

District Review Report

Monson Public Schools

Review conducted February 12-15, 2013

Center for District and School Accountability
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education



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Published April 2013

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Monson Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

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

Districts reviewed in the 2012-2013 school year included those classified into Level 3¹ of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance in each of the state's six regions: Greater Boston, Berkshires, Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Pioneer Valley. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Monson district was conducted from February 12 to February 15, 2013. The site visit included 26.25 hours of interviews and focus groups with over 52 stakeholders ranging from school committee members to district administrators and school staff to teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted 2 focus groups with 12 elementary school teachers, 8 middle school teachers, and 4 high school teachers. The visit began one day later than originally scheduled because the school was closed on Monday, February 11, because of a snowstorm.

¹ Districts selected were in Level 3 in school year 2012-2013; all served one or more schools among the lowest 20 percent of schools statewide serving common grade levels pursuant to 603 CMR 2.05(2)(a). The districts with the lowest aggregate performance and least movement in Composite Performance Index (CPI) in their respective regions were selected for review from among those districts not exempt under Chapter 15, Section 55A. A district was exempt if another comprehensive review was completed or scheduled within nine months of the review window.

The team also conducted visits to each of the district's three schools. The team observed classes at Monson High School, Granite Valley Middle School, and Quarry Hill Community School using ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, expenditures, and student performance. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 31 classrooms in 3 schools. The team collected data using an instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

Monson has a selectman form of government with three selectmen. There are five members of the school committee; they are supposed to be elected, but most of them have been appointed by the board of selectmen because there were no candidates running for office. Two members will complete their terms in 2013, one in 2014, and two in 2015. Two students also serve on the school committee and participated in the interim superintendent search.

The current superintendent is an interim superintendent and has been in the position since December 13, 2012. Since 2002, Monson has had six superintendents: three interim and three permanent. The district leadership team includes the interim superintendent, the director of curriculum and instruction, the director of pupil personnel services, and the director of business and facilities. Vice-principals occasionally participate. The district also has three directors in each of the following areas: technology, transportation, and food service. The district has three principals for its three schools and one vice-principal at each school. There are 92.2 teachers in the district.

As of October 1, 2012, 1,255 students were enrolled in the district's three schools:

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

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Quarry Hill Community School	Elementary	PK-4	469
Granite Valley Middle	Middle	5-8	427
Monson Innovation High School	High	9-12	359
Totals	3	PK-12	1,255

Student population in the district declined by 14 percent from 2008 to 2012, a drop of 210 students during that time: 1,525 students in 2008, 1,477 students in 2009, 1,419 students in 2010, 1,383 students in 2011, and 1,315 students in 2012. The declines took place at the high- and elementary-school levels (18 percent and 21 percent, respectively), while there was little variation in middle-school enrollment.

Monson student demographics for the 2011–2012 school year are different from the demographics statewide (see Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B), with fewer students who are not white, fewer who are English language learners, and fewer whose first language is not English. As of 2011–2012, the proportion of white students is 95 percent, compared to 67 percent in the state, African-American/Black students make up 1 percent of enrollment, compared to 8

percent in the state, and Hispanic/Latino students make up 2 percent of enrollment, compared to 16 percent in the state. English language learners make up 1 percent of the student population, compared to 7 percent in the state, and students whose first language is not English make up 2 percent of the total enrollment, compared to 17 percent in the state. The proportion of students with disabilities is 14 percent, compared to 17 percent in the state, and the proportion of students from low-income families is 27 percent, compared to 35 percent statewide.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were \$11,172 in fiscal year 2011, lower than the median of \$11,853 for K-12 districts of similar size (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](#)). See Table 3 for in-district per-pupil expenditures for fiscal years 2010-2012. Net school spending has been slightly above what is required, as shown in Table B2 in Appendix B.

In June 2011, Monson experienced extensive damage from a tornado. According to the town administrator, 51 homes were completely lost and another 240 were damaged, and while the schools were not damaged many families were left homeless.

Student Performance

Information about student performance includes: (1) the accountability and assistance level of the district, including the reason for the district's level classification; (2) the progress the district and its schools are making toward narrowing proficiency gaps as measured by the Progress and Performance Index (PPI); (3) English language arts (ELA) performance and growth; (4) mathematics performance and growth; (5) science and technology/engineering (STE) performance; (6) annual dropout rates and cohort graduation rates; and (7) suspension rates. Data is reported for all student groups meeting minimum N-size requirements (20 in the aggregate; 30 for subgroups). Four-and two-year trend data are provided when possible, in addition to areas in the district and/or its schools demonstrating potentially meaningful gains or declines over these periods. Data on student performance is also available in Appendix B. In both this section and Appendix B, the data reported is the most recent available.

1. The district is Level 3 because the Quarry Hill Community School is Level 3.²

- A. Quarry Hill Community School is among the lowest performing 20% of subgroups for students with disabilities.³
- B. The district's 3 schools place between the 24th percentile and the 43rd percentile based on each school's four-year (2009-2012) achievement and improvement trends relative to other schools serving the same or similar grades: Quarry Hill Community School (24th percentile of elementary schools); Granite Valley Middle (33rd percentile of middle schools); and Monson Innovation High School (43rd percentile of high schools).

² Due to the district's Level 3 classification, it received a concurrent determination of need for special education technical assistance or intervention of "Needs Technical Assistance (NTA)." This serves as an indication that while areas of the district's performance may be positive, one or more schools (or, in the case of a single school district, the district as a whole) may be experiencing poor outcomes for students with disabilities and/or are having compliance issues.

³ A district is classified into the level of its lowest-performing school unless it has been placed in Level 4 or 5 by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education independent of the level of its schools.

2. The district is not sufficiently narrowing proficiency gaps.

- A. The district as a whole is not considered to be making sufficient progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps. This is because the 2012 cumulative PPI for all students and for high needs⁴ students is less than 75 for the district. The district's cumulative PPI⁵⁶ is 61 for all students and 58 for high needs students. The district's cumulative PPI for reportable subgroups are: 63 (low income students), 45 (students with disabilities), and 61 (White students).

3. The district's English language arts (ELA) performance is low⁷ relative to other districts and its growth⁸ is moderate.⁹ There were variations in school performance.

⁴The high needs group is an unduplicated count of all students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and Former ELL students, or low income students (eligible for free/reduced price school lunch).

⁵The PPI combines multiple measures of performance data (achievement, improvement, and graduation and dropout rates) over multiple years into a single number. All districts, schools, and student subgroups receive an *annual PPI* based on improvement from one year to the next and a *cumulative PPI* between 0 and 100 based on four years of data. A district's, school's or subgroup's cumulative PPI is the average of its annual Progress and Performance Index scores over the four most recent MCAS administrations, weighting recent years the most (1-2-3-4). A cumulative PPI is calculated for a group if it has at least three annual PPIs. If a group is missing an annual PPI for one year, that year is left out of the weighting (e.g., 1-X-3-4). While a group's annual PPI can exceed 100 points, the cumulative PPI is always reported on a 100-point scale.

⁶The cumulative PPI is a *criterion-referenced* measure of a district or school's performance relative to its own targets, irrespective of the performance of other districts or schools. Conversely, school percentiles are *norm-referenced* because schools are being compared to other schools across the state that serve the same or similar grades.

⁷All districts, schools, and subgroups are expected to halve the gap between their level of performance in the year 2011 and 100 percent proficient by the 2016-17 school year in ELA, mathematics, and STE. The Composite Performance Index (CPI), a measure of the extent to which a group of students has progressed towards proficiency, is the state's measure of progress towards this goal. In this report the 2012 CPI is used to compare the performance of districts, schools, and grades in a particular subject for a given year. For districts, for each level of school, and for each grade the CPIs are ordered from lowest to highest and then divided into five equal groups (quintiles) with the corresponding descriptions: "very high", "high", "moderate", "low" or "very low". In their assignment to quintiles single-school districts are treated as schools rather than districts. Quintiles for grades are calculated two ways: using a ranking of all districts' CPIs for a particular grade, and using a ranking of all schools' CPIs for a particular grade. CPI figures derive from the MCAS Report on the Department's School and District Profiles website: http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/mcas.aspx.

⁸Massachusetts uses student growth percentiles (SGP) to measure how much a student's or group of students' achievement has grown or changed over time. At the student level, student growth percentiles measure progress by comparing changes in a student's MCAS scores to changes in MCAS scores of other students with similar achievement profiles ("academic peers"). Growth at the district, school, and subgroup levels are reported as median SGPs - the middle score when the individual SGPs in a group are ranked from highest to lowest. Median SGPs are reported for ELA and mathematics. In contrast to the CPI, which describes a group's progress toward proficiency based on the group's current level of achievement, the median SGP describes a group's progress in terms of how the achievement of the students in the group changed relative to the prior year as compared to their academic peers. A group demonstrates "moderate" or "typical" growth if the group's median SGP is between the 41st and 60th percentiles.

⁹For ELA trends in the aggregate see Table B4a in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5a.

- A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for students with disabilities; the district did not meet its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, and White students.¹⁰
- B. The district met its annual growth for students with disabilities; the district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, and White students.
- C. The district did not earn extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for any reportable group. It earned extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for students with disabilities.
- D. In 2012 the district demonstrated moderate performance in grade 6, low performance in grades 5, 8, 10, and overall, and very low performance in grades 3, 4, and 7 relative to other districts.
- E. In 2012 the district demonstrated high growth in grade 6, moderate growth in grades 8, 10, and overall, and low growth in grades 4, 5, and 7.
- F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful¹¹ gains in grade 6 and potentially meaningful declines in grade 3. Most of the gains in grade 6 and declines in grade 3 were attributable to its performance over both periods.
- G. The 2012 performance of Quarry Hill Community School (PK-4) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 3 and overall. Most of the declines in grade 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- H. The 2012 performance of Granite Valley Middle School (5-8) is moderate relative to other middle schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 6 and potentially meaningful declines in grade 5. Most of

¹⁰ A district, school, or subgroup is considered to have met its target when its CPI is within 1.5 CPI points of the target.

¹¹ The following changes in measures of achievement and growth, either positive or negative, are potentially meaningful, pending further inquiry: CPI (2.5 points); SGP (10 points); percent *Proficient* and *Advanced* (3 percentage points). Changes are more likely to be potentially meaningful for larger groups of students; higher performing groups tend to demonstrate fewer potentially meaningful changes than lower performing groups; and certain subjects and grade levels are more likely to demonstrate potentially meaningful changes than others. A consistent pattern of potentially meaningful change over several consecutive pairs of consecutive years is more likely to be meaningful than changes from one year to another, whether consecutive or not. In this report, a statement of potentially meaningful change is provided when a district, school, grade level, or subgroup demonstrates three or more instances of declines or gains of the amounts specified above in the CPI, SGP, and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* over the last four years, the most recent two years, or both. Any instance of decline of one of the amounts specified above (or more) prevents three or more instances of gain from being considered potentially meaningful, and vice versa.

the gains in grade 6 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in grade 5 were attributed to its performance over both periods.

- I. The 2012 performance of Monson Innovation High School (9-12) is moderate relative to other high schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated declines in SGP in grade 10 and overall. Most of the declines in grade 10 and overall were attributed to its performance between 2009 and 2012.

4. The district's mathematics performance is very low relative to other districts and its growth is moderate.¹²

- A. The district did not meet its proficiency gap narrowing targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.
- B. The district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.
- C. The district did not earn extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for any reportable group. It did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.
- D. In 2012 the district demonstrated moderate performance in grade 6, low performances in grades 7, 8, 10 and very low performance in grades 3, 4, 5, and overall relative to other districts.
- E. In 2012 the district demonstrated high growth in grades 6, moderate growth in grades 7, 8, and overall, low growth in grades 5 and 10, and very low growth in grade 4.
- F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 6 and potentially meaningful declines in grades 3, 4, and 10. Most of the gains in grade 6 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in 3, 4, and 10 were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- G. The 2012 performance of Quarry Hill Community School (PK-04) is very low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is very low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 3, 4, and overall. Most of the declines in grades 3, 4, and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- H. The 2012 performance of Granite Valley Middle School (5-8) is low relative to other middle schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school

¹² For mathematics trends in the aggregate see Table B4b in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5b.

demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 6. Most of the gains in grade 6 were attributable to its performance over both periods.

- I. The 2012 performance of Monson Innovation High School (9-12) is low relative to other high schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 10 and overall. Most of the declines in grade 10 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

5. The district's science and technology/engineering (STE) performance is very low relative to other districts.¹³

- A. The district did not meet its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.
- B. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for low income students. It did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable subgroup.
- C. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performances in grade 8 and very low performance in grades 5, 10 and overall relative to other districts.
- D. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 5, 10, and overall. These gains were attributable to its performance over both periods.
- E. The 2012 performance of Granite Valley Middle School (5-8) is low relative to other middle schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 5, 8 and overall. Most of the declines in grades 5, 8 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.
- F. The 2012 performance of Monson Innovation High School (9-12) is low relative to other high schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 10 and overall. Most of the declines in grade 10 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

6. In 2012, the district met its annual improvement targets for all students for the four-year cohort graduation rate, the five-year cohort graduation rate, and the grade 9-12 annual dropout rate.¹⁴ Over the most recent three-year

¹³ For STE trends in the aggregate see Table B4c in Appendix B; for selected subgroups, see Table B5c.

¹⁴ All groups (districts, schools, and subgroups) are expected to make steady progress toward a goal of 90 percent for the four-year cohort graduation rate and 95 percent for the five-year rate by the 2016-17 school year. For accountability determinations in any given year, the cohort graduation rate from the prior school year is used. For example, 2012 accountability determinations for the four-year rate use data

period for which data is available¹⁵, the four-year cohort graduation rate declined, the five-year cohort graduation rate increased, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined. Over the most recent one-year period for which data is available, the four-year cohort graduation rate declined, the five-year cohort graduation rate declined, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined.¹⁶

- A. Between 2009 and 2012 the four-year cohort graduation rate declined 1.6 percentage points, from 86.0% to 84.4%, a decrease of 1.9 percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it declined 1.6 percentage points, from 86.0% to 84.4%, a decrease of 1.9 percent.
- B. Between 2008 and 2011 the five-year cohort graduation rate increased 2.7 percentage points, from 85.7% to 88.4%, an increase of 3.2 percent. Between 2010 and 2011 it declined 0.1 percentage points, from 88.5% to 88.4%, a decrease of 0.1 percent.
- C. Between 2009 and 2012 the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined 2.1 percentage points, from 3.3% to 1.2%, a decrease of 64.2% percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it declined 0.2 percentage points, from 1.4% to 1.2%, a decrease of 15.7 percent.

7. Monson Public Schools' rate of in-school suspensions in 2011-2012 was significantly lower than the statewide rate¹⁷ and the rate of out-of-school suspensions did not significantly differ from the state rate.

- A. The rate of in-school suspensions for Monson was 1.9 percent, significantly lower than the state rate of 3.4 percent. The rate of out-of-school suspensions for Monson was 5.6 percent, compared to the state rate of 5.4 percent.
- B. There was a significant difference among racial/ethnic groups for out-of-school suspensions but not for in-school suspensions¹⁸. The out-of-school-suspension rate was 33.3 percent for African-American/Black students, 14.3 percent for Hispanic/Latino students, 6.3 percent for Multi-race (not Hispanic or Latino) students, and 5.3 percent for White students.

from 2011; determinations for the five-year rate use data from 2010. Districts, schools, and subgroups are considered to be on target if they meet the state's federally-approved annual targets in a given year for either the four-or five-year cohort graduation rate, whichever is higher.

¹⁵ Note that the 2012 four-year graduation and dropout rates and the 2011 five-year graduation rate will be used in the 2013 accountability determination; the 2011 four-year graduation and dropout rates and the 2010 five-year graduation rate were used in the 2012 determination. See previous footnote.

¹⁶ For annual dropout rate trends for the last three years available see Table B6 in Appendix B. For cohort graduation rate trends for the last three years available see Tables B7a and B7b.

¹⁷ Statistical significance based on one sample T test. $P \leq .05$

¹⁸ Statistical significance for racial/ethnic groups and other subgroups based on Chi Square. $P \leq .05$

- C. There was not a significant difference between the in-school suspension rates of high needs students and non high needs students (2.7 percent compared to 1.6 percent), low income students and non low income students (2.2 percent compared to 1.8 percent), students with disabilities and students without disabilities (3.9 percent compared to 1.6 percent), and English language learners and non English language learners (0.0 percent compared to 1.9 percent).
- D. There was a significant difference between the rates of out-of-school suspensions for high needs students and non high needs students (8.2 percent compared to 4.1 percent), and students with disabilities and students without disabilities (12.9 percent compared to 4.5 percent). The out-of-school suspension rates were not significantly different for low income students and non low income students (6.9 percent compared to 5.1 percent), and English language learners and non English language learners (0.0 percent compared to 5.6 percent).
- E. On average students in the Monson Public Schools missed 8.1 days per disciplinary action¹⁹, higher than the state average of 3.1.

¹⁹ Disciplinary action refers to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, permanent expulsion, removal by an impartial hearing officer to an alternative setting, or removal by school personnel to an alternative setting.

Monson Public Schools Review Findings

Strengths

Assessment

- 1. The district has taken steps to develop formative and summative assessments to monitor student achievement in ELA and mathematics.**
 - A.** The district's director of curriculum and instruction is responsible for data collection, dissemination, and initial analysis.
 - 1.** The director has involved representatives from all school levels through the District Teaching and Learning Council (DTLC) to create a team to develop a data-based District Improvement Plan driven by student achievement data. In addition to one to two representative teachers from each school, membership on the DTLC includes the director of pupil personnel services and one assistant principal.
 - a.** According to interviewees, the DTLC meets two to three times per month. It started with a full-day orientation/work meeting; three-hour after-school sessions followed.
 - B.** The district is using a common test, Galileo, to monitor student achievement in ELA and math in grades 1–10.
 - 1.** According to an administrator, the district selected Galileo because it was viewed as measuring student achievement against the state's standards and as a good predictor of student success on the MCAS tests.
 - 2.** The new testing program was piloted in grades 3–8 in 2011–2012 and has been expanded to grades 1–10 in 2012–2013. Testing in 2012–2013 was scheduled for September, January, and May in K–8 and September, October, December, and May in grades 9–11. The district anticipated extending the test to grades 11–12 in 2013–2014, according to an administrator.
 - 3.** School principals provided examples of how the analysis of Galileo test scores had resulted in program changes.
 - a.** At Monson High School, all grade 9 algebra classes are now scheduled to meet at the same time so that classes are available for students who are at different readiness levels. At Granite Valley Middle School, similar scheduling modifications allow for flexible grouping of mathematics students.
 - b.** At Quarry Hill Community School, teachers are now departmentalized in grades 2–4 to enable teachers to specialize in ELA or mathematics at each grade level.
 - c.** The analysis of Galileo and MCAS scores also resulted in the shift to 90 minute blocks of ELA and math instruction at the middle school, and the addition of instructional time at the elementary school, including the provision of uninterrupted teaching blocks where possible.

4. Teachers and administrators view the addition of Galileo assessments as an aid to improving student learning.
 - a. At the middle school, two students participate in accelerated math classes because of their high scores on Galileo, according to administrators.
 - b. Student support staff said that they used Galileo, as well as report grades, GRADE, and MCAS, to identify students who are not performing at grade level.
 - c. Elementary teachers said that they previously only had DIBELS to check on a student's performance level but now can use Galileo.
 - d. Middle school teachers said that they were asked to look at Galileo data before placing students in levels, and the test also helped teachers to know who was not performing at grade level. Some have developed questions based on the Galileo results and use these in their Do Now activities. The director of curriculum and instruction also noted, "At the middle school, they are looking at Galileo to see what they need to do for kids in front of them." Teachers and administrators said that high school teachers developed action plans for students who perform below grade level.
 - e. Some teachers in grades 3–8 have begun to use Galileo to develop benchmark assessments, according to an administrator.
- C. The district uses the following assessments: Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) in K–4 (3 times a year), the Group Reading Assessment Diagnostic Test (GRADE) in K–8 (2 times a year), and Study Island (3 times a year) assessments in grades 3–8. This year the high school has begun to administer ACT for placement purposes, according to administrators.
 1. The elementary and middle schools use GRADE to help determine reading levels and the need for intervention services.
- D. The high school, recently selected as a Massachusetts Innovation School, is participating in the international PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) testing program for all 10th grade students.

Impact: Through its use of Galileo, DIBELS, GRADE, Study Island, ACT, and PISA, the district is collecting accurate and high-quality information on student performance and is developing its capacity to track student growth and the need for interventions.

Human Resources and Professional Development

2. Monson's teachers and their evaluators have begun to implement the state's new educator evaluation system, many with a spirit of hopefulness.

- A. As a participant in the Race to the Top grant program, the district is required to begin implementing a new educator evaluation system consistent with ESE's new system in 2012–2013. The expectation was that half of the Monson educators being evaluated in 2012–2013 would be evaluated using the new district system.
- B. Monson's teachers' association and administrators said that they supported the implementation of the educator evaluation system and viewed the new system as an improvement over prior practice because of the required frequency of classroom observations and the emphasis on student achievement data.
 - 1. The teachers' association (in concert with the school committee) agreed to adopt ESE's model contract language, according to administrators and teachers' association members, and the superintendent notified ESE to that effect on September 28, 2012.
 - 2. At the invitation of Monson's teachers' association, the Massachusetts Teachers' Association provided a teacher workshop on the educator evaluation system, according to teachers' association members.
 - 3. Teachers' association members said that the association agreed to reconfigure collectively bargained professional development time for one year in order to provide greater time for teachers to implement the educator evaluation system.
 - 4. One teacher expressed "optimism" and said that the new evaluation system "has set the expectations of what an excellent teacher would be doing . . . I think it has made a contribution to our professionalism."
- C. Teachers and administrators said that they were participating in training in support of implementation of the new system.
 - 1. At the time of the review in February 2013, the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) had provided two full-day training sessions for all teachers and administrative staff, with a third full day scheduled for March.
 - 2. CES had provided a full day of training for evaluators.
- D. Each Monson teacher either has, or will, set goals during the two-year implementation cycle according to administrators and teachers.
 - 1. The team goals at the high school are focused on student achievement across grade levels as well as on school climate.
 - 2. The elementary and middle schools have developed grade-level goals designed either to support students or to develop the curriculum.
 - 3. Documents volunteered and provided by 12 teachers show evidence of self-assessment, thoughtful analysis, and goal setting. Articulate and thorough goals were presented in SMART goal format: specific/strategic, measurable, action oriented, rigorous/realistic and timed/tracked.

4. Self-assessments based on the Assessment of Practice against Performance Standards rubric and the Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice were evident.
5. Administrators said that they had written goals.

Impact: As Monson begins to implement the new educator evaluation system, the result is an increase in the capacity within the district to support educators' professional growth and improve instruction.

Finance and Asset Management

3. **The district's business manager oversees appropriate financial procedures and controls, including audits and external reviews, and seeks savings in energy and transportation costs.**
 - A. The district complies with state auditing requirements.
 - B. The district contracted with the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) to conduct a "Financial Operations Review" in March, 2009, resulting in recommendations to improve the financial operations of the district.
 - C. The business manager is developing a policy and procedures financial handbook.
 - D. The business manager is planning and implementing programs for savings in energy and transportation costs.
 1. Electric and gas rates were renegotiated. Savings in electricity are projected to be in the range of \$25,000 to \$30,000 for the current fiscal year, fiscal year 2013.
 2. A solar energy system is under review for possible installation, and green community grants have been used.
 - E. The transportation director is considering an alliance with Palmer to reduce costs.

Impact: The impact of responsible oversight is the confidence and trust of town officials and administrators, who characterized relations as "positive" and "mutually supportive."

Challenges and Areas for Growth

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

Leadership and Governance

4. In recent years the district has had substantial instability in central office leadership, particularly in the position of superintendent.

A. Personnel changes in the position of superintendent have been frequent for the past eight years.

1. In December, 2012, midway through his fourth year of employment, the district replaced the incumbent superintendent with an interim superintendent, according to a document provided by the district.
2. Administrators and members of the school committee variously enumerated and identified short-term superintendents and interim superintendents who had been employed by the district in the past eight years; two incumbent superintendents had been placed on administrative leave by the school committee and later reached financial settlements with the district.

B. Key positions in the central office have experienced turnover.

1. The director of curriculum and instruction was in her third year of employment in the district.
2. The director of pupil personnel services was completing her sixth month of employment in the district.
3. The technology director had just recently been hired.

Impact: These frequent changes in personnel, particularly in the superintendency, have had serious consequences for the effective operation of the district.

- There is a perception among stakeholders of an absence of consistent and effective leadership.
 - An administrator said that the district needed “consistent leadership.”
 - A representative of the teachers’ association said: “In the many years I have been here we have had so many superintendents...the district has no real consistency, no stability from the top down.”
- Teachers in a focus group said that there has been a decline in the district reaching out and connecting with the community, and a decline in community support for the schools.
- According to school committee members, the school committee has become unable to focus on the needs of the schools.
- School committee members said that sudden and unexpected resignations from the school committee have taken place before the completion of elected terms.
- The district has not developed and revised short-term and long-term goals to energize staff and set an appropriate direction for the district so as to meet each student’s needs for achievement, according to administrators and school committee members.
 - The district was only just beginning to develop a data-based District Improvement Plan. (See first Assessment finding below.)

5. As most administrators have not been evaluated in recent years, an important opportunity has been missed to improve leadership.

- A.** Administrators with one to five years of experience in their current positions said that they either had not been evaluated while in those positions, or had received only one evaluation.
- B.** A review of the personnel files by the visiting team for all nine of the administrators other than the interim superintendent showed that none contained any evaluations for the past three years; most of them contained no evaluations, with only two containing signed evaluations, neither of which was instructive or conducive to growth.
- C.** Administrators said that they had submitted goals under the new evaluation system, but had received no feedback on them.

Impact: The absence of recent, thorough performance evaluations for administrators has serious consequences for their effectiveness and for the advancement of district initiatives. An opportunity has been missed to improve the professional practice of the administrative staff and to hold them accountable for improving education in the district.

Curriculum and Instruction

6. Because of an ineffective process of curriculum development, the district has not produced aligned, consistently delivered, and continuously improving curriculum.

- A.** A review of ELA and mathematics curricula by the visiting team shows that they are incomplete.
 - 1.** The ELA and mathematics curricula do not have scope and sequence charts, curriculum units, instructional strategies, and assessments.
- B.** Although staff recognizes a districtwide curriculum leader, the director of curriculum, school-level curriculum leadership seems to be mostly absent.
 - 1.** Teachers at the elementary and high schools could not identify school-level curriculum leaders.
 - a.** When teachers were asked to name the curriculum leader for the elementary school, they said that although there were people identified with specific content areas, there was not one person that they could go to.
 - b.** When teachers were asked to identify the curriculum leader for the high school, it was mentioned that there was an “ELA and math focus person,” but no curriculum leader was named.
 - c.** Close monitoring of classroom curriculum implementation for content and consistency is not taking place at the elementary school or high school, according to teachers.

C. Attention to vertical curriculum coherency has not been paid consistently.

1. According to teachers, there has not been much conversation between teachers of grades 4 and teachers of grade 5 or between teachers of grades 8 and teachers of grade 9 to determine whether there are redundancies or gaps in the curricula.
2. Grade-level and secondary course curricula in ELA and mathematics have been developed by individual teachers without input or critical feedback from appropriate colleagues.
 - a. One teacher said that course development was not a district activity; another said that teachers developed curricula on their own.

Impact: The absence of a fully articulated, vertically coherent, and horizontally consistent curriculum means that teachers act as independent contractors and there is no collective pursuit of common goals. Also, content curriculum redundancies and gaps are likely.

7. According to the review team's observations, the district does not have key instructional practices and expectations, including a range of strategies, technologies, and supplemental materials aligned with students' developmental levels.

- A. The team observed 31 classes throughout the district: 10 at the high school, 9 at the middle school, and 12 at the elementary school. The team observed 13 ELA classes, 14 mathematics classes, and 4 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were two special education inclusion classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members used ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. (See Instructional Inventory Results in Appendix C.)
1. In 14 of the 31 classrooms visited (45 percent) there was partial or no evidence of lessons that included rigor and high expectations. However, in 6 of the 9 middle school lessons observed (67 percent), rigor and high expectations were present. For example, one observer visited one classroom where students engaged in speculating and writing about a character in a photograph; an improvisational presentation followed.
 2. In 21 of the 31 classrooms visited (68 percent), there was no evidence of a variety of resources designed to meet students' diverse learning needs. In one example where the review team observed resources assisting learning, students used fractional cubes to discover equivalent fractions.
 3. There was partial or no evidence of the use of varied instructional strategies within lessons to meet students' diverse learning needs in 17 of the 31 classrooms observed (55 percent).
 4. There was no evidence of the use of frequent formative assessments to check for student understanding in 15 of the 31 observed classrooms (48 percent). There was no evidence of this characteristic in 8 of the 12 elementary classrooms visited (67 percent). In one example where frequent formative assessments were

observed, an observer noted a teacher asking all students to raise their hands if they thought one-third was greater than one-sixth.

5. In 16 of the 31 classes observed (52 percent) there was no evidence of students being engaged in challenging academic tasks. There was no evidence of this level of instructional activity in 6 of the 12 elementary classrooms observed (50 percent). However, observers found this kind of activity in 6 of the 9 middle school classes visited (67 percent). For example, in one classroom students were asked to show fifths on a 4x4 geo board. After trial and error they determined that it could not be done and were asked to explain why.
6. In 24 of the 31 visited classrooms (77 percent), observers found no evidence of student work that demonstrated high quality and that could serve as exemplars. There was no evidence of this characteristic in 10 of the 12 observed elementary classrooms (83 percent) and in 8 of the 9 observed middle school classrooms (89 percent).

Impact: The absence of key instructional practices and expectations including a range of strategies, technologies, and supplemental materials aligned with students' developmental levels prevents students of all ability levels from increasing their achievement and learning to the best of their ability. Without differentiated instructional strategies, the district cannot provide for all students quality programs that are comprehensive, accessible, and rigorous. Without opportunities for rigorous learning experiences, students do not develop higher-order thinking skills and their achievement is compromised.

Assessment

8. **A system and a culture for using assessments for school, educator, and student improvement are emerging in the district but do not yet consistently or sufficiently guide district, school, and classroom improvement.**
 - A. District leadership has not yet provided to stakeholders a complete picture of the current level of MCAS performance of all students in Monson, a clear vision for improving student achievement, or a data-based determination of priorities, as would be typically articulated within a District Improvement Plan (DIP).
 1. Led by the director of curriculum and instruction, the district has just begun to develop a data-driven DIP, according to an administrator.
 2. The school committee does not receive sufficient student performance data to guide its decision-making or have a full understanding of what Level 3 status means, according to members of the school committee.
 3. Student performance has not been the driving force in developing the budget for the district, according to the interim superintendent.
 4. Student performance data for subgroups is not formally disaggregated or analyzed, according to teachers and administrators.

5. When teachers and administrators were asked whether there was a districtwide approach to using data, they said that each school used data differently.
 - a. The high and middle schools are further along in their use of data to improve teaching and learning. At the elementary school, the use of assessments represents “the biggest shift in thinking,” according to an administrator.
- B. The elementary school does not have a current SIP. The most recent SIP was developed under the prior principal’s leadership and is dated 2011–2012.
- C. The high school and the middle school have current school improvement plans (SIPs) that reference student achievement data; these contain varying levels of rigor and specificity.
 1. The high school and middle school SIPs have a range of initiatives and activities but do not have 3-5 focus areas that organize the work.
 2. Both the high school SIP and the middle school SIP have goals that are too general (e.g., “Meet the new student achievement accountability standards” in the high school SIP, “To improve student learning in Mathematics” in the middle school SIP.)
 3. The high school SIP lists student performance data, but does not analyze it. It names specific staff, but does not specify timelines. The middle school SIP analyzes student performance data, and sets time-boundaries, but is not specific about what staff is responsible—there is often a citation of “Administration” or “Administration, Staff.”
- D. The previous superintendent, who served until December 2012, did not request SIPs, and it was not expected that they would be presented to the school committee, according to an administrator.²⁰

Impact: Because the school district has not yet made effective use of data to set and prioritize goals, allocate resources, make program adjustments, and modify curriculum and instruction, its efforts to improve student achievement are not sufficiently directed.

9. **Assessment practices are not systematized, and data is not used consistently within or among all schools to improve instruction.**
 - A. There have been insufficient guidance, professional development support, and policies and procedures to aid the district in using assessment data to improve teaching and learning.
 - B. Each school has been left to its own initiative to develop its assessment practices and schools continue to implement data practices in relative isolation.

²⁰Mass. Gen. Laws, c. 69, s. 1I, provides in part: “Upon request of the school committee, copies of the [school improvement] plans shall be made available to the committee for review in order to ensure consistency with the 3-year district improvement plan and the district annual action plan . . .”

- C. Although a team leader structure currently exists in the schools, it is not uniformly effective in helping teachers disaggregate, analyze, and use available student achievement data at each school.
 - 1. In the elementary school teachers said that they were not clear about how team time was to be used. Others said that while teachers in all schools were using data, it was not necessarily in a team configuration.
 - 2. Interviewees said that it would be beneficial if teachers had more training in analyzing and using data; elementary teachers said that they have not received sufficient training in the interpretation of reports from Galileo.
 - 3. The district has just begun to develop common assessments, according to teachers.
- D. The three schools do not systematically exchange student assessment data to track and analyze student performance vertically.
 - 1. The district has not established an expectation of systematic and regular exchange of student performance data among the principals and staff at the schools.
 - a. The three principals do not meet regularly either with the superintendent or with each other to analyze student performance data, according to administrators.
 - b. Teachers noted that while some programs were in place to assist students with transitions between schools, there was “not much” conversation between 8th and 9th grade teachers, for example.
 - c. Other than the Galileo, GRADE, and Study Island assessments mentioned above (see Assessment finding under Strengths), elementary/middle school and middle/high school assessments are not aligned, according to an administrator and team leaders.
 - 2. Resources for accessing and using computer-based assessments vary among the schools.
 - a. Teachers said that the elementary school had one computer lab with some non-functioning computers, which it used for test administration, while the middle school had two computer labs and laptops, which enabled students to be tested more efficiently and for teachers to get results back more quickly.
 - b. All GRADE data at the elementary level is entered by the Title I teacher because the district has only one software license for this program, according to teachers.
 - c. The district is in the process of converting from Rediker to IPASS and currently has multiple databases, according to an administrator.

Impact: The inconsistencies in current district assessment practices and available resources within and among schools and the insufficiency of educators’ capacity to analyze and use assessment data have weakened the district’s capacity to improve both teaching and learning.

Human Resources and Professional Development

10. The district's past culture does not include the supervision and evaluation of professional staff, and at the time of the review evaluations of administrators under the new educator evaluation system had not begun.

- A.** In a review of 10 current administrators' personnel folders (including the new interim superintendent), the team did not find evidence that any administrator had been evaluated within the past three years.
 - 1.** The team reviewed 29 randomly selected teachers' personnel folders. The team did not find evidence in the 29 folders that teachers were evaluated during the 2011–2012 school year.
 - 2.** Of the 29 personnel folders reviewed, 8 contained documents about teachers who had not yet been awarded professional teacher status. One out of 8 had been evaluated (in March 2011).
 - 3.** Administrators and teachers reported going multiple years without participating in an evaluation process.
 - a.** One administrator spoke of never having been evaluated. Another mentioned an evaluation in 2009–2010 but none in 2010–2011.
 - b.** Teachers variously said that they had gone two, three, and four years without an evaluation.
- B.** At the time of the review In February 2013, though many steps toward implementing the district's new evaluation system had been taken (see Human Resources/Professional Development finding under Strengths above), the district's leadership had not begun the new, five-step cycle of evaluating its administrators.
 - 1.** According to administrators, they had been asked to develop goals, and at least one had submitted goals, but neither the previous superintendent nor the interim superintendent had initiated the implementation of the five-step cycle of evaluating Monson's administrators.

Impact: A history of having paid little attention to evaluating administrators or teachers makes it difficult for the district to implement the new educator evaluation system in a way that is a lever for change, particularly when the new educator evaluation system has not yet been extended to administrators.

11. The district does not invest sufficiently in the professional development of its educators.

- A.** The district does not provides continuous educator development opportunities.
 - 1.** Monson provides one and one-half days of professional development during the school year. An additional 50 hours are school-based at the principals' discretion, according to an administrator.

- B. The district does not have a professional development plan, according to an administrator.
- C. Teachers said that their input and needs were not considered in the planning of professional development.
- D. Interviewees said that sufficient training has not been provided in strategies for inclusive classrooms and differentiated/tiered instructional practices and the use of formative assessments.
- E. Adequate training in the interpretation and use of student performance data has not been provided, according to an administrator.
- F. Teachers said that the district did not offer educator development to coincide with and support the implementation of the new Massachusetts ELA and mathematics curriculum standards based on the Common Core standards.
- G. The mentoring program does not provide consistent support for new teachers.
 - 1. Administrators said that the district did not have a standard protocol for its mentoring program and that relationships depended on the people involved.
 - 2. They said that there is a “hope” that colleagues provide support for new teachers.

Impact: Insufficient investment in developing and nurturing the instructional corps compromises staff capacity and the ability of the district to improve student performance.

Student Support

12. The district has not developed an effective system of support that ensures that all students’ academic and non-academic needs are met and that there is communication with families about student performance.

- A. Not all the schools have processes for identifying and responding quickly to students who are not performing at grade level.
 - 1. While the middle school and high school Student Teacher Assistance Teams (STATs) meet regularly to discuss students in need of support, the elementary school does not have a support team that meets regularly, and teachers said that they did not have a clear idea about how to refer a child for support during the school year.
 - 2. According to an administrator, there is no district process for referrals.
- B. Classroom instruction reflects little differentiation.
 - 1. Only 6 of 31 classrooms observed (19 percent) showed clear and consistent evidence of the use of multiple resources for diverse learners.

2. Only 11 of 31 classrooms observed (35 percent) showed clear and consistent evidence of appropriate and varied strategies that meet students' diverse learning needs.
- C. Student support interventions are limited, sometimes inconsistent, or informal.
1. Title I can be used only for eligible students in the elementary and middle schools, since both schools have Targeted Assistance programs.
 2. Opportunities for Title I support are limited, with referrals done mainly in the spring, according to interviewees.
 3. Teachers said that interventionists and special education teachers are often pulled out of classes to cover testing, run special education meetings, or to substitute for an absent classroom teacher.
 4. After-school help at the high school and the middle school is mainly informal and drop in, according to administrators and a review of high school and middle school handbooks by the visiting team.
 5. Supplemental Educational Services have not been offered this year, according to interviewees.
- D. There are limited opportunities for advanced placement and accelerated programs in the district.
1. According to one administrator, the high school needs more staffing to offer more AP opportunities.
 2. ASPIRE, the elementary gifted and talented program, has reduced staff from one full-time staff to 0.5 FTE and serves only 3rd and 4th graders, according to teachers.
- E. The district does not have a practice of scheduling time for parent-teacher conferences.
1. Parents in a focus group said that it was a "huge lack" that the district did not have parent-teacher conferences.

Impact: The absence of an effective system of supports has hindered the ability of the district to raise student achievement.²¹ The absence of scheduled time for parent-teacher conferences prevents teachers from engaging more fully with families and using the conferences to gain families' support for continued improvement in student achievement.

Finance and Asset Management

13. The budget development process is not transparent, does not include key stakeholders, and does not sufficiently involve consideration of student performance, student needs, and district goals.

²¹ The district is not considered to be making sufficient progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps (it did not meet its cumulative Progress and Performance Index targets in 2012). See [School/District Profiles on ESE website](#).

- A. According to interviewees among administrators and on the school committee, recent budgets presented to the school committee were developed with top-down decision making with an absence of administrative team input—particularly by school principals.
- B. The absence of administrative team input into budgets has meant that they have been insufficiently transparent. One administrator said that in the past the budget process had had transparency, so that the administrator knew what colleagues needed; that has not happened recently.
- C. District and school goals were not a focus in the deliberative process and were not communicated to the community through the budget document and presentation.
- D. Student performance on MCAS is not a driving force in the budget development process, according to the interim superintendent and town officials.
- E. Budget constraints caused in part by the challenge of managing down the budget with declining enrollment have necessitated cuts. The cuts made by the district have had a negative effect on the advanced placement program, professional development, the elementary reading series, the elementary gifted and talented program (ASPIRE), and elementary staffing levels.
- F. The state of technology is considered antiquated and the director of business and facilities said: “There is a lack of continuity among systems.”
 - 1. The 2007 NEASC report states (p. 49): “The technology needs of Monson High School are a major concern.” . . . “At this time district-wide technology systems are not adequately serviced.”

Impact: The budget development process has been a lost opportunity for close review of student performance issues, improvement plans, and resource allocation. The district has not adequately communicated priorities to the Monson community or used the allocation of resources to address the needs of its students.

Monson Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

- 1. The district should use the search for a new superintendent as an opportunity to stabilize central office leadership after years of turnover. Once a new superintendent is in place, the superintendent and all members of the school committee should seek support for governance from available sources.**
 - A.** Using the District Improvement Plan's analysis of student data and district needs, to the extent that it has been developed, the search committee, working with the interim superintendent, should create a profile of the next superintendent and develop realistic and workable expectations for the responsibilities of a school district leader, including:
 - 1.** Exercising leadership
 - 2.** Developing data-based long- and short-term strategies in updated strategic, district improvement, and school improvement plans.
 - 3.** Supervising and monitoring the achievement of goals.
 - 4.** Communicating with the school committee, teachers' association, town officials, and entire Monson community as well as administrative leadership, certified staff, support personnel, students, and families.
 - 5.** Ensuring effective data management and analysis and dissemination of student performance data to the entire community as well as within the district.
 - 6.** Initiating transparent, proactive, and data-based budget development reflecting the goals and needs of the district.
 - B.** The district currently has the benefit of an experienced interim superintendent who is accustomed to working in an interim capacity, having done so in five previous school districts in Massachusetts and Connecticut. It should take advantage of his experience and his objectivity as an outside observer in fashioning this profile of the next superintendent and engage his active involvement in the search.
 - 1.** Enlisting the help of the interim superintendent in this manner would be consistent with Goal 6 of the interim superintendent's goals for this year: "To provide guidance and assistance, as necessary, to the School Committee as they implement a Search process for a new full time Superintendent of schools."²²
 - C.** In conducting the superintendent search, the district should proceed at a deliberate pace, acting thoroughly, thoughtfully, and prudently as interviews are conducted, finalists are chosen, and the final selection is made.

²² Superintendent's Goals, 2012-2013, January 2, 2013.

- D. Any members of the school committee who have not received training from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) about members' role and responsibilities should arrange to receive that training.
- E. The new superintendent and all school committee members should take steps to pursue governance support, for instance investigating possible participation in the District Governance Support Project (DGSP) co-sponsored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the MASC, and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. The DGSP is "designed to focus on continuous improvement and build greater understanding of both the distinct roles and responsibilities of the school committee and district superintendent as well as promote new strategies for teamwork and collaboration to enhance student achievement."²³ The new superintendent and school committee might also investigate the possibility of support for governance for Monson from the MASC separate from the DGSP.

Benefits: By carefully considering the needs of the district and the characteristics to be sought in the new superintendent, and by selecting a new superintendent through a thorough and thoughtful search with the assistance of the new superintendent, the district will have taken steps to secure a potentially long-serving superintendent of schools who will address the needs of the district. Receiving support for governance and MASC training for any school committee members who have not received it can help the new superintendent and school committee improve their teamwork and collaboration and help stabilize central office leadership.

Curriculum and Instruction

- 2. To ensure that curricula are aligned, consistently delivered, and continuously improving, the district should:
 - implement a cyclical development process that results in curricula that are aligned to the new Massachusetts curriculum standards and have vertical coherence and horizontal consistency, and
 - engage district and school-level administrators and team leaders to actively monitor curriculum implementation to ensure that the intended curricula are the taught curricula.
- A. The district should activate a cycle of curriculum development.
 - 1. The district should recruit, with the assistance of school principals, a representative group of K-12 teachers to serve on an ELA task force, a mathematics task force, and a science task force. The district should consider having school-level administrators chair each task force.
 - 2. Each task force should determine the current state of the curriculum in their area and devise a work plan accordingly. The task forces should use student performance data in curriculum development and revision, helping to make the use of data an integral part of these processes. All subject area curricula (guides/maps/syllabi) should include learning objectives, resources, a scope and sequence, instructional

²³ See [DGSP brochure](#).

strategies designed to educate all students, a balanced set of assessments, and aligned materials and supplies.

- a. ESE's Model Curriculum Units provide high-quality examples of these elements. The model units and a blank template can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/>.
 3. In addition to awarding Professional Development Points to teachers who serve on these task forces, the district should consider providing them with opportunities such as conference attendance, professional days to observe promising practices, and the chance to pilot curriculum-related materials and supplies including instructional technologies.
- B.** The district should develop a system for monitoring the implementation of the curriculum to ensure that it is consistently delivered and continuously improving.
1. The principals should engage the team leaders as members of instructional advisory groups on matters of curriculum, instruction, and student performance. Monson has a substantial amount of collectively bargained time to be used for professional activities; the principals and team leaders should strategically design the use of this time.
 2. Monson's principals and assistant principals should spend time in all classrooms. Delegation of some traditional duties should take place to facilitate the paradigm shift to instructional leader. Practices such as walkthroughs will provide leaders with greater familiarity with the curriculum in different subject areas and with teachers' instructional practices.
 3. The district should take the steps necessary to institute a system of monitoring of classroom instruction by instructional leaders and frequent feedback to teachers.

Benefits: A curriculum development process that produces written curricula aligned to the Massachusetts frameworks and aligned both horizontally and vertically, especially at transition points (from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school), will promote higher levels of student achievement, as will monitoring to ensure fidelity of implementation of that curriculum and to provide feedback to teachers to improve instruction.

3. **To increase student learning and improve student achievement, district leaders should establish a collaborative approach to identify effective instructional practices, prioritize them for adoption in the district, and decide how teachers will be supported, monitored, and evaluated with respect to their use. Administrators and teachers should then refer back to the identified practices as they work to calibrate and improve instruction.**
 - A. The district should examine a range of instructional best practices and provide teachers and administrators with information about effective instruction.
 1. The district should consider offering a course outlining the essential elements of effective instruction to teachers and administrators.

2. A source of information that may be helpful is ESE's *Conditions for School Effectiveness Research Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/ConditionResearchGuide.pdf>). In particular, pages 30-35 provide a succinct description of research about specific instructional approaches.
- B. In addition to administrators and teachers, the identified best practices should be shared with the Monson School Committee, parents, and community members to establish a shared understanding of teaching excellence.
 - C. A group of teachers should then engage with school and central office leaders to prioritize effective instructional techniques and plan how teachers will be supported to use those techniques, then monitored, and finally evaluated on their implementation.
 1. Using Monson's history of student performance data to inform the discussion, Monson's community of educators should discuss the implications of the instructional best practices research in light of Monson student performance and the students' identified learning needs.
 2. The district should use the instructional best practices coupled with the study of Monson student performance to target what practices Monson teachers should concentrate on developing first.
 3. Once the instructional strategies deemed most likely to successfully address Monson's students' needs have been determined, the district's teachers whose pedagogical practice exemplifies the preferred strategies should be recruited to share their practices via districtwide workshops.
 4. Agreement should be reached about what administrators will look for in classroom walkthroughs and observations and what kind of feedback they will provide to promote strong content knowledge and effective instruction.
 - a. Some examples of what administrators might look for in walkthroughs and observations are included in ESE's *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/mathclass_char.doc) and *An Effective Standards-Based Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/scitechclass_char.pdf).

Benefits: When the district has a common set of instructional practices based on research and evidence of their effectiveness, teachers have support in using them, and district administrators actively monitor instruction and provide feedback, there will be more consistency in the quality of classroom instruction and students will have the opportunity to learn to the best of their ability and achieve at high levels.

Assessment

- 4. The district should work to ensure that data analyses are systematically used across the district and schools to inform planning and policy development, instructional program improvements, assessment practices, supervision, and professional development.**
 - A.** The district leadership should develop a clear vision of priorities, using data to determine them; articulate them within the DIP; and carry them out through current SIPs for all schools.
 - B.** The district should establish as a priority a continuous improvement planning cycle based on the analysis of student performance data; it should identify administrators and staff who, in addition to the director of curriculum and instruction, will share responsibility for monitoring improvement in district, school, subgroup, and individual student achievement.
 - C.** The district should develop specific, measurable, rigorous, and time-bound student performance goals based on analysis of current and relevant performance data.
 - 1.** Every improvement plan should have a few (e.g., 3-5) focus areas that organize the work to be done.
 - D.** The district should communicate its key priorities in the DIP to all stakeholders effectively and frequently so that they are fully aware of the areas for improvement and the actions and resources required to improve student achievement.
 - E.** District and school leaders should nurture and support a culture of regular analysis of performance data to evaluate programs and to support teachers in developing the skills required to monitor and evaluate student progress and in improving their instructional practice.
 - 1.** The district should include in regular meetings among the three principals and the superintendent analysis of student performance data and discussion of teaching and learning.
 - 2.** The district should take the steps necessary to ensure that all teachers have team time that is designated for regular and frequent analysis and use of data, with a structure and expectations that will ensure that it is used to focus on data, curriculum, and instruction.
 - 3.** The district should also prioritize analysis of the needs of teachers (and administrators) for training in analyzing and using data, for instance in the interpretation of Galileo reports, and the provision of that training.
 - 4.** The district should ensure that teachers share a common language about data, assessment, and instruction. Discussions of the following questions, for example, will help teachers arrive at this common language:
 - a.** What questions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment can be asked and answered using samples of student work or teacher work?

- b. What data can best be displayed to determine achievement, progress, and trends for this particular level and subject area or department? How will it be collected, analyzed, and displayed?
5. ESE's District Data Team Toolkit (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/lg.html>) – a resource to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use – can provide helpful guidance for this process.
 6. Other sources of information about data use include: Kathryn Parker Boudett, Elizabeth A. City and Richard Murnane, *Data Wise: A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning*, Harvard Education Press, 2010; Nancy Love, editor, *Using Data to Improve Learning for All: A Collaborative Inquiry Approach*, Corwin Press, A Sage Company, 2009; Nancy Love, Katherine E. Stiles, Susan Mundry, and Kathryn DiRanna, *The Data Coach's Guide to Improving Learning for all Students*, A joint publication of The Corwin Press, TERC, Research for Better Teaching and West Ed, 2008; and Victoria Bernhardt, *Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement 2nd*, Eye on Education, 2004.
- F. The district should explore the options in its new student database program for systemwide collection of assessment data and report generation, paying particular attention to ease of access and use by all teachers.

Benefits to implementing this recommendation include:

- More effective use of existing student performance data in decision-making; in setting district, program, school, and student improvement goals; and in improving curriculum and instruction.
- A consistent K-12 set of practices in the collection and dissemination of data that will ensure validity.
- Increased capacity of the district to develop common assessments at each grade level.

Human Resources and Professional Development

5. **Monson should continue the good work that it has begun in embracing and beginning to implement ESE's new educator evaluation system. Monson should build on its momentum and work to become a district recognized for excellence in implementation of the new system.**
 - A. The school committee should begin applying the new educator evaluation system in its evaluation of the interim superintendent.
 1. The review by the school committee of the interim superintendent's proposed goals and the development by him and the school committee of two to four district improvement goals and the superintendent's annual plan at a public meeting will model the new system and demonstrate to staff that the system applies to all educators.²⁴

²⁴ See Part VI: Implementation Guide for Superintendent Evaluation, p. 7, available at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/>.

- B. The interim superintendent must begin applying the new system, by using it in his evaluation of the central office administrators and the principals for 2012-2013. Another year should not pass without evaluation of all administrators.
 - 1. The interim superintendent should give feedback on and approve the administrators' goals. He and they should accelerate their implementation of the new system's five- step cycle.
- C. A committee should be formed of a small, representative group of administrators and teachers to evaluate the implementation of the new system across the district.
 - 1. To make sure that the new system is not implemented as a disconnected initiative, the district should implement it in a manner that establishes coherence among the district's other initiatives. For example, vertical alignment between individual, school, and district goals can accelerate improvement: team goals can be used to establish a common professional practice goal of skill development in using formative assessments or greater differentiation in instructional methods. As another example, principals across the district can share the same professional practice goal of learning to observe classroom instruction and provide more useful feedback.

Benefits: Student growth is at the center of the district's evaluation procedures. Implementing the new educator evaluation system as a lever for change across the district will result in a culture of growth-oriented supervision and evaluation and improvement in student performance as well as teacher and administrator professional practice.

6. Monson should develop a program for ongoing professional development that is linked directly to needs identified through analysis of educator evaluations and student performance. The program should provide opportunities for instructional leadership and the coaching of peers.

- A. The district should convene a professional development committee, consisting of a representative group of professional staff.
 - 1. The committee should consider Monson's school and district improvement plans, student learning goals in the district, and information from supervisors concerning common professional practice goals to determine the areas of greatest need for professional development.
 - 2. Annually, once needs have been determined, the committee should produce a professional development plan designed, in a way responsive to those needs, to build the staff's capacity to improve levels of achievement for all students.
 - 3. The district should consider having principals and team leaders identify exemplary classroom teachers and recognize them by asking them to serve as presenters of workshops planned by the committee.
 - 4. The committee should design a brief evaluation instrument to monitor the quality and perceived effectiveness of professional development it plans. In particular, it should find out from supervisors whether specific professional development initiatives have had an impact on teachers' professional practice.

B. The district should make sure its induction program for new professional staff consistently includes an orientation, mentoring/coaching, and support. (See 603 CMR 7.12 and 7.13.)

- 1.** Adequate time should be provided for the protégé and mentor teacher to work together. The mentor and protégé's year one agenda should be structured in terms of time and topics to be addressed.

Benefits: By creating a coordinated professional development plan based on Monson's priorities and needs, the district will be able to use the valuable resources of teacher time and district funds in ways that will result in high-quality instruction and increased student achievement. A structured induction program that welcomes new staff, orients them to, e.g., the district's curriculum, preferred instructional strategies, and the identity and location of resources, while providing consistent mentoring and support as they become acclimated, will result in improved instruction.

Student Support

7. The review team recommends that the district strengthen its system of supports, ensuring that there is a process in each school to identify and quickly respond to a wide spectrum of student needs (including students working below grade level and those ready for accelerated work).

- A.** The district should support the elementary school in implementing a Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT) team modeled after the STAT teams at the middle and high schools.
- B.** The district should communicate its expectations of differentiation in classroom instruction and provide professional development followed by monitoring to ensure that teachers are putting differentiation into practice, so that students across the spectrum of learning needs are supported and challenged.
- C.** The district should avoid using Title I teachers, interventionists, and special education teachers as substitutes, test proctors, or special education meeting chairs to ensure that students assigned to intervention will have ongoing, uninterrupted instruction.
- D.** The district should provide targeted support after school at the middle and high schools and strongly urge students who need the extra help to attend after-school sessions.
- E.** The district should explore options to increase AP and honors offerings and participation and provide professional development and support for teachers as well as extra support for students in AP and honors courses to ensure their success
- F.** The district might consider using resources currently allocated to the gifted and talented program to support teachers in creating creative and challenging stems to core instruction.

Benefits: Having an elementary STAT team will ensure that all teachers know where to refer students who are having difficulty; it will also provide a network of staff who can brainstorm with teachers to identify strategies that can be implemented in the classroom and that are helpful for all students. An elementary STAT team, an instructional focus on

differentiation, increased AP and honors offerings, targeted after-school support, and a careful examination of the elementary gifted and talented program will help the district meet the needs of students working below grade level and students ready for accelerated work, leading to improved achievement and increased proficiency for all students.

Finance & Asset Management

8. New leadership should

- **see that the process for budget development is transparent and that the administrative team has input into it; and**
 - **make sure that decisions on the allocation of resources are based on student performance data and the strengthened district and school improvement plans.**
- A. School principals and other administrators should participate in budget development, making the needs in their schools or other areas of responsibility known. The district **might consider ways to have teachers participate, also.**
- B. Resources should be allocated in the budget through consideration of student needs and (see Assessment recommendation above) the strengthened improvement plans.
- C. The budget document should communicate district and school goals and objectives—and the ways in which the budget is aligned to them—to all stakeholders including the community and town meeting that vote the district appropriation.

Benefits:

- Participation by the administrative team will make the needs of the various schools and sectors of the district known to all participants and allow them to be reflected in the budget.
- Allocation of resources in accordance with student needs and district and school priorities will help the district meet the challenge, created by the decline in enrollment, of reducing staffing and reallocating resources as appropriate.
- Communication in the budget document of goals and objectives and the budget's alignment to them will help the whole community understand the needs in the district that are driving the budget.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit

Review Team Members

The review of the Monson district was conducted from February 12–15, 2013 by the following team of educators, independent consultants to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

1. Dr. Owen Conway, Leadership and Governance, and Financial and Asset Management
2. Dr. Peter McGinn, Curriculum and Instruction, and Human Resources and Professional Development
3. Christine Brandt, Assessment and Review Team Coordinator
4. Lenora Jennings, Student Support

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: director of business and facilities, human resource and finance coordinator, and grants and payroll secretary.

The review team conducted interviews with the following members of the Monson School Committee: the vice-chair, the secretary, and two members.

The team conducted interviews with representatives of the Monson teachers' association: president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and four school representatives.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: interim superintendent, director of curriculum and instruction, the director of pupil personnel services, and the director of business and facilities.

The review team visited the following schools in Monson: Monson High School (grades 9–12), Granite Valley Middle School (grades 5–8), Quarry Hill Community School (pre-kindergarten through grade 4).

The team interviewed all three school principals and vice-principals and met individually with the Quarry Hill Community School principal while visiting her school. The team also conducted 2 teacher focus groups, 1 with 12 elementary school teachers, and 1 with 8 middle school and 4 high school teachers.

The team observed 31 classes throughout the district: 10 at the high school, 9 at the middle school, and 12 at the elementary school.

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

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

- Data on the district's staffing and finances.
- Published educational reports on the district by ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports.
- All completed program and administrator evaluations, a random selection of completed teacher evaluations and samples of teacher goals for the 2012–2013 school year provided by the principals.

Site Visit Schedule

The following is the schedule for the onsite portion of the district review of the Monson conducted from February 12–15, 2013. The original start date was changed because of school cancellation on Monday, February 11, 2013.

Tuesday February 12, 2013	Wednesday February 13, 2013	Thursday February 14, 2013	Friday February 15, 2013
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff, principals, vice principals, team leaders, student support staff and teachers' association representatives; teacher focus groups; review of documents and personnel files. Meeting with town officials (town administrator and town finance director).	Interviews with district staff, principals, student support staff, and school committee members. Visits to Monson High School, Granite Valley Middle School, and Quarry Hill Community School and classroom observations; review of documents and personnel files.	Interviews with district and school leaders and staff; classroom observations in all three schools. Meeting with teachers' association representatives and parents. Review of documents and personnel files.	School visits, follow-up interviews with school leaders and district staff; classroom observations; team meeting; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Expenditures, Performance

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

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
Asian	13	1.0%	56,517	5.9%
Afr. Amer./Black	8	0.6%	81,806	8.6%
Hispanic/ Latino	27	2.2%	156,976	16.4%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	19	1.5%	26,012	2.7%
Nat. Haw. Or Pacif. Isl.	6	0.5%	1,020	0.1%
White	1,180	94.0%	630,150	66.0%
All students	1,255	100.0%	954,773	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2012

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

Student Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	189	40.9%	14.9%	163,921	35.5%	17.0%
Low income	336	72.7%	26.8%	353,420	76.5%	37.0%
ELL and Former ELL	11	2.4%	0.9%	95,865	20.7%	10.0%
All high needs students	462	--	36.4%	462,272	--	47.9%

Notes: As of October 1, 2012. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 1,269 and total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 965,602.

**Table B2: Monson Public Schools
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2011–2013**

	FY11		FY12		FY13
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated
Expenditures					
From local appropriations for schools	11,109,956	10,857,219	10,679,743	10,699,908	10,217,350
By school committee	7,526,198	7,385,731	6,524,212	6,493,665	4,929,092
By municipality	18,636,154	18,242,950	17,203,955	17,193,573	15,146,442
Total from local appropriations	---	2,322,493	---	2,207,640	---
From revolving funds and grants	---	20,565,443	---	19,401,213	---
Total expenditures	11,109,956	10,857,219	10,679,743	10,699,908	10,217,350
Chapter 70 aid to education program					
Chapter 70 state aid*	---	7,221,084	---	7,259,850	7,312,050
Required local contribution	---	5,102,395	---	5,200,769	5,290,215
Required net school spending**	---	12,323,479	---	12,460,619	12,602,265
Actual net school spending	---	12,610,035	---	12,796,711	12,719,495
Over/under required (\$)	---	286,556	---	336,092	117,230
Over/under required (%)	---	2.3	---	2.7	0.9

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

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

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

**Table B3: Monson Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010–2012**

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012
Administration	\$336.47	\$360.41	\$377.53
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$727.87	\$782.85	\$836.38
Teachers	\$3,710.03	\$3,985.51	\$4,039.12
Other teaching services	\$1,224.17	\$1,363.21	\$1,350.12
Professional development	\$192.04	\$248.54	\$234.88
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$383.32	\$206.24	\$208.70
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$321.78	\$363.87	\$415.01
Pupil services	\$1,139.60	\$1,259.63	\$1,258.70
Operations and maintenance	\$833.09	\$889.68	\$741.94
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$1,615.07	\$1,712.09	\$1,919.90
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$10,483.44	\$11,172.03	\$11,383

Source: Per-pupil expenditure reports on [ESE website](#).

Table B4a: Monson Public Schools
English Language Arts Performance, 2009-2012

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
3	CPI	104	84.1	86.2	86.0	81.5	-2.6	-4.5	Yes	Very Low
	P+	104	58%	62%	63%	53%	-5	-10		--
4	CPI	94	73.9	84.7	82.2	75.8	1.9	-6.4	--	Very Low
	P+	94	42%	59%	57%	46%	4	-11		--
	SGP	92	42.0	51.0	57.0	30.5	-11.5	-26.5		Low
5	CPI	108	84.8	76.9	84.9	83.3	-1.5	-1.6	--	Low
	P+	108	61%	49%	65%	60%	-1	-5		--
	SGP	101	49.5	30.0	42.0	33.0	-16.5	-9.0		Low
6	CPI	118	85.0	84.6	84.8	90.3	5.3	5.5	Yes	Moderate
	P+	118	63%	62%	64%	74%	11	10		--
	SGP	109	40.0	38.0	54.0	64.0	24.0	10.0		High
7	CPI	115	81.6	86.1	89.3	85.4	3.8	-3.9	--	Very Low
	P+	115	54%	63%	72%	67%	13	-5		--
	SGP	112	31.5	32.0	53.0	38.5	7.0	-14.5		Low
8	CPI	126	91.5	91.5	94.5	92.7	1.2	-1.8	--	Low
	P+	126	74%	79%	88%	80%	6	-8		--
	SGP	122	36.0	57.0	62.5	51.5	15.5	-11.0		Moderate
10	CPI	82	96.4	94.9	94.9	97.0	0.6	2.1	--	Low
	P+	82	90%	83%	89%	89%	-1	0		--
	SGP	69	62.0	65.0	56.0	50.0	-12.0	-6.0		Moderate
All	CPI	747	85.3	85.9	87.8	86.6	1.3	-1.2	--	Low
	P+	747	63%	64%	70%	67%	4	-3		Very Low
	SGP	605	44.0	44.5	53.0	46.0	2.0	-7.0		--

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time. The “2012 Performance” column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts’ CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above. The “2012 Performance” column also gives the level of the median SGP. Median SGPs from 0 to 20 are considered to be Very Low; from 21 to 40, Low; from 41 to 60, Moderate; from 61 to 80, High; and from 81 to 100, Very High.

**Table B4b: Monson Public Schools
Mathematics Performance, 2009-2012**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
							4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
			2009	2010	2011	2012				
3	CPI	104	84.6	84.6	87.5	72.1	-12.5	-15.4	Yes	Very Low
	P+	104	64%	66%	69%	45%	-19	-24		--
4	CPI	94	72.2	77.2	73.1	64.9	-7.3	-8.2	Yes	Very Low
	P+	94	37%	42%	31%	29%	-8	-2		--
	SGP	92	48.0	43.0	27.0	19.0	-29.0	-8.0		Very Low
5	CPI	108	68.2	64.0	72.4	68.8	0.6	-3.6	--	Very Low
	P+	108	40%	33%	43%	38%	-2	-5		--
	SGP	103	38.0	29.0	30.0	37.0	-1.0	7.0		Low
6	CPI	118	72.7	69.6	79.3	83.3	10.6	4.0	Yes	Moderate
	P+	118	44%	39%	55%	65%	21	10		--
	SGP	110	54.0	36.0	61.5	65.0	11.0	3.5		High
7	CPI	115	67.2	73.8	68.5	72.2	5.0	3.7	--	Low
	P+	115	34%	49%	41%	48%	14	7		--
	SGP	112	67.5	63.0	68.0	52.5	-15.0	-15.5		Moderate
8	CPI	127	67.1	65.7	73.3	70.9	3.8	-2.4	--	Low
	P+	127	36%	33%	47%	43%	7	-4		--
	SGP	124	50.0	50.0	56.5	59.5	9.5	3.0		Moderate
10	CPI	84	94.3	92.1	87.5	87.5	-6.8	0.0	Yes	Low
	P+	84	87%	80%	76%	75%	-12	-1		--
	SGP	71	41.5	50.0	50.0	39.0	-2.5	-11.0		Low
All	CPI	750	75.1	74.6	76.6	74.0	-1.1	-2.6	--	Very Low
	P+	750	49%	48%	50%	49%	0	-1		--
	SGP	612	48.5	43.0	50.0	45.5	-3.0	-4.5		Moderate

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time. The “2012 Performance” column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts’ CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above. The “2012 Performance” column also gives the level of the median SGP. Median SGPs from 0 to 20 are considered to be Very Low; from 21 to 40, Low; from 41 to 60, Moderate; from 61 to 80, High; and from 81 to 100, Very High.

Table B4c: Monson Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2009-2012

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI)
							4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
			2009	2010	2011	2012				
5	CPI	108	76.0	74.8	78.9	72.2	-3.8	-6.7	Yes	Very Low
	P+	108	43%	40%	49%	36%	-7	-13		--
8	CPI	126	69.5	75.8	75.5	67.3	-2.2	-8.2	--	Low
	P+	126	30%	39%	43%	28%	-2	-15		--
10	CPI	74	88.3	87.8	88.5	80.7	-7.6	-7.8	Yes	Very Low
	P+	74	68%	64%	62%	50%	-18	-12		--
All	CPI	308	77.5	78.7	80.1	72.2	-5.3	-7.9	Yes	Very Low
	P+	308	46%	46%	50%	36%	-10	-14		--

Notes: P+ = percent Proficient or Advanced. Students participate in STE MCAS tests in grades 5, 8, and 10 only. Median SGPs are not calculated for STE. The "2012 Performance" column shows the quintile into which the CPI for the grade (or all grades) falls in a ranking of all Massachusetts districts' CPIs for that grade (or all grades). See footnote 7 in the Student Performance section above.

Table B5a: Monson Public Schools
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	281	73.4	74.3	78.6	77.8	4.4	-0.8
		P+	281	40%	42%	54%	50%	10	-4
		SGP	211	37.0	41.0	53.0	46.0	9	-7
	State	CPI	235,216	75.3	76.1	77.0	76.5	1.2	-0.5
		P+	235,216	44%	45%	48%	48%	4	0
		SGP	177,719	45.0	45.0	46.0	46.0	1	0
Low income	District	CPI	202	77.0	80.4	85.1	82.9	5.9	-2.2
		P+	202	48%	51%	67%	61%	13	-6
		SGP	160	35.0	42.0	53.0	44.5	9.5	-8.5
	State	CPI	180,261	75.5	76.5	77.1	76.7	1.2	-0.4
		P+	180,261	45%	47%	49%	50%	5	1
		SGP	137,185	45.0	46.0	46.0	45.0	0.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	120	61.4	59.4	56.4	62.9	1.5	6.5
		P+	120	19%	19%	16%	23%	4	7
		SGP	80	36.0	39.5	46.0	52.5	16.5	6.5
	State	CPI	91,757	67.8	67.3	68.3	67.3	-0.5	-1.0
		P+	91,757	28%	28%	30%	31%	3	1
		SGP	66,785	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	3.0	1.0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	45,367	64.8	66.1	66.2	66.2	1.4	0.0
		P+	45,367	30%	32%	33%	34%	4	1
		SGP	29,933	51.0	51.0	50.0	51.0	0.0	1.0
All students	District	CPI	747	85.3	85.9	87.8	86.6	1.3	-1.2
		P+	747	63%	64%	70%	67%	4	-3
		SGP	605	44.0	44.5	53.0	46.0	2.0	-7.0
	State	CPI	497,549	86.5	86.9	87.2	86.7	0.2	-0.5
		P+	497,549	67%	68%	69%	69%	2	0
		SGP	395,772	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0

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

**Table B5b: Monson Public Schools
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	281	59.9	61.3	64.9	60.8	0.9	-4.1
		P+	281	27%	28%	33%	31%	4	-2
		SGP	216	42.0	37.5	46.0	37.5	-4.5	-8.5
	State	CPI	235,552	64.5	66.7	67.1	67.0	2.5	-0.1
		P+	235,552	32%	36%	37%	37%	5	0
		SGP	178,144	45.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	1.0	0.0
Low income	District	CPI	202	63.0	66.7	71.0	67.1	4.1	-3.9
		P+	202	32%	36%	41%	39%	7	-2
		SGP	164	40.0	39.0	47.0	39.0	-1.0	-8.0
	State	CPI	180,433	64.5	67.1	67.3	67.3	2.8	0.0
		P+	180,433	33%	37%	38%	38%	5	0
		SGP	137,529	44.0	47.0	46.0	45.0	1.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	120	48.9	47.5	45.8	41.0	-7.9	-4.8
		P+	120	12%	11%	8%	7%	-5	-1
		SGP	82	45.0	41.0	44.0	29.0	-16.0	-15.0
	State	CPI	91,876	56.9	57.5	57.7	56.9	0.0	-0.8
		P+	91,876	20%	21%	22%	21%	1	-1
		SGP	66,876	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	0.0	0.0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	45,695	59.2	61.5	62.0	61.6	2.4	-0.4
		P+	45,695	29%	31%	32%	32%	3	0
		SGP	30,189	49.0	54.0	52.0	52.0	3.0	0.0
All students	District	CPI	750	75.1	74.6	76.6	74.0	-1.1	-2.6
		P+	750	49%	48%	50%	49%	0	-1
		SGP	612	48.5	43.0	50.0	45.5	-3.0	-4.5
	State	CPI	497,984	78.5	79.9	79.9	79.9	1.4	0.0
		P+	497,984	56%	58%	58%	59%	3	1
		SGP	396,357	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0

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

**Table B5c: Monson Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	102	62.9	69.4	72.6	62.5	-0.4	-10.1
		P+	102	18%	31%	34%	23%	5	-11
	State	CPI	96,996	62.1	64.3	63.8	65.0	2.9	1.2
		P+	96,996	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Low income	District	CPI	72	65.1	76.5	75.0	64.9	-0.2	-10.1
		P+	72	21%	43%	40%	25%	4	-15
	State	CPI	74,300	61.1	63.6	62.8	64.5	3.4	1.7
		P+	74,300	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	48	54.4	59.1	57.9	53.6	-0.8	-4.3
		P+	48	5%	13%	14%	13%	8	-1
	State	CPI	38,590	58.1	59.0	59.2	58.7	0.6	-0.5
		P+	38,590	18%	19%	20%	20%	2	0
English language learners or Former ELL	District	CPI	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	15,271	50.8	51.8	50.3	51.4	0.6	1.1
		P+	15,271	15%	16%	15%	17%	2	2
All students	District	CPI	308	77.5	78.7	80.1	72.2	-5.3	-7.9
		P+	308	46%	46%	50%	36%	-10	-14
	State	CPI	211,464	76.8	78.3	77.6	78.6	1.8	1.0
		P+	211,464	50%	52%	52%	54%	4	2

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

**Table B6: Monson Public Schools
Annual Dropout Rates, 2009-2012**

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	3.3%	2.7%	1.4%	1.2%	-2.1	-63.6%	-0.2	-14.3%	2.5%

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

**Table B7a: Monson Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2009-2012**

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	32	73.2%	70.8%	55.9%	59.4%	-13.8	-18.9%	3.5	6.3%	74.1%
Low income	27	70.0%	76.5%	53.6%	51.9%	-18.1	-25.9%	-1.7	-3.2%	72.4%
Students w/ disabilities	15	70.0%	61.5%	50.0%	60.0%	-10.0	-14.3%	10.0	20.0%	68.6%
English language learners (ELL) or Former ELL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	61.1%
All students	90	86.0%	88.5%	86.0%	84.4%	-1.6	-1.9%	-1.6	-1.9%	84.7%

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

**Table B7b: Monson Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2008-2011**

Group	Number Included (2011)	School Year Ending				Change 2008-2011		Change 2010-2011		State (2011)
		2008	2009	2010	2011	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	34	71.4%	73.2%	70.8%	64.7%	-6.7	-9.4%	-6.1	-8.6%	76.5%
Low income	28	68.8%	70.0%	76.5%	64.3%	-4.5	-6.5%	-12.2	-15.9%	75.0%
Students w/ disabilities	12	66.7%	70.0%	61.5%	58.3%	-8.4	-12.6%	-3.2	-5.2%	70.8%
English language learners (ELL) or Former ELL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	64.2%
All students	121	85.7%	86.8%	88.5%	88.4%	2.7	3.2%	-0.1	-0.1%	86.3%

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

**Table B8: Monson Public Schools
Attendance Rates, 2009-2012**

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All Students	95.4%	94.8%	95.3%	95.3%	-0.1	-0.1%	0.0	0.0%	94.9%

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

**Table B9: Monson Public Schools
Selected Disciplinary Measures, 2009-2012**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.1	0.3	0.2	1.9	1.8	---	1.7	---	3.4
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	4.6	5.1	3.9	5.6	1.0	21.7%	1.7	43.6%	5.4

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
1. Interactions between teacher & students & among students are positive & respectful.	ES	0%	0%	100%	(0)	0	0%
	MS	0%	0%	100%	(1)	0	0%
	HS	0%	0%	100%	(2)	31	100%
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated. Disruptions, if present, are managed effectively & equitably.	ES	0%	8%	92%	(0)	5	16%
	MS	22%	0%	78%	(1)	1	3%
	HS	30%	0%	70%	(2)	25	81%
3. Classroom procedures are established & maintained to create a safe physical environment & promote smooth transitions among all classroom activities.	ES	8%	0%	92%	(0)	2	6%
	MS	0%	11%	89%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	10%	20%	70%	(2)	26	84%
4. Lesson reflects rigor & high expectations.	ES	33%	25%	42%	(0)	8	26%
	MS	11%	22%	67%	(1)	6	19%
	HS	30%	10%	60%	(2)	17	55%
5. Classroom rituals, routines & appropriate interactions create a safe intellectual environment in which students take academic risks & most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.	ES	0%	8%	92%	(0)	2	6%
	MS	11%	11%	78%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	10%	10%	80%	(2)	26	84%
6. Multiple resources are available to meet students' diverse learning needs.	ES	67%	0%	33%	(0)	21	68%
	MS	89%	11%	0%	(1)	4	13%
	HS	50%	30%	20%	(2)	6	19%
7. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment & provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	0%	17%	83%	(0)	0	0%
	MS	0%	0%	100%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	0%	10%	90%	(2)	28	90%

Teaching	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
8. Demonstrates knowledge of subject & content.	ES	0%	0%	100%	(0)	0	0%
	MS	0%	0%	100%	(1)	0	0%
	HS	0%	0%	100%	(2)	31	100%
9. Communicates clear grade-appropriate learning objectives aligned to state standards. Applicable ELL language objectives are evident.	ES	0%	8%	92%	(0)	5	16%
	MS	22%	0%	78%	(1)	1	3%
	HS	30%	0%	70%	(2)	25	81%
10. Uses appropriate & varied strategies matched to learning objectives & content.	ES	8%	0%	92%	(0)	2	6%
	MS	0%	11%	89%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	10%	20%	70%	(2)	26	84%
11. Requires inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, &/or evaluation of concepts individually, in pairs or in groups to demonstrate higher-order thinking. (circle observed skills)	ES	33%	25%	42%	(0)	8	26%
	MS	11%	22%	67%	(1)	6	19%
	HS	30%	10%	60%	(2)	17	55%
12. Uses varied questioning techniques that require/seek thoughtful responses & promote deeper understanding.	ES	0%	8%	92%	(0)	2	6%
	MS	11%	11%	78%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	10%	10%	80%	(2)	26	84%
13. Implements appropriate & varied strategies that meet students' diverse learning needs.	ES	67%	0%	33%	(0)	21	68%
	MS	89%	11%	0%	(1)	4	13%
	HS	50%	30%	20%	(2)	6	19%
14. Paces lesson to engage all students & promote understanding.	ES	0%	17%	83%	(0)	0	0%
	MS	0%	0%	100%	(1)	3	10%
	HS	0%	10%	90%	(2)	27	87%
15. Conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding & inform instruction.	ES	0%	0%	100%	(0)	15	48%
	MS	0%	0%	100%	(1)	7	23%
	HS	0%	0%	100%	(2)	9	29%
16. Makes use of technology to enhance learning.	ES	0%	8%	92%	(0)	25	81%
	MS	22%	0%	78%	(1)	1	3%
	HS	30%	0%	70%	(2)	5	16%

Learning	By Grade Span	Evidence					
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	(1)	(2)	#	%	
17. Students are engaged in productive learning routines.	ES	25%	0%	75%	(0)	6	19%
	MS	22%	0%	78%	(1)	6	19%
	HS	10%	60%	30%	(2)	19	61%
18. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	50%	0%	50%	(0)	12	39%
	MS	22%	11%	67%	(1)	4	13%
	HS	40%	30%	30%	(2)	15	48%
19. Students assume responsibility for their own learning.	ES	33%	17%	50%	(0)	5	16%
	MS	11%	11%	78%	(1)	7	23%
	HS	0%	40%	60%	(2)	19	61%
20. Students articulate their thinking or reasoning verbally or in writing either individually, in pairs or in groups.	ES	50%	8%	42%	(0)	14	45%
	MS	33%	0%	67%	(1)	4	13%
	HS	50%	30%	20%	(2)	13	42%
21. Students' responses to questions elaborate about content & ideas (not expected for all responses).	ES	50%	0%	50%	(0)	14	45%
	MS	33%	22%	44%	(1)	6	19%
	HS	50%	40%	10%	(2)	11	35%
22. Students make connections to prior knowledge, real world experiences & other subject matter.	ES	67%	0%	33%	(0)	14	45%
	MS	22%	11%	67%	(1)	2	6%
	HS	40%	10%	50%	(2)	15	48%
23. Students use technology as a tool for learning &/or understanding.	ES	100%	0%	0%	(0)	26	84%
	MS	78%	11%	11%	(1)	1	3%
	HS	70%	0%	30%	(2)	4	13%
24. Student work demonstrates high quality & can serve as exemplars.	ES	83%	8%	8%	(0)	24	77%
	MS	89%	0%	11%	(1)	4	13%
	HS	60%	30%	10%	(2)	3	10%