeted $2,854,380 for professional development; 77 percent of this funding came from grants and 23 percent from budgetary funds. Administrators and teachers interviewed responded positively regarding the district's professional development offerings, as well as the Lucid software program which allows for online professional development registration.

For the most part, principals were not able to select staff members for their buildings on a timely basis. The seniority and bumping language in the teachers' contract prevails when positions open because of attrition or enrollment shifts. Bumping often affected the stability of a school's staff.

The district approved expenditures for new instructional resources with an aim to standardize the district's curricula across grade levels. One example was the purchase of the Trophies reading program for grades K-5.

Although not in a written timeline, the district developed systematic procedures focused on analysis of student achievement data, improvement of instructional practices, and review of progress toward goals established for the district and for individual schools. The leadership of the district communicated the goals of the school system at school committee meetings, parent council meetings, PIM meetings, and in a district newsletter disseminated quarterly. With the assistance of an external consultant, the district established a broad-based committee of approximately 20 members to develop a strategic plan. In an effort to improve achievement of all students, the district has implemented numerous alternative educational programs and services at the elementary, middle, and high school levels to assist the district's approximately 14,000 students, 75 percent of whom participate in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

According to interviewees, approximately 50 different languages were spoken by students in the district. The district's Parent Information Center (PIC), which operates year round, provided assistance to students and parents in matters related to English language learners (ELLs) and special education students, school assignments, housing and education for the homeless, and health and medical needs. During focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders in the district, a recurrent theme of pride in the Lynn Public Schools and a commitment to its students was expressed.

Curriculum and Instruction

During the period under reexamination, the district involved its teachers in the redesign of the ELA, math, and science curricula. The district aligned the new curricula with the state frameworks and provided timelines that led to horizontal and vertical alignment. The district curriculum and instruction team focused on providing district as well as in-school training for principals and teachers in the implementation of the new curricula. Interviews with teachers as

well as classroom observations by examiners revealed that the curricula were in use across district classrooms.

The district had mandated the introduction of the PIM process in all schools. This meant that PIM teams produced School Improvement Plans (SIPs) based upon close analysis of assessment results. The objectives in these SIPs frequently called for instructional strategies to address the assessed needs of the schools' students. The district responded with Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training for teachers of English language learners, training in key reading comprehension strategies, multiple offerings of the Skillful Teacher course, and math content training to support teachers' math instruction. In providing its teachers with training embedded in three-credit courses such as SIOP and Skillful Teacher, the district provided the teachers with substantial opportunities to add to or improve their repertoire of instructional strategies. Building-level curriculum and instruction teachers worked with teachers to assist them in introducing these strategies.

During the site visit, the EQA examiners observed a total of 94 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 33 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching, grouped into five categories: classroom management; instructional practice; expectations; student activity, work, and behavior; and classroom climate for learning. Observations were conducted in 13 of the district's 28 schools as follows: 41 at the elementary level, 37 at the middle school level, and 16 at the high school level. In total, the EQA examiners observed 32 ELA classrooms, 40 math classrooms, and 22 science classrooms. Observations of classroom teachers indicated strong classroom management in elementary, middle, and high schools. At the same time, observers found that classroom activity frequently did not reflect high expectations for student learning, particularly at the middle school level.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

During the reexamination period, the district trained school and district leaders in the use of assessment data from the MCAS tests, the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE), and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and used the data to understand progress in student achievement, develop SIPs, and inform decisions about instruction, curriculum, and professional development. In addition, the use of assessment

data became an integral part of the budget process. Finally, the district made progress in the development and use of formative assessments by designing and analyzing quarterly benchmark tests in all tested content areas in grades 3-10.

MCAS test results indicated progress in ELA and math at all grade levels and for most subgroups during the reexamination period, with the exception of ELA scores of students with disabilities. Lynn's seniors overall, and in three of the high schools in particular, failed to show progress in meeting the DOE's Competency Determination standard from 2005 through 2007.

Human Resource Management and Professional Development

A provision in the teachers' contract giving teachers the annual opportunity to bid for vacancies based upon seniority and certification, prior to making them available to outside recruitment, hindered hiring practices. That provision also extended bumping rights to teachers whose positions the district eliminated. The most recent teachers' contract modified that provision and prohibited teachers with 15 or more years of service from losing their position through bumping. According to interviewees, after the bidding/bumping process was completed and outside recruitment could begin, the candidate pool became limited and often resulted in the district having to hire teachers on waivers. A review of district records corroborated this and indicated that the district employed 102 teachers on waivers in the 2006-2007 school year. Of those, 46 percent were special education teachers, 20 percent were ELL or English as a second language (ESL) teachers, and 10 percent were science or mathematics teachers. Once begun, the recruitment and hiring process was perceived by district personnel as being fair and open and focused on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals. A review of district documents indicated that almost 96 percent of teachers (1,127 of 1,178) were certified; 17 percent (203 of 1,178) taught out of field for one or more periods per day; and four percent (51 of 1,178) were on waivers. All administrators were licensed for the position that they held, and 84 percent (234 of 278) of the paraprofessionals met the federal definition of 'highly qualified.'

Efforts to recruit highly qualified teachers included participation in job fairs, Internet advertising through SchoolSpring.com and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) website, advertising in newspapers such as *The Daily Item* of Lynn and *The Boston*

Globe, continued communication with North Shore Community College, and the maintenance of a resume bank of teacher applications.

Retention of personnel in the district was attributed to a favorable benefits package with strong incentives for longevity, a wide range of professional development opportunities accompanied with financial incentives including the awarding of one salary scale credit for each 10 professional development points earned, a mentoring program, and partnerships with local colleges to offer enhanced opportunities to obtain graduate credit.

The district's professional development program focused on accountability for administrators, teachers, and other staff members through the implementation of a system that utilized the Department of Education's Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process to evaluate its schools and guide the development of SIPs, which had a required professional development component. The SIPs were forwarded to the district office of curriculum and instruction for analysis, identification of common professional development needs, and generation of professional development offerings. The SIPs were utilized in the formation of the District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) and the formation of the professional development plan to ensure alignment and address the goals identified in the DIPCA and the individual SIPs. The professional development plan focused on goals addressing weaknesses in ELA and mathematics. Offerings included training in mathematics instruction, training in pedagogy (such as Research for Better Teaching), training for all staff members in English language learner development (such as MELA-O and SIOP), and trainings that allowed teachers to become recertified and to attain 'highly qualified' status.

The district focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Principals were trained in Observing and Analyzing Teaching (OAT) by Research for Better Teaching (RBT), Confronting Mediocre Teaching, and Leading the Learning. Evaluation instruments were revised for teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, vice-principals, and principals to better align the instruments with the requirements of education reform. The district's deputy superintendents supported supervisory efforts by reviewing all teacher evaluations, noting comments made, and discussing results with principals. In addition, curriculum instruction teachers (CITs) worked in classrooms and provided non-evaluative supervision to teachers. Walk-through tools were

developed and utilized across the district both for regular and sheltered instruction to record evidence of the implementation of district initiatives. The evaluation instruments were in narrative form and were described by interviewees as cumbersome but more valid than the former instruments.

Teacher evaluations reviewed by examiners were found to be informative; 38 percent were considered instructive, and only 58 percent were timely. Evaluations written on the revised teacher evaluation instrument, and following training from RBT, included meaningful and specific comments that addressed suggestions for improving instructional practices.

Administrators in the Administrators' Association were not evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year because the evaluation instrument was perceived to be of poor quality. That instrument was in the process of revision at the time of the reexamination. Fifty-eight percent of administrator evaluations reviewed by EQA examiners were timely, and only 17 percent were considered instructive. Most of the evaluations reviewed did not include recommendations to promote growth and overall effectiveness.

Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support

During the period under reexamination, the district saw gains in the average attendance rate and reductions in chronic student absenteeism and dropout rates. District staff attributed these improvements in student attendance to revisions made in the district attendance policy, enforcement of the policy by district attendance officers and school administrators, and communication to parents from school staff members. The average attendance rate for the district improved from 93.3 percent in 2004-2005 to 94.9 percent in 2006-2007, according to DOE data. During the 2005-2006 school year, 2,610 students had 19 or more absences; in the 2006-2007 school year, the district reduced the number of chronically absent students to 2,316. Teacher absenteeism remained at acceptable levels during the period reexamined. An agreement in the teachers' contract allowed employees to buy back up to five sick leave days each school year.

The district provided numerous programs and services to students and their families. Teachers assigned students to tutoring in ELA and math, which took place before school, after school, and during the summer. High school students participated in MCAS test preparation classes in English and math. The district had six alternative education programs to support regular

education and special education students who needed a different environment for academic success. The English language learner program improved the delivery of instruction to ELL students with training in sheltered immersion practices for large numbers of classroom and ELL teachers. The district had plans to increase the number of classroom teachers trained in special education inclusion practices to make classroom instruction more effective for special education students.

The PIC served all students in the district, including many students and their families who lived in difficult circumstances. The PIC registered all new students and determined student needs to make sure that the staff assigned each student to the best educational placement. Over 6,000 registrations, transfers, or withdrawals took place each year. The PIC staff worked with school staffs and community partners to provide additional support to over 1,300 homeless students and their families. Parents accessed services such as transportation and childcare through the Parent Information Center to help them attend school events. Students were allowed to remain at their school through the last grade even if their family moved to another area of the city. This practice supported academic continuity for each student.

Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

Rather than reexamine the district only on those 2004 indicators on which the district was rated 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory,' the EQA conducted a full examination of the district on Standard VI covering the period 2004-2007. The EQA examiners gave the Lynn 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.

School committee policy defined the budget process and gave the superintendent the responsibility for budget preparation. The budget process commenced with the projection of student enrollment for each school in the system. The district connected enrollment, budgetary, and staffing data and used them as an integral part of the budget process. The district used the goals of the DIPCA to develop the budget with the aim of improving student achievement. The school committee and the superintendent, as part of the budget process, were committed to small class sizes in all of the schools. The supplies and materials portion of the budget was based on a per pupil allocation in order to assure equity. The budget process started in February and

concluded in August followed by school committee approval of the superintendent's recommended budget. Each of the principals reviewed districtwide trends in making budget decisions and presented their budget recommendations to the administrative team. The superintendent held meetings with the principals to review their budgets and developed recommendations for presentation to the school committee. The budget document included information on state and federal funds. The recommended budget was submitted to the school committee's budget subcommittee for review followed by submission to the full committee. There were several iterations of the budget by the superintendent based on projected available city funds. The mayor prepared the city's budget that included the school system's budget allocation. The school system budget would be revised to meet the mayor's recommendation. Following a public hearing in August, the school committee voted the budget followed by submission to the mayor and city council.

In interviews with the superintendent and the business manager, it was stated that the district required additional special needs staffing as well as additional funding for capital expenditures to address maintenance, renovation, and modernization of school facilities. Lynn exceeded the net school spending (NSS) requirements during the period under reexamination, and in FY 2005 the per pupil expenditure exceeded the state average. The city relied heavily on Chapter 70 aid and other state and federal grant revenue. The school district received approximately $20 million in state, federal, and private grants that supplemented the budget. The district had limited financial resources, and the city had a low tax base. The district transferred the custodial and maintenance functions to the city in order to improve efficiency and reduce costs. The school budget was 54.5 percent of the total city budget. The budget and the instructional costs increased during the reexamination period.

The district had a long-term capital plan that recommended repairs and maintenance of existing school buildings (many of the schools are over 50 years old). An analysis of the schools showed a need for construction of new schools and a need for program spaces (science labs, special needs space, and small group meeting spaces) in the elementary and middle schools. The Merrimack Education Center (MEC) reviewed enrollment projections and the school facilities of the district, which showed a significant need for additional classrooms and space at the elementary and middle schools. Because of deferred maintenance, a need existed to repair and

renovate many of the schools and upgrade systems, such as HVAC and electrical systems. A report by Strategic Building Solutions (SBS) detailed four recommendations for capital expenditures that would improve the schools. The superintendent recommended the option that proposed renovating and expanding the middle schools and addressing repairs in each school. The district transferred the maintenance and custodial responsibility to the inspectional services department of the city. Interviews with the staff members indicated improvement in maintenance of the schools as a result of the change.

Analysis of MCAS Student Achievement Data

The EQA's analysis of student achievement data focuses on the MCAS test results for 2004-2007, with primary attention paid to the 2007 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 2007 MCAS test results revealed differences between the achievement of students in Lynn 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 Lynn; and comparative analyses of district wide, 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 subgroups.

Achievement

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

Findings:

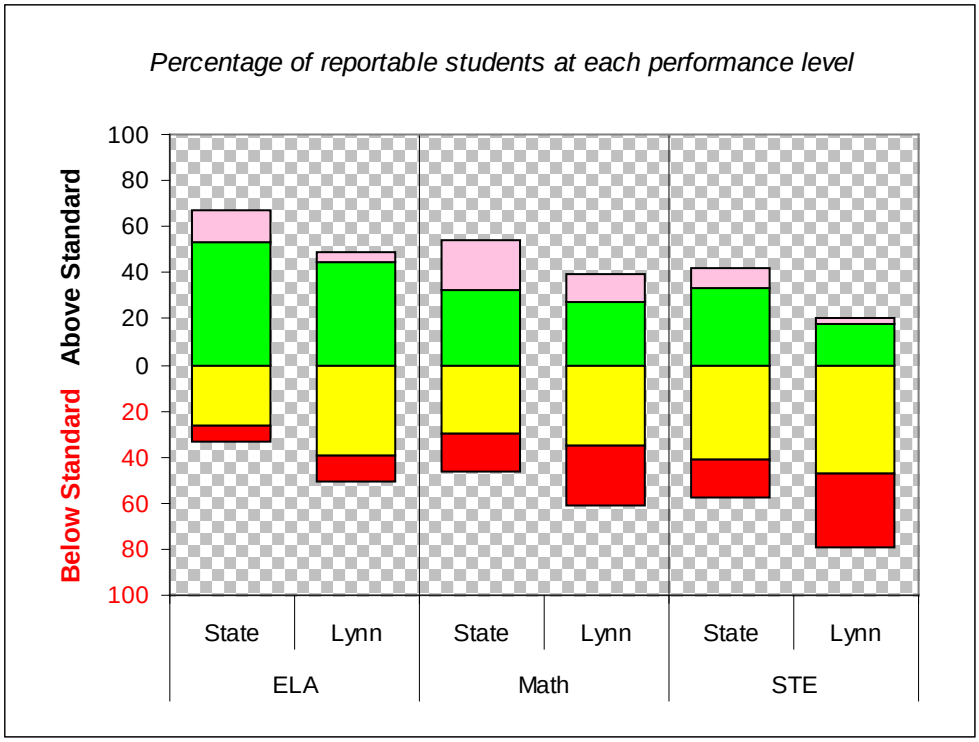
- On average, nearly half the students in Lynn Public Schools attained proficiency in English language arts (ELA) on the 2007 MCAS tests, two-fifths of Lynn students attained proficiency in math, and slightly more than one-fifth attained proficiency in science and technology/engineering (STE). Eighty-nine percent of the Class of 2007 attained a Competency Determination.

- Lynn's ELA proficiency index on the 2007 MCAS tests was 77 proficiency index (PI) points. This resulted in a proficiency gap, the difference between its proficiency index and the target of 100, of 23 PI points, nine points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in ELA. This gap would require an average improvement in performance of more than three PI points annually to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

- In 2007, Lynn's math proficiency index on the MCAS tests was 67 PI points, resulting in a proficiency gap of 33 PI points, nine points wider than the state's average proficiency gap in math. This gap would require an average improvement of nearly five PI points per year to achieve AYP.

- Lynn's STE proficiency index in 2007 was 57 PI points, resulting in a proficiency gap of 43 PI points, 15 points wider than that statewide.

Figure/Table 1: MCAS Test Performance by Subject, 2007



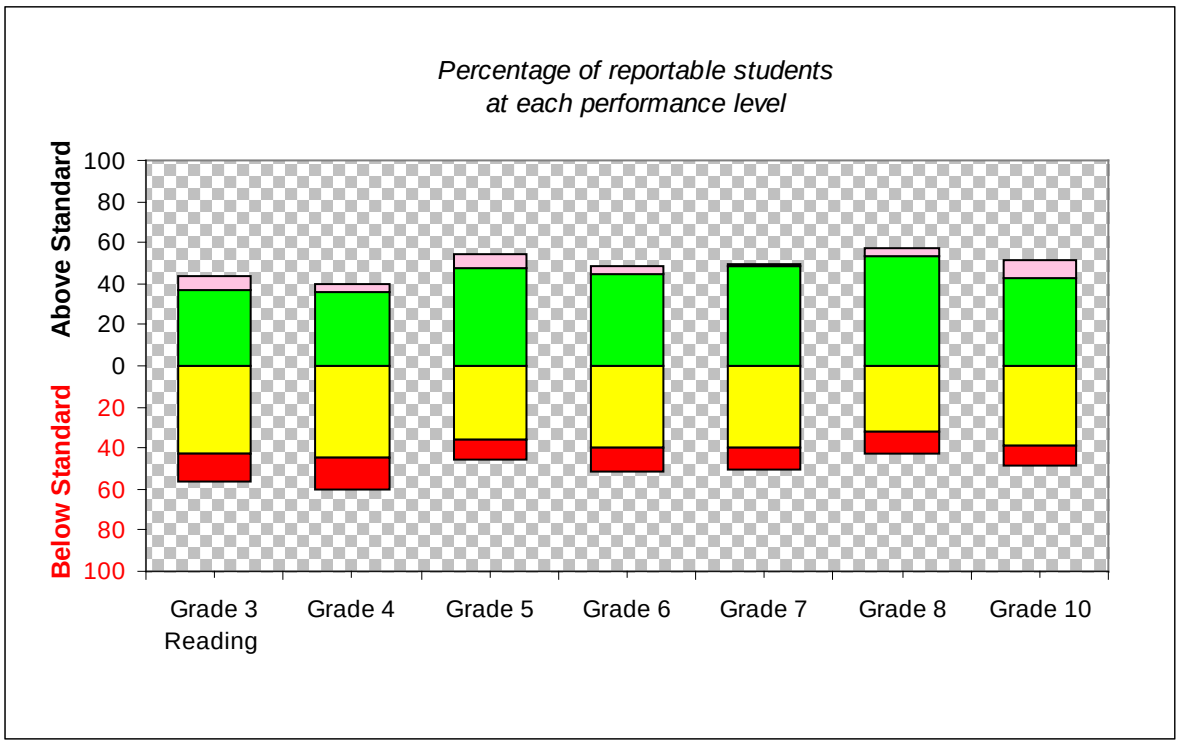
	ELA		Math		STE	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	13	5	22	12	9	3
Proficient	53	44	32	28	34	18
Needs Improvement	27	39	30	35	41	47
Warning/Failing	7	12	17	26	17	32
Percent Attaining Proficiency	66	49	54	40	43	21
Proficiency Index (PI)	85.7	77.0	76.1	66.6	72.1	57.2

In 2007, achievement in English language arts (ELA), math, and science and technology/engineering (STE) was lower in Lynn than statewide. In Lynn, 49 percent of students attained proficiency in ELA, compared to 66 percent statewide; 40 percent attained proficiency in math, compared to 54 percent statewide; and 21 percent attained proficiency in STE, compared to 43 percent statewide.

The 2007 proficiency index for Lynn students in ELA was 77 PI points, compared to 86 PI points statewide; in math, it was 67 PI points, compared to 76 points statewide; and in STE, it was 57 PI points, compared to 72 points statewide.

The ELA proficiency gap for Lynn students in 2007 was 23 PI points, compared to 14 PI points statewide, and would require an average improvement of more than three PI points annually to make AYP. Lynn's math proficiency gap in 2007 was 33 PI points, compared to 24 PI points statewide, and would require an average improvement of nearly five PI points per year to make AYP. Lynn's STE proficiency gap was 43 PI points, compared to 28 PI points statewide.

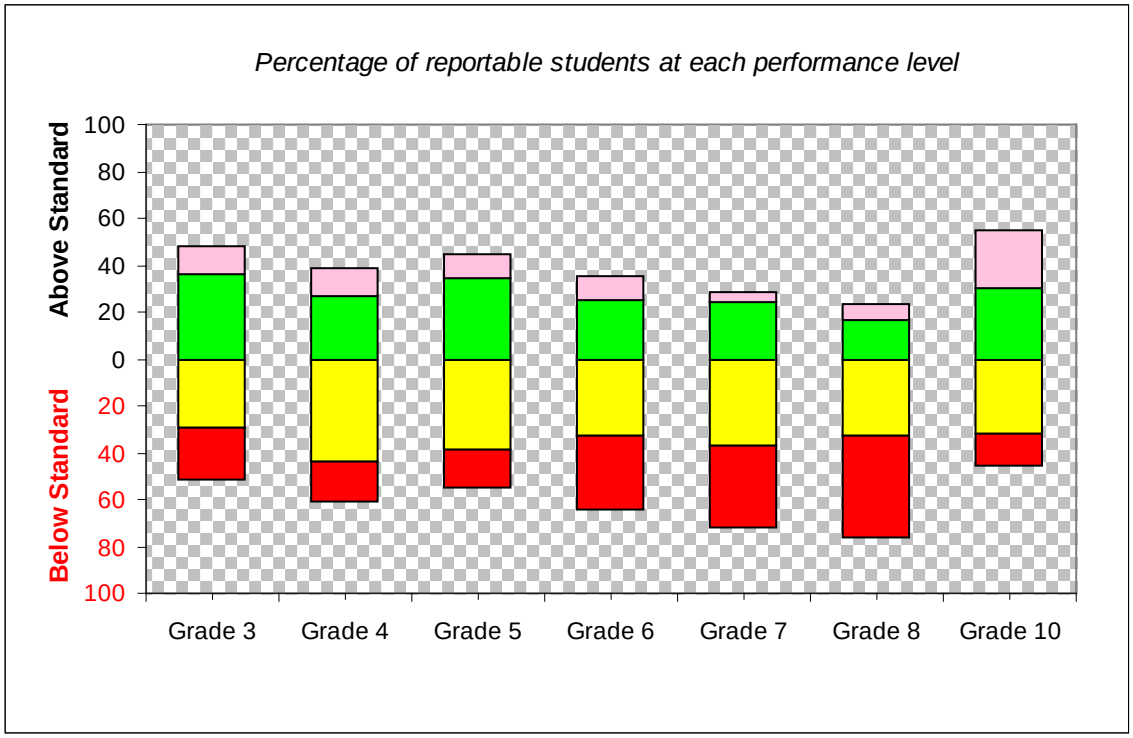
Figure/Table 2: MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance by Grade, 2007



	Grade 3 Reading	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Advanced	7	3	7	4	2	4	8
Proficient	37	36	48	45	48	53	43
Needs Improvement	43	45	36	40	40	33	38
Warning/Failing	14	15	10	12	10	11	10
Percent Attaining Proficiency	44	39	55	49	50	57	51

The percentage of Lynn students attaining proficiency in ELA in 2007 varied by grade level, ranging from a low of 39 percent at grade 4 to a high of 57 percent at grade 8.

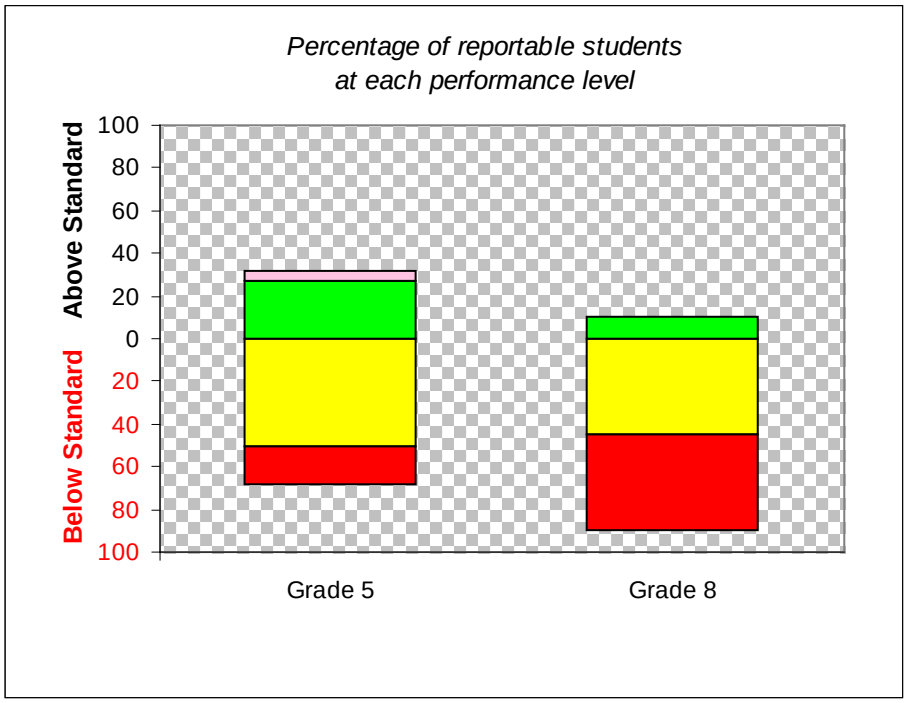
Figure/Table 3: MCAS Math Test Performance by Grade, 2007



	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
Advanced	12	12	11	10	4	7	25
Proficient	36	27	34	25	24	17	30
Needs Improvement	29	44	38	33	37	33	32
Warning/Failing	22	17	17	32	35	43	14
Percent Attaining Proficiency	48	39	45	35	28	24	55

The percentage of Lynn students attaining proficiency in math in 2007 also varied by grade level, ranging from a low of 24 percent at grade 8 to a high of 55 percent at grade 10.

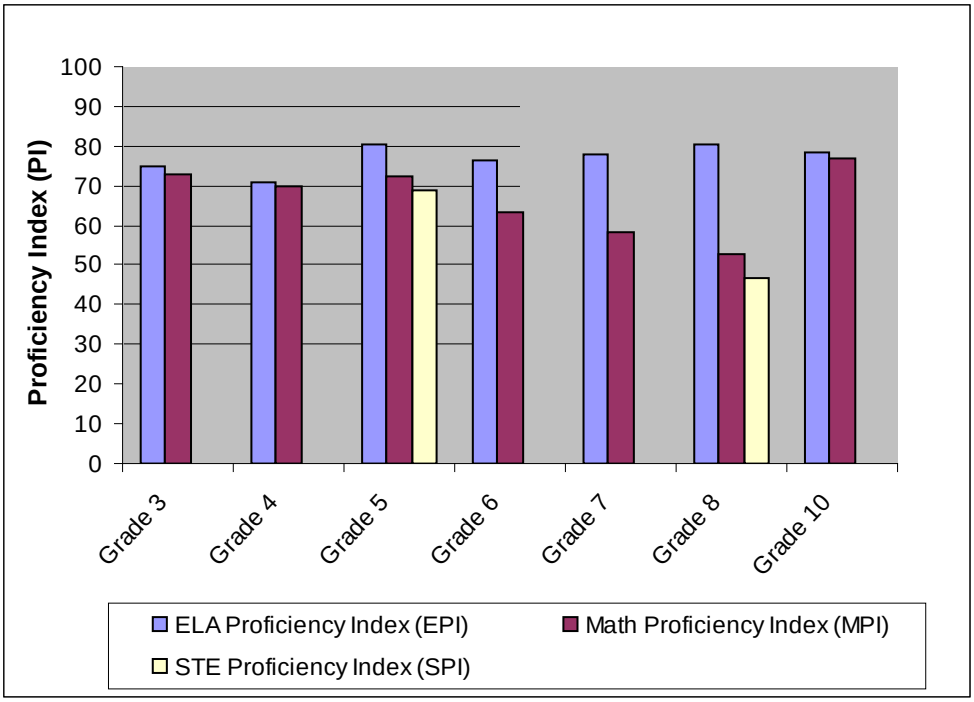
Figure/Table 4: MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance by Grade, 2007



	Grade 5	Grade 8
Advanced	5	0
Proficient	27	10
Needs Improvement	50	45
Warning/Failing	17	45
Percent Attaining Proficiency	32	10

In Lynn in 2007, 32 percent of grade 5 students attained proficiency in STE, and 10 percent of grade 8 students did so.

Figure/Table 5: MCAS Proficiency Indices by Grade and Subject, 2007

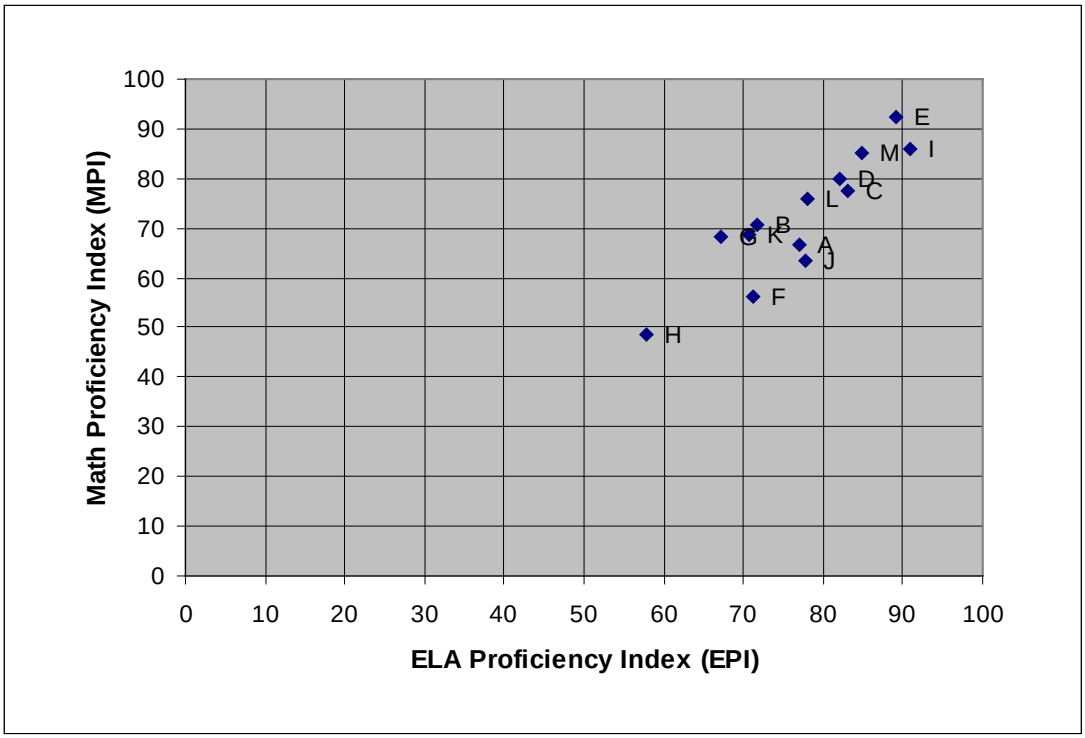


	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 10
ELA Proficiency Index (EPI)	74.8	70.7	80.6	76.4	78.0	80.2	78.3
Math Proficiency Index (MPI)	72.8	70.0	72.4	63.1	58.4	53.0	76.7
STE Proficiency Index (SPI)			68.6			46.8	

At every grade level, the performance of Lynn students on the 2007 MCAS tests was strongest in ELA. Lynn's ELA proficiency gap in 2007 ranged from a low of 19 PI points at grade 5 to a high of 29 PI points at grade 4. Lynn's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of 23 PI points at grade 10 to a high of 47 PI points at grade 8. Lynn's STE proficiency gap was 31 PI points at grade 5 and 53 PI points at grade 8.

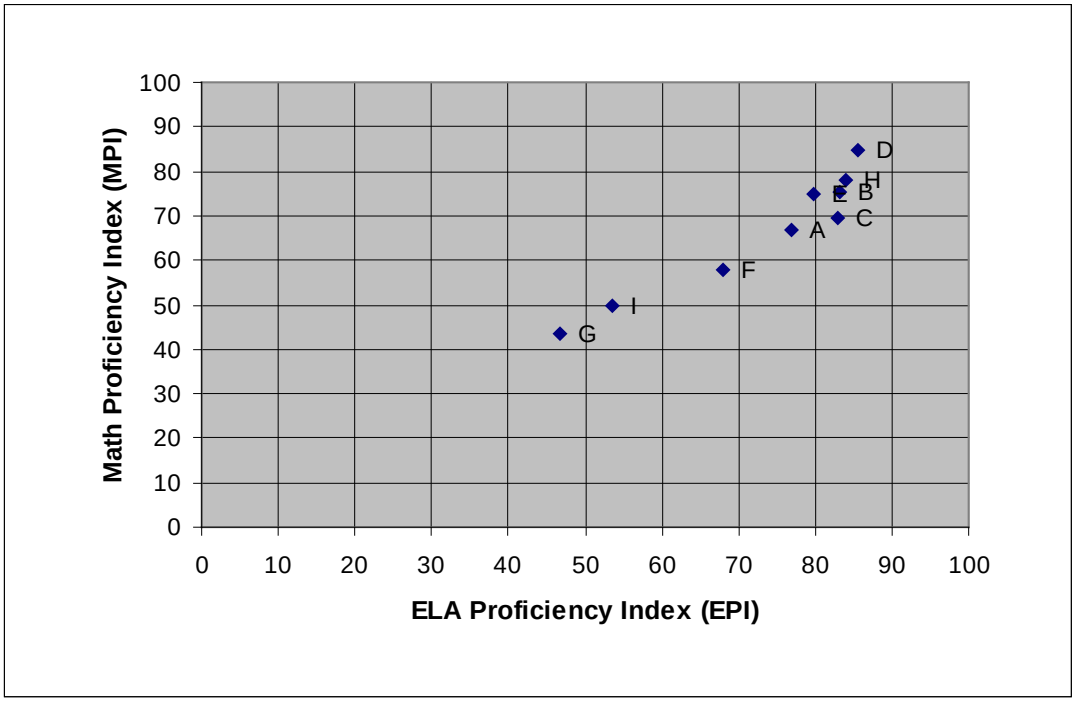
Figures 6 A-C/Table 6: MCAS ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) vs. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by School, 2007

A. Elementary Schools



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Lynn district average	77.0	66.6	13,454
B	A. Drewicz	71.8	70.5	311
C	Aborn	83.2	77.4	232
D	Brickett	82.1	79.8	253
E	Capt. William G. Shoemaker	89.1	92.4	335
F	Career Development Center	71.1	56.3	64
G	Cobbett	67.2	68.1	436
H	E. J. Harrington	57.8	48.7	383
I	Edward A. Sisson	91.0	86.0	386
J	Hood	77.8	63.4	336
K	Ingalls	70.6	68.8	445
L	Julia F. Callahan	78.1	76.0	441
M	Lincoln-Thomson	84.8	85.1	213

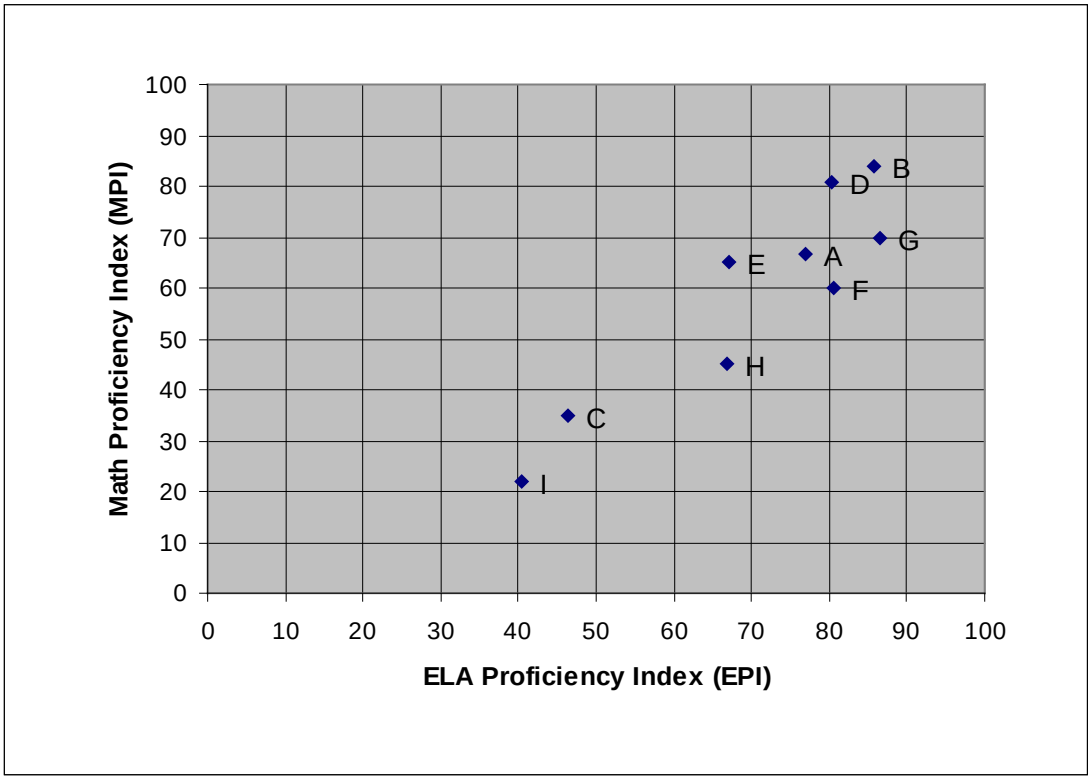
B. Elementary Schools, continued



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Lynn district average	77.0	66.6	13,454
B	Lynn Woods	83.2	75.3	163
C	Robert L. Ford	83.0	69.6	1,102
D	Sewell-Anderson	85.6	84.8	225
E	Tracy	79.9	75.0	185
F	Washington Community	68.0	57.7	294
G	Welcoming Alternative	46.8	43.5	62
H	William R. Fallon	84.1	78.0	148
I	Wm. P. Connery	53.6	49.7	399

Among Lynn's elementary schools, the ELA proficiency gap in 2007 ranged from a low of nine PI points at Edward A. Sisson to a high of 53 PI points at Welcoming Alternative. Lynn's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of eight PI points at Capt. William G. Shoemaker to a high of 56 PI points at Welcoming Alternative.

C. Middle and High Schools



		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Lynn district average	77.0	66.6	13,454
B	Lynn English High	85.7	83.9	766
C	Lynn Alternative High	46.4	35.0	12
D	Classical High	80.4	80.7	644
E	Lynn Voc. Tech. Institute	67.2	65.2	550
F	Breed Junior High	80.6	59.9	2,161
G	Pickering Middle	86.5	69.8	1,255
H	Thurgood Marshall Middle	66.8	45.2	1,618
I	Welcoming Middle	40.3	22.1	35

Among Lynn's middle and high schools, the ELA proficiency gap in 2007 ranged from a low of 13 PI points at Pickering Middle to a high of 60 PI points at Welcoming Middle. Lynn's math proficiency gap ranged from a low of 16 PI points at Lynn English High to a high of 78 PI points at Welcoming Middle.

Equity of Achievement

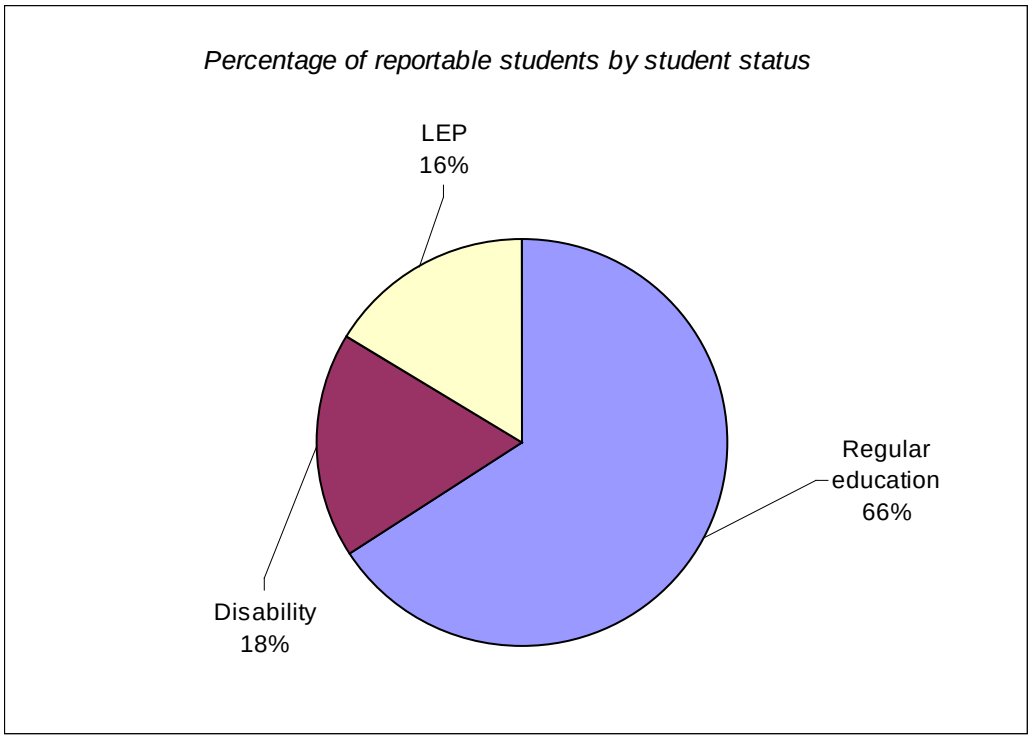
Do MCAS test results vary among subgroups of students?

Findings:

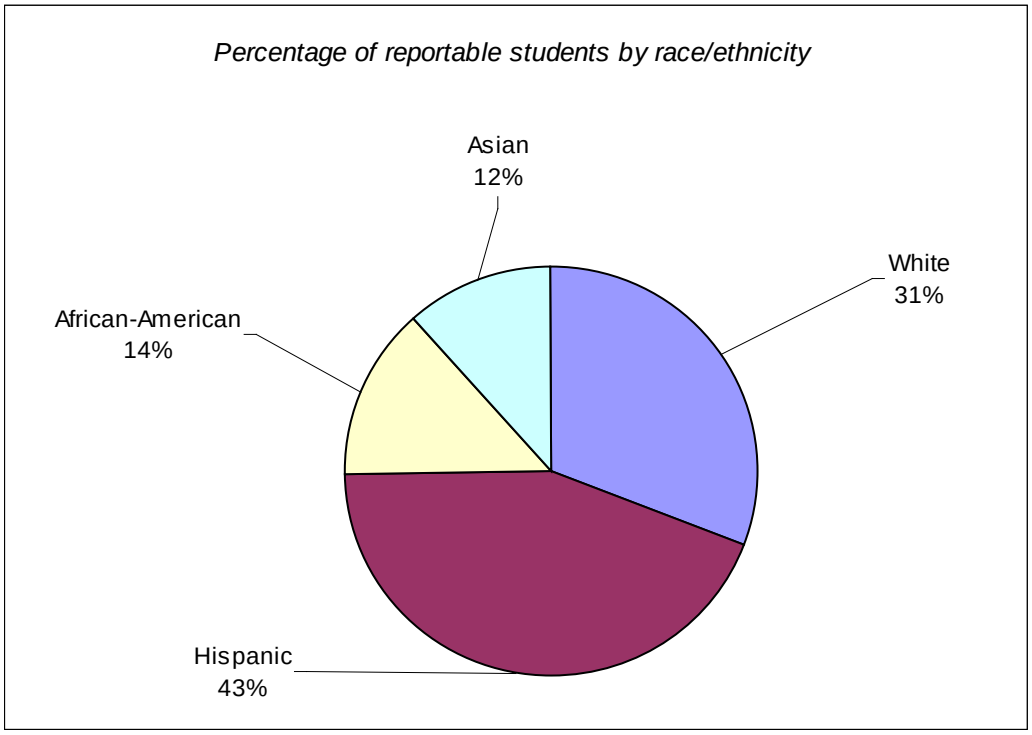
- MCAS performance in 2007 varied considerably among subgroups of Lynn students. Of the nine measurable subgroups in Lynn, the gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups was 30 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 34 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).
- The proficiency gaps in Lynn in 2007 in both ELA and math were wider than the district average for students with disabilities, limited English proficient (LEP) students, Hispanic students, African-American students, and low-income students (those participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program).
- The proficiency gaps in ELA and math were narrower than the district average for regular education students, White students, Asian students, and non low-income students.

Figures 7 A-C/Table 7: Student Population by Reportable Subgroups, 2007

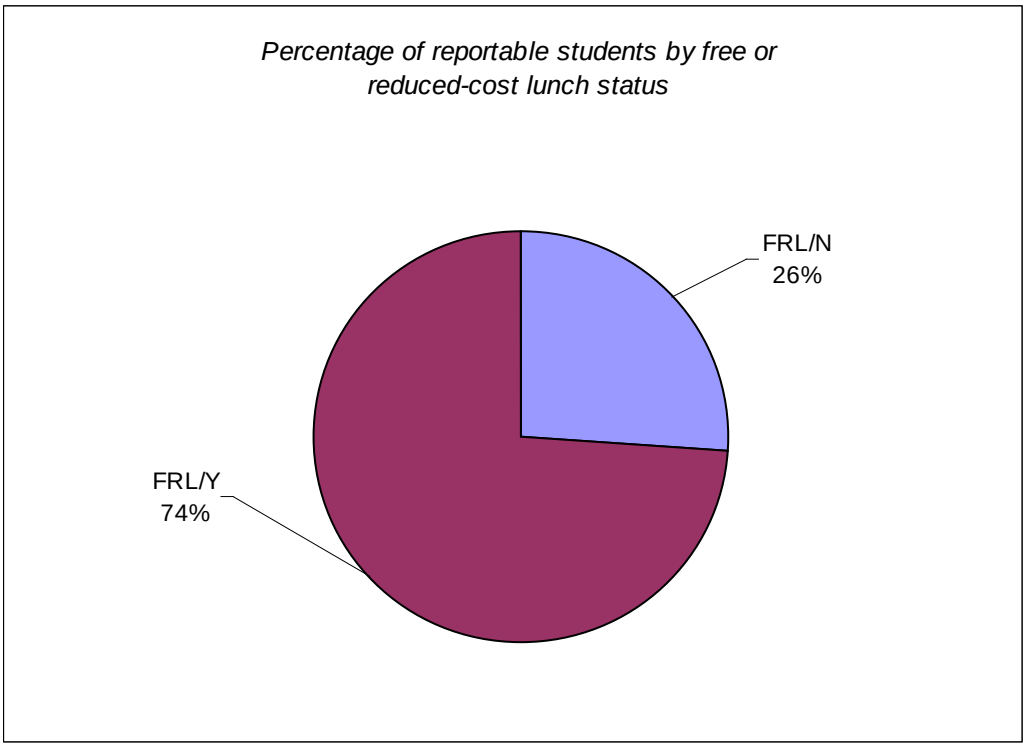
A.



B.



C.

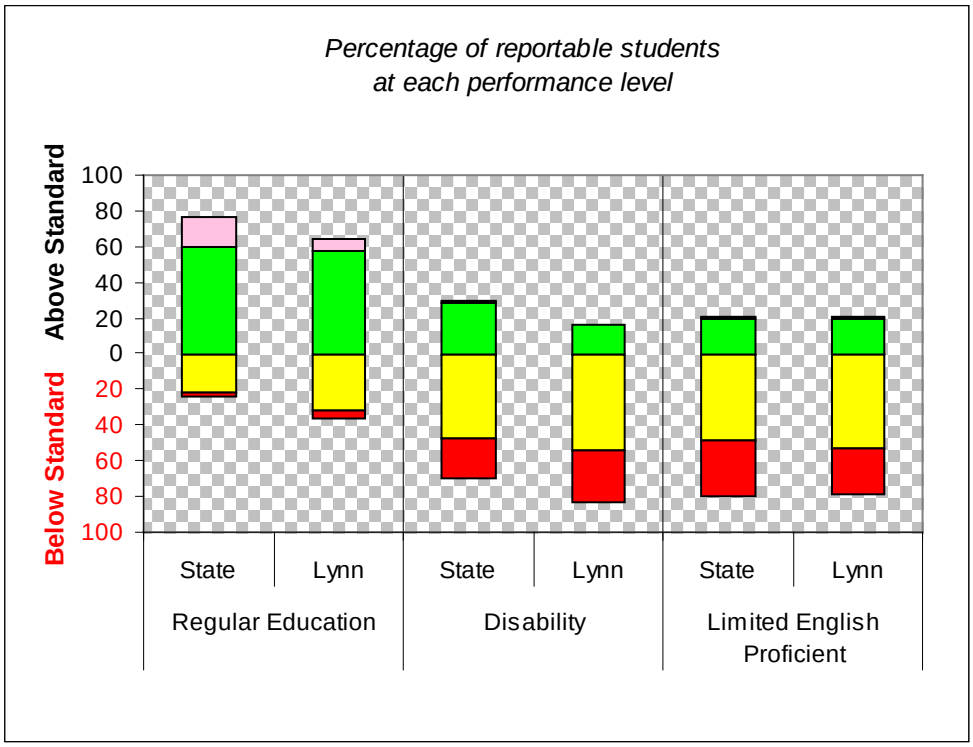


	Subgroup	Number of Students
Student status	Regular education	4,516
	Disability	1,222
	LEP	1,121
Race/ethnicity	White	2,043
	Hispanic	2,899
	African-American	911
	Asian	763
Free or reduced-cost lunch status	FRL/N	1,796
	FRL/Y	5,063

Note: Data include students in tested grades levels only.

In Lynn in 2007, 18 percent of the students tested were students with disabilities and 16 percent were limited English proficient (LEP) students. The majority of the students tested were non-White, including 43 percent Hispanic, 14 percent African-American, and 12 percent Asian. Seventy-four percent of the tested students participated in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

Figure/Table 8: MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance by Student Status Subgroup, 2007

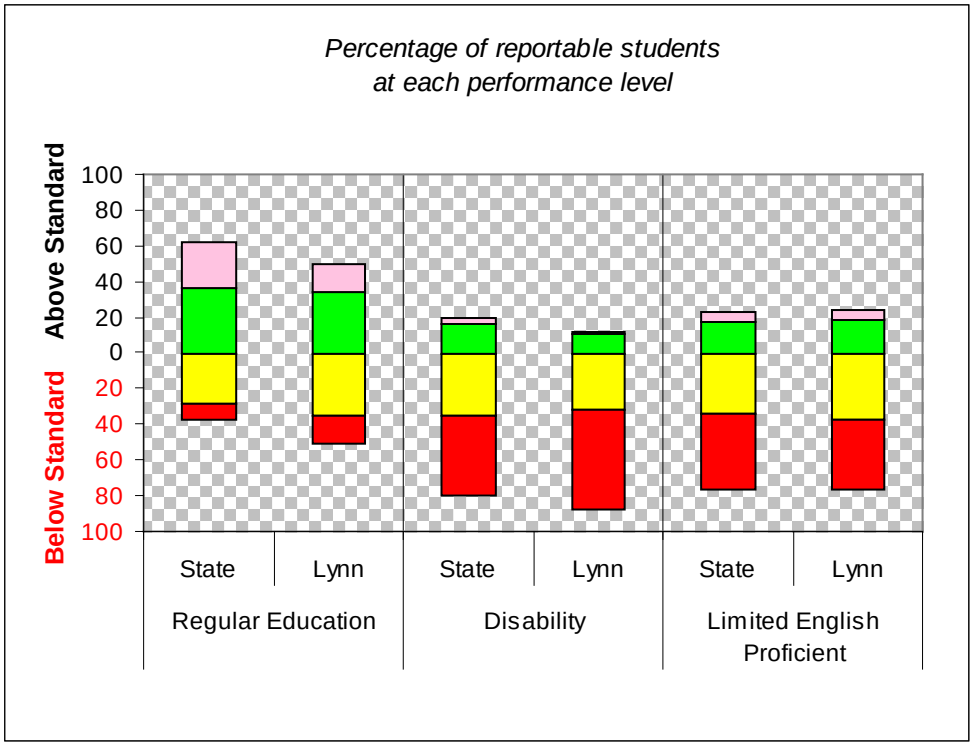


	Regular Education		Disability		Limited English Proficient	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	16	7	2	0	1	1
Proficient	60	57	28	16	19	20
Needs Improvement	21	32	48	54	48	53
Warning/Failing	2	3	22	30	31	27
Percent Attaining Proficiency	76	64	30	16	20	21
Proficiency Index (EPI)	91.3	86.5	64.8	56.3	57.3	59.2

In Lynn in 2007, the proficiency rate in ELA of regular education students was four times greater than that of students with disabilities and three times greater than that of limited English proficient students. Sixty-four percent of regular education students, 16 percent of students with disabilities, and 21 percent of LEP students attained proficiency in ELA on the 2007 MCAS tests.

Lynn's ELA proficiency gap in 2007 was 14 PI points for regular education students, compared to nine PI points statewide; 44 PI points for students with disabilities, compared to 35 PI points statewide; and 41 PI points for LEP students, compared to 43 PI points statewide. The performance gap in ELA between Lynn's regular education students and students with disabilities was 30 PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it was 27 PI points.

Figure/Table 9: MCAS Math Test Performance by Student Status Subgroup, 2007

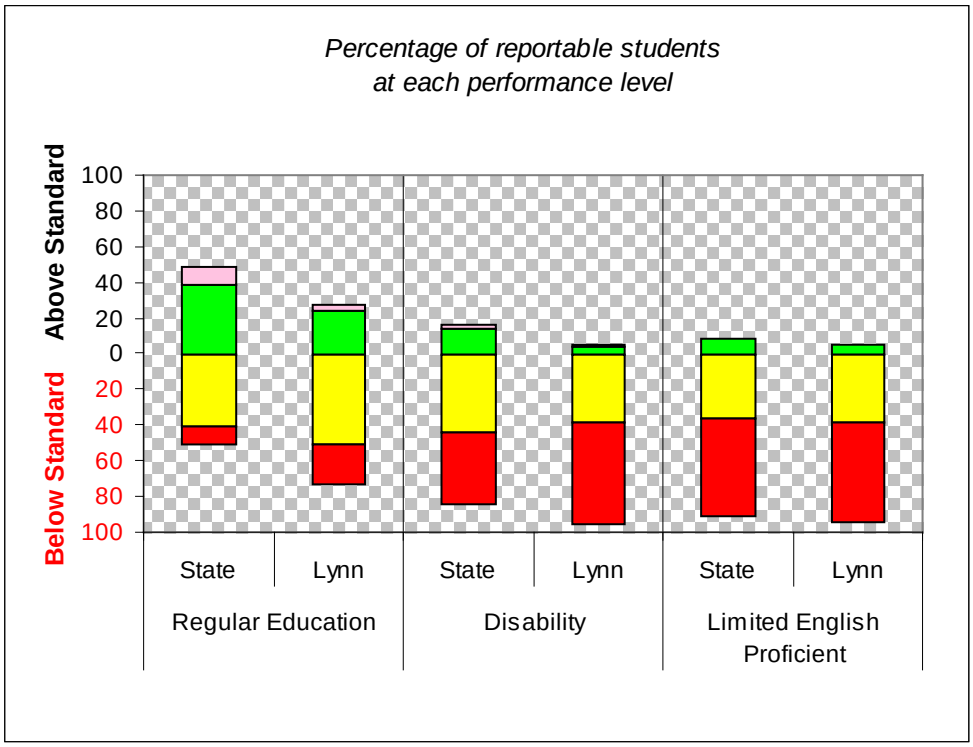


	Regular Education		Disability		Limited English Proficient	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	26	15	4	2	6	5
Proficient	36	34	16	10	18	19
Needs Improvement	28	35	36	32	34	38
Warning/Failing	10	15	44	57	43	38
Percent Attaining Proficiency	62	49	20	12	24	24
Proficiency Index (MPI)	82.2	75.2	51.0	42.8	53.0	55.1

In Lynn in 2007, the proficiency rate in math of regular education students was four times greater than that of students with disabilities and two times greater than that of limited English proficient students. Forty-nine percent of regular education students, 12 percent of students with disabilities, and 24 percent of LEP students attained proficiency in math on the MCAS tests in 2007.

Lynn's math proficiency gap in 2007 was 25 PI points for regular education students, compared to 18 PI points statewide; 57 PI points for students with disabilities, compared to 49 PI points statewide; and 45 PI points for LEP students, compared to 47 PI points statewide. The performance gap in math between Lynn's regular education students and students with disabilities was 32 PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it was 20 PI points.

Figure/Table 10: MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance by Student Status Subgroup, 2007

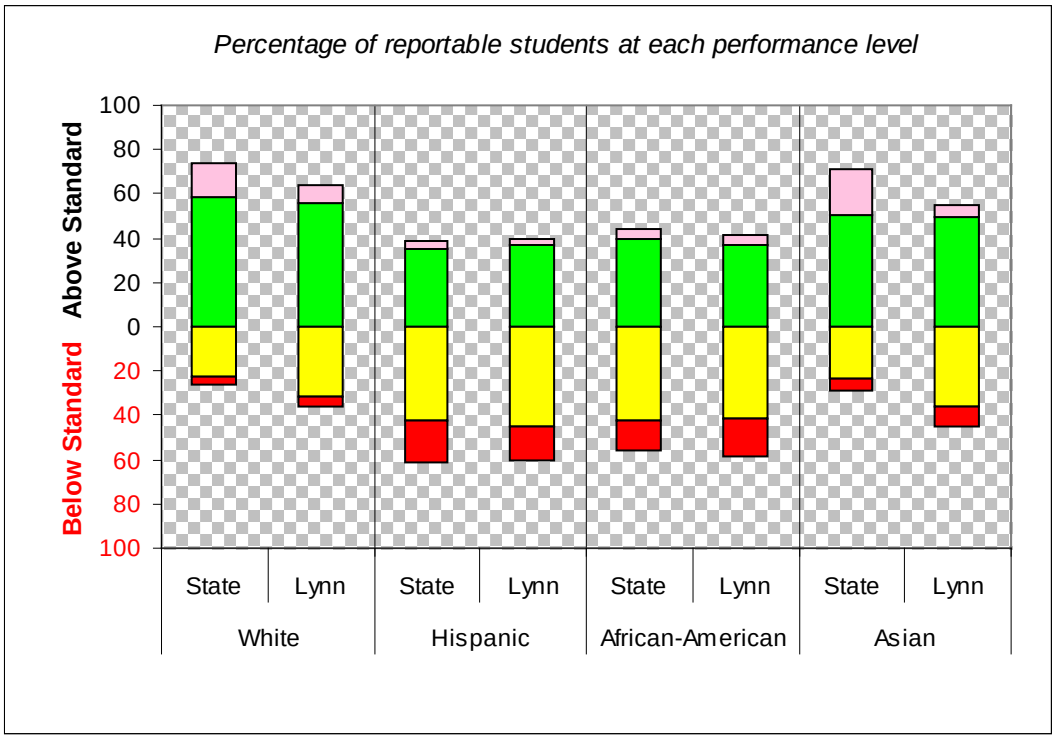


	Regular Education		Disability		Limited English Proficient	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	10	3	2	1	1	0
Proficient	39	24	14	4	8	5
Needs Improvement	41	51	44	38	36	38
Warning/Failing	10	21	40	57	55	56
Percent Attaining Proficiency	49	27	16	5	9	5
Proficiency Index (SPI)	77.5	64.4	51.8	40.2	42.2	40.6

In Lynn in 2007, the proficiency rate in science and technology/engineering of regular education students was more than five times greater than that of both students with disabilities and LEP students. Twenty-seven percent of regular education students, five percent of students with disabilities, and five percent of LEP students attained proficiency in STE on the 2007 MCAS tests.

Lynn's STE proficiency gap in 2007 was 36 PI points for regular education students, compared to 22 PI points statewide; 60 PI points for students with disabilities, compared to 48 PI points statewide; and 59 PI points for LEP students, compared to 58 PI points statewide. The performance gap in STE between Lynn's regular education students and students with disabilities was 24 PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it also was 24 PI points.

Figure/Table 11: MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup, 2007

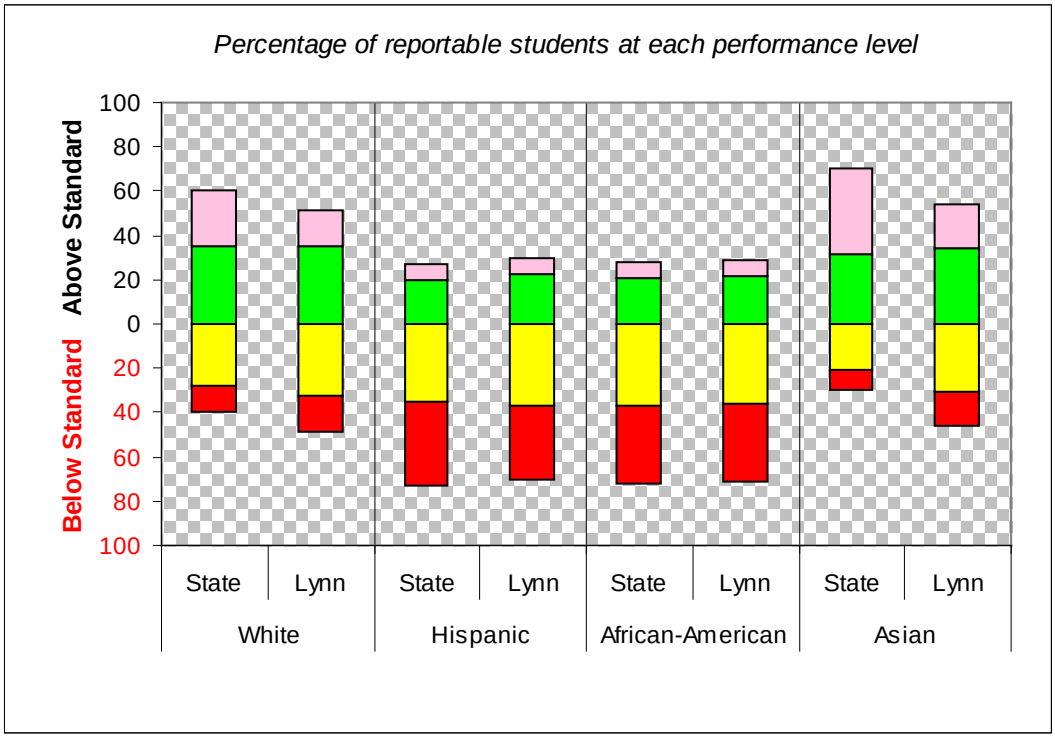


	White		Hispanic		African-American		Asian	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	16	8	3	3	4	4	21	5
Proficient	58	56	35	37	40	37	50	49
Needs Improvement	22	32	43	45	42	41	23	36
Warning/Failing	4	5	19	16	14	17	5	9
Percent Attaining Proficiency	74	64	38	40	44	41	71	54
Proficiency Index (EPI)	89.8	85.5	69.8	71.6	73.9	71.7	87.7	79.9

In Lynn in 2007, performance on the MCAS ELA tests varied widely by race/ethnicity, as 64 percent of White students, 54 percent of Asian students, 41 percent of African-American students, and 40 percent of Hispanic students attained proficiency in ELA on the 2007 MCAS tests.

Lynn's ELA proficiency gap in 2007 was 15 PI points for White students, compared to 10 PI points statewide; 20 PI points for Asian students, compared to 12 PI points statewide; 28 PI points for Hispanic students, compared to 30 PI points statewide; and 28 PI points for African-American students, compared to 26 PI points statewide. The performance gap in ELA between Lynn's White and Hispanic students was 14 PI points, between White and African-American students it was also 14 PI points, and between White and Asian students it was six PI points.

Figure/Table 12: MCAS Math Test Performance by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup, 2007

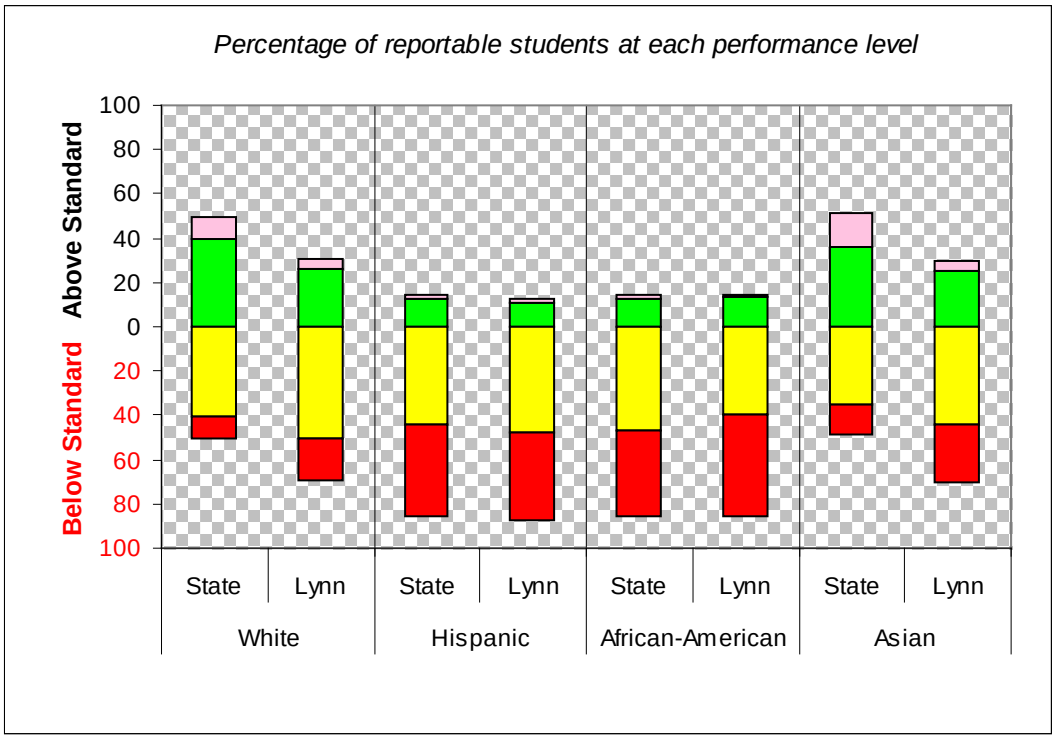


	White		Hispanic		African-American		Asian	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	25	17	7	7	7	7	39	20
Proficient	35	35	20	23	21	22	31	34
Needs Improvement	28	32	35	37	37	36	21	30
Warning/Failing	11	16	37	33	35	35	9	16
Percent Attaining Proficiency	60	52	27	30	28	29	70	54
Proficiency Index (MPI)	80.9	75.5	56.9	60.2	58.4	58.4	85.4	76.4

In Lynn in 2007, performance on the MCAS math tests also varied widely by race/ethnicity, as 54 percent of Asian students, 52 percent of White students, 30 percent of Hispanic students, and 29 percent of African-American students attained proficiency in math on the MCAS tests in 2007.

Lynn's math proficiency gap in 2007 was 24 PI points for Asian students, compared to 15 PI points statewide; 25 PI points for White students, compared to 19 PI points statewide; 40 PI points for Hispanic students, compared to 43 PI points statewide; and 42 PI points for African-American students, the same as statewide. The performance gap in math between Lynn's Asian and African-American students was 18 PI points, between Asian and Hispanic students it was 14 PI points, and between Asian and White students it was one PI point.

Figure/Table 13: MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance by Race/Ethnicity Subgroup, 2007

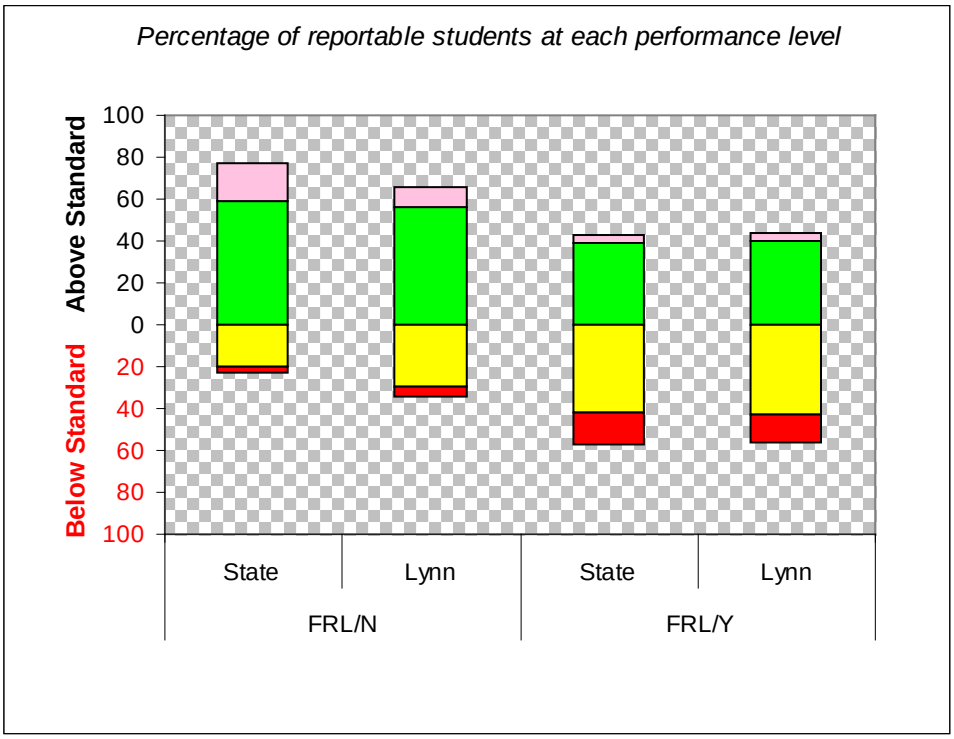


	White		Hispanic		African-American		Asian	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	10	4	2	2	1	1	15	4
Proficient	39	26	13	11	13	14	36	25
Needs Improvement	40	51	44	48	47	40	35	44
Warning/Failing	10	19	41	39	39	46	14	26
Percent Attaining Proficiency	49	30	15	13	14	15	51	29
Proficiency Index (SPI)	78.0	66.9	50.6	50.7	51.3	49.3	76.8	62.9

In Lynn in 2007, performance on the MCAS STE tests likewise varied widely by race/ethnicity, as 30 percent of White students, 29 percent of Asian students, 15 percent of African-American students, and 13 percent of Hispanic students attained proficiency in STE on the 2007 MCAS tests.

Lynn's STE proficiency gap in 2007 was 33 PI points for White students, compared to 22 PI points statewide; 37 PI points for Asian students, compared to 23 PI points statewide; 49 PI points for Hispanic students, the same as statewide; and 51 PI points for African-American students, compared to 49 PI points statewide. The performance gap in STE between Lynn's White and African-American students was 18 PI points, between White and Hispanic students it was 16 PI points, and between White and Asian students it was four PI points.

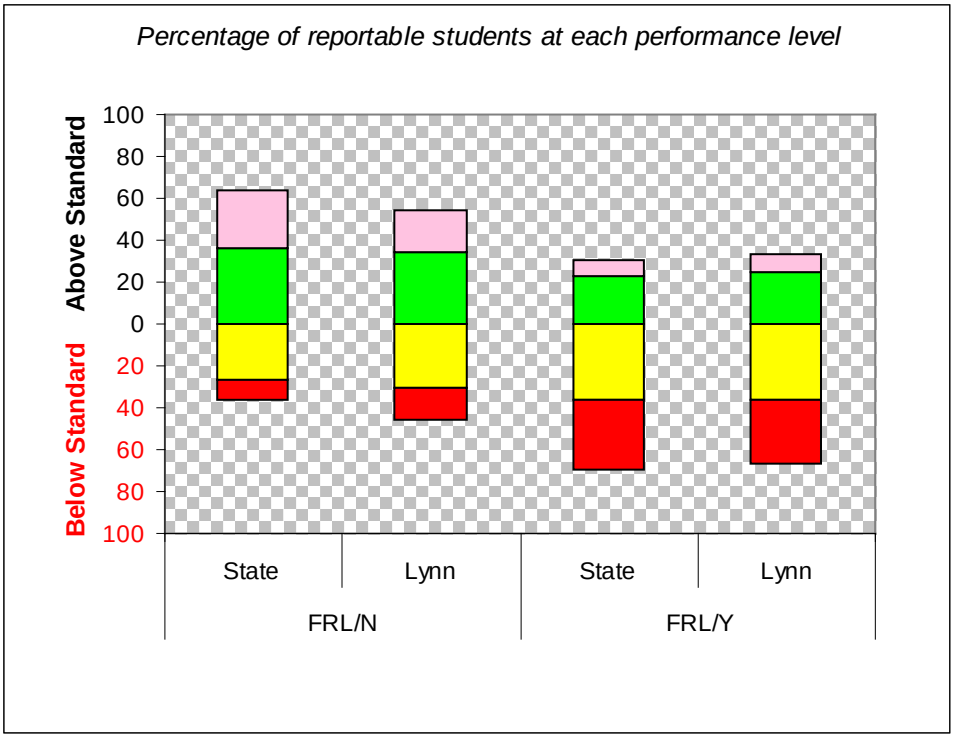
Figure/Table 14: MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance by Socioeconomic Status Subgroup, 2007



	FRL/N		FRL/Y	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	17	9	4	3
Proficient	59	56	39	40
Needs Improvement	20	30	42	43
Warning/Failing	3	5	15	14
Percent Attaining Proficiency	76	65	43	43
Proficiency Index (EPI)	91.0	85.7	73.4	73.9

In Lynn in 2007, 43 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained proficiency in ELA on the MCAS tests, compared to 65 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The ELA proficiency gap was 26 PI points for low-income students, compared to 27 PI points statewide; and 14 PI points for non low-income students, compared to nine PI points statewide. Lynn's performance gap in ELA between the two subgroups was 12 PI points.

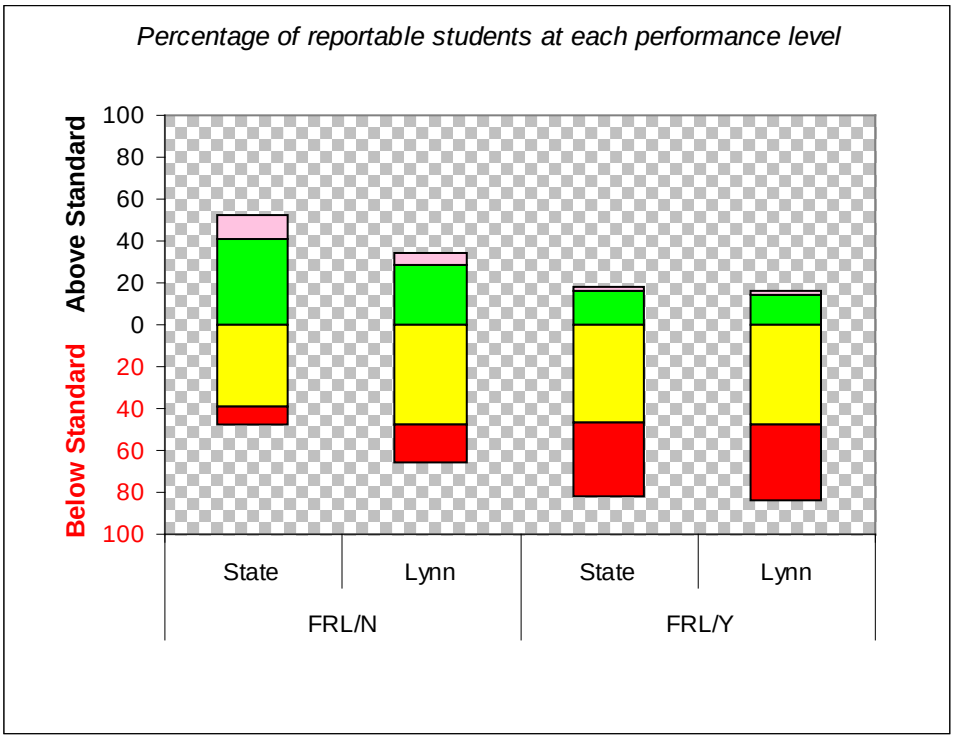
Figure/Table 15: MCAS Math Test Performance by Socioeconomic Status Subgroup, 2007



	FRL/N		FRL/Y	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	27	20	8	9
Proficient	36	35	23	25
Needs Improvement	27	30	37	37
Warning/Failing	10	16	33	30
Percent Attaining Proficiency	63	55	31	34
Proficiency Index (MPI)	82.7	76.6	60.3	63.1

In Lynn in 2007, 34 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained proficiency in math on the MCAS tests, compared to 55 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The proficiency gap in math was 37 PI points for low-income students, compared to 40 PI points statewide; and 23 PI points for non low-income students, compared to 17 PI points statewide. The performance gap in math between the two subgroups in Lynn was 14 PI points.

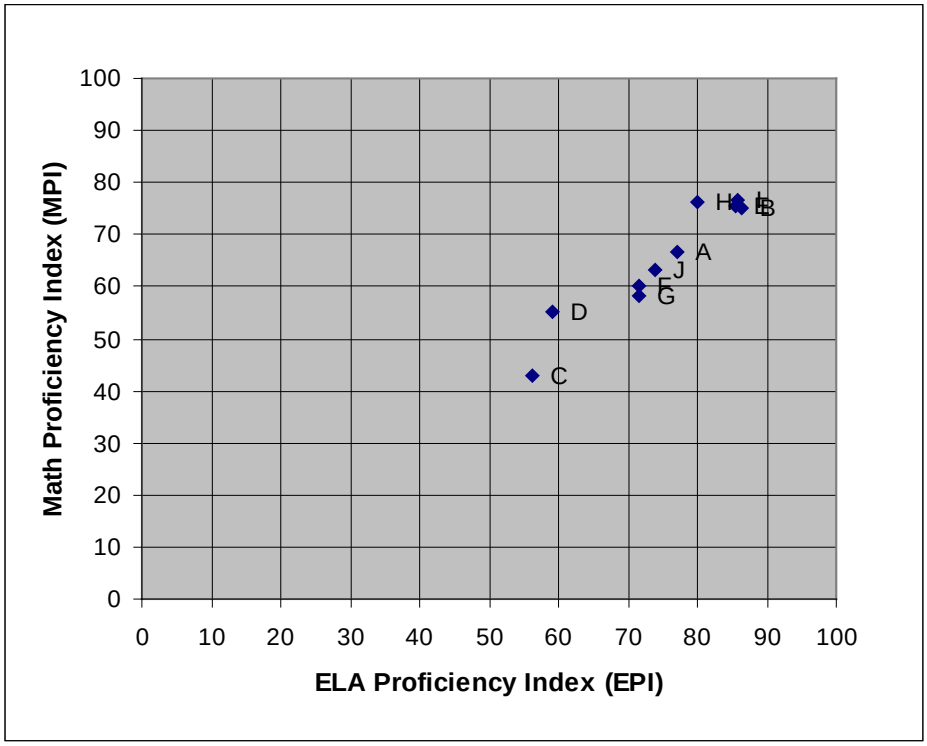
Figure/Table 16: MCAS Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Test Performance by Socioeconomic Status Subgroup, 2007



	FRL/N		FRL/Y	
	State	Lynn	State	Lynn
Advanced	11	6	2	2
Proficient	41	29	17	15
Needs Improvement	39	48	47	47
Warning/Failing	9	17	34	37
Percent Attaining Proficiency	52	35	19	17
Proficiency Index (SPI)	79.4	68.2	55.2	53.6

In Lynn in 2007, 17 percent of low-income (FRL/Y) students attained proficiency in STE on the MCAS tests, compared to 35 percent of non low-income (FRL/N) students. The proficiency gap in STE was 46 PI points for low-income students, compared to 45 PI points statewide; and 32 PI points for non low-income students, compared to 21 PI points statewide. Lynn's performance gap in STE between the two subgroups was 15 PI points.

Figure/Table 17: MCAS ELA Proficiency Index vs. Math Proficiency Index by Subgroup, 2007



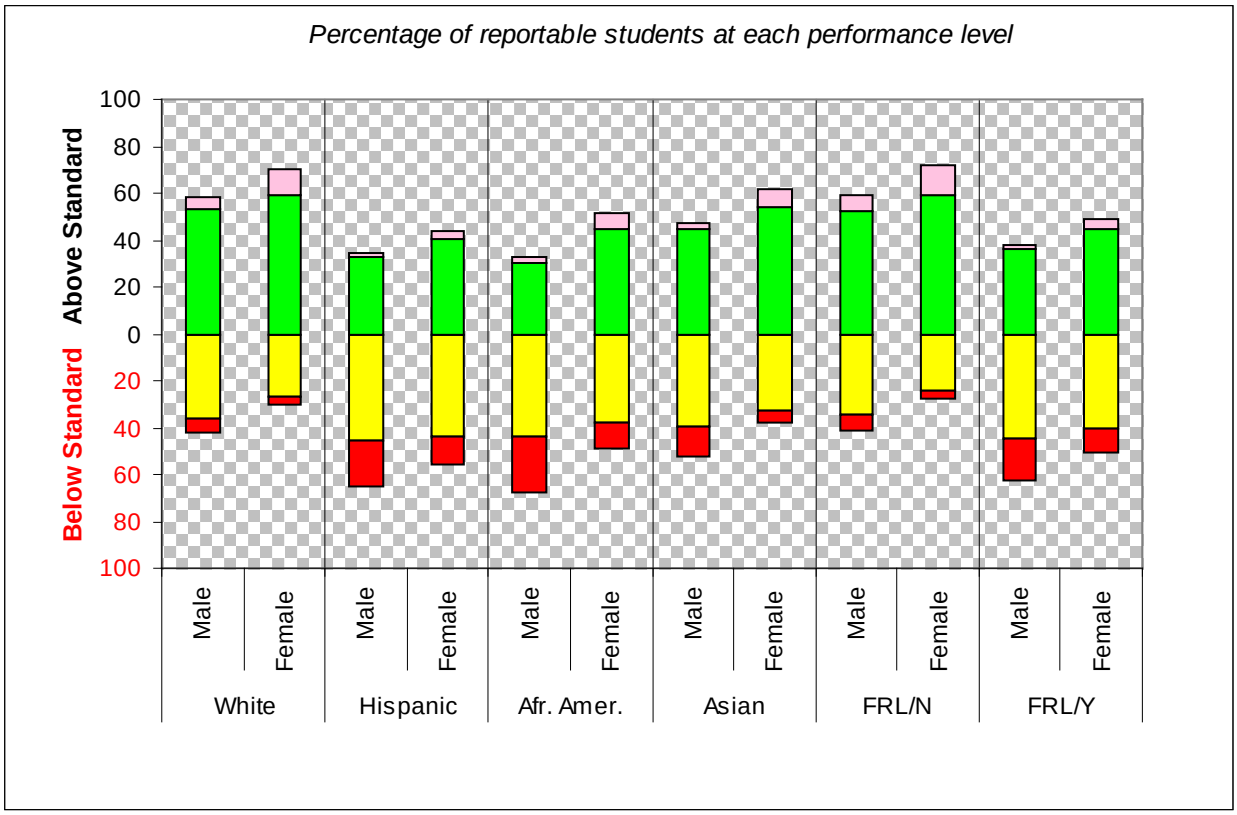
		ELA PI	Math PI	Number of Tests
A	Lynn	77.0	66.6	13,454
B	Regular Education	86.5	75.2	9,028
C	Disability	56.3	42.8	2,187
D	LEP	59.2	55.1	2,239
E	White	85.5	75.5	4,007
F	Hispanic	71.6	60.2	5,685
G	African-American	71.7	58.4	1,785
H	Asian	79.9	76.4	1,499
I	FRL/N	85.7	76.6	3,555
J	FRL/Y	73.9	63.1	9,897

The gap in performance between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in Lynn in 2007 was 30 PI points in ELA (regular education students, students with disabilities, respectively) and 34 PI points in math (non low-income students, students with disabilities, respectively).

Regular education students, White students, Asian students, and non low-income students in Lynn performed above the district average in both ELA and math in 2007, while students with disabilities, LEP students, Hispanic students, African-American students, and low-income students performed below the district average in both subjects.

Each subgroup in Lynn had stronger performance in ELA than in math on the 2007 MCAS tests. While the gap between performance in ELA and math for most subgroups in Lynn was approximately 10 PI points or more, this gap was only four PI points for LEP students and Asian students.

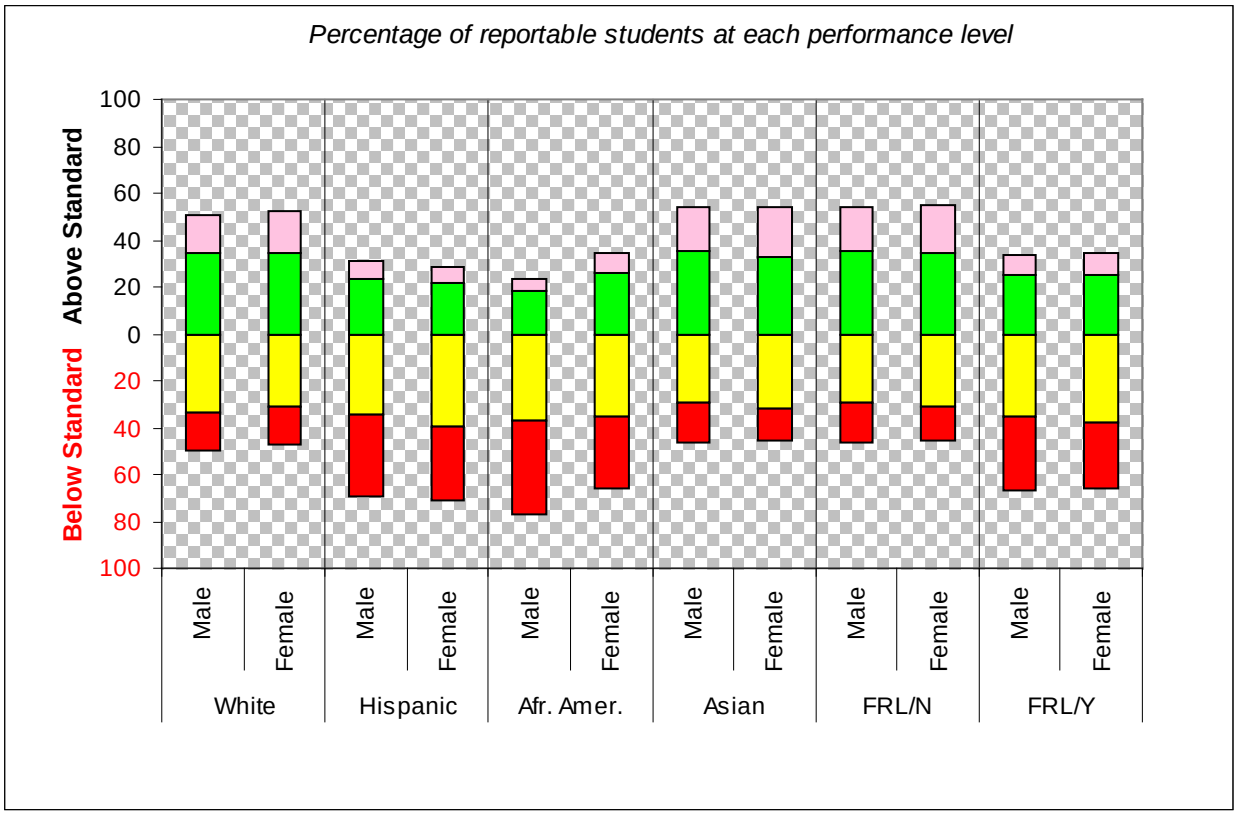
Figure/Table 18: MCAS English Language Arts (ELA) Test Performance by Race/Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Status by Gender, 2007



	White		Hispanic		Afr. Amer.		Asian		FRL/N		FRL/Y	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Advanced	5	11	2	3	2	6	3	8	6	13	2	5
Proficient	53	59	33	41	30	45	45	54	53	59	36	45
Needs Improvement	36	27	46	44	44	38	40	32	35	24	45	41
Warning/ Failing	6	3	19	12	23	11	13	6	7	4	18	10
Percent Attaining Proficiency	58	70	35	44	32	51	48	62	59	72	38	50
Proficiency Index (EPI)	83.1	88.2	68.0	75.2	65.8	78.1	75.7	84.3	82.7	88.8	70.1	77.8
Number of Tests	1,050	958	1,438	1,417	461	431	391	361	924	857	2,519	2,444

On the 2007 MCAS tests in ELA, Lynn's female students outperformed male students in all racial/ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups. The performance gap in ELA between female and male students was narrowest for White students (five PI points) and widest for African-American students (12 PI points).

Figure/Table 19: MCAS Math Test Performance by Race/Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Status by Gender, 2007



	White		Hispanic		Afr. Amer.		Asian		FRL/N		FRL/Y	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Advanced	16	18	7	7	5	8	19	22	19	20	8	9
Proficient	35	35	24	22	18	26	35	32	35	34	25	25
Needs Improvement	33	31	35	40	37	35	29	32	29	31	36	38
Warning/ Failing	16	16	34	32	39	30	17	14	17	14	31	28
Percent Attaining Proficiency	51	53	31	29	23	34	54	54	54	54	33	34
Proficiency Index (MPI)	75.2	75.9	60.1	60.3	53.8	63.4	75.6	77.3	75.9	77.3	62.2	63.9
Number of Tests	1,046	953	1,424	1,406	463	430	390	357	920	854	2,507	2,427

On the 2007 MCAS tests in math, Lynn's female students outperformed male students in the White, African-American, and low-income subgroups, and performance was comparable for each gender in the Hispanic, Asian, and non low-income subgroups. The performance gap in math between female and male students was narrowest for Hispanic students (less than one PI point) and widest for African-American students (10 PI points).

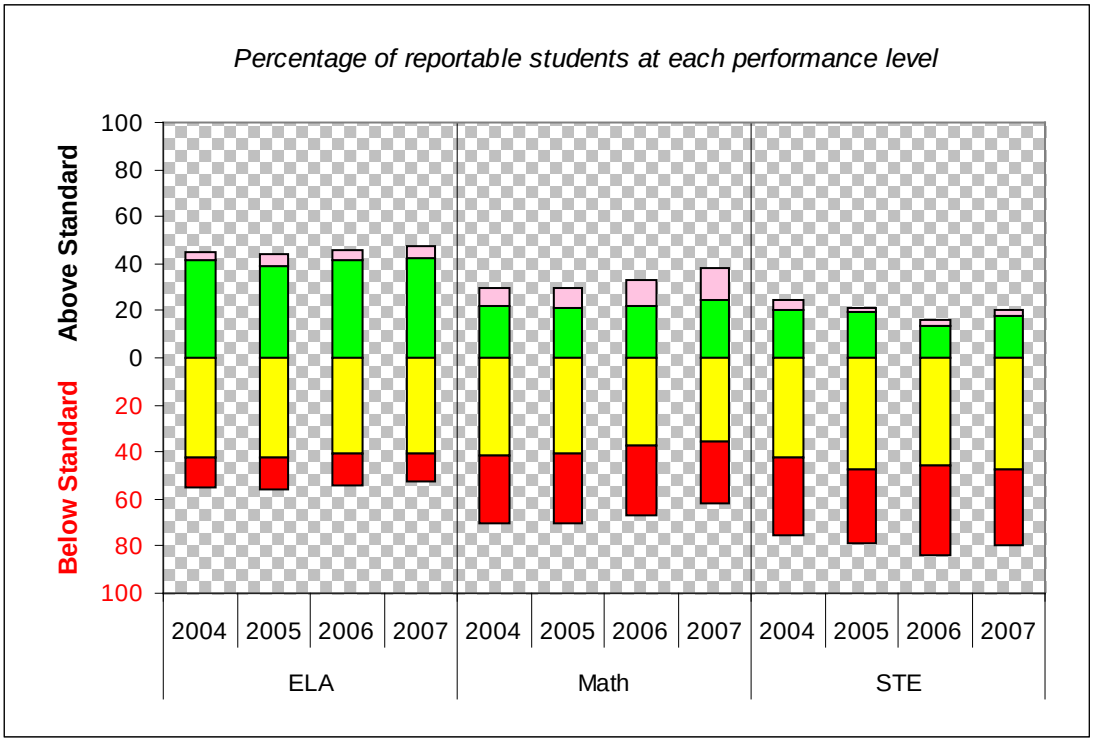
Improvement

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

Findings:

- Between 2004 and 2007, Lynn's MCAS performance showed slight improvement in English language arts, more improvement in math, and a slight decline in science and technology/engineering.
- Over the three-year period 2004-2007, ELA performance in Lynn improved slightly, at an average of approximately one-third PI point annually. This resulted in an improvement rate, or a closing of the proficiency gap, of nearly five percent, a rate lower than that required to achieve AYP. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in ELA increased from 45 percent in 2004 to 48 percent in 2007.
- Math performance in Lynn showed more improvement over this period, at an average of close to one and one-half PI points annually. This resulted in an improvement rate of slightly more than 11 percent, also a rate lower than that required to achieve AYP. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in math rose from 29 percent in 2004 to 39 percent in 2007.
- Between 2004 and 2007, Lynn had a slight decline in STE performance of less than one PI point over the three-year period, resulting in a widening of the proficiency gap by almost two percent. The percentage of students attaining proficiency in STE decreased from 25 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2007.

Figure/Table 20: MCAS Test Performance by Subject, 2004-2007



	ELA				Math				STE			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Advanced	4	5	4	5	7	8	11	14	4	2	3	3
Proficient	41	39	42	43	22	21	22	25	21	19	14	18
Needs Improvement	42	42	40	41	42	40	37	35	42	47	46	47
Warning/ Failing	13	14	14	12	29	30	30	27	33	31	38	32
Percent Attaining Proficiency	45	44	46	48	29	29	33	39	25	21	17	21
Proficiency Index (PI)	74.6	74.0	75.1	75.8	61.4	61.0	62.6	65.7	57.9	57.5	52.5	57.2

Note: Trend data include grades at which testing was administered in each subject in all four years; therefore, the 2007 ELA and math data may differ from those reported in Figure/Table 1.

The percentage of Lynn students attaining proficiency in ELA increased from 45 percent in 2004 to 48 percent in 2007. The proficiency gap in ELA narrowed from 25 to 24 PI points over this period, resulting in an improvement rate of nearly five percent, a rate lower than that required to make AYP.

The percentage of Lynn students attaining proficiency in math increased from 29 percent in 2004 to 39 percent in 2007. The proficiency gap in math narrowed from 39 to 34 PI points over this period, resulting in an improvement rate of more than 11 percent, also a rate lower than that required to make AYP.

The percentage of Lynn students attaining proficiency in STE decreased from 25 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2007. The proficiency gap in STE widened by nearly two percent over this period, from 42 to 43 PI points.

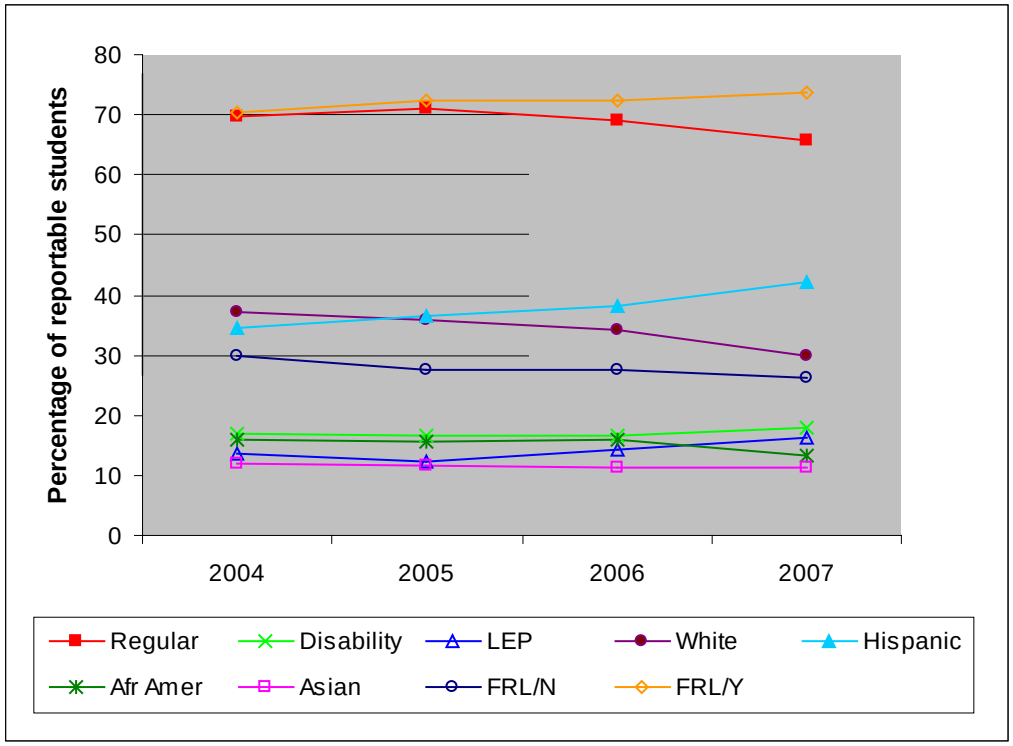
Equity of Improvement

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

Findings:

- In Lynn, the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in ELA narrowed from 36 PI points in 2004 to 31 PI points in 2007, and the performance gap between the highest- and lowest-performing subgroups in math widened from 33 to 36 PI points over this period.
- All student subgroups with the exception of students with disabilities, non low-income students, and African-American students had improved performance in ELA between 2004 and 2007. The most improved subgroups in ELA were limited English proficient and Asian students.
- In math, the performance of all student subgroups in Lynn improved between 2004 and 2007. The most improved subgroups in math were White and Asian students.

Figure/Table 21: Student Population by Reportable Subgroups, 2004-2007



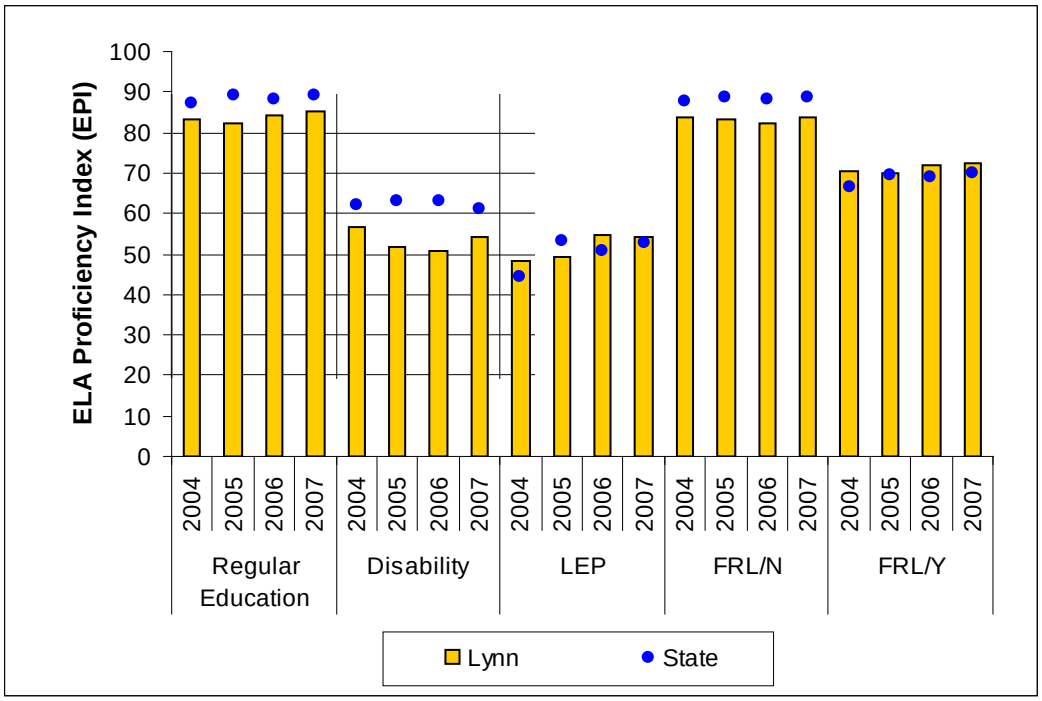
	Number of Students				Percentage of students			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Lynn	6,305	6,057	6,965	6,859	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular	4,385	4,297	4,812	4,516	69.5	70.9	69.1	65.8
Disability	1,062	1,014	1,163	1,222	16.8	16.7	16.7	17.8
LEP	858	746	990	1,121	13.6	12.3	14.2	16.3
White	2,351	2,174	2,388	2,043	37.3	35.9	34.3	29.8
Hispanic	2,174	2,215	2,651	2,899	34.5	36.6	38.1	42.3
Afr Amer	1,007	947	1,117	911	16.0	15.6	16.0	13.3
Asian	757	708	790	763	12.0	11.7	11.3	11.1
FRL/N	1,878	1,673	1,921	1,796	29.8	27.6	27.6	26.2
FRL/Y	4,427	4,384	5,044	5,063	70.2	72.4	72.4	73.8

Note: The 2007 percentages of students reported here may differ from those reported in Figure/Table 7; the percentages shown here are based on the total number of students in the district, whereas the percentages shown in Figure 7 are based on the number of students in reportable subgroups. Data include students in tested grades only.

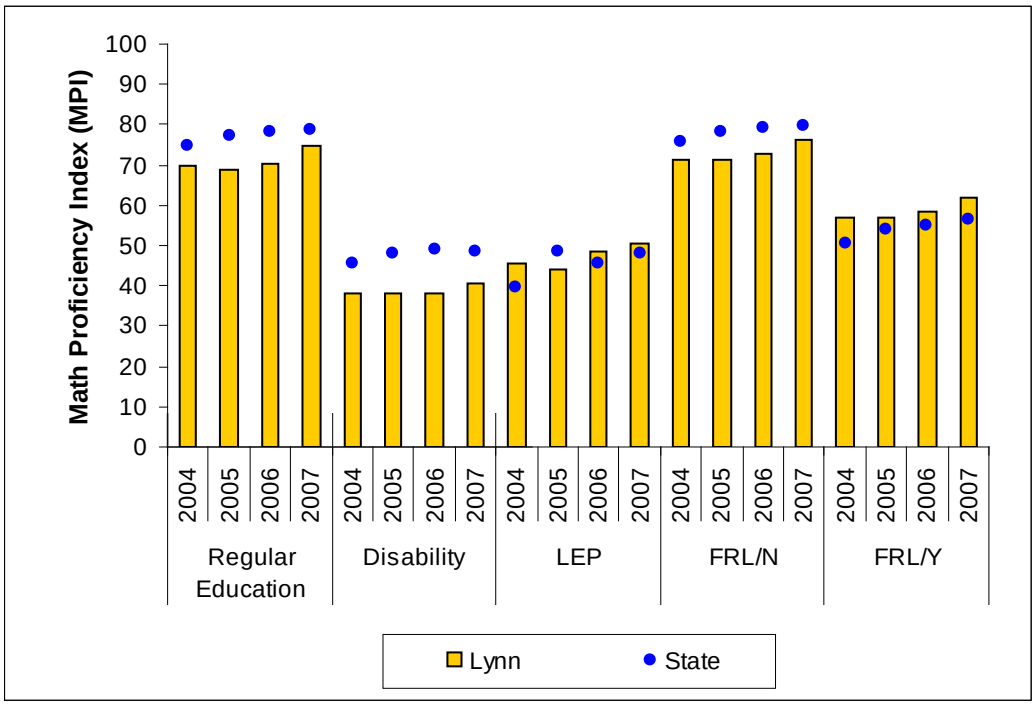
Between 2004 and 2007 in Lynn, the proportion of regular education students declined by four percentage points, that of students with disabilities increased by one percentage point, and LEP students increased by three percentage points. The proportion of White students decreased by seven and one-half percentage points, that of Hispanic students increased by eight percentage points, African-American students decreased by three percentage points, and Asian students decreased by one percentage point. The proportion of low-income students increased by three and one-half percentage points.

Figures 22 A-D/Table 22: MCAS Proficiency Indices by Subgroup, 2004-2007

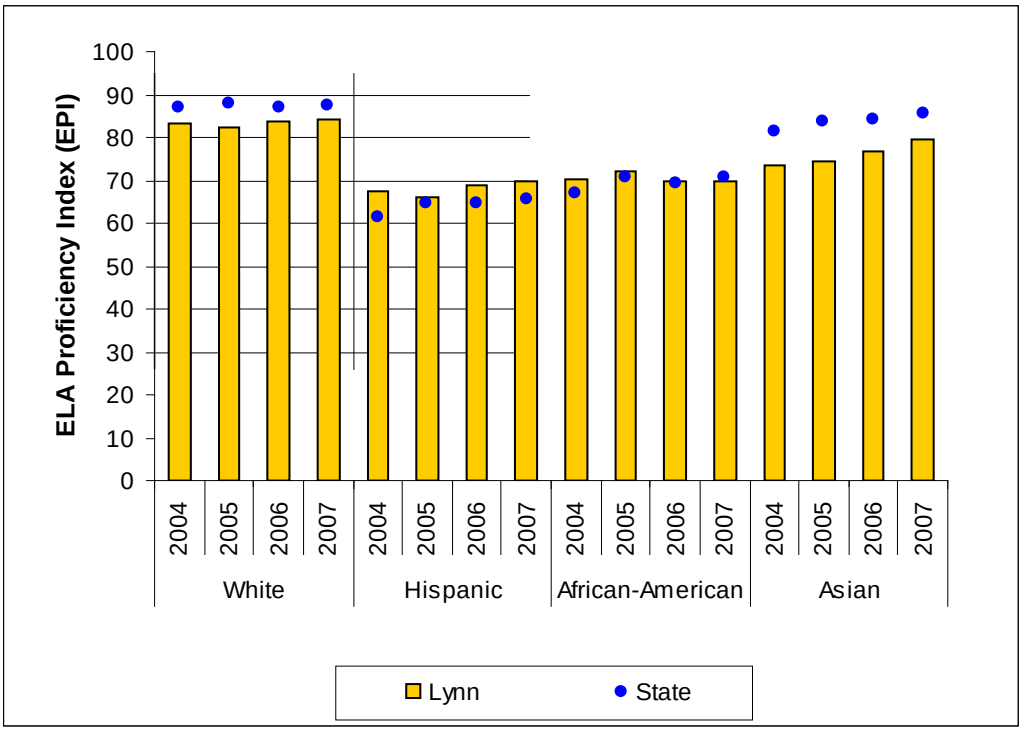
A. ELA Proficiency Index (EPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



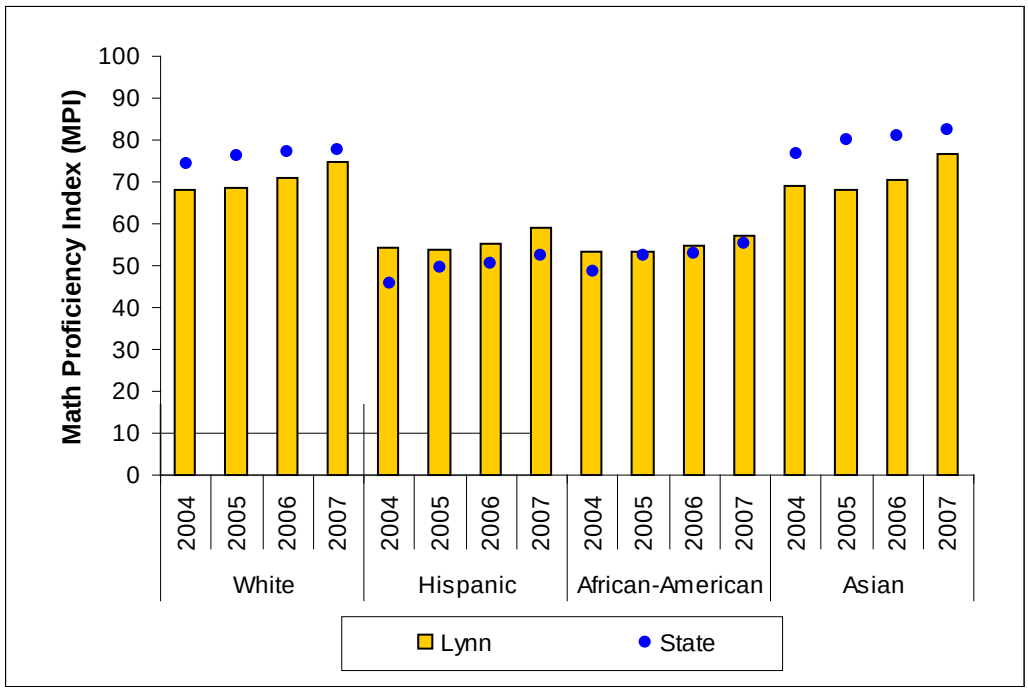
B. Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Student Status and Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch Subgroups



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



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



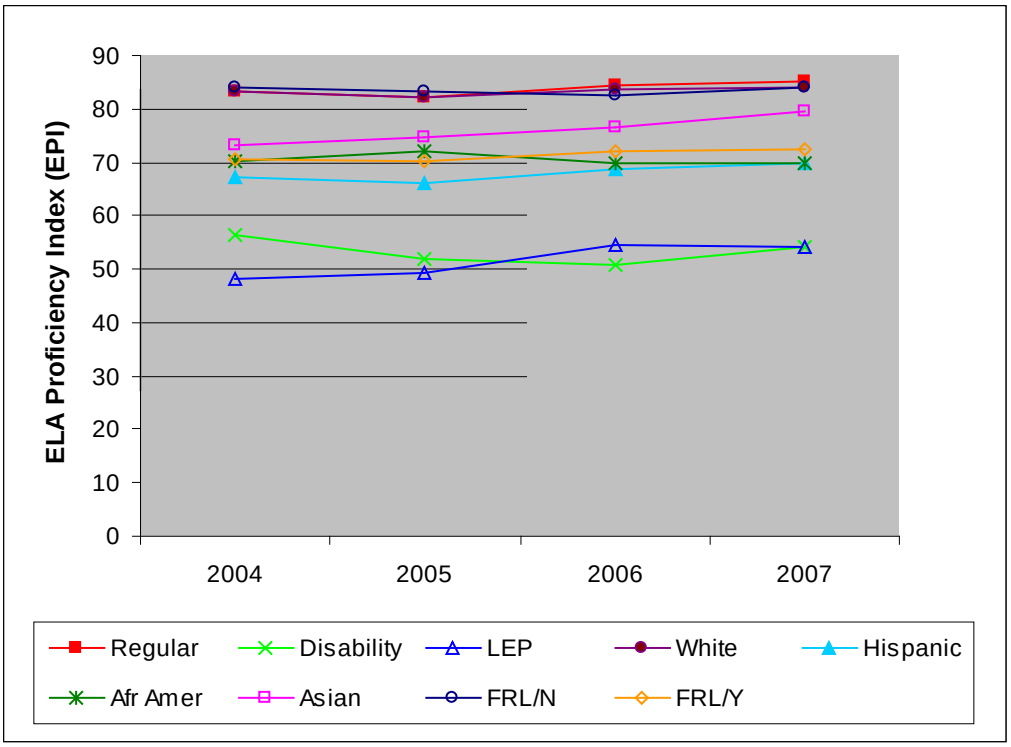
State				Lynn			
Subgroup	**Year**	**EPI**	**MPI**	**Subgroup**	**Year**	**EPI**	**MPI**
Regular Education	2004	87.3	74.7	Regular Education	2004	83.1	69.8
	2005	89.2	77.4		2005	82.1	68.8
	2006	88.3	78.2		2006	84.4	70.1
	2007	89.0	78.9		2007	85.3	75.0
Disability	2004	62.1	45.3	Disability	2004	56.5	38.3
	2005	63.3	47.9		2005	51.9	37.9
	2006	62.9	49.0		2006	50.9	38.0
	2007	61.2	48.4		2007	54.0	40.5
LEP	2004	44.4	39.6	LEP	2004	48.1	45.6
	2005	53.4	48.4		2005	49.4	43.9
	2006	50.9	45.6		2006	54.6	48.3
	2007	52.9	47.9		2007	54.0	50.3
FRL/N	2004	87.9	75.9	FRL/N	2004	83.9	71.5
	2005	88.9	78.1		2005	83.4	71.2
	2006	88.3	79.0		2006	82.4	72.8
	2007	88.6	79.7		2007	83.9	76.4
FRL/Y	2004	66.6	50.7	FRL/Y	2004	70.4	56.8
	2005	69.7	53.9		2005	70.1	56.8
	2006	68.8	55.0		2006	72.1	58.5
	2007	70.0	56.3		2007	72.4	61.7
White	2004	86.9	74.4	White	2004	83.1	68.2
	2005	87.7	76.2		2005	82.2	68.8
	2006	87.1	77.2		2006	83.8	71.1
	2007	87.4	77.8		2007	84.1	74.8
Hispanic	2004	61.4	45.7	Hispanic	2004	67.3	54.3
	2005	64.8	49.3		2005	66.2	54.0
	2006	64.6	50.6		2006	68.7	55.3
	2007	65.8	52.2		2007	70.0	58.9
African-American	2004	67.1	48.4	African-American	2004	70.2	53.1
	2005	70.5	52.3		2005	72.0	53.1
	2006	69.4	52.8		2006	69.8	54.7
	2007	70.9	55.2		2007	69.9	57.2
Asian	2004	81.2	76.6	Asian	2004	73.3	69.1
	2005	83.7	80.2		2005	74.6	68.1
	2006	84.3	81.0		2006	76.6	70.6
	2007	85.5	82.5		2007	79.5	76.9

Note: Trend data include grades at which testing was administered in each subject in all four years; therefore, 2007 data may differ from those reported in Figure/Tables 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 15.

In Lynn, most student subgroups had greater improvement in math than in ELA between 2004 and 2007. Over this period, the performance of regular education students improved by two PI points in ELA and by five PI points in math. The performance of students with disabilities declined by two and one-half PI points in ELA and improved by two points in math. The performance of LEP students improved by six PI points in ELA and by five points in math. The performance of non low-income students remained the same in ELA and improved by five PI points in math, and the performance of low-income students improved by two PI points in ELA and by five points in math.

Also during this period, the performance of White students improved by one PI point in ELA and by six and one-half points in math. The performance of Hispanic students improved by three PI points in ELA and by four and one-half points in math. The performance of African-American students declined by one-half PI point in ELA and improved by four points in math. The performance of Asian students improved by six PI points in ELA and by eight points in math.

Figure/Table 23: MCAS English Language Arts Proficiency Index (EPI) by Subgroup, 2004-2007



	ELA Proficiency Index (EPI)				Percent Attaining Proficiency			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Lynn	74.6	74.0	75.1	75.8	45	44	46	47
Regular	83.1	82.1	84.4	85.3	57	55	60	61
Disability	56.5	51.9	50.9	54.0	18	12	10	14
LEP	48.1	49.4	54.6	54.0	11	11	16	16
White	83.1	82.2	83.8	84.1	59	58	60	60
Hispanic	67.3	66.2	68.7	70.0	34	31	36	38
Afr Amer	70.2	72.0	69.8	69.9	36	40	37	39
Asian	73.3	74.6	76.6	79.5	41	45	49	54
FRL/N	83.9	83.4	82.4	83.9	60	62	59	61
FRL/Y	70.4	70.1	72.1	72.4	38	37	41	41

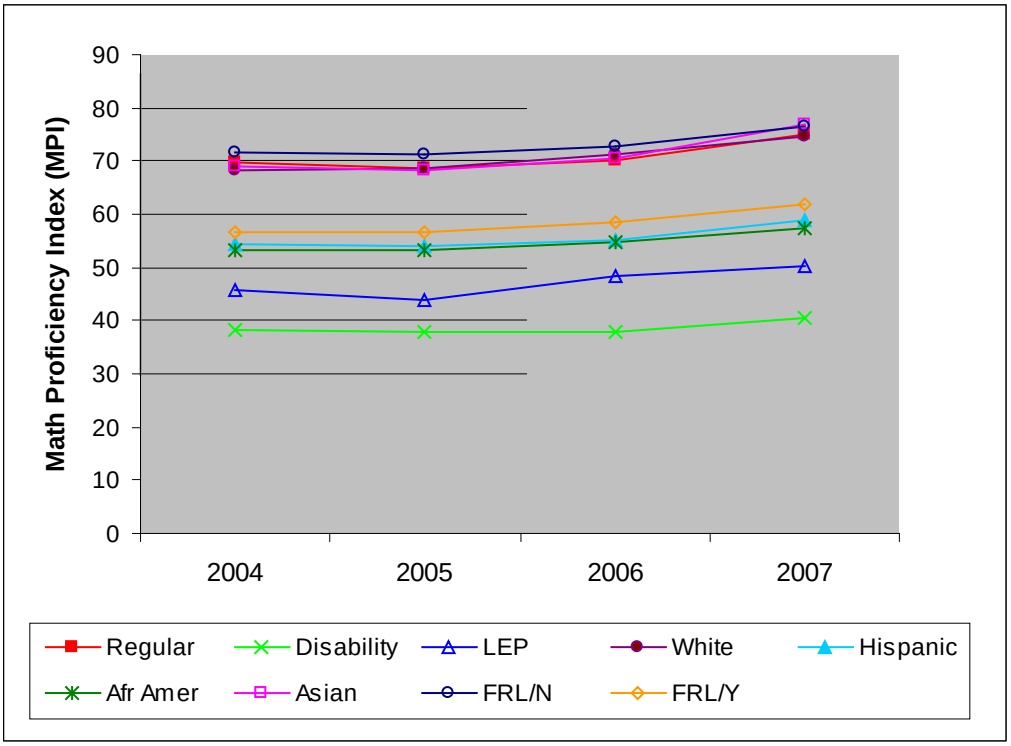
Note: Trend data include grades at which testing was administered in each subject in all four years; therefore, 2007 data may differ from those reported in Figure/Tables 8, 11, and 14.

All student subgroups in Lynn with the exception of students with disabilities, non low-income students, and African-American students had improved performance in ELA between 2004 and 2007. The ELA proficiency gap for Lynn's regular education students narrowed from 17 to 15 PI points over this period, resulting in an improvement rate of 13 percent; for students with disabilities, it widened by six percent from 44 to 46 PI points; and for LEP students, it narrowed from 52 to 46 PI points, an improvement rate of 11 percent. The proficiency gap in ELA for White students narrowed from 17 to 16 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of six percent; for Hispanic students, it narrowed from 33 to 30 PI points, an improvement rate of eight percent; for African-American students, the gap widened by less than one-half

PI point; and for Asian students, it narrowed from 27 to 21 PI points, an improvement rate of 23 percent. The ELA proficiency gap for non low-income students stayed at 16 PI points, and for low-income students it narrowed from 30 to 28 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of seven percent.

Between 2004 and 2007, the performance gap in ELA between regular education students and students with disabilities widened by five PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it narrowed by four points. The ELA performance gap between White and Hispanic students narrowed by two PI points, between White and African-American students it widened by one point, and between White and Asian students it narrowed by five points. The performance gap in ELA between non low-income and low-income students narrowed by two PI points over this period.

Figure/Table 24: MCAS Math Proficiency Index (MPI) by Subgroup, 2004-2007



	Math Proficiency Index (MPI)				Percent Attaining Proficiency			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Lynn	61.4	61.0	62.6	65.7	29	30	33	38
Regular	69.8	68.8	70.1	75.0	38	38	41	49
Disability	38.3	37.9	38.0	40.5	7	7	7	11
LEP	45.6	43.9	48.3	50.3	13	11	15	18
White	68.2	68.8	71.1	74.8	38	39	44	50
Hispanic	54.3	54.0	55.3	58.9	20	21	23	29
Afr Amer	53.1	53.1	54.7	57.2	18	21	22	27
Asian	69.1	68.1	70.6	76.9	40	39	43	55
FRL/N	71.5	71.2	72.8	76.4	42	44	46	54
FRL/Y	56.8	56.8	58.5	61.7	23	24	28	32

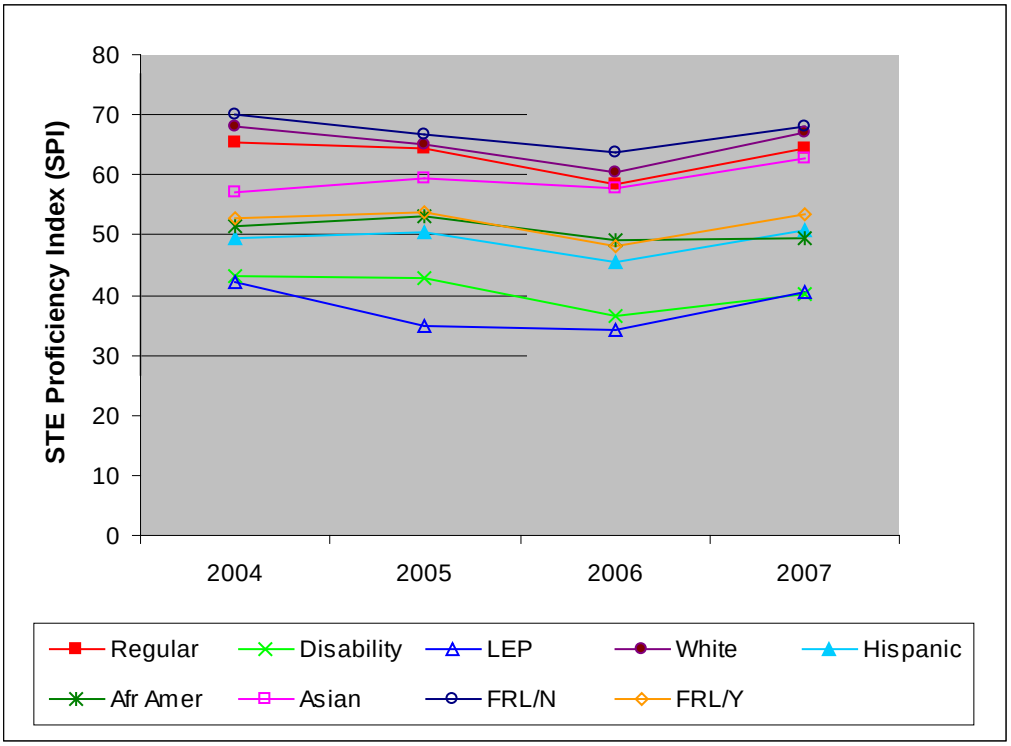
Note: Trend data include grades at which testing was administered in each subject in all four years; therefore, 2007 data may differ from those reported in Figure/Tables 9, 12, and 15.

In math, the performance of all student subgroups in Lynn improved between 2004 and 2007. The math proficiency gap for Lynn's regular education students narrowed from 30 to 25 PI points over this period, resulting in an improvement rate of 17 percent; for students with disabilities, it narrowed from 62 to 60 PI points, an improvement rate of four percent; and for LEP students, it narrowed from 54 to 50 PI points, an improvement rate of nine percent. The proficiency gap in math for White students narrowed from 32 to 25 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of 21 percent; for Hispanic students, it narrowed from 46 to 41 PI points, an improvement rate of 10 percent; for African-American students, the gap narrowed from 47 to 43 PI points, an improvement rate of nine percent; and for Asian students, it narrowed from 31 to 23 PI points, an improvement rate of 25 percent. The math proficiency gap for non low-income students

narrowed from 29 to 24 PI points, an improvement rate of 17 percent; and for low-income students it narrowed from 43 to 38 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of 11 percent.

Between 2004 and 2007, the performance gap in math between regular education students and students with disabilities widened by three PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it widened by one-half point. The math performance gap between White and Hispanic students widened by two PI points, between White and African-American students it widened by two and one-half points, and between White and Asian students it narrowed by one point. The performance gap in math between non low-income and low-income students remained the same over this period.

Figure/Table 25: MCAS STE Proficiency Index (SPI) by Subgroup, 2004-2007



	STE Proficiency Index (SPI)				Percent Attaining Proficiency			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2004	2005	2006	2007
Lynn	57.9	57.5	52.5	57.2	24	21	16	21
Regular	65.3	64.4	58.5	64.4	31	27	21	27
Disability	43.2	42.9	36.6	40.2	12	10	5	5
LEP	42.1	34.7	34.3	40.6	11	5	3	6
White	68.1	65.2	60.5	66.9	37	30	24	31
Hispanic	49.3	50.5	45.4	50.7	14	14	9	13
Afr Amer	51.3	53.0	49.0	49.3	13	15	14	15
Asian	57.0	59.3	57.8	62.9	26	25	23	30
FRL/N	69.9	66.7	63.9	68.2	40	33	30	35
FRL/Y	52.8	53.7	48.1	53.6	18	17	11	16

In science and technology/engineering, the only student subgroups in Lynn with improved performance between 2004 and 2007 were Hispanic, Asian, and low-income students. The STE proficiency gap for Lynn's regular education students widened by three percent from 35 to 36 PI points over this period; for students with disabilities, it widened by five percent from 57 to 60 PI points; and for LEP students, it widened by three percent from 58 to 59 PI points. The proficiency gap in STE for White students widened by four percent from 32 to 33 PI points; for Hispanic students, it narrowed from 51 to 49 PI points, an improvement rate of three percent; for African-American students, the gap widened by four percent from 49 to 51 PI points; and for Asian students, it narrowed from 43 to 37 PI points, an improvement rate of 14 percent. The STE proficiency gap for non low-income students widened by six percent from 30 to 32 PI points; and for low-income students it narrowed from 47 to 46 PI points, resulting in an improvement rate of two percent.

Between 2004 and 2007, the performance gap in STE between regular education students and students with disabilities widened by two PI points, and between regular education students and LEP students it widened by less than one point. The STE performance gap between White and Hispanic students narrowed by three PI points, between White and African-American students it widened by close to one point, and between White and Asian students it narrowed by seven points. The performance gap in STE between non low-income and low-income students narrowed by two and one-half PI points over this period.

Participation

Are all eligible students participating in required state assessments?

Finding:

- On the 2007 MCAS tests in ELA, math, and STE, eligible students in Lynn participated at levels that met or exceeded the state's 95 percent requirement.

n-Values by Subgroup and Performance Level, 2007

Subgroup	Performance Level	ELA	Math	STE
Lynn	ALL LEVELS	**6,744**	**6,710**	**1,877**
	Advanced	332	773	50
	Proficient	2,986	1,856	339
	Needs Improvement	2,643	2,346	890
	Warning/Failing	783	1,735	598
Regular Education	Advanced	317	697	46
	Proficient	2,588	1,538	314
	Needs Improvement	1,462	1,577	675
	Warning/Failing	156	693	281
Disability	Advanced	3	17	3
	Proficient	177	111	13
	Needs Improvement	589	346	125
	Warning/Failing	328	616	184
Limited English Proficient	Advanced	12	59	1
	Proficient	221	207	12
	Needs Improvement	592	423	90
	Warning/Failing	299	426	133
White	Advanced	159	336	24
	Proficient	1,122	694	149
	Needs Improvement	636	647	287
	Warning/Failing	91	322	107
Hispanic	Advanced	77	202	13
	Proficient	1,050	645	88
	Needs Improvement	1,279	1,050	387
	Warning/Failing	449	933	316
African-American	Advanced	39	59	3
	Proficient	333	196	32
	Needs Improvement	366	325	94
	Warning/Failing	154	313	108
Asian	Advanced	39	150	9
	Proficient	371	253	53
	Needs Improvement	272	226	93
	Warning/Failing	70	118	54
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/No	Advanced	168	348	27
	Proficient	994	614	132
	Needs Improvement	526	536	219
	Warning/Failing	93	276	80
Free or Reduced-Cost Lunch/Yes	Advanced	164	425	23
	Proficient	1,992	1,242	207
	Needs Improvement	2,117	1,809	671
	Warning/Failing	690	1,458	518
Male	Advanced	109	381	28
	Proficient	1,387	954	191
	Needs Improvement	1,443	1,162	455
	Warning/Failing	504	930	288
Female	Advanced	223	392	22
	Proficient	1,599	902	148
	Needs Improvement	1,200	1,183	435
	Warning/Failing	279	804	310

n-Values by Grade and Year, 2004-2007

Grade	Year	ELA	Math	STE
Grade 3	2004	1,056	0	0
	2005	1,008	0	0
	2006	971	971	0
	2007	1,016	1,015	0
Grade 4	2004	1,057	1,061	0
	2005	1,002	999	0
	2006	969	972	0
	2007	936	934	0
Grade 5	2004	0	0	1,073
	2005	0	0	999
	2006	923	927	926
	2007	900	897	895
Grade 6	2004	0	1,063	0
	2005	0	1,034	0
	2006	975	977	0
	2007	905	904	0
Grade 7	2004	1,073	0	0
	2005	1,032	0	0
	2006	1,002	1,005	0
	2007	960	960	0
Grade 8	2004	0	994	993
	2005	0	1,061	1,056
	2006	1,051	1,044	1,044
	2007	1,000	991	982
Grade 10	2004	966	975	0
	2005	979	977	0
	2006	984	960	0
	2007	1,027	1,009	0
All Grades	2004	4,152	4,093	2,066
	2005	4,021	4,071	2,055
	2006	6,875	6,856	1,970
	2007	6,744	6,710	1,877

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 2004-2007 reported in Figure/Tables 20-25 and in the table of n-values by grade and year:
English language arts (ELA): 3, 4, 7, 10
Math: 4, 6, 8, 10
Science and technology/engineering (STE): 5, 8

The highest performance level for grade 3 reading in 2006 and 2007 was Advanced/Above Proficient; this level did not exist in prior years, when the highest level was Proficient.

Subgroup inclusion is based on the number of students and the number of schools in the district. To be included as reportable, a subgroup must have at least 10 times the number of schools in the district. Subgroup inclusion for all years of the trend data is based on the 2007 data.

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

Rounded values may result in slight apparent discrepancies.

Reexamination Findings

This section summarizes the conclusions of the EQA team's reexamination of the Lynn Public Schools. It reports on only those 2004 indicators that received a 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory' rating and that the EQA team reassessed. The table below displays the initial 2004 ratings and the 2007 reassessments. The narrative that follows presents the relevant 2004 indicators, followed by the ratings from 2004 and 2007 and corresponding evidence for the ratings. Because of the changes in the EQA standards and indicators, the 2004 indicators are organized according to the 2007 standards. In addition, the district was examined and rated on selected 2007 indicators that were not part of the prior examination.

Standard I: Leadership, Governance, and Communication																	
	2004 Indicators															2007 Indicators	
Indicators► Ratings▼	**9.1**	**9.2**	**9.3**	**9.4**	**9.6**	**9.7**	**9.8**	**10.1**	**10.2**	**10.3**	**11.7**	**11.8**	**12.5**	**12.9**	**12.10**	**13**	**14**
Excellent																**2007**	
Satisfactory	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**		**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**	**2007**			
Needs Improvement							**2007**								**2007**		**2007**
Poor	**2004**		**2004**	**2004**	**2004**				**2004**	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**		
Unsatisfactory		**2004**				**2004**	**2004**	**2004**									

I. Leadership, Governance, and Communication

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

Findings:

- The District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) served as the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and contained vision and mission statements, strengths and weaknesses related to curriculum and instruction, and measurable goals.

- School Improvement Plans (SIPs) used a standard template, were aligned to the DIPCA, and contained measurable goals related to the improvement of student achievement. Using the PIM planning process, each school identified multiple instructional and assessment strategies.
- The district implemented numerous programs and developed collaborative relationships with organizations in the city to provide at-risk students and families access to health, social, recreational, and supplemental educational services.
- During the period of reexamination, the district's priority was improved student achievement in ELA and mathematics. During this period, the DOE changed the district's classification of underperformance from Category I to Category II.
- The district lacked appropriate funding to support school safety and engage in long-term planning for school safety.
- Contractual language allowed more senior teachers to bump less senior ones, which resulted in the late hiring of teachers and the need for the district to apply to the DOE for numerous licensure waivers.
- The district analyzed MCAS test results for the aggregate and subgroup student populations, and ELA and mathematics achievement improved during the reexamination period.
- The school committee evaluated the superintendent annually using the instrument recommended by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC).
- During the reexamination period, the deputy superintendents evaluated principals using the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership.
- The transfer of custodial and maintenance responsibilities and supervision to the city had a positive impact on the cleanliness of school facilities, according to principals and district administrators.
- The district engaged consulting firms to develop a long-term plan for replacement and rehabilitation of school facilities with cost estimates. This plan was submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for approval and funding.

- Although the district's budget was above net the school spending requirement, the district needed additional funds for maintenance and capital improvements.

Summary

The superintendent and the school committee of the Lynn Public Schools have adopted a District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) that prioritizes a system-wide goal of making adequate yearly progress (AYP) in both ELA and math for students in the aggregate and for all student subgroups at all grade spans. With the addition of two new deputy superintendents, a cohesive curriculum and instruction team has worked to place districtwide emphasis on standards-based instruction, to improve vocabulary and reading comprehension at all grade levels, and to provide early intervention programs in ELA and math. Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) teams, in all district schools except one, addressed the goals of individual School Improvement Plans (SIPs) which aligned with the goals of the district's corrective action plan. The superintendent and the two deputy superintendents have implemented new initiatives and made modifications to appropriately address those indicators rated 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory' in the district's initial EQA review. The Department of Education (DOE), in recognizing district progress in addressing the goals of the corrective action plan and seeing improvement in student achievement, has moved the district from the performance classification of Category I to Category II.

Contractually, principals were defined as the instructional school leaders of their respective buildings. The district provided training in assessment procedures such as TestWiz to strengthen the data analysis process. To support established district and school goals, central administration approved a professional development plan for 2005-2006 and budgeted $2,854,380 for professional development; 77 percent of this funding came from grants and 23 percent from budgetary funds. Administrators and teachers interviewed responded positively regarding the district's professional development offerings, as well as the Lucid software program which allows for online professional development registration.

For the most part, principals were not able to select staff members for their buildings on a timely basis. The seniority and bumping language in the teachers' contract prevails when positions open because of attrition or enrollment shifts. Bumping often affected the stability of a school's staff.

The district approved expenditures for new instructional resources with an aim to standardize the district's curricula across grade levels. One example was the purchase of the Trophies reading program for grades K-5.

Although not in a written timeline, the district developed systematic procedures focused on analysis of student achievement data, improvement of instructional practices, and review of progress toward goals established for the district and for individual schools. The leadership of the district communicated the goals of the school system at school committee meetings, parent council meetings, PIM meetings, and in a district newsletter disseminated quarterly. With the assistance of an external consultant, the district established a broad-based committee of approximately 20 members to develop a strategic plan. In an effort to improve achievement of all students, the district has implemented numerous alternative educational programs and services at the elementary, middle, and high school levels to assist the district's approximately 14,000 students, 75 percent of whom participate in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

According to interviewees, approximately 50 different languages were spoken by students in the district. The district's Parent Information Center (PIC), which operates year round, provided assistance to students and parents in matters related to English language learners (ELLs) and special education students, school assignments, housing and education for the homeless, and health and medical needs. During focus group discussions and interviews with stakeholders in the district, a recurrent theme of pride in the Lynn Public Schools and a commitment to its students was expressed.

2004 Indicators

9.1. The district provides and maintains thorough, complete, and informative documentation on past and current initiatives, practices, policies, procedures, and achievements of the district and its students. This documentation is accessible and well organized.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

For the initial period of EQA examination (2000-2003), the school committee submitted a codified set of school district policies to the EQA for review. While comprehensive, the school committee did not officially adopt these policies. According to district administrators, a subcommittee led by members of the school committee, with the assistance of the school department attorney, was reviewing the policies at the time of the initial examination. During interviews, administrators expressed awareness of the district's policy book, but it was not referenced as a matter of practice or governance for the period under review.

The district's administrators stated that the only record of past and current practices, initiatives, and procedures were in the minutes of the school committee meetings. In Lynn, it would have been difficult to access historical records in the district since there was no code or reference file of school committee minutes. The superintendent stated that all policy books needed to be updated. The district's policies were in the process of being reviewed with the guidance of the school department's attorney. Administrators indicated that it was a time consuming process, but acknowledged that it needed to be accomplished.

For the reexamination period under review (2004-2007), the school committee's secretary indicated that district policies were submitted, under contract, to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) in 2005-2006 to be codified according to national school board standards. However, it was further indicated that the submitted policies were lost due to a building relocation of the contracting agency. The district has again initiated the codification process.

A subcommittee of the school committee and the school committee's attorney reviewed the policies prior to promulgation. The superintendent indicated that the school committee formally approved, at meetings open to the general public, all school and district policies. Minutes of school committee meetings contained records of votes taken. It was indicated by interviewees that the codification of district policies will be completed by the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Policies with accompanying procedures and forms will be translated for students and parents as necessary. With the district now having a full-time position of school committee

secretary, complete and informative documentation regarding practices, policies, and procedures will be maintained. All district policies were posted on the district's internal shared drive.

During the reexamination period, informative documentation on district initiatives and achievements of the district and its students was reflected in the district's corrective action plan and in individual School Improvement Plans. These aligned documents listed content foci for improved student achievement with specific goals related to standards-based instruction, a districtwide curriculum and instruction team, the improvement of vocabulary and reading comprehension at all grade levels, early intervention programs in ELA and math, and improved integration of special education programs with regular education programs. The district's SIPs and the district's corrective action plan aligned listings that included measurable goals, strategies, implementation, strategy status, results, and funding sources. These documents are accessible and have been distributed to school committee members, Performance Improvement Mapping team members, administrators, the school faculty, and school council members.

9.2. <u>The District Improvement Plan (DIP) incorporates the district's vision and mission statement, and the analysis of student achievement data drives the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs, services, and practices.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, Lynn's District Improvement Plan (DIP) was incorporated in the district's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Consolidated Strategic Plan for 2003 to 2006. The DIP had both vision and mission statements and five stated district goals. The vision statement addressed the provision of equitable educational opportunities for optimal achievement in all academic areas. The five supporting goals included: design and support of curriculum driven by the MCAS test results; establishment of policies and practices to create safe, clean, and ample school facilities; the employment of highly qualified staff; and providing high quality, research-based professional development for all the staff.

During interviews, the EQA was told that educational initiatives were driven by the MCAS test results. However, the same interview provided information on budget reductions and staff layoffs

for FY 2004. The lack of funding for the schools was the result of state budget cuts. The state cuts affected all districts across the state in January and February 2003. Over a two-year period, the school district laid off 250 to 260 staff members. Furthermore, full-day kindergartens, pre-kindergarten programs, one middle school, and two alternative education programs were eliminated.

District administrators indicated that the instructional gap created by the budget reductions forced greater reliance on grant funds (for example, Title I) to implement the DIP. Using the PIM process, and informed by data provided by Mass Insight and the MCAS test results, the grant funds were used to hire curriculum and instruction teachers. Also, administrators stated that based on student achievement data the district reduced reading instruction to provide funds for math initiatives.

According to district interviews, over the last two years of the initial review period, the DIP had been restructured to absorb the loss of 200 or more positions. The revised DIP focused on writing across the curriculum, restructuring the TBE/ELL program, and enlarging the district curriculum team to supervise curriculum alignment and professional development. According to district interviews, the school district had to cut its all-day kindergarten program and reduced the size of its preschool program in order to finance the changes.

However, during the initial period under review, the school district was in turmoil, with significant and public disagreement among the members of the school committee and the former superintendent of schools. During this period, the former superintendent by-passed the school committee in the development of the DIP. According to the interviewees, efforts to improve student achievement in 2000, 2001, and a portion of 2002 were stagnant. The former superintendent was replaced in January 2002 with the appointment of the current superintendent.

During the reexamination period under review, the district included mission and vision statements in the DIPCA, reviewed student achievement data, and modified programs when needed. The DIPCA became the DIP and received approval from the school committee. Administrators explained that district leaders on a regular basis looked at MCAS test results and other student achievement data. Using the Performance Improvement Mapping process, the district formulated 10 recommendations as part of the DIPCA. This plan centered on

instructional improvement in mathematics, ELA, and reading, and it included a vision and mission statement, 10 goals, action steps, person(s) responsible, budgetary requirements, and professional development required. The vision statement addressed equitable educational opportunities and the goals addressed improving student performance in mathematics and ELA as measured by MCAS test results.

District administrators stated that the district hired a consultant to assist with its long-term strategic planning efforts. The district, working with 25 to 30 participants, met with 18 focus groups to develop a strategic plan, estimated for completion in June 2008.

As a result of the development of the DIPCA and achievement data analysis, the district adopted a new elementary math program and supported the adoption with extensive teacher professional development. To support student math achievement, the district used the Houghton Mifflin basal and supplementary materials such as Everyday Math, the River Deep program, and SmartBoards in a number of schools. At Lynn Classical High School, SmartBoards existed in all academic classrooms. The district also combined the Harcourt Trophies program with the Wilson reading program to improve student achievement in ELA.

The district heavily invested in professional development that supported improved academic achievement. In FY 2006, the district expended $652,764 from its operational budget and $2,201,616 from grants for a total professional development expenditure of $2,854,380. The district utilized a specialized professional development software package to keep track of all professional development in the district and prepared extensive records of professional development opportunities and a record of each teacher's participation.

9.3. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) for every school is aligned with the district's mission statement, and the analysis of student achievement data drives the development, implementation, and modification of educational programs, services, and practices.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

Even though there had been a loss of over 200 teachers during the initial period of EQA review, curriculum support staff had increased, especially in the schools with the lowest test scores. However, the new curriculum instruction teachers (CITs), who were once in the administrative bargaining unit as facilitators, were moved to the teachers' unit. Therefore, CITs had no influence on teacher evaluations and accountability. The CITs were building based and focused on modeling lessons, team teaching and planning, developing curriculum and planning instruction, and driving the PIM process with the DOE. Their focus was on both math and ELA. Prior to the use of CITs and the PIM process, the use of system-wide facilitators who answered directly to the superintendent were said by interviewees to be a major cause of the dissention within the school district.

Since the initial period under review, all schools, especially the eight elementary schools that did not make AYP in either math or ELA (Cobbet, Connery, Harrington, Ingalls, Drewicz, Hood, Sewall-Anderson and Tracey), were involved in the PIM process with the DOE. The PIM process was adopted to encourage the staffs to conduct an analysis of student data in an effort to drive the development, implementation, and modification of programs, services, and practices. A PIM team existed in every school, and included parents, teachers, CITs, and administrators. Interviewees indicated that it was still too early to see any results from the PIM process. With the guidance of the DOE, the administration elected to develop School Improvement Plans as one-year plans written in a consolidated plan model. According to district interviews, all SIPs were school specific, contained prioritized goals, with dedicated professional development time, and included districtwide training for all teachers as teachers of ELL students. According to the DIP, 17 percent of students were designated as limited English proficient (LEP).

During the reexamination period, central office administrators ensured that SIPs aligned with the DIPCA through annual central office reviews. The school committee reviewed and approved all SIPs annually. All principals received extensive training in understanding how to use school data analysis effectively and how to integrate this information into the PIM process, and technical assistance in the use of TestWiz. Principals annually reviewed MCAS test data for the aggregate and subgroup student populations, and reviewing MCAS data with the PIM team led to instructional modifications, which were included in the SIPs. Principals divided the SIPs into

two parts: part I, narrative; and part II, action plan. All schools utilized the same format in developing their SIPs. All SIPs identified specific school goals, contained measurable prioritized academic goals with a focus on improving student achievement and school climate, and included methods to better utilize technology. In addition, all SIPs contained dedicated professional development time.

9.4. District leaders monitor student achievement data throughout the year, considering the goals identified in the DIP and individual SIPs and implements programs, policies, and services that are most likely to result in improved student achievement.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district had worked with Gordon College to develop districtwide benchmarks to monitor results. The district also instituted the Follow the Leader program, a technology-based program with simulations of MCAS questions, in 15 schools. Interviewees indicated that principals monitored data by using programs such as STAR math and SRA in several of the schools. The interviewees indicated that they lacked a specific process for monitoring performance data—"monitoring strategies don't exist right now"—and that " there is a need to do more pre-and post-cycle testing." According to the interviewees, the leadership recognized that a lack of monitoring devices was a weakness in the school system. They also acknowledged that "quality principal leadership was needed" and that they needed "an expert who could help the district with assessment."

During the reexamination period under review, the superintendent hired two new deputy superintendents who had district and school responsibilities in curriculum, instruction, and assessment evenly divided among the district's 28 schools. These administrators indicated that central office administrators first reviewed MCAS district and individual school results and identified trends for each tested subject through analysis of longitudinal data from 2003 to 2007. Subsequently, these administrators held a meeting with all principals and the curriculum leadership staff to review the data and set a course of action. The administrators developed

graphs showing the MCAS proficiency index from 2003 to 2007 for the aggregate and subgroup student populations at both the district and school levels.

According to the district's contract for principals, the principal was the designated instructional leader for each school and was responsible for curriculum implementation, instruction, and assessment, including curriculum alignment and teacher analysis of data. The district formed leadership teams in all schools with the PIM process paramount in the analysis of data and the implementation of action plans designed to monitor and improve student achievement. The SIPs, on the first page, listed leadership team members, which typically included the principal, curriculum instruction teachers, vice-principals, parents, and department heads. Schools made modifications to SIPs annually based on MCAS data analysis. Central office administrators indicated that all district administrators were trained to use TestWiz for analysis of MCAS test data, and the district had purchased the latest version of the TestWiz software for this purpose.

Examples of new programs which were implemented to improve student achievement include Harcourt Trophies Reading, Kurzweil Reader, Plato, Brainfuse, Calendar Math, DIBELS, and Houghton Mifflin Mathematics. The district expended $2,854,380 for professional development in FY 2006 to support new initiatives and modifications in program and services, and for training in instructional strategies, benchmarking, and assessment.

9.6. <u>The leadership reports annually to the school committee, staff, and community concerning the extent to which the implementation of the DIP and SIPs have or have not resulted in improved student achievement.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

For the initial period of EQA review, the superintendent of schools reported to the EQA team that a meeting was held with the school committee upon receipt of the MCAS test scores in November. This meeting was open to the public and the press was usually in attendance. A formal PowerPoint presentation of the 2003 MCAS test data was made to the school committee. According to administrators, student achievement was discussed at the public forums with recommendations for interventions and strategies consistent with the DIP.

With respect to the presentation of student performance results, the superintendent communicated the MCAS test results to the school committee. He indicated to the EQA that he also presented updates as they became available in November and when the Competency Determinations were released. One of the curriculum administrators presented a PowerPoint demonstration on AYP. This was also presented to the appropriate state representatives and senators. The principals communicated the MCAS test results to parents and met with them. The school improvement councils met either monthly or quarterly. The schedules were submitted to the deputy superintendents' offices. The superintendent wrote a grant to resurrect a newsletter to the public on the state of public education in the district. However, these funds were cut in recent budget cuts. The superintendent reported that most schools had their own newsletters. The superintendent reported further that he regularly addressed the state of education with community agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, and the Lynn Business Foundation.

With respect to the SIPs driving the budget process, principals made requests to the superintendent's office for specific personnel requests. When asked to what degree the SIPs drove the budget, the superintendent indicated that in the prior year only executive summaries were presented to the school committee. The school committee did not analyze the individual SIPs in the spring of 2003 due to work on budget cuts. However, the school committee members reported that they had read the plans in previous years. The superintendent met with the school committee twice a month plus at subcommittee meetings. During the initial period under review, the division and competition for control among the district leadership of the school system made the DIP and SIPs ineffective in driving student achievement for the 2000, 2001, and 2002 cycles of MCAS testing, according to interviews with directors, administrators, and city officials.

During the reexamination period under review, administrative interviews indicated that the school committee, consisting of seven members with the mayor as chairperson, supported all educational initiatives. Administrators commented that the committee did not micromanage the school district. In addition, the school committee employed a full-time secretary who served as the liaison between the committee and the superintendent.

Interviewees indicated that the school committee had 11 subcommittees. Committee members understood their role in establishing policy, reviewing and approving the budget, and the hiring of the superintendent, the director of special education, and certain other specific personnel. School committee members met twice a month, and audiotapes of the meetings were maintained to verify minutes and votes taken. School committee members received compensation totaling $800 monthly. The city clerk posted all school committee meetings, and members received meeting agendas one week in advance. All meetings followed the open meeting law and were attended by the press, union members, and community members.

The superintendent of schools reported that a meeting took place with the school committee upon receipt of the MCAS test scores in the fall. This meeting was open to the public. A formal PowerPoint presentation of the 2006 MCAS test data was made to the school committee by principals and other administrators. According to administrators, student achievement was discussed at the public forums with recommendations for interventions and strategies.

The principals communicated the MCAS test results to parents and met with all stakeholders, including school improvement councils. The district published a district newsletter three times a year and most schools published their own newsletters; the results of the MCAS tests were included in the newsletters. The superintendent reported further that he regularly addressed the state of education with community agencies such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, Kiwanis, and the Lynn Business Foundation.

9.7. <u>The superintendent is evaluated annually on the district's state assessment results and implementation of the DIP. This performance evaluation serves as the basis for improving the future job performance of the superintendent.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to members of the school committee, the superintendent of schools was not evaluated for 2000, 2001, and a portion of 2002. The reason given by the school committee was that the parties to the superintendent's evaluation could not agree on an evaluation instrument.

The current superintendent was appointed effective January 1, 2002. The school committee and superintendent had agreed to use the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) model for the superintendent's evaluation. A review of the current superintendent's evaluation by the EQA team showed that it included specific goals to address major districtwide issues. The goals listed by the superintendent and agreed to by the school committee addressed student achievement and the District Improvement Plan. The superintendent identified 15 goals, which the school committee applied to the MASC evaluation format. Each goal could be related to specific measurable outcomes. Future job performance was a component of the superintendent's evaluation. According to the superintendent, his evaluation was a new experience for the school committee. The most recent evaluation of the superintendent prior to November 20, 2003, was in 1987.

During the reexamination period under review, the superintendent was evaluated by the school committee for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. The evaluation instrument included eight categories: 1) relationship with the school committee; 2) educational leadership; 3) general management; 4) budget management; 5) personnel management; 6) communications and public relations; 7) personal qualities and characteristics; and 8) other. The evaluation was partially based on student achievement in the district. The rating scale used by school committee members for each of the eight categories was: a) fails to meet; b) meets; and c) exceeds. The superintendent's evaluation instrument was obtained by the district from the MASC. The superintendent's evaluations were reported in open sessions of school committee meetings. Central office administrators and members of the school committee stated that the Department of Education lowered the corrective action rating of the district from Category I to Category II as a result of improved student achievement during the reexamination period.

9.8. Principals are evaluated annually on school state assessment results and the implementation of their respective SIPs. These performance evaluations serve as the basis for improving future job performance of the principals.

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

At the original site visit, the superintendent indicated that at least one principal was removed following the initial period under review. According to interviews, annual goal setting with midyear reviews were begun with principals and included at least two quantifiable goals that were connected to the MCAS test results. Since 2003, all principals underwent a first round of evaluation and were able to meet the goals that were established for them. In the second round of the evaluation, the principals were asked to add goals to the ones that were assigned by the district leadership. One of the expectations for principals was for them to increase their number of classroom visits. They had an approved evaluation instrument based on the Principles of Effective Leadership. The instrument was written in a narrative form under each goal and did not contain a rating scale. Administrators indicated to the EQA that requests were made in the spring for documentation showing that the principals were checking from the John Collins Writing and math folders. The assistant superintendent was responsible for the evaluations of the 30 principals. When asked if one could clearly see differences in the feedback given to principals, the district leadership reported that they could. Half the principals were veteran principals, and the other half were fairly new to the district. When questioned whether principals monitored individual professional development plans (IPDPs) and connected them to the SIPs, the superintendent indicated that principals had this responsibility. In other interviews, the EQA was told that this information was not in a form that was easily accessible, but that it would be beginning in the fall of 2004, since new software was purchased for this purpose. Current leadership was dedicated to improving the performance of principals, according to interviews with professional staff members, the school committee, and city leaders.

During the reexamination period under review, the superintendent indicated that the two newly hired deputy superintendents were given the responsibility of evaluating principals based on student achievement. However, due to the recent hiring of these assistant superintendents, not all principals were evaluated in school year 2006-2007. When asked what the expectations for principals were, the superintendent indicated he had an expectation that student MCAS test scores would improve, that data would be analyzed and used in the PIM process, and that poverty and home situations would not to be cited as impediments to improvement of student learning. The superintendent further stated that principals were expected to be instructional

leaders who work toward making adequate yearly progress at their schools along with working toward attainment of the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The evaluation instrument for principals met the requirements of the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership (603 CMR 35.00). The evaluation format included a pre-conference and formative and summative assessment for established goals. Ratings were: 1) meets expectations; 2) meets expectations in part; and 3) does not meet expectations. The instrument allowed for a written observation narrative supported by evidence. The principals' contract indicated that a principal may be terminated or reassigned if the school falls into corrective action as defined by NCLB.

Professional development related to supervision and observation of teachers was provided to principals through Research For Better Teaching. During principal interviews, it was indicated that the RBT training received was valuable for principals in observing instructional practices. During the on-site reexamination, a random sampling of 12 principal personnel files was reviewed. Seven of the 12 files did not contain timely evaluations. The five timely evaluations were both informative and instructive.

10.1. The superintendent, in regular meetings with administrators and members of the school committee, develops a coherent vision or mission statement and DIP designed to achieve it.

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, although the current superintendent of schools and deputy superintendent were working closely with the school committee, since January 1, 2002 the relationship between the previous superintendent and the school committee was in turmoil. Between 2000 and 2002, the District Improvement Plan was developed by the superintendent and presented to the school committee. Although the school committee did not officially adopt the mission statement, vision statement, and district goals developed by the superintendent, the superintendent proceeded to make this DIP the focus of improvement in student achievement. Consequently, the superintendent was operating key elements of the district's goals and plans without the approval of the district's policymaking body. During this 2000 to 2002 period, SIPs

were developed and written according to the superintendent's directives. The current administration revised the DIP in the summer of 2003, and the revised DIP was approved by the school committee in 2003. The new DIP was incorporated into the NCLB Consolidated Strategic Plan.

During the reexamination period under review, central office administrators and principals reported that they met regularly together or by grade level to discuss student achievement results. Frequent reviews of student achievement data helped the superintendent, the school committee, and principals share a common vision. This common vision was clearly stated in the DIPCA. Central office and school meetings regularly focused on the PIM process, achievement data analysis, and the technical assistance schools needed to support students. These meetings resulted in annual modifications to the DIPCA and SIPs.

10.2. The superintendent effectively delegates the educational and operational management of the schools to the building principals and program directors.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period under examination, the central administration of the Lynn Public Schools had two distinct and different leadership teams. As previously stated, the schools during the period 2000 to 2002 were in a state of instability as a result of dissention and division among the school committee members and the previous superintendent. In interviews, the district and school administrators indicated that this instability was due to the leadership style of the previous superintendent of schools. During this period of instability, districtwide facilitators, who reported directly to the superintendent, were primarily responsible for the coordination and supervision of instruction. These facilitators were directed by the superintendent to work with principals to address issues related to the improvement of student achievement. According to interviews with various leadership groups in Lynn, the relationship between the facilitators and the principals was detrimental to efforts to improve student achievement.

The current administration, which was new effective January 1, 2002, dramatically changed the relationships among the central office, the school principals, and program directors. The

positions of facilitators were eliminated and replaced by curriculum instruction teachers (CITs). The CITs were school based and worked under the supervision and direction of the principals. Working with the DOE, the principals and CITs were utilizing the PIM process to inform instructional improvement under the goals established by the 2003 district consolidated strategic plan. The principals and CITs had the full support of both the superintendent of schools and the school committee. The ultimate outcome of these changes was to be determined by the performance of students on future MCAS tests.

During the reexamination period under review, the superintendent indicated that leadership and operational duties were delegated to principals and program directors in accordance with established job descriptions referenced with requirements of Massachusetts education reform legislation. Job descriptions were maintained on file in the district's human resources office. Prior to the hiring of new administrators due to attrition or reorganization, it was indicated by district administrators that job descriptions were reviewed for currency.

During the on-site reexamination, the district's organizational chart was reviewed by the EQA team. Lines of authority and responsibility were outlined for policy control and senior management, operations structure, deputy superintendent cohorts, educational programs, special education, curriculum and instruction preK-12, equity/language support programs, external grants, wellness programs, attendance and discipline, fine arts, management services, finance, human resources, food services, data processing, networking/technology, and transportation.

During interviews with district administrators, teachers, school committee members, and parents, participants indicated that despite the fact that the district is the sixth largest in the state with 28 schools and approximately 14,000 students, a team effort involving all stakeholders was prevalent and directed toward improvement of student achievement. School committee members and administrators indicated that the superintendent delegated educational and operational management duties to district administrators and defined expectations and goals for the school system.

10.3. The district leaders ensure that:

a. all principals are aware of and understand published policies and district improvement plans; and

b. the district uses system-wide and intra-district communication systems to keep all faculty and staff well informed and to provide avenues for response.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the period prior to January 1, 2002 was not a time of effective implementation of the district's strategies and initiatives. In August 2003, all the principals were involved with the superintendent in the development of the NCLB consolidated strategic plan. Given the option by the DOE of developing a one-year or three-year DIP, the administration chose to develop a one-year DIP. The central administration hoped the one-year plan would allow the principals to develop effective SIPs on a multi-year basis in the future. According to interviews with the central administration, the superintendent intended to meet with principals and the central office administration weekly. These meetings were followed by a session between the deputy superintendent and curriculum and instruction teams. The executive director for curriculum and instruction met periodically with teachers.

These meetings, along with e-mails, tended to be the primary communication link between the central administration and the schools. It was the expectation of the central administration that information and data received at administrative meetings and through electronic mails would be communicated to the professional staff districtwide.

Although the Lynn Public Schools had comprehensive and codified school policies, the school committee did not officially adopt these policies. According to the superintendent of schools, a subcommittee of the school committee and the school district attorney were revising school policies at the time of the initial EQA review. No timeframe could be given during that interview regarding the completion of the policy review. All these efforts by the current administration were attempts to bring the school district together after almost three years of turmoil.

During the reexamination visit, administrators indicated that updating school committee policies was a work in progress. Several years ago, the district contracted with the MASC to update all district policies. The revised policy manual now awaits a legal review by the district's attorney. All school policies received approval prior to their inception with a regular review process. In interviews, principals, school committee members, and other administrators frequently referenced school policies. Administrators demonstrated awareness of the DIPCA and stated ways schools used aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to evaluate progress toward school goals each year. Identification of the strengths and weaknesses of schools generated modifications in the DIPCA and resulted in the reprioritizing of goals, instruction, and professional development. The district communicated to staff members through regular department meetings, e-mails, school newsletters, meetings with the union president, weekly central office meetings, and monthly principal meetings.

11.7. The budget and district's expenditures are adequate to provide for appropriate levels of staffing, professional development, materials, supplies, and equipment.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district had cut over 280 positions, eliminated its all-day kindergarten program, and reduced its non-salary spending in all areas in FY 2003 and FY 2004. Prior to FY 2003, the district's appropriation, supported by over 80 percent from state Chapter 70 aid, was, according to district interviews, adequate to support the district's staffing and equipment needs. The district's grant programs were able to provide supplemental and targeted resources to accommodate certain district programs and subgroup needs. During the period of time under initial review, the district's spending for professional development was as follows:

	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002
Actual Spending	$1,824,136	$2,624,350	$1,852,928
Required Spending	$1,064,025	$1,467,700	$1,899,250
Difference	$760,111	$1,156,650	($46,322)

During the reexamination period under review, the district exceeded the DOE net school spending requirements (NSS) in FY 2005 through FY 2007. In FY 2006, the per pupil expenditure was $11,861 compared to the state average of $11,210. The Lynn school district followed a very sophisticated process in the formulation of the district budget. School committee policy drove the process of developing the budget and gave the superintendent the responsibility for the budget preparation. The budget process began with student enrollment projections at each school. The district connected enrollment, budgetary, and staffing data and used them to develop the budget. The district also used the DIPCA goals to develop the budget.

The PIM process guided the budget process. Principals and PIM team members met with central office administrators to define budget requirements in priority form. Although most budget needs received budget attention, not all budget requests were accommodated. In general, all schools required more financial resources. To address the requirements of desegregation, major budget decisions, such as those regarding staffing, curriculum initiatives, efforts to support student achievement in underperforming schools, and salary adjustments, came from central office administrators. Each school received a per pupil allotment for materials and supplies based on the previous year's enrollment. Aging facilities indicated the need for more funds in the area of capital needs.

11.8. The community provides sufficient financial resources to ensure an educational program of quality, as evidenced by a sufficient district revenue levy.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district met its NSS requirements. The district's budget was funded with approximately 80 percent state aid. From FY 1993 through FY 2003, the district's Chapter 70 aid increased from $28,813,333 to $98,243,576, an increase of $69,430,243. According to district interviews, the city had never attempted an override of Proposition 2½. The city and school system were able over the previous decade to provide funding to renovate various schools as well as construct new schools.

During the reexamination period under review, the district met its net school spending requirements. Chapter 70 aid as a percentage of actual net school spending was 76.1 percent in FY 2005, 72.3 percent in FY 2006, and 73.2 percent in FY 2007.

During this period, the district's Chapter 70 aid increased by $11,091,051 between FY 2005 and FY 2007. Interviews indicated that the district lacked additional monies for maintenance and capital improvements. However, with the responsibility of maintenance and capital improvements shifted to the city, interviewees remained positive that maintenance of the schools would improve and the district would save money.

12.5. The district reviews student achievement data and the reviews are reflected in its financial decisions.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district did not have a formal process to review disaggregated student achievement data. However, during FY 2004 the district began to review disaggregated student achievement data and incorporated those data into individual school PIM plans as well as district PIM plans. For FY 2004, the information from PIM planning instruments was incorporated into the budget development process in the district. This documentation served to provide data reflecting budget decisions for FY 2004.

During the reexamination period under review, the district utilized a formal process to review aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data. MCAS test data received by the district each fall were reported in the aggregate and by subgroups to the school committee and the community. Using the PIM process, principals used student achievement data to measure the progress toward SIP goals. Goals were annually prioritized and refined. Modifications guided instruction, staffing, and the purchase of materials. A TestWiz network program supported by technical training assisted principals and the PIM teams in data analysis. Central office administrators met with principals and PIM team members to identify student needs with emphasis on individual students. As a result, this led to changes in the implementation of professional development, new curricula, new programs, changes in staffing, use of more

complex assessments, better use of data, and modified classroom instruction. Saturday school funded through a grant supported improvement in student achievement, but Saturday school ended when the grant ended. Title I funds supported student learning in most schools.

12.9. The district implements preventive maintenance programs for buildings and equipment that are reviewed on a regular basis and are related to the district's long-term capital needs.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, due to budget reductions the number of maintenance personnel was significantly reduced, impacting the district's ability to maintain its facilities. The district had 10-man crews that collectively addressed all the maintenance needs of the district's buildings. As a result of budget cuts, these positions were eliminated and maintenance needs were impacted. The district, over the 10 years prior to the initial review, worked with the city to address its capital needs. Various bonds were approved beginning in 1992 to renovate and expand six elementary schools. Later, another bond was approved to renovate or construct a new Classical High School and to renovate English High School and Lynn Vocational-Technical High School. Lastly, a bond for $120 million was approved for additional phases of long-range planning for the district. It was reported that approximately $20 million of this was used for the high school renovations while the balance was still available.

During the reexamination period under review, the responsibility for the cleaning and maintenance of district schools was assumed by the inspectional services department of the City of Lynn. School and district administrators indicated that this operational change enhanced supervision and accountability and resulted in cleaner and expedited maintenance of school facilities. In FY 2006, $5,000,000 was appropriated and expended to repair and install new school roofs and to address heating and ventilation problems.

Sixteen of the 28 school buildings in the district were constructed 50 or more years ago. In August 2005, the Merrimack Education Center (MEC) completed a study of long-range enrollment projections and a programmatic space analysis. This study confirmed that significant

program space needs existed within Lynn's elementary and middle schools, such as needs for additional classrooms, science labs, special education spaces, and small group meeting rooms.

In August 2007, Strategic Building Solutions, LLC submitted a Conditions Assessment and Planning Report. This report identified the maintenance, repair, regulatory compliance, and long-term capital needs of district elementary and middle schools and the associated costs. A detailed project inventory by building systems and sub-systems was prioritized with estimated costs. The district's long-range plan was submitted to the state for approval and funding.

12.10. Educational and program facilities are of adequate size, clean, safe, well-lit, well-maintained, and conducive to promoting the learning process.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial EQA review, the EQA team conducted site visits of school buildings in the Lynn Public Schools. The EQA team toured facilities that ranged from brand new to ones that were quite old. The facilities were clean and well maintained, yet the EQA team observed areas that needed maintenance and repairs. For the period beginning in FY 2002, the district cut funding for maintenance personnel and trades people who previously served the district. The district reported that it reduced its custodial and maintenance positions from 167 to 147, and acknowledged this had a detrimental effect on the district's capacity to maintain its buildings.

During the reexamination period under review, site visits were conducted at 13 schools. These schools were clean, well lit and well maintained to the extent supported by available funds. It was acknowledged by central office administrators and school committee members that the district needed additional funding to implement the recommendations made in the Conditions Assessment and Planning Report, which included maintenance and repair of existing school buildings, the construction of new schools, and the need to provide additional spaces to enhance the learning process. Of the district's 28 schools, 16 were constructed 50 or more years ago. The district was hopeful that state assistance in funding would be expedited through the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) program.

During interviews with school personnel, it was reported that school building cleanliness had improved and maintenance repairs were more efficiently expedited with the transfer of supervision and responsibility of custodial and maintenance services to the city.

2007 Indicators

13. The district formed partnerships with community human service agencies and benefactors, such as corporate and civic sponsors, to provide at-risk students and families access to health, social, recreational, and supplemental educational services.

EQA Rating from 2007: Excellent

Evidence

The district developed collaborative relationships with organizations in the city to provide services to at-risk students. The district implemented several alternative education programs to meet the needs of at-risk students. At the high school level, there were two programs for special education students and similar separate programs at one elementary and one middle school.

A Career Development Center for at-risk high school students provided a learning environment for students unsuccessful in a traditional setting. The Competency Determination (CD) rate for this school improved from 90 to 94 percent between 2005 and 2007. For students who needed transitional assistance to return to school from the court and corrections systems, the district established a Multi Agency Student Transitional (MAST) School. As part of this program, student and family social service agencies provided on-site assistance to families and formulated integrated and coordinated individualized service plans. Transition to a mainstream educational setting was a stated goal of the MAST program.

A late afternoon and evening program entitled Lynn Educational Evening Program (LEEP) was implemented for high school students who did not attend day school. This program served students who had dropped out and faced issues such as pregnancy, involvement with the Division of Youth Services (DYS) or the Department of Social Services (DSS), and discipline problems.

A resource provided for parents was the Parent Information Center (PIC), which processed school registrations. The center maintained student records on a district data base, which

included immunization records, birth certificates, passports, guardianship court records, and previous schools attended. The center assisted parents with matters relating to preschool programs, special education services, ELL screening, admission to the LEEP program, and education and housing assistance for homeless children and their families. The liaison for homeless children and families was a nurse practitioner who also provided medical and health counseling, assisted with referrals to medical and social service agencies, and immunized children when necessary. The homeless liaison conducted visits to shelters and motels if requested by principals or teachers. It was indicated by a center staff member that there were approximately 1,300 homeless children in the city. In the course of a full year, it was reported that the PIC processed approximately 6,000 transactions related to students and families.

At each high school and middle school, in-school community health centers, staffed with counselors and nurse practitioners, were established to assist students and their families with health and medical related matters. During the interview process with parents, it was stated that the city and the school department provided numerous support services for students and parents. It was indicated that an inherent culture existed to assist the city's youth to the greatest extent possible.

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

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

In April 2007, the position of school security and emergency planning liaison went into effect in the district and was filled by a Lynn police officer. Two documents were prepared for the district as part of the development of a comprehensive safety plan. These documents were made possible through a district grant. A flip chart for teachers entitled Classroom Emergency Procedures addressed 13 safety situations, which included media protocol, evacuation, lockdown, shelter in place, power outage, medical emergency, hazardous materials, suspicious package, bomb threat, missing person, weapon/assault/intruder, fire/explosion, and severe weather. This chart was to be

posted in all classrooms near the teacher's desk. During the 13 school visits, this was not evident in all classrooms.

The second document prepared was the School Emergency Operations Plan. This plan included a message from the superintendent regarding safety procedures within district schools. It stated that the principal was to assume the leadership of implementing the emergency plan and that each school must establish an emergency response team to implement the written procedures. This document listed 20 threat-specific procedures and six color-coded topics, which were 1) background information; 2) pre-incident planning; 3) assessment; 4) notification and warning; 5) actions, roles and responsibilities; and 6) incident closure. Further information regarding crisis communication, evacuation, and shelter was written in the plan. A training session involving police, fire, and public health representatives and school principals was held in September 2007 related to the establishment of crisis management teams. Further training sessions had been scheduled for October and November 2007 for all principals and vice-principals. Part of the training will be directed to the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

During school visits, it was noted that not all buildings had a secure entry system, functioning intercom systems, and internal communications devices. Not all EQA examiners were required to sign in or wear visitor identification. The district through its relationship with General Electric installed a state-of-the-art security system at one middle school.

Principals interviewed indicated that fire drills were routinely held approximately four times during the school year. The district was in the process of establishing a formal drill schedule for school lockdowns. A stated goal of the district was to develop a long-range safety and security plan for all schools with cost estimates.

Standard II: Curriculum and Instruction										
	2004 Indicators								2007 Indicators	
Ratings▼ Indicators►	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.5	9	11
Excellent										
Satisfactory	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007			2007
Needs Improvement								2007	2007	
Poor	2004		2004		2004	2004	2004			
Unsatisfactory		2004		2004				2004		

II. Curriculum and Instruction

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

Findings:

- During the reexamination period, Lynn Public Schools had produced curricula in English language arts, mathematics, and science and trained teachers in their use.
- Classroom observations by examiners indicated horizontal and vertical alignment of the ELA and math curricula. Review of the curriculum documents revealed alignment with the state frameworks.
- The district redefined the role of the curriculum and instruction team to that of providing extensive support for principals and teachers.
- To address the assessed needs of its students, the district implemented numerous instructional programs, such as SIOP training, reading comprehension strategies, math content courses, and the Skillful Teacher course.
- The district was gradually moving its special education students toward greater inclusion in regular education classes. However, additional staff and more training for both regular and special education teachers were needed to accomplish the task.
- The district addressed the needs of English language learners by providing curricular and professional development support.
- Classroom observations revealed high expectations in 52 percent of 94 randomly selected classrooms, and only 41 percent at the middle school level.

Summary

During the period under reexamination, the district involved its teachers in the redesign of the ELA, math, and science curricula. The district aligned the new curricula with the state frameworks and provided timelines that led to horizontal and vertical alignment. The district curriculum and instruction team focused on providing district as well as in-school training for principals and teachers in the implementation of the new curricula. Interviews with teachers as well as classroom observations by examiners revealed that the curricula were in use across district classrooms.

The district had mandated the introduction of the PIM process in all schools. This meant that PIM teams produced School Improvement Plans (SIPs) based upon close analysis of assessment results. The objectives in these SIPs frequently called for instructional strategies to address the assessed needs of the schools' students. The district responded with Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training for teachers of English language learners, training in key reading comprehension strategies, multiple offerings of the Skillful Teacher course, and math content training to support teachers' math instruction. In providing its teachers with training embedded in three-credit courses such as SIOP and Skillful Teacher, the district provided the teachers with substantial opportunities to add to or improve their repertoire of instructional strategies. Building-level curriculum and instruction teachers worked with teachers to assist them in introducing these strategies.

During the site visit, the EQA examiners observed a total of 94 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 33 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching, grouped into five categories: classroom management; instructional practice; expectations; student activity, work, and behavior; and classroom climate for learning. Observations were conducted in 13 of the district's 28 schools as follows: 41 at the elementary level, 37 at the middle school level, and 16 at the high school level. In total, the EQA examiners observed 32 ELA classrooms, 40 math classrooms, and 22 science classrooms. Observations of classroom teachers indicated strong classroom management in elementary, middle, and high schools. At the same time, observers found that classroom activity frequently did not reflect high expectations for student learning, particularly at the middle school level.

2004 Indicators

4.2. Teachers in all of the district's schools:

a. have access to the current curriculum,

b. are trained in their use, and

c. are expected to use them in planning and delivering instruction.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review (2000-2003), teachers in the Lynn Public Schools were provided with copies of the curriculum guides for their grade levels and were expected to use the curriculum guides in planning and delivering instruction, according to district administrators. The building facilitators or curriculum instruction teachers who were trained in their use distributed curriculum guides.

This was monitored by the building principals, vice-principals, department heads, or designated administrators through informal building walk-throughs and by reviewing the John Collins Writing folders and plan books. Periodic observations and evaluations were also tools used by principals. However, according to administrators, the teacher evaluation was a rating scale and not a useful document. Also, administrators indicated that the guides were cumbersome to use and many would wound up "sitting on a shelf."

At the initial site visit, interviewees indicated that a tremendous amount of work was being done to revise the curriculum guide in ELA. Because the district updated its math K-8 curriculum in the spring of 2003 and the DOE had updated the math curriculum framework in 2000, for a majority of the initial period under review the district did not have an updated math curriculum.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2007), teachers in all of the district's schools had access to and were trained in the current curricula. In 2004, the district had produced a new curriculum in ELA for grades K-12. During interviews, ELA teachers at all levels indicated they had copies of the curriculum and they used it, which they referred to as their "red book." During 2006-2007, the district had developed new curricula for elementary and middle

school math. Administrators and curriculum instruction teachers (CITs) reported that all CITs and at least one math teacher from each elementary school attended a one-week introduction to the new curriculum during the summer of 2007. These teachers then had the responsibility to bring the curriculum back to teachers in their schools. Then, as the year progressed, the district held central monthly meetings by elementary grade level during which additional training occurred and teachers could ask questions. Also, the newly revised middle school math curriculum had a day-by-day pacing guideline. This meant that principals and CITs could monitor the implementation of the curriculum through regular walk-throughs of classrooms.

Concerns about the achievement of the district's students for whom English was a second language led to the development of a language support curriculum. CITs were trained in its use, and they assumed part of the responsibility for ensuring that teachers implemented the strategies. In addition, the district offered SIOP courses to further extend classroom teachers' ability to address the needs of English language learners. This SIOP training took the form of a three-credit course, which involved a significant time commitment. Regardless of that, a large percentage of teachers completed the course.

At the high schools, most teachers had access to a computer, and the curricula were available for them online. Department heads had responsibility for curriculum training at the high school, which occurred in department meetings. High schools also maintained large binders by content area with lessons, standards, and grade-level assessments. Finally, the district had revised its high school biology curriculum in 2006 and had provided professional development for teachers involved in its implementation.

4.3. <u>The district has an established, well-documented process that involves teachers in the annual review and/or revision of curriculum based on the analyses of results of standardized tests.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to district administrators "not much was done until 2003" in ELA and math. For the period under review, the district used a math curriculum

that was developed in the summer of 1998. The district's curricula were aligned with the state frameworks. However, when DOE framework revisions were made, the district did not realign its curricula with the frameworks.

Interviewees indicated that the adopted math curriculum did not cover the state standards. This was also stated in the District Improvement Plan (DIP). However, interviewees also indicated that there was a major effort to align the math curriculum with the state curriculum framework. The grades K-8 math curriculum was revised in the spring of 2003, and it aligned with the state frameworks. The guides were hand delivered to teaching staff in the fall of 2003.

District interviews indicated that the district looked at the MCAS math test data and determined that the low math scores were attributable to several factors. The district's math curriculum was standards based; however, it was not in alignment with state frameworks. Furthermore, the sequence of topics taught in grades K-5 Mimosa math was not in alignment with what the students needed to know before the MCAS test was taken. Administrators stated the series was chosen as a "reaction to low math scores." There was extensive professional development, but teachers were not systematically encouraged to look at the standards. The district administered a survey that indicated that there were "gaps" that needed to be addressed. Also, teachers did not have the background to deliver the math curriculum. Specific professional development for 2003 included content understanding, graphing, geometry, and algebra.

Interviewees indicated that the district curriculum administrator did a significant amount of work to revise the ELA curriculum. However, they acknowledged that not much was done prior to 2003.

During the reexamination period under review, the district established a process of curriculum revision that involved teachers in the review and/or revision of curriculum. Grades K-12 assurance specialists indicated in interviews that they were in charge of the curriculum work that occurred in the district. They went on to describe a process which involved the selection of teachers, most frequently CITs, to chair curriculum committees with a broad representation of regular education, special education, and English language learner (ELL) teachers on the committee. A number of teachers who participated in this process reported that rather than begin with a comprehensive review of data, they began with a general awareness informed by data that

student results on the MCAS tests were generally poor and that the best approach to turning the situation around was to ensure coverage of framework content. As a result, they more frequently began the process with a thorough review and analysis of the relevant state framework. This orientation guaranteed that the district's curriculum and the resulting instruction were standards based. However, a thorough review of disaggregated data in the future is expected to highlight the particular instructional needs of special education students.

The district had not yet established a formal curriculum review process since teachers had developed much of the curriculum during the previous three years. However, interviews with administrators and teachers revealed that as these new curricula were rolled out they were considered draft documents, and teachers implementing them had regular opportunities to contribute to their ongoing revision.

4.4. Modifications and/or revisions to curricula are:

a. evaluated for their effectiveness in improving equitable student achievement for all student populations, and

b. revised as necessary and disseminated to staff.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to district administrators, there was no formal process in place for evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum. Principals provided input about programs. The data showed that special education students lagged behind regular education students. One reason for this might have been a lack of math subject area expertise on the part of special education teachers, as well as a deficit in understanding the state math framework.

The ELA and math instruction in special education did not adhere to standards, and therefore special education students did not have access to curricula supporting the MCAS tests. The district acknowledged this need, and it planned professional development in math, as well as a review of the frameworks, planned for September 2003.

The DOE's Performance Improving Mapping (PIM) process was used to examine student achievement in ELA and math. The process also established an action plan for each school. The PIM process was used to prepare a data-driven School Improvement Plan (SIP) with the aim of improving curriculum, instruction, and assessment to raise all students' achievement to the proficient level. However, this process was not started until the 2002-2003 school year, and this was only in the seven schools that were declared 'in need of improvement' and the one school that was declared 'underperforming.' In 2003, the PIMS process was mandated in all the schools, and administrators were trained to use the program.

At the high school, department heads had responsibility for encouraging and participating in curriculum improvement efforts. One high school was accredited and the other two were involved in the process. Administrators indicated that the ELA curriculum revision was in process, the K-8 math curriculum was complete, and the grades 9-12 math curriculum was near completion. When finished, both ELA and math curricula would be aligned with the current state frameworks.

During the reexamination period under review, important curriculum development occurred at all levels in ELA, math, and science, as well as for instruction of ELL students. A process for feedback from teachers concerning implementation of the new elementary math curriculum was built into training teachers in the new curriculum. As the new elementary math curriculum and program were implemented, CITs met monthly with teachers to address their questions and concerns. Teachers were invited to monthly grade-level meetings at the district level to ask questions as the curriculum roll-out occurred. Although the new elementary science curriculum was still in draft form, it was distributed to teachers because the changes in the coverage of the science topics were so numerous that the district wanted to put the draft document in the hands of teachers, in part to get their feedback.

The centrality of the PIM process guaranteed the close examination of MCAS test results, and in particular the disaggregated scores of student subgroups. Interviewees reported that PIM teams developed SIPs to address needs identified during the analysis of assessment results. A review of the SIPs indicated a focus on ELL and special education student results. This was then translated into development of a number of SIP strategies geared to improved student achievement for

subgroup populations, particularly ELL students. The district had not yet fully addressed the specific needs of special education students through data analysis.

Administrators reported that a review of the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) results indicated a need for focused instruction on phonological awareness. The district responded with training and materials to address this need. For the most part, administrators reported that much of the written curricula available to teachers was so current that teacher training was still ongoing. As a result, while feedback from teachers as a curriculum was rolled out did inform early adjustments in the curriculum, not enough time had elapsed for the district to undertake a formal review.

4.5. The district regularly implements an established, well-documented process to ensure:

a. horizontal instructional program articulation throughout the system, and

b. sequencing and alignment of learning goals and expectations from one grade to the next K–12.

c. alignment with the state curriculum frameworks across all grades preK-12.

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the John Collins Writing program was implemented throughout the district at grades 1-12. Also, the K-12 math programs were in place; grades K-5 used Mimosa math, the middle school was using Passport, and the high school had texts for its course offerings.

Some schools implemented Balanced Literacy in the primary grades because of the Bay State Readers Grant and READ Excellence. However, administrators indicated that these offerings were not consistent within the district. When asked to give a percentage of the district that implemented these offerings, the response was 75 percent implementation of Balanced Literacy. The district had no benchmarks and was in the process of developing them. According to district interviewees, curriculum instruction teachers were working on benchmarking with Gordon College in 2003.

During the initial period under review, seven schools in Lynn were declared ‘in need of improvement’ and one school was declared ‘underperforming’. According to administrators, analysis of possible causes and efforts to increase achievement were haphazard. The ELA and math curricula were not fully aligned with the state curriculum frameworks.

During the reexamination period under review, the district had implemented a process for curriculum development and implementation that ensured horizontal and vertical alignment, as well as alignment with the state curriculum frameworks. First steps in any curriculum work that occurred in the district involved a thorough analysis of the state frameworks and documentation for teachers as to which standards were to be covered at specific grade levels. District office administrators reported that they followed up with an ongoing emphasis on what teaching in a standards-based environment involved. Principals and CITs required that teachers note on the blackboard for each lesson which standard the day’s lesson was addressing. Examiners, during classroom observations, reported that they saw standards posted on the board.

Examiners who observed classrooms reported that as they moved from classroom to classroom and from school to school they saw close horizontal alignment of lessons in both ELA and math. This was in part because the newly developed curriculum documents provided pacing guides which called for lesson alignment by the day, as in middle school math, or by the month, as in elementary ELA. Further reinforcement of common coverage of standards across the district came from the quarterly exams given in ELA, math, and science. These assessments measured content coverage as indicated in the pacing guides in the curriculum documents. At the high school level, horizontal alignment was ensured by the fact that the teachers within a school who taught a course in common gave common final exams.

Vertical alignment of learning goals flowed from the mapping of framework learning objectives month by month and then year by year. The state framework learning objectives were sequenced based on students’ developing capabilities, and the district frameworks closely followed the state frameworks.

5.1. The district has implemented instructional programs that:

a. are designed to meet the assessed needs of its students, and

b. include the practices, resources and procedures needed to support the instructional programs.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, ELL students lagged behind their peers at all levels on the MCAS tests. According to administrators, all teachers in the district would receive professional development on the topic of second language acquisition and its affects on academic achievement. Teachers also would be trained in various teaching strategies to use with second language learners. This initiative was being implemented in the 2002-2003 school year.

Various schools had implemented a Balanced Literacy program because of a Bay State Readers Grant and READ Excellence. However, administrators indicated that it was not implemented consistently across the district. When asked to give a percentage of teachers using the Balanced Literacy strategies in the classroom, the response was 75 percent implementation.

An individual student success plan (ISSP), in Lynn entitled a longitudinal student success plan, was developed for every student who received a score of 'Warning/Failing' on the MCAS tests. Principals' designees were responsible for coordinating all aspects of the individual student success plans (ISSPs). They were signed by the student' parents and were supported in the following ways: Title I reading or math, special education through the IEP process, placement in double ELA and math periods, before- or after-school help, the MCAS test preparation courses, Saturday academic support, and summer school.

The district also provided a summer school program. The summer school was system-wide, tuition based, and awarded credit for courses. Students might have chosen to attend the summer school for enrichment purposes or sought credits for graduation or promotional purposes. Tuition waivers could have been obtained from the superintendent, deputy superintendent, or director of the parent information center. Payment plans were available for students. Course offerings

included, English, math, foreign language, and science. Special education and TBE/ESL services were provided.

According to administrators, the district examined the low MCAS test scores and trend data. An analysis of problems and their possible causes and efforts to increase achievement in math were haphazard. The math curriculum was not aligned with the state framework, and it was not until the 2002-2003 school year that a major effort was made to revise the ELA and math curricula. Also, instruction in special education did not adhere to the math standards, so special education students did not have access to the math curriculum.

Administrators indicated that training in the PIM process made an impact in understanding what was necessary about data analysis. However, the PIM process was not in place until the 2002-2003 school year and was not used in all schools, only in those declared 'in need of improvement' or 'underperforming.' Results of using this process were not available at the time of the initial review.

During the reexamination period under review, the district assessed the needs of its students through close examination of MCAS test results using the PIM process. Each school wrote its SIP based on the instructional needs uncovered during the PIM process. At the district level, assurance specialists reviewed each SIP, made a tentative list of the schools' professional development needs, and consulted with the principals regarding the appropriateness of the listed professional development needs.

The district implemented numerous instructional programs during the reexamination period. To address teachers' needs for math content knowledge, the district engaged Mass Insight to teach math to large cohorts of its teachers. Teachers received tuition reimbursement when they completed math courses at Salem State College. The revised ELA curriculum documents promoted an understanding of several key reading comprehension strategies, and the district supported the implementation of these strategies through professional development. At the elementary level, the district moved from the Mimosa math program to Houghton Mifflin program since student results in math were poor and the Mimosa program did not meet the content requirements of the state frameworks. Most important, the district has offered Research

for Better Teaching's Skillful Teacher course for eight years, and a large percentage of the district's teachers have attended.

Student MCAS test results underscored students' needs to work on vocabulary. To address this, the district piloted three different approaches to vocabulary development during 2006-2007. To address the needs of its ELL students, the staff had developed the language support curriculum and had provided SIOP training to a large percentage of its teachers, although classroom observations did not find these strategies implemented consistently across the curriculum. There were also instances of support for instructional strategies at the high school level. Lynn Tech had for three years focused on reading across the curriculum, and Lynn Classical began in 2007-2008 to require that each grade 9 student take a reading across the curriculum course.

Administrators and teachers reported that, for the most part, teachers had the materials necessary to support the district's instructional programs. For example, because of recent inclusion initiatives, special education teachers received the same training and resources as regular education teachers. At the same time, schools reported some difficulties in moving toward more inclusion due to the lack of sufficient special education staff members.

5.2. Improving and/or sustaining student achievement is the shared responsibility of: the district, each of its schools, the students, their parents, and the community.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, in 2002-2003, the district provided training in the PIM process training for the seven schools 'in need of improvement' and the one 'underperforming' school. A PIM leadership team worked with the support of the school support coordinator in analyzing the MCAS test data to inform school councils in the redirection of curriculum and instruction.

At the school level, each school developed a School Improvement Plan that was aligned with the district's goals. The principals were responsible for the implementation of the plans. They identified the needs of the school and its professional staff.

Teachers used individual success plans to guide instruction for at-risk students. Student study teams reviewed the status of at-risk students to suggest modifications in regular classroom instruction.

Students had the opportunity to participate in after-school programs in reading and math support provided by Title I. The Follow the Leaders program provided both instructional and assessment support at 15 pilot schools. Students were offered before- and after-school, Saturday, and summer programs, though participation was voluntary. The district had a Parent Information Center (PIC), and new students enrolled at the PIC. Parents might have participated in the school councils and were part of the school support team. Title I parents signed parent compacts designating shared responsibility with the school in working toward improved student achievement. The Title I program also offered classes for parents. Parents were consulted when their children had an individual student success plan and were required to sign the plan. Notices to the parents were translated into various languages.

Lynn Vocational-Technical High School had an agreement with the North Shore Community College (NSCC), Franklin Institute, and Wentworth Institute that allowed any student with necessary courses, such as accounting, marketing, electronics technology, and computer drafting and design, to be enrolled in technical preparation.

A working relationship with the Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce enabled students to receive flexible hours and supplementary or bonus pay for attending class and passing the MCAS exam. Teams of math or ELA teachers, one NSCC instructor, and NSCC work-study students were employed to provide supplementary tutoring. Several agencies in Lynn were providers of daycare, some of which were funded by the 21st Century Fund. The Lynn Business/Education Foundation sponsored a library program. Despite these initiatives, during the initial period under review, seven schools were ‘in need of improvement’ and one was declared an ‘underperforming’ school.

During the reexamination period under review, under the direction of the new executive director of curriculum and instruction, the district curriculum and instruction team broadened and improved its working relationships with principals and schools. The district curriculum staff worked closely with principals to focus and extend support for individual schools. Each school

had a member of the district curriculum staff assigned to it, and these individuals were in schools listening to staff and used the SIPs to target the support provided to principals and schools.

The Parent Information Center was a key initiative to support outreach to parents, particularly important in a school district so heavily impacted by speakers of other languages. Staff members at this center ensured appropriate placements for incoming students. They also went provided additional support to parents faced with the challenge of settling into the community. In addition, at the school level, some parents were included as members of the vital PIM team. Support from the community included tutoring by students from Gordon College and North Shore Community College.

A key new initiative to promote safety in schools was the addition of a school resource officer to each secondary school and the creation of a district position for a police officer who was to work with schools to improve safety. A grant and the town budget funded this position. In addition, in an effort to improve the cleanliness and maintenance of the schools, the city had assumed responsibility for custodial care and maintenance.

5.3. The district has allocated sufficient instructional time in the core content areas to promote academic achievement and a level of proficiency for all students. Instructional time in each content area:

   a. meets state requirements at each level, and

   b. meets the educational needs of students as determined through an analysis of student achievement data.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to policy IC/ICA, the school calendar for elementary schools in Lynn was 180 days per year, and every elementary student received 900 hours per school year of structured learning time. The secondary schools operated 180 days per year and every secondary student received 990 hours of structured learning time. At the elementary level, one- to two-hour blocks were scheduled daily for ELA instruction and for math

instruction in Mimosa math, basic skills, and problem solving. Principals were instructed to ensure that any adjustments to the teaching schedule had a minimal impact on ELA or math scheduling. In addition, teachers submitted their daily schedule to the principal to ensure that all teachers abided by the school's designated time schedule. In one school, the teacher's weekly schedule was posted by the entrance to the classroom.

The Performance Improving Mapping (PIM) process was used to examine student achievement in ELA and math. The process also established an action plan for each school. This process was started in the 2002-2003 school year for the seven schools 'in need of improvement' and the one school that was 'underperforming.' The process was mandated for all schools.

At the middle school level, all schools had programs to address the need for increased time in ELA and math. Each middle school was staffed with literacy/reading teachers who provided additional instruction to students identified in assessments as needing more assistance. The Follow the Leader program was used to provide supplementary ELA and math instruction for at-risk students. The program used assessments and remedial software. The middle schools offered Saturday and summer programs that dealt with ELA and math for the identified at-risk students.

At the high school level, students had access to the MCAS math and ELA courses, as well as the MCAS test after-school tutoring, Saturday courses, and summer programs. For the majority of the initial period under review, the district looked at pattern and trend data. Administrators told the EQA that training in the PIM process made an impact on understanding what was necessary to know about data analysis.

During the reexamination period under review, the district met the state requirements for time on learning at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition, the elementary schools had increased the amount of time required for ELA and math instruction. The district now required 120 minutes daily of ELA instruction and 60 minutes of math instruction at the elementary level. High school students at risk of not graduating received separate instruction during the school day to equip them to pass the MCAS tests. In addition, the district had a small cadre of reading teachers who were deployed where the needs were greatest. As a result, after analysis of the 2007 MCAS test scores, the district changed these teachers' school assignments to address greater needs at other schools. Furthermore, CIT school assignments changed to

address school and student needs. For example, interviewees indicated that Lynn Classical High School requested and received an ELL CIT due to concerns about ELL achievement there. At the same time, the district was gradually moving toward greater inclusion of its special education students in regular education classes. Greater inclusion meant an increase in the quality of instruction, since more special education students had access to instruction by a content-certified teacher.

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to the district policy GA, the district's specific personnel goals were to develop and implement strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that would result in employing and retaining the candidates with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the system's learning program.

The district personnel department addressed the recruitment of highly qualified teachers in the following ways: participation in job fairs, communication with regional colleges, advertising in newspapers, website information, a benefits package with strong incentives for longevity, and extending professional development opportunities with financial incentives.

According to administrators, the district awarded one graduate credit for each 10 professional development points earned. In-service training was provided and a scheduled list of professional development activities was available by October 1 of each year. The teachers' union could provide in-service programs for salary credit under the same conditions with the prior approval of the superintendent.

The district implemented a mentoring program and partners with local colleges to offer enhanced opportunities for graduate credit. According to administrators, Gordon College placed student teachers in the Lynn Public Schools. They were well trained and these placements offered

another source of future qualified teacher applicants. The district provided opportunity for promotion, one example of which was the aspiring principals group; this was a professional development program led by a deputy superintendent.

According to district administrators, teachers in the employment of the Lynn Public Schools were requested to have an opportunity to bid for vacancies prior to making these positions available to outside recruitment. This was a provision of the collective bargaining contract. Though the district's policies encouraged hiring the best qualified candidates, the district and the seniority language in the teachers' contract did not always allow for the placement of the most highly qualified teachers in the vacant positions.

During the reexamination period under review, interviewees indicated, and a review of district documents corroborated, that the district's employment practices had encouraged skilled, highly qualified personnel to be appointed and remain in the district. Almost 96 percent of teachers (1,127 of 1,178) were certified; 17 percent (203 of 1,178) taught out-of-field for one or more periods per day; and four percent (51 of 1,178) were on waivers. All administrators were licensed for the position that they held, and 84 percent (234 of 278) of the paraprofessionals employed by the district met the federal definition of 'highly qualified.' A review of the district's list of individuals on waiver in the 2006-2007 school year indicated that of the 102 individuals on waiver, 46 percent taught special education, 20 percent taught ELL or ESL, and 10 percent taught either science or mathematics.

District officials did indicate that in the most recent teachers' contract negotiations, the school committee had successfully negotiated a modification to the bid/bumping provision that prohibited teachers with 15 or more years of service from being bumped from their positions. This was perceived as being a positive step toward streamlining the bidding and bumping process, and one that would likely improve the district's opportunities to secure skilled, highly qualified personnel to work in the Lynn Public Schools. However, it was reiterated to EQA examiners by district administrators and school committee members that the largest obstacle to attracting skilled, highly qualified personnel to be appointed to and remain in the district continued to be a provision in the teachers' collective bargaining agreement that required that teachers employed by the district be accorded the annual opportunity to bid for vacancies prior to

making them available to outside recruitment. That provision also extended bumping rights to those vacancies to teachers whose positions were eliminated. Appointments to positions bid upon or bumped into continued to be based upon seniority and possession of appropriate certification. District officials indicated that, while they were not necessarily opposed to teachers having the right to be able to bid upon or bump into vacant positions, they were concerned that by the time the bidding/bumping process was completed and outside recruitment could begin, it was usually June and the candidate pool had been historically quite small at that late date, resulting in the district's need to employ individuals on waivers.

District personnel indicated that efforts to recruit highly qualified teachers included: participation in job fairs; Internet advertising through SchoolSpring.com and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents website; advertising in newspapers such as *The Daily Item* of Lynn and *The Boston Globe*; continued communication with North Shore Community College; and the maintenance of a resume bank of teacher applications. Administrators perceived the use of SchoolSpring.com, with its initial screening component, as particularly useful for vacancies that occurred during the school year.

Administrators attributed retention of personnel in the district to a favorable benefits package, one that included strong incentives for longevity; a wide range of professional development opportunities that were accompanied by financial incentives including the awarding of one salary scale credit for each 10 professional development points earned; a mentoring program; and partnerships with local colleges to offer enhanced opportunities for graduate credit.

2007 Indicators

9. <u>The district created inclusive classrooms or programs for student populations, through an integrated services model, minimizing separation from the mainstream.</u>

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

District administrators agreed in interviews that the district had made some progress in addressing the instructional needs of its special education students during the reexamination period. At the beginning of the period under reexamination, most special education students received their content area instruction from special education teachers in separate settings. As the

period under reexamination progressed, principals and teachers created inclusive settings for these students. In addition, as curriculum development and training occurred, the district began to provide special education teachers with the same curriculum materials and training as their regular education colleagues received. In some cases, this meant that special education students had access to the curriculum alongside regular education students. In other cases, the instructional model continued to be pullout, but the special education teacher was now using mainstream materials. Principals in interviews voiced agreement that the move toward greater inclusion was an important one. However, they also frequently cited the need for more special education staff members to provide the support necessary for effective implementation of the inclusion model. By contrast, the district, during the period under reexamination, had developed curricula and provided training to equip teachers to address the needs of English language learners. Administrators recognized that they needed to provide leadership so that similar work would be done for special education students.

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

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the site visit, the EQA examiners observed a total of 94 randomly selected classrooms and recorded the presence or absence of 33 attributes reflected in the Principles of Effective Teaching, grouped into five categories: classroom management; instructional practice; expectations; student activity, work, and behavior; and classroom climate for learning. Examiners recorded the attributes observed in each of the five categories during their time spent in the classroom. Observations were conducted at 13 of the district's 28 schools as follows: 41 at the elementary level, 37 at the middle school level, and 16 at the high school level. In total, the EQA examiners observed 32 ELA classrooms, 40 math classrooms, nine science classrooms, and 13 classrooms of other subjects. In calculating the presence of observed practices, where appropriate, the practices that would not be applicable were noted and were removed from the total to obtain a proper basis for determining the percentage.

The EQA team conducted observations in almost 50 percent of the district's schools. While the examiners noted variations and inconsistencies in instruction at the schools where observations were conducted, overall the EQA team determined that the quality of instruction was satisfactory. Almost half the observations were conducted at elementary schools, which had higher percentages of observed practices related to quality instruction. The middle and high schools had similar percentages of observed practices related to quality of instruction. Overall, examiners observed consistent use of classroom management practices, but lower percentages of practices related to high expectations in the classroom.

Classroom management refers to the maintenance of order and structure within the classroom. Classroom rules and routines are established and internalized, and students take responsibility for their work with or without teacher direction. The teacher models and promotes respectful behavior and maintains safety in the classroom. Instructional time is maximized due to smooth transitions between activities. Other adults working in the classroom have an active instructional role. Positive indicators of classroom management were evident in 83 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 87 percent at the elementary level, 80 percent at the middle school level, and 80 percent at the high school level. The classroom management category was rated the most positive of all categories; no other category had a rating above 70 percent. Also, the classroom management indicators were consistently positive across all levels. The one exception was that examiners found that "[a]dditional teachers, aides, and assistants have an instructional role in the classroom and are actively involved in the learning process" in only 53 percent of the classrooms observed.

Instructional practice was the largest category reviewed by the examiners. Effective instructional practice is considered evident when the teacher implements instructional strategies that reflect school and/or district priorities. The teacher makes learning goals clear to students, and students understand their relevance. The teacher increases the level of learning by using a variety of instructional techniques. Instructional time is allocated and used effectively, and the pace of instruction is appropriate to students' varied rates of learning. The teacher elicits student contributions and uses a variety of questioning techniques that encourage elaboration, thought, and broad involvement. The teacher checks for student understanding and corrects misunderstandings, and provides clear and explicit directions that are understood by students.

English language acquisition and language development are embedded in all subject areas. The teacher uses available technology appropriately to deliver instruction. Positive indicators of instructional practice were evident in 70 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide. Examiners observed strong instructional practices with considerably greater frequency at the elementary level than at the high school level, with 75 percent at the elementary level, 68 percent at the middle school level, and 59 percent at the high school level.

Among the highest rated indicators in this category were: "[t]he teacher provides clear and explicit directions that are understood by students," evident in 94 percent of the classrooms observed; "[t]he teacher checks for understanding and corrects misunderstandings," evident in 84 percent of the classrooms observed; and "[t]he teacher implements instructional strategies that reflect school and/or district priorities," evident in 83 percent of the classrooms observed. Two of the lowest rated indicators were: "[t]he teacher uses technology appropriately to deliver instruction," evident in 26 percent of the classrooms observed; and "[t]he teacher increases the level of learning by using a variety of instructional techniques," evident in 42 percent of the classrooms observed.

Expectations refers to the maintenance of high standards for students by teachers. The teacher communicates and enforces expectations and guidelines for student work and behavior, and the teacher encourages students and expresses confidence in their ability to do challenging work. Instructional time focuses on having students produce high quality work, and the teacher provides models and rubrics to exemplify such work. High quality student work is shown to be valued through activities such as celebration, citation, exhibition, and publication. Positive indicators of expectations for students were evident in 55 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 63 percent at the elementary level, 48 percent at the middle school level, and 52 percent at the high school level. The middle school level was the lowest scoring level within this category. In fact, this was the only category and level for which examiners found positive indicators in less than 50 percent of the classrooms observed. Within the expectations category, the highest scoring indicator was "[t]he teacher communicates and enforces standards, expectations, and guidelines for student work and interpersonal behavior," evident in 78 percent of the classrooms observed. A considerably lower percentage of positive observations were made

regarding "[t]he teacher provides models and/or rubrics to exemplify high quality student work," evident in 41 percent of the classrooms observed.

Positive *student activity, work, and behavior* are considered evident when students are actively engaged in the learning process. They show an understanding of the lesson's objective, and they demonstrate ownership of learning by asking their own questions. Students are able to recall information from prior learning and make connections to new learning. They make appropriate use of technology in the classroom. The interaction between students is respectful, and they are purposefully and productively engaged in learning. Student work reflects quality, complexity, and care. Positive indicators of student activity, work, and behavior were evident in 58 percent of the classrooms districtwide, with 62 percent at the elementary level, 51 percent at the middle school level, and 62 percent at the high school level. Examiners found that "[s]tudents recall important items or learning moments from this or prior lessons and use this information to increase understanding" in 83 percent of the classrooms observed. In contrast, they found that "[s]tudents demonstrate ownership of learning by asking their own questions" in 37 percent of the classrooms observed.

Finally, indicators of positive *classroom climate for learning* are considered evident when the teacher creates an inclusive environment where all students are accepted and where the space is used to accommodate a range of learning activities. The teacher uses positive reinforcement to enhance students' self-esteem and self-confidence, and appeals to students' interests or curiosity to motivate them. The classroom is well provisioned and includes multiple resources that address different learning styles. Positive indicators of classroom climate for learning were evident in 69 percent of the classrooms observed districtwide, with 81 percent at the elementary school level, 59 percent at the middle school level, and 61 percent at the high school level. These percentages indicate a wide disparity in positive observations concerning classroom climate between the elementary schools on the one hand and the middle and high schools on the other. Examiners found that "[t]he teacher creates an inclusive environment in which all students belong" in 96 percent of the classrooms observed, but that "[t]he teacher appeals to interests or curiosity of students in order to motivate them" in only 45 percent of the classrooms observed.

Summary of Classroom Observations

	Number of Classrooms				Average Class Size	Average Paraprofs. per Class	Computers		
	ELA	Math	Science/ Other	Total			Total Number	Number for Student Use	Average Students per Computer
Elementary	12	22	7	41	18.2	0.2	55	29	25.7
Middle	14	13	10	37	20.6	0.1	57	34	22.4
High	6	5	5	16	22.3	0.0	17	2	178.5
Total	32	40	22	94	19.8	0.2	129	65	28.7

	Classroom Management	Instructional Practice	Expectations	Student Activity, Work, and Behavior	Classroom Climate for Learning
Elementary					
Total observations	158	333	125	164	166
Maximum possible	182	442	199	264	204
Avg. percent of observations	87%	75%	63%	62%	81%
Middle					
Total observations	129	268	89	126	109
Maximum possible	162	397	185	249	185
Avg. percent of observations	80%	68%	48%	51%	59%
High					
Total observations	55	99	40	66	49
Maximum possible	69	168	77	106	80
Avg. percent of observations	80%	59%	52%	62%	61%
Total					
Total observations	342	700	254	356	324
Maximum possible	413	737	461	619	469
Avg. percent of observations	83%	70%	55%	58%	69%

Standard III: Assessment and Program Evaluation				
Ratings▼ Indicators►	**1.4**	**1.6**	**1.7**	**1.8**
Excellent				
Satisfactory	**2007**	**2007**		**2007**
Needs Improvement			**2007**	
Poor	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**	**2004**
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.

Findings:

- District and school leaders regularly analyzed and used assessment results to inform improvements in the design of new curricula and programs in K-5 ELA, K-5 math, middle school math and science, and high school biology.
- The PIM process guided the development of individual School Improvement Plans (SIPs) and the District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) and identified priorities for professional development as well as improvements to instructional practices.
- The district identified a number of new supplementary and support programs and services based on its analysis of assessment data.
- While district and school leaders made considerable progress in becoming skilled at analyzing student achievement data, interviewees perceived the need to improve upon those skills in order to implement stronger instructional practices and supplementary services for special education students.
- During the reexamination period, although Lynn students showed progress in both ELA and math as measured by the MCAS tests, the Competency Determination rate declined from 87 percent for the Class of 2004 to 79 percent for the Class of 2007, and it declined in three of the four high schools for which data were computed.

Summary

During the reexamination period, the district trained school and district leaders in the use of assessment data from the MCAS tests, the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE), and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and used the data to understand progress in student achievement, develop SIPs, and inform decisions about instruction, curriculum, and professional development. In addition, the use of assessment data became an integral part of the budget process. Finally, the district made progress in the development and use of formative assessments by designing and analyzing quarterly benchmark tests in all tested content areas in grades 3-10.

MCAS test results indicated progress in ELA and math at all grade levels and for most subgroups during the reexamination period, with the exception of ELA scores of students with disabilities. Lynn's seniors overall, and in three of the high schools in particular, failed to show progress in meeting the DOE's Competency Determination standard from 2005 through 2007.

2004 Indicators

1.4. Regular analysis of assessment results informs improvements to:

a. curricula,

b. instructional practices,

c. supplementary and remedial programs and services,

d. professional development, and

e. purchasing and provisioning for improved student achievement.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review (2000-2003), interviewees indicated that for the majority of time under review each individual school site was responsible for determining its strengths and weaknesses through an item analysis of the MCAS test results. Prior to January 2002, most analyses using assessment data were not consistent throughout the district. In 2003, the DOE invited the district to participate in the PIM process. Since then, trained PIM teams in

schools designated as ‘in need of improvement’ or ‘underperforming’ were charged with, among other things, reviewing assessment data to determine the schools’ strengths and weaknesses. It was understood that there was a problem with scope and sequence, and, in general, elementary teachers lacked background knowledge.

Leadership teams responded to the identified problems in the math curriculum by planning and offering professional development that was more closely connected to the skills needed to teach all subgroups and learning styles. The district realigned its math curriculum to address identified weaknesses. In addition, the curriculum and instruction team at the central office reviewed test data to identify areas of district concern. Interviewees cited a review of math curriculum and assessment data that revealed that some concepts were not well aligned with the state’s curriculum frameworks, and the district modified the scope and sequence of its local curriculum. Supplementary materials and supplies were purchased to support the modified scope and sequence and changes in the curriculum.

Interviewees indicated that prior to the district’s involvement with the PIM process, the district had not reviewed student assessment data disaggregated by subgroup (with the exception of those generated by using TestWiz), although some schools might have disaggregated their own subgroup data. Interviewees indicated that with the new sheltered English immersion (SEI) legislation, as well as a review of disaggregated assessment data for the district’s ELL students, the district had undergone a “major shift” in resource allocation to support professional development in instructional practices for teachers with ELL students. Interviewees indicated that the district had transformed its organizational structure to facilitate service delivery and had redesigned the curriculum, including instructional materials and additional staff. In January 2002, schools were directed to analyze data in multiple ways, including review of disaggregated data by subgroup; these data were to be an integral part of their SIPs for the 2002-2003 school year. These efforts, however were begun during the latter part of the initial period under review, and did not reflect the district’s practice for the majority of time under review.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2007), the district expanded and deepened a number of initiatives related to analysis of assessment results, which led to the improvement of programs. For example, systematic analyses of assessment results at the district and school levels

informed improvements to curricula in all tested content areas. Districtwide leaders, such as the newly created assurance specialists, ELL specialists, and special education leaders, joined with high school department heads, middle school lead teachers, and classroom teachers to use achievement data to revise curricula and create stronger alignment with state standards. In addition, they evaluated and chose a new elementary ELA program, a new elementary math program, and developed a new middle school math curriculum. The district also updated the high school biology curriculum to better address state frameworks and rewrote the elementary science curriculum.

School-based Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) teams analyzed MCAS test results using TestWiz and shared those analyses with classroom teachers and district leaders. PIM teams developed SIPs built on knowledge of their respective schools' strengths and weaknesses. The SIPs, in turn, collectively informed the priorities the district leadership included in the DIPCA. PIM teams included members such as the principal and/or vice-principal, curriculum instruction teachers (CITs), classroom teachers, other specialists, and a parent.

With input from the SIPs and the DIPCA, district and school leaders were able to use assessment results productively. CITs focused on monitoring and improving teaching strategies at the grade, academic discipline, or classroom levels. A number of principals pointed to the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) data used to measure and track early literacy development through grade 3. Teachers also used the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE) to determine what skills students in the district's Reading First schools (K-3) and Bay State Reading Initiative schools (K-5) had mastered and where they needed intervention.

Based on an analysis of assessment results, the district and individual schools instituted supplementary and remedial programs and services. For example, the elementary schools instituted before- and after-school math courses, and the middle schools identified students with low reading scores and placed them in reading support classes. The high schools identified students entering grade 9 who were at risk of failing the MCAS tests as well as grade 10 students who failed the MCAS tests, and scheduled them in supplementary ELA and math classes. Individual schools instituted student study teams (SSTs) comprised of regular and special

educators to identify potential referrals for special education evaluations and services. The district administered the Early Screening Inventory (ESI) to students aged 3 to 6 to identify children who may need special education services in order to perform successfully in school.

During the reexamination period, documents and interviews indicated that school and district leaders included assessment results in the data that informed both the planning and implementation of professional development. The district dedicated professional development days for teachers to learn how to develop, score, and analyze results of quarterly formative benchmark tests. Interviewees indicated that more is still to be done in this area, and the professional development emphasis varied from school to school based on their SIP needs. The Tower Foundation awarded a professional development grant for teachers from five elementary schools, based on need, to learn to analyze DIBELS data. Low MCAS math scores led the district to offer a number of teachers the opportunity to participate in math content professional development offered by Mass Insight Education for three years. Teachers and CITs worked with Harcourt Brace trainers during the last two years to build capacity to introduce the new Trophies ELA program. District and school leaders planned professional development for ELL teachers and regular education teachers in more effective ELL strategies. Many professional staff participated in professional development in the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model to facilitate higher quality instruction for ELL students in the content areas. Interviewees cited a need for additional funds to meet the district's needs in this area. The district reimbursed teachers who took courses at Salem State College in special education strategies for both regular and special education teachers. In addition, a large number of teachers participated in the Research for Better Teaching (RBT) Skillful Teacher training during the period of reexamination.

The district identified a number of new programs and support activities based on student assessment data and allocated resources such as time, funding, and professional expertise to them. For example, the district targeted Title I funds to improve reading and literacy skills. It allocated $700,000 in fiscal year 2006 to purchase the new Houghton Mifflin K-5 mathematics program and initiated professional development to prepare teacher-trainers to implement it. In addition, in fiscal year 2006 the district allocated $2,854,380 for professional development, which included $652,764 from the budget and $2,201,616 from grants. The district found ways

to increase time on learning through before-school, after-school, and summer learning activities for elementary school students who needed supplementary support. Through the budget process, PIM teams and principals met individually with district leaders to discuss staffing and provisioning. These discussions linked assessment data, human resource needs, enrollments, and the allocation of resources.

1.6. District administrators, building administrators, and teachers demonstrate that they have the skills to use aggregate and individual test analyses to improve instructional programs and services for all student populations.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, for the majority of the time the district's formal training in data analysis was achieved mainly through training in Excel and TestWiz. During 2002, the district employed a school support coordinator to provide training and support to principals and their designees in the PIM process.

The district's Cycle II adequate yearly progress (AYP) performance ratings for 2003 cited that in the aggregate the district's performance rating was 'Low' in ELA and 'Very Low' in math. The same report cited that the district's improvement rating was 'Above Target' in ELA and 'On Target' in math. MCAS trend data for 2000 through 2003 indicated that in the aggregate there had been no improvement over time in either ELA or math. Despite making AYP for all the cycles in the review period, the MCAS trend data for 2000 through 2003 indicated the following: 75.5 percent of the district's students scored in the 'Needs Improvement' and 'Warning/Failing' categories in 2000; 74 percent scored in these categories in 2001; 69 percent did so in 2002; and 65.5 percent did so in 2003.

During the reexamination period under review, the district's and individual schools' emphasis on standards-based instruction and assessment meant that the district relied more heavily on data analyses to drive decision-making for every aspect of the educational process. All district-level members of the curriculum team and building-level PIM team members demonstrated the skills needed to analyze the results of the MCAS tests, the GRADE, and the DIBELS and to apply

those analyses to both planning and instructional decision-making. PIM teams used assessment data to inform school improvement planning and participated in linking that planning to the budget process through meetings with district leaders. The district also offered professional development workshops to teachers on improving data analysis skills.

While the district built capacity for leaders and many teachers to analyze summative assessment data, evidence from interviews and documents indicated that the district was still developing skills in the use and analysis of formative assessments. For example, the district developed, implemented, and analyzed quarterly benchmark tests in all tested content areas in grades 3-10. Although some problems with test data scanning equipment existed, leaders and other professional staff members made progress in using these analyses to target instructional and programmatic improvements. Interviewees indicated that more support was needed in developing and using formative assessments, especially for ELL and special education students.

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to the progress report on students attaining the Competency Determination (CD) released by the DOE in 2004, 94 percent of the Class of 2003 earned a Competency Determination, and 87 percent of the Class of 2004 earned a Competency Determination.

During the reexamination period under review, an analysis of MCAS test data indicated that in the aggregate, Lynn students showed progress in attaining proficiency in both ELA and math from 2004 to 2007. From 2004 to 2007, the percentage of all students attaining proficiency increased from 45 to 48 percent in ELA and from 29 to 39 percent in math. From 2004 to 2007, the proficiency index for all students increased from 74.6 to 75.8 PI points in ELA and from 61.4 to 65.7 PI points in math. From 2005 to 2007, both the percentage of students attaining proficiency and the proficiency index remained flat in science and technology/engineering

(STE), with 21 percent of students scoring at or above the 'Proficient' level and a proficiency index of 57.2 PI points in 2007.

EQA examiners reviewed 2004 to 2007 MCAS test scores for student subgroups and found that the district had an increase in the percentage of students attaining proficiency in both ELA and math for all subgroups, with the exception of students with disabilities in ELA. The proficiency index in both ELA and math also improved for all subgroups, with the exception of students with disabilities and African-American students in ELA.

EQA examiners also noted progress in the percentage of grade 10 students who attained proficiency in ELA and math from 2004 to 2007. During that period, the aggregate percentage of grade 10 students who attainted proficiency increased from 79 to 88 percent in ELA and from 71 to 81 percent in math.

Although the district demonstrated progress in MCAS test scores across grades in all content areas during the period of reexamination, progress in meeting the Competency Determination standard was uneven according to data from the DOE's AYP reports for 2005 through 2007. In the aggregate and at individual high schools, the CD attainment rate increased from 2005 to 2006 and then decreased from 2006 to 2007 to levels below those reached in 2005. The overall CD attainment rate declined from 85 percent in 2005 to 79 percent in 2007. In addition, a review of individual school-level data revealed that the CD attainment rate declined at three high schools and increased at one. From 2005 to 2007, the CD attainment rate increased at the Career Development Center from 90 to 94 percent. It declined at Classical High School from 88 to 82 percent; at English High School from 87 to 86 percent; and at Lynn Vocational-Technical Institute from 79 to 72 percent. For the fifth high school, the alternative high school program, reported Competency Determination data existed only for 2007.

To improve the attainment rate of the Competency Determination standard, EQA examiners noted that the district added a portfolio component for students who needed to meet the CD standard through an alternative format. High school principals filed cohort appeals for eligible students and notified them about the eligibility components for cohort appeals.

1.8. Classroom assessment standards, practices, and expectations for teachers and students are consistently linked with learning standards articulated in the state curriculum frameworks.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the evidence indicated that the district made linkages between local assessment standards, practices, and expectations for teachers and students with the state learning standards in ELA in grades K-12, in reading in grades K-2, and in math in grades K-5. However, during the initial period under review the district lacked these linkages in middle school math.

The district's documentation indicated that the PIM process "[drove] curriculum and instruction, reallocation of staff and the acquisition of instructional materials." In the district, feedback from evaluations existed mainly at the elementary level in reading and math. Interviewees indicated, however, that for the majority of the time under review, classroom assessment, practices, and expectations for teachers and students were not closely linked with the state curriculum frameworks across all grade levels. However, since the district's involvement with the PIM process in 2002, interviewees indicated that the district was more focused on the alignment among classroom assessment, instructional practices, expectations for students and teachers, and with the state curriculum frameworks.

During the reexamination period under review, evidence from documents and interviews with administrators, teachers, and focus groups indicated a dominant districtwide emphasis on instituting a system of standards-based instruction and assessment linked specifically to the state curriculum frameworks. The district developed new curricula and designed and purchased new programs that aligned curriculum, assessment, professional development, and expectations for students and teachers.

The district and each school also defined multiple strategies needed to implement such a system, and many strategies outlined assessment standards, practices, and expectations for teachers as well as students. One strategy expanded and strengthened the roles of districtwide assurance specialists in each academic discipline. Assurance specialists worked with leaders and teachers

to align curricula to state standards, evaluate and choose new textbook programs, and develop quarterly formative assessments to measure student progress in meeting standards. They also collaborated with school-level leaders and teachers to analyze achievement data and planned professional development that responded to specific teaching and learning needs. Another strategy strengthened the role of and support for school-based CITs, with some schools having more than one, based on need. Each school had one or more CITs who worked with classroom teachers on instructional strategies individually, by grade level, or by academic discipline. Another strategy used the PIM process, which highlighted the analysis of assessment data in planning, instructional decision-making, and budgeting.

Standard IV: Human Resource Management and Professional Development												
	2004 Indicators											2007 Indicator
Ratings▼ Indicators►	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.7	10.5	13
Excellent												
Satisfactory	2007	2007	2007			2007	2007	2007	2007	2007		
Needs Improvement				2007	2007						2007	2007
Poor	2004	2004	2004		2004	2004	2004	2004			2004	
Unsatisfactory				2004					2004	2004		

IV. Human Resource Management and Professional Development

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

Findings:

- The primary drivers of professional development were the SIPs, the analysis of student achievement data, the MCAS test results, and input from principals.
- The professional development program was part of a connected district improvement system, which used the PIM process to evaluate schools and to develop the SIPs, the DIPCA, and the district professional development plan.
- The impact of contractual "bidding and bumping" language delayed hiring, affected staff stability, and resulted in a greater number of teachers being hired on waivers.
- The district revised evaluation instruments for teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, vice-principals, and principals, which resulted in better alignment with the components of education reform.
- The district focused on improving the quality of active supervision utilizing RBT principles and developing walk-through instruments with a focus on improved student achievement in ELA and mathematics.
- Professional development in the area of school safety was in the planning stages.

Summary

A provision in the teachers' contract giving teachers the annual opportunity to bid for vacancies based upon seniority and certification, prior to making them available to outside recruitment, hindered hiring practices. That provision also extended bumping rights to teachers whose positions the district eliminated. The most recent teachers' contract modified that provision and prohibited teachers with 15 or more years of service from losing their position through bumping. According to interviewees, after the bidding/bumping process was completed and outside recruitment could begin, the candidate pool became limited and often resulted in the district having to hire teachers on waivers. A review of district records corroborated this and indicated that the district employed 102 teachers on waivers in the 2006-2007 school year. Of those, 46 percent were special education teachers, 20 percent were ELL or English as a second language (ESL) teachers, and 10 percent were science or mathematics teachers. Once begun, the recruitment and hiring process was perceived by district personnel as being fair and open and focused on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals. A review of district documents indicated that almost 96 percent of teachers (1,127 of 1,178) were certified; 17 percent (203 of 1,178) taught out of field for one or more periods per day; and four percent (51 of 1,178) were on waivers. All administrators were licensed for the position that they held, and 84 percent (234 of 278) of the paraprofessionals met the federal definition of 'highly qualified.'

Efforts to recruit highly qualified teachers included participation in job fairs, Internet advertising through SchoolSpring.com and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) website, advertising in newspapers such as *The Daily Item* of Lynn and *The Boston Globe*, continued communication with North Shore Community College, and the maintenance of a resume bank of teacher applications.

Retention of personnel in the district was attributed to a favorable benefits package with strong incentives for longevity, a wide range of professional development opportunities accompanied with financial incentives including the awarding of one salary scale credit for each 10 professional development points earned, a mentoring program, and partnerships with local colleges to offer enhanced opportunities to obtain graduate credit.

The district's professional development program focused on accountability for administrators, teachers, and other staff members through the implementation of a system that utilized the Department of Education's Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process to evaluate its schools and guide the development of SIPs, which had a required professional development component. The SIPs were forwarded to the district office of curriculum and instruction for analysis, identification of common professional development needs, and generation of professional development offerings. The SIPs were utilized in the formation of the District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA) and the formation of the professional development plan to ensure alignment and address the goals identified in the DIPCA and the individual SIPs. The professional development plan focused on goals addressing weaknesses in ELA and mathematics. Offerings included training in mathematics instruction, training in pedagogy (such as Research for Better Teaching), training for all staff members in English language learner development (such as MELA-O and SIOP), and trainings that allowed teachers to become recertified and to attain 'highly qualified' status.

The district focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Principals were trained in Observing and Analyzing Teaching (OAT) by Research for Better Teaching (RBT), Confronting Mediocre Teaching, and Leading the Learning. Evaluation instruments were revised for teachers' paraprofessionals, school nurses, vice-principals, and principals to better align the instruments with the requirements of education reform. The district's deputy superintendents supported supervisory efforts by reviewing all teacher evaluations, noting comments made, and discussing results with principals. In addition, curriculum instruction teachers (CITs) worked in classrooms and provided non-evaluative supervision to teachers. Walk-through tools were developed and utilized across the district both for regular and sheltered instruction to record evidence of the implementation of district initiatives. The evaluation instruments were in narrative form and were described by interviewees as cumbersome but more valid than the former instruments.

Teacher evaluations reviewed by examiners were found to be informative; 38 percent were considered instructive, and only 58 percent were timely. Evaluations written on the revised teacher evaluation instrument, and following training from RBT, included meaningful and specific comments that addressed suggestions for improving instructional practices.

Administrators in the Administrators' Association were not evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year because the evaluation instrument was perceived to be of poor quality. That instrument was in the process of revision at the time of the reexamination. Fifty-eight percent of administrator evaluations reviewed by EQA examiners were timely, and only 17 percent were considered instructive. Most of the evaluations reviewed did not include recommendations to promote growth and overall effectiveness.

2004 Indicators

3.1. The district employs a system of:

a. school evaluation that focuses on accountability for administrators;

b. program evaluation that focuses on accountability for administrators and staff;

c. personnel evaluation that focuses on accountability for all administrators, teachers, and staff.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review (2000-2003), district interviewees indicated that during 2000 to 2002 the district did not complete school evaluations that focused on the accountability of principals, few program evaluations were conducted other than those required for a state or federal grant, and personnel evaluations did not focus on accountability for administrators, teachers, and staff members. The district had approximately 300 paraprofessional staff members. District interviewees reported that the school committee reserved the prerogative to evaluate the performance of paraprofessionals; interviewees also indicated that this was done when they wanted to terminate an employee.

Beginning in the 2002-2003 school year, the district began using an internal panel review process in the schools designated as 'in need of improvement.' The process was comprised of school personnel, and was used at the Harrington Elementary School in 2002-2003 and the Connery Elementary School in 2003. District interviewees indicated that the team generated a

report that was disseminated back to the school which identified critical concerns and provided recommendations and support for change that the district could provide.

In 2002, the administration at central office changed, and the superintendent and the deputy superintendent restructured the administrators' contract. Changes included the requirement for principals to identify two annual quantitative goals that were directly related to the MCAS test score improvement. In addition, the deputy superintendent met with principals individually to determine appropriate SMART (specific, measurable, action required, and timeline) goals that addressed school improvements or principals' professional development.

In spring 2003, the district provided all administrators who had evaluation responsibilities with training in personnel evaluation. In addition, a graduate course in Observing and Analyzing Teaching I (OAT) by Research for Better Teaching (RBT) was offered as training designed for personnel involved in the evaluation of teachers.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2007), the district focused on accountability for administrators, teachers and staff members through the implementation of a system that utilized the Department of Education's Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process to evaluate the schools and guide the development of School Improvement Plans (SIPs); through program evaluation of its mentoring and induction program; and through personnel evaluation incorporating professional development trainings and revision of the professional personnel evaluation instruments for teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, vice-principals, and principals. A review of evaluations in 50 randomly selected teacher personnel files showed that, while the newly revised teacher evaluation instrument was in place, it was not fully implemented and evaluations were not timely.

School Evaluation

Interviewees described a process that began with all schools utilizing the PIM process to review programs and instructional practices, perform data analyses, and develop SIPs. The schools forwarded the SIPs to the district's office of curriculum and instruction for review and formulation of appropriate professional development opportunities. The curriculum team, comprised of eight people, analyzed all SIPs, made a tentative list of the schools' professional development needs, and consulted with the principals as to the list's accuracy. These included

office of curriculum and instruction personnel, and members from each academic discipline, the special education program, and the English language learner (ELL) program. The SIP analyses identified common professional development needs, generated professional development offerings, and served as a supervision tool to help district-level administrators to monitor and ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional programs at each school site. District-level data analysis by the office of curriculum and instruction identified areas in need of improvement for individual schools. Principals then individually met with the office of curriculum and instruction administrators to discuss perceived needs. Principals went back to their schools, and through their PIM teams and use of TestWiz.net analyzed disaggregated MCAS test data.

Program Evaluation

During the reexamination period, the district did not have a formalized procedure for program evaluation. However, principals and staff members did review programs and instructional practices through utilizing the PIM process at each of the schools and as part of the data analysis in developing the SIPs. The district also contracted with Class Measures for the evaluation of its mentoring and induction program. Because of MCAS test data analyses in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, interviewees indicated that the district began to shift its focus toward implementing a departmentalized instructional approach at one of its elementary schools.

The district implemented new instructional programs. For example, to improve mathematics content knowledge, the district brought Mass Insight Education in to teach mathematics to large cohorts of its teachers. When student MCAS test results underscored the need for students to work on vocabulary, the district piloted three different approaches to vocabulary development during 2006-2007. One of the approaches was selected in 2007-2008, and support was provided to schools to implement this vocabulary program. To address the needs of ELL students, staff members had developed the language support curriculum and had provided SIOP training to a large percentage of its teachers. The district analyzed Advanced Placement (AP) program results and used them to inform instruction. In addition, the district offered the RBT Skillful Teacher course to provide teachers with effective teaching strategies.

Personnel Evaluation

During the reexamination period, the district focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Principals received training in Observing and Analyzing Teaching (OAT) from Research for Better Teaching in the 2006-2007 school year. Trainings were also provided on Confronting Mediocre Teaching, and Leading the Learning. In addition to revising its professional personnel evaluation instruments for teachers' paraprofessionals, school nurses, vice-principals, and principals, the district's deputy superintendents ensured supervisory efforts of the principals by reviewing all teacher evaluations, noting comments made, and discussing results with principals. Further, CITs worked in classrooms and provided non-evaluative supervision to teachers. Walk-through tools were developed and utilized across the district both for regular and sheltered instruction to record evidence of implementation of district initiatives. Additionally, the district utilized Lucid My PDC, an online professional development program, through which principals were able to improve their supervision of staff members through tracking and running reports on teachers' professional development activities.

Lastly, during the site visit EQA examiners had the opportunity to review 50 randomly selected teacher personnel evaluations. Of the 50 evaluations reviewed, 41 of 50 (82 percent) were found to be somewhat informative, and 19 of 50 (38 percent) were found to be instructive.

3.2. <u>The results of the district's program evaluation are analyzed and used to inform needed changes or modifications in the district's programs and services that would most likely result in improved student achievement.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, interviewees indicated that, prior to 2002, there was some structure in place at the district level for the formal evaluation of programs that generated an analysis to inform needed modifications specifically designed to improve student achievement. Program evaluations included the those of the Title I program, academic support, magnet programs, and Even Start in 2000, and health education in 2000, 2001, and 2002.

However, there was little evidence that the district used the program analyses to inform changes that would likely result in improved student achievement.

Beginning in 2002-2003, late in the initial period under review, the school leadership teams were trained in and began to use data analysis to inform needed modifications in programs directly related to improving student achievement. Interviewees indicated that the school leadership teams reviewed data specifically for patterns and trends. Changes informed by data analysis affected staffing patterns, the distribution of materials and supplies, and teaching pedagogy. Interviewees indicated that Mass Insight Education had recently conducted an external audit of the math department (Charting the Course for Improvement in Math). District interviewees indicated that the report recommended, among other things, aligning districtwide initiatives, reducing organizational fragmentation, and implementing better integrated improvement strategies.

During the reexamination period under review, while the district did not have a formalized procedure for program evaluation, interviewees and the EQA Monitor's Report of June 2006 corroborated that program evaluations and modifications took place in the district. As a result of the Department of Education's Coordinated Program Review (CPR) of 2005, changes were made including use of electronic Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); the addition of transition coaches for post-grade 12; the collection and translation of all documents and policies that go to students and families; tracking of achievement of formerly limited English proficient (FLEP) students; and the ELL endorsement for all teachers in the district as part of their professional development plan. Because of the Mass Insight audit, utilization of benchmark assessments in mathematics resulted in an increase in the professional development programs in mathematics content and pedagogy across the district. Changes also took place that were attributed by interviewees and noted in the EQA monitor's report as resulting from the EQA examination of 2004. Those changes included development of standards-based and data-driven SIPs; revised curriculum guidelines and documents; use of benchmark assessments; revised personnel evaluation processes; and a focus on improving student achievement.

According to information gleaned from a review of documents and interviews, principals and staff members did review programs and instructional practices utilizing the PIM process and as

part of the data analysis process in developing SIPs. The district contracted with Class Measures for the evaluation of its mentoring and induction program. Interviewees indicated that because of MCAS data analyses in ELA and mathematics, the district began to shift its focus toward implementing a departmentalized instructional approach in one of its elementary schools. Advanced Placement (AP) program results were analyzed at least every three years, and the results were used to inform instruction.

3.3. There is an ongoing process to:

a. monitor, and

b. evaluate the quality, adequacy, and effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional programs.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, prior to 2002, the district's interviewees indicated that the district had no formal, ongoing process to monitor and evaluate the quality, adequacy, and effectiveness of the curriculum and the instructional program. Some informal evaluations were conducted at the site level, but they were implemented at the discretion of the building administrators and not consistently driven from the district office.

Prior to the start of the 2002-2003 school year, an external consultant trained some Lynn school personnel in the panel review process that led to the establishment of an internal review process for schools. In these reviews, schools in 'need of improvement' were visited and reviewed for two days by a panel of teachers from other Lynn schools. At special after-school meetings, the findings of the review were presented to school professional staff members in the presence of the superintendent of schools and the deputy superintendent of schools. At the time of the initial EQA site visit, the district had completed internal reviews at four schools.

In 2002-2003, school leadership teams were trained in the PIM process. In 2003, the district began participating in the Consolidated Strategic Plan (CSP) process and indicated that it now

saw the its evaluation process as two-tiered. The first tier involved the CSP at the district level, and the second tier involved individual SIPs at the site level.

During the 2002-2003 school year, the district was invited by the DOE to join a group of urban districts with schools designated 'in need of improvement.' Interviewees indicated that this was the point at which the district began to focus in earnest on collecting data, analyzing them, and using the analyses to inform decision-making. In 2002, the district reviewed its ELA and math programs and determined that they had significant gaps. The ELA program, for example, did not sufficiently address genres or grammar, and the math program had problems with scope and sequence and alignment to the state curriculum frameworks. The district established these new initiatives but only in the latter part of the initial period under review.

During the reexamination period under review, administrators indicated that the district's evaluation process focused the DIPCA at the district level and the individual SIPs at the site level. All schools at the time of reexamination utilized the PIM process to develop their SIPs. The schools forwarded the SIPs to the district's office of curriculum and instruction for review and formulation of appropriate professional development opportunities. The curriculum team, comprised of eight people, analyzed all SIPs. These included office of curriculum and instruction personnel, and members from each academic discipline, the special education program, and the ELL program. The SIP analyses identified common professional development needs, generated professional development offerings in the district, and served as a supervision tool to help district-level administrators to monitor and ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum and instructional programs at each school site.

3.4. <u>The district's evaluation procedure for administrators is aligned with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, a randomly selected sample of approximately 50 percent of the district's administrative evaluations indicated that the district's evaluations of administrators were consistent with the terms negotiated in the administrative contract.

Evaluations were not consistent with the components of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act; although the components of Effective Leadership were listed within the document, the evaluations sampled did not address the components.

During the reexamination period under review, while the district's formal evaluation procedure complied with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, its practice did not in that not all administrators were evaluated annually as prescribed by MGL Chapter 71, section 38. EQA examiners requested 22 evaluations to review during the on-site visit. District administrators indicated that 10 of those evaluations were of administrators who held membership in the Administrators' Association. Interviewees stated that, because the present evaluation instrument was perceived to be of poor quality, none of the administrators in the Administrators' Association were evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year. Interviewees further indicated that the district was in the process of revising the evaluation instrument in the 2007-2008 school year and planned implementation of a new instrument in the 2008-2009 school year.

Of the 12 administrators' evaluations reviewed, only seven (58 percent) were timely. All were signed and contained the components of education reform. Nine of 12 (75 percent) were informative and two of 12 (17 percent) were instructive. Overall, most of the evaluations reviewed were without recommendations to promote growth and overall effectiveness.

The district focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Interviewees indicated that the principals' and vice-principals' evaluation instruments were revised to better align them with the components of education reform. The new instruments were comprised of five goals, four of which were standard goals across the district for all administrators and the last being a personal goal set by each individual administrator. The evaluation instruments were in narrative form and were described by interviewees as being cumbersome but more valid than the former instruments.

3.5. <u>The district's evaluation procedure for teachers is aligned with the requirements of the Education Reform Act.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the EQA team reviewed a random sample of approximately 10 percent of evaluations of the professional staff. While the evaluation instrument was consistent with the components identified in the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, of the 83 evaluations reviewed, 23 were not timely (conducted within the last two years) and 60 were timely. Interviewees indicated that administrators did not use the evaluation instrument as an opportunity to make suggestions to improve instruction. Of the sample reviewed, comments on evaluations were mostly laudatory. However, several evaluations conducted after the district offered training from Research for Better Teaching in personnel evaluation reflected meaningful comments that included suggestions for improving instructional practices.

During the reexamination period under review, while the district's formal evaluation procedure complied with the requirements of the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, its practice did not in that not all teachers were evaluated in accordance with MGL Chapter 71, section 38, which requires that teachers serving without professional status shall be evaluated every year and teachers serving with professional status shall be evaluated every two years. EQA examiners reviewed 50 teacher evaluations during the on-site visit. Of the 50 evaluations reviewed, 29 (58 percent) were timely; 43 (86 percent) were signed; 39 (78 percent) contained the components of education reform; 41 (82 percent) were informative; and 19 (38 percent) were instructive. Recommendations were found in 12 (24 percent) of the evaluations. Evaluations written on the revised teacher evaluation instrument and which were conducted after the district offered RBT training in personnel evaluation included meaningful and specific comments with suggestions for improving instructional practices.

The district focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Principals received training in Observing and Analyzing Teaching (OAT) from Research for Better Teaching (RBT) in the 2006-2007 school year. The district also provided training on Confronting Mediocre Teaching, and Leading the Learning. In addition to revising its professional personnel evaluation instruments for teachers, the district's deputy superintendents ensured supervisory efforts of the principals by reviewing all teacher evaluations, noting comments made, and discussing results with principals. Further, CITs worked in classrooms and provided non-

evaluative supervision to teachers. Walk-through tools were developed and utilized across the district both for regular and sheltered instruction to record evidence of the implementation of district initiatives. Principals also utilized Lucid My PDC to track and run reports on teachers' professional development activities.

3.6. In order to improve achievement for all students, the district uses disaggregated assessment scores to:

a. evaluate specific aspects of achievement, so that data can be analyzed to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction,

b. set priorities for professional development, and

c. reallocate staff and resources to improve achievement levels for all student populations.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period under review, prior to the advent of the use of TestWiz in 2002-2003, school administrators were trained in the use of Excel and were guided in a systematic procedure for conducting the MCAS test data analysis (i.e., examination of data for patterns and trends to identify strengths and weaknesses at their schools). The purpose of this activity was to preserve strengths and to correct weaknesses in their schools by taking decisive actions such as reallocation of staff members, professional development, and acquisition of instructional materials.

Interviewees indicated that during the initial period under review, the level of proficiency with data analysis varied from school to school, depending on the leadership in place and proficiency levels of individual teachers. Further, those same interviewees indicated it was not a district expectation that the planning translated into action with any level of consistency. In the 2002-2003 school year, the district required that schools focus more on analysis of disaggregated student achievement data. District- and building-level administrators indicated that they were beginning to see evidence of a more focused approach on using data to inform curriculum and instruction.

Interviewees indicated that during the 2000-2001 school year, professional development was not determined by a review of disaggregated student achievement data. However, during this timeframe, as a result of a review of student achievement data, the district supported two systemic professional development initiatives for the John Collins Writing program (grades 1-10) and Mimosa math (grades K-5). Interviewees and a review of the budget documents indicated that during the initial period under review the district allocated staff resources depending upon composition of student populations and enrollments. Interviewees indicated that the PIM process focused on allocating resources based on needs identified by data analysis. While the district engaged in some efforts to train staff members in disaggregating data, the district's academic achievement improved modestly during the period under examination.

During the reexamination period under review, all principals received training in the PIM process and were expected to write their School Improvement Plans with their PIM teams to address the needs identified through the close analysis of data required by the PIM process. All principals were also trained in TestWiz, and they were particularly enthusiastic about the recent enhancement of TestWiz analysis potential. Principals did not have separate professional development budgets, so the district curriculum staff drafted a tentative list of appropriate professional development based on close analysis of each School Improvement Plan. The district staff then met with each principal to draw up a final list of professional development for the school for the year. At the same time, district assurance specialists, after analysis of the district MCAS results, made their own determination as to districtwide professional development needs. For example, because of low elementary math scores over a period of years, the district moved to revise the curriculum and adopt and fund a new math program. Also, because students demonstrated a lack of phonological awareness on the DIBELS, the district sponsored professional development on this topic across the district.

Also, the district revisited the assignment of CITs across the district and made some adjustments as needs appeared. In addition, the district created a new, temporary position for an elementary math CIT to oversee the implementation of the new elementary math curriculum and program in 2007-2008. In addition, the district had a corps of reading teachers who were assigned each year depending upon need as determined from analysis of MCAS scores.

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

a. principals,

b. teachers, and

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the superintendent developed a District Improvement Plan (DIP) in 2000-2001. However, the school committee did not approve the DIP. Despite that, each school developed a School Improvement Plan based on this DIP. Each School Improvement Plan included a professional development plan based on the DIP, rather than an analysis of needs at each school. For the initial period under review, based on information gathered at a variety of levels of the school district, professional development needs were developed by the district leadership with little school-based input.

Interviewees told the EQA team that the professional development selections offered during the initial period of review were diverse and addressed a variety of initiatives across the school district. Administrators asked teachers for input and developed a variety of professional development offerings to meet their requests. According to interviewees, in 2000-2002 there was a decline in effectiveness of professional development. Regarding the district's top-down approach, there was "lots of resistance, lots of efforts, many initiatives, and resistance was supported by the school committee." When asked about the effectiveness of in-service for the period under study, interviewees told examiners that "there was lots of resistance" to districtwide in-service from "teachers and some principals," especially in Mimosa math and John Collins Writing. During this time, many school officials maintained the view "that accountability would all just go away." However during this time, the central office administrator for professional development and the district curriculum facilitators continued going to schools to demonstrate and model new classroom and instructional practices. The district officials reported to the EQA

that if principals were open to their presence and accepted help from the district facilitators, then change happened more quickly at individual schools.

In 2003, eight schools began the PIM process through the DOE, which was expanded to all schools except for the high schools, which used the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) process to drive professional development. After the development of a one-year consolidated plan, the district was more focused in professional development. The PIM process was employed to drive professional development initiatives. Teachers were trained, coached, and given professional development in John Collins Writing to improve MCAS ELA test scores.

To address Lynn's NCLB Consolidated Strategic Plan, administrators conducted a needs assessment in FY 2002. Interviewees said that the needs assessment and the MCAS test data analysis formed the basis for professional development initiatives. Principals received training in analyzing MCAS data, according to administrators. Further, dialogue with the superintendent of schools indicated that the principals were trained to conduct effective staff evaluations, differentiated instruction, and staffing issues.

According to the interviewees, paraprofessionals were increasingly being included in school-site professional development offerings, and they had the option to attend a program at North Shore Community College.

During the reexamination period under review, interviewees indicated that the district utilized a strategy to ensure that every school in the district had its professional development needs included in the district's professional development plan by implementing a procedure that utilized the PIM process at each school in the development of its SIP. Once developed, the SIPs, which identified professional development needs as a required component, were forwarded to the district's office of curriculum and instruction for review and formulation of appropriate professional development opportunities. The curriculum team, composed of office of curriculum and instruction administrators, members from each academic discipline, and special education and English language learner teachers, analyzed all submitted SIPs. The SIP analyses helped to identify common professional development needs for the principal, teachers, other professional staff members, paraprofessionals, and teacher assistants at each school site.

The deputy superintendents and principals provided the curriculum team with other input relative to specific professional development requirements based upon their evaluation and supervision of staff members. The district also utilized Lucid software that contained teachers' individual professional development plans (IPDPs) and served as a supervisory tool that allowed principals to review teachers' professional development activities and correlate them to teachers' identified professional development needs as they aligned with a school's SIP.

7.2. The district updates its Professional Development Plan annually and sets forth a budget for professional development within the confines of the foundation budget.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, professional development plans were updated but not revised to reflect school-based needs until some schools started the PIM process in 2003. According to administrators, only some schools completed this process as of the time of EQA's onsite visit. In addition, the school district did not meet its budget commitment to professional development in FY 2002 (the latest information available to the EQA team), although in FY 2000 and FY 2001 the district exceeded its required professional development spending level.

According to interviewees, the school district provided a combination of districtwide professional development and school-based professional development. However, it was noteworthy that most schools in Lynn did not have school-based funds available for professional development to address specific needs, unless they had specific grant money. Sometimes professional development providers were contracted to conduct system-wide professional development, among them Salem State College, Gordon College, John Collins Writing, Dr. Virginia Rojas, and Research for Better Teaching. At other times, CITs were trained and then expected to provide school-based professional development with grade and teacher teams. The examples that were cited were school-based student assistance teams and differentiated instruction.

Administrators credited the PIM process for prompting an annual review of student performance and a corresponding update of professional development. The administrators involved cited the

PIM matrix as a process that summarized professional development needs across the school system by school. However, this process was completed in only eight schools.

During the reexamination period under review, the district updated its professional development plan annually through the utilization of the PIM process in each of its schools. As previously mentioned, the major thrust for professional development activities emanated from each building's School Improvement Plan. Any activities related to professional development were listed in the Lucid online professional development program, and an e-mail notice was forwarded to all appropriate staff members. District staff members utilized Lucid to complete IPDPs, to obtain principal approvals, to register for courses, and to print out PDP certificates.

Interviewees expressed their perception that the district provided an adequate budget annually for professional development. A review of district documents indicated that in FY 2006 the district had expended a total of $2,854,380, of which $2,201,616 came from grant funding sources and $652,764 from budgetary funds. Stipends and providers accounted for $2,117,860 (74 percent) of the total expended.

7.3. The district's Professional Development program is informed by the following:

a. analysis of student assessment data disaggregated by student subgroup populations,

b. evaluation results of programs and services, and

c. evaluations of professional staff and administrators.

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, interviewees reported that at many different levels the process of analyzing student data by student subgroup was only just beginning. The district officials indicated that prior to 2003, the district looked primarily at "trends and patterns" to drive what the district needed to do. Recent professional development was focused on improving the ELL program and exposing the special education staff to standards-based training.

District administrations reported that the PIM process and later the NCLB Consolidated Strategic Plan, both late in the initial period under study, prompted the professional staff to start to disaggregate data by subgroup. According to district interviews, the district had CITs trained in TestWiz in the summer of 2003. In 2003, the district trained leadership teams in all schools to analyze the MCAS data disaggregated by subgroup.

The only evaluation of programs and services across that district that interviewees could cite were teacher surveys, which teachers completed at the end of professional development in-service sessions, and evaluations that were components of state and federally funded programs. In general, the district was only in the beginning stages of evaluating programs and services.

A review of teacher evaluations (at least 10 percent of the district's teachers) revealed few suggestions made by principals for further individual professional study. As cited above, the development of a database containing IPDPs for professional staff members was in the early development stages. This would have enabled a principal to easily connect individual professional development goals with a school's SIP. It would also have enabled all buildings to connect with the goals of the school district contained in the DIP or DCAP. However, this information was not available to principals in any organized way until the fall of 2004.

A review of principal evaluations revealed that until the spring of 2003, the evaluations were not completed in a timely manner. This task was recently assigned to the assistant superintendent. According to the district leadership, recent evaluations of principals resulted in professional development recommendations to them with respect to taking Research for Better Teaching courses on recognizing good teaching.

For the reexamination period under review, district administrators reported that the primary drivers of professional development were the SIPs, the analysis of data, including the MCAS test results, and principals' input. Further, the district's professional development program was informed primarily through the utilization of the PIM process in each of the district's schools that led to the development of the annual SIP. The PIM process was used to assist in analyzing student assessment data and was facilitated by trainings in TestWiz. Based upon the assessment data analyses, strengths and weaknesses in programs were identified. The district's professional

development during the reexamination period became focused on weaknesses in ELA and mathematics teaching and learning throughout the district.

Interviewees indicated that in attempting to improve instruction in ELA and mathematics, the district concentrated its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. As was previously mentioned, principals received training in Observing and Analyzing Teaching from Research for Better Teaching in the 2006-2007 school year. Trainings were also provided in Confronting Mediocre Teaching and in Leading the Learning. In addition to revising its professional personnel evaluation instruments for teachers, the district's deputy superintendents ensured supervisory efforts of the principals by reviewing all teacher evaluations, noting comments made, and discussing results with principals. Walk-through tools were developed and utilized across the district both for regular and sheltered instruction to record evidence of implementation of district initiatives. Principals also utilized Lucid software to track and run reports on teachers' professional development activities. The self-evaluations of the district's mentoring program submitted to Class Measures for review provided another source of input into the district's professional development program.

Of the 50 randomly selected teacher evaluations reviewed by the EQA, 82 percent were found to be mostly informative and 38 percent were considered somewhat instructive. Recommendations were found in 24 percent of the evaluations. Evaluations written on the revised teacher evaluation instrument and which were conducted after the district offered administrators training from Research for Better Teaching in personnel evaluation reflected meaningful and specific comments that addressed suggestions for professional development and improving instructional practices.

Most of the administrator evaluations reviewed did not include recommendations to promote growth and overall effectiveness. The few comments made in administrators' evaluations were primarily laudatory in nature. Interviewees stated that, because the existing evaluation instrument for administrators in the Administrators' Association was perceived to be of poor quality, none of the administrators in the Administrators' Association were evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year. Interviewees further indicated that the district was in the process of revising the evaluation

instrument in the 2007-2008 school year, and planned implementation of a new instrument in the 2008-2009 school year.

7.7. The district's Professional Development Plan is implemented to address and sustain the goals identified in the District Improvement Plan and individual School Improvement Plans.

EQA Rating from 2004: Unsatisfactory

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the school committee interviews indicated that the former superintendent presented the district goals to the committee, but the school committee did not act upon the superintendent's goals. Nevertheless, the former superintendent used these goals to develop the DIP and direct the SIPs for the period under review. Because of this process, individual SIPs were developed without a thorough analysis of school-based needs.

Interviewees indicated that most of the professional development initiatives were funded at the district level. In the initial period under examination, the curriculum facilitators working at the central office organized professional development. Courses were determined at the central district office, based on the requests of teachers, principals, and other administrators. According to interviewees, schools did not have school-based professional development budgets unless they had grant-specific funds available.

The professional development leadership described resistance to many of the initiatives being offered to improve student achievement in the schools during this period. Professional development officials stated "it was horrible," "we were offering a lot of [programs] with no results." Interviewees indicated that the turmoil among the top leadership was seen as an opportunity for the staff to not take the DIP and SIPs seriously.

With the improved climate in the district after the change in superintendency on January 1, 2002, beginning in late 2002-2003 professional development efforts were beginning to be accepted and taken seriously to improve student achievement, according to interviewees in central office and some principals.

During the reexamination period under review, the district moved from a professional development program described at the time of the last EQA review by district administrators as being one that offered many programs with little to no results to one that interviewees perceived as focused on accountability for administrators, teachers, and staff members. This was accomplished through the implementation of a system that utilized the PIM process to evaluate the schools and guide the development of the SIPs, which had a required professional development component. The SIPs were developed and forwarded to the office of curriculum and instruction for analysis by the curriculum team. The SIP analyses identified common professional development needs and generated professional development offerings in the district. The SIPs were utilized in the formation of the Consolidated District Plan and the professional development plan to ensure alignment.

The curriculum and instruction team used the DIPCA and SIPs to develop a professional development plan that focused on goals addressing identified weaknesses in ELA and mathematics. Toward that end, professional development trainings included those in mathematics instruction; pedagogy, such as RBT; training of all staff members in English language development, such as Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O) and Sheltered Immersion Observation Protocol (SIOP); and trainings that allowed teachers to attain 'highly qualified' status and to become recertified.

The district also focused its efforts on improving the quality of its active supervision. Principals received training in Observing and Analyzing Teaching from Research for Better Teaching in the 2006-2007 school year. The district also provided training in Confronting Mediocre Teaching and in Leading the Learning. Additionally, the district utilized Lucid, an online professional development program, through which principals were able to improve their supervision of staff members through tracking and running reports on teachers' professional development activities.

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, due to provisions within the teachers' collective bargaining agreement, the process of filling vacancies within the professional staff was cumbersome and time consuming. According to the teacher contract, teachers already in the employment of the Lynn Public Schools were required to be given an opportunity to bid for teaching vacancies prior to making these positions available to outside recruitment. Seniority and certification were the primary qualifications for bidding vacancies within the school district. More recently, according to the superintendent of schools and the deputy superintendent, professional development credits and certification in the area of the responsibilities of a vacancy were required for new appointments.

The recruitment of staff members outside the district included establishing a relationship between the director of human resources and institutions of higher education in the area. The director of human resources attended job fairs offered by these institutions of higher learning. The human resources office generated an applicant pool from the greater Boston metropolitan area. *The Boston Globe* and *The Daily Item* of Lynn were the primary media outlets for publishing the district's employment vacancies. According to the provisions of the teachers' collective bargaining agreement, administrative positions were required to be posted internally for a period of 14 days. Screening committees were utilized for filling administrative positions and making recommendations to the superintendent of schools. Most classified personnel fell under the requirements of civil service in the city. Paraprofessional recruitment and hiring was also covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Between 2000 and 2003, the teachers' contract provisions required the administration to allow internal staff members to bid for positions.

During the reexamination period under review, the process of filling vacancies had become somewhat less cumbersome and time consuming than it had been at the time of the prior EQA visit. The largest obstacle to hiring and retaining skilled, highly qualified personnel continued to be a provision in the teachers' collective bargaining agreement which required that teachers employed by the Lynn Public Schools be accorded the annual opportunity to bid for vacancies prior to making them available to outside recruitment. That provision also extended bumping rights to those vacancies to teachers whose positions were eliminated.

The bid/bumping provision was reported by interviewees as having caused a lack of stability in the district's schools. Appointments to positions subject to bidding and bumping were based upon seniority and possession of appropriate certification. District officials did indicate that in the most recent teachers' contract negotiations, the school committee had successfully negotiated a modification to the bid/bumping provision that prohibited teachers with 15 or more years of service from being subject to bumping. This was perceived as being a positive step toward streamlining the bidding and bumping process, and one that would likely improve the district's opportunities to secure skilled, highly qualified personnel.

District officials also indicated that by the time the bidding/bumping process was completed and outside recruitment could begin, usually in June, the candidate pool had been historically quite small and often resulted in the district employing individuals on waivers. A review of district records corroborated this and indicated that in the 2006-2007 school year the district employed 102 teachers on waivers. Of those, 46 percent were in special education, 20 percent were in ELL or ESL, and 10 percent were in science or mathematics. District officials attributed most of the waivers to the delay in starting the outside recruitment practice due to the bumping and bidding provision in the teachers' contract.

Once begun, the recruitment and hiring process was perceived by district personnel as being fair and open and focused on identifying and acquiring the most qualified individuals for each position. Interviewees reiterated their concern, however, that the delay in being able to begin outside recruitment caused the district to be annually faced with a diminished pool of candidates.

Efforts to recruit highly qualified teachers included participation in job fairs and Internet advertising through SchoolSpring.com and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents websites. Administrators perceived the use of SchoolSpring.com with its initial screening component as particularly useful for vacancies that occurred during the school year. Other recruiting strategies used by the district included advertising in newspapers such as *The Boston Globe* and *The Daily Item* of Lynn, continued communication with North Shore Community College, and the maintenance of a resume bank of teacher applications.

Administrators attributed retention of personnel in the district to a favorable benefits package, one that included strong incentives for longevity; a wide range of professional development

opportunities accompanied by financial incentives including the awarding of one salary scale credit for each 10 professional development points earned; a mentoring program; and partnerships with local colleges to offer enhanced opportunities for graduate credit.

2007 Indicator

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.

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the reexamination period, in April 2007, the district hired a school security and emergency planning liaison and charged him with developing an emergency response system. This individual was also to serve 50 percent of the time as a resource officer in the district and develop an emergency procedures management plan. EQA examiners were told that the district had an emergency procedures flip chart in every classroom in the district that was expected to be hung on a wall in close proximity to the teacher's desk. Visits to the schools confirmed their presence in some rooms but not in others.

An internal needs assessment that had been conducted identified two problem areas, the need for intercoms and external door security, and this information was provided to the city. District officials identified internal communications as being a very big problem in the district, and indicated that attempts were being made to incorporate budget funds to address the situation. At the time of the EQA reexamination, eight or nine schools had Voice Over IP (VOIP) phones in classrooms. While district officials perceived the VOIP phones as helpful, they only worked in classrooms and not in hallways. The district implemented security measures in partnership with GE Security to install approximately 16 security cameras, a DVM recorder, and a buzzer system at the Marshall Middle School at a cost to the district of $75,000. Interviewees indicated that the district planned to continue such installations, prioritized by building needs and subject to funding availability.

EQA examiners, during school site visits, observed that some external doors were locked and required a buzzer for entry, while others were either unlocked or ajar allowing open access.

Interviewees indicated that some of the door hinges might have been defective making even a locked door unable to close properly, thus rendering it “open.”

During the reexamination period, interviewees indicated that trainings for fire drills and bus evacuations regularly occurred in the district. Other trainings were in the planning stage in the district. Trainings for evacuations and lockdowns were planned to take place in the 2007-2008 school year. The first training planned was for all principals on building lockdowns, and it was expected that the principals would subsequently train their staffs. This was scheduled for October 26, 2007. Interviews and use of the Lucid professional development software indicated that a four-hour training for district principals on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) would be scheduled for November 5, 9, or 15, 2007.

Standard V: Access, Participation, and Student Academic Support												
	2004 Indicators									2007 Indicators		
Ratings▼ Indicators►	2.4	2.5	6.1	6.6	8.1	8.2	8.4	8.5	8.6	4	5	6
Excellent												
Satisfactory	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007			2007	2007	2007
Needs Improvement								2007	2007			
Poor	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004	2004			
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.

Findings:

- The district and school staff monitored student attendance, implemented practices and procedures to increase attendance, and communicated with parents regarding the importance of attending school. Averaged attendance increased in the district and chronic absenteeism decreased.
- The district provided alternative education programs to support students with special needs and promoted the prevention and recovery of dropouts.
- The district continued its improvement in the delivery of English language learner services by providing quality professional development, materials, and coaching for classroom and ELL teachers.
- The Parent Information Center (PIC) and schools in the district held activities to encourage parent involvement and accommodated parents by offering services such as transportation and childcare to make it easier for them to participate.
- The PIC collaborated with the community to enable families who lived in challenging circumstances to gain stability, thus helping students to be ready to learn.

- The PIC and school staffs minimized the effects of mobility on students by allowing them to stay in their present school through the last grade even if the family moved to another part of the city.
- The aggregate percentage of Lynn students scoring 'Proficient' or higher on the 2006 and 2007 MCAS grade 3 reading tests was 10 percent lower than the previous two years.

Summary

During the period under reexamination, the district saw gains in the average attendance rate and reductions in chronic student absenteeism and dropout rates. District staff attributed these improvements in student attendance to revisions made in the district attendance policy, enforcement of the policy by district attendance officers and school administrators, and communication to parents from school staff members. The average attendance rate for the district improved from 93.3 percent in 2004-2005 to 94.9 percent in 2006-2007, according to DOE data. During the 2005-2006 school year, 2,610 students had 19 or more absences; in the 2006-2007 school year, the district reduced the number of chronically absent students to 2,316. Teacher absenteeism remained at acceptable levels during the period reexamined. An agreement in the teachers' contract allowed employees to buy back up to five sick leave days each school year.

The district provided numerous programs and services to students and their families. Teachers assigned students to tutoring in ELA and math, which took place before school, after school, and during the summer. High school students participated in MCAS test preparation classes in English and math. The district had six alternative education programs to support regular education and special education students who needed a different environment for academic success. The English language learner program improved the delivery of instruction to ELL students with training in sheltered immersion practices for large numbers of classroom and ELL teachers. The district had plans to increase the number of classroom teachers trained in special education inclusion practices to make classroom instruction more effective for special education students.

The PIC served all students in the district, including many students and their families who lived in difficult circumstances. The PIC registered all new students and determined student needs to make sure that the staff assigned each student to the best educational placement. Over 6,000

registrations, transfers, or withdrawals took place each year. The PIC staff worked with school staffs and community partners to provide additional support to over 1,300 homeless students and their families. Parents accessed services such as transportation and childcare through the Parent Information Center to help them attend school events. Students were allowed to remain at their school through the last grade even if their family moved to another area of the city. This practice supported academic continuity for each student.

2004 Indicators

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review (2000-2003), the district's expectations for attendance were provided in its policy manual and student handbooks. The district employed a supervisor of attendance and discipline and two full-time attendance officers who, along with the principals and other building administrators, received quarterly attendance reports, tracked students, and worked with community agencies to ensure students were attending school. In interviews with district administrators, the district officials reported that they tracked student absences that were deemed excessive or reflected patterns of abuse. In interviews, district administrators stated that the district desired a higher attendance rate, particularly in the alternative education programs. In 2002, according to DOE data, the rates of chronic absenteeism in grades 9-12 exceeded 40 percent.

During the reexamination period under review (2004-2007), the district policy manual, the student handbooks for the elementary, middle, and high schools, and other district documents, such as the attendance department document entitled Excessive Unexcused Absence Steps, showed that the district had written attendance and truancy policies in place. In interviews, district staff members described the procedures and practices in place to monitor student attendance. Since the 2004 EQA review, the district recorded gains in the average attendance rate

and reductions in dropouts and chronic student absenteeism due to the implementation of several initiatives and enforcement of the attendance policy.

In an effort to encourage student attendance and discourage absences, the district revised and strengthened the district attendance policy for 2005-2006 for all elementary, middle and high school students. The district attendance office and the administration at each school monitored attendance daily and quarterly. The district did not allow absent students to attend or participate in school events if they were absent on the same day of that activity, unless given permission by the principal. Administrators targeted "non-justified" or unexcused absences and specified consequences to students for excessive non-justified absences in the attendance policy listed in all student handbooks. Non-justified absences could be either an undocumented absence, an absence without a parent note, or an absence documented with a parent note but the reason given for the absence was not on the list of "justified" absences. After five undocumented absences, the administration notified the parent by a phone call and letter citing excessive absences from class. Ten non-justified absences, documented or undocumented, resulted in an 'F' for the quarter. At the end of the 2005-2006 school year, the district leadership saw the district's average attendance rate increase from 93.3 percent to 93.4 percent. The leadership decided to reduce the number of non-justified absences resulting in an 'F' from 10 to seven per quarter for the 2006-2007 school year and saw an increase in the average attendance rate from 93.4 percent to 94.9 percent. The district's attendance policy for 2007-2008 remained the same as last year's.

Other ways in which the Lynn Public Schools encouraged attendance and discouraged absences included procedures for closer monitoring of absences and improved communication with parents about student absences. Central office and school administrators reported that most schools used an automated calling system, ConnectEd, to notify parents of student absences. According to interviewees, some elementary teachers maintained graphs of student attendance and they contacted parents to follow up on a student's absence. Some elementary schools rewarded students who had perfect attendance with a token. In grades 9-12, teachers conducted "attendance Wednesdays" when they let students know where they stood concerning absences. The district continued the operation of its attendance department with an attendance and discipline officer and two assistant attendance and discipline officers. They supported principals and assistant principals by taking over excessive absence cases when parents did not respond to the school administration's attempts to improve a student's attendance. The district's data center

produced reports of “unexcused absences greater than or equal to the number specified” when requested by principals, assistant principals, or attendance officers. District and building administrators used these reports, sorted by building, grade, and homeroom, to monitor students in jeopardy of failure due to poor attendance.

Attendance officers and school administrators also followed a process for excessive unexcused absences. For the first through third unexcused absence in a quarter, school staff members phoned and/or mailed letters to notify parents and determine reasons for absences. Upon the fourth unexcused absence in a quarter, school administrators sent an Excessive Unexcused Absence Letter home as required by the district’s attendance policy. When students reached the fifth unexcused absence in a quarter, school administrators sent the Truancy Notification Form to the assigned attendance officer. The attendance officer conducted a home visit to assess the situation and advised parents of the legal requirements for students to attend school regularly. They also informed the parents of the possibility of a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) action or discussed alternative education options, especially for students over the age of 16. For the seventh unexcused absence in a quarter or a total of 10 for the year, school administrators sent a CHINS Court Referral Form to the attendance officer to initiate possible court action for students under the age of 16. Attendance officers had the option to file a CHINS Petition (C.119, s.39E) a Duties of Parent Penalty (C.76, s.2), or an Inducing Absence of Minor (C.76, s.4). School administrators sent an Over Sixteen-Drop Letter to students over the age of 16 who accumulated 15 consecutive absences to notify them of their options. They also submitted a Truancy Investigation Notice to the attendance officer to determine the possible location of the student.

The district and school staff monitoring and communication with parents contributed not only to the district’s increase in its average attendance rate to 94.9 percent in 2006-2007, it also resulted in a decrease in chronic absenteeism and dropouts. According to DOE statistics, the percent of students chronically absent in the district was 23.8 percent in 2004, 21.6 percent in 2005, and 20.5 percent in 2006. During the 2005-2006 school year, 2,610 students had 19 or more absences. For the 2006-2007 school year, the district reduced the number of students with 19 or more absences to 2,316 students. The district leadership expected and encouraged students to attend classes and stay in school.

2.5. The district collects and uses data on:

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

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district collected and provided quarterly reports concerning attendance to building administrators. These reports were primarily designed to track and monitor student attendance. It was unclear what, if any, process the district used to correlate student attendance with performance. Nevertheless, the district "has accepted as self-evident that [its] excessive absenteeism [would have] serious [and] negative consequences on performance and achievement."

During the reexamination period under review, the district gathered and reviewed student and staff attendance data to determine the students and staff members for whom administrators should be concerned regarding their attendance. Teachers and administrators reported anecdotal information citing individual cases where good student attendance contributed to improved achievement. However, the district did not use a systematic, institutionalized process to evaluate the effect of student and staff attendance on performance or achievement.

Interviewees indicated that district and school staff members entered all student attendance information into a database. School administrators obtained reports on student attendance and took action if necessary. Central office staff members tracked problem areas for student absences. Elementary staff members reported that they saw a correlation between progress on Reading First assessments and student presence in school. At the high school level, staff members explained that they talked about student attendance at faculty meetings and they looked at subgroup data. During special education annual review meetings at all grade levels, the teams checked the special education student's attendance and addressed attendance issues in the student's IEP, if necessary. Special education staff members expressed the opinion that they

could relate special education student attendance to student growth in occupational therapy and physical therapy.

Administrators stated that office staff members at each of the schools kept staff attendance records and that they forwarded staff attendance information to the payroll department each work day. When requested by principals, the human resource department provided principals with staff attendance data from the payroll department, including how often the staff person was absent and for what reason. Principals reported that they monitored these data for patterns, such as absences on Fridays and/or Mondays. They reviewed the attendance records for teachers with excessive absences and determined whether the absences were due to extended illness or an inappropriate use of sick leave. Principals conducted conferences with teachers who were absent for large numbers of days and counseled them if the use of sick leave was inappropriate and/or excessive. The district's contract with teachers allowed for the annual redemption of sick leave in a lump sum cash payment for all employees who used less than five days in a school year. Teachers with no absences redeemed five sick days in a lump sum cash payment, teachers with one absence redeemed four sick days, those with two redeemed three, those with three redeemed two, and those with four redeemed one. Teacher absenteeism remained at acceptable levels during the reexamination period under review and the district continued to pay lump sum cash payments to employees who used few or no sick days. During the 2006-2007 school year, over 900 employees redeemed sick leave and received lump sum cash payments.

6.1. <u>District and school policies and practices require all staff and students to be in attendance.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, Lynn had school district policies to address student and staff attendance. The district had a student attendance policy that was in compliance with the Massachusetts General Laws, and school handbooks that were distributed to students contained the attendance expectations. Student attendance was monitored in each school building. Student attendance was taken on a daily basis by the elementary classroom teachers, by the homeroom teachers, and by the first period teacher at the secondary level. All attendance data were collected

and sent to the attendance center at the central office. These data were entered on Pentamation software. According to 2002 data, attendance rates in the middle schools, the alternative school, and the high schools were significantly below the state averages.

Lynn Classical High School had a call-in system for attendance, and the attendance secretary called students' homes, while an absentee list was generated and guidance counselors followed up if there were excessive student absences. The district had three truant officers. If necessary, these officers made home visits. There was an ongoing issue with mobility and disconnected phone numbers. At the alternative school, a parent was called when the student was absent. When the student returned, the principal had a conference with the student.

Administrators reported that the central administration had made staff attendance a priority and was proactive on staff attendance issues. This was a definite change from past practice. The staff was aware of the attendance policy and that a pattern of unexcused Monday and Friday absences would be followed up by the district administration. Staff members had to call in any absence to their immediate supervisor. As an incentive for good attendance, the district provided a buy back of five days.

During the reexamination period under review, the district had a student attendance policy that applied to all students of elementary, middle, and high schools. Changes in the attendance policy resulted in improvements in the district's average attendance rate and reductions in the district's dropout rate and chronic absenteeism rate, with each of these approaching the state average. The district attendance office and the administration at each of the schools worked together to bring about these improvements.

The district revised the district attendance policy for 2005-2006 and strengthened the policy in the 2006-2007 school year. With this policy, the district differentiated between "justified" or excused absences and "non-justified" or unexcused absences. The attendance policy was the same for all elementary, middle, and high school students. District attendance officers and school administrators monitored attendance daily and quarterly. School administrators and teachers usually made the first contact by phone and/or letter if there were concerns about a student's absences. Administrators targeted non-justified absences and specified consequences to students for excessive non-justified absences in the attendance policy listed in all student handbooks, with

the most serious consequence being the assignment of an 'F' for seven or more non-justified absences in a quarter (reduced from 10 used in 2005-2006).

Along with the school principals, district attendance officers strictly enforced the district's attendance policy and reminded parents and students of the requirement that students be in school. Attendance officers hoped to see improved attendance after parent conferences and/or home visits; however, they took parents to court if there was no improvement. As the district policy became stricter, the district's average attendance rate reported by the DOE improved from 93.3 percent in 2005 to 93.4 percent in 2006 to 94.9 percent in 2007. The percentage of students chronically absent fell from 23.8 percent in 2004 to 21.6 percent in 2005 to 20.5 percent in 2006. The percentage of dropouts fell from 6.0 percent in 2005 to 5.3 percent in 2006. The average number of absences per student was 11 days in 2006. The district's attendance policy for 2007-2008 remained the same as last year's.

Principals and human resources personnel worked together to monitor and act on issues concerning teacher attendance. The teacher contract allowed employees to buy back up to five days of sick leave at the end of each school year. This employee benefit supported acceptable teacher attendance rates in the district.

School specific teacher attendance data provided by the district on EQA Attachment B, which included attendance data on long-term illness, short-term illness, military and jury duty, professional development, and days absent for other reasons, showed that 1,077 classroom teachers averaged approximately 11.3 days absent. Excluding long-term illness, military and jury duty, and professional development days, teachers averaged approximately 8.8 days absent. The teacher contract allowed employees to buy back up to five sick leave days per school year.

According to interviewees, principals monitored and documented poor teacher attendance with the assistance of the human resources and payroll departments. Interviewees stated that the human resources department and the principals reviewed teacher attendance data to determine patterns in attendance. Teacher attendance was a factor in a principal's decision to rehire a teacher. Substitute teachers were the principal method of ensuring continuity of instruction when a teacher called in sick or was absent for another reason. Teachers called the principal at some schools or the assistant principal at others to report their absence. Administrators called

substitute teachers after a teacher called in sick. Interviewees indicated the district had permanent substitutes available at each of the middle and high schools. The district required all substitutes to have at least two years of college, with any substitute working over 20 days required to have a college degree. The district provided no formal training for substitute teachers. At the time of the reexamination, the district had no established method for measuring the relationship between teacher attendance and student achievement.

6.6. The district has policies and practices that assign faculty to students and courses that maximize all faculty talents and skills and promote high levels of student achievement.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the teachers' labor contract required that the district fill staff vacancies using a bumping and bidding procedure, which did not necessarily result in the assigning of faculty members to courses that maximized faculty talents and skills.

For the reexamination period under review, district leadership and department heads during interviews shared the ways that they assigned educators to students, courses, and programs to promote high levels of student achievement. Interviewees reported that department heads assigned teachers to honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes at the high schools based not necessarily on seniority but more on the teacher's desire and ability to teach the class. As an example, a math teacher needed to teach pre-calculus for some time with success before the department head assigned that teacher to an AP or honors course. Department heads also considered that some teachers preferred to teach regular classes and did not want the pressure of AP/honors classes. The department head's goal was to find the "best fit" for each class. Central office staff members stated that they saw the need to provide AP teachers with training on how to improve instruction in AP classes, thus hopefully increasing scores on AP tests.

Central office administrators, counselors, and teachers gave several examples of the encouragement to enroll non-typical students in honors and AP classes. Central office curriculum administrators described the deployment of curriculum and instruction teachers (CITs) and reading specialists to areas of need to improve instruction and achievement.

During the period under reexamination, the district provided academic support for students in an effort to help them succeed in academic programs, such as after-school tutoring and summer school. The district also provided ELL training for over 600 teachers in the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O). District staff members stated that they provided Sheltered Immersion Observation Protocol (SIOP) training to approximately 500 teachers. Despite training as many teachers as possible, central office staff members said SIOP training was optional and that some of the teachers in need of SIOP training did not receive it. They admitted that there were some ELL students in regular education classes with a teacher untrained in sheltered immersion practices. The district implemented the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), the District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action (DIPCA), and had Student Teacher Assistance Teams (STATs) and/or child study teams in each school to help students develop and implement strategies associated with academic success.

8.1. <u>The district has adopted and is implementing a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), which may be a component of the District Improvement Plan (DIP), to assist principals in ensuring that all efforts have been made to meet students' needs in regular education.</u>

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, district interviewees articulated how the DIP and DCAP worked together to guide the district's improvement. The district officials described the DIP as central to the district with the DCAP as a subset of the DIP, which directed their planning to improve student performance.

The district started the PIM process in eight schools in 2003. Teams from these schools were trained to review student data. The district tried to use Pentamation and then COGNOS software to analyze data, but found them difficult to use. The district became more proficient in the use of TestWiz, and CITs were trained to use this program to analyze student data in the summer of 2003. In 2003-2004, the CITs were expected to analyze the data and then discuss them with teachers in each building. In most buildings, they met on a monthly basis for this purpose.

Student assistance teams (also referred to as child study teams) were established. The district officials reported that some schools made stronger efforts in this work than others. The district also indicated to the EQA that teachers were now starting to work in teams rather than in isolation.

It was noteworthy that the principals reported that common planning time was uneven across schools and happened only where principals were able to work out special teacher coverage for art and gym. When asked about the effectiveness of using differentiated instruction in the schools in coordination with the child study teams, out of 30 schools the district described 50 percent as "strong" and 50 percent as "weak," with the strongest teams in the K-5 schools.

During the reexamination period under review, the district used the DCAP to assist principals and teachers in accommodating instruction to the needs of regular education students. The district also created a document entitled Lynn Public Schools District Improvement Plan for Corrective Action 2007. Although a review of the plan did not show a specific reference to the DCAP, it was clear that to meet the goals and successfully implement the strategies listed in the corrective action plan, the district would need to have the components of a DCAP in place. For example, in order to implement the standards-based teaching approaches contained in the math and reading curriculum strategies of the DIPCA, principals and teachers would need to have access to instructional strategies, personnel, and resources described in the DCAP. The DCAP also included strategies to assist regular education teachers in helping ELL students succeed. These DCAP ELL support strategies helped the district implement the SIOP strategies included in the DIPCA.

8.2. The district has a DCAP that is designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in:

a. analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles of all students in the regular classroom, and

b. providing appropriate services and support within the regular education program.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to interviewees, efforts to analyze and accommodate learning styles of all students and provide services and support within the regular education program were only in the beginning stages. At the time of the review, there was no way to assess whether recent changes had been successful because there were no data to support this.

Late in the initial period under review, most efforts were focused on the PIM process and on building capacity within the school district to analyze data and create initial plans. As CITs were distributed among school buildings (with the 'in need of improvement' and 'underperforming' schools receiving additional staff members), leadership teams were established. The child study teams were also organized to study the needs of low-performing students. Interventions were suggested and shared. According to interviews, giving a language dominance test was a standard recommendation to gather baseline data on a child who was not making adequate progress. The district told the EQA that it started to administer the DIBELS in grades 1-3 at quarterly intervals. Prior to 2003, John Collins Writing folders were used in all grades. The Mimosa math portfolios were kept in the elementary grades. According to the principals, they checked these folders, kept documentation, and submitted it to the assistant superintendent.

Only in 2003-2004 did the school district begin to offer a training program in differentiated instruction. According to documentation provided, the principals and two teachers from each of the seven schools 'in need of improvement' and the one 'underperforming' school, one CIT from each school, and five members from the central department of curriculum and instruction attended the training. An Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) consultant was hired to conduct the training. All interviewees agreed that it was too soon to see a change in practice in classrooms, and that it was too soon to tell if this program would be effective in increasing student achievement. Despite the fact that the district had child study teams, language dominance testing for students who were not making adequate progress, John Collins Writing folders, math Mimosa portfolio assessment, and Wilson spelling, these services were not sufficient to establish and sustain significant improvement in student achievement.

During the reexamination period under review, the district designed the DCAP to assist regular education classroom teachers. The DCAP provided to the EQA team listed numerous ways in which the classroom teacher could accommodate the different learning needs of students. Central office interviewees explained that they provided copies of the DCAP to principals to distribute to their teachers. During the site visit, the EQA team saw evidence of teachers addressing learning needs through approaches such as standards-based instruction; Sheltered Immersion Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies for ELL students; literacy strategies including phonics, vocabulary, and word study; modifications for special education students by the regular classroom teacher; John Collins Writing; math strategies including measurement, number sense, computation; and strategies for MCAS.

Interviewees shared the various assessments and practices that teachers used to determine student needs for learning, including the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS); the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) language assessments; Trophies assessments; quarterly benchmark assessments for ELA, math, science, and social studies; PIM leadership team analysis of MCAS data to guide instruction; and the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O). Interviewees reported that some regular classroom teachers with ELL students in their classroom had not received training in SIOP approaches.

The DCAP also assisted the regular classroom teacher in providing appropriate services and support within the regular classroom. Behavioral support services included student study teams; alternative school programs for chronically failing high school students in regular education programs; homework clubs and after-school support; language support classes for ELL students (SEI and transitional); SIOP strategies for ELL students; strategies suggested by RBT training; curriculum and instruction teachers' coaching and mentoring; and assistive technology. Accommodations suggested by the DCAP to support student learning before a referral to special education included providing clear learning objectives; providing active and varied learning experiences; using oral and visual directions for assignments; oral testing; shortening of assignments; allowing additional time for completion of tasks; and providing feedback or reinforcement for desired student behaviors.

8.4. The district engages in a formal, comprehensive analysis of the results from student performance assessments and student needs to determine the content and scope of academic support services that are offered.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, the district did not engage in a formal, systematic, or comprehensive analysis of student results from 2000 to 2002. Interviewees indicated that efforts to look at student performance results were uncoordinated and only focused on patterns and trends in student performance data. Based on such analysis, the John Collins Writing became system-wide in all grades, and Mimosa math was adopted. Most students attended school in their own neighborhood and so the types of programs offered to them were contingent upon what was funded at that school site.

According to the interviewees, in 2003 all students who were eligible had individual student success plans (ISSPs). A consistent form was used across all schools. School teams used TestWiz to look at student subgroup data. All low-performing students had an MCAS test folder. The CITs took a lead role in organizing this work with teachers. Most schools did yearly reviews and obtained a signature from parent(s). In 2003-2004, school-based teams of teachers were learning to use this process to look at student performance. Prior to that time, there was no organized and comprehensive analysis that was evident from interviews.

During the reexamination period under review, the district changed or improved programs based on an analysis of student assessment data and student needs through the PIM process and the curriculum review process. One example of a change in a district program cited by interviewees was the elementary math program. The district decided to change its elementary math program two years ago because of poor elementary MCAS math test results for several years. CITs and classroom teachers also expressed displeasure with the “old” Mimosa Growing with Math program’s presentation of multiple concepts during the same lesson. After a teacher committee studied three math programs, the committee decided to support the change to the Houghton Mifflin mathematics program. The reasons for the selection of the program cited by teachers who

piloted the program in 2006-2007 were: 1) the program was the best fit for meeting the math standards; 2) it provided very clear objectives with a more structured approach; and 3) the ELL, GT, and intervention support materials were of high quality. Central office curriculum leaders decided to add a math intervention teacher in 2007-2008 based on the district's poor math results. They selected the math intervention teacher to lead elementary teachers in mapping the math standards on a day to day basis to improve instruction and assessment. The math intervention teacher planned to design annual yearly progress assessments in math in collaboration with the technology integration specialist. As an example at the secondary level, high school staff members identified entering grade 9 students at risk of failing the MCAS tests and all grade 10 students who failed them, and they assigned these students to MCAS test preparation classes in ELA and/or math, in effect assigning them to additional ELA and math classes.

Central office staff members reported the expansion of alternative education programs as an example of programs that the district improved because of the analysis of student needs. During the period under reexamination, the district offered six alternative education programs. Three of the alternative education programs were stand-alone programs for special education students whose IEPs indicated that they needed a smaller school and classroom setting. These programs were at the Welcoming Elementary School (grades 1-6), the Welcoming Middle School (grades 6-8), and the Lynn Alternative High School (grades 9-12). A fourth alternative stand-alone program was the Career Development Center (CDC) for regular or special education high school students needing vocational and coop programs in a smaller school setting. At the end of 2006-2007, the CDC graduated 40 students, with each of them receiving a diploma and passing the MCAS tests. The Multi-Agency Student Transitional (MAST) program was a stand-alone program for students in grades 9-12 who were under the jurisdiction of the Department of Youth Services (DYS). Housed within a space next door to a DYS facility, the MAST program offered a full academic program along with a vocational program funded by a state grant. In 2006-2007, five students graduated with a diploma and passed the MCAS tests. The sixth alternative education program was the Lynn Evening Education Program (LEEP) designed for dropout recovery. About 200 students attended LEEP during some part of the year, with about 100 students attending nightly. The district designed this program when guidance counselors discovered that many high school students worked during the school day to support their

families. Guidance counselors suggested LEEP to students who were unable to attend high school during the school day. This program was also for students who did not survive or fit into the regular high school program. These students retained their affiliation with their high school and graduated from there.

Staff members reported the initiation of several programs based on the analysis of assessment results. During interviews, administrators and teachers mentioned the use of the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) to place students into leveled middle school reading classes, a practice which classroom observations confirmed. Interviewees also shared that they used TestWiz analysis of MCAS test data to recommend students for before- or after-school math tutoring. Based on MCAS test scores, guidance staff members recommended that certain students take MCAS test preparation classes during summer school.

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

a. identify all students who are not meeting grade-level performance expectations; and

b. provide these students with sufficient supplementary and/or remedial services.

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, kindergartens were full-time, and at the time of the EQA visit the district had a large preschool program. However, funding for full-time kindergarten was cut for 2003-2004 and it became a half-day program. The district administrators and kindergarten teachers believed that this was having a negative impact on students' performance. Those interviewed stated that many kindergarten teachers identified a majority of students in their classes as "not prepared to enter first grade." Administrators told the EQA that "some transitional classes might have needed to be considered in the future." The DIBELS was administered to students in grades K-2 to identify strengths and weaknesses. Prior to this, the district relied heavily on the MCAS testing at the end of grade 3 to assess student progress.

In ELA, the district curriculum from 1999 was under revision. Therefore, teachers generally did not have updated grade-level expectations or benchmarks to inform teacher practice. Establishing benchmarks was ongoing work and was done in conjunction with Gordon College. In math, a revised K-8 curriculum was disseminated to staff members in the fall of 2003. The math curriculum in grades 9-12 was still under revision.

The district administrators indicated that without grade-level benchmarks, it was difficult to determine which students should receive supplementary services and the appropriate services to provide. At the time of the review, the district was working to develop grade-level benchmarks.

During the reexamination period under review, some of the schools in the district began to use assessments to identify students who were below grade level, and after identifying these students, staff members assigned them to services and/or programs. Curriculum leaders stated that many staff members used data to identify student needs and to determine needed services, but they acknowledged that much work remained and that district staff members could improve their use of data to determine student and program needs.

In one example provided by interviewees using this approach, teachers, reading specialists, and/or CITs used the DIBELS to conduct fall and winter assessments of students in grades K-2 in 12 of 19 elementary schools in 2006-2007. Five other elementary schools conducted one DIBELS assessment in 2006-2007, either during fall or winter. District and school staff members used the DIBELS assessment data to determine whether students were at risk, had some risk, or had low risk of failure in reading at their respective grade level. After administering the fall assessments, classroom teachers tailored their reading instruction to address the student needs identified by the assessment, with the neediest students receiving additional literacy support from teachers, reading specialists, or CITs. District staff members provided the EQA team with charts from one elementary school showing a comparison of fall and winter assessment data with noticeable improvement shown. Based on the results of these assessments and interventions in most of the elementary schools in the district, curriculum leaders mandated that all students in grades K-3 in all elementary schools receive DIBELS assessments during the 2007-2008 school year. They also required teachers, reading specialists, and CITs to provide literacy support to all identified at-risk students. This assessment and early intervention became even more important

because the state had cut early childhood education funds for several years. A grant from the Tower Foundation paid for DIBELS training in the summer of 2007 for all the remaining teachers who were untrained.

Interviewees provided another example of the use of data at the secondary level. Guidance counselors reviewed the MCAS scores of entering freshmen and determined those students at risk of failing the grade 10 MCAS ELA or math test. Counselors assigned identified at-risk freshmen to MCAS preparation classes in ELA or math as needed. They also placed students who failed the grade 10 MCAS ELA or math test into these MCAS preparation classes.

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

EQA Rating from 2004: Poor

EQA Rating from 2007: Needs Improvement

Evidence

During the initial period of EQA review, according to DOE data, 56 percent of the students did attain proficiency in reading on the MCAS grade 3 reading test in 2001; in 2002, 51 percent were not 'Proficient;' and in 2003, 52.8 percent were not 'Proficient' in grade 3 reading.

During the reexamination period under review, the district provided a number of early intervention programs and assessments to help students attain proficiency in grade 3 reading. Interviewees indicated that examples of programs used in the district through grade 3 to support reading achievement included the Harcourt Trophies program, Reading First schools, and Bay State Readers Initiative schools. Examples of assessments used in the district through grade 3 included Harcourt Trophies holistic testing, Quick Phonics Screener, Elements of Reading Inventory (ERI), quarterly district ELA assessments, the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GRADE), and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). A state grant supported the Reading First schools and Bay State Readers Initiative schools. The district also provided ELA supplemental educational services at a number of elementary schools with an AYP status of 'corrective action,' 'restructuring,' or 'in need of improvement.' District documents showed supplemental educational services support came from Brainfuse One-to-One Tutoring, the Princeton Review, and Ann's Christian Learning Center.

In spite of early intervention programs offered by the district, a review of grade 3 reading scores showed that in 2005-2006, 40 percent attained proficiency, and in 2006-2007, 41 percent attained proficiency. Statewide, 58 percent of grade 3 students attained proficiency in reading in 2005-2006 and 59 percent did so in 2006-2007. Twelve percent of the district's grade 3 students with disabilities attained proficiency in reading in 2006-2007, compared to 27 percent statewide. In 2006-2007, 25 percent of the district's LEP students attained proficiency, compared to 29 percent statewide. Thirty-six percent of the low-income students in the district attained proficiency, compared to 36 percent statewide. Thirty-three percent of the Hispanic students in the district attained proficiency, compared to 32 percent statewide. Fifty-nine percent of the district's White students attained proficiency, compared to 66 percent statewide.

2007 Indicators

4. The district immediately assessed the skills and needs of entering and mobile students when records were not available or accessible, and made educationally appropriate and effective placements.

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

According to interviewees, all registration for new students took place at the Parent Information Center (PIC) located in the central office/vocational high school complex. In terms of the number of registrations, withdrawals, and transfers, the PIC handled about 6,000 transactions each year.

Prior to starting the registration process, the school nurse/homeless liaison, located next door to the PIC, obtained and checked each student's health records and provided immunizations to students as needed. When the school nurse determined that the student's health records were in order, the nurse sent the parent to PIC to begin the registration process. First, as the parent completed registration paperwork, PIC staff members obtained and assessed the student's school records, including checking closely to see if the student was an identified special education student or English language learner. PIC staff members at times acquired student records by fax after sending a signed parent release form or otherwise "chased records down." The district never delayed a student's enrollment in a school because records had not arrived. Next, PIC staff

members reviewed the home language survey to see if the parent listed a language other than English and, if so, they sent the family to the language support office next store. If language support office staff members determined that the student's English language proficiency qualified the student for ELL support, they asked the parent to sign a form giving permission to place the student in a school with an ELL program. Lastly, PIC staff members checked for special education records for the student. They prepared to send the student to his/her new school if the student had special education records indicating full or partial inclusion services. If the records listed special education services beyond inclusion support, PIC staff members referred the family to the special education office, which employed a full-time parent liaison. Special education staff members reviewed the student's IEP and determined the Lynn school that could best meet that child's needs.

The director of equity/program support for the homeless assigned the student to a school considering the student's needs, racial balance, and class size. The PIC remained open year round and special education staff members assisted PIC staff members with special education issues.

District staff members conducted some assessments as part of the registration process and other assessments to determine student needs after the new student arrived at his/her school. PIC staff members sent all students whose home language survey listed a language other than English to the language support center to assess their English language proficiency. Language support center staff members administered the Rigby ELL assessment to all K-12 students whose native language was not English. For all pre-kindergarten students whose language was not English, staff members administered the Pre-kindergarten Individual Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT). For Spanish-speaking students in grades 1-12 with no English literacy skills, they administered the reading/writing portion of the Language Assessment in Spanish (LAS). These language assessments helped district staff members determine the best placement for students who were learning English. With an influx of immigrants, such as the Somali-Bantu refugees, the district created "newcomer classes" for students who had no formal schooling. In these newcomer classes, teachers taught students the basics of how to acclimate to their new surroundings, including use of lunch trays, bathroom facilities, and school supplies. These students eventually moved from their newcomer class to a sheltered English immersion (SEI) program school.

School staff members reviewed each new student's school records and, if needed, provided further academic assessment. The district mandated for the 2007-2008 school year that staff members administer the DIBELS to all students in grades K-3 in October and January. Two elementary schools, Cobbet and Connery, also conducted DIBELS testing at grades 4-5. The DIBELS assessments identified those students who were at risk in their reading skills. School staff members provided additional support to these high-risk students and monitored the progress of these students every two weeks. Teachers and/or CITs at each elementary school assessed any new students who arrived during the course of the school year with the DIBELS and assigned any high-risk students to two-week progress monitoring. Using these assessments, district teachers and staff members determined the preK-12 language support needs and K-3 reading needs of every new student, even when there were no school records for some of these students. District and school staff members did not report the use of any other assessments for new students upon their arrival. Teachers and administrators reported that they referred struggling students, including new students, to the student teacher assistance team (STAT) or the child study team to determine the strategies to use to help the student be successful in school.

5. The district provided programs and services to alleviate the adverse effects of poverty (including delayed language development, lack of readiness skills, low self-esteem and aspirations, high mobility, and family instability) on students' social, emotional, and intellectual development.

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

District and school staff members stated that many students and their families lived in difficult circumstances. DOE statistics for the 2006-2007 school year indicated that the percentage of low-income students was 75.1 percent. An internal statistical analysis conducted by district staff members determined an average student mobility rate of 24 percent for the district during the 2006-2007 school year. Interviews and documentation disclosed that in 2006-2007 the district also had 1,313 homeless students, including 238 students in foster homes, 116 unaccompanied youth, 153 students in shelters, and 806 students "doubled up" in the residence of another family. In 2005-2006, there were 1,341 homeless students. Interviewees stated that many of these transient and mobile students included students placed in the district by the departments of social

and youth services. The district had a school nurse/homeless coordinator at the PIC who ensured that the district followed the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act. The act defined homeless students as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. PIC and school staff members tried to minimize the effects of mobility on students by allowing them to stay in their present school through the last grade even if the family moved to another part of the city. Interviewees stated that PIC staff members worked diligently and with great success to acquire student records, which allowed the district to determine placement and the need for particular educational services for each student, especially services for special education students and English language learners.

The district provided many programs and used many strategies to support the students and their families who lived in challenging circumstances. Lynn offered an early childhood program that served low-income and special needs students ages 3 and 4. The early childhood program admitted regular education, special education, ELL, and other at-risk students and kept a few seats open in classrooms so that space was available to any new arrival who qualified for the program. Homeless students received free transportation, school materials, teen pregnancy counseling, mentoring programs, summer programs such as Camp Learn, and coordinated collaboration between schools, shelters, and community agencies. The families of homeless students also received crisis intervention, advocacy, and clinical services, including the Lynn Academy, Adolescent Group Home, Latency Age Group Home, and Short Term Assessment Rapid Reintegration (STARR). Other homeless family supports included counseling, childcare, job training, and basic needs services provided through Catholic Charities; day care and after-school programs through the YMCA; and medical, mental health, and dental care through the Lynn Community Health Center. Many other services were provided to families through the support of the Boys and Girls Club, Girls Incorporated, Serving People in Need (SPIN), Lynn Economic Opportunity, Lynn Non-Profit Business Association, Lynn Housing Authority, Department of Transitional Assistance, and Department of Social Services.

6. The district directly involved parents and community organizations in the education of their children through their regular communication and outreach, and facilitated their participation by such means as holding meetings and events at convenient times and locations and providing translators, transportation, and child care.

EQA Rating from 2007: Satisfactory

Evidence

District and school staff members designed the Parent Information Center (PIC) and activities in their schools to encourage parent involvement while using many strategies to make it easier for parents to participate in these events. The PIC, a department in the district that the EQA team saw as a model of openness and transparency, was the first contact that most parents had with the district. In advertising the registration process to parents, the PIC utilized a parent outreach employee and provided a newsletter in January, followed by brochures, which they sent home to parents. PIC staff members also broadcast cable television announcements and ConnectEd phone messages advertising student registration. They also arranged translations of all the registration materials for parents in as many of the 40 languages represented in the community as they could. The staff maintained an open door for parents to visit the PIC to seek assistance, including opportunities for parents to revisit their choices in the selection of programs such as the ELL program. In interviews, district staff members expressed concern that too many parents chose to keep their children out of the ELL program, usually because they did not want their children to ride the bus to the ELL program school. PIC and language support center staff members did all they could to communicate effectively with parents and minimize "opting out" of the ELL program. School staff members reiterated the importance of using the ConnectEd phone messaging system. Several gave examples of the effectiveness of the ConnectEd system, including an example of a special education parent meeting attended by up to 75 parents in 2006-2007. District special education staff members held the same type of special education parent meeting the previous year with only four or five parents attending. The only difference between the two events was that special education staff members used ConnectEd to advertise the meeting with the better attendance. Early childhood staff members reported improved parent attendance at school events by offering free transportation, holding training at different times during the day and evening, and providing free childcare. Other interviewees also mentioned one or more of the strategies mentioned that resulted in improved parent attendance. The district paid

for the free transportation and childcare using grant funds. Parents also attended parent conferences and school events, volunteered in schools, and at least one parent served on every PIM team.

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														

Rather than reexamine the district only on those 2004 indicators on which the district was rated 'Poor' or 'Unsatisfactory,' the EQA conducted a full examination of the district on Standard VI covering the period 2004-2007.

VI. Financial and Asset Management Effectiveness and Efficiency

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

Standard Rating: Satisfactory

Findings:

- The City of Lynn lacked adequate financial resources from state and local sources to address issues regarding the maintenance of schools and school safety and security.
- The district used student achievement data to develop the budget. The budget process involved the participation of all relevant stakeholders and included input from principals and school Performance Improvement Mapping teams.
- The school district was above its net school spending requirement and above the state average per pupil cost, and the total budget increased each year.
- The city and the school system did not have a formal written agreement regarding the indirect costs for the school system related to services provided by the city. The business

manager provided a written agreement that was signed by the superintendent and awaited the mayor's review and approval.

- During the period under review, the school system did not have a formal review process to determine cost effectiveness of all programs, initiatives, and activities, but as part of the PIM process programs and initiatives were reviewed on a school and district basis to assure cost effectiveness and identify student needs.
- The school district used the city's MUNIS financial accounting system, which integrated the school district program and financial information.
- Lack of intercom systems and external door security were identified as problem areas in many of the schools. Many schools lacked intrusion detection systems, and ID badges were not used in the schools. Most schools did not conform to the federal disabilities act regarding access for disabled individuals.
- The district contracted for the development of a capital improvement plan that recommended the renovation and the replacement of many of the existing school facilities.

Summary

School committee policy defined the budget process and gave the superintendent the responsibility for budget preparation. The budget process commenced with the projection of student enrollment for each school in the system. The district connected enrollment, budgetary, and staffing data and used them as an integral part of the budget process. The district used the goals of the DIPCA to develop the budget with the aim of improving student achievement. The school committee and the superintendent, as part of the budget process, were committed to small class sizes in all of the schools. The supplies and materials portion of the budget was based on a per pupil allocation in order to assure equity. The budget process started in February and concluded in August followed by school committee approval of the superintendent's recommended budget. Each of the principals reviewed districtwide trends in making budget decisions and presented their budget recommendations to the administrative team. The superintendent held meetings with the principals to review their budgets and developed recommendations for presentation to the school committee. The budget document included information on state and federal funds. The recommended budget was submitted to the school

committee's budget subcommittee for review followed by submission to the full committee. There were several iterations of the budget by the superintendent based on projected available city funds. The mayor prepared the city's budget that included the school system's budget allocation. The school system budget would be revised to meet the mayor's recommendation. Following a public hearing in August, the school committee voted the budget followed by submission to the mayor and city council.

In interviews with the superintendent and the business manager, it was stated that the district required additional special needs staffing as well as additional funding for capital expenditures to address maintenance, renovation, and modernization of school facilities. Lynn exceeded the net school spending (NSS) requirements during the period under reexamination, and in FY 2005 the per pupil expenditure exceeded the state average. The city relied heavily on Chapter 70 aid and other state and federal grant revenue. The school district received approximately $20 million in state, federal, and private grants that supplemented the budget. The district had limited financial resources, and the city had a low tax base. The district transferred the custodial and maintenance functions to the city in order to improve efficiency and reduce costs. The school budget was 54.5 percent of the total city budget. The budget and the instructional costs increased during the reexamination period.

The district had a long-term capital plan that recommended repairs and maintenance of existing school buildings (many of the schools are over 50 years old). An analysis of the schools showed a need for construction of new schools and a need for program spaces (science labs, special needs space, and small group meeting spaces) in the elementary and middle schools. The Merrimack Education Center (MEC) reviewed enrollment projections and the school facilities of the district, which showed a significant need for additional classrooms and space at the elementary and middle schools. Because of deferred maintenance, a need existed to repair and renovate many of the schools and upgrade systems, such as HVAC and electrical systems. A report by Strategic Building Solutions (SBS) detailed four recommendations for capital expenditures that would improve the schools. The superintendent recommended the option that proposed renovating and expanding the middle schools and addressing repairs in each school. The district transferred the maintenance and custodial responsibility to the inspectional services

department of the city. Interviews with the staff members indicated improvement in maintenance of the schools as a result of the change.

Indicators

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

In terms of budget preparation responsibility, school committee policy indicated that "the superintendent engaged in advance planning with the staff and community involvement in order to achieve the greatest educational return and contribution to the educational program in relation to dollar expended." The district had a corrective action plan that served as the district's blueprint to improve student achievement. The goals of the plan formed the basis for the budget development. The director of equity and program support provided each principal an organization plan that projected student enrollment, class size, and staffing. The Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process was a component of the budget process, and district administrators used it to help develop school budgets. Each principal had an opportunity to present his/her budget at organizational meetings with central office administrators, such as the deputy superintendents, business manager, executive director of curriculum, and the director of equity and program support.

The superintendent reviewed the budget with the administrative team based on the goals and priorities of the school system. Individual teachers had limited input into the budget process. The supplies and materials budget for each school was based on a per pupil cost basis because of court ordered desegregation.

The budget document consisted of four years of historical data and the superintendent's recommendation. The proposed budget contained the philosophy and goals of the district. The document included projected revenue, appropriation funds, total organization including external grants, organization and class size management plan–salaries, and management plan–non-salary.

The budget document contained several versions because of changing city revenue projections during the development of the budget.

The budget subcommittee of the school committee met and reviewed the budget. Sometime in June or July, the mayor provided the recommended budget amount for the school system to the superintendent. The superintendent used this figure to finalize the budget. The school committee held a public hearing in August followed by a vote to approve the budget. The budget was then sent to the mayor and city council for review and approval.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district used a formal process to analyze aggregated and disaggregated data. In interviews with the superintendent and the business manager, it was indicated that one component of the budget development process was the use of the PIM process, which analyzed on an ongoing basis aggregated and disaggregated student achievement and assessment data for all students. The budget process included an analysis of MCAS test scores and other student assessment data to initiate and modify programs. Lynn's schools identified as 'in need of improvement' or 'underperforming' received special attention in improving student achievement during the budget process. The deputy superintendent and executive director of curriculum reviewed system-wide math data trends in making budget decisions. As a result, $700,000 was allocated for elementary school math textbooks. According to interviews with administrators, as a result of data analysis and to improve student achievement the district implemented a number of new programs, including Harcourt Trophies reading and Calendar Math.

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: Need Improvement

Evidence

Interviewees indicated that the budget and supplemental funding had not been adequate to meet the educational needs of Lynn's students. Interviewees stated that as an urban and poor city, Lynn lacked the ability to raise taxes beyond the limitation of Proposition 2 1/2. The city relied heavily on Chapter 70 aid and other funding sources that included state, federal, and private grants. Total full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers decreased from 1,125.1 in FY 2004 to 1,111.7 in FY 2005 and to 1,095.9 in FY 2006. The superintendent stated that the district's priority was to maintain low class size at the elementary school level. The district received a $1.5 million grant to implement a full-day kindergarten. The budget in FY 2005 increased by 1.9 percent (from $105,285,468 to $107,253,807), in FY 2006 by 4.4 percent (from $107,253,807 to $111,951,000), and in FY 2007 by 2.2 percent (from $111,951,000 to $114,955,235). During FY 2007, the district transferred the custodial and maintenance function to the city to improve the efficiency accompanied by a possible reduction in costs, although the transfer of the funding from the school system to the city did not occur until the FY 2008 budget. The End of the Year Pupil and Financial Report (EOYR) showed that the instructional expenditures for FY 2004, FY 2005, and FY 2006 were $75,873,831, $77,289,229, and $78,598,197, respectively, for a 3.5 percent increase over this period. The city treasurer/chief financial officer (CFO) prepared a budget analysis which showed that the school budget was 54.5 percent of the city budget and that approximately 20 percent of the tax rate was attributed to the school district. The treasurer/CFO stated that the city had a low tax base. The Department of Revenue (DOR) reported that the school expenditures were approximately 48 percent of the total city expenditures. The school district received $19,123,180 in state, federal, and private grants for FY 2007. Interviews with principals and instructional staff members indicated a need for additional staffing, although interviewees stated the schools had adequate supplies and materials. Classroom observations at

the vocational high school noted the lack of state-of-the-art equipment in some of vocational shops.

The treasurer/CFO stated the city had limited financial resources and had experienced rising health care costs for employees as well increased pension and energy costs. The city had approximately $5,000,000 in free cash and a limited stabilization fund.

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

During the period under review, the school system did not have a formal review process to determine cost effectiveness of all programs, initiatives, and activities. However, during the PIM process, program and initiatives were reviewed on a school and district basis to assure cost effectiveness and identify student needs. The maintenance and custodial staffs were transferred to the city to improve efficiency and to provide possible cost savings. The district reviewed special needs out-of-district placements to determine if the district could develop in-district programs. Other examples of cost saving measures included moving the middle school alternative program to the high school to save on salaries, and closing a middle school and using the savings to bring back all-day kindergarten. The food service program was not self-sustaining and required a $287,000 subsidy by the city. The current price of a meal was $1.55 and had not increased for several years. The school committee did not increase the meal cost because of the low income levels of district families. The school system did not have user fees.

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

The business manager stated the school department did not have a signed written memorandum for indirect costs with the city. An agreement, showing the manner of calculation, was developed for FY 2007 and FY 2008 and signed by the superintendent and awaited the mayor's signature. The business manager stated that the same procedures and allocations were used in prior years. The FY 2005 Audit Report On Applying Agreed-upon Procedures Over Compliance Applicable to Massachusetts School Districts' End-of-Year Pupil and Financial Report stated that "the City of Lynn and the Lynn Public Schools (LPS) do not have a written agreement as to the reporting of municipal expenses on behalf of the School Department. The city provided the school system with a list of expenses paid by the city. We were unable to verify health insurance costs to back up the city." The business office annually reviewed the city charges. The school system's manager of financial operations incorporated the indirect charges information submitted by the city into the EOYR.

6. <u>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.</u>

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The district funded the budget above the required local contribution for the period under review. From fiscal year 2004 to 2007, the local contribution increased by 13.0 percent ($28,012,196 to $31,653,289). Lynn's required NSS increased by 8.9 percent ($124,313,587 to $135,404,638) for the same time period. Chapter 70 aid increased by 7.7 percent from FY 2004 to FY 2007 ($96,301,391 to $103,751,349). In FY 2005, Lynn exceeded the required NSS by $1,853,989 or 1.5 percent. In FY 2006, the district exceeded the required NSS by $8,569,936 or 6.6 percent. In FY 2007, the district exceeded the required NSS by $4,880,898 or 3.6 percent.

Lynn received a 1.4 percent increase in Chapter 70 aid in FY 2005, a 2.6 percent increase in FY 2006, and a 3.6 percent increase in FY 2007. Foundation enrollment decreased from 14,221 students to 13,762, a decrease of 459 students or 3.2 percent, from FY 2005 to FY 2007. Lynn had a peak foundation enrollment of 15,201 in FY 2003, followed by a decrease of 1,439 students as of FY 2007. Total instructional costs increased by 3.6 percent ($75,873,831 to

$78,598,197) from FY 2004 to FY 2006 while city indirect expenditures for FY 2006 were $43,833,984. The district spent all appropriated funds except for approximately $30,000 in FY 2006. Lynn's per pupil expenditure was $11,861 in FY 2006, compared to the state average of $11,211.

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: Need improvement

Evidence

Interviewees stated that the district submitted the EOYR on time after the DOE granted waivers. The district submitted state and federal grant reports in a timely manner. The director of equity/program support indicated that out of $19 to $20 million in federal grants, the district returned approximately $30,000.

According to interviewees, financial reports were provided to the school committee periodically. The MUNIS financial system provided the line item budget as voted by the school committee and kept track of expenditures. The reports consisted of original appropriation, transfers, revised budget, year-to-date expenditures, encumbrances, and available budget monies. Individual reports were prepared when requested by school committee members. The school committee signed the warrants showing the expenditures for the period. Some school committee members asked the school committee to sign for them. Principals and directors had access to their budgets and expenditures. They also received reports of their organizations that included staffing. The school committee meetings were not televised and the public typically received information on the meetings from newspaper accounts. The superintendent disseminated information regarding education in the district through a variety of organizations, such as the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Lynn Business Foundation.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The school district used the city's MUNIS financial accounting system, which integrated the school district program and financial information. The business manager stated that the system provided forecast mechanisms to assure that spending did not exceed the approved budget. The Automated Data Processing (ADP) company managed the school's payroll system. A crosswalk integrated the payroll into the city's MUNIS system. The principals and district administrators prepared requisitions and submitted them to the business office for approval. The business office forwarded them to the city purchasing department, where they were converted to purchase orders and encumbered to the appropriate account using the MUNIS system. The business manager stated that the system would not issue purchase orders unless there were sufficient funds in the account. Transfers were required if there were insufficient funds. Appropriations were divided into three funds: regular education, special needs, and athletics. School committee approval was needed for a transfer from one fund to another. School committee approval was required for transfer of money from a salary account to non-salary account.

The business manager stated that only purchase orders were encumbered. A review of payroll and purchasing systems showed there were control procedures in place to assure spending was in conformance with the budget. The MUNIS system provided the principals and administrators access to their budgets and expenditures at the school and district levels to accurately track spending and other financial transactions.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The school system actively pursued and acquired local, state, federal, and private grants. The school district employed a director of foundation, state, and federal fund grants and regulatory compliance who had the responsibility for all of the grant funded programs, including preparation and monitoring of all state and federal grants. The director and affected schools and departments prepared and submitted state, federal, and private grants applications. In FY 2007, the school district received $19,123,180 in state, federal, and private grants of which $952,536 were private funds (not used for salaries) and $666,971 were competitive grants. The district received $730,100 for all-day kindergarten implementation and $6,495,565 in Title I funds. The director and the responsible grant manager monitored state, federal, and private grants using the MUNIS financial system.

All monies collected at schools were counted at the respective schools and sent to the central office, where they were consolidated and sent to the bank via a Wells Fargo armored truck. The athletic director collected game receipts and submitted them to the city treasurer's office. The treasurer's office reconciled all deposits. The school cafeteria accounts had not been self-sustaining and required an appropriation of $287,000. Interviewees stated that the price for a lunch was $1.55 for many years and the school committee was reluctant to increase the lunch because of low income levels of families in Lynn.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The business manager had retired at the end of the FY 2007 fiscal year, but agreed to stay on as a consultant to the district until a new business manager was hired. The business manager had DOE school business manager certification. The city had the responsibility for all procurement. EQA examiners were unable to determine if the city purchasing department had personnel with MCPPO credentials.

The city purchasing agent, as the chief procurement officer for the city, developed and administered the purchasing for the school district in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 30B. Purchase requisitions were prepared by the school district that required approval by the business manager and then were sent to the city purchasing department for the preparation and approval of purchase orders. The city purchasing department had the responsibility for obtaining items that required bidding. All spending over $4 million required voter approval. The city contracted with Malanson and Heath to perform the audit of the school district for the past two years. Interviewees stated that the comptroller had the responsibility for tracking assets above $25,000 in accordance with GASB 34. The MUNIS financial accounting system monitored and tracked city and district financial activities to assure that they were accurate and current.

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

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The business manager stated that the school system used SchoolDude to track maintenance activities and to process work orders. During FY 2006, the district transferred the custodial and maintenance function of the schools to the inspectional services department of the city. Interviews with staff members indicated that maintenance and custodial services had improved because of the transfer. Lack of funds resulted in the failure to address the maintenance needs of the schools. EQA examiners conducted site visits at 13 schools. The conditions ranged from new schools to schools that were quite old and in need of repair. Most schools visited by the EQA examiners were clean, well lit, and well maintained based on the available funds. The district expended $5 million from a $10 million city bond issue to repair and install roofs and address HVAC problems. The new Lynn Classical High School had structural problems that required additional funding to repair. The district received an insurance settlement from the insurance company of the school's architect, which the district would use for repairs.

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

Rating: Satisfactory

Evidence

The Lynn Public Schools included 19 elementary schools, four middle/junior high schools, and five high schools. Three of the high schools had undergone a major renovation, additions, and/or facility replacement with proceeds of $95.6 million from bonds issued in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Each of the projects is receiving 90 percent of approved project costs and interest from the state.

Authorized and unused debt existed for school construction in the amount of $94,500,000. The use of these monies was contingent upon the receipt of 90 percent reimbursement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The school district submitted a request to the MSBA for 80 percent reimbursement for four new elementary schools, but was asked to "pick one of the schools" for reimbursement. A bond issued for $10 million was voted by the community, of which $7,751,244 was used for capital repairs such as roof repairs and boiler replacement. An amount of $1 million was allocated for Lynn Classical High School repairs to supplement the insurance settlement.

The district commissioned the Merrimack Education Center (MEC) to address the needs of the elementary and middle schools. Completed in August 2005, MEC conducted a Long-range Enrollment Projections and Programmatic Space Analysis. The report identified space needs, including the modernization of classrooms. In addition, the district contracted with Strategic Building Solutions (SBS), which developed a report entitled Lynn Public Schools Conditions Assessment and Planning, dated October 19, 2006. SBS prepared another report entitled Lynn Public Schools Conditions Assessment and Planning School Committee briefing dated March 8, 2007. The progress report reviewed by EQA examiners dated June 30, 2007 "stated that the last report by SBS had four options, with the superintendent recommending the first option, which proposed: a) renovating and expanding the middle schools; b) addressing outstanding building repair needs at each school; c) providing incremental spaces as identified by MEC; and d) utilizing the Fecteau-Leary Building as swing space. The estimated cost of this option was $164.5 million.

13. <u>The schools were secure and had systems to ensure student safety.</u>

Rating: Needs Improvement

Evidence

The district had at its goal "that all students' education is in a learning environment that is safe, drug free and conducive to learning." With the assistance of GE Security, a limited security assessment threat report was prepared and used as a blueprint to prepare a safe and drug free environment in the schools.

The district hired a police officer as the school security and emergency planning liaison. An emergency operational council recently met and discussed safety issues. The district had a crisis response manual that was available in each classroom. According to a report by SBS, “Life safety systems are not adequate by today’s standards including sprinkler, fire alarms, exit signs and emergency light upgrades.” According to the SBS report, safety issues existed with the electrical system because it did not meet current standards and because of the need for distribution upgrades to meet additional capacity.

Interviewees indicated that each of the high schools had a camera monitoring system. Middle schools did not have camera security systems with the exception of the Marshall Middle School, which had a full security system. The three high schools and the Marshall Middle School had a security platform from GE that allowed monitoring of the three high schools and the Marshall Middle School. Elementary schools did not have camera monitoring systems.

The district used E-rate reimbursement to install a Voice IP system on the computers in the classrooms of several schools, which allowed public address and telephone systems to operate from the computers. Not all the schools had functioning security monitoring or intercom systems. The business manager stated that the superintendent had committed to continue to improve school security.

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. The EQA computes three indices: the English Language Arts Proficiency Index (EPI), the Math Proficiency Index (MPI), and the Science and Technology/Engineering Index (SPI).

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 2007 MCAS tests in a given content area:

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

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

The EPI is calculated using the ELA results for all students taking the ELA exam. The MPI is calculated using the math results for all students taking the math exam. The SPI is calculated 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 1998 – FY 2007

	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
FY 98	13,898	5.1	96,516,549	7.3	24,382,252	66,801,757	15.9	91,184,009	10.6	91,323,644	10.7	139,635	0.2
FY 99	14,161	1.9	101,047,921	4.7	23,692,232	74,680,862	11.8	98,373,094	7.9	99,177,442	8.6	804,348	0.8
FY 00	14,187	0.2	101,458,677	0.4	25,288,242	77,549,370	3.8	102,837,612	4.5	102,399,622	3.2	-437,990	-0.4
FY 01	14,677	3.5	108,239,765	6.7	26,363,788	82,313,967	6.1	108,677,755	5.7	109,012,710	6.5	334,955	0.3
FY 02	15,114	3.0	122,161,932	12.9	27,143,699	95,036,457	15.5	122,180,156	12.4	122,206,645	12.1	26,489	0.0
FY 03	15,201	0.6	126,285,539	3.4	28,041,963	98,243,576	3.4	126,285,539	3.4	128,185,629	4.9	1,900,090	1.5
FY 04	14,667	-3.5	124,313,587	-1.6	28,012,196	96,301,391	-2.0	124,313,587	-1.6	127,309,130	-0.7	2,995,543	2.4
FY 05	14,221	-3.0	126,500,171	1.8	28,851,969	97,648,202	1.4	126,500,171	1.8	128,354,160	0.8	1,853,989	1.5
FY 06	13,806	-2.9	129,974,090	2.7	29,799,249	100,174,841	2.6	129,974,090	2.7	138,544,026	7.9	8,569,936	6.6
FY 07	13,762	-0.3	135,144,696	4.0	31,653,289	103,751,349	3.6	135,404,638	4.2	140,285,536	1.3	4,880,898	3.6

	Dollars Per Foundation Enrollment			Percentage of Foundation			
	Foundation Budget	Ch 70 Aid	Actual NSS	Ch 70	Required NSS	Actual NSS	Chapter 70 Aid as Percent of Actual NSS
FY 98	6,945	4,807	6,571	69.2	94.5	94.6	73.1
FY 99	7,136	5,274	7,004	73.9	97.4	98.1	75.3
FY 00	7,152	5,466	7,218	76.4	101.4	100.9	75.7
FY 01	7,375	5,608	7,427	76.0	100.4	100.7	75.5
FY 02	8,083	6,288	8,086	77.8	100.0	100.0	77.8
FY 03	8,308	6,463	8,433	77.8	100.0	101.5	76.6
FY 04	8,476	6,566	8,680	77.5	100.0	102.4	75.6
FY 05	8,895	6,866	9,026	77.2	100.0	101.5	76.1
FY 06	9,414	7,256	10,035	77.1	100.0	106.6	72.3
FY 07	9,820	7,539	10,194	76.8	100.2	103.8	74.0

Foundation enrollment is reported in October of the prior fiscal year (e.g., FY 07 enrollment = Oct 1, 2005 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.