District Review Report

Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District

Review conducted June 10-12, 2013

Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

This document was prepared by the
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Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Review Overview

Purpose

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

Districts reviewed in the 2012-2013 school year included those classified into Level 3[1] of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance in each of the state's six regions: Greater Boston, Berkshires, Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Pioneer Valley. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District was conducted from June 10 through June 12, 2013. The site visit included 30 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 42 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted 3 focus groups with 13 elementary school teachers, 12 middle school teachers, and 2 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, expenditures, and student performance. The team observed

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

classroom instructional practice in 28 classrooms in 5 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

Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District educates the children in two adjoining communities in central Massachusetts. Both Spencer and East Brookfield have an open town meeting form of government under the direction of a board of selectmen. The chairman of the school committee is elected. There are seven members of the school committee and they meet monthly.

At the time of the review in June 2013 the district had an acting superintendent who had been in the position since December 11, 2012. An interim superintendent was to begin leading the district on July 1, 2013. The district leadership team includes the superintendent, a business manager, and a director of pupil services. In number and type central office positions have been mostly stable over the past three years, although many of the positions have seen considerable turnover. The district has five principals leading six schools. There are three other school administrators, one assistant principal and two deans. There are 134.6 teachers in the district.

As of October, 2012, 1,940 students were enrolled in the district's 6 schools:

Table 1: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Maple Street School	Early Elementary	PK-K	245
East Brookfield Elementary	Elementary School	K-6	210
Lake Street Elementary	Elementary School	1-3	372
Wire Village School	Elementary School	4-6	343
Knox Trail Junior High	Middle School	7-8	315
David Prouty High	High School	9-12	455
Totals	**6 schools**	**PK-12**	**1,940**
*As of October 2012			

Between 2008 and 2012 overall student enrollment decreased by 7.7 percent, from 2,142 students in 2008 to 1,977 students in 2012. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low income 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 3 percent lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for districts of similar size in fiscal year 2011: total in-district per-pupil expenditures were $11,498 as compared with a median of $11,853. Actual net school spending has been consistently above what is required under state law for fiscal years 2011 and 2012, as shown in Table B2 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

Information about student performance includes: (1) the accountability and assistance level of the district, including the reason for the district's level classification; (2) the progress the district and its schools are making toward narrowing proficiency gaps as measured by the Progress and Performance Index (PPI); (3) English language arts (ELA) performance and growth; (4) mathematics performance and growth; (5) science and technology/engineering (STE) performance; (6) annual dropout rates and cohort graduation rates; and (7) suspension rates. Data is reported for the district and for schools and student subgroups that have at least four years of sufficient data and are therefore eligible to be classified into an accountability and assistance level (1-5). "Sufficient data" means that at least 20 students in a district or school or at least 30 students in a subgroup were assessed on ELA and mathematics MCAS tests for the four years under review.

Four-and two-year trend data are provided when possible, in addition to areas in the district and/or its schools demonstrating potentially meaningful gains or declines over these periods. Data on student performance is also available in Appendix B. In both this section and Appendix B, the data reported is the most recent available.

1. **The district is Level 3 because the Knox Trail Junior High School is Level 3.[2]**

    A. The Knox Trail Junior High School is among lowest performing 20 percent of middle schools and the school's students with disabilities are among the lowest performing 20 percent of subgroups served by middle schools.[3]

    B. The district's five schools with reportable data place between the 12th percentile and the 24th percentile based on each school's four-year (2009-2012) achievement and improvement trends relative to other schools serving the same or similar grades: East Brookfield Elementary (24th percentile of elementary schools); Wire Village School (22nd percentile of elementary schools); Lake Street Elementary (insufficient data to calculate percentile), Knox Trail Junior High (12th percentile of middle schools); and David Prouty High (22nd percentile of high schools).

2. **The district is not sufficiently narrowing proficiency gaps.**

    A. The district as a whole is not considered to be making sufficient progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps. This is because the 2012 cumulative PPI for all students and for high needs[4] students is less than 75 for the

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

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

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

district. The district's cumulative PPI [5] [6] is 48 for all students and 46 for high needs students. The district's cumulative PPI for reportable subgroups are: 49 (low income students), 38 (students with disabilities), 66 (Hispanic/Latino students) and 47 (White students).

3. **The district's English language arts (ELA) performance is very low[7] relative to other districts and its growth[8] is low.[9]**

   A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for Hispanic/Latino students; the district did not meet its annual improvement targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.[10]

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

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

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

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

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

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

B. The district met its annual growth for Hispanic/Latino students; the district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.

C. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students, and it did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.

D. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grades 3, 4, 6, and 10 and very low performance in grades 5, 7, 8, and overall relative to other districts.

E. In 2012 the district demonstrated moderate growth in grade 8 and low growth in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, and overall.

F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful[11] gains in grade 10 and potentially meaningful declines in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7. Most of the gains in grade 10 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 were attributed to its performance over both periods.

G. The 2012 performance of East Brookfield Elementary School (K-6) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grades 3, 5, 6, and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced, CPI, and SGP. Most of the declines in grades 3, 5, 6, and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

H. The 2012 performance of Lake Street Elementary School (1-3) is very low relative to other elementary schools and there was insufficient data to calculate its growth. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 3 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced, and CPI. Most of the declines in grades 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

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

I. The 2012 performance of Wire Village School (4-6) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 4 and potentially meaningful declines in grade 5 and overall. Most of the gains in grade 4 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in grade 5 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

J. The 2012 performance of Knox Trail Junior High (7-8) is low relative to other middle schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 7. Most of the declines in grade 7 were attributed to its performance between 2009 and 2012.

K. The 2012 performance of David Prouty High (9-12) is moderate relative to other high schools and its growth is low. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grades 10 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced. Most of the gains in grade 10 and overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.

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

A. The district met its annual proficiency gap narrowing targets for all students and White students; the district did not meet its annual improvement targets for high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students.

B. The district did not meet its annual growth targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, Hispanic/Latino students, and White students.

C. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for high needs students, and Hispanic/Latino students, and it did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.

D. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grades 4, 5, 6, and 10 and very low performance in grades 3, 7, 8, and overall relative to other districts.

E. In 2012 the district demonstrated moderate growth in grades 5, 6, 8, 10, and overall, and low growth in grades 4 and 7.

F. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grades 5, 7, and 10 and potentially meaningful declines in grades 3. Most of the gains in grades 5, 7, and 10 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in grade 3 were attributed to its performance over both periods.

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

G. The 2012 performance of East Brookfield Elementary School (K-6) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 5 and potentially meaningful declines in grade 4. Most of the gains in grade 5 were attributable to its performance over both periods, and most of the declines in grade 4 were attributed to its performance over both periods.

H. The 2012 performance of Lake Street Elementary School (1-3) is very low relative to other elementary schools and there was insufficient data to calculate student growth. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 3 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced and CPI. Most of the declines in grade 3 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

I. The 2012 performance of Wire Village School (4-6) is low relative to other elementary schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grades 4, 5, and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced, CPI, and GSP. Most of the gains in grades 4, 5, and overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.

J. The 2012 performance of Knox Trail Junior High (7-8) is low relative to other middle schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grades 7 the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced and CPI. Most of the gains in grade 7 were attributable to its performance over both periods.

K. The 2012 performance of David Prouty High (9-12) is moderate relative to other high schools and its growth is moderate. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 10 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced and CPI. Most of the gains in grade 10 and overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.

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

   A. The district did not meet its annual improvement targets for all students, high needs students, low income students, students with disabilities, and White students.

   B. The district earned extra credit toward its annual PPI for increasing the percentage of students scoring *Advanced* 10 percent or more between 2011 and 2012 for high needs students, and low income students, and it did not earn extra credit for decreasing the percentage of students scoring *Warning/Failing* 10 percent or more over this period for any reportable group.

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

C. In 2012 the district demonstrated low performance in grade 5 and very low performance in grades 8, 10, and overall relative to other districts.

D. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the district demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 5. Most of the gains in grade 5 were attributable to its performance over both periods.

E. The 2012 performance of East Brookfield Elementary School (K-6) is low relative to other elementary schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful declines in grade 5 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced and CPI. Most of the declines in grades 5 and overall were attributed to its performance over both periods.

F. The 2012 performance of Lake Street Elementary School (1-3) lacked sufficient data to calculate its performance level relative to other elementary schools.

G. The 2012 performance of Wire Village School (4-6) is low relative to other elementary schools. Between 2009 and 2012 and more recently between 2011 and 2012, the school demonstrated potentially meaningful gains in grade 5 and overall in the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced or Advanced. Most of the gains in grade 5 and overall were attributable to its performance over both periods.

H. The 2012 performance of Knox Trail Junior High (7-8) is low relative to other middle schools.

I. The 2012 performance of David Prouty High (9-12) is low relative to other high schools.

6. **In 2012, the district met its annual improvement targets for all students for the four-year cohort graduation rate, the five-year cohort graduation rate, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate.[14] Over the most recent three-year period for which data is available,[15] the four-year cohort graduation rate increased, the five-year cohort graduation rate increased, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined. Over the most recent one-year period for which data is available, the four-year cohort graduation rate increased, the five-year cohort graduation rate increased, and the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined.[16]**

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[14] All groups (districts, schools, and subgroups) are expected to make steady progress toward a goal of 90 percent for the four-year cohort graduation rate and 95 percent for the five-year rate by the 2016-17 school year. For accountability determinations in any given year, the cohort graduation rate from the prior school year is used. For example, 2012 accountability determinations for the four-year rate use data from 2011; determinations for the five-year rate use data from 2010. Districts, schools, and subgroups are considered to be on target if they meet the state's federally-approved annual targets in a given year for either the four-or five-year cohort graduation rate, whichever is higher.

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

[16] For annual dropout rate trends from 2009 to 2012, see Table B6 in Appendix B. For cohort graduation rate trends for the last three years available, see Tables B7a and B7b.

A. Between 2009 and 2012 the four-year cohort graduation rate increased 5.8 percentage points, from 78.1% to 83.9%, an increase of 7.4 percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it increased 0.6 percentage points, from 83.3% to 83.9%, an increase of 0.7 percent.

B. Between 2008 and 2011 the five-year cohort graduation rate increased 5.4 percentage points, from 80.6% to 86.0%, an increase of 6.7 percent. Between 2010 and 2011 it increased 4.1 percentage points, from 81.9% to 86.0%, an increase of 5.0 percent.

C. Between 2009 and 2012 the annual grade 9-12 dropout rate declined 3.6 percentage points, from 4.0% to 0.4%, a decrease of 89.3 percent. Between 2011 and 2012 it declined 1.1 percentage points, from 1.5% to 0.4%, a decrease of 71.3 percent.

7. **The district's rates of in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions in 2011-2012 were not significantly different from the statewide rates.[17]**

   A. The district's rate of in-school suspensions was 4.6 percent, compared to the state rate of 3.4 percent. The rate of out-of-school suspensions was 5.3 percent, compared to the state rate of 5.4 percent.

   B. There was a significant difference among racial/ethnic groups for in-school suspensions.[18] The in-school-suspension rate was 0.0 percent for African-American/Black students, 0.0 percent for Asian students, 5.9 percent for Hispanic/Latino students, 14.3 percent for Multi-race (not Hispanic or Latino) students, and 4.3 percent for White students.

   C. There was a significant difference among racial/ethnic groups for out-of-school suspensions. The out-of-school-suspension rate was 7.7 percent for African-American/Black students, 0.0 percent for Asian students, 3.9 percent for Hispanic/Latino students, 16.7 percent for Multi-race (not Hispanic or Latino) students, and 5.0 percent for White students.

   D. There was a significant difference between the in-school suspension rates of high needs students and non high needs students (6.2 percent compared to 3.2 percent), and low income students and non low income students (6.2 percent compared to 3.7 percent).

   E. There was a significant difference between the rates of out-of-school suspensions for high needs students and non high needs students (7.5 percent compared to 3.4 percent), and low income students and non low income students (8.5 percent compared to 3.5 percent).

   F. On average students in the district missed 3.4 days per disciplinary action,[19] slightly higher than the state average of 3.1.

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[17] Statistical significance based on one sample T test. P≤ .05

[18] Statistical significance for racial/ethnic groups and other subgroups based on Chi Square. P≤ .05

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

Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. **During multiple interviews with school committee members, teachers, and administrators, it was clear to the review team members that the district is made up of people who are cognizant of the condition of their school district and eager to embrace whatever change is necessary to improve teaching and learning.**

   A. In one interview, an administrator told review team members that the district had administrators and teachers who were "hungry and willing" and who wanted to improve learning for their students.

   B. There are many instances of innovative, effective, and promising practices in each of the district schools.

      1. Groups of teachers are working to use whatever data they have available to improve instruction.

         a. The Wire Village data team uses MCAS data analysis for grouping and scheduling students, MAP data for grouping and "benchmarking."

         b. Teachers in the junior high school focus group spoke of data teams organized by instructional teams. They said that they used MAP test results as available and MCAS data when it was distributed. The MCAS test was administered often enough to be as useful as the MAP data, which they described as "helpful."

      2. Math initiatives implemented at Wire Village were shared with Lake Street teachers; during a review team interview the Lake Street principal mentioned the teachers' excitement about the initiatives.

         a. At the time of the review, the MATH STARS program had been in place at Wire Village for three years in the fourth grade classes. The program involves small group interventions for six weeks at a time, followed by a re-evaluation and then re-grouping and repeating where necessary.

      3. The assistant principal at Knox Trail Junior High, following an analysis of MCAS student assessment results, conducted meetings between math teachers in her school and teachers of mathematics in grades 5 and 6 at the elementary schools to improve alignment of curriculum topics among schools.

      4. Knox Trail Junior High has initiated an advisory period for students and added additional MCAS math tutoring to the advisory period and MCAS ELA tutoring to the last period of the day.

C. Groups of teachers volunteer their personal time for uncompensated activities designed to help students. These groups vary in scope and character across the district and receive administrative support from school administrators.

   1. At the high school teachers have organized a before-school tutoring program to assist students in preparing for both school and statewide assessments. Teachers volunteer their time before first period in the morning.

   2. Wire Village has instituted an advisory period before school where students can receive counseling services or academic support as needed. A voluntary after-school support program is also in place.

Impact: Not only do the effective practices put in place benefit students, but also, with a mature staff that understands the need for more effective programs and practices and is anxious to build on the promising initiatives in place, efforts by district leadership to bring about educational improvements will be easier to initiate and manage.

Assessment

2. **Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is used consistently from kindergarten through grade 8, in all elementary schools as well as at the junior high school. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Learning Skills (DIBELS) is used consistently in all elementary schools from kindergarten through grade 3.**

   A. The MAP is given two to three times per year to all students K–8 and DIBELS is given with the same frequency K–3.

   B. At each school in the district where it is administered, data from the MAP test is used routinely to track student levels and make adjustments to the taught curriculum to ensure that necessary knowledge and skills are covered in a timely way.

      1. At Knox Trail Junior High School, teachers attending the focus group said that they used the MAP testing to "track levels" and "make changes" in curriculum and topic organization.

      2. One administrator said that there had been a "near panic" during the previous school year when there was a concern that funding for the MAP program would be discontinued.

      3. In one interview, when the acting superintendent was asked to discuss strengths of the district, she singled out the teachers at Wire Village for their "strong use of the MAP."

   C. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Learning Skills (DIBELS) is used virtually universally at the elementary schools K-3 to track student literacy levels and differentiate early reading instruction.

   D. At the elementary level, generally the principal is identified as the person who "shares the information" with the teachers.

E. Some schools report having data teams. These data teams consist of groups of teachers, sometimes with administrative participation, that meet on irregular schedules, to review whatever data is available.

F. Across the district both teachers and administrators expressed appreciation of the role of effective data analysis in improving student achievement.

Impact: The MAP is given two to three times per year to all students K–8 and DIBELS is given with the same frequency K–3. Although this schedule does not provide frequent enough feedback for real-time instructional modifications, it does provide teachers with a valuable tool to ensure that important curricular standards are taught in a timely way and that students are making consistent learning gains.

Human Resources and Professional Development

3. **The district has a mentoring program for first year teachers that has remained in place through leadership changes.**

    A. The collective bargaining agreement states that newly hired teachers shall be assigned to a certified mentor teacher for one school year, and the mentor shall receive a stipend of $900.00 for each teacher assigned.

       1. The length of the supervisory period is 30 hours, according to the CBA and teachers. Teachers confirmed that mentors receive a $900.00 stipend.

    B. The review team was provided by district leaders a list of 18 mentors and 18 protégés who participated in the program in 2012-2013.

    C. Teachers, including a high school mentor, said that mentors receive training for one week in the summer and mentors and protégés are required to complete timesheets. The acting superintendent confirmed that mentors are trained and receive a stipend.

    D. The team reviewed a monthly meeting checklist, which requires that the mentor and protégé document monthly activities and sign the form. The form documents activities that the mentor and protégé engaged in during the month and how much time they spent meeting together. Teachers said that mentors and protégés meet 1-2 times per week during common prep time.

    E. A review of 2012 TELL Mass data showed that 100 percent of new teacher responders (7) were assigned a mentor.

Impact: A strong and appropriately funded mentoring program creates a team climate and assists new teachers by providing advice, guidance, and support. A structured induction program for new teachers helps them to be independent and confident, and likely reduces teacher turnover and in-district mobility.

Finance and Asset Management

4. **Several district employees took steps to expose the previous superintendent's financial mismanagement at some personal risk, which is to be commended although they were not able to prevent a large deficit being incurred in fiscal year 2013.**

    A. The former business administrator reported to the then school committee chair that the fiscal year 2013 budget prepared by the superintendent had serious errors. The business administrator was dismissed by the superintendent at the beginning of fiscal year 2013 over the objections of the school committee.

    B. Soon after the dismissal of the business administrator, a business office employee reported on errors in the fiscal year 2013 budget and the revenue projections, as well as on over-expenditures and reporting irregularities, to a new school committee chair.

    C. Problems with the fiscal year 2013 budget reported by the business staff members included treating revolving account funds as revenues, calculating the town assessments incorrectly, and offsetting health insurance expenditures in the amount of $620,045 with ARRA funds that were not going to be available in fiscal year 2013.

    D. At the December 11, 2012 school committee meeting, the treasurer reported to the school committee an imbalance between the cash balance and remaining budgeted expenditures in the fiscal year 2013 budget, as well as alleging improper expenditures from the high school student activities accounts.

    E. At the time of this review, the district was considering its options to address its considerable fiscal year 2013 deficit, including borrowing up to $3 million from the state via special legislation enacted in June 2013 (Chapter 24 of the Acts of 2013, *An Act relative to the financial condition of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District*). As a result of this legislation, the role of the commissioner of elementary and secondary education in the district's financial and budgetary management was to increase, and the district was to be required to hire a fiscal overseer.

Impact: The efforts of and risks taken by district employees ultimately led to the dismissal of the superintendent early enough in the fiscal year to institute some budget cuts to lessen the final deficit for the year. This also allowed the district time to reach out to its state legislative delegation to request special legislation to provide it with borrowing authority to close its fiscal year 2013 deficit. The school committee has two new members and is now required to exercise more financial oversight, though faced with the challenge of paying off the deficit covered by the state.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

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

Leadership and Governance

5. **The school committee did not carry out important responsibilities to oversee the school district budget and hold the former superintendent accountable for performing his responsibilities.**

   A. According to the school committee members, they had not fulfilled their responsibilities in that they had not overseen the former superintendent as they should have. Some examples mentioned by school committee members were:

      1. not asking for detailed information or questioning or challenging the former superintendent about the proposed fiscal year 2013 school budget and the manner in which it was prepared;

      2. not following past practice and having a school committee member or the superintendent present the budget at the annual town meeting;

      3. not inquiring about or approving new positions added to the school department staff;

      4. not holding the district accountable for providing complete monthly expenditure accounts from August to November 2012; and

      5. not evaluating the former superintendent.

   B. One member indicated that the committee has no credibility with the citizens and that the defeat of the fiscal year 2013 school budget override was a vote against the committee.

   C. Other interviewees expressed criticisms of the school committee, including the following:

      1. The committee is divided along town lines;

      2. there is an absence of communication between the school committee and town committees;

      3. they are "combative";

      4. the committee does not follow Robert's Rules of Order and has treated some presenters (school employees) "poorly" at meetings;

      5. they are "aloof and do not ask questions";

6. the committee rarely talks about education; and

7. they do not understand how the roles of educators have changed over the years or what mandates are about.

D. The review team interviewed six of the seven school committee members. Of the six interviewed members, two said that they had attended the mandated Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) orientation session, two stated they had not, and the other two mentioned that they were recently elected and as yet they had not attended the MASC session.

E. Interviewees told the review team that the actions and omissions of the former superintendent had harmed the district. They gave the following examples:

1. the school system has no objectives;

2. people were put in positions for which they were not qualified;

3. the position of business manager was not posted and filled as requested by the school committee; and

4. questionable budgeting practices resulted in a flawed fiscal year 2013 school department budget and a financial crisis (see Finance and Asset Management section below).

Impact: When school committees do not fulfill their roles and responsibilities, for instance

- making certain that adequate resources are available to provide a quality education for all students in the district; and

- hiring and holding accountable the superintendent for performing such duties as

  o implementing all federal and state educational mandates and school committee policies,

  o preparing an annual proposed school department budget,

  o appointing administrators,

  o employing certified teachers and support staff, and

  o overseeing the daily operation of the school system,

they jeopardize the functioning of a school system.

6. **Since 2006-2007, the frequent changes of central office and school level administrators have meant the disruption of leadership at the district and school levels and an absence of continuity and consistency in the school system.**

   A. Since 2006-2007, several turnovers have taken place in each of the central office administrator positions.

1. Two individuals have held the position of superintendent of schools, another has served as an acting superintendent, and still another person was scheduled to serve as interim superintendent as of July 1, 2013.

2. Since 2006, the district has had a business manager, then an acting business manager (as of January 2013), and a new business manager to begin as of July 1, 2013.

3. One person held the position of curriculum coordinator until the position was eliminated in June of 2011. At the start of the 2012-2013 school year, a position of director of teaching and learning was established to oversee curriculum and was filled by an administrator promoted in the district. However, on June 11, 2013, the school committee voted to eliminate this position.

4. Over this time period, three people have served as the director of pupil services.

B. Several changes in administrative personnel have also taken place in each of the schools since 2006-2007.

1. At David Prouty High School, there have been three different principals and two different assistant principals since 2006-2007.

2. The Knox Trail Junior High School has had three individuals serve as principal since 2006-2007. From 2006 through the end of the 2012 school year, two individuals held the position of assistant principal. For 2012-2013, the title of the position was changed to dean of students and a new person was serving in this role.

3. During these years, the Maple Street School had one person who was a half-time principal from 2006-2007 through 2008-2009, was a full-time principal through 2011-2012, and was serving at the time of the review as half-time principal at both the Maple Street and Lake Street elementary schools.

4. The Lake Street Elementary School has had two individuals who have held the position as principal (one full time and most recently, another half-time).

5. At the Wire Village Elementary School there have been three different principals over this time period. Also, the school had a position of assistant principal in 2006-2008, after which time it was eliminated. For 2012-2013, a position of dean of students was established and was held by a new person.

6. Since 2006-2007, three individuals have served as principal of the East Brookfield Elementary School.

C. Interviewees expressed concern about the number of administrator turnovers in the school system.

1. Administrators, teachers, and parents told review team members that

   a. the "leadership is dysfunctional, we do not feel strong";

   b. there was "no cohesiveness"; and

   c. "we are not working together as a whole team."

   They also said that there was

d. "inconsistency and no focus,"

e. that "we all want the same thing," and

f. that "we just want some leadership."

2. Interviewees told the team that many initiatives were started but never finished.

Impact: The number of changes in administrative personnel at the central office and at each school is an issue with both school employees and the parents of the students. These administrative turnovers have meant that

- the school system does not have a vision/direction,

- the schools work independently rather than as a team,

- there is little consistency and continuity of programs and services among the schools, and

- various initiatives are begun by one administrator and not completed because of the arrival of a new administrator.

7. **The school system did not have a District Improvement Plan (DIP) for 2012-2013 with SMART goals and a template for identifying how the action steps for the SMART goals would be achieved. Although each school had an improvement plan for 2012-2013 and principals used a common template for their 2012-2013 SIPs,   the goals in the SIPs were not SMART goals and the template was missing some important components . The district did have a Vision 2015 Strategic Plan prepared by the previous superintendent.**

A. The district does not have an improvement plan for 2012-2013.

1. The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District did not provide the review team with a District Improvement Plan (DIP) for 2012-2013 nor was one available on the district website.

2. During an interview with the acting superintendent, she said that the district did not have a DIP or goals.

3. Principals told the review team that the district did not have a DIP.

4. On the last day of the site visit the director of pupil services gave a review team member a copy of a document entitled "Accelerated Improvement Plan" that she said that she was "working on" with District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) support. However, during the various leadership and governance interviews when questions were posed about improvement plans, district and school level administrators did not mention this plan.

B. The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Vision 2015 Strategic Plan has 6 goals accompanied by 4 to 11 Action Steps.

1. The goals in the Vision 2015 Strategic Plan are not SMART goals (Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action-Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-focused, and Timed and Tracked). For example, Goal 5 reads, "To provide comprehensive professional development."

2. The strategic plan is not written on a template that identifies how the action steps will be accomplished, what funds are needed to accomplish them, what measure(s) will be used to determine if they are accomplished, who is responsible, and what the deadlines are for accomplishing the action steps.

3. When the review team posed questions to interviewees about whether the district had a vision statement and a District Improvement Plan, the Vision 2015 Strategic Plan was not mentioned. To the contrary, the interviewees expressed the need for a vision for the district and a DIP.

C. Each school had an improvement plan for 2012-2013.

1. All the 2012-2013 SIPs in the district had the same template. The components include (a) Background, (b) Mystery, (c) Dream, (d) Relevance, (e) Actions, (f) Learning, (g) Evidence, (h) Intended Results, and (i) Resources.

2. The 2012-2013 SIP Dream for the Knox Trail Junior High School was "To foster a culture, respect, and community for all faculty, staff, and students. Targeted instruction in all disciplines will increase MCAS scores." This Dream (goal) was not a SMART goal and, as the district did not have a DIP, was not aligned to any DIP goal.

Impact: Without a DIP with SMART goals and SIPs with SMART goals aligned to those in the DIP, administrators, teachers, parents, town officials, and residents in the district's two communities do not know the direction in which the district schools are heading or the plans for achieving their goals. Because the district does not have a DIP, the schools are each working independently rather than working together as one school system.

Curriculum and Instruction

8. **The district does not have a system in place that ensures the timely review and revision of curriculum to guarantee that updated and comprehensive curricula will be implemented in all classrooms.**

A. There is no dedicated districtwide position responsible for curriculum oversight.

1. The existence of a districtwide curriculum support position has been intermittent since 2011.

a. District administrators said that there has been an absence of coordination and communication for many years.

b. In June 2011, the previous curriculum coordinator left the district; the position remained unfilled during the 2011-2012 school year.

c. The curriculum coordinator position, renamed director of teaching and learning, was returned to the operating budget for the 2012-2013 school year.

d. In December 2012, the new director of teaching and learning became the acting superintendent of schools; districtwide oversight of curriculum and instruction was not reassigned.

e. At the June 11, 2013, school committee meeting, the director of teaching and learning position was officially eliminated as of July 1, 2013.

2. The role of curriculum coordination at the school and district level has been assumed by other administrators and teacher leaders.

a. The director of pupil services serves as the district liaison to the Central District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) and wrote DSAC grants for assistance with curriculum alignment in the district, primarily for grade 4.

b. At the K-8 level, principals are responsible for curriculum coordination and review and rely heavily on DSAC efforts to align curricula to the state frameworks. This assistance varies by school and level.

c. The dean of students at the junior high school formally supports mathematics curriculum coordination and an ELA teacher informally helps coordinate the English Language Arts curricula.

d. The high school principal said that the three department heads are responsible for curriculum coordination, development, and revisions for grades 9-12.

B. The district does not have a documented and shared process for curriculum development and continuous review.

1. The district does not have a formal process for curriculum review or for curriculum accommodation.

a. A review of documents showed that the district does not have a curriculum accommodation plan to accommodate and maximize student learning and achievement through professional development, instructional support systems, direct and systematic instruction in Reading/ELA, and the review of academic schedules.

b. Administrators said they were in the beginning stages of developing systems for curriculum review through Central DSAC and school efforts but that the process was disjointed and informal and the district did not have a curriculum review process in place.

c. Opportunities for teachers to discuss curriculum are limited by the limited amount of common planning time in many schools.

2. Efforts to review and develop curricula and instructional materials are sporadic and rooted in necessity.

   a. Without a curriculum review cycle or process, the district initiates curriculum development and revision based upon ESE's adoption of new curriculum frameworks.

   b. Level 3 status and MCAS data also drive curriculum development and revision in the district.

   c. Principals and teachers said that instructional materials were not periodically reviewed or updated.

3. K-12 curriculum documents aligned with the current state frameworks in English Language Arts and Literacy and Mathematics were not provided to the review team before or during the onsite visit. The team learned that efforts are a work in progress and vary across the district.

   a. Initial efforts have begun in English Language Arts for grades 4-6 and additional work is planned during the 2013-2014 school year in these grades under the direction of the Central DSAC.

   b. East Brookfield Elementary school was not included in the grade 4-6 ELA curriculum alignment because it is not a Title I school.

   c. While the junior high school is not designated Title I, the principal said that she was able to get her teachers into the summer DSAC curriculum workshops and that efforts have begun at that level.

   d. The high school principal said that the mathematics curriculum has been aligned with the 2011 mathematics framework. In addition, the grade 9 ELA curriculum alignment is complete.

   e. Efforts have not begun at the secondary level to align grade 6-12 content and technical subject curricula with the 2011 ELA Literacy Standards for the content and technical subject areas.

   f. While alignment work has been initiated at the elementary level, administrators and teachers strongly expressed a need for both horizontal and vertical alignment of curricula and instructional expectations.

   g. The review team was provided onsite with a *Suggested Pacing for ELA Framework, Grades 4-6* document, which identified grade level responsibility for each ELA standard by semester.

Impact: Without a clearly documented and articulated process for curriculum development and review, including opportunity for vertical and horizontal collaboration at each level, and a district position with overall responsibility for curriculum oversight, the district cannot ensure that curriculum content and implementation are viable for all students or that all students have access to the full curriculum.

9. **The district does not have a research-based instructional model, and administrators and teachers do not share a common understanding of the district's expectations for effective instruction.**

   A. The district has not consistently articulated its expectations for high quality and tiered instruction at all levels.

1. Teachers and administrators said that in recent years they had experienced the initiation of several instructional models that had not been sustained or supported because of changing leadership.

2. Principals said that they routinely identified the instructional focus for their school without guidance from the central office or a District Improvement Plan.

3. The district does not have a consistent and structured formative process used by all schools to monitor instructional quality. Interviewees said that all principals were conducting learning walkthroughs although they might do them in different ways.

4. Principals and district leaders said that learning walkthrough training had been provided through the DSAC. One principal said that the learning walkthrough training at one school focused on student engagement and that teachers participated.

5. Principals told the review team that teachers have not been provided with professional development around effective instructional practices.

6. In interviews some teachers seemed to consider the district evaluation tool as the district instructional model.

7. Administrators said that some teachers have been reluctant to change their instruction to reflect best practice, and principals expressed the opinion that their initiatives were not supported by the central office.

B. While the district has expended time and resources for professional development in differentiation of instruction, evidence of implementation was largely noted in schools' RTI/Tier 2 programs rather than in Tier 1 general classroom instructional strategies.

1. When administrators were asked for examples of differentiation of instruction in the district, reference was made to special education support programs.

2. Principals and other administrators said that all teachers did not participate in the differentiated instruction professional development and that practice was not consistent at all schools.

C. Administrators and parents said that outside of AP classes there were few accelerated programs or opportunities for gifted students in the district.

1. Interviewees mentioned online classes and a high school partnership and dual enrollment at Worcester State College.

D. Current instructional technology resources are outdated or limited and do not effectively support research-based instruction or the implementation of curriculum learning expectations.

1. The technology director position was eliminated, and a document review showed that the district did not have a plan for reviewing and updating the technology needs of the district.

2. Teachers and administrators said that technology was "sparsely" integrated into curriculum because of limited or outdated resources and that some technology access had been eliminated.

3. K-12 parents in a focus group said that the technology across the district needed upgrading and improving for both student learning and parent access to Power School.

4. Of the 28 observed classrooms, only 23 percent of elementary, 50 percent of junior high, and 25 percent of high school lessons used technology to enhance learning. Students used technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding in 23 percent of elementary, 50 percent of junior high, and 33 percent of high school classrooms.

Impact: The absence of a shared instructional model for teaching and learning and of professional development around effective instructional practices has resulted in an absence of clarity about best teaching practices among administrators and teachers. Without an instructional model and support of instruction, the district cannot ensure that students consistently have access to good instruction that meets their diverse learning needs and optimizes their potential. Additionally, teachers do not have access to targeted professional development for continuous growth.

10. **The quality of instruction in 28 observed classrooms was inconsistent and observed instruction was missing important research-based good practices.** (Please see Instructional Inventory results in Appendix C.)

   The team observed 28 classes throughout the district: 9 at the high school, 6 at the middle school, and 13 at 3 of the 4 elementary schools. The team did not observe classrooms at the Maple Street School (PK-K). The team observed 6 ELA classes, 13 mathematics classes, and 9 science classes. Among the classes observed were 5 special education classes and 1 ELL class. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members 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. Observed instructional practices do not consistently reflect elements of an optimal learning environment.

   1. Of classrooms observed, 85 percent of elementary lessons reflected clear and consistent evidence of rigor and high expectations; only 50 percent of junior high, and 44 percent of high school lessons demonstrated clear and consistent evidence of rigor and high expectations.

   2. While 100 percent of observed elementary and junior high classrooms clearly and consistently demonstrated rituals, routines, and appropriate interactions that create a safe intellectual environment where students take academic risks and most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented, 67 percent of observed high school classrooms clearly and consistently reflected this practice.

   3. Exactly 38 percent of elementary, 67 percent of junior high, and 22 percent of observed high school classrooms clearly and consistently provided students with multiple resources to meet their diverse learning needs.

B. Observed instructional practices were inconsistent across grade levels and, in general, did not strongly reflect elements of good instructional design or promote higher-order thinking.

1. In 39 percent of all observed classrooms team members did not see evidence of posted or shared learning objectives aligned to state standards. This practice was observed clearly and consistently in 69 percent of elementary, 50 percent of middle school, and 22 percent of high school lessons.

2. In observed high school classrooms, 22 percent of lessons clearly and consistently reflected appropriate and varied strategies matched to learning objectives and content.

3. Both elementary and junior high school lessons (77 percent and 83 percent, respectively) clearly and consistently showed high levels of students engaging in inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation of concepts to demonstrate higher-order thinking.

4. Lessons observed in elementary classrooms reflected the most clear and consistent use of varied questioning techniques that require or seek thoughtful responses and promote deeper understanding; incidence of these techniques decreased by level.

5. There was little evidence of teachers at any level employing varied strategies to meet students' diverse learning needs; this was particularly true at the elementary and high school levels.

6. Clear and consistent evidence of teachers' use of formative assessment to check for student understanding and inform instruction ranged from 38 percent at the elementary level to 50 percent at the junior high school.

C. Observed instructional practices did not consistently challenge students, provide them opportunities to articulate and expand upon their thinking, or make connections across disciplines and to real world experiences.

1. In 85 percent of elementary lessons there was clear and consistent evidence of students engaged in productive learning routines and challenging academic tasks.

2. There was clear and consistent evidence of students articulating their thinking in 62 percent of elementary, 33 percent of junior high, and 11 percent of high school classrooms. Overall, 39 percent of all observed classrooms districtwide clearly and consistently reflected this characteristic.

3. Students clearly and consistently made connections to prior knowledge, real world experiences and other subject matter in 54 percent of all observed classrooms.

4. Clear and consistent evidence of student work that demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars was observed in 18 percent of observed classrooms districtwide.

Impact: The absence of a clear model of good instruction and its articulation and supervision in schools and classrooms has produced inconsistent instructional practice. The incidence of practices that meet students' diverse learning needs and promote high student expectations and high-order thinking varied in observed classrooms.

Assessment

11. **There is not a consistent, districtwide structure for the collection and analysis of data and its dissemination to teachers. Some tools are in place for analysis of learning at the classroom level, and administrators individually use tools from Edwin Analytics to ascertain the status of learning of groups in their schools, but there is not a coordinated protocol for managing that information districtwide.**

   A. Administrators and teachers reported inconsistent and divergent approaches in schools to data analysis and use, ranging from weekly meetings and consistent use to less consistent approaches.

      1. Administrators at the Maple Street School initiated a "data wall" that was designed to provide data for discussion within teacher groups. It ultimately improved student grouping based on data analysis.

      2. Administrators at the East Brookfield School did not report much in the way of data analysis, reflecting the absence of a district initiative for this year. In response to the question about data use, administrators from East Brookfield responded that there was "not much" consistent use of assessment information by teachers.

      3. Knox Trail school administrators use data for placement and scheduling purposes, but not for instructional modifications.

      4. Maple and Lake Street Schools staff said that they have access to MCAS data and "use it selectively" to improve student achievement.

      5. High school teachers said in a focus group interview that a formal data structure was not in place.

   B. Schools within the district all spoke of their "data teams." Little evidence was found, however, of the effective use districtwide of disaggregated data use to improve instructional practices or modify program use and resource procurement. In several interviews, some principals and central office administrators said that the district did not have a data team.

      1. Several schools reported having a "data team." The term appears to be used in a general sense, describing groups of teachers and other staff members informally meeting on an irregular schedule to look over available data. In one interview, interviewees described a district data team that existed several years previously, but which ended abruptly when the staff member who served as its organizing force was laid off for budgetary reasons.

      2. While the high school reported having a data team, in a focus group teachers said that data was not provided formally. ESE data was sent to teachers.

   C. Administrators at the high school said that administration of the MAP assessment system was discontinued. According to administrators, technological support was inadequate and the quality of the information gained did not justify the investment of technology resources available.

1. Interviewees at the high school reported that there were some common assessments in place, and that the Accuplacer assessment was administered to students in grades 11 and 12. Accuplacer is a suite of tests that determines student strengths and weaknesses in math, reading, and writing commonly used for course placement.

Impact: Without a districtwide assessment system, the district is a collection of schools doing different things in assessment and achieving different results depending on the year, the discipline, the administrator, the teacher, and the circumstances. Such an approach is effective at some schools; ineffective and inefficient at others. The opportunity for effective management is compromised and diminished.

12. **The district does not have a comprehensive set of formative assessments or a system in place to monitor formative assessments and ensure that the most effective instructional techniques are being employed and that progress in learning is consistent.**

    A. The curriculum is not in place at a level where benchmarks are in regular use to monitor student progress.

        1. Although there were some references to curriculum documents during the onsite visit, curriculum documents were not provided to the review team.

            a. At one interview, the acting superintendent told the review team that there were curriculum documents in existence, but they were at least six years old. Such documents would not be aligned with the 2011 curriculum frameworks.

    B. Elementary teachers said that they administered MAP assessments three times per year, and had access to that data, as well as to DIBELS and Lexia data. In answer to a question about conducting benchmark testing to track student performance they credited "some places" where it was going on using DIBELS and MAP.

    C. Junior high school teachers told review team members during their focus group that benchmarks and formative assessments were not in use at their school.

    D. Administrators at the high school said that administration of the MAP assessment system was discontinued. According to administrators, technological support was inadequate and the quality of the information gained did not justify the investment of technology resources available.

        1. Interviewees at the high school reported that there were some common assessments in place and described an initiative to develop a set of common assessments. They said that the Accuplacer assessment was administered to students in grades 11 and 12. Accuplacer is a suite of tests that determines student strengths and weaknesses in math, reading, and writing, commonly used for course placement.

    E. High school teachers identified students using Study Island and Plato as effective tools. They did not indicate that they were able to use the results effectively, however.

Impact: Without benchmarks or formalized formative assessments, teachers at the junior high and high school are forced to wait until the next MCAS administration, a year away, to determine student progress. Even teachers at the

elementary level, where some formative and benchmark assessments are in place, are hindered in their capacity to modify their instruction to improve student achievement by the absence of a districtwide system of formative and benchmark assessments.

Human Resources and Professional Development

13. **The district did not implement the new educator evaluation system in 2012-2013 as required for Race to the Top participants, although some teacher and administrator training had taken place at the time of the review.**

    A. The district participates in the Race to the Top grant program and was required under 603 CMR 35. 11(1) to fully implement the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's new educator evaluation system in 2012-2013.

        1. District and school leaders, teachers, and teachers' association representatives said in multiple interviews that the new educator evaluation system had not been implemented and a memorandum of understanding on the terms of the new educator evaluation system had not been bargained.

        2. On April 30, 2013, the school committee voted unanimously to accept the 2012-2014 Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School Teachers' Association Contract subject to ratification by the teachers' association. A review of the new collective bargaining agreement showed that it will continue in effect until August 31, 2014.

        3. A review of the new collective bargaining agreement showed that it does not include the new educator evaluation system.

        4. One principal said that some teachers had conducted self-evaluations as part of the prior evaluation system, but that the district had not done anything under the new evaluation system. This information was confirmed during the review of teacher personnel files. Some SMART goals (Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action-Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-focused, and Timed and Tracked) attributed to the former superintendent were observed on the district website, but their context was unclear, and other staff had not developed SMART goals.

        5. In anticipation of implementing the new educator evaluation system, the district planned to use TeachPoint software, and had purchased IPads for evaluators as tools to collect educator evaluation information, according to district and school leaders. A principal provided the evaluation forms included on TeachPoint, but they were not in use in the district and were not observed during a review of teacher personnel files. A review of administrator personnel files showed that the former superintendent used the new administrator evaluation tool to evaluate three administrators and rated the administrators exemplary in every standard.

        6. A teachers' association representative said that administrators received the required educator evaluation system training. The team confirmed this information through a review of an educator evaluation team training participant list, which included all administrators and school building teachers' association representatives. This training was held in Auburn, Rockland, and Spencer, Massachusetts, during September-December 2012.

B. The district for the most part adhered to the educator evaluation system in place before the state mandated a new system.

1. The team reviewed evaluations from the files of 31 teachers with and without professional status. For the most part, teacher evaluations were timely, signed, effective and instructive. Two files did not contain evaluations.

2. The team reviewed the personnel files of six administrators to determine whether they had been evaluated by the superintendent or school committee and whether the evaluations were timely, signed, effective, instructive, and aligned with the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership.[20] The school committee did not evaluate the former superintendent. As mentioned earlier, the former superintendent used the new administrator evaluation tool to evaluate three administrators (and rated every standard exemplary). Another superintendent wrote a general summary evaluation somewhat aligned to the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership. One file did not include any evaluations.

3. A review of 2012 TELL Mass data showed that approximately 90 percent of the teachers who responded said that evaluations were consistent and that they were held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.

4. A principal told the team that the existing evaluation system was not authentic because evaluation needs to be an ongoing process and not done year to year.

5. All teachers and administrator files reviewed included documentation of appropriate licensure for the position held or subject taught.

Impact: Without a well-organized and consistent educator evaluation system, professional growth and accountability, the ability of principals to monitor instructional quality, and the district's capacity to improve student achievement are all limited.

14. The district does not have an organized and well-funded K-12 professional development plan informed by student or teacher needs, achievement data, or the evaluations of teachers. Some professional development has taken place across the district, but it was uncoordinated and not aligned to, or developed as part of, any district or school plan to improve teaching and learning.

A. The acting superintendent and the director of pupil services said that they shared responsibility for professional development. Both confirmed that the district did not have an organized plan for professional development.

1. The team located on the district's website a document authored by the former superintendent and entitled: *Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District Professional Development Plan 2012-2013 DRAFT.* The acting superintendent and the director of pupil services said that this document was not an operational document in the district.

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[20] The Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership accompanied the regulations on evaluation of teachers and administrators (at 603 CMR 35.00) that governed educator evaluation before the changes mandated by amendment of the regulations on June 28, 2011.

2. The recently agreed-to collective bargaining agreement, in Article X, includes an agreement to form a professional development committee including representative teachers to plan professional development for all teaching staff..

3. The new collective bargaining agreement, like the old one, provides for teachers to be provided five days of professional development, but only one day is mandatory, and any professional development days beyond that one day must be agreed to by the teachers' association. Other days are voluntary and teachers may or may not be paid. See Article III of the new agreement.4.Only 16percent of teachers who responded to the 2012 TELL Mass survey believed that enough time was provided for professional development, according to a review of the survey data.

5. Representatives from the teachers' association said that in 2012-2013 teachers had one full day of professional development and one half-day. They said that in 2011-2012 teachers did not have half-day professional development activities. One principal said that half-days were not used effectively.

6. District leaders told the team that RTI was a major program implemented during 2013 and all staff had been trained. The district provided the team with a document entitled Professional Development Activities 2012-2013, which confirmed that nine professional development sessions were held on RTI, including RTI implementation sessions at all schools.

7. Annual funding for professional development ranged between $52,000 and $61,000 over the 4 years from fiscal year 2009 to fiscal year 2012. Tuition reimbursement is contractually available to teachers and administrators, and a review of personnel files and information provided by teachers showed that teachers can attend professional development conferences.

8. According to a review of 2012 TELL Mass data, approximately 18 percent of teachers who responded indicated that professional development is evaluated and results communicated to teachers.

9. District leaders said that the impact of RTI professional development, a major professional development initiative in 2011-2012, was not monitored.

10. Examples of other professional development offerings include K-8 curriculum alignment training by the DSAC, educator evaluation system training for administration and association leaders, PBIS training, and training on special education laws and regulations. Bullying training was provided to students, principals, directors, and parents.

11. Principals said that teachers have not received professional development in instructional practices.

B. Common planning time is limited at most schools.

1. Principals said that two elementary schools did not have common planning time. Another elementary school reported that some common planning took place on Fridays when students were in gym.

2. The junior high school said that common planning was limited to weekly team meetings.

3. The high school said that time was available for planning because of block scheduling, but it was individual teacher prep time.

4. According to the 2012 TELL Mass Survey, 69 percent of the teachers who responded said that they did not have time to collaborate with colleagues.

Impact: Without a collaboratively developed, sustained, and well-funded system of professional development, professional growth and accountability of staff are compromised and the ability of teachers to improve student achievement is hindered. The insufficient availability of organized common planning time makes the implementation of job embedded professional development difficult, as well as targeted instructional planning among teachers.

Student Support

15. **The Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District is developing a tiered system of support, but efforts are inconsistent and vary from school to school.**

   A. The district has a process in place that could provide a system for referring and monitoring students who are struggling either academically or socially/emotionally, but meetings are not consistent or uniform across the district.

      1. Interviewees said that in every school there are Student Concerns meetings in which principals, guidance, general and special educators, and the nurse discuss student academic and behavioral concerns. The purpose of these meetings is to strategize and identify interventions. Interviewees also said that the regularity of the meetings has decreased.

      2. Documents provided by the district indicated that Student Concerns meetings are held weekly at the Maple Street School, monthly at the Lake Street School, and monthly at the high school.

      3. The Knox Trail Junior High School's 2012-2013 School Improvement Plan (SIP) lists Student Concerns meetings as a resource. Interviewees said that they had these meetings "before all the cuts," noting, "We have things and they're used, but not as much as they should be" and "Lots of students are falling through the cracks."

   B. Programs and practices that provide students with support and interventions for academic and social/emotional needs vary from school to school.

      1. Teachers and an administrator said that Wire Village has a Tier 2 intervention, the Student Success Center, where 5th and 6th grade students identified from MCAS and MAP results as "at risk," can "cycle through" during their social studies block and receive support for reading or mathematics.

      2. A review of the Wire Village SIP showed that Wire Village has a grade 4 math intervention called MATH STARS that has been in operation for three years. MATH STARS students are assessed every six weeks. It was reported during an assessment interview that MATH STARS has worked well and that teachers have seen improvements.

3. Interviewees said that at Lake Street Elementary School literacy intervention blocks used by the whole school provide students with fluid groups to address needs. Groups range from remedial to groups for gifted students; they change every six weeks.

4. The East Brookfield SIP describes a school without Title I support, with increasing numbers of high-needs students and declining MCAS achievement. Among the resources needed, the SIP listed intervention programs and Title I.

5. Knox Trail Junior High has a new Tier 2 program that started in 2012-2013. It has the capacity to serve regular education students and students with disabilities but currently serves only two students with disabilities. Interviewees said that there has not been additional support for Knox Trail since it was identified as a Level 3 school.

6. Teachers and an administrator said that Prouty High School has a Tier 2 before-school program that offers support for struggling students. Although some students are strongly encouraged to attend, the program is voluntary.

7. Interviewees also said that the district had an MCAS summer school program for junior high and high school students including 1.5 weeks of ELA and 1.5 weeks of mathematics. However, summer school support is not districtwide. And the only after-school service for elementary students is a fee-based program that offers some homework help. Lake Street had an after-school program but no longer.

8. Administrators said that district efforts to institute Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) have come to an end. A PBIS program was launched as a new pilot at the Lake Street School in 2012-2013, but in December 2012 everyone "went into crisis mode," and two key positions were lost (a therapeutic interventionist and a .5 psychologist). Now teachers are choosing whether or not to use the program on their own.

9. It was also reported that Wire Village Elementary School had a Positive Behavior Intervention Strategy (PBIS) program in 2011-2012, but that it, like many district initiatives begun during the past few years, "went away."

10. The review team examined documents about the Knox Trail Junior High school Behavior Monitoring System, which includes a six-tier intervention protocol for addressing concerns about students. Tier I is teacher generated (re-direction, alternative seating, lunch detention and/or incentives); Tier 2 is a detention slip; Tier 3 is a referral slip (for meeting with administrator and parent); Tier 4 engages a team of teachers in creating an action sheet; Tier 5 is a weekly progress report; and Tier 6 is a daily point sheet.

C. The district offers limited opportunities for students ready for accelerated work.

1. When teachers and an administrator were asked about accelerated learning opportunities beyond Advanced Placement classes at the high school, the team was told that the elementary and junior high school levels did not offer anything "official."

2. One administrator said, "Rigor is something we are working on"; another said, "There is nothing in this district for high ability kids, except in kindergarten; we are teaching to the middle."

3. Parents, confirming the need for accelerated work, said "Programs for the gifted are not here." One parent said, "I know that money is a problem, but it would be nice if there were things here to engage the kids."

Impact: That school-based programs and practices operate without clear direction from the district means uneven support for students, making it more difficult for the district and its schools to improve student well-being and student achievement.

16. **Although it uses Power School and has parent-teacher organizations at some of the schools, the district has not yet developed an effective system of communication between schools and families, and parent engagement with the schools is not strong enough to assist in improving student achievement.**

    A. A review of documents showed that there was awareness in the district of the need for improved communication between schools and families.

       1. The first item under Actions in the David Prouty High School 2012-2013 School Improvement Plan (SIP) reads: "Increase school to home collaboration between teachers, coaches, staff, and administration."

       2. An item in the Maple Street 2012-2013 SIP poses the question: "How can we reach preschool and kindergarten families and help them provide activities at home that will promote kindergarten readiness?"

    B. School council members seem to have limited input in school improvement efforts.

       1. When school council members were asked whether they had been involved in developing School Improvement Plans, they said that mostly they have had things presented to them to discuss, noting that a copy of the School Improvement Plan was provided "only if you attended the meeting."

       2. Administrators said that the school council meets twice a year.

       3. One administrator indicated that the school council was not taken seriously.

    C. Interviews indicated that there were issues with the district's support and engagement of parents, the timeliness of student data in the district's data management system, and the usefulness of that system.

       1. When parents were asked how the district communicates, they said that the district does a "step-up day" for students and an orientation for parents but "does not really address important issues."

       2. Newsletters are emailed to the parents of high school students, according to interviewees.

       3. Parents for the most part praised the accessibility of teachers but said that some principals needed to be more responsive to parents.

       4. Several administrators said that parent communication was "common." One noted that communication was important but said "We don't have enough to share with parents." Another said that if the administrators did not have support, they "could not help teachers and parents feel supported."

5. Parents agreed that they had to be proactive in their communication with the schools. One parent told the review team "If you don't ask, they don't tell you."

6. One parent said that sometimes information about student progress and grades on Power School, the district's data management system, is not up to date; another told the review team that Power School is "not dependable." An administrator characterized the technology as "terrible."

7. One administrator said that "there doesn't seem to be enough parent involvement."

Impact: Without fully functioning school councils and consistent, regular communication between schools and families, parents are not sufficiently engaged, likely do not have complete confidence in the district's ability to meet their children's needs, and are not working with the schools to improve student achievement.

Finance and Asset Management

17. **The fiscal year 2013 budget presented by the former superintendent was seriously flawed, and the school committee failed to exercise their oversight responsibilities sufficiently, resulting in a large deficit and financial crisis for the district which will effectively reduce the funds available for education in coming years.**

    A. The former superintendent put together the fiscal year 2013 budget document essentially on his own, and presented non-existent revenues to support proposed expenditures.

       1. He did not include principals or the business official in preparing the budget as had been done in the past.

       2. He dismissed the business manager at the beginning of the fiscal year and did not replace him.

       3. He did not provide reports to the school committee in the early months of the school year, citing an ongoing audit. Negative account balances were presented by the treasurer in the December expenditure report.

       4. The superintendent was let go on December 11, 2012, with final termination in February 2013. In addition to the budget and reporting issues cited above, allegations were made that he used high school student activities account funds for his travel reimbursement.

    B. The school committee allowed the budget to go forward in spite of warnings from staff and open conflict about its credibility. The school committee did not exercise oversight and did not discover budget irregularities that misrepresented revenue sources in the fiscal year 2013 budget.

       1. Fewer meetings of the school committee finance and facilities sub-committee were scheduled than in previous years. The school committee did not question the budget presented by the superintendent.

2. Less specific budget numbers were presented and at one meeting the school committee chairman publicly questioned accuracy of the budget, in part because of information from the business manager. The chair did not persuade town officials or school committee members that there were irregularities in the budget.

3. A budget presentation was not made by the superintendent or school committee members at the public hearing and town meeting. The annual town meeting passed the budget.

4. Further information about irregularities was later given to the school committee chair by a business office employee. The chair did not present this information to the committee for fear of reprisal by the superintendent against the employee. He requested monthly expenditure reports, which were provided with encumbrances omitted.

C. By December 2012 the budget deficit was presented by the treasurer and was no longer deniable, and amounted to about $2 million against total expenditures of about $27 million. Immediate budget cuts caused disarray, and the district was forced to turn to the state to borrow funds which must be repaid in future budgets.

1. The district already spends less on in-district pupils than the median for districts of similar size. In fiscal year 2012, the district spent $11,681 per in-district pupil, compared with the median for similar size districts, $11,883. In fiscal year 2012, its actual net school spending was just 4.2 percent above required spending.

2. As stated in the strengths section above, in June 2013, special state legislation was enacted to allow the district to borrow up to $3 million from the state to close its fiscal year 2013 deficit (Chapter 24 of the Acts of 2013, *An Act relative to the financial condition of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District*). As a result of this legislation, the commissioner's role in the district's financial and budgetary management will increase, and the district will be required to hire a fiscal overseer.

D. The district's financial mismanagement has implications for the planning and implementation of its fiscal year 2014 budget as well. To date, the district has not passed a fiscal year 2014 budget that has been approved by both member towns. Under law, the commissioner establishes a 1/12 budget until such time as a budget is approved locally or December 1, whichever comes first. The interim monthly budget is to be one-twelfth of the regional school district's budget for the prior fiscal year or such higher amount as the commissioner may determine. Each member community within the district is ordered to appropriate and pay to the district such assessments as are calculated by the district treasurer for the support of this interim budget. If a local budget is not passed by December 1, the commissioner assumes fiscal control of the district. See Mass. Gen. Laws. c. 71, §16B, and 603 CMR 41.05.

1. Proposition 2 ½ overrides to support the district's budget have been attempted and failed in both towns, with the latest votes taking place September 10, 2013.

Impact: The new superintendent has to shoulder the burden of the financial deficit and the fractious relationships ensuing from the leadership crisis. The loan permitted by the state legislation has to be paid back, reducing funds available for education. Matters have been made more difficult by the district's inability to pass its fiscal year 2014

budget, which necessitates overrides in both towns. The state will continue to set a budget for the district until the budget is approved locally, reducing local financial autonomy.

Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Review

Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. **All school committee members should receive training (or retraining) to better understand their role and responsibilities. These include setting goals and policy – including guidelines for the budget – and working to ensure that necessary funds are appropriated for the district.**

   A. School committee members should participate in orientation sessions to become familiar with their role and responsibilities.

      1. All newly elected school committee members should participate in the mandated orientation workshop conducted by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). Previously untrained school committee members should also participate in this workshop.

      2. The school committee chair should meet with new members to review items such as school committee policies, collective bargaining agreements, agendas and back-up materials for meetings, rules and procedures for committee meetings, etc.

      3. The school committee should take steps to pursue governance support, for instance investigating possible participation in the District Governance Support Project (DGSP), a program jointly developed by MASC, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), and ESE. The topics covered by this program include operating protocols for effective boards, planning and goal-setting, community engagement, and collective bargaining. One of the purposes of the program is to assist school committee members to develop an understanding of the specific expectations for school committee members. The school committee might also investigate the possibility of support for governance for Spencer-East Brookfield from the MASC separate from the DGSP.

Benefits: Participation in professional development will help school committee members to better understand their role and fulfill their responsibilities to the young people in the school district. Participation will have a positive impact on the spirit and functioning of school committee meetings. Also, implementation of effective school committee practices can help to restore some of the faith and trust recently lost by the committee in both communities and among town officials.

2. **The school committee and the interim superintendent should examine and address the issue of the turnover of central office and school level administrators.**

   A. The school committee should examine the document *Changes in Spencer-East Brookfield Administrators 2006-Present* which was prepared by the acting superintendent during the site visit and was shared with the review team on June 11, 2013. It shows that almost every central office and school level administrator position had been held by three different individuals during this time period.

1. The interim superintendent and school committee should gather information from current and, if possible, past administrators about the key reasons they have chosen to stay in or leave the district. A follow-up report should be prepared to illustrate the reason(s) for the turnover of administrators in each of the positions. The school committee and the superintendent should use the report to explore ways to minimize the number of administrator turnovers in the school system.

2. The interim superintendent and school committee should also gather information about the key functions the district needs and the way in which existing administrator positions do or do not fulfill these functions. This should inform a proposal for meeting the administrative needs of both the central office and the schools. The proposal should include justification for any administrator position changes (additions, deletions, modifications), accompanied by new or revised job descriptions.

3. The new interim superintendent should take steps to provide support and effective feedback to all administrators in order to continually strengthen the district's leadership team.

Benefits: A stable administrative team, working with a shared vision and detailed improvement plans (see recommendation below), can provide the school system with leadership and consistency. Over time, this consistency should foster a culture within the district in which the schools work together as a system rather than independently.

3. **The interim superintendent should develop a vision for the future direction of the district and should oversee the collaborative development of a District Improvement Plan with SMART goals to achieve that vision. Similarly, the principals, with the assistance of their school councils, should develop School Improvement Plans with SMART goals that align with the goals in the District Improvement Plan.**

   A. The interim superintendent should develop a vision for the school district.

      1. A priority of the interim superintendent should be to develop a vision statement for the school system, with multiple opportunities for input from the leadership team and other stakeholders, including parents. This should be presented to the school committee for approval and then shared with all district employees and community members.

   B. Following the preparation of a vision statement, the interim superintendent should oversee the creation of a District Improvement Plan (DIP).

      1. The interim superintendent, working collaboratively with leadership personnel, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders, should prepare a DIP with SMART goals (S=Specific and Strategic, M=Measurable, A=Action-Oriented, R=Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused, and T=Timed and Tracked) and a template that includes categories such as action steps, resources required, person(s) responsible, means of measurement, and deadlines. This DIP should also be presented to and approved by the school committee, and then shared with everyone in the school system and in both communities.

         a. ESE's *Guiding Principles for Effective Benchmarks* document (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level4/AIP-GuidingPrinciples.pdf) provides information about different types of benchmarks to guide and measure district improvement efforts.

2. With the assistance of their school councils, the principals should prepare School Improvement Plans (SIPs) with SMART goals that are aligned with the DIP goals.

   a. The interim superintendent should ensure that all draft SIPs are rigorous, clear, and include all necessary elements, giving feedback to principals as needed. Once the SIPs are approved by the interim superintendent and presented to the school committee, the principals should share them with staff members, parents, and the community.

3. The interim superintendent and the principals should make periodic reports to the school committee and the community on progress being made toward the achievement of the goals in the DIP and the SIPs.

4. As part of the evaluation process, the superintendent might choose to include some goals from the DIP in the Superintendent's Annual Plan so that the school committee's annual evaluation of the superintendent reflects the extent of progress toward district goals. In a similar fashion, principals' school improvement goals might include SIP goals so that the superintendent's annual evaluation of principals reflects the extent of progress toward these goals.

Benefits: The development and sharing of a vision statement will communicate to every school employee and community member the direction in which the district is heading. In addition, the DIP and SIPs will identify the goals necessary to achieve the vision along with detailed plans to achieve each goal. Through periodic reporting on the DIP and SIP goals by the superintendent and principals respectively, stakeholders will know what progress is being made. Furthermore, if DIP and SIP goals are incorporated into the annual evaluations of the interim superintendent and the principals respectively, it will emphasize the importance of the DIP and SIPs and hold the administrators accountable for achieving the goals in the plans in order to attain the district's vision.

Curriculum and Instruction

4. The district should establish a multi-year collaborative process to ensure consistent and effective development, review, alignment, and delivery of curriculum. To do so, the district needs to have a districtwide leadership position with responsibility for the oversight of curriculum development and implementation.

   A. Such a districtwide leadership position is necessary to oversee and coordinate critical activities.

   1. Monitoring of depth, content currency and alignment to common core state standards is necessary to guarantee that all students have access to high quality curriculum.

      a. ESE's *Quality Review Rubrics* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/rubrics/) can support the analysis and improvement of curriculum units.

   2. Vertical and horizontal articulation of curriculum within and among schools is also essential. Consistency in curriculum implementation across all schools is an important responsibility of the person in this role. The

curriculum leader would guide and oversee curriculum development and implementation at the school and district levels.

3. The districtwide curriculum leader should ensure coordinated oversight of instructional practices, data analysis to inform district and school improvement, and the alignment of related professional development activities.

B. The district should develop a multi-year plan for curriculum review.

1. This plan should include analysis of MCAS and district assessment data, and should involve educators from different levels and areas of expertise. The establishment of a district data team could assist in the process of analyzing data to inform curriculum.

2. The plan should provide a timeline for when K-12 curricula in each discipline will be reviewed and updated. It should also identify the human and financial resources needed to support this work.

3. The district should develop practices to ensure that curriculum materials are regularly monitored for effectiveness. Practices might include conducting a systematic review of lesson plans and regular collaborative discussions of what materials work well and which materials need revision.

4. The district should continue its work with the Central DSAC Team to complete K-12 English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics curriculum revisions by 2014 so all students have access to a comprehensive and aligned curriculum.

    a. ESE's *Common Core State Standards Initiative* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/) includes links to implementation resources, model curriculum units, and information about transitioning to the 2011 frameworks.

    b. The *Resource Guide to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Students with Disabilities* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/alt/resources.html) might also be a useful resource for curriculum development.

    c. *How to Develop Curriculum Maps to Support a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum that Guides Instruction* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf) is a presentation that provides definitions and examples of curriculum maps and an overview of curriculum mapping.

    d. *Science and Technology/Engineering Strand Maps* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/maps/default.html) are resources to support the review of the Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Curriculum Framework. Science and Technology/Engineering Concept and Skill Progressions (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/ste/default.html) are articulations of possible ways for students to progress through levels of understanding of concepts. These resources might also help to inform the district's curriculum development.

Benefits to the Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District from implementing this recommendation will include dedicated and comprehensive curriculum leadership and oversight and a more effective and aligned system for

curriculum development, revision, and delivery. Curriculum will be more cohesive and functional, ensuring that all students have access to a full curriculum that meets their diverse learning needs. A workable cycle of curriculum improvement and renewal ensures that curricula are dynamic and will continuously evolve as frameworks are revised at the state level.

5. **In order to improve instruction and ultimately student achievement, it is recommended that the district identify and adopt an instructional model. Effective instruction can more universally take place by developing a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like, sharing these expectations with all stakeholders through professional discourse, and supervising practice, giving ongoing feedback.**

   A. The district's administrators should define what good instruction looks like in the district and commit to a sustained plan for introducing and supporting this instructional vision.

      1. The district has introduced some instructional models to teachers in the last few years, including Understanding by Design. There are other models in use at various other school districts in Massachusetts. Using research, teacher input, and other information, administrators should determine and make explicit the shared expectations for instruction throughout the district.

      2. The district should use grade level, team and department meetings, as well as district professional development days, to support teachers' and administrators' development of ideas and strategies from the adopted research-based instructional model. These same structures may also provide opportunities for educators to watch videos of effective teaching and discuss and calibrate their understanding of effective strategies.

      3. Strategies should be identified that will form every teacher's repertoire of instructional tools and become the district's "non-negotiables." Recommended required components include: communicating clear learning objectives for each lesson; differentiating to address students' learning styles and/or support learning needs; asking higher-order questions that require students to extend their thinking; and implementing frequent formative assessments to check for understanding.

         a. *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/mathclass_char.doc) and *An Effective Standards-Based Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/omste/news07/scitechclass_char.pdf) are references for mathematics and science and technology/engineering instructional planning and observation. They are intended to support activities that advance standards-based educational practice, including formal study, dialogue and discussion, classroom observations, and other activities.

   B. The administrative team is encouraged to develop a plan for phasing in components of the district's instructional model.

      1. New strategies should be identified for initial implementation, with other instructional components and strategies planned for implementation at appropriate intervals.

2. Teachers who struggle with the implementation of new strategies could be supported by identified peers or through embedded and/or external professional development.

3. Frequent observations (formal and informal) with timely, targeted feedback will be essential as teachers implement and extend new practices.

   a. The district should continue to work with the DSAC to develop a learning walkthrough process that can be used to observe and provide feedback on the implementation of teaching strategies learned through professional development.

   b. *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/04.0.pdf) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning. This resource might be a useful reference as the district identifies and provides feedback on specific instructional elements. It is part of ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/ImplementationGuide.pdf).

4. Discussions of exemplary teaching practice, including sharing generalized Information, trends, and impressions with teachers to improve teaching, could be scheduled during faculty meetings and other available time.

   a. ESE's *Professional Learning Communities Guidance* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/PLCguidance.pdf) and *Professional Learning Communities Stages at a Glance* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/PLCstages.pdf) are reference tools to frame the work of developing and strengthening instructional teams at the school level.

5. Regular and frequent common planning time should be made available for teachers to discuss and share best practice.

Benefits to the Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District from implementing this recommendation include clear expectations for what constitutes good teaching for both teachers and administrators. Effective teaching can empower students as learners, thinkers, and problem-solvers and can increase student achievement. Consistent instructional expectations allow educators to learn from one another and to continually improve instruction individually and collaboratively.

Assessment

6. **The district should build formal data teams at the school level and use representatives of each school data team to serve on a district data team.**

   A. The roles and responsibilities of each data team should be formalized and systematized.

   1. The district should consider leveraging the teachers and administrators who have demonstrated enthusiasm for the use of assessment data by including them in formal data teams.

2. Responsibility for the organization of the data teams should be assigned to one district-level administrator, and periodic updates on the organization of the teams and the results of their work should be shared with the superintendent, each school council, and the school committee.

   a. ESE's District and School Assistance Center is a valuable resource that can support the work of data teams.

   b. The *District Data Team Toolkit* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf) 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.

3. Once fully functioning, the data teams can evaluate program effectiveness and can identify ways to support teachers' use of data in the classroom. The data teams can also help schools to reflect on the effectiveness of school improvement plans, and can provide information to the school committee to better inform its budgeting, district policy analysis, and superintendent evaluation.

   a. Although the district already makes use of information gathered from the following links, their use by a trained, coordinated data team can yield more useful, actionable information for the district:

      1. The *District Analysis and Review Tool (DART)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/) is a tool that offers snapshots of district and school performance, allowing users to easily track select data elements over time, and make sound, meaningful comparisons to the state or to "comparable" organizations.

      2. *Edwin Analytics* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/) is a powerful reporting and data analysis tool that provides access to new information, reports and perspectives on education and programs that specifically support improvements in teaching and learning.

Benefits: While data analysis alone will not improve student achievement, it is the first step in informed decision-making at the district, school, and classroom levels. Well-structured, effective data teams can guide the evaluation of programs, support decisions related to resource allocation, and identify areas of strength and need. At the classroom level, data analysis can help teachers to identify effective instructional strategies, provide targeted interventions, and use time more efficiently.

7. **As a part of the curriculum development process described in recommendation number 4 above, the district should consider developing or adopting a set of benchmark assessments that are aligned with the curriculum and should support the implementation of frequent formative assessment practices.**

   A. Curriculum benchmarks are one facet of an effective, aligned curriculum. If curriculum benchmarks are in place, simple assessments can be used to gather information on which students have attained them and which have not. Benchmark assessments can also inform assignments of students to interventions and trigger additional student support mechanisms when required.

      1. Teachers of grade levels and subjects whose curriculum benchmarks are in place could revise regular classroom tests to reflect benchmark attainment. In combination with an effective Response to Intervention

model, this would allow students not attaining the benchmarks in a timely way to be more easily identified and referred to Student Concerns meetings or other support structures.

2. Teachers in each subject area can gauge the effectiveness of teaching strategies by interpreting the benchmark assessment data. This supports the modification and revision of instructional strategies based upon student performance.

B. Formative assessments are strategies that can be used on a more frequent basis to provide real-time information on concept attainment and instructional effectiveness. Combined with common benchmark assessments, formative assessments are a valuable tool for teachers in the classroom.

The **benefit** of implementing benchmark and formative assessments is the opportunity to rapidly identify students' specific strengths and needs. This can help to improve teaching, thereby increasing student learning.

Human Resources and Professional Development

8. **District and school leaders should urgently pursue agreement on educator evaluation contractual language and should ensure that the new educator evaluation system is fully implemented.**

A. Massachusetts regulations require all school districts to adopt new educator evaluation systems by the 2013-2014 school year and to implement the systems with at least 50 percent of educators in the district. Spencer-East Brookfield, as a participant in the Race to the Top program, was required to do so by 2012-2013. The district and teachers' association have not yet reached agreement on a new system, and the district has not yet initiated arbitration.

B. Negotiations should begin immediately with the teachers' association to amend the recently bargained CBA or develop a separate memorandum of understanding to provide for a new educator evaluation system that meets state requirements. As soon as language is agreed on it should be submitted to ESE.

1. *Building Trust and Collaboration through Effective Communications and Engagement* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/convening/2013spr-ReadingLessons.pdf) is a presentation developed and presented by the Reading Public School District that shares reflections about the initial planning and implementation of the new educator evaluation system. It might be useful to reference one district's "lessons learned" at this stage in the educator evaluation process.

C. The district should consider adopting the evaluation documents included with the TeachPoint software used by the district.

D. District and school leaders should create implementation protocols and calendars to plan and track the use of the evaluation system.

E. The district should ensure that all educators receive the necessary support to implement and benefit from the educator evaluation system.

1. All teachers and new administrators should complete the required educator evaluation system training.

2. All educators' SMART goals, including those of the interim superintendent and principals, should be aligned with the DIP and SIPs, as appropriate.

3. Professional development should be designed to support district, school, and teacher goals.

   a. *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation & Professional Development* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-ProfessionalDevelopment.pdf) is a resource that explains how educator evaluation and professional development can be mutually reinforcing systems that improve educator practice and student outcomes.

Benefits: A well-organized and consistent educator evaluation system that is aligned with DIP and SIP goals and well supported will improve professional growth and accountability, instructional quality, and student achievement.

9. **The district should plan a systematic approach to professional development that is aligned with the goals in the DIP and SIPs, is appropriately resourced, and addresses identified needs of students, teachers, and administrators.**

   A. The district should establish a professional development committee as required by the CBA to implement a collaborative professional development planning process. The committee should compile information from multiple sources to identify clear priorities for professional development.

   1. Data teams in each school should collect and analyze student performance and other data to inform professional development planning.

   2. All staff should be surveyed annually to determine professional development needs and priorities.

   B. The district should research additional methods of funding and/or providing professional development to supplement the limited funding in the budget.

   C. More time should be provided for professional development – including embedded professional development, such as professional learning communities – to ensure that educators are equipped to meet students' needs.

   1. To improve professional learning opportunities and develop a culture of collaboration, principals should research alternatives to current schedules in order to provide regular, frequent common planning time for teachers to collaborate; then the necessary steps should be taken to revise the schedules to provide this.

Benefits to the district from implementing a robust and aligned professional development program include improved teaching, which will ultimately lead to increased student achievement. Providing quality, useful professional development can also have a positive effect on hiring and staff turnover.

Student Support

10. **The Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District should strengthen its tiered system of support to ensure consistent practices across the district, and to meet the needs of all students, including those struggling and those ready for accelerated work.**

    A. The district should provide guidance and direction for the Student Concerns meetings in order to guarantee a common, reliable process for teachers to refer students and identify strategies to meet students' needs.

        1. Guidance may include a consistent scheduling framework, sample agenda templates, and administrator feedback.

        2. Guidance should include universal screening tools to ensure that all students with needs are identified using the same standards.

        3. The district should also require documentation of action steps, including periodic updates for each student referred.

    B. The district should identify existing tiered supports, and improve and/or add interventions as needed, in order to provide a coherent, consistent, effective tiered system of support.

        1. The district should document and categorize all existing tiered intervention opportunities that are intended to meet the range of needs in each school, including students who are struggling and those who are ready for accelerated work.

        2. The effectiveness of existing interventions should be analyzed, and programs should be improved and, if necessary, added, to ensure that the district is equipped to address all students' diverse needs.

        3. The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Self-Assessment* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/sa/) might be a useful resource as the district seeks to identify ways to strengthen its tiered system of support.

        4. The district should clearly communicate the key elements of its tiered system to all stakeholders to promote a shared understanding of the system and to ensure that programs and practices are consistent across schools and grade levels.

    C. The district should continue to focus its professional development on differentiating instruction to ensure the consistent delivery of core instruction that appropriately challenges all students.

Benefit: A carefully designed tiered system of student support will increase the likelihood that all students are provided with instruction and support that meet their needs and promote learning.

11. **The district should make meaningful parent engagement a key priority by continuing and expanding its inclusion a goal in district and school improvement plans and by establishing districtwide systems for two-way communication between schools and parents.**

    A. The district should ensure that school-level structures for parent involvement are established and sustained.

1. Membership on the school council should include the appropriate numbers of staff and parent members, and School council meetings should be held regularly. Effectively functioning school councils generally use one of two general strategies regarding frequency of meetings:

   a. Some meet on a regular monthly schedule.

   b. Others hold regular meetings at the beginning of the school year and then convene on an "as-needed" basis to ratify and bring closure on the recommendations of smaller subcommittees or working groups of the council.[21]

2. Minutes and membership should be posted and made public.

3. School council members should have meaningful input into the development of School Improvement Plans.

4. Parent teacher organizations should be supported in each school and should include at least one member who is on the school council.

B. The district should support systems for ongoing communication between parents and their children's teachers.

1. Parents should be regularly informed about their children's progress, either through Power School or another medium.

C. The district should provide multiple opportunities for parents to formally and informally communicate their concerns and commendations to the district. Examples of ways to gather parent input include morning coffees with the principal and/or superintendent and annual parent surveys.

D. The following resources are designed to help districts and schools to strengthen family engagement:

1. ESE's *Family and Community Engagement Standards* document (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/PCEIstandards.pdf) defines each of the six Family and Community Engagement Standards and includes a rubric for each. A related self-assessment (http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf) can help the district to determine priorities related to family engagement.

2. *Title I Family Engagement* materials (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/titlei/parta/family-engagement/?section=FE) include policies, toolkits, research, presentations, and other resources.

3. ESE's *Family and Community Involvement* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/FamComm/f_involvement.html) has links to several resources, including the *Guide to Parent, Family, and Community Involvement*.

Benefits: Parents who have meaningful opportunities for participation in school improvement efforts are more engaged with schools and have more confidence in the school's ability to meet their child's needs. Meaningful partnerships with parents will enable parents and schools to work together to maximize student achievement.

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[21] Suggested Practices in Implementing the Letter and the Spirit of the School Councils Law, http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/schoolcouncils/part3b.html. Meetings might also be bi-monthly.

Finance and Asset Management

12. The district should:

- **continue to develop and implement a plan to resolve its financial crisis;**

- **work toward passing its own budget for fiscal year 2015, as part of that plan; and**

- **work to build trust and improve relations among the district fiscal team, the school committee, and municipal leaders.**

A. The plan to resolve the district's financial crisis should include:

1. Continuing to work with the state-mandated fiscal overseer, and by extension, ESE.

2. Conducting a review of current financial management and oversight processes with the goal of revising district processes to align with best practices.

3. Providing district and municipal leadership with consistent, complete, and transparent financial reporting that helps leaders understand the current year fiscal situation and future year budget projections.

B. In fiscal year 2014, the district is operating under a state-set budget, determined by the ESE Commissioner. In implementing a plan to resolve its financial issues, it should work towards passing its own budget for fiscal year 2015.

1. This should include establishing a budget process that yields a complete and well-understood budget document.

2. If this plan includes exercising state granted borrowing authority, the district should ensure the timely repayment of any such borrowing.

C. The district's financial crisis has had a negative impact on relationships among its fiscal team (superintendent, business manager, treasurer, etc.), school committee, and municipal leaders. The district should work to build trust and improve relations among these parties. This may include:

1. Ensuring the district's fiscal team has the tools and support it needs to operate professionally and successfully.

2. Strengthening the school committee's fiscal expertise. The district could recruit community members with experience in financial management, budget development, and auditing/accounting practices to serve on a budget subcommittee or budget advisory committee.

3. Working closely with the school committee and municipal leaders to provide substantive financial information and answer questions as needed.

Benefits: Implementing these recommendations will allow district leaders to put the financial crisis behind them, put the district on a sound financial footing, and turn their focus back to Spencer-East Brookfield students' education.

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

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from June 10 through 12, 2013 by the following team of ESE staff members and independent consultants.

1. Dr. John Kulevich, leadership and governance

2. Michele Kingsland-Smith, curriculum and instruction

3. Dr. John Roper, assessment, review team coordinator

4. James Hearns, human resources and professional development

5. Lenora Jennings, student support

6. Dr. Wilfrid Savoie, 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 acting business manager, the district treasurer, one accounts-payable staff member.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the School Committee: chair, vice-chair, and four additional members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: president, secretary and treasurer.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: acting superintendent and director of student services.

The team visited the following schools: East Brookfield Elementary School (K-6), Lake Street School (grades 1 - 3), Wire Village School (grades 4-6), Knox Trail Junior High School (grades 7-8), and David Prouty High School (grades 9-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with principals (5) and focus groups with 13 elementary school teachers, 12 middle school teachers, and 4 high school teachers.

The team observed 28 classes during its three-day visit in the district: 9 at the high school, 6 at the middle school, and 13 at the 3 elementary schools.

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

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

o Data on the district's staffing and finances.

o Published educational reports on the district by ESE and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).

o District documents such as school improvement plans, school committee policies, summaries of student assessments, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports.

o All completed program and administrator evaluations, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 06/10/2013	Tuesday 06/11/2013	Wednesday 06/12/2013
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers' association; interviews with Spencer municipal officials; and visits to David Prouty High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; and visits to Knox Trail JHS, Wire Village, Lake Street, East Brookfield Elementary Schools and David Prouty High School for classroom observations; school committee focus groups; and interviews with East Brookfield municipal officials.	Interviews with school leaders; interviews with 13 parents; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Expenditures, Performance

Table B1a: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD

2012-2013 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
Asian	17	0.9%	56,517	5.9%
Afr. Amer./Black	18	0.9%	81,806	8.6%
Hispanic/ Latino	126	6.5%	156,976	16.4%
Multi-race, Non-Hisp. /Lat.	57	2.9%	26,012	2.7%
Nat. Haw. Or Pacif. Isl.	--	--	1,020	0.1%
White	1,721	88.7%	630,150	66.0%
All students	**1,940**	**100.0%**	**954,773**	**100.0%**

Note: As of October 1, 2012

Table B1b: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD

2012-2103 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations

Student Group	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	404	42.4%	20.4%	163,921	35.5%	17.0%
Low income	720	75.6%	37.1%	353,420	76.5%	37.0%
ELL and Former ELL	10	1.0%	0.5%	95,865	20.7%	10.0%
All high needs students	953	--	48.2%	**462,272**	--	**47.9%**

Notes: As of October 1, 2012. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 1,979; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 965,602.

Table B2: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending
Fiscal Years 2011–2013

	FY11		FY12		FY13
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated
Expenditures					
From school committee budget	24,102,265	23,373,906	24,352,405	23,537,807	25,383,094
From revolving funds and grants	---	3,677,798	---	4,020,843	---
Total expenditures	---	27,051,704	---	27,558,650	---
Chapter 70 aid to education program					
Chapter 70 state aid*	---	13,166,267	---	13,236,949	13,315,389
Required local contribution	---	6,026,675	---	6,269,918	6,527,063
Required net school spending**	---	19,192,942	---	19,506,867	19,842,452
Actual net school spending	---	20,402,118	---	20,319,956	21,938,029
Over/under required ($)	---	1,209,176	---	813,089	2,095,577
Over/under required (%)	---	6.3	---	4.2	10.6

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

Data retrieved June 21, 2013

Table B3: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010–2012

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012
Administration	$376.11	$344.83	$450.29
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$715.22	$748.66	$812.40
Teachers	$4,563.85	$4,317.50	$4,445.50
Other teaching services	$612.52	$669.23	$816.19
Professional development	$31.22	$29.03	$26.49
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	$382.17	$435.45	$395.63
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$214.16	$257.43	$242.23
Pupil services	$1,198.88	$1,236.50	$1,282.56
Operations and maintenance	$999.00	$1,041.09	$1,024.22
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	$2,482.51	$2,418.78	$2,185.13
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$11,576	$11,499	$11,681

Sources: Per-pupil expenditure reports on ESE website

Table B4a: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
English Language Arts Performance, 2009-2012

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
3	CPI	133	87.0	90.5	86.0	83.3	-3.7	-2.7	Yes	Low
	P+	133	67%	70%	63%	50%	-17	-13		--
4	CPI	140	77.7	78.7	75.4	77.7	0	2.3	--	Low
	P+	140	50%	52%	42%	47%	-3	5		--
	SGP	126	29.0	36.0	30.5	37.5	8.5	7.0		Low
5	CPI	167	82.0	82.7	85.7	77.8	-4.2	-7.9	Yes	Very Low
	P+	167	57%	61%	63%	50%	-7	-13		--
	SGP	161	42.0	37.0	37.0	31.0	-11.0	-6.0		Low
6	CPI	158	86.1	83.4	85.3	82.9	-3.2	-2.4	Yes	Low
	P+	158	64%	65%	68%	57%	-7	-11		--
	SGP	148	37.0	44.0	34.0	29.0	-8.0	-5.0		Low
7	CPI	173	86.0	84.4	80.0	81.4	-4.6	1.4	Yes	Very Low
	P+	173	62%	60%	54%	55%	-7	1		--
	SGP	166	38.5	24.0	22.0	28.0	-10.5	6.0		Low
8	CPI	158	90.0	89.0	87.3	88.8	-1.2	1.5	--	Very Low
	P+	158	77%	72%	67%	74%	-3	7		--
	SGP	148	40.0	42.0	30.5	45.0	5.0	14.5		Moderate
10	CPI	119	93.5	93.2	91.8	96.2	2.7	4.4	Yes	Low
	P+	119	80%	77%	79%	86%	6	7		--
	SGP	104	34.0	42.0	33.0	39.0	5.0	6.0		Low
All	CPI	1,048	85.5	85.6	84.0	83.6	-1.9	-0.4	--	Very Low
	P+	1,048	64%	65%	61%	59%	-5	-2		--
	SGP	853	38.0	37.0	31.0	34.0	-4.0	3.0		Low

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

Table B4b: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Mathematics Performance, 2009-2012

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI, SGP)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
3	CPI	132	79.8	86.9	87.4	76.5	-3.3	-10.9	Yes	Very Low
	P+	132	54%	70%	70%	53%	-1	-17		--
4	CPI	141	77.1	74.1	75.4	78.2	1.1	2.8	--	Low
	P+	141	43%	37%	38%	43%	0	5		--
	SGP	128	49.0	45.0	34.5	37.0	-12.0	2.5		Low
5	CPI	168	64.2	72.6	73.8	79.0	14.8	5.2	Yes	Low
	P+	168	31%	43%	46%	54%	23	8		--
	SGP	161	21.0	34.0	44.0	54.0	33.0	10.0		Moderate
6	CPI	160	71.4	76.8	74.6	76.6	5.2	2.0	--	Low
	P+	160	44%	54%	48%	47%	3	-1		--
	SGP	148	36.0	68.5	38.0	43.0	7.0	5.0		Moderate
7	CPI	169	64.5	63.5	61.5	66.1	1.6	4.6	Yes	Very Low
	P+	169	34%	30%	34%	40%	6	6		--
	SGP	162	34.5	29.0	30.5	37.0	2.5	6.5		Low
8	CPI	158	70.5	68.9	66.5	65.0	-5.5	-1.5	--	Very Low
	P+	158	49%	41%	37%	39%	-10	2		--
	SGP	149	57.0	50.0	50.5	49.0	-8.0	-1.5		Moderate
10	CPI	116	86.2	91.0	85.5	90.1	3.9	4.6	Yes	Low
	P+	116	66%	76%	69%	73%	7	4		--
	SGP	101	39.0	40.0	41.0	43.0	4.0	2.0		Moderate
All	**CPI**	**1,044**	**72.9**	**75.6**	**74.3**	**75.2**	**2.3**	**0.9**	**--**	**Very Low**
	P+	**1,044**	**45%**	**49%**	**47%**	**49%**	**4**	**2**		**--**
	SGP	**849**	**38.0**	**46.0**	**39.0**	**44.0**	**6.0**	**5.0**		**Moderate**

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

Table B4c: Spencer-East Brookfield
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2009-2012

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines			2012 Performance (CPI)
			2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend	Potentially Meaningful?	
5	CPI	167	75.6	77.8	71.6	74.6	-1	3	Yes	Low
	P+	167	37%	45%	37%	41%	4	4		--
8	CPI	158	66.3	64.2	64.1	63.3	-3	-0.8	--	Very Low
	P+	158	32%	22%	23%	25%	-7	2		--
10	CPI	99	83.5	84.4	87.8	83.3	-0.2	-4.5	--	Very Low
	P+	99	55%	62%	66%	56%	1	-10		--
All	**CPI**	**424**	**74.3**	**74.4**	**72.5**	**72.4**	**-1.9**	**-0.1**	**--**	**Very Low**
	P+	**424**	**40%**	**40%**	**38%**	**38%**	**-2**	**0**		**--**

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

Table B5a: Spencer-East Brookfield
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	517	75.3	75.9	74.7	75.2	-0.1	0.5
		P+	517	43%	45%	43%	41%	-2	-2
		SGP	395	36.0	32.0	32.0	30.0	-6	-2
	State	CPI	235,216	75.3	76.1	77.0	76.5	1.2	-0.5
		P+	235,216	44%	45%	48%	48%	4	0
		SGP	177,719	45.0	45.0	46.0	46.0	1	0
Low income	District	CPI	399	77.4	79.5	77.3	77.4	0	0.1
		P+	399	48%	52%	48%	45%	-3	-3
		SGP	309	37.0	37.0	31.0	29.0	-8.0	-2.0
	State	CPI	180,261	75.5	76.5	77.1	76.7	1.2	-0.4
		P+	180,261	45%	47%	49%	50%	5	1
		SGP	137,185	45.0	46.0	46.0	45.0	0.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	228	65.7	61.9	61.5	62.3	-3.4	0.8
		P+	228	28%	20%	22%	20%	-8	-2
		SGP	164	34.5	24.0	31.0	30.5	-4.0	-0.5
	State	CPI	91,757	67.8	67.3	68.3	67.3	-0.5	-1.0
		P+	91,757	28%	28%	30%	31%	3	1
		SGP	66,785	40.0	41.0	42.0	43.0	3.0	1.0
English language learners & Former ELL	District	CPI	6	--	0.0	--	0.0	--	--
		P+	6	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	45,367	64.8	66.1	66.2	66.2	1.4	0.0
		P+	45,367	30%	32%	33%	34%	4	1
		SGP	29,933	51.0	51.0	50.0	51.0	0.0	1.0
All students	**District**	**CPI**	**1,048**	**85.5**	**85.6**	**84.0**	**83.6**	**-1.9**	**-0.4**
		P+	**1,048**	**64%**	**65%**	**61%**	**59%**	**-5**	**-2**
		SGP	**853**	**38.0**	**37.0**	**31.0**	**34.0**	**-4.0**	**3.0**
	State	**CPI**	**497,549**	**86.5**	**86.9**	**87.2**	**86.7**	**0.2**	**-0.5**
		P+	**497,549**	**67%**	**68%**	**69%**	**69%**	**2**	**0**
		SGP	**395,772**	**50.0**	**50.0**	**50.0**	**50.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**

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

Table B5b: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	513	58.9	63.6	63.2	64.7	5.8	1.5
		P+	513	27%	31%	31%	32%	5	1
		SGP	391	34.0	43.0	34.0	39.0	5.0	5.0
	State	CPI	235,552	64.5	66.7	67.1	67.0	2.5	-0.1
		P+	235,552	32%	36%	37%	37%	5	0
		SGP	178,144	45.0	46.0	46.0	46.0	1.0	0.0
Low income	District	CPI	396	62.0	67.0	66.4	67.7	5.7	1.3
		P+	396	31%	34%	35%	36%	5	1
		SGP	306	34.0	45.0	34.0	39.5	5.5	5.5
	State	CPI	180,433	64.5	67.1	67.3	67.3	2.8	0.0
		P+	180,433	33%	37%	38%	38%	5	0
		SGP	137,529	44.0	47.0	46.0	45.0	1.0	-1.0
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	227	48.3	49.4	48.9	47.8	-0.5	-1.1
		P+	227	15%	15%	13%	10%	-5	-3
		SGP	162	33.0	39.0	34.0	34.0	1.0	0.0
	State	CPI	91,876	56.9	57.5	57.7	56.9	0.0	-0.8
		P+	91,876	20%	21%	22%	21%	1	-1
		SGP	66,876	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0	0.0	0.0
English language learners & Former ELL	District	CPI	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
		SGP	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	45,695	59.2	61.5	62.0	61.6	2.4	-0.4
		P+	45,695	29%	31%	32%	32%	3	0
		SGP	30,189	49.0	54.0	52.0	52.0	3.0	0.0
All students	District	CPI	1,044	72.9	75.6	74.3	75.2	2.3	0.9
		P+	1,044	45%	49%	47%	49%	4	2
		SGP	849	38.0	46.0	39.0	44.0	6.0	5.0
	State	CPI	497,984	78.5	79.9	79.9	79.9	1.4	0.0
		P+	497,984	56%	58%	58%	59%	3	1
		SGP	396,357	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0

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

Table B5c: Spencer- East Brookfield RSD
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2009-2012

Group and Measure			Number Included (2012)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2009	2010	2011	2012	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High needs	District	CPI	187	62.0	63.1	62.8	61.6	-0.4	-1.2
		P+	187	19%	22%	23%	22%	3	-1
	State	CPI	96,996	62.1	64.3	63.8	65.0	2.9	1.2
		P+	96,996	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Low income	District	CPI	148	60.7	66.5	63.6	64.5	3.8	0.9
		P+	148	20%	27%	26%	27%	7	1
	State	CPI	74,300	61.1	63.6	62.8	64.5	3.4	1.7
		P+	74,300	25%	28%	28%	31%	6	3
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	80	57.2	50.9	54.5	48.1	-9.1	-6.4
		P+	80	15%	9%	8%	3%	-12	-5
	State	CPI	38,590	58.1	59.0	59.2	58.7	0.6	-0.5
		P+	38,590	18%	19%	20%	20%	2	0
English language learners & Former ELL	District	CPI	3	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	3	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	15,271	50.8	51.8	50.3	51.4	0.6	1.1
		P+	15,271	15%	16%	15%	17%	2	2
All students	District	CPI	424	74.3	74.4	72.5	72.4	-1.9	-0.1
		P+	424	40%	40%	38%	38%	-2	0
	State	CPI	211,464	76.8	78.3	77.6	78.6	1.8	1.0
		P+	211,464	50%	52%	52%	54%	4	2

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

Table B6: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Annual Grade 9-12 Dropout Rates, 2009-2012

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	4.0%	5.0%	1.5%	0.4%	-3.6	-89.3%	-1.1	-71.3%	2.5%

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

Table B7a: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2009-2012

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	59	63.9%	51.6%	74.1%	74.6%	10.7	16.7%	0.5	0.7%	74.1%
Low income	41	63.8%	49.1%	72.7%	82.9%	19.1	29.9%	10.2	14.0%	72.4%
Students w/ disabilities	28	51.2%	48.1%	66.7%	53.6%	2.4	4.7%	-13.1	-19.6%	68.6%
English language learners (ELL) & Former ELL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	61.1%
All students	118	78.1%	73.1%	83.3%	83.9%	5.8	7.4%	0.6	0.7%	84.7%

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

Table B7b: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD

Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2008-2011

Group	Number Included (2011)	School Year Ending				Change 2008-2011		Change 2010-2011		State (2011)
		2008	2009	2010	2011	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
High needs	54	63.5%	69.9%	61.3%	75.9%	12.4	19.5%	14.6	23.8%	76.5%
Low income	44	62.2%	72.4%	58.5%	75.0%	12.8	20.6%	16.5	28.2%	75.0%
Students w/ disabilities	21	48.6%	53.5%	51.9%	66.7%	18.1	37.2%	14.8	28.5%	70.8%
English language learners (ELL) & Former ELL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	64.2%
All students	114	80.6%	82.0%	81.9%	86.0%	5.4	6.7%	4.1	5.0%	86.3%

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

Table B8: Spencer-East Brookfield RSD

Attendance Rates, 2009-2012

	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All Students	94.1%	94.8%	95.5%	95.2%	1.1	1.2%	-0.3	-0.3%	94.9%

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

Table B9: Spencer-East Brookfield
Suspension Rates, 2009-2012

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
	2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**Percentage Points**	**Percent**	**Percentage Points**	**Percent**	
In-School Suspension Rate	2.2%	0.1%	8.3%	4.6%	2.4	109.1%	-3.7	-44.6%	3.4%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	3.8%	7.7%	5.6%	5.3%	1.5	39.5%	-0.3	-5.4%	5.4%

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	By Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent	Overall		
		(0)	**(1)**	**(2)**		**#**	**%**
1. Interactions between teacher & students & among students are positive & respectful.	**ES**	0	0	13	**(0)**	0	0%
	MS	0	0	6	**(1)**	1	4%
	HS	0	1	8	**(2)**	27	96%
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated. Disruptions, if present, are managed effectively & equitably.	**ES**	0	0	13	**(0)**	1	4%
	MS	1	0	5	**(1)**	2	7%
	HS	0	2	7	**(2)**	25	89%
3. Classroom procedures are established & maintained to create a safe physical environment & promote smooth transitions among all classroom activities.	**ES**	0	0	13	**(0)**	1	4%
	MS	0	1	5	**(1)**	4	14%
	HS	1	3	5	**(2)**	23	82%
4. Lesson reflects rigor & high expectations.	**ES**	2	0	11	**(0)**	5	17%
	MS	2	2	4	**(1)**	6	20%
	HS	1	4	4	**(2)**	19	63%
5. Classroom rituals, routines & appropriate interactions create a safe intellectual environment in which students take academic risks & most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.	**ES**	0	0	13	**(0)**	0	0%
	MS	0	0	6	**(1)**	3	11%
	HS	0	3	6	**(2)**	25	89%
6. Multiple resources are available to meet students' diverse learning needs.	**ES**	7	1	5	**(0)**	11	39%
	MS	2	0	1	**(1)**	6	21%
	HS	2	5	2	**(2)**	11	39%
7. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment & provides all students with access to learning activities.	**ES**	1	0	12	**(0)**	1	4%
	MS	0	0	6	**(1)**	3	11%
	HS	0	3	6	**(2)**	24	86%

Teaching	By Grade Span	None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)	Overall	#	%
8. Demonstrates knowledge of subject & content.	ES	0	0	13	(0)	2	7%
	MS	0	0	6	(1)	1	4%
	HS	2	1	6	(2)	25	89%
9. Communicates clear grade-appropriate learning objectives aligned to state standards. Applicable ELL language objectives are evident.	ES	3	1	9	(0)	11	39%
	MS	3	0	3	(1)	3	11%
	HS	5	2	2	(2)	14	50%
10. Uses appropriate & varied strategies matched to learning objectives & content.	ES	3	3	7	(0)	6	21%
	MS	1	2	3	(1)	10	36%
	HS	2	5	2	(2)	12	43%
11. Requires inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, &/or evaluation of concepts individually, in pairs or in groups to demonstrate higher-order thinking. (circle observed skills)	ES	1	2	10	(0)	6	19%
	MS	0	1	5	(1)	7	22%
	HS	5	4	4	(2)	19	59%
12. Uses varied questioning techniques that require/seek thoughtful responses & promote deeper understanding.	ES	2	3	8	(0)	12	43%
	MS	4	0	2	(1)	4	14%
	HS	6	1	2	(2)	12	43%
13. Implements appropriate & varied strategies that meet students' diverse learning needs.	ES	7	5	1	(0)	12	43%
	MS	2	1	3	(1)	11	39%
	HS	3	5	1	(2)	5	18%
14. Paces lesson to engage all students & promote understanding.	ES	1	2	10	(0)	3	11%
	MS	1	2	3	(1)	9	32%
	HS	1	5	3	(2)	16	57%
15. Conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding & inform instruction.	ES	6	2	5	(0)	7	25%
	MS	0	3	3	(1)	9	32%
	HS	1	4	4	(2)	12	43%
16. Makes use of technology to enhance learning.	ES	10	0	3	(0)	17	63%
	MS	2	1	3	(1)	2	7%
	HS	5	1	2	(2)	8	30%

Learning	By Grade Span	Evidence			Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent			
		(0)	(1)	(2)		#	%
17. Students are engaged in productive learning routines.	**ES**	0	2	11	**(0)**	2	7%
	MS	2	2	2	**(1)**	8	29%
	HS	0	4	5	**(2)**	18	64%
18. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	**ES**	2	0	11	**(0)**	5	18%
	MS	0	3	3	**(1)**	5	18%
	HS	3	2	4	**(2)**	18	64%
19. Students assume responsibility for their own learning.	**ES**	0	3	10	**(0)**	4	14%
	MS	1	2	3	**(1)**	7	25%
	HS	3	2	4	**(2)**	17	61%
20. Students articulate their thinking or reasoning verbally or in writing either individually, in pairs or in groups.	**ES**	5	0	8	**(0)**	15	54%
	MS	4	0	2	**(1)**	2	7%
	HS	6	2	1	**(2)**	11	39%
21. Students' responses to questions elaborate about content & ideas (not expected for all responses).	**ES**	5	0	8	**(0)**	14	50%
	MS	3	2	1	**(1)**	3	11%
	HS	6	1	2	**(2)**	11	39%
22. Students make connections to prior knowledge, real world experiences & other subject matter.	**ES**	4	1	8	**(0)**	8	29%
	MS	1	0	5	**(1)**	5	18%
	HS	3	4	2	**(2)**	15	54%
23. Students use technology as a tool for learning &/or understanding.	**ES**	10	0	3	**(0)**	18	64%
	MS	2	1	3	**(1)**	1	4%
	HS	6	0	3	**(2)**	9	32%
24. Student work demonstrates high quality & can serve as exemplars.	**ES**	7	3	3	**(0)**	19	68%
	MS	3	1	2	**(1)**	4	14%
	HS	9	0	0	**(2)**	5	18%