

# Comprehensive District Review Report



Pittsfield Public Schools

Review conducted March 27–30, 2017

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Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and  
Secondary Education

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**Published September 2017**

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## Executive Summary

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Pittsfield has a fourth-year superintendent who has brought stability to a district that has seen much turnover. Building on leadership skills that promote collaboration, transparency, and data-driven decision making, the superintendent has developed a District Improvement Plan (DIP) which addresses establishing a more collaborative climate among the 12 schools, focuses instructional improvement on explicit learning targets and the use of formative assessments, and implements strategies to help Pittsfield become a more culturally competent school district. The district leadership team is beginning to make inroads in addressing major systemic needs to improve student achievement including the development of an aligned K–12 curriculum.

Along with the other towns in Berkshire County, Pittsfield, the largest municipality, is dealing with lagging economic development and population shifts and declines which affect the funding and delivery of educational services. This is compounded by a large and increasing number of students that “choice out” of the district. The superintendent has created strong relationships with the city and despite a struggling local economy the city’s financial support of schools has consistently exceeded the required net school spending level. The percentage amount over the requirement increased over the four years before the onsite review. However, budget cuts have resulted in the loss of critical staff in the central office as well as in schools which could have a negative impact on improvement initiatives in curriculum and instruction.

The district’s 2016–2017 focus on learning targets and formative feedback were evident in classroom observations. The review team found that the use of formative assessment was more prevalent in observed classrooms at the elementary and middle schools than at the high schools; clear learning targets were seen most often in observed classes at the elementary level and least often at the middle-school level. Some staff said and the team’s observations confirmed that student engagement needs to be a focus and that the district is missing a common instructional model.

### Strengths

There is a culture of transparency and collaboration among school leaders, teachers, members of the school committee, and city officials. District leaders use data to set district priorities, to track progress on district initiatives, and to make adjustments to programs. There is shared ownership of student learning in the district, particularly evident in the many partnerships with local businesses and agencies that provide services beyond what the district can provide. High-school teachers -provided examples of personal interventions for homeless students; middle- and elementary-school teachers talked about “I” and “we” when discussing the need to make improvements in instruction to meet the changing needs of students. District leaders prepare budget documents that are clear, transparent, comprehensive, and aligned with district goals. Under the guidance of the superintendent, the district has put in place policies and practices to help build the cultural competency skills of the school community and to increase the racial diversity of the teaching and administrative staff to more closely reflect the demographic make-up of the community.

## **Challenges and Areas for Growth**

Planning documents are missing critical components that could provide context for the number and pace of initiatives that some staff find overwhelming. The DIP and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) do not include a mission, vision, core values, theories of action, measurable student goals, assessments to gauge progress, and procedures for revising plans.

Under the supervision of a new curriculum director, the district is working with teachers to document and align its ELA curriculum with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. The district is farthest along in its work on K–5 ELA curriculum but needs to complete documentation and alignment of 6–12 ELA and K–12 math, science, and social studies curriculum. The district does not have a clearly articulated, research-based instructional model. In observed classrooms, the quality of instruction varied across the district. The district has not formulated a clear, shared system for data collection, analysis, and dissemination, particularly in identifying students in need of support; this has resulted in varying policies, structures, and practices among the eight elementary, two middle, and two high schools. While all the schools provide multi-tiered social-emotional-behavioral supports, there is not a coherent, districtwide system of academic supports.

The district has not realized the potential of its educator evaluation system; evaluators have focused on ensuring compliance in performing the requisite number of observations and completing the required forms. The review team found that staff received limited instructive or growth-oriented feedback and few conversations about professional practice and growth were taking place in the district. The district has not taken action on the more recent components of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework which require all Massachusetts school districts to collect and use student feedback as evidence in the teacher evaluation process and staff feedback as an evidence source in the administrator evaluation process. The district does not have a sustained, comprehensive, and collaboratively developed professional development plan that is consistently aligned with the DIP and SIPs.

The district has schools in need of maintenance, major repairs, and upgrades, but does not have a long-term plan to replace or renovate the buildings. The district and the city do not have an up-to-date written agreement about indirect costs for municipal services that are provided to the district.

## **Recommendations**

District and school leaders should complete the DIP and SIP planning documents by including components that will help formalize the schools’ vision/mission/goals and the ways in which progress will be measured.

District leaders should provide training for school leaders and teachers in the use of data to assess the quality of student learning, determine and evaluate interventions, and improve classroom instruction.

The district should continue with urgency its work to align its curriculum and ensure its faithful implementation. It should identify critical research-based instructional strategies so that all teachers will demonstrate a high level of skills in meeting the needs of all learners. It should ensure that its numerous

professional development programs are aligned with district priorities. The district's educator evaluation program should shift from compliance to providing feedback that will promote professional growth.

The city should develop a long-range plan for the schools that are in need of renovation, replacement, or closing. It should work with the city to update its agreement regarding shared expenses.

# Pittsfield Public Schools Comprehensive District Review

## Overview

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### **Purpose**

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

Districts reviewed in the 2016–2017 school year include districts classified into Level 2, Level 3, or Level 4 of ESE’s framework for district accountability and assistance. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

### **Methodology**

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

### **Site Visit**

The site visit to the Pittsfield Schools district was conducted from March 27–30, 2017. The site visit included 30 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 149 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted three focus groups with four elementary-school teachers, three middle-school teachers, and three high-school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, student performance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 105 classrooms in the district’s 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

Pittsfield has a mayor-council form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. The seven members of the school committee meet twice each month.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 1, 2013. The district leadership team includes the principals and 10 central office positions: the superintendent, the deputy superintendent, the assistant superintendent of career and technical education, the director of human resources, the student service facilitator, the director of special education, the director of technology, the assistant superintendent for business and finance, the director of curriculum/Title I, and the ELL coordinator. Central office positions have been decreasing over the past two years. The district has 12 principals leading 12 schools. There are five vice-principals. In the 2016–2017 school year, there were 466 teachers in the district.

In the 2016–2017 school year, 5,487 students were enrolled in the district's 12 schools:

**Table 1: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2016–2017**

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Capeless	ES	Pre-K–5	209
Morningside	ES	Pre-K–5	417
Crosby	ES	Pre-K–5	439
Conte Community	ES	Pre-K–5	362
Allendale	ES	K–5	282
Egremont	ES	K–5	469
Stearns	ES	K–5	235
Williams	ES	K–5	323
Reid Middle	MS	6–8	555
Herberg Middle	MS	6–8	629
Pittsfield High	HS	9–12	861
Taconic High	HS	9–12	706
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12 schools</b>	<b>Pre-K–12</b>	<b>5,487</b>
*As of October 1, 2016			

Between 2013 and 2017 overall student enrollment decreased by 8.3 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from economically disadvantaged families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were higher than the median in-district per-pupil expenditures for K-12 districts of similar size in fiscal year 2015: \$14,780 as compared with \$12,947 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](#)). Actual net school spending has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B6 in Appendix B.

## Student Performance

**Pittsfield is a Level 3 district because 3 of its 8 elementary schools are in Level 3 for being among the lowest performing 20 percent of elementary schools and because Pittsfield High and Taconic High are in Level 3 for being among the lowest performing 20 percent of high schools.**

- Morningside is a focus school because its white students and high needs students are among the lowest performing 20 percent of subgroups.
- Conte Community is a focus school because its African American/black students, White students and high needs students are among the lowest performing 20 percent of subgroups.
- Pittsfield High is a focus school because its students with disabilities and high needs students are among the lowest performing 20 percent of subgroups.

**Table 2: Pittsfield Public Schools  
District and School PPI, Percentile, and Level 2013–2016**

School	Group	Annual PPI				Cumulative PPI	School Percentile	Account ability Level
		2013	2014	2015	2016			
Allendale	All	90	25	--	70	60	16	2
	High Needs	88	56	--	70	69		
Egremont	All	70	20	--	105	76	42	2
	High Needs	40	20	--	105	71		
Capeless	All	120	110	--	80	94	41	1
	High Needs	81	94	94	63	80		
Morningside	All	45	55	--	80	68	7	3
	High Needs	45	55	--	85	71		
Crosby	All	50	50	--	85	70	20	3
	High Needs	35	55	--	80	66		
Stearns	All	85	60	--	105	89	74	1
	High Needs	100	69	--	100	91		
Williams	All	55	55	105	85	82	84	1
	High Needs	50	75	75	80	75		
Conte Community	All	55	30	--	90	68	5	3
	High Needs	55	45	--	95	75		
Reid Middle	All	65	40	--	70	61	22	2
	High Needs	70	35	--	60	54		



Herberg Middle	All	60	45	--	65	59	23	2
	High Needs	55	40	--	65	56		
Pittsfield High	All	71	32	68	68	61	7	3
	High Needs	64	43	43	50	48		
Taconic High	All	79	39	75	61	63	16	3
	High Needs	89	32	68	50	56		
District	All	46	32	--	68	55	--	3
	High Needs	50	32	--	64	53		

**Between 2015 and 2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 10 percentage points in ELA and by 6 percentage points in math.**

- The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 10 percentage points in ELA and by 7 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of students from economically disadvantaged families meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 9 percentage points in ELA and by 7 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of ELL and former ELL students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 9 percentage points in ELA and by 13 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 11 percentage points in ELA and by 8 percentage points in math.

**Table 3: Pittsfield Public Schools  
ELA and Math Meeting or Exceeding Expectations (Grades 3–8) 2015–2016**

Group	ELA			Math		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
All students	38%	48%	10	37%	43%	6
High Needs	24%	34%	10	24%	31%	7
Economically Disadvantaged	25%	34%	9	25%	32%	7
ELL and former ELL students	20%	29%	9	19%	32%	13
Students with disabilities	9%	20%	11	11%	19%	8

**Between 2013 and 2016, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science declined by 7 percentage points for all students, and by 6 to 16 percentage points for high needs students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. In 2016, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science was 16 percentage points below the 2016 state rate for the district as a whole and by 6 to 10 percentage points for high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, English language learners, and students with disabilities.**

**Table 4: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science Percent Proficient or Advanced by Subgroup 2013–2016**

Group		2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend	Above/Below State (2016)
All students	District	45%	42%	39%	38%	-7	-16
	State	53%	55%	54%	54%	1	
High Needs	District	33%	30%	25%	21%	-12	-10
	State	31%	33%	31%	31%	0	
Economically Disadvantaged	District	--	--	26%	22%	--	-10
	State	--	--	34%	32%	--	
ELL and former ELL students	District	29%	7%	7%	13%	-16	-6
	State	19%	18%	19%	19%	0	
Students with disabilities	District	18%	13%	12%	12%	-6	-9
	State	21%	21%	22%	21%	0	

The district reached its 2016 Composite Performance Index (CPI) targets in ELA and math for students from economically disadvantaged families but did not reach its targets for all students, high needs students, English language learners, and students with disabilities. The district did not reach its CPI targets in science for all students and each group that makes up the high needs population with reportable data.

**Table 5: Pittsfield Public Schools  
2016 CPI and Targets by Subgroup**

Group	ELA			Math			Science		
	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating
All students	82.9	92.5	Improved Below Target	76.7	88.7	Improved Below Target	70.9	84.3	No Change
High Needs	76.2	89.7	Improved Below Target	69.3	85.1	Improved Below Target	61.5	79.6	No Change
Economically Disadvantaged <sup>1</sup>	76.8	73.8	Above Target	69.7	70.2	On Target	61.5	67.3	Declined
ELLs	73.5	86.7	Improved Below Target	63.9	82.5	Improved Below Target	54.2	73.9	Improved Below Target
Students with disabilities	68.4	85.2	Improved Below Target	59.5	81.0	Improved Below Target	56.2	77.5	No Change

In 2016, students' growth in ELA and math was moderate compared with their academic peers for all students, and for each subgroup that makes up the high needs population. The district reached its

<sup>1</sup> The economically disadvantaged subgroup does not have a CPI target and rating because 2015 is the first year that a CPI was calculated for the economically disadvantaged group; this CPI will serve as a baseline for future years' CPI targets.

student growth targets in ELA for all students and for each subgroup that makes up the high needs population, and in math for English language learners and students with disabilities.

**Table 6: Pittsfield Public Schools  
2016 Median ELA and Math SGP by Subgroup**

Group	2016 Median ELA SGP			2016 Median Math SGP		
	District	Rating	Growth Level	District	Rating	Growth Level
All students	50.0	Above Target	Moderate	44.0	Below Target	Moderate
High Needs	46.0	Above Target	Moderate	43.0	Below Target	Moderate
Econ. Disad.	45.0	Above Target	Moderate	41.0	Below Target	Moderate
ELLs	65.5	Above Target	Moderate	55.0	On Target	Moderate
SWD	43.0	Above Target	Moderate	42.0	On Target	Moderate

In 2016, the district's out-of-school suspension rates were above the state rates for all students, high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students with disabilities. The in-school suspension rates were more than three times the state rates for all students and twice the state rates for high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

**Table 7: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Out-of-School and In-School Suspension Rates by Subgroup 2013–2016**

Group	Type of Suspension	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)
High Needs	ISS	7.3%	11.2%	5.3%	8.5%	2.9%
	OSS	8.7%	6.8%	2.8%	6.5%	4.9%
Economically disadvantaged*	ISS	7.0%	11.7%	4.2%	9.0%	3.2%
	OSS	8.8%	7.0%	2.2%	7.0%	5.6%
ELLs	ISS	2.9%	6.3%	3.2%	5.7%	1.9%
	OSS	4.9%	2.6%	0.7%	3.0%	4.0%
Students with disabilities	ISS	15.0%	14.7%	15.4%	10.7%	3.5%
	OSS	12.7%	10.7%	8.3%	9.2%	5.9%
All Students	ISS	5.3%	8.6%	3.2%	6.3%	1.9%
	OSS	6.3%	5.1%	1.7%	4.5%	2.9%

\*Suspension rates for students from low income families used for suspension rates for students from economically disadvantaged families for 2013 and 2014

Between 2012 and 2015, the district's four-year cohort graduation rate improved by 3.3 percentage points for all students and by 1.2 to 7.6 percentage points for high needs students, students from low income families, and students with disabilities, and declined by 13.8 percentage points for English language learners. The district reached the four-year cohort graduation target for all students.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The four-year cohort graduation rate target is 80 percent for each group and refers to the 2015 graduation rate. Students from low-income families did not receive a 2016 accountability rating because of the change to the economically disadvantaged measure.

**Table 8: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates 2013–2016**

Group	Number Included (2016)	Cohort Year Ending				Change 2013–2016		Change 2015–2016		State (2016)
		2013	2014	2015	2016	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	297	67.8%	75.4%	74.4%	74.7%	6.9	10.2%	0.3	0.4%	79.1%
Low income	268	66.7%	75.4%	73.0%	74.3%	7.6	11.4%	1.3	1.8%	78.4%
ELLs	17	66.7%	86.7%	57.9%	52.9%	-13.8	-20.7%	-5.0	-8.6%	64.1%
SWD	116	58.3%	60.7%	63.3%	59.5%	1.2	2.1%	-3.8	-6.0%	71.8%
All students	434	78.5%	84.0%	82.9%	81.8%	3.3	4.2%	-1.1	-1.3%	87.5%

Between 2011 and 2014, the district's five-year cohort graduation rate improved by 4.5 percentage points for all students, and by 8.0 percentage points for high needs students and students from low income families, and by 4.5 percentage points for students with disabilities. The district reached the five-year cohort graduation target for all students.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 9: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates 2012–2015**

Group	Number Included (2015)	Cohort Year Ending				Change 2012–2015		Change 2014–2015		State (2015)
		2012	2013	2014	2015	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	297	70.5%	73.1%	80.0%	78.5%	8.0	11.3%	-1.5	-1.9%	82.0%
Low income	267	68.8%	72.5%	79.7%	76.8%	8.0	11.6%	-2.9	-3.6%	81.6%
ELLs	19	68.2%	80.0%	93.3%	57.9%	-10.3	-15.1%	-35.4	-37.9%	70.2%
SWD	109	66.1%	65.2%	68.2%	70.6%	4.5	6.8%	2.4	3.5%	74.5%
All students	457	81.3%	82.0%	86.7%	85.8%	4.5	5.5%	-0.9	1.0%	89.4%

Between 2013 and 2016, Pittsfield's drop-out rates decreased for all students and each group that makes up the high needs population. Pittsfield's 2016 dropout rates for high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and English language learners were below the 2016 state rates.

**Table 10: Pittsfield Public Schools**

<sup>3</sup> The five-year cohort graduation rate target is 85 percent for each group and refers to the 2014 graduation rate. Students from low-income families did not receive a 2016 accountability rating because of the change to the economically disadvantaged measure.

**Drop-out Rates by Subgroup 2013–2016<sup>4</sup>**

Group	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)
High Needs	4.6%	3.4%	4.4%	3.2%	3.7%
Econ. Disad.	4.5%	3.2%	4.4%	3.1%	4.1%
ELLs	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	6.6%
SWD	6.7%	5.9%	5.9%	5.2%	3.1%
All students	3.0%	2.1%	2.7%	1.9%	1.9%

## Grade and School Results

Between 2013 and 2016, ELA CPI for all students declined by 2.1 points, from 85.0 in 2013 to 82.9 in 2016, and declined in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades.

- ELA CPI improved by 4.5 points in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, by 1.9 points in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and by 1.7 points in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.
- ELA CPI declined by 4.6 points in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, by 8.4 points in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, by 6.4 points in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and by 2.3 points in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - ELA CPI in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade was 94.7 in 2016, 2.0 points below the 2016 state CPI of 96.7.

**Table 11: Pittsfield Public Schools  
ELA Composite Performance Index (CPI) by Grade 2013–2016**

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
3	445	79.8	81.2	76.5	84.3	--	4.5	7.8
4	412	72.0	73.3	70.1	73.9	--	1.9	3.8
5	407	83.1	80.6	75.2	84.8	--	1.7	9.6
6	391	85.2	84.9	68.9	80.6	--	-4.6	11.7
7	379	87.8	88.7	76.1	79.4	--	-8.4	3.3
8	358	92.0	90.8	85.9	85.6	--	-6.4	-0.3
10	363	97.0	92.8	95.8	94.7	96.7	-2.3	-1.1
All	2,881	85.0	84.2	78.3	82.9	87.2	-2.1	4.6

In 2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA ranged from 35 percent to 70 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, from 17 percent to 75 percent in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and from 24 percent to 76 percent in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades was 49 percent, 37 percent, and 46 percent, respectively, at Reid Middle, and 45 percent, 49 percent, and 57 percent, respectively, at Herberg Middle. The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in ELA in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade was 86 and 90 percent, respectively, at Pittsfield High and Taconic High.

<sup>4</sup> Drop-out rates for students from low income families used for 2013 and 2014 drop-out rates for students from economically disadvantaged families.

**Table 12: Pittsfield Public Schools  
ELA Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade 2015–2016<sup>5</sup>**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Allendale	56%	34%	58%	--	--	--	--	50%
Egremont	56%	56%	59%	--	--	--	--	57%
Capeless	70%	47%	66%	--	--	--	--	60%
Morningside	35%	17%	24%	--	--	--	--	26%
Crosby	42%	40%	36%	--	--	--	--	40%
Stearns	52%	69%	73%	--	--	--	--	66%
Williams	67%	75%	76%	--	--	--	--	72%
Conte Community	40%	25%	50%	--	--	--	--	39%
Reid Middle	--	--	--	49%	37%	46%	--	44%
Herberg Middle	--	--	--	45%	49%	57%	--	51%
Pittsfield High	--	--	--	--	--	--	86%	86%
Taconic High	--	--	--	--	--	--	90%	90%
District	50%	45%	54%	46%	42%	51%	88%	--

**Between 2013 and 2016, ELA CPI improved by 0.4 to 9.7 points in 6 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 7.3 points at Reid Middle and by 6.0 points at Herberg Middle. ELA CPI declined by 3.5 points at Pittsfield High and by 1.4 points at Taconic High.**

- ELA CPI for high needs students improved by 3.9 to 12.0 points at 5 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 10.8 points at Reid Middle and by 8.7 points at Herberg Middle. ELA CPI for high needs students' declined by 7.5 points at Pittsfield High and by 2.9 points at Taconic High.
- ELA CPI for English language learners improved by 12.0 and 28.7 points in 2 of the 3 elementary schools with reportable data, by 14.5 points at Reid Middle ,and by 6.6 points at Herberg Middle.
- ELA CPI for students with disabilities improved by 1.2 to 24.1 points at 4 of the 7 elementary schools with reportable data, and declined by 6.4 points at Reid Middle and by 3.2 points at Herberg Middle. ELA CPI for students with disabilities declined by 13.1 and 6.7 percentage points, respectively, at Pittsfield High and Taconic High.

**Table 13: Pittsfield Public Schools  
ELA Composite Performance Index (CPI) by School and Subgroup 2013–2016**

School	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend
Allendale	83.0	82.4	78.1	84.5	1.5
High Needs	78.3	80.0	76.5	82.2	3.9
Econ. Disad.	--	--	76.0	81.3	--
ELLs	56.3	--	--	85.0	28.7
SWD	--	60.4	52.5	75.0	--
Egremont	83.1	79.3	74.3	84.2	1.1
High Needs	73.7	69.1	64.3	78.9	5.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	65.1	81.4	--
ELLs	--	58.9	52.1	79.8	--
SWD	65.5	63.6	54.0	66.7	1.2
Capeless	88.0	86.7	87.4	87.9	-0.1

<sup>5</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> grade results are MCAS and refer to the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced.

High Needs	82.7	82.9	82.6	81.0	-1.7
Econ. Disad.	--	--	85.4	81.6	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	65.3	80.6	71.7	75.0	9.7
Morningside	64.5	70.0	56.3	64.9	0.4
High Needs	63.4	69.1	56.4	62.9	-0.5
Econ. Disad.	--	--	56.1	63.1	--
ELLs	62.5	60.2	46.9	53.8	-8.7
SWD	57.6	66.3	50.6	50.0	-7.6
Crosby	73.6	74.8	75.0	81.3	7.7
High Needs	71.0	74.2	73.6	79.5	8.5
Econ. Disad.	--	--	72.6	79.1	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	70.6	77.5	75.4	79.6	9.0
Stearns	94.3	88.4	87.5	90.0	-4.3
High Needs	91.5	86.9	83.2	88.0	-3.5
Econ. Disad.	--	--	84.7	87.2	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	92.4	79.8	81.5	87.5	-4.9
Williams	83.1	85.7	86.3	92.8	9.7
High Needs	75.3	80.4	76.0	87.3	12.0
Econ. Disad.	--	--	75.0	89.2	--
ELLs	--	--	--	90.0	--
SWD	60.9	76.9	68.2	85.0	24.1
Conte Community	67.4	70.4	61.7	74.4	7.0
High Needs	66.9	70.0	60.9	72.1	5.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	61.7	73.4	--
ELLs	60.7	65.9	55.9	72.7	12.0
SWD	53.7	55.8	45.2	50.0	-3.7
Reid Middle	89.1	86.8	77.5	81.8	-7.3
High Needs	86.3	83.2	70.3	75.5	-10.8
Econ. Disad.	--	--	72.5	76.1	--
ELLs	78.9	69.6	45.6	64.4	-14.5
SWD	74.3	66.1	54.0	67.9	-6.4
Herberg Middle	88.9	89.8	76.8	82.9	-6.0
High Needs	81.6	84.0	65.0	72.9	-8.7
Econ. Disad.	--	--	66.9	75.4	--
ELLs	72.9	77.6	58.3	66.3	-6.6
SWD	62.6	69.3	49.6	59.4	-3.2
Pittsfield High	96.3	91.6	93.9	92.8	-3.5
High Needs	92.8	88.1	88.2	85.3	-7.5
Econ. Disad.	--	--	90.9	86.6	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	86.5	76.4	79.1	73.4	-13.1
Taconic High	98.1	94.3	98.3	96.7	-1.4
High Needs	97.0	90.9	97.0	94.1	-2.9
Econ. Disad.	--	--	97.2	96.4	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	95.4	79.3	94.9	88.7	-6.7

**Between 2013 and 2016, math CPI declined by 3.2 points for all students, from 79.9 in 2013 to 76.7 in 2016. Math CPI also declined in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.**

- Math CPI declined by 10.3 points in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, by 12.0 points in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and by 24.7 points in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - Math CPI did not improve in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. In 2016, math CPI was 87.2 in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade in 2016, 2.5 points below the 2016 state CPI of 89.7.
- Math CPI improved by 8.8 points in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and by 1.6 points in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Table 14: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Math Composite Performance Index (CPI) by Grade 2013–2016**

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
3	442	81.0	79.6	80.9	89.8	--	8.8	8.9
4	415	73.6	70.0	71.4	75.2	--	1.6	3.8
5	407	79.7	75.9	74.0	79.7	--	0.0	5.7
6	390	82.7	76.8	73.9	72.4	--	-10.3	-1.5
7	371	75.7	71.9	67.2	63.7	--	-12.0	-3.5
8	226	79.5	75.4	54.9	54.8	--	-24.7	-0.1
10	361	87.2	87.1	86.7	87.2	89.7	0.0	0.5
All	2,867	79.9	76.6	74.6	76.7	81.5	-3.2	2.1

**In 2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in math ranged from 32 percent to 93 percent in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, from 10 percent to 75 percent in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and from 23 percent to 85 percent in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades was 42 percent, 26 percent, and 24 percent, respectively, at Reid Middle, and 31 percent, 40 percent, and 11 percent, respectively, at Herberg Middle. The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in ELA in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade was 71 percent and 77 percent, respectively, at Pittsfield High and Taconic High.**

**Table 15: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Math Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade 2015–2016<sup>6</sup>**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Allendale	54%	43%	27%	--	--	--	--	41%
Egremont	71%	43%	63%	--	--	--	--	59%
Capeless	85%	41%	45%	--	--	--	--	56%
Morningside	32%	10%	23%	--	--	--	--	22%
Crosby	41%	44%	54%	--	--	--	--	45%
Stearns	60%	75%	65%	--	--	--	--	67%
Williams	93%	69%	85%	--	--	--	--	83%
Conte Community	63%	18%	49%	--	--	--	--	45%
Reid Middle	--	--	--	42%	26%	24%	--	35%
Herberg Middle	--	--	--	31%	40%	11%	--	37%
Pittsfield High	--	--	--	--	--	--	71%	71%
Taconic High	--	--	--	--	--	--	77%	77%
District	59%	40%	50%	35%	33%	17%	73%	--

<sup>6</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> grade results are MCAS and refer to the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced.



**Between 2013 and 2016, math CPI improved by 2.6 points to 14.4 points in 5 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 11.6 points at Reid Middle and by 11.3 points at Herberg Middle. Math CPI improved by 1.6 points at Pittsfield High and declined by 1.5 points at Taconic High.**

- Math CPI for high needs students improved by 3.4 points to 15.2 points at 6 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 14.2 points at Reid Middle and by 15.2 points at Herberg Middle. Math CPI for high needs students' improved by 0.2 point at Pittsfield High and by 1.7 points at Taconic High.
- Math CPI for English language learners improved by 9.6 points and 28.7 points in 2 out of 3 elementary schools with reportable data, and declined by 32.6 points at Reid Middle and by 20.8 points at Herberg Middle.
- Math CPI for students with disabilities improved by 2.5 points to 31.7 points at 5 of the 7 elementary schools with reportable data, and declined by 7.1 points at Reid Middle and by 12.9 points at Herberg Middle. Math CPI for students with disabilities improved by 8.5 points and 1.5 points, respectively, at Pittsfield High and Taconic High.

**Table 16: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Math Composite Performance Index by School and Subgroup 2013–2016**

School	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend
Allendale	82.7	78.5	77.0	81.1	-1.6
High Needs	76.4	75.0	74.7	79.8	3.4
Econ. Disad.	--	--	76.0	78.3	--
ELLs	56.3	--	--	85.0	28.7
SWD	--	58.3	65.0	75.0	--
Egremont	78.7	74.9	78.0	87.4	8.7
High Needs	68.3	62.1	71.1	83.5	15.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	71.9	84.6	--
ELLs	--	57.1	56.3	83.3	--
SWD	56.8	53.4	64.5	73.7	16.9
Capeless	82.9	83.1	79.0	85.5	2.6
High Needs	75.7	75.8	70.5	81.0	5.3
Econ. Disad.	--	--	76.9	80.9	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	48.6	58.3	56.8	80.3	31.7
Morningside	67.1	65.6	55.3	62.8	-4.3
High Needs	66.2	64.5	55.5	61.0	-5.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	55.7	61.5	--
ELLs	57.1	60.2	58.8	55.8	-1.3
SWD	61.6	65.8	48.2	48.9	-12.7
Crosby	74.4	71.6	78.7	81.9	7.5
High Needs	71.2	70.6	78.0	79.3	8.1
Econ. Disad.	--	--	77.7	78.7	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	70.2	70.5	75.0	78.3	8.1
Stearns	95.6	94.5	87.9	93.1	-2.5
High Needs	94.5	92.9	84.6	89.5	-5.0
Econ. Disad.	--	--	85.2	91.5	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	92.4	91.7	79.3	84.1	-8.3

Williams	88.4	88.0	95.6	95.9	7.5
High Needs	85.1	83.9	88.9	91.5	6.4
Econ. Disad.	--	--	87.1	92.7	--
ELLs	--	--	--	93.2	--
SWD	72.8	73.2	85.2	88.0	15.2
Conte Community	64.7	58.0	63.7	79.1	14.4
High Needs	64.6	58.1	62.4	76.7	12.1
Econ. Disad.	--	--	62.4	77.3	--
ELLs	65.4	52.3	61.8	75.0	9.6
SWD	46.3	45.0	49.0	48.8	2.5
Reid Middle	81.1	74.9	71.1	69.5	-11.6
High Needs	76.5	69.4	64.0	62.3	-14.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	65.6	63.9	--
ELLs	73.0	54.6	34.4	40.4	-32.6
SWD	61.4	55.1	51.4	54.3	-7.1
Herberg Middle	79.3	76.2	68.3	68.0	-11.3
High Needs	70.6	67.5	55.7	55.4	-15.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	58.4	57.5	--
ELLs	64.6	56.6	45.0	43.8	-20.8
SWD	54.5	51.0	40.4	41.6	-12.9
Pittsfield High	83.7	85.5	84.0	85.3	1.6
High Needs	71.1	76.7	70.4	71.3	0.2
Econ. Disad.	--	--	72.6	71.6	--
ELLs	67.5	--	--	--	--
SWD	51.6	62.3	53.0	60.1	8.5
Taconic High	92.3	89.5	90.1	90.8	-1.5
High Needs	88.7	85.6	84.5	87.0	-1.7
Econ. Disad.	--	--	85.8	88.9	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	78.9	75.0	82.1	80.4	1.5

**Between 2013 and 2016, science proficiency rates declined by 7 percentage points in the district as whole, from 45 percent in 2013 to 38 percent in 2016, 16 percentage points below the 2016 state rate of 54 percent.**

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency rates decreased by 11 percentage points from 43 percent in 2013 to 32 percent in 2016, 15 percentage points below the 2016 state rate of 47 percent.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency rates decreased by 7 percentage points from 33 percent in 2013 to 26 percent in 2016, 15 percentage points below the 2016 state rate of 41 percent.
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency rates decreased by 3 percentage points from 60 percent in 2013 to 57 percent in 2016, 16 percentage points below the 2016 state rate of 73 percent.

**Table 17: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science Percent Proficient or Advanced by Grade 2013–2016**

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
5	439	43%	38%	32%	32%	47%	-11%	0%
8	367	33%	37%	30%	26%	41%	-7%	-4%
10	343	60%	53%	56%	57%	73%	-3%	1%
All	1149	45%	42%	39%	38%	54%	-7%	-1%

In 2016, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science ranged from 18 percent to 64 percent, below the 2016 state rate of 47 percent at 6 of the 8 schools with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency rates were 24 percent at Reid Middle and 29 percent at Herberg Middle, below the 2016 state rate of 41 percent. In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade science proficiency was 54 percent at Pittsfield High and 64 percent at Taconic High, above the 2016 state rate of 73 percent.

**Table 18: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science Percent Proficient or Advanced by School and Grade 2015–2016**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Allendale	--	--	23%	--	--	--	--	23%
Egremont	--	--	44%	--	--	--	--	44%
Capeless	--	--	26%	--	--	--	--	26%
Morningside	--	--	18%	--	--	--	--	18%
Crosby	--	--	18%	--	--	--	--	18%
Stearns	--	--	48%	--	--	--	--	48%
Williams	--	--	64%	--	--	--	--	64%
Conte Community	--	--	21%	--	--	--	--	21%
Reid Middle	--	--	--	--	--	24%	--	24%
Herberg Middle	--	--	--	--	--	29%	--	29%
Pittsfield High	--	--	--	--	--	--	54%	54%
Taconic High	--	--	--	--	--	--	64%	64%
District	--	--	32%	--	--	26%	57%	38%
State	--	--	47%	--	--	41%	73%	54%

Between 2013 and 2016, science proficiency declined by 1 to 17 percentage points in 8 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 9 and 6 percentage points at Reid Middle and Herberg Middle, respectively. Science proficiency rates declined by 9 percentage points at Pittsfield High and improved by 5 points at Taconic High.

- Science proficiency rates for high needs students declined by 4 to 28 percentage points in 7 of the 8 elementary schools, and declined by 11 and 5 percentage points at Reid Middle and Herberg Middle, respectively. Science proficiency rates for high needs students declined by 15 percentage points at Pittsfield High and by 9 percentage points at Taconic High.
- Science proficiency rates for students with disabilities declined by 6 and 9 percentage points at 2 of the 4 elementary schools with reportable data, declined by 5 percentage points at Reid Middle, and improved by 2 percentage points at Herberg Middle. Science proficiency rates for students with disabilities declined by 12 and 10 percentage points, respectively, at Pittsfield High and Taconic High.

**Table 19: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science Percent Proficient or Advanced by School and Subgroup 2013–2016**

<b>School</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>4-Year Trend</b>
<b>Allendale</b>	39%	35%	31%	23%	-16%
High Needs	15%	17%	28%	11%	-4%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	35%	12%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	--	--	--	--	--
<b>Egremont</b>	47%	42%	24%	44%	-3%
High Needs	24%	22%	7%	26%	2%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	8%	31%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	18%	25%	0%	12%	-6%
<b>Capeless</b>	41%	55%	45%	26%	-15%
High Needs	38%	44%	38%	10%	-28%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	50%	--	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	--	--	20%	--	--
<b>Morningside</b>	33%	27%	16%	18%	-15%
High Needs	32%	25%	18%	15%	-17%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	19%	14%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	0%	5%	0%	5%	5%
<b>Crosby</b>	31%	15%	13%	18%	-13%
High Needs	27%	13%	9%	13%	-14%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	10%	17%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	15%	5%	0%	6%	-9%
<b>Stearns</b>	49%	68%	47%	48%	-1%
High Needs	48%	60%	35%	41%	-7%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	38%	38%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	--	--	8%	--	--
<b>Williams</b>	81%	67%	78%	64%	-17%
High Needs	65%	60%	47%	40%	-25%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	43%	31%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	--	50%	--	--	--
<b>Conte Community</b>	30%	10%	5%	21%	-9%
High Needs	27%	11%	2%	23%	-4%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	2%	22%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	20%	--
SWD	18%	0%	0%	20%	2%
<b>Reid Middle</b>	33%	36%	25%	24%	-9%
High Needs	23%	30%	16%	12%	-11%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	17%	12%	--
ELLs	--	25%	--	--	--
SWD	11%	8%	6%	6%	-5%

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Herberg Middle	35%	39%	35%	29%	-6%
High Needs	17%	22%	20%	12%	-5%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	21%	13%	--
ELLs	10%	--	--	--	--
SWD	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%
Pittsfield High	63%	43%	48%	54%	-9%
High Needs	45%	27%	30%	30%	-15%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	32%	34%	--
ELLs	--	--	8%	23%	--
SWD	23%	9%	11%	11%	-12%
Taconic High	59%	66%	65%	64%	5%
High Needs	52%	52%	54%	43%	-9%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	56%	49%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	43%	31%	39%	33%	-10%

## Leadership and Governance

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### ***Contextual Background***

Pittsfield's new mayor, senior-level city officials, school committee members, the superintendent, and teachers' association leaders communicate often and collaborate well to support the city's schools and students.

The superintendent is leading a student-focused transformation of the district, from a district of 12 separate and uncoordinated schools into a unified system of schools. The district's cultural transformation focuses on increasing coherence and shared responsibility for learning. The superintendent communicates the district's priority to develop and provide more effective instructional policies and practices that will improve students' 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, knowledge, and outcomes. Management approaches continue to shift from a "top down" central office to collaborative, shared, and supportive leadership among the central office staff, principals, and teachers. Decision-making now depends on intentional, data-driven analysis and planning.

The superintendent continues to build an effective team of leaders and learners. Among the 12 principals, the median number of years as a district principal is 3 years; 3 principals have been in their positions for 1 year. The district employs a cadre of collaborative, caring, and dedicated teachers who appreciate the fact that their leaders acknowledge and support their efforts.

District and school leaders face major leadership challenges: a high number of choice-out families; balancing urgency with the paced implementation of sustained improvements; doing more and better with decreasing resources and less administrative support; and using formative and summative data for identifying students in need of academic support and providing appropriate, effective interventions.

### ***Strength Finding***

- 1. The superintendent, the school committee, and other educational leaders promote a culture of transparency and collaboration which helps to foster public confidence and shared responsibility for student learning in the district and broader community.**
  - A.** School leaders actively promote transparency that is characterized by visibility and accessibility of information.
    1. The superintendent described his relationships with the school committee as very transparent, noting "They have faith in me; I have faith in them." He told the review team that when interacting with seven elected officials, "the only way to operate is to be transparent," noting "We can't be who we want to be unless we are clear about who we are."

2. School committee members acknowledged that the superintendent practices transparency by providing timely data and analysis in key areas: student achievement, district and school planning documents, budget and finance, and superintendent's reports on school department activities presented at school committee meetings.
    - a. A school committee member said that when administrators presented student achievement data, they gave both "lowlights and highlights."
  3. On December 2, 2016, as required by state regulations, district principals mailed to all parents a letter explaining the data in the school's most recent Department of Elementary and Secondary Education report card. In addition, the district posted on its website copies of the principals' letters and the schools' report cards.
  4. In order to promote transparency with the public about the school department's fiscal year 2017 budget, on January 17, 2016, the school committee conducted a day-long session at which each district principal presented a half-hour report identifying the school's plans and budgetary needs for staff, materials, and building repairs.
    - a. District principals expressed the view that there was more transparency than in the past. As a result, district staff members were having many more open and honest conversations about what needed to change.
  5. Contributing to district transparency, Pittsfield Access Television records and broadcasts school committee meetings that provide community members with current information and data about district plans, operations, and outcomes.
- B.** School staff, municipal staff, and parents indicated that there was a high degree of collaboration throughout the school system and the community.
1. Interviews and a document review indicated that the superintendent and the school committee model collaboration for the district and community.
  2. City officials said that district and municipal staff had positive working relationships.
    - a. A city official observed that the superintendent had a collaborative approach to problem solving, noting that the school district and the city "should walk in the same direction."
    - b. Central office administrators said that their relationships with municipal officials were "solid."
  3. Teachers' association representatives, school committee members, and the superintendent indicated that their relationships and interactions were collaborative and productive.
    - a. To conduct collective bargaining negotiations in 2015, the school committee and the teachers' association used the collaborative, Interest Based Bargaining (IBB) approach.

- b. The collective bargaining agreement provides for structures that promote continuous collaboration and discussion of issues: the superintendent and the teachers' association president meet monthly, and the school committee chair, the superintendent, administrators, and union representatives are members of the advisory Joint Labor Management Council (JLMC) which usually meets monthly.
- c. In the 2016-2018 District Improvement Plan, Objective #1 states: *In order to drive key planning and decision making, the district will create a consistent collaborative leadership model that includes a common infrastructure at the district and building levels.*
- d. The superintendent effectively delegates educational and operational leadership to principals, program leaders, and administrators.
  - i. Principals expressed the opinion that compared with the district culture five years ago they are trusted more and were receiving more consistent support. Rather than competing with one another, principals are sharing information and pulling together. Principals also praised their teachers' productive teamwork.
- 4. Teachers indicated that they have been increasing their participation and collaboration in several school or district initiatives: planning and presenting professional development; field- testing math instructional materials and formative assessments; piloting a new teacher leadership model at Stearns Elementary; attending book clubs with colleagues; and developing grants to fund schools' improvement initiatives.
  - a. Teachers from different schools spoke positively about the support that they have received from key administrators, including: "District leadership has been open to our needs" and "I feel respected."
- 5. Parents told the team that they had experienced positive and frequent two-way communication with school personnel and said that the responses from the central office were also "good."

**Impact:** District leaders' strong degree of transparency and collaboration helps foster public confidence and increase staff morale and commitment to implementing initiatives and instructional practices that elevate students' academic proficiency and social-emotional skills. Pittsfield's educational and municipal leaders are role models for their students by showing them how adults can work together to improve their city and its schools.



## ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

- 2. The district's District Improvement Plan (DIP) and School Improvement Plans (SIPs) do not have measureable goals and are missing some important components.**
  - A.** The superintendent and school committee members said that the district's previous planning process had produced a DIP which was 140 pages long. The current superintendent wanted a DIP that was a realistic, meaningful, living document understandable to educators, parents, and community members; student- centered; reflective of teachers' voices; and based on research-based instructional practices.
  - B.** During the two years before the onsite in March 2017, district leaders had been revising planning procedures and documents.
    1. The district's streamlined 2016–2018 DIP, which is nine pages long, details instructional activities in five strategic areas: implementing a consistent and collaborative leadership model; expecting clear, measurable and rigorous academic objectives in classrooms; expanding teacher use of formative assessments; implementing practices to better meet students' social-emotional needs; and building cultural competency.
    2. The DIP and the School Improvement Plans (SIPs) are tightly aligned because they contain similar content and terminology and the same objectives and timelines.
    3. District planning documents demonstrate several positive qualities: district leaders use the DIP to guide budgetary decisions; most SIPs contain school-specific details; and the key activities sections in the SIPs include professional development offerings.
    4. The goals in the plans are not SMART goals. While each plan's goals ("outcomes") are specific and strategic, action-oriented, timed and tracked, they are not stated in a way that enables the district to measure growth.<sup>7</sup>
  - D.** The DIP and SIPs address what adults will do rather than what students will do and achieve. The outcomes and benchmarks in the DIP and the SIPs are not results-oriented and do not state specific student performance goals that are based on student achievement data.
  - E.** Because the DIP and the SIPs do not include specific assessment/measurement tools to gauge progress, the DIP and SIPs do not indicate when and how staff members will analyze formative (interim) and summative (annual) data to monitor students' progress, make adjustments to instruction, and track the effectiveness of district and school initiatives.

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<sup>7</sup> SMART goals are Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results Focused; and Timed and Tracked.

1. District leaders said that they were aware that the district plans do not contain formative assessment data for developing outcomes and benchmarks.
- F.** While district leaders regard the DIP and the SIPs as “living documents” that they will review and revise over the next two years, the district does not have documented procedures and timelines for reviewing plan implementation (referred to by the district as “fidelity checks”) and for revising plans during the 2016–2017 and 2017–2018 school years.
- G.** District leaders have not developed consistent procedures for periodically reporting to the school committee, staff, school councils, families, and community stakeholders on the progress made in attaining the plans’ strategic objectives.
- H.** District staff expressed concerns about the pace of implementing multiple simultaneous, improvement initiatives.
1. The superintendent indicated that the fast pace of implementing district initiatives was an agenda item for an upcoming cabinet meeting.
  2. Principals expressed concern about how to balance the many new initiatives in the DIP and SIPs without lowering staff morale and overwhelming teachers. Principals described their own pressures for completing quality and timely teacher evaluations.
  3. Teachers, supportive of and involved in the district’s new initiatives, told the team that there were too many simultaneous implementation tasks “to concentrate on mastering one thing.” Teachers said that because of the “hectic” pace they were losing sight of the desired outcomes of the initiatives that they were trying to implement.
- I.** The DIP and SIPs do not have concise statements describing the district or school’s mission (purpose), core values (the principles that guide decision making and action), and vision (aspirations for students to achieve).
1. The superintendent and deputy superintendent expressed awareness that district plans are missing vision and mission statements.

**Impact:** Without clear and concise statements describing a plan’s mission, vision, core values, and theory of action, district plans are missing the overarching context for a well-designed strategy. Staff and stakeholders may be unclear about the coherent connections and desired outcomes of the plans’ stated objectives. Without data-measured outcomes, staff and stakeholders cannot assess progress and revise activities accordingly. Without reporting regularly on the plans’ implementation progress, district personnel are missing frequent opportunities to increase public confidence and employee morale. Without a realistic implementation pace staff may find it challenging to focus on achieving desired outcomes.

## ***Recommendation***

### **1. District leaders should continue to revise DIP and SIP planning documents by adding important components.**

- A.** District staff should include in the DIP and SIPs strategic objectives, interim benchmarks, and measureable outcomes that are written in the SMART format.
- B.** The plans should clearly indicate:
  - 1. The assessment/measurement tools that educators will use to gauge students' progress;
  - 2. Who is responsible for collecting data for each benchmark;
  - 3. When evidence will be collected and organized;
  - 4. Who will review evidence for each benchmark; and
  - 5. When and how progress and challenges concerning plan benchmarks will be communicated and discussed with principals, teachers, parents, school committee members, and other stakeholders.
- C.** Action steps in the plans should be based on the activities necessary to achieve the specific desired outcomes.
- D.** To provide context for planning, and to further his goal of creating a cohesive and focused school system, the superintendent should consider formalizing mission and vision statements informed by the district's core values.
  - 1. The superintendent should work with his leadership team, and with teacher representatives, to develop and formally document these plan elements.

**Benefits:** By creating district and school plans focused on specific and measureable outcomes, district leaders and teachers will be better equipped to reflect on progress and make changes as needed in order to accomplish ambitious goals. A statement of vision, mission, and core values would serve to help re-focus a district dealing with many unrelated initiatives throughout the years.

### **Recommended resources:**

- *What Makes a Goal Smarter?*  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/presentations/SMARTGoals/Handout5.pdf> is a description of SMART goals with accompanying examples. The handout was designed to support

educators in developing goals as part of the educator evaluation system, but could also be a useful reference for the district as it develops or refines its DIP and SIPs.

- ESE's *Planning for Success* tools (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/success/>) support the improvement planning process by spotlighting practices, characteristics, and behaviors that support effective planning and implementation and meet existing state requirements for improvement planning.
- *District Accelerated Improvement Planning - Guiding Principles for Effective Benchmarks* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/turnaround/level-4-guiding-principles-effective-benchmarks.pdf>) provides information about different types of benchmarks to guide and measure district improvement efforts.
- *What Makes a Goal Smarter?* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/presentations/SMARTGoals/Handout5.pdf>) is a description of SMART goals with accompanying examples. The handout was designed to support educators in developing goals as part of the educator evaluation system, but could also be a useful reference for the district as it develops or refines its DIP and SIPs.

## Curriculum and Instruction

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### ***Contextual Background***

Pittsfield is in the middle of a shift in instructional leadership. Until the 2016–2017 school year, the assistant superintendent was responsible for curriculum and instruction in addition to numerous other districtwide responsibilities. In 2016–2017, the district added the position of curriculum director. This new role focuses on curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as Title I services. The director is responsible for all grades and subject areas, oversees teacher curriculum leaders (department chairs, team leaders, and coaches), and works collaboratively with the ELL coordinator. In the 2017–2018 proposed budget, the district is recommending the elimination of all department chairs at both high schools and team leader stipends at both middle schools. Consequently, those positions may not continue to guide curricular and instructional practices. Administrators and staff both noted that district's curriculum focus in recent years has been on kindergarten through grade 8 rather than on grades 9–12.

The district recognizes the need to align curriculum with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. To support this work, in 2016–2017 the new curriculum director began two separate curriculum councils: one with teachers and one with parents. The councils meet quarterly with the curriculum director; the parent council advises the curriculum director and the teacher council focuses on curricular issues and piloting programs.

As a result, the district has a newly established process for the review and revision of curricular materials that includes input from professional staff, an innovation appreciated by teachers. The district is piloting math curriculum (K–8) and has plans to pilot science curriculum and to review social studies standards. Over 40 teachers have been involved with the math pilot. Teachers have completed individual curriculum maps, but the maps have not been vertically or horizontally aligned. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the district planned to develop in summer 2017 consistent grade-level and subject roadmaps for the 2017–2018 school year.

As single ELA and math programs are adopted districtwide, the instructional core is becoming more cohesive. Also, with the focus on learning targets and the use of formative assessment practices, instructional practice is becoming more strategic and coherent.

### ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

- 1. The district does not have a fully documented, aligned or consistently delivered curriculum.**
  - A.** The district has a new K–12 curriculum director who is also the Title I director. She is a former elementary principal in the district and began as director in July 2016.
  - B.** A district leader said that the district has curriculum guides that were developed in past years. When teachers and administrators were asked how well the curriculum guides were aligned

with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, they indicated that they were not well aligned and noted that the district was moving in that direction.

- C. The district does not have completed districtwide curriculum maps or scope and sequence documents.
  - 1. District leaders indicated that the district does not have curriculum guides for all subject areas.
  - 2. Teachers have been working on individual standards-based maps but have not coordinated them into district documents. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the plan was to create K–8 “road maps” in summer 2017 to help ensure better districtwide alignment of the curriculum with the frameworks.
    - a. Some subjects do not have districtwide curriculum guides.
  - 2. Some staff said they had common materials (such as in high school math) while others indicated that there were different math programs at different grades at the elementary level. For example, one educator stated, “Each school was using different math programs [but] now we are moving to standardize with one series.”
  - 3. Staff indicated that the primary and secondary levels do not have consistent materials in the areas of writing, science, or social studies.
  - 4. In the budget presentation in March 2017, the superintendent prioritized curriculum amid budget cuts by committing \$500,000 to curriculum materials for the fiscal year 2018.
- D. The district does not have a consistent monitoring system, practices, or personnel to ensure fidelity to the curriculum.
  - 1. District leaders told the team that principals are the instructional leaders; principals said that they monitor informally for curriculum fidelity when observing instruction.
  - 2. Some schools have instructional coaches that help to monitor curriculum implementation.
  - 3. At the high-school level, department heads oversee curriculum fidelity.
  - 4. District leaders told the team that the positions of elementary coaches and department heads were at risk given anticipated budget cuts and changes in the coaching model.

**Impact:** Because the district’s K–12 taught curricula are not fully documented or aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, the district cannot ensure that all students have access to a high-quality, consistently delivered, and continuously improving curriculum. Further, the district cannot ensure that teachers and other staff are making effective use of curriculum guides for all areas or have the required materials necessary to meet the instructional needs of all learners.

- 2. The district is in the beginning stages of articulating and implementing common instructional strategies across all classrooms. In observed classrooms, team members noted variation in the degree to which student engagement was evident in classrooms and found that differentiated instruction was the least developed instructional practice districtwide.**

The team observed 105 classes throughout the district: 31 at the 2 high schools, 30 at the 2 middle schools, and 44 at the 8 elementary schools. The team observed 33 ELA classes, 38 mathematics classes, 21 science classes, and 13 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were five special education classes, one ELL class, and two career/technical education classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. Five review team members and two additional observers collected data using ESE's Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

- A.** Teachers and administrators said that the district does not have a common instructional model.
  1. Administrators said that the district does not have a common definition of strong instruction, although district leaders were exploring research-based instructional models.
  2. Teachers reported that the district did not have a common instructional model but noted that the district was moving in that direction and district leaders wanted teachers to generate this work.
    - a. Various instructional models are used in some schools such as the Vicky Gibson method in some elementary classrooms.
    - b. Interviewees at several schools reported that they were piloting the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) model with grant funds.
      - i. An outside center has provided professional development on UDL to staff; interviewees said that once the funding ended it was unclear whether this support would continue.
- B.** The District Improvement Plan introduced two strategies in 2016–2017, learning targets and formative assessment, which all staff members are beginning to implement.
  1. In observed classrooms, the team found moderate and strong evidence that teachers referred to clear learning objectives (characteristic # 2), in the form of learning targets, in 68 percent of lessons, that teachers implemented lessons that reflected high expectations aligned to the learning targets (characteristic # 3) in 63 percent of lessons, and that teachers used appropriate instructional strategies well-matched to the learning targets (characteristic # 4) in 66 percent of lessons. In some observed classrooms, the learning target was posted but the teacher did not expand on the concept or refer to the learning target during the observation.

2. A review of the DIP indicated that formative assessments were not scheduled to be fully in place until the 2017–2018 school year, but team observations indicated that the use of formative assessment was well on its way to implementation.
  - a. The team found moderate and strong evidence of the use of formative assessments to check for understanding (characteristic #11) in 79 percent of observed elementary classes, in 77 percent of observed middle-school classes, and in only 49 percent of high-school classes.
  - b. Examples of formative assessment techniques observed included probes for understanding through questioning and answering, dialogue recorded in a Socratic seminar, whole-class dip sticking (e.g., thumbs up/thumbs down), individual student conferencing, and fluency and comprehension checks in small groups and online.
- C. The district has limited differentiation of instruction in classrooms.
  1. In observed classrooms, team members saw moderate and strong evidence that the teachers appropriately differentiated instruction so the lesson content was accessible for all learners (characteristic #8) in just 41 percent of elementary classes, in only 36 percent of middle-school classes, and in only 19 percent of high-school classrooms.
- D. While there were examples of strong student engagement in classrooms at all levels, the team observed many classes that were highly teacher directed with many students not motivated or engaged in the lesson.
  1. In some classrooms students were actively participating in their own learning in Socratic seminar or small-group lab work. Team members found moderate and strong evidence that students assumed responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups (characteristic # 7) in only 49 percent of classes overall (in 57 percent of elementary classes, in 54 percent of middle-school classes, and in only 36 percent of observed high-school classrooms).
  2. In some observed classrooms team members saw strong engagement techniques such as offering flexible seating options, student choices for recording work, and students participating actively in small group/targeted activities at stations.
    - a. In contrast, in other observed classes, mainly at the middle- and high-school levels, many students were not actively engaged in the lesson. Examples included only a few students answering questions while others sat quietly, and student presentations where one student presented and the remainder of the class sat and listened without any tasks to do.
    - b. In some classrooms most of the students were participating in the lesson but a small number of students were not on task and their behavior was not effectively addressed by the staff. This was evident at all three levels. Examples included students on social



media and not prompted to work, students not participating in writing assignments and not being redirected by a teacher, and a student physically leaving the learning space where direct instruction was taking place without being redirected to return by the classroom teacher or aide. The periods of disengagement ranged from a few minutes to the entire observed time in the room.

- c. In many observed high-school classes, students arrived late and missed a portion of the lesson. For example, in one class four students arrived after the bell with their headphones on.
- d. Staff reported that cell phones often distract students during instruction.
  - i. Teachers told the team that the district did not have consistent policies about cell phones and said: “Teachers are struggling with the cell phone problem.” They reported that they have tried various techniques to reduce the use of inappropriate cell phone use in their classrooms but have not met with success.
  - ii. Review team members observed high-school students on their phones texting, scrolling, or listening to music rather than engaging in the lesson.

**Impact:** Without a common instructional model articulated and employed, the district cannot ensure the use of a range of practices aligned with students’ developmental levels and learning needs or ensure that instructional practices and activities build a respectful climate and enable students to assume increasing responsibility for their own learning.

## ***Recommendations***

1. **The district should continue its work to have an aligned, consistently delivered, and continuously improving curriculum.**
  - A. The district should ensure curriculum is aligned by creating and publishing curriculum guides for all grades and subject areas and obtaining and implementing consistent districtwide resources and materials that are aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks.
  - B. The district should engage groups of teachers and leaders to map the curriculum vertically and horizontally for all subjects and courses taught. This group should create common templates for the district, and help leaders to determine the training that should be provided.
    - a. A timeline should be developed for when all curriculum maps will be created/revised to ensure all subjects and grades are covered. Upon completion of the curriculum guides, the district should make sure that they are readily accessible to all staff.

- C. The district should develop a system to ensure fidelity to the curriculum in all classrooms.
- D. The district should establish a documented process for the regular and timely review and revision of curricula based on valid research, the analysis of statewide assessment results and other assessments, and input from professional staff.
  1. As part of this process, the district should ensure that content areas that are least aligned, use the most outdated resources, or that have new standards, are prioritized in the process. The district should continue its process of inventorying and assessing all existing resources.
  2. The district should ensure that the curriculum adoption process includes a careful assessment of whether the materials are research-based and aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks.
  3. The district should continue to articulate in its improvement plans and budgets the expense and rationale for having resources that are fully aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks.

**Benefits:** Implementing this recommendation would lead to a cohesive, comprehensive, documented, and consistently delivered K–12 curriculum that enables students to be college and career ready.

**Recommended resources:**

- *Local District Common Core Implementation – Progress and Capacity Rubric* (<http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/District%20Common%20Core%20Capacity%20Rubric%20%20130910.pdf>) from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a tool for districts to use to assess their progress on Common Core implementation and to identify areas of strength and improvement.
- *Curriculum Mapping: Raising the Rigor of Teaching and Learning* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/Candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf>) is a presentation that provides definitions of curriculum mapping, examples of model maps, and descriptions of curriculum mapping processes.
- *Creating Curriculum Units at the Local Level* ([http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/mcu\\_guide.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/mcu_guide.pdf)) is a guidance document that can serve as a resource for professional study groups, as a reference for anyone wanting to engage in curriculum development, or simply as a way to gain a better understanding of the process used to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.
- *Creating Model Curriculum Units* (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssquWrLjKc9h5h2cSpDVZqe6t>) is a series of videos that captures the collaboration and deep thinking by curriculum design teams over the course of a year as they worked to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units. It includes videos about

developing essential questions, establishing goals, creating embedded performance assessments, designing lesson plans, selecting high-quality materials, and evaluating the curriculum unit.

- Sample curriculum maps (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/default.html>) were designed to assist schools and districts with making sense of students' learning experiences over time, ensuring a viable and guaranteed curriculum, establishing learning targets, and aligning curriculum to ensure a consistent implementation of the MA Frameworks.
- ESE's *Quality Review Rubrics* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/rubrics/>) can support the analysis and improvement of curriculum units.
- ESE's *"What to Look For" Observation Guides (Updated August 2017)* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/observation/>) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use, but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.

**2. The district should continue its work to ensure that educators at all levels consistently use high-quality instructional practices.**

- A.** The district should continue to focus on the strategies identified in the 2016–2017 DIP (learning targets and formative assessment) and should identify and implement additional common, research-based strategies that address student engagement, differentiation, and other priorities.
1. This should be a collaborative effort, led by the district's curriculum council or another representative group.
  2. The common instructional strategies should align with and support the district's focus on inclusive practices (such as Universal Design for Learning).
  3. The district should prioritize these foundational strategies as its "non-negotiables."
- B.** Teachers should be provided with appropriate guidance and feedback as they implement the identified strategies.
1. Opportunities such as coaching, faculty meetings, department meetings, common planning time, and professional development meetings should focus on the shared instructional practices.
  2. Teachers and administrators might consider watching videos of effective teaching and discussing instructional strategies as a way to calibrate expectations.

3. The district should consider establishing a peer observation system to allow exemplary teachers to demonstrate particular practices.
- C. The district should develop a multi-year plan for how to implement this approach over time, factoring in necessary resources, and integrate it into the district and school improvement plans.

**Benefit:** Implementing this recommendation will mean clear and articulated expectations for teachers and administrators for what constitutes best practices. A district that provides high-quality instruction for all students and ongoing professional supports for teachers and administrators creates and sustains a culture of continuous improvement, resulting in professional growth and increased student achievement.

**Recommended resources:**

- The *Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/guidebook/>) includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.
- ESE's *Calibration Video Library* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/resources/calibration/>) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network. These videos depict a range of practice (this is NOT a collection of exemplars) to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.
- ESE's *Online Calibration Training Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/resources/calibration/tool/>) uses videos of classroom instruction from ESE's Calibration Video Library to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well educators throughout the state.

## Assessment

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### ***Contextual Background***

District leaders are responsible for the districtwide collection, analysis, and dissemination of data for stakeholders such as the school committee, principals, parents, and city officials; there is no districtwide data team with membership from principal or teacher groups. District leaders use assessment data to set priorities, to track progress on district initiatives, and to make adjustments to programs. The district has relied upon data analysis to begin to address challenging issues: identifying the factors that have led to high suspension rates and high chronic absence among certain subgroups, raising awareness about the impact of teachers' absence on the budget and eventual impact on student learning, and calibrating principals' evaluations of teachers' performance. The superintendent developed a District Improvement Plan with the expectation that all school leaders would provide data to measure progress towards two goals: the implementation of learning targets for all lessons and improvement in practices that build cultural competency.

Data collection, analysis, and dissemination practices vary considerably among levels and subjects, with the strongest and most consistent practices at the elementary level in ELA. Elementary schools use the ELA assessment tool AimsWeb for measuring fluency in reading, but there is no districtwide math assessment at any level. The district is piloting a common K-8 academic assessment program, FastBridge, in ELA in some schools, with plans to include the math assessments in the 2017–2018 school year. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, student support staff members planned to use FastBridge to track social-emotional-behavioral data.

Principals and teachers have varying degrees of skill in the analysis and use of data to inform instruction. Some schools have common planning times where teachers meet to collaborate in assessment planning and analysis. During the onsite in March 2017, a primary concern of many stakeholders was the absence of a documented, aligned curriculum which would provide the basis for the development of common assessments to track student learning and ensure curriculum fidelity. Also, the district has not identified or developed assessments to provide student feedback as evidence in the teacher evaluation process and staff feedback as an evidence source in the administrator evaluation process, as required by educator evaluation regulations.

## ***Strength Finding***

**1. District leaders use student performance and other pertinent data to inform major aspects of their decision-making, to set priorities, to track progress on district initiatives, and to make adjustments to programs.**

A. The superintendent has developed the 2016–2018 District Improvement Plan (DIP) with five goals.<sup>8</sup> In the first year of the DIP, 2016–2017, the district has been strategically tracking the use of academic objectives (“learning targets”), one of two initiatives to improve teaching and learning. The district plans to implement and track data about the second initiative, the daily use of formative assessments in 2017–2018.

1. The first DIP goal is: “In order to increase student engagement, access to the curriculum, and student achievement, all instructional staff will post and address clear, measurable and rigorous academic objectives tied to the Massachusetts standards.”
  - a. District leaders reported that they required all principals to collect evidence of teachers’ use of “I can...” statements from classroom observations by December 22, 2016. Once the data had been aggregated, the deputy superintendent shared data with principals and staff.
  - b. In observed classrooms, the review team found moderate and strong evidence that teachers provided and referred to clear learning objectives in the lesson (characteristic # 2) in 79 percent of elementary classes, in 57 percent of middle-school classes, and in 62 percent of high-school classrooms.

B. In addition to collecting and tracking data about DIP goals, district leaders track data and take action in other areas such as:

1. *Analyzing high rates of suspension and chronic absence among certain student subgroups.* The superintendent and other interviewees told the team that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) notified the district that “it was suspending students of color much too much.”
  - a. The district hired registered behavior technicians to help improve behavior for all students. Tracking of behavioral data and the provision of tiered supports are emerging strengths in the district.

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<sup>8</sup> The goals are: implementing a consistent and collaborative leadership model; expecting clear, measurable and rigorous academic objectives in classrooms; expanding teacher use of formative assessments; implementing practices to better meet students’ social-emotional needs; and building cultural competency.

- b. Student support staff reported that they were tracking PBIS data and attendance and have instituted some practices such as making parents more aware that attendance was important for school success and sending post cards home.
  - c. According to the latest available ESE data, in 2016 chronic absence was highest for Hispanic/Latino students and Black/African American students at 32.2 percent and 27.2 percent, respectively.<sup>9</sup>
2. *Analyzing teachers' absence and the impact on student learning.* District leaders gathered data about frequency, timing, reasons, and costs of the high number of teachers' absence; the teachers' association and other district leaders agreed to change the most recent (2015) collective bargaining agreement to establish better accountability about teachers' absence.
3. *"Calibrating" principals' reviews of teachers' performance.* Reviewing data from walkthroughs, district leaders saw disparities between teachers' evaluations and students' performance on assessments. The district provided seven days of training with Research for Better Teaching (RBT) to help improve evaluators' observation skills. The district is also using walkthrough data to analyze inclusive practices.

**Impact:** When district leaders use data for organizational improvement and learning, they model for all staff the role that data can play in driving improvement. When district leaders use data to measure progress and to inform decisions, they are better able to identify the causes of low student performance, realign resources, and adjust conditions so that the performance of all students improves.

### ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

2. **District schools have not established uniform and integrated policies, structures, and practices for the continuous collection, analysis, and dissemination of student performance and other data.**
  - A. Policies, structures, and practices for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data vary among the schools. The elementary schools have some commonalities in practice and sharing of information, while the two middle schools and the two high schools have limited common practices vertically or horizontally.
    1. All elementary schools have been using AimsWeb for 12 years to monitor ELA fluency; competency in understanding and using the data varies among the schools. Only Egremont uses AimsWeb to track math progress.
    2. Some elementary schools use additional progress monitoring systems. Morningside uses Track My Progress and two schools use IXL to track math progress.

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<sup>9</sup> Percent chronically absent is defined as a student absent more than 10 percent of the days in membership.

3. In the elementary schools with Title I programs, coaches generally lead data review meetings. When a school does not have a coach, the principal and teachers are responsible for data analysis.
4. Some elementary schools have formal data teams and others analyze data in their instructional leadership team (ILT) meetings.
  - a. Elementary principals and teachers have varying abilities to effectively analyze data.
5. At the middle and high schools, data practices vary by school and by level.
  - a. Reid Middle School has a formal data team and one reading teacher has taken on the responsibility for tracking reading scores. The loss of coaches at Herberg has affected the school's ability to efficiently collect data. A data team meets informally. Both middle schools use the IXL program.
  - b. Taconic High School uses TestWiz to conduct benchmark testing while Pittsfield High School does not. At each high school, department heads are responsible for analyzing student assessment results; Pittsfield High School has a data team which meets monthly and during the summer.
  - c. One K–12 special education staff member is tracking reading fluency of a small group of students and comparing their scores with MCAS ELA proficiency.
  - d. District leaders said that while Taconic High has some common assessments in place, Pittsfield High has few. They told the team that the district was planning to develop ELA common assessments first and math next.
3. District leaders reported that 90 percent of elementary teachers are “data fluent” and use the data to adjust their instructional groupings. They told the review team that at the middle-school level there was a “big divide” in data fluency between the two schools, with Reid having used data for many years and being “immersed” in data. Administrators told the team that teachers would benefit from training in analyzing benchmark data and taking next steps in instruction.
  - a. Twenty-one K–12 staff who have a range of responsibilities for data collection and analysis throughout the district told the team that at the secondary level (grades 6–12) between 35 percent and 50 percent of teachers use data to inform instruction and at the elementary level (K–5), between 50 percent and 100 percent, depending on whether ELA or math was the focus.
4. Building Assistance Meetings (BAMs) use data when reviewing a student for possible support; at the high-school BAM meetings there is little classroom data used nor any formal system of supports based on the data.



- a. Student support staff K–12 told the team that when referring students to BAMs for support some teachers relied on narrative evidence rather than measurable data.
- B. The district recognizes the need for developing a common system to assess student learning and has piloted a K–8 assessment program.
  1. The district is piloting the FastBridge Learning system (Formative Assessment Systems for Teachers: FAST™) K–8 to measure ELA and math skills. FastBridge replaces the Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic (GRADE) test. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the district was planning to use FastBridge to track social-emotional-behavioral data.
  2. The district plans to use FastBridge to assess high-school students on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and those in work-study programs.
  3. FastBridge assessments will be linked to PowerSchool, the technology platform used in grades 7–12; scores will also be accessible to special education staff whose program, TIENET (Technology for Improving Education NETWORK) is linked to PowerSchool.

**Impact:** The absence of comprehensive and coordinated policies, structures, and practices for the continuous collection, analysis, and dissemination of student performance and other data hinders the district’s goal and policy development and its ability to make appropriate judgments and timely adjustments to its programs, instruction, and professional development offerings.

## ***Recommendation***

1. **District leaders should make more explicit for school leaders and classroom teachers the district’s rationale and expectations for use of data at the school and classroom level and provide the necessary guidance and training. The district should identify teacher leaders who would form the foundation for a district-wide data team to track patterns and trends in student achievement data.**
  - A. The district should identify a team of leaders and teachers who will analyze districtwide student performance data and help to further develop expectations, systems and practices for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data at the school and classroom levels.
    1. A primary focus for the data team should be identifying patterns and trends among students, and specifically subgroups of students who have been underperforming.
    2. The team could guide the district in the use of data generated by the new K–8 FastBridge math and ELA assessment program and make recommendations for the extension to the high school grades or the selection of a comparable program for the high school grades.
    3. The team representatives should identify the constraints that prevent schools and teachers from effectively analyzing and using data to improve instruction.

- a. These include but are not limited to the availability of common planning time for teachers to collaboratively develop and analyze common assessments and the training necessary to ensure data literacy and competency across the district.
- B. District and school leaders, along with student support leaders, should develop systems to identify, support, and monitor struggling learners effectively and in a timely way.
- C. The district should establish expectations and guidelines for teachers' use of formative and benchmark assessments.
  1. The district should provide the structure and supports that teachers need as they begin to align formative and benchmark assessments to the standards and grade-learning outcomes.
  2. Teachers should receive training needed to collaboratively develop and score common assessments.
  3. A well-balanced system of formative and benchmark assessments should be used as part of a system of tiered instruction.

**Benefits** from implementing this recommendation will include ensuring that the district is using its resources strategically to improve student achievement. It may help to inform the district as it moves to implement a formal academic intervention program for all students who are under-achieving and assess the impact of these programs on raising student achievement. A comprehensive assessment program can give teachers and school leaders with a more accurate picture of where students are relative to learning targets and standards so that they are better able to provide instruction and academic interventions based on students' needs.

**Recommended resources:**

- ESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/webinar/PartI-GapAnalysis.pdf>) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, districts can determine potential next steps.
- ESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/e/programs/accountability/tools-and-resources/district-analysis-review-and-assistance/leadership-and-governance.html>) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.

## Human Resources and Professional Development

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### ***Contextual Background***

The district has a human resources director and hiring practices are consistent districtwide and give principals the autonomy to choose their staffs. The hiring process is hampered by the fact that the city's budget is not set until July 1 and so the district is hiring after neighboring districts. Also, the district is at a disadvantage because it competes for candidates with Springfield, which has a higher pay scale.

The district has been working hard to increase the racial diversity of the staff to more closely reflect the make-up of the community and has in place a clear vision, policies, and procedures towards this end. District leaders said that increasing staff diversity has proved to be "an uphill battle," with slow progress in recent years. The district is commended for its efforts thus far and is encouraged to continue and expand this initiative, perhaps by working with colleges and private sector partners to identify potential candidates and by connecting with and learning from districts that have successfully diversified their staffs.

The district has not implemented its educator evaluation system in a way that enhances educators' ability to improve their professional practice. The district has focused on compliance with the requisite number of classroom visits and required evidence. The review team found that staff have received limited instructive or growth oriented feedback and the district has not taken action on the more recent components of the Educator Evaluation Framework.

The district has a well-organized new teacher induction and mentoring system. However, the district does not have a cohesive, comprehensive, sustained, and collaboratively developed professional development program that is consistently linked with district goals and priorities. The district does not have an over-arching plan to organize professional development districtwide. Opportunities for teachers to collaborate are limited as common planning time exists only in some schools and is organized differently in each school.

### ***Strength Finding***

- 1. The district has put in place policies and procedures to increase the racial diversity of the teaching and administrative staff to more closely reflect the demographic make-up of the community.**
  - A.** In a March 2014 memo addressed to principals and hiring managers, the superintendent outlined desired hiring practices to increase staff diversity.
    1. The memo stated that "all applicants for each and every position" who self-identify as a person of color and who meet minimal requirements, will be given an interview.
    2. The memo states that all candidates who "appear licensable to a reasonable standard" will be seriously considered for a position.

- B. The 2016—2018 District Improvement Plan states as the first outcome for strategic objective five: “District and school administration will continue to work to increase the number and percentage of staff who mirror student diversity in all positions through recruiting and retention efforts and increasing district cultural competency.”
  - 1. The second key activity connected to this outcome reads, in part: “Increased efforts at recruiting candidates of color including advertising, recruiting visits, and word of mouth programs will continue to be enacted.”
- C. The district has advertised in publications such as Diversity in Education.
- D. According to district data, there has been an increase in recent years in the number of district employees who mirror student diversity, but a decrease in the number of teachers.
  - 1. District data includes all employees, including bus drivers, cafeteria workers, clerical staff, paraprofessionals as well as professional staff. The data indicated that 36 district employees who reflected student diversity worked in the district in 2013; 14 of these employees were teachers. By 2016, this number had risen to 44 of whom 12 were teachers.
- E. The district acknowledges the difficulty of recruiting and hiring candidates of color.
  - 1. The city of Pittsfield finalizes its budget on July 1. This means that the school district cannot begin to hire until after that date. The city is considering changing that date to May 1, but the current conditions mean that Pittsfield is hiring after all local districts and neighboring urban districts.
  - 2. The district is at a disadvantage as it competes for hires with Springfield, which is within commuting distance from Pittsfield and has a higher pay scale.

**Impact:** Research shows that increasing the presence of teachers of color can have a positive impact on student achievement, retention, and well-being.

### ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

- 2. **The district does not have a cohesive, comprehensive, sustained, and collaboratively developed professional development program that is consistently linked with the District Improvement Plan and School Improvement Plans.**
  - A. The district does not have a representative professional development (PD) committee to coordinate PD in the district.
    - 1. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district had a PD committee in the past, but now part it was a subcommittee of the district’s curriculum, assessment, and PD committee. District leaders stated that the committee’s mandate was to “look at what we

are doing and make sense of it.” Interviewees said that while this committee initially had strong teacher participation, it now consists of “mostly administrators.”

- B.** There is no published PD plan that connects the district’s priorities or establishes a PD calendar.
  - 1. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the PD subcommittee was preparing an inventory of current, mandated, and needed PD in the district, to inform a PD plan.
- C.** The district has three streams of professional development: district based, school based, and teachers’ association mandated.
  - 1. Although district leaders told the team that all PD activities had to be aligned with the goals in the District Improvement Plan and the School Improvement Plans, a document review indicated that some PD offerings were not aligned with district priorities. A survey of the school professional development and faculty meeting topics showed more than 15 different topics. The teacher-designed professional development days added more topics to this list.
- D.** Some professional development initiatives have started in selected schools and the future of these initiatives, their relationship to district priorities, and their budgetary implications are not clear.
  - 1. Training in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) had been implemented in six schools over the three years before the onsite in March 2017. Interviewees said that a grant funded the training and the grant would expire soon. At the time of the onsite, the district did not have a plan to extend this training to other schools. District officials stated that they did not want the training “to go away.” They also stated that the district relies heavily on outside funds for professional development.

**Impact:** Without a comprehensive, coordinated, and collaboratively developed professional development plan that is aligned with and informed by district goals, the district limits its ability to enhance professional practice, to retain highly effective educators, to improve instruction, to advance district goals and priorities, and to increase student achievement. Teachers may receive exposure to multiple initiatives without developing mastery in any. Dependence on grant funding may lead to effective programs disappearing from the district as funding expires.

**3. The district has not implemented its educator evaluation system effectively. The district has not taken action on the more recent components of the Educator Evaluation Framework.**

- A.** Interviews and a review of evaluative documents indicated that district leaders were aiming for “compliance” in the implementation of the district’s educator evaluation system.
  - 1. District leaders said that they were holding the principals accountable for the number of classroom observations that they performed.

2. A review of the evaluative documents of 30 teachers randomly chosen from across the district showed that staff received limited instructive<sup>10</sup> or growth-oriented feedback as a component of formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations.
- B.** One of the priorities of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework is conversation, ongoing reflection and dialogue between principal and teacher about professional practice and growth. The team found limited evidence that this is taking place in the district.
1. Principals stated that they had limited time for “face to face” meetings after observations or formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations.
  2. District leaders said that high-school principals had as many as 105 evaluations to complete and with this load it was difficult to provide quality, constructive feedback.
    - a. Teachers stated that the number of hours spent on the educator evaluation system was “too much,” noting there was “no evidence of improved teaching.”
  3. At the high school, department heads have participated in evaluation in the past but not as the primary evaluators.
    - a. District leaders said that the department head role was being eliminated and so the evaluative workload of the principal was becoming prohibitive.
    - b. Teachers expressed concern that the evaluators’ absence of knowledge of specialized content areas reduced their ability to provide constructive feedback.
- C.** As of the 2015–2016 school year the educator evaluation regulations (603 CMR 35.07) require all Massachusetts school districts to collect and use student feedback as evidence in the teacher evaluation process and staff feedback as an evidence source in the administrator evaluation process.<sup>11</sup> The district is currently out of compliance with this regulatory requirement.
1. District leaders stated that the district has not taken action to implement this component of the state’s Educator Evaluation Framework.

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<sup>10</sup> An informative evaluation is factual and cites instructional details such as methodology, pedagogy, Standards and Indicators of Effective Teaching Practice or instruction of subject-based knowledge that is aligned with the state curriculum frameworks. It does not commit to improvement strategies. An instructive evaluation includes comments intended to improve instruction.

<sup>11</sup> On Tuesday, February 28, 2017, after collecting public comment since November 2016, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted 9-1 to amend the educator evaluation regulations. The most significant change in the regulations is the elimination of a separate student impact rating. Under the [amended regulations](#), evaluators do not have to make a separate judgment about an educator’s impact on student learning. Instead, student learning is embedded as an indicator within one of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework’s four standards.

**Impact:** When a district's educator evaluation system is not implemented in a way that enhances educators' ability to improve their professional practice or contribute to their professional growth, the district is missing a critical opportunity to improve students' academic achievement.

## ***Recommendations***

- 1. The district should support a representative group that will create a focused professional development plan.**
  - A.** The district should create and support a professional development (PD) committee.
    1. The committee could draw from the current professional development sub-committee.
    2. It should have strong representation from administration and teaching staff.
  - B.** The PD committee's mandate should be to determine which professional development activities the district will prioritize and to develop a plan to deliver them districtwide.
    1. The priorities should be linked to the DIP and the SIPs.
    2. The professional development plan should balance instructional practice, content area professional development and teacher collaboration time. The committee should establish districtwide PD expectations and coordinate the separate streams of professional development currently in the district, while giving individual schools an opportunity to address local needs.
    3. The plan should contain budgetary implications and a plan to integrate new staff as they are hired. It should also integrate the training of paraprofessionals.
    4. The plan should reduce or streamline the various existing professional development offerings. This should help to reduce the number of topics on which teachers are expected to become proficient in a given year.
    5. The plan should be published, shared with all staff, and available to the public.
  - C.** The district should examine PD initiatives that are in place in only a few schools and determine their impact. If they have proved to improve student achievement, then part of the district's PD plan should be to extend the models to all schools.
    1. The district should examine grant funded professional development to determine whether these programs need to be moved into the regular budget and expanded districtwide. Planning for sustainable funding should be done before committing to any grant funded professional development.

**Benefits:** A professional development plan that is coordinated and linked to the budget and the district and school improvement plans can help to ensure that the district is expending limited funds on professional development that has been determined to improve student achievement. Teachers will be better equipped to improve their practice when given the opportunity to participate in a focused set of professional development offerings.

**Recommended resources:**

- *The Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.pdf>) describe, identify, and characterize what high quality learning experiences should look like for educators.
- *ESE's Professional Development Self- Assessment Guidebook* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ease/accountability/dsac/professional-development-self-assessment-guide.pdf>) provides tools for analyzing professional development offerings' alignment with the Massachusetts High-Quality Professional Development Standards, the Educator Evaluation Framework, and the Standards and Indicators of Effective Practice.
- *Identifying Meaningful Professional Development* (<https://youtu.be/zhuFioO8GbQ>) is a video in which educators from three Massachusetts districts discuss the importance of targeted, meaningful professional development and the ways districts can use the evaluation process to identify the most effective PD supports for all educators.

**2. The district should ensure that all evaluators have the guidance and support they need to produce thoughtful evaluations that lead to productive conversations and that provide constructive feedback that contributes to professional growth.**

- A. The district should make sure that all evaluators understand how to go beyond compliance with the form of the evaluation to providing high-quality written feedback.
  - 1. Evaluations should focus on professional growth and progress toward district priorities.
- B. The district should examine how to assemble evaluation teams using administrative staff such as assistant principals and deans to reduce the evaluative workload of principals in the larger schools. In addition, the district should work with the joint labor-management council to streamline the process to make the data collection and entry less onerous.
  - 1. The goal should be to give the evaluators time to engage in professional conversations with the staff they are observing, and produce meaningful written evaluations.
- C. The district should take the necessary steps to integrate student and staff surveys into staff evaluations.

**Benefits:** By producing evaluations that are meaningful and contain constructive feedback, the time that evaluators are putting into this effort will result in increased teacher effectiveness. Professional



conversations based on classroom observations and on ways to improve practice will strengthen communication between evaluators and teachers and promote professional growth.

**Recommended resources:**

- ESE's *Calibration Video Library* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/>) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network. These videos depict a range of practice (this is NOT a collection of exemplars) to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.
- ESE's *Online Calibration Training Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/calibration/tool/>) uses videos of classroom instruction from ESE's Calibration Video Library to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well as educators throughout the state.
- *On Track with Evaluator Capacity* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/pln/OnTrack-EvaluatorCapacity.pdf>) is an interactive document that provides specific strategies, lessons learned, and links to district-created resources. It was produced by eight districts that were part of a Professional Learning Network for Supporting Evaluator Capacity.
- *Quick Reference Guide: Opportunities to Streamline the Evaluation Process* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Streamline.pdf>) is designed to help districts reflect on and continuously improve their evaluation systems:
  - What's working? What are the bright spots?
  - How can we streamline the process to stay focused on professional growth and development?
  - What do we need to adjust to ensure our system is valuable to educators and students?
- *Quick Reference Guide: Student and Staff Feedback* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Feedback.pdf>) includes principles to consider when making decisions about student and staff feedback instruments as well as answers to frequently asked questions about student and staff feedback.

## Student Support

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### ***Contextual Background***

Student support services in the district include special education, support for English language learners, the district's safe and healthy schools initiatives, psychological counseling, and tutoring services. Title I services are provided in three elementary schools. There are several programs and services at each school level to support students' social, emotional, behavioral, and psychological needs. However, the district does not have a robust, coordinated system of academic support programs and interventions.

Counseling is available at every school through a school counselor or an adjustment counselor. Elementary schools have on-site behavioral interventions and self-contained therapeutic classes for all levels. Each school has a resource room and self-contained classes for more severely and multiply-disabled students at each school level. District policies and practices promote drop-out prevention and services to students who have left the schools. In 2015–2016, the district's overall drop-out rate was 1.9 percent, an improvement over the rates in recent years.<sup>12</sup> Student attendance is a significant issue, especially at the secondary level (see the Challenge finding below). District leaders recognize this and have identified it as an area for study.

The district has an effective system for child-find (outreach to parents) and the identification of students with disabilities. The district also provides for the rapid placement of students entering the district and for the continuity of education for students who are homeless. Specific activities are provided to assist students adjust as they move from the elementary level to the middle-school level and from the middle-school level to the secondary level, but the transfer of education data is less effectively conducted. The district anticipates that the expansion of the FastBridge student data system will address this issue. The district is also exploring and piloting a number of interventions and instructional strategies from which all students could benefit.

The district has made outreach to parents and the Pittsfield community a priority. Pittsfield is becoming an increasingly diverse community and the district has made cultural competency one of its district improvement goals. Its efforts focus on recruiting employees of color, training faculty and staff, and educating students on the cultural richness of their community. Every school also has a community sponsor and the high schools have multiple community members on their CTE advisory committees. The district has established positive partnership with many community organizations and agencies that supplement the services provided by the schools.

The district has taken steps to ensure that all students are safe. Visitors are admitted into schools only after they have been identified and most classroom doors at the elementary and middle school levels are locked. Adults are in the hallways during passing times in the middle and high schools. The district has a *Family Emergency Response Booklet* which outlines the school and district response plans for all

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<sup>12</sup> According to the latest available ESE data, the district's drop-out rate for all students has fluctuated with an overall decline, from 3.0 percent in 2013 to 2.1 percent in 2014 to 2.7 percent in 2016 to 1.9 percent in 2016.

emergencies. It also provides parents with contact information they may need should an actual emergency take place. Despite these actions, some members of the Pittsfield community perceive that the schools are not safe.

The administration and faculty of the Pittsfield Public Schools recognize the challenges they face in their efforts to move the district forward and improve outcomes for all students. Those challenges include the need to create a strong, tiered system of academic instructional supports and to ensure that all classroom teachers are versed in the accommodations, interventions, and instructional practices they need to meet the needs of all their students.

## ***Strength Findings***

### **1. The district has a tiered system of social, emotional, and behavioral supports and programs, including drop-out prevention and credit recovery services.**

#### **A. The district has a tiered system of social-emotional and behavioral supports although it is stronger in some schools than others.**

1. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a research-based “whole school” bullying prevention program in kindergarten through grade 12. High-school students told the team that “bullying doesn’t happen here.” They indicated that when seniors see bullying they step-in and “tell kids to stop.”
2. Steps to Respect (grades 3–5) and Second Step (K–5) are research-based programs targeting bullying and violence prevention.
3. The district provides all students access to school adjustment counselors for evaluation and individualized classroom behavioral and crisis intervention.
4. Registered Behavioral Technicians (RBTs) are shared by all elementary schools but one.<sup>13</sup> These technicians collect student and class data for teams and provide direct services to students. Principals and teacher leaders reported that the RBTs have made a difference at their schools and that disruptive behaviors have decreased.
5. Counselors at the high schools provide academic, career, and crisis counseling to students. Students at both high schools told the team they also have people who they can go to for personal problems.

#### **B. District policies and procedures promote drop-out prevention and provide services to students who have left the schools.**

1. The high schools have instituted measures to re-engage students and reduce the likelihood of students dropping out.

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<sup>13</sup> One elementary school has a school adjustment counselor rather than a RBT.

- a. Recognizing that students who earn failing grades early in high school have a higher likelihood of dropping out, the district has instituted 9<sup>th</sup> grade support teams to intercede with students who are failing courses.
  - b. The Positive Options Program enables students to earn a high school diploma and the possibility of college credit through a partnership with Berkshire Community College.
  - c. If students decide to drop out, they meet with their guidance counselor and are encouraged to reengage or are provided with options upon leaving.
2. Students who drop out can receive services at the Reconnect Center, part of the Berkshire Community Action Council. The Center's goal is to reengage students with the schools or to provide General Educational Development (GED) assistance.
  3. In 2016, the district's overall drop-out rate was 1.9 percent, the lowest it had been since 2008.<sup>14</sup> The superintendent attributed the decrease to daily instruction, summer school, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs, and Adult Education Services.
- C. The district promotes practices that are designed to limit the separation of students with social, emotional, and behavioral needs from the mainstream.
1. The district has made teachers' understanding and use of inclusive practices a priority in the 2016–2018 District Improvement Plan. In 2016–2017, the district was in the early stages of providing educators with professional development about inclusive practices.
    - a. The district's comprehensive District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) includes school-based practices to support student learning, including personnel, accommodations, modifications, and interventions. The DCAP includes a flow chart for the process of supporting a student and monitoring progress.
    - b. At one school the book group has chosen the book *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*, cultural proficiency, and inclusive practices as their topics for the 2016–2017 school year, noting that these link social-emotional learning and academics. One veteran teacher told the team that it is important to “educate people on how to address the social needs of students.”

**Impact:** With a tiered system for social-emotional and behavioral supports and district policies and procedures that promote inclusion, drop-out prevention, and credit recovery, the district provides for students' needs and increases their chances for success in school and society.

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<sup>14</sup> According to the most recent available ESE data, Pittsfield's overall drop-out rate has fluctuated with an overall decrease, from 4.6 percent in 2008 to 3.9 percent in 2009 to 3.4 percent in 2010 to 3.1 percent in 2011 to 3.4 percent in 2012 to 3.0 percent in 2013 to 2.1 percent in 2014 to 2.7 percent in 2015 to 1.9 percent in 2016.

**2. The district maintains positive open lines of communication with students' families and a strong working relationship with community partners in order to support students' academic, social, and emotional wellbeing.**

**A.** The district and schools use multiple means of communicating with parents and families.

1. Parents said that they receive newsletters from teachers, schools, and the central office. They also receive phone notice of emergencies, current issues, and upcoming events through the PhoneConnect system.
  - a. Parents of secondary school students told the team that they have access to their children's grades, discipline records, and attendance through PowerSchool.
  - b. Students noted that their parents make effective use of PowerSchool to monitor their work and behavior in school.
2. The district is taking positive steps to increase the cultural competency of its faculty and staff so that all "students and families know they are welcome and supported for their best success." It also provides for communication by means other than spoken English.
  - a. Each school has at least one person who can translate for parents and guardians who speak only Spanish (the most common second language in the district).
  - b. Translators and ASL interpreters are included in meetings if parents and or other family members do not speak English or are hearing impaired.
3. Some PTOs offer Active Parenting, a series of classroom and video-based parent educational programs.
4. The district website has family- and parent-friendly help and information, including "Family & Community," "Special Education Resources," "English Language Learners," and "Emergency Information."
  - a. By accessing the "Language" drop-down feature on the district's website, family members can select translations of information in 10 languages.
5. The Family Emergency Response Booklet is published annually and available on the district's website. A hard copy is provided upon request.

**B.** Each Pittsfield school has been "adopted" by a corporate or civic sponsor that provides support and additional resources to the school and its students.

1. School civic partners who have "adopted" a school provide mentors, funds, and role models. Among some of the partners are: Berkshire Bank, Berkshire Community College, Berkshire Health Systems, Graylock Federal Credit Union, Hillcrest Campuses of Berkshire Health Systems, Mountain One Bank, and Pittsfield Cooperative Bank.

2. Both Pittsfield High School and Taconic High School have multiple partners that support their schools and technical program.
  3. Numerous area employers provide work experiences to grade 11 and 12 students through the high schools' co-operative education programs.
- C. External partnerships enable the district to provide services to students and families that might otherwise not be available in the schools.
1. The Boys and Girls Club of Pittsfield provides after-school care and programs and the YMCA offers before- and after-school care at the Egremont, Williams, Cosby, and Allendale elementary schools.
  2. Local agencies provide follow-up or "reconnect" services to students. For example, students who have dropped out can receive services at the Reconnect Center, part of the Berkshire Community Action Council. The Department of Mental Health has a program for students who have been absent for mental health reasons, and the Pittsfield resettlement program helps English language learners who withdrew from Pittsfield High School and are reentering.
  3. Career and employment services are provided by the Berkshire County Regional Employment Board, the Berkshire Works Career Center, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and Interprint.
  4. Junior Achievement, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, and the Barrington Stage Company Playwright Mentoring Project provide enrichment programs and mentoring.
  5. Other local agencies provide funds for pregnancy and substance abuse prevention (United Way), dual enrollment and drop-out prevention (Berkshire Community College), and services to students from economically disadvantaged families and homeless adolescents (the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority and Community Legal Aid).
  6. The Pittsfield Adult Learning Center provides free group and individualized education including college, career, and HiSET exam preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, and pathway for an adult Pittsfield Public Schools diploma. Through a partnership with the Regional Employment Board, the Center provides free training in advanced manufacturing.

**Impact:** Open lines of communication enable parents, students, and families to be informed and access the resources available to them. External partnerships help provide students and families with access to behavioral health, social, recreational, and supplemental educational services that may not otherwise be available within the schools.

## ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

### **3. The district does not have in place a coordinated multi-tiered system of academic supports.**

- A.** District leadership recognizes that the elementary schools have more resources for academic supports than the middle and high schools.
  - 1. Title I services are only available in three schools (Conte, Crosby, and Morningside). Teachers from these schools reported that all three have ELA coaches and strong Tier II and III interventions. Two have math coaches. The other five elementary schools have a full- or part-time reading coach, but no math coaches.
    - a. Of the two models under which Title I funds can be expended, schoolwide and targeted assistance, Crosby and Morningside are schoolwide projects, and Conte is a targeted assistance school for 2016–2017.
    - b. Some teachers from the non-Title I schools told the team that their students’ needs are not being met.
- B.** Administrators at the secondary level reported that there is no Tier 2 support in academics at that level.
  - 1. High-school teachers said that there is no reading intervention and that the schools are “not addressing a fundamental need.”
  - 2. They also stated that they do not have sufficient ELL support or resources, and do not believe that they have the staff capacity to meet their students’ needs.
- C.** Students at the high schools identified their classroom teachers as their primary source of academic help. They did not identify another dependable source of academic support.
- D.** Some principals reported using retired teacher volunteers for intervention in the classrooms. Reading coaches at the elementary levels are also used as student support interventionists.
- E.** Special education services are the only Tier 3 supports available at the middle-school level. Tier 2 is typically a push-in/pull-out service provided by a paraprofessional if one is available. The district does not have a set of information about Tier 2 or Tier 3 services, to inform families, teachers, and others about these supports.
- F.** Many teachers do not effectively differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all learners in their classrooms. The review team observed moderate and strong evidence of differentiation in only 34 percent of the classrooms.

**Impact:** The absence of an effective multi-tiered system of academic supports has hampered the ability of the district to provide for students’ diverse learning needs and to improve their achievement.

#### 4. District policies and practices are not improving students' attendance.

- A. The district's student attendance rate has declined in recent years and is below the state average, while chronic absence has increased and is higher than the state average.

**Table 20: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Student Attendance and Chronic Absence, 2011–2016**

Rate	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014	2014–2015	2015–2016	2015– 2016 (State)
Attendance	94.7	93.9	94.3	94.2	93.6	94.9
Chronic Absence*	14.9	18.4	16.7	17.1	18.8	12.3

\*Percent chronically absent is defined as students absent more than 10 percent of their days in membership.

Source: ESE's District and School Profiles

- B. Attendance rates at the high school are of particular concern.
1. In 2016, attendance for grade 12 was 89.8 percent and the lowest of all four classes.
  2. The percentages of chronically absent students were as follows: 30.5 for grade 9; 28.5 for grade 10; 26.6 for grade 11; and 32.7 for grade 12.
- C. Chronic absence for some subgroups is high. In 2016, for example, chronic absence was 27.2 percent for Black/African Americans, 32.2 percent for Hispanic/Latinos, and 22.8 percent for multi-non-Hispanics.
- D. Faculty and administrators at all levels acknowledged students' absence as a barrier to success.
1. Some teachers told the team that attendance at the secondary level is complicated by adolescent homelessness and the reduction of agency and legal commitment when a child turns 16 years of age.
- E. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district has put in place the following practices to improve students attendance: sending postcards to the parents of elementary students after four days of absence, notifying parents when students have been absent for 10–15 days, including students' attendance data in PowerSchool, initiating a public relations campaign about student attendance ("Do you know where your child is at 9:00?"), and expanding bus pick-up to all students after a snow storm.
- F. The high school student handbook states that 6 absences per semester or 12 absences per year will result in loss of credit. A large number of "absence failures" may result in grade retention.



1. Pittsfield and Taconic High Schools have the district's highest retention rates for the 2015–2016 school year at 6.1 percent and 4.0 percent, respectively, compared with the 1.5 percent state rate.
2. Students have the opportunity to make up a missed class or day through the after school 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Programs and staying after school with the teacher of record.

**Impact:** Chronic absence is an early indicator for low achievement and dropping out of school. Frequent absence interferes with sustained student achievement, learning, and progress toward college and career readiness.

### ***Recommendations***

1. **The district and school leadership should take the necessary steps to develop the programs, provide the resources, and implement a coordinated tiered system of academic supports for all students.**
  - A. The district should review and extend its approach to providing additional supports to all students with the goal of establishing a coordinated, districtwide system of tiered academic intervention.
    1. The district should specify and document all academic interventions available at each level and in every school to better identify gaps.
    2. The district should identify resources needed to address those gaps.
    3. The district and schools at each level should examine their schedules and time-on-learning to determine if a more effective use of instructional time can provide intervention and/or enrichment opportunities for all students.
    4. Working with a team of educators, the district should develop a plan that will provide a districtwide system of tiered academic intervention that can be implemented, monitored, and modified as needed for successful student outcomes.
  - B. The district should review its use of Title I funds to ensure their best use to benefit students within the district, including the benefits of schoolwide services over targeted assistance in schools that qualify.
  - C. The district should continue to develop teachers' ability to address students' academic needs in the general education classroom.
    1. The district should continue to educate faculty about strategies for the engagement of all students and differentiating instruction in the general education classroom.

2. The district should train faculty to use data that is currently available, as well as specialized assessments as appropriate, to accurately identify the needs of students and to address them in a timely way.
3. The district should highlight for general education staff the suggested modifications and accommodations detailed in the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP), provide all teachers copies of this resource and, if needed, the professional development necessary for successful implementation.

**Benefits:** The district will benefit from implementing this recommendation in that students will be provided with opportunities for success through inclusive classroom instruction, an array of skill and content specific interventions, and other supports designed to meet their identified needs. By following this recommendation, the district will be more likely to increase student achievement and college and career readiness.

**Recommended resources:**

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)* ([www.mass.gov/ese/mtss](http://www.mass.gov/ese/mtss)) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The MTSS website includes links to a self-assessment and a variety of helpful resources.
- The *Educator Effectiveness Guidebook for Inclusive Practice* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/>) includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the MA Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion following the principles of Universal Design for Learning, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Social and Emotional Learning.
- ESE's *Early Warning Indicator System* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html>) is a tool to provide information to districts about the likelihood that their students will reach key academic goals. Districts can use the tool in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions and to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede students' ability to meet academic goals.
- The *Early Warning Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/2014ImplementationGuide.pdf>) provides information on how to use early warning data, including the Massachusetts Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS), to identify, diagnose, support and monitor students in grades 1-12. It offers educators an overview of EWIS and how to effectively use these data in conjunction with local data by following a six-step implementation cycle.
- *Taking Action for ELLs: Foundational Concepts* (<https://www.wida.us/index.aspx>; log-in required) is an online learning module designed for educators with a beginning level of awareness of WIDA English language development. The module covers three topics:

- Building Awareness of Your ELLs
- Use of Language for Academic Purposes
- Integrating Content and Language

Educators are invited to use the module independently or collaboratively with colleagues.

**2. The district should review its current efforts to improve attendance adjust its efforts as needed.**

- A.** A probable cause analysis should be conducted or updated to determine what current factors are contributing to chronic absence. This should be done with input from staff, community, families, and students.
- B.** The district should consider including new and revised SMART goals for attendance in the district improvement plan, with clear and actionable steps for which administrators and faculty are accountable. Furthermore, the district should develop a plan with goals for supporting families of students with a high rate of chronic absence.
- D.** The district should work with students to identify new strategies to increase student attendance.
- E.** The district should consult and or collaborate with similar districts to identify successes and determine the extent to which they can be replicated.
- F.** The district should review the role of the coordinator of attendance and, if needed, make the role more accountable and more functional to its purpose.

**Benefits** from implementing this recommendation will include a clear blueprint with action steps grounded in student, family, and community voices to improve student attendance for the district, schools, and families. Improved attendance for students will create better conditions for uninterrupted continuous and learning, thus paving the way for improved achievement.

**Recommended resource:**

- *Every Student, Every Day: A Community Toolkit to Address and Eliminate Chronic Absenteeism* (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/chronicabsenteeism/toolkit.pdf>) is a set of Action Guides that provide information and resources to help ensure that all young people are in school every day and benefitting from coordinated systems of support.

## Financial and Asset Management

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### ***Contextual Background***

The district's population has changed in recent years reflecting changes in the city's economy. According to ESE data, in 2016 almost half of Pittsfield students came from economically disadvantaged families (49.8 percent), compared with 30.2 percent statewide. The number of students "choicing out" of the district increased from 251 in 2007 to 443 in 2015. The number of students attending charter schools has increased from 22 in fiscal year 2007 to 176 in fiscal year 2015. The total tuition expenditure for these students is \$3,827,550.

The district renovated 7 of its 12 schools between 1998 and 2001 with financial assistance from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the district was building a new Taconic High School with its bonding capacity and reimbursements from MSBA. In 2017, because of the combined effect of declining property values and a 12.9 percent increase in health insurance costs, the district reached its levy limit (the maximum that the city can raise in taxes without an override vote).

The city's financial support for the district has consistently exceeded the required net school spending level. The percentage amount over the requirement increased over the four years before the onsite. The fiscal 2017–2018 budget deliberations have been limited by the city's reaching the levy limit. The school committee and administrators have worked proactively to develop an effective budget with the financial constraints. Although the budget is aligned with district and school improvement goals, the goals in the planning documents are not monetized.

Four of Pittsfield's twelve schools are forty years old or older and have not been renovated in those forty years. They were each rated "poor" or "fair/poor" in the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) 2010 inventory of the needs of all Massachusetts schools. While the district has a long-term capital plan and budget to make repairs to these schools, it does not have a long-term plan to renovate or replace these buildings.

## ***Strength Finding***

**1. The district's budget document is clear, comprehensive, and aligned with district goals. The budget is created through an open, participatory process, including active participation by the mayor and school committee members.**

**A.** Interviews and a document review indicated that the budget development process is a nine-month process that begins with school-level stakeholders and ends with a fully developed budget document.

1. In October, the district sends out information on the budget history and process to each principal. The principals, in turn, meet with staff and school councils to develop their requests for the coming year.
2. The central office uses My Budget File software to disseminate data to the principals and to manage the data collected.
3. The central office uses a website called Smarter School Spending, which provides free processes and tools to help districts use their resources to improve student achievement.
4. In fall 2016, the principals presented their budget needs to the school committee in open public session.
5. The budget calendar outlines the budget development process, from the request phase in October to the final approval in June.
6. District administrators told the team that they were contemplating adding a school-based budgeting system to the budget development process.

**B.** The budget document is aligned with district and school goals.

1. The District Improvement Plan includes budget goals needed to achieve the plan's objectives.
2. The individual School Improvement Plans (SIPs) include budget goals to support district goals.
3. The Pittsfield Public Schools Accelerated Achievement Plan is part of the budget document; it summarizes the District Improvement Plan and the School Improvement Plans.
4. Data is used in creating the budget and is included in the budget document. For example, the budget includes information about the representation of persons of color to show why hiring practices have had to change.

**C.** The budget document contains extensive information about the district's educational programs and finances.

1. The financial data is well organized and uses ESE's accounting system.
2. The document details the history of staff FTEs and expenditures for the previous six years.
3. A detailed narrative of the changes anticipated for the next year is included along with the rationale for those changes.

**Impact:** Clear and comprehensive budget documentation has allowed the district to respond to budget constraints responsibly and proactively.

### ***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

- 2. Some district schools are old and outdated. Some buildings need maintenance, major repairs, and upgrades. While the district and the city have a capital plan and budget to make repairs to schools, there is no long-term plan to replace or renovate the buildings.**

**A.** Since 1998, Pittsfield has renovated 7 of its 12 schools.

**B.** In 2010, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) inventoried the needs of all Massachusetts schools. Buildings were rated on a 1 to 4 scale for building condition and general environment. One (1) was the highest rating, four (4) the lowest.

1. Crosby Elementary was rated 4 for both building condition and general environment. Crosby was built in 1962 and has not been renovated.
2. Conte and Morningside were rated 3 for building condition and 2 for general environment. Conte was built in 1974 and Morningside in 1975. Neither has been renovated.
3. Allendale and Egremont elementary schools were rated 2 for building condition and 1 for general environment. Allendale and Egremont were built in 1951. Egremont was renovated in 1998, and Allendale in 1999.
4. Capeless, Stearns, and Williams elementary schools were rated 1 for both building condition and general environment. Capeless was built in 1951, Williams in 1957, and Stearns in 1961. Capeless, Stearns, and Williams were renovated in 2001.
5. Reid and Herberg middle schools were rated 2 for building condition and 1 for general environment. The middle schools were built in 1953. Herberg was renovated in 1999, and Reid in 2000.
6. Pittsfield High School was rated 3 for building condition and 1 for general environment. Pittsfield High was built in 1931 and renovated in 1975.
7. Taconic High was built in 1969 and at the time of the review in March 2017 was being replaced.

- C. The review team visited all 12 district schools and noted instances of: excessive noise; problems with temperature regulation; inadequate labs, athletic fields, and parking; water damage; and exposed asbestos.
  - 1. Crosby Elementary had heating problems.
  - 2. Conte and Morningside were noisy because of the open-classroom design. The media centers were noisy and had limited equipment and rooms for students to use what equipment they had. In both schools the auditorium was the gymnasium.
  - 1. The heating system at Pittsfield High School was not working properly and some areas had high temperatures. The science labs, athletic fields, and parking were inadequate. Major athletic facilities were offsite. Water damage and exposed asbestos after a recent fire and flood needed to be addressed.
  - 2. Students said that a corridor was blocked because of asbestos remediation. Students also said that the building was “falling apart.”
- D. The 2016 New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Visiting Team Report noted several problems at Pittsfield High School.
  - 1. The NEASC report notes that “...it does not have a long range plan to address...facility needs, technology, and capital improvements.
  - 2. The NEASC report states “...the school site and plant are not currently able to support an environment for high quality programs and services.” The report cites problems with the heating systems, the absence of athletic facilities, windows in need of repair, and other issues.
- E. The district and the city have a long-range capital plan and budget, but the plan only addresses major building repairs, not the renovation or replacement of buildings.
  - 1. The district’s fiscal year 2016–2017 budget has a capital improvements section which lists major repairs that are needed in the schools. The repairs are not monetized or placed on a time line. The list is submitted to the city maintenance department for inclusion in the city’s long-term capital budget and plan.
  - 2. The budget does not include a plan for renovating or replacing schools.
  - 3. District leaders told the team there has been discussion, but the district did not have a plan.
  - 4. The city has a long-term capital plan in which some requested projects are funded, some projects prioritized by the city’s maintenance department are funded, and some are listed for future funding.

- F. At the time of the onsite in March 2017, the district was working with the Berkshire County Educational Task Force to address those topics that affect any plan, such as collaboratives, school choice, and charter schools. Interviewees said that the district plans to work with the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) on planning for school needs.

**Impact:** Inadequate buildings and outdated classrooms are not conducive to student learning. Excessive noise and limited technology also affect learning. And the slow pace of new and renovated schools compromises appropriate updating of facilities.

**3. The district and the city do not have an up-to-date written agreement detailing indirect municipal services that are provided to the district by the city, as required by state regulation 603 CMR 10.04.**

- A. The district does not have an up-to-date, signed written agreement between the district and the city on municipal expenditures in support of the schools, such as buildings and grounds, health insurance, other insurance, Medicaid, payments, unemployment compensation, and snow removal.
  - 1. The agreement between the district and the city on municipal expenditures in support of the schools was last reviewed and approved in 2004.
- B. The city submits data to the district for ESE's End of Year Report, including a list of expenditures that the city has made on behalf of the schools. Some of these are actual costs and others are allocations of aggregate city expenditures. (An allocation is a percentage distribution of a total expenditure that is determined to be a fair representation of the city's and the district's shares of that expenditure.) These costs may not be measured accurately.
  - 1. The net school spending (NSS) requirement is a minimum level of expenditures, in defined categories, that a school district must meet. This requirement is made up of expenditures from the school committee's budget as well as expenditures by the municipality on behalf of schools. In 2015, 30 percent, \$24,018,529, of the district's net school spending were expenditures reported by the city. In fiscal year 2015, Pittsfield exceeded the NSS requirement by \$10,082,602.
  - 2. District leaders reported that the amounts in the city's report were not documented. For example, the figures for health insurance were allocated at 62 percent of the city's total cost. Interviewees said that they were not actual costs because the percentage was based on 2004 staffing levels. In 2004, the school department's staff was 62 percent of the city's staff. Interviewees said that the staffing levels have changed and they did not know whether the percentage was still accurate.
  - 3. ESE's 2016 compliance audit recommends "a review of the agreement be made to ascertain the allocation of expenditures is adequate for current needs."



4. The 2016 compliance audit found that the city's expenditure for maintenance of school buildings was overstated by \$92,041.

**Impact:** Because the written agreement between the district and the city on municipal expenses in support of the schools has not been reviewed or approved since 2004, the city may not be allocating costs accurately or accurately calculating and reporting required net school spending.

## ***Recommendations***

### **1. The city and school district should develop a long term capital plan and budget to address the need for renovating the four remaining school buildings that are rated fair/poor by MSBA.**

#### **A. The central administration and school committee should develop a long-term capital plan to renovate or replace the four schools.**

1. The future status of these four aging schools must be addressed, in a planned, long-term manner, to avoid the facilities becoming inadequate to meet the needs of students.
2. The school principals and school councils should work with the city's building maintenance department each year to plan for the capital needs of each building. Their analysis should be documented in a long-term capital plan.
3. The school administration should continue to work with the Berkshire County Educational Task Force to address those topics that affect any plan, such as collaboratives, school choice and charter schools.
4. The school administration should go forward with its plan to work with the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) on planning for school needs.
5. The district should work with MSBA to seek assistance in making capital plans. By applying for a major repair or accelerated repair grant ([http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/programs/repair\\_program](http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/programs/repair_program)) the district may find that some of the scheduled repairs are not cost effective.

**Benefits:** Developing a capital plan to systematically address buildings that are beginning to fail will help to ensure that the district's educational facilities do not negatively impact students' learning and well-being.

#### **Recommended resources:**

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

- *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003347>), from the National Center for Education Statistics, is intended to help school districts plan for efficient and effective operations. It addresses various topics, including conducting a facilities audit, planning and evaluating maintenance, and managing staff and contractors.
  - *The Massachusetts School Checklist* (<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/environmental-health/exposure-topics/iaq/iaq-methods/the-mass-school-checklist.html>) is a list of the most important environmental health and safety issues for schools to address. It includes regulations and industry standards/guidelines related to elements on the checklist, as well as additional resources.
  - The Green Ribbon Schools Award honors schools that are exemplary in reducing environmental impact and costs, improving the health and wellness of students and staff, and delivering effective environmental and sustainability education. The district might find several related resources useful, including Massachusetts' *Green Ribbon Schools Award Resource Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/sbuilding/GreenRibbon/ResourcesGuide.pdf>) and the US Department of Education's *Green Strides* resource list (<http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/green-strides/resources.html>).
- 2. The city and school department should mutually develop a written agreement, or update the old agreement, relative to the correct reporting, allocation and documentation of expenditures by municipal agencies for educational purposes in compliance with 603 CMR 10.04.**
- A.** The appropriate representatives of the school department and town government should meet to draft such an agreement.
    - 1. For those expenditure categories, such as "Administrative Services," for which allocations of municipal expenditures are required, an allocation method should be agreed upon and put in writing.
    - 2. For those expenditure categories for which actual expenditures are reported, the method for determining these actual expenditures should be agreed upon and put in writing.
  - B.** The agreement should be submitted to the appropriate city and school department officials for their approval.
    - 1. If the previously agreed-upon allocations are changed, 603 CMR 10.04 requires that the Commissioner of Education approve the change.
  - C.** If the city and school department cannot agree on a methodology, they should notify ESE.

**Benefit:** The benefit of implementing this recommendation is that the district will be in compliance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations and the Compliance Supplement for Massachusetts Schools.

Having this agreement will provide clarity for the city and school district on how city expenditures are determined and how Net School Spending expenditures are calculated.

**Recommended resources:**

- ESE's webpage on school finance laws and regulations (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr10.html?section=04>) provides a list of municipal payments commonly made on behalf of school districts.
- ESE's Chart of Accounts (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/accounting/eoy/ChartOfAccounts.pdf>) describes the general requirements for reporting revenue and expenditure data from school committee appropriation, municipal spending in support of schools, revolving and special funds and state and federal grants and contracts.

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

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### Review Team Members

The review was conducted from March 27–30, 2017, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Dr. James Caradonio, Leadership and Governance
2. Dr. Kristan Rodriguez, Curriculum and Instruction
3. Christine Brandt, Assessment, *review team coordinator*
4. Dr. John Retchless, Human Resources and Professional Development
5. Marta Montleon, Student Support
6. David King, Financial and Asset Management

### District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: the assistant superintendent of business and finance and Pittsfield's treasurer/director of finance and administration.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: the chair, the clerk, and one member.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: the president, the chair of grievance, and five members.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the superintendent, the deputy superintendent, the director of curriculum and Title I, the assistant superintendent for business and finance, the assistant superintendent of career and technical education, the director of human resources, and the director of special education.

The team visited the following schools: Capeless (Pre-K–5), Morningside (Pre-K–5), Crosby (Pre-K–5), and Conte Community (Pre-K–5); Allendale (K–5), Egremont (K–5), Stearns (K–5), and Williams (K–5); Herberg and Reid (grades 6–8); and Pittsfield and Taconic (grades 9–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with 12 principals and focus groups with 4 elementary-school teachers, 3 middle-school teachers, and 3 high-school teachers.

The team observed 105 classes in the district: 31 at the 2 high schools, 30 at the 2 middle schools, and 44 at the 8 elementary schools.

The review 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, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

## Site Visit Schedule

Monday 3/27/17	Tuesday 3/28/17	Wednesday 3/29/17	Thursday 3/30/17
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers' association; and visits to Reid and Herberg for classroom observations.	Interviews with town or city personnel; interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; and visits to Herberg, Pittsfield, and Taconic for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; interviews with school committee members; visits to Conte, Herberg, Reid, Williams, Crosby, Stearns, Morningside, Allendale, and Egremont for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Capeless, Pittsfield, and Taconic for classroom observations; district wrap-up meeting with the superintendent.

## Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Pittsfield Public Schools  
2016–2017 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	592	10.8%	84,996	8.9%
Asian	88	1.6%	63,690	6.7%
Hispanic	645	11.8%	184,782	19.4%
Native American	15	0.3%	2,125	0.2%
White	3,687	67.2%	584,665	61.3%
Native Hawaiian	4	0.1%	855	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	456	8.3%	32,635	3.4%
<b>All Students</b>	<b>5,487</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>953,748</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: As of October 1, 2016

**Table B1b Pittsfield Public Schools  
2016–2017 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	1,165	35.7%	21.0%	167,530	38.4%	17.4%
Econ. Disad.	2,734	83.8%	49.8%	288,465	66.1%	30.2%
ELLs and Former ELLs	245	7.5%	4.5%	90,204	20.7%	9.5%
All high needs students	3,264	100.0%	58.9%	436,416	100.0%	45.2%

Notes: As of October 1, 2016. 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 2,049; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 964,514.

**Table B2a: Pittsfield Public Schools  
English Language Arts Performance, 2013–2016**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS Year			PARCC		Gains and Declines
			2013	2014		2015	2016	2-Year Trend
3	CPI	445	79.8	81.2	CPI	76.5	84.3	7.8
	P+	445	44%	49%	Lv 4&5	35%	50%	15
4	CPI	412	72	73.3	CPI	70.1	73.9	3.8
	P+	412	36%	36%	Lv 4&5	44%	45%	1
	SGP	392	38.0	43.0	SGP	31.5	49.0	17.5
5	CPI	407	83.1	80.6	CPI	75.2	84.8	9.6
	P+	407	60%	48%	Lv 4&5	35%	54%	19
	SGP	380	49.0	47.5	SGP	32.0	56.5	24.5
6	CPI	391	85.2	84.9	CPI	68.9	80.6	11.7
	P+	391	61%	64%	Lv 4&5	28%	46%	18
	SGP	366	54.5	48.0	SGP	19.0	56.0	37.0
7	CPI	379	87.8	88.7	CPI	76.1	79.4	3.3
	P+	379	68%	69%	Lv 4&5	41%	42%	1
	SGP	347	50.0	47.0	SGP	24.0	50.0	26.0
8	CPI	358	92	90.8	CPI	85.9	85.6	-0.3
	P+	358	79%	77%	Lv 4&5	45%	51%	6
	SGP	334	51.0	47.5	SGP	24.0	49.5	25.5

**Table B2b: Pittsfield Public Schools  
English Language Arts Performance, 2013–2016<sup>15</sup>**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS/Accountability Year				State (2016)	Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016		4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
10	CPI	363	97.0	92.8	95.8	94.7	96.7	-2.3	-1.1
	P+	363	91%	82%	89%	88%	91%	-3%	-1%
	SGP	314	42.0	31.0	32.0	38.0	50.0	-4.0	6.0
All	CPI	2,881	85.0	84.2	78.3	82.9	87.2	-2.1	4.6
	P+	--	62%	60%	--	--	--	--	--
	SGP	2,133	47.0	44.0	27.0	50.0	50.0	3.0	23.0

<sup>15</sup> In the All category 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

**Table B2c: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Mathematics Performance, 2013–2016**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS Year			PARCC		Gains and Declines
			2013	2014		2015	2016	2-Year Trend
3	CPI	442	81.0	79.6	CPI	80.9	89.8	8.9
	P+	442	56%	56%	Lv 4&5	41%	59%	18
4	CPI	415	73.6	70.0	CPI	71.4	75.2	3.8
	P+	415	40%	33%	Lv 4&5	40%	40%	0
	SGP	393	47.0	33.0	SGP	38.0	43.0	5.0
5	CPI	407	79.7	75.9	CPI	74.0	79.7	5.7
	P+	407	57%	49%	Lv 4&5	39%	50%	11
	SGP	382	62.0	56.0	SGP	49.5	62.5	13.0
6	CPI	390	82.7	76.8	CPI	73.9	72.4	-1.5
	P+	390	61%	53%	Lv 4&5	39%	35%	-4
	SGP	364	54.0	44.0	SGP	46.0	48.0	2.0
7	CPI	371	75.7	71.9	CPI	67.2	63.7	-3.5
	P+	371	49%	44%	Lv 4&5	34%	33%	-1
	SGP	340	34.0	41.0	SGP	32.0	37.0	5.0
8	CPI	226	79.5	75.4	CPI	54.9	54.8	-0.1
	P+	226	56%	50%	Lv 4&5	9%	17%	8
	SGP	205	48.5	47.0	SGP	27.0	36.0	9.0

**Table B2d: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Mathematics Performance, 2013–2016<sup>16</sup>**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS/Accountability Year				State (2016)	Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016		4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
10	CPI	361	87.2	87.1	86.7	87.2	89.7	0.0	0.5
	P+	361	73%	71%	72%	73%	78%	0	1
	SGP	314	33.0	27.0	28.0	30.0	50.0	-3.0	2.0
All	CPI	2,867	79.9	76.6	74.6	76.7	81.5	-3.2	2.1
	P+	--	56%	51%	--	--	--	--	--
	SGP	2,121	46.0	41.0	37.0	44.0	50.0	-2.0	7.0

<sup>16</sup> In the All category 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.



**Table B2e: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2013–2016**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
5	CPI	439	75.6	72.1	68.6	69.8	76.4	-5.8	1.2
	P+	439	43%	38%	32%	32%	47%	-11	0
8	CPI	367	68.9	69.5	65.6	61.7	71.3	-7.2	-3.9
	P+	367	33%	37%	30%	26%	41%	-7	-4
10	CPI	343	84.3	81.2	82.1	82.0	88.9	-2.3	-0.1
	P+	343	60%	53%	56%	57%	73%	-3	1
All	CPI	1,149	76.1	74.1	72.2	70.9	78.7	-5.2	-1.3
	P+	1,149	45%	42%	39%	38%	54%	-7	-1

Notes: P+ = percent *Proficient* or *Advanced*. Students participate in Science and Technology/ Engineering (STE) MCAS tests in grades 5, 8, and 10 only. Median SGPs are not calculated for STE.

**Table B3a: Pittsfield Public Schools  
English Language Arts (All Grades)  
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2013–2016<sup>17</sup>**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Accountability					2-Year Trend	4-Year Trend
				MCAS			PARCC			
				2013	2014		2015	2016		
High Needs	District	CPI	1,723	79.3	79.2	CPI	70.7	76.2	5.5	-3.1
		P+	--	49%	48%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	1,164	41.0	44.0	SGP	22.0	46.0	24.0	5.0
	State	CPI	222,707	76.8	77.1	CPI	76.3	77.1	0.8	0.3
		P+	--	48%	50%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	165,487	47.0	47.0	SGP	47.0	47.0	0.0	0.0
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	1,432	--	--	CPI	71.4	76.8	5.4	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	960	--	--	SGP	22.0	45.0	23.0	--
	State	CPI	152,877	--	--	CPI	77.6	78.2	0.6	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	114,361	--	--	SGP	46.0	46.0	0.0	--
SWD	District	CPI	654	70.0	69.5	CPI	61.6	68.4	6.8	-1.6
		P+	--	25%	22%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	396	31.0	38.0	SGP	18.0	43.0	25.0	12.0
	State	CPI	91,177	66.8	66.6	CPI	67.4	68.2	0.8	1.4
		P+	--	30%	31%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	66,633	43.0	43.0	SGP	43.0	43.0	0.0	0.0
ELL or Former ELLs	District	CPI	154	72.4	67.7	CPI	59.2	73.5	14.3	1.1
		P+	--	40%	31%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	94	--	--	SGP	38.0	65.5	27.5	--
	State	CPI	52,960	67.4	67.8	CPI	68.9	70.7	1.8	3.3
		P+	--	35%	36%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	35,109	53.0	54.0	SGP	53.0	54.0	1.0	1.0
All students	District	CPI	2,881	85.0	84.2	CPI	78.3	82.9	4.6	-2.1
		P+	--	62%	60%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	2,133	47.0	44.0	SGP	27.0	50.0	23.0	3.0
	State	CPI	491,267	86.8	86.7	CPI	86.8	87.2	0.4	0.4
		P+	--	69%	69%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	388,999	51.0	50.0	SGP	50.0	50.0	0.0	-1.0

<sup>17</sup> 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

**Table B3b: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Mathematics (All Grades)  
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2013–2016<sup>18</sup>**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Accountability					2-Year Trend	4-Year Trend
				MCAS			PARCC			
				2013	2014		2015	2016		
High Needs	District	CPI	1,714	73.2	69.9	CPI	66.6	69.3	2.7	-3.9
		P+	--	44%	38%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	1,155	43.0	39.0	SGP	36.0	43.0	7.0	0.0
	State	CPI	222,349	68.6	68.4	CPI	67.9	68.8	0.9	0.2
		P+	--	40%	40%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	165,191	46.0	47.0	SGP	46.0	46.0	0.0	0.0
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	1,424	--	--	CPI	67.5	69.7	2.2	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	952	--	--	SGP	36.0	41.0	5.0	--
	State	CPI	152,560	--	--	CPI	69.2	70.0	0.8	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	114,091	--	--	SGP	46.0	45.0	-1.0	--
SWD	District	CPI	652	60.8	59.4	CPI	57.1	59.5	2.4	-1.3
		P+	--	18%	17%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	391	31.5	34.0	SGP	32.0	42.0	10.0	10.5
	State	CPI	91,049	57.4	57.1	CPI	57.3	58.1	0.8	0.7
		P+	--	22%	22%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	66,511	42.0	43.0	SGP	43.0	44.0	1.0	2.0
ELL or Former ELLs	District	CPI	156	65.4	59.7	CPI	57.3	63.9	6.6	-1.5
		P+	--	28%	24%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	95	--	--	SGP	41.5	55.0	13.5	--
	State	CPI	53,048	63.9	63.8	CPI	64.5	65.8	1.3	1.9
		P+	--	35%	36%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	35,290	53.0	52.0	SGP	51.0	50.0	-1.0	-3.0
All students	District	CPI	2,867	79.9	76.6	CPI	74.6	76.7	2.1	-3.2
		P+	--	56%	51%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	2,121	46.0	41.0	SGP	37.0	44.0	7.0	-2.0
	State	CPI	490,612	80.8	80.3	CPI	80.7	81.5	0.8	0.7
		P+	--	61%	60%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	388,423	51.0	50.0	SGP	50.0	50.0	0.0	-1.0

<sup>18</sup> 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

**Table B3c: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)  
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2013–2016**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	635	69.1	66.9	64.0	61.5	-7.6	-2.5
		P+	635	33%	30%	25%	21%	-12	-4
	State	CPI	89,857	66.4	67.3	66.3	65.4	-1.0	-0.9
		P+	89,857	31%	33%	32%	31%	0	-1
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	514	--	--	64.3	61.5	--	-2.8
		P+	514	--	--	26%	22%	--	-4
	State	CPI	61,476	--	--	67.1	65.8	--	-1.3
		P+	61,476	--	--	33.0%	29%	--	-4
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	265	60.2	57.7	56.2	56.2	-4	0
		P+	265	18%	13%	12%	12%	-6	0
	State	CPI	38,109	59.8	60.1	60.2	59.7	-0.1	-0.5
		P+	38,109	20%	22%	22%	21%	1	-1
English language learners or Former ELLs	District	CPI	60	65.4	48.6	47.7	54.2	-11.2	6.5
		P+	60	29%	7%	7%	13%	-16	6
	State	CPI	18,594	54	54	53.9	54.1	0.1	0.2
		P+	18,594	19%	18%	18%	19%	0	1
All students	District	CPI	1,149	76.1	74.1	72.2	70.9	-5.2	-1.3
		P+	1,149	45%	42%	39%	38%	-7	-1
	State	CPI	208,262	79.0	79.6	79.4	78.7	-0.3	-0.7
		P+	208,262	53%	55%	54%	54%	1	0

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

**Table B4: Pittsfield Public Schools**  
**Annual Grade 9-12 Drop-Out Rates, 2013–2016**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2013–2016		Change 2015–2016		State (2016)
	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High Needs	4.6%	3.4%	4.4%	3.2%	-1.4	-30.4%	-1.2	-27.3%	3.7%
Econ Disad <sup>19</sup>	4.5%	3.2%	4.4%	3.1%	-1.4	-31.1%	-1.3	-29.5%	4.1%
Students w/ disabilities	6.7%	5.9%	5.9%	5.2%	-1.5	-22.3%	-0.7	-11.9%	3.1%
ELL	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	-5.4	-73.9%	1.9	--	6.6%
All students	3.0%	2.1%	2.7%	1.9%	-1.1	-36.6%	-0.8	-29.6%	1.9%

Notes: The annual drop-out 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. Drop outs 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 high school equivalency by the following October 1. Drop-out rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers.

**Table B5: Pittsfield Public Schools**  
**Attendance Rates, 2013–2016**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2013–2016		Change 2015–2016		State (2016)
	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	93.9%	94.3%	94.2%	93.6%	-0.3	-0.3%	-0.6	-0.6%	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.

<sup>19</sup> Low income numbers used for economically disadvantaged for 2013 and 2014

**Table B6: Pittsfield Public Schools**  
**Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2014–2016**

	FY14		FY15		FY16	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
<b>Expenditures</b>						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$52,484,497	\$55,458,588	\$56,882,524	\$56,506,241	\$58,874,065	\$58,424,068
By municipality	\$21,705,671	\$27,890,907	\$29,538,959	\$29,592,186	\$28,810,118	\$28,752,886
Total from local appropriations	\$74,190,168	\$83,349,495	\$86,421,483	\$86,098,427	\$87,684,183	\$87,176,954
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$11,571,828	--	\$13,193,802	--	\$11,372,647
Total expenditures	--	\$94,921,323	--	\$99,292,229	--	\$98,549,601
<b>Chapter 70 aid to education program</b>						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$39,290,438	--	\$39,447,163	--	\$39,818,894
Required local contribution	--	\$28,757,787	--	\$29,005,679	--	\$29,086,218
Required net school spending**	--	\$68,048,225	--	\$68,452,842	--	\$68,905,112
Actual net school spending	--	\$75,689,508	--	\$78,535,444	--	\$78,975,547
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$7,641,283	--	\$10,082,602	--	\$10,070,435
Over/under required (%)	--	11.2%	--	14.7%	--	14.6%

\*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: FY14, FY15, and FY16 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website

Data retrieved 12/13/16 and 8/8/17

**Table B7: Pittsfield Public Schools  
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil  
Fiscal Years 2013–2015**

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Administration	\$279	\$317	\$328
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$743	\$739	\$928
Teachers	\$4,998	\$5,200	\$5,349
Other teaching services	\$1,140	\$1,286	\$1,364
Professional development	\$190	\$195	\$214
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$661	\$618	\$536
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$388	\$423	\$431
Pupil services	\$990	\$1,019	\$1,160
Operations and maintenance	\$1,070	\$1,140	\$1,169
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$2,679	\$3,076	\$3,301
<b>Total expenditures per in-district pupil</b>	<b>\$13,137</b>	<b>\$14,013</b>	<b>\$14,780</b>

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

Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding.

## Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0 to 3)
<b>Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives &amp; Instruction</b>						
1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject matter and content.	<b>ES</b>	0%	18%	59%	23%	2
	<b>MS</b>	0%	40%	33%	27%	1.9
	<b>HS</b>	6%	29%	48%	16%	1.7
	<b>Total #</b>	2	29	51	23	1.9
	<b>Total %</b>	2%	28%	49%	22%	
2. The teacher provides and refers to clear learning objective(s) in the lesson.	<b>ES</b>	5%	16%	59%	20%	2.0
	<b>MS</b>	7%	37%	47%	10%	1.6
	<b>HS</b>	10%	29%	39%	23%	1.7
	<b>Total #</b>	7	27	52	19	1.8
	<b>Total %</b>	7%	26%	50%	18%	
3. The teacher implements a lesson that reflects high expectations aligned to the learning objective (s).	<b>ES</b>	2%	20%	70%	7%	1.8
	<b>MS</b>	7%	40%	50%	3%	1.5
	<b>HS</b>	16%	32%	39%	13%	1.5
	<b>Total #</b>	8	31	58	8	1.6
	<b>Total %</b>	8%	30%	55%	8%	
4. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to the learning objective(s).	<b>ES</b>	2%	16%	70%	11%	1.9
	<b>MS</b>	0%	43%	50%	7%	1.6
	<b>HS</b>	13%	35%	42%	10%	1.5
	<b>Total #</b>	5	31	59	10	1.7
	<b>Total %</b>	5%	30%	56%	10%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #1</b>	<b>ES</b>					7.7
	<b>MS</b>					6.6
	<b>HS</b>					6.5
	<b>Total</b>					7.0



<b>Focus Area #2: Student Engagement &amp; Critical Thinking</b>		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0 to 3)
5. Students are motivated and engaged in the lesson.	<b>ES</b>	0%	20%	59%	20%	2.0
	<b>MS</b>	0%	47%	40%	13%	1.7
	<b>HS</b>	10%	39%	42%	10%	1.5
	<b>Total #</b>	3	35	51	16	1.8
	<b>Total %</b>	3%	33%	49%	15%	
6. The teacher facilitates tasks that encourage students to develop and engage in critical thinking.	<b>ES</b>	0%	36%	45%	18%	1.8
	<b>MS</b>	13%	50%	30%	7%	1.3
	<b>HS</b>	6%	39%	42%	13%	1.6
	<b>Total #</b>	6	43	42	14	1.6
	<b>Total %</b>	6%	41%	40%	13%	
7. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	<b>ES</b>	2%	41%	41%	16%	1.7
	<b>MS</b>	10%	37%	47%	7%	1.5
	<b>HS</b>	16%	48%	10%	26%	1.5
	<b>Total #</b>	9	44	35	17	1.6
	<b>Total %</b>	9%	42%	33%	16%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #2</b>	<b>ES</b>					5.5
	<b>MS</b>					4.5
	<b>HS</b>					4.6
	<b>Total</b>					4.9

		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0 to 3)
<b>Focus Area #3: Differentiated Instruction &amp; Classroom Culture</b>						
8. The teacher appropriately differentiates instruction so the lesson content is accessible for all learners.	<b>ES</b>	7%	52%	32%	9%	1.4
	<b>MS</b>	3%	60%	33%	3%	1.4
	<b>HS</b>	19%	61%	16%	3%	1.0
	<b>Total #</b>	10	60	29	6	1.3
	<b>Total %</b>	10%	57%	28%	6%	
9. The teacher uses appropriate resources aligned to students' diverse learning needs. (e.g., technology, manipulatives, support personnel).	<b>ES</b>	7%	27%	52%	14%	1.7
	<b>MS</b>	0%	57%	40%	3%	1.5
	<b>HS</b>	19%	39%	32%	10%	1.3
	<b>Total #</b>	9	41	45	10	1.5
	<b>Total %</b>	9%	39%	43%	10%	
10. The classroom climate is characterized by respectful behavior, routines, tone, and discourse.	<b>ES</b>	2%	9%	52%	36%	2.2
	<b>MS</b>	0%	27%	60%	13%	1.9
	<b>HS</b>	16%	26%	45%	13%	1.5
	<b>Total #</b>	6	20	55	24	1.9
	<b>Total %</b>	6%	19%	52%	23%	
11. The teacher conducts appropriate formative assessments to check for understanding and provide feedback to students.	<b>ES</b>	5%	16%	52%	27%	2.0
	<b>MS</b>	3%	20%	60%	17%	1.9
	<b>HS</b>	6%	45%	23%	26%	1.7
	<b>Total #</b>	5	27	48	25	1.9
	<b>Total %</b>	5%	26%	46%	24%	
<b>Total Score For Focus Area #3</b>	<b>ES</b>					7.4
	<b>MS</b>					6.6
	<b>HS</b>					5.6
	<b>Total</b>					6.6