

Targeted District Review Report



Tyngsborough Public Schools

Review conducted January 30–February 1,
2017

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

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Executive Summary

Tyngsborough is a small school district with one high school, one middle school, and one elementary school. The district has experienced a great deal of administrator turnover. At the time of the review in late January/early February 2017, the superintendent was only in his third month in the position. The assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development, the technology coordinator, and the principals of the high school and the middle school were all in their first year of service. Interviewees told the team that there have been many new principals and assistant principals at the middle and high schools, with accompanying changes in initiatives.

Well-defined instructional leadership has been absent from the district in recent years. The district has limited systems to document, review, and revise curriculum; to improve instruction; and to ensure that appropriate assessments are in place to measure and monitor students' progress. District leaders have identified curriculum as an emerging need of the district and are in the beginning stages of providing districtwide curriculum oversight as well as specific content support at the school levels. The assistant superintendent has indicated his commitment to assessing the district's needs about curriculum and assessment and has identified teachers to serve as curriculum leaders in various content areas. These full-time teachers receive a stipend for additional curricula responsibilities. At the time of the review, curriculum leaders were in their first month as a group, had met once, and were developing short-term and long-term goals.

The targeted review by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring focused on three standards: curriculum and instruction, assessment, and student support. The team observed 52 classes throughout the district: 20 at the high school, 14 at the middle school, and 18 at the elementary school. The team observed 19 ELA classes, 19 mathematics classes, and 14 classes in other subject areas. 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.

In observed classrooms across all levels, the team noted that while classroom climate was characterized by respectful behavior and was conducive to teaching and learning, instructional practices were implemented unevenly and inconsistently. Review team members found these inconsistencies most pronounced at the middle school.

The team found limited differentiation of instruction in the schools. In most observed classrooms students were doing the same activities using the same resources. Occasionally, a teacher or a paraprofessional was observed working with a student and at times a teacher was working with a small group but overall the teaching and learning was uniform, with limited account for individual learning differences.

Strengths

Student Support

Tyngsborough has substantial staff resources and common practices at every level to address the social-emotional needs of students. School counselors, behavior specialists, and school psychologists support the social-emotional development and needs of students. Each school has an Intervention Team or a Student Support Team (SST) which meets regularly to discuss and develop strategies for individual students' social-emotional needs.

The district has been attentive to and has kept graduation rates high, drop-out rates low, and discipline referrals at a minimum. High-school counselors meet with students beginning in grade 9 to make sure that they are taking the right courses and are on track for on-time graduation. SSTs meet regularly and identify at-risk students. These students may be referred to other resources in the district, including the virtual classroom, the night school, the summer school, and a credit recovery program.

Classroom climate is positive and there are few discipline referrals. A variety of programs and practices support a positive school climate.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

Curriculum and Instruction

The district does not have a system that ensures that its curriculum is fully documented and regularly reviewed and revised. The district is in the beginning stages of establishing instructional leadership. The team did not find evidence that the district has a clearly understood or communicated instructional model.

Assessment

The district does not have a comprehensive assessment system to measure and monitor students' progress K–12. At the time of the review, the district's assessment system was under development.

Student Support

The district does not have a clearly delineated tiered system of support. There are limited assessments to measure and monitor student achievement K–12 and limited academic interventions to support students in ELA and mathematics. The district has two reading specialists who work with students in grades 1 and 2; there are no mathematics specialists. Intervention blocks are scheduled for grade 2 students only; the district plans to expand this practice in other grades in 2017–2018.

During the onsite, the review team found that the main entrances to the high school and the middle school were unlocked during the school day and camera coverage was inadequate, compromising the safety of students and staff.

Recommendations

The district should continue to develop and refine curriculum and instructional leadership at the district and school levels to ensure a fully documented and aligned curriculum that is used and effectively delivered districtwide. With appropriate instructional leadership the district should identify a common instructional model and communicate it and other instructional expectations for high-quality instruction. The district should provide appropriate professional development in differentiation of instruction to all staff K–12.

It is recommended that the district continue to enhance its assessment system and add missing components. Enhancements may include more common assessments, professional development in the analysis of data and designated time for all teachers—at the elementary, middle, and high school levels—to review, analyze, and plan based on data results.

The district should move forward with plans to enhance its academic student support system with a clearly documented and practiced tiered system of support. Additionally, the district should provide time for interventions at all grades and make sure that effective assessment tools are administered to identify and monitor student progress.

Finally, the district should complete the safety infrastructure of the middle and high school by upgrading to electronic entry doors and additional cameras.

Tyngsborough Public Schools Targeted District Review

Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, targeted district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to three district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE). Targeted reviews address one of the following sets of three standards: **Governance and Administrative Systems** (Leadership and Governance, Human Resources and Professional Development, and Financial and Asset Management standards) or **Student-Centered Systems** (Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support standards). All targeted reviews include finding(s) about instruction based on classroom observations. A targeted review identifies systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. In addition, the targeted district review is designed to promote district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps.

Districts whose performance level places them in Level 2 of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance will typically participate in a targeted district review (Level 3 and Level 4 districts typically receive a comprehensive review). Other relevant factors are taken into consideration when determining if a district will participate in a targeted or comprehensive review.

This targeted review by the Office of District Reviews and Monitoring focused on the following standards: Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support.

Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the three district standards identified as the focus of the targeted review. Team members also observe classroom instructional practice. A district review team consisting of independent consultants with expertise in the district standards reviews documentation, data, and reports for two days before conducting a three-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. Subsequent to the onsite review, the team meets for two days to develop findings and recommendations before submitting a draft report to ESE.

Site Visit

The site visit to the district was conducted from January 30–February 1, 2017. The site visit included 19 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 57 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, parents, students, and teachers' association

representatives. The review team conducted 3 focus groups with 12 elementary-school teachers, 9 middle-school teachers, and 7 high-school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, student performance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instructional practice in 52 classrooms in 3 schools. The team collected data using ESE’s Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

Tyngsborough has a town administrator/board of selectmen form of government. The seven members of the school committee meet twice a month. Members elect the chair of the school committee.

The superintendent has been in the position since October 25, 2017. The district leadership team includes: the assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development; the director of student services; the business manager; and the director of technology. Central office positions have been mostly stable in number over the past three years. The district has three principals leading three schools. There are four other school administrators, one associate and three assistant principals. In 2016–2017 there were 127.9 teachers in the district.

In the 2016–2017 school year, 1,713 students were enrolled in the district’s 3 schools:

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

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Tyngsborough Elementary School	ES	Pre-K–5	787
Tyngsborough Middle School	MS	6–8	419
Tyngsborough High School	HS	9–12	507
Totals	3 schools	Pre-K–12	1,713
*As of October 1, 2016			

Between 2013 and 2017 overall student enrollment decreased by 8.2 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from economically disadvantaged families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were lower than the median in-district per-pupil expenditures for 51 K–12 districts of similar size (1,000–1,999 students) in fiscal year 2015: \$ 12,825 as compared with \$13,140 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](#)). Actual net school spending

has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B6 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

Tyngsborough is a Level 2 district because Tyngsborough Elementary and Tyngsborough Middle are in Level 2 for not meeting their gap narrowing targets for all students and high needs students.

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

School	Group	Annual PPI				Cumulative PPI	School Percentile	Accountability Level
		2013	2014	2015	2016			
Tyngsborough Elementary	All	90	25	0	75	63	51	2
	High Needs	85	65	65	50	61		
Tyngsborough Middle	All	95	35	60	50	55	63	2
	High Needs	69	45	0	50	51		
Tyngsborough High	All	89	54	100	89	85	79	1
	High Needs	--	--	--	--	--		
District	All	86	43	68	68	65	--	2
	High Needs	63	42	50	46	48		

Between 2015 and 2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations declined by 2 percentage points in ELA and improved by 5 percentage points in math.

- The percentage of high needs students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 1 percentage point in ELA and by 4 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of students from economically disadvantaged families meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 4 percentage points in ELA and by 5 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of ELL and former ELL students meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 20 percentage points in ELA and by 6 percentage points in math.
- The percentage of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding expectations improved by 2 percentage points in ELA and by 1 percentage point in math.

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

Group	ELA			Math		
	2015	2016	Change	2015	2016	Change
All students	63%	61%	-2	56%	61%	5
High Needs	33%	34%	1	25%	29%	4
Economically Disadvantaged	41%	45%	4	33%	38%	5
ELL and former ELL students	20%	40%	20	27%	33%	6
Students with disabilities	17%	15%	2	11%	12%	1

Between 2013 and 2016, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science declined by 4 percentage points for all students, by 1 percentage point for high needs students, and by 3 percentage points for students with disabilities. In 2016, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science was 8 percentage points above the 2016 state rate for the district as a whole, and 4 or 6 percentage points above the 2016 state rate for high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students with disabilities.

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

Group		2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend	Above/Below State (2016)
All students	District	66%	58%	59%	62%	-4	8
	State	53%	55%	54%	54%	1	
High Needs	District	36%	30%	29%	35%	-1	4
	State	31%	33%	31%	31%	0	
Economically Disadvantaged	District	--	--	35%	38%	--	6
	State	--	--	34%	32%	--	
ELL and former ELL students	District	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	19%	18%	19%	19%	0	
Students with disabilities	District	30%	14%	19%	27%	-3	6
	State	21%	21%	22%	21%	0	

The district did not reach its 2016 Composite Performance Index (CPI) targets in ELA, math, and science for any group except students from economically disadvantaged families in ELA.

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

Group	ELA			Math			Science		
	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating	2016 CPI	2016 Target	Rating
All students	89.1	94.7	Improved Below Target	87.3	91.4	Improved Below Target	82.7	91.4	No Change
High Needs	72.7	84.8	Improved Below Target	67.2	78.7	Improved Below Target	72.6	85.6	Declined
Economically Disadvantaged ¹	79.9	78.3	Above Target	72.2	74.6	No Change	77.7	84.9	Declined
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Students with disabilities	62.7	81.0	Improved Below Target	55.5	74.0	Improved Below Target	61.7	81.3	No Change

In 2016, students’ growth in ELA was moderate compared with their academic peers statewide for all students, and low for high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and students with disabilities. Students’ growth in math was moderate compared with their academic peers statewide for all students, high needs students, students from economically disadvantaged families, and low for students with disabilities.

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

Group	2016 Median ELA SGP			2016 Median Math SGP		
	District	CPI Rating	Growth Level	District	CPI Rating	Growth Level
All students	42.0	Below Target	Moderate	51.0	On Target	Moderate
High Needs	39.0	Below Target	Low	43.0	Below Target	Moderate
Econ. Disad.	39.0	On Target	Low	42.5	Below Target	Moderate
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	37.0	Below Target	Low	39.0	Below Target	Low

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

In 2016, the district’s out-of-school suspension rates and in-school suspension rates were well below the 2016 state rates for all students and high needs students.

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

Group	Type of Suspension	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)
High Needs	ISS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	2.9%
	OSS	2.7%	1.9%	1.2%	0.8%	4.9%
Economically disadvantaged*	ISS	0.0%	0.0%	--	--	3.2%
	OSS	3.7%	2.1%	--	--	5.6%
ELLs	ISS	--	--	--	--	1.9%
	OSS	--	--	--	--	4.0%
Students with disabilities	ISS	--	0.0%	--	--	3.5%
	OSS	--	2.1%	--	--	5.9%
All Students	ISS	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.9%
	OSS	0.9%	1.2%	0.5%	0.3%	2.9%

*Suspension rates for students from low-income families used for 2013 and 2014

Between 2012 and 2015, the district’s four-year cohort graduation rate improved by 1.7 percentage points for all students and by 8.9 and 19.4 percentage points for high needs students and students with disabilities, respectively, and declined by 4.6 percentage points for students from low income families. The district reached the four-year cohort graduation target for each group with reportable data.²

**Table 8: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates 2012–2015**

Group	Number Included (2015)	Cohort Year Ending				Change 2012–2015		Change 2014–2015		State (2015)
		2012	2013	2014	2015	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	31	84.6	79.2	85.0	93.5	8.9	10.5%	8.5	10.0%	78.5
Low income	19	94.1	82.4	87.5	89.5	-4.6	-4.9%	2	2.3%	78.2
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	64.0
SWD	18	75.0	84.6	70.0	94.4	19.4	25.9%	24.4	34.9%	69.9
All students	135	95.3	94.6	92.9	97.0	1.7	1.8%	4.1	4.4%	87.3

Between 2011 and 2014, the district’s five-year cohort graduation rate improved by 0.9 percentage point for all students, by 10.0 and 8.4 percentage points for high needs students and students from

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

low-income families, and improved by 1.4 percentage points for students with disabilities. The district reached the five-year cohort graduation target for all students, high needs students, and students from low-income families.³

**Table 9: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates 2011–2014**

Group	Number Included (2014)	Cohort Year Ending				Change 2011–2014		Change 2013–2014		State (2014)
		2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	40	80.0	88.5	83.3	90.0	10.0	12.5%	6.7	8.0%	80.3
Low income	24	83.3	100.0	88.2	91.7	8.4	10.1%	3.5	4.0%	79.6
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	69.8
SWD	20	78.6	75.0	84.6	80.0	1.4	1.8%	-4.6	-5.4%	73.5
All students	127	94.4	96.1	95.3	95.3	0.9	1.0%	0	0.0%	88.5

In 2015, the district’s drop-out rate for all students was one-third of the 2015 state rate and below the 2015 state rate for high needs students and students with disabilities.

**Table 10: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Drop-out Rates by Subgroup 2012–2015**

Group	2012	2013	2014	2015	State (2015)
High Needs	1.3%	4.8%	0.0%	2.2%	3.4%
Econ. Disad. ⁴	2.3%	4.4%	0.0%	4.9%	3.3%
ELLs	--	--	--	--	5.7%
SWD	2.3%	5.9%	0.0%	1.6%	3.5%
All students	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	1.9%

Grade and School Results

Between 2013 and 2016, ELA CPI for all students declined by 2.5 points, from 91.6 in 2013 to 89.1 in 2016, and declined in the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th grades.

- ELA CPI improved by 0.2 point in the 3rd grade, by 1.2 points in the 7th grade, and by 0.3 point in the 10th grade.
 - ELA CPI in the 10th grade was 98.8 in 2016, 2.1 points above the 2016 state CPI of 96.7.
- ELA CPI declined by 5.3 points in the 4th grade, by 4.1 points in the 5th grade, by 4.7 points in the 6th grade, and by 4.1 points in the 8th grade.

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

⁴ Drop-out rates for students from low-income families used for 2012, 2013, and 2014 drop-out rates for students from economically disadvantaged families.

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

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
3	114	88.4	86.3	80.3	88.6	--	0.2	8.3
4	114	86.0	86.0	78.6	80.7	--	-5.3	2.1
5	136	89.3	89.3	88.3	85.2	--	-4.1	-3.1
6	134	92.1	89.8	83.1	87.4	--	-4.7	4.3
7	135	92.0	95.1	91.0	93.2	--	1.2	2.2
8	155	94.7	93.3	97.0	90.6	--	-4.1	-6.4
10	126	98.5	96.4	99.4	98.8	96.7	0.3	-0.6
All	929	91.6	90.9	88.3	89.1	87.2	-2.5	0.8

The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA was 60 percent in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades at Tyngsborough Elementary, and 58 percent, 71 percent, and 60 percent in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, respectively, at Tyngsborough Middle. The percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in ELA was 98 percent in the 10th grade at Tyngsborough High.

**Table 12: Tyngsborough Public Schools
ELA Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade 2015–2016⁵**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Tyngsborough Elementary	60%	60%	60%	--	--	--	--	60%
Tyngsborough Middle	--	--	--	58%	71%	60%	--	63%
Tyngsborough High	--	--	--	--	--	--	98%	98%
District	60%	61%	59%	57%	71%	59%	97%	--

Between 2013 and 2016, ELA CPI declined by 3.6 points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 2.7 points at Tyngsborough Middle, and improved by 0.9 point at Tyngsborough High.

- ELA CPI for high needs students declined by 4.7 points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 0.8 points at Tyngsborough Middle, and improved by 3.7 points at Tyngsborough High.
- ELA CPI for students with disabilities declined by 4.7 points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 1.2 points at Tyngsborough Middle, and improved by 5.4 points at Tyngsborough High.

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

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

School	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend
Tyngsborough Elementary	88.6	88.0	82.8	85.0	-3.6
High Needs	72.5	77.8	61.4	67.8	-4.7
Econ. Disad.	--	--	73.0	78.1	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	61.4	68.8	45.0	56.7	-4.7
Tyngsborough Middle	93.6	92.7	91.2	90.9	-2.7
High Needs	75.8	77.7	72.5	75.0	-0.8
Econ. Disad.	--	--	78.8	81.3	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	64.8	65.3	60.3	63.6	-1.2
Tyngsborough High	98.7	96.9	99.6	99.6	0.9
High Needs	93.4	88.2	97.5	97.1	3.7
Econ. Disad.	--	--	97.7	--	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	90.4	77.8	97.7	95.8	5.4

Between 2013 and 2016, math CPI improved by 0.2 point for all students, from 87.1 in 2013 to 87.3 in 2016 and improved in the 5th, 7th, and 10th grades.

- Math CPI improved by 2.9 points in the 5th grade, by 7.0 points in the 7th grade, and by 2.2 points in the 10th grade.
 - Math CPI in the 10th grade was 96.4 in 2016, 6.7 points above the 2016 state CPI of 89.7.
- Math CPI declined by 5.0 points in the 4th grade, by 3.1 points in the 6th grade, and by 12.1 points in the 8th grade, and did not improve in the 3rd grade.

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

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
3	114	93.5	87.8	89.3	93.5	--	0.0	4.2
4	115	87.6	82.6	81.0	82.6	--	-5.0	1.6
5	134	83.2	83.3	89.5	86.1	--	2.9	-3.4
6	134	88.0	82.6	79.9	84.9	--	-3.1	5.0
7	132	77.9	83.4	82.0	84.9	--	7.0	2.9
8	80	86.8	77.2	74.6	74.7	--	-12.1	0.1
10	126	94.2	93.4	93.4	96.4	89.7	2.2	3.0
All	924	87.1	84.2	85.3	87.3	81.5	0.2	2.0

The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in math was 79 percent, 61 percent, and 55 percent in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, respectively, at Tyngsborough Elementary, and 58 percent in the 6th and 7th grades, and 29 percent in the 8th grade at Tyngsborough Middle. The

percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in math was 93 percent in the 10th grade at Tyngsborough High.

**Table 15: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Math Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade 2015–2016⁶**

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Tyngsborough Elementary	79%	61%	55%	--	--	--	--	64%
Tyngsborough Middle	--	--	--	58%	58%	29%	--	59%
Tyngsborough High	--	--	--	--	--	--	93%	93%
District	78%	61%	55%	57%	57%	28%	91%	--

Between 2013 and 2016, math CPI declined by 1.1 points at Tyngsborough Elementary, and improved by 1.0 point at Tyngsborough Middle and by 1.3 points at Tyngsborough High.

- Math CPI for high needs students declined by 2.6 points at Tyngsborough Elementary, and improved by 2.4 points at Tyngsborough Middle and Tyngsborough High.
- Math CPI for students with disabilities declined by 7.4 points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 7.3 points at Tyngsborough High, and improved by 3.5 points at Tyngsborough Middle.

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

	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend
Tyngsborough Elementary	88.5	85.3	86.6	87.4	-1.1
High Needs	71.5	69.3	68.1	68.9	-2.6
Econ. Disad.	--	--	77.0	75.4	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	63.1	55.6	53.8	55.7	-7.4
Tyngsborough Middle	85.1	80.9	82.8	86.1	1.0
High Needs	62.6	57.8	59.5	65.0	2.4
Econ. Disad.	--	--	67.5	68.6	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	49.6	45.5	46.1	53.1	3.5
Tyngsborough High	95.8	93.7	96.2	97.1	1.3
High Needs	82.9	76.5	83.8	85.3	2.4
Econ. Disad.	--	--	88.6	--	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	86.5	56.9	72.7	79.2	-7.3

Between 2013 and 2016, science proficiency rates declined by 4 percentage points in the district as whole, from 66 percent in 2013 to 62 percent in 2016, 8 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 54 percent.

- 5th grade science proficiency rates decreased by 9 percentage points from 67 percent in 2013 to 58 percent in 2016, 11 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 47 percent.

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

- 8th grade science proficiency rates were 44 percent in 2013 and 2016, 3 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 41 percent.
- 10th grade science proficiency rates declined 1 percentage point from 93 percent in 2013 to 92 percent in 2016, 19 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 73 percent.

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

Grade	Number	2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
5	137	67%	48%	46%	58%	47%	-9%	12%
8	160	44%	45%	50%	44%	41%	0%	-6%
10	119	93%	83%	86%	92%	73%	-1%	6%
All	416	66%	58%	59%	62%	54%	-4%	3%

In 2016, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in science was 59 percent in the 5th grade at Tyngsborough Elementary, 12 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 47 percent. Science proficiency was 45 percent in the 8th grade at Tyngsborough Middle, 4 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 41 percent. Science proficiency was 93 percent in the 10th grade at Tyngsborough High, 20 percentage points above the 2016 state rate of 73 percent.

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

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	Total
Tyngsborough Elementary	--	--	59%	--	--	--	--	59%
Tyngsborough Middle	--	--	--	--	--	45%	--	45%
Tyngsborough High	--	--	--	--	--	--	93%	93%
District	--	--	58%	--	--	44%	92%	62%
State	--	--	47%	--	--	41%	73%	54%

Between 2013 and 2016, science proficiency rates declined by 8 percentage points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 1 percentage point at Tyngsborough Middle and Tyngsborough High.

- Science proficiency rates for high needs students declined by 4 percentage points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 2 percentage points at Tyngsborough High, and improved by 14 percentage points at Tyngsborough Middle.
- Science proficiency rates for students with disabilities declined by 6 percentage points at Tyngsborough Elementary and by 2 percentage points at Tyngsborough High, and improved by 10 percentage points at Tyngsborough Middle.

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

School	2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend
Tyngsborough Elementary	67%	49%	49%	59%	-8%
High Needs	37%	26%	29%	33%	-4%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	32%	42%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	24%	14%	12%	18%	-6%
Tyngsborough Middle	46%	46%	51%	45%	-1%
High Needs	16%	18%	27%	30%	14%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	24%	31%	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	12%	4%	28%	22%	10%
Tyngsborough High	94%	84%	89%	93%	-1%
High Needs	71%	61%	53%	69%	-2%
Econ. Disad.	--	--	70%	--	--
ELLs	--	--	--	--	--
SWD	69%	31%	--	67%	-2%

Curriculum and Instruction

Contextual Background

From the 2013–2014 school year until January 2017, the district did not have subject-specific curriculum leaders at the school and district levels. Principals and assistant principals provided curriculum support to teachers, when possible. Teachers told the team that they assumed responsibility for their own curriculum and did not have leaders to set expectations for curriculum documentation.

District leaders have identified curriculum as an emerging need in the district and are in the beginning stages of addressing districtwide curriculum oversight as well as specific content support at the school levels. In August 2016, the district appointed an assistant superintendent to oversee curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development districtwide. To address curriculum support at the school level, in January 2017 the district established the position of content leaders Pre-K–12. The newly appointed content leaders are also full-time teachers which limits their support of curriculum.

At the elementary level, K–5 teachers follow the EnVisionMath program and Readers and Writers Workshop. Interviewees told the team that Readers and Writers Workshop is a well-embedded program in the district. FUNdations, which is used to support phonics K–2, is being piloted in grade 3. Grade-level teachers rely on resources and materials, including some teacher-developed maps. At the middle school, teachers follow the Massachusetts standards as well as pacing guides and teacher-developed resources. The high school has written curriculum for each course. Teachers at the high school use curriculum maps, follow the Massachusetts standards, and have resources on Google docs to implement the curriculum.

The elementary and middle schools have structured time during the school day for teachers to collaborate; however, the high school does not have structured time for teachers to meet and collaboration takes place informally. Collaboration on curriculum, including alignment, takes place during the district’s professional development days.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

- 1. At the time of the review in late January/early February 2017, the district was in the elementary stages of establishing curriculum leadership at the district and school levels.**
 - A.** In August 2016, the district appointed an assistant superintendent to oversee curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.
 1. Interviewees stated that until the assistant superintendent was hired, no one person in the district was responsible for the curriculum.

- B.** The superintendent identified curriculum alignment, documentation, and leadership as emerging district needs. He told the team that a district focus on curriculum had been missing for several years.
 - 1. District leaders stated that a more systematic approach to curriculum was needed at the district and school levels.

- C.** District leaders told the team that the district’s goal is to develop a consensus curriculum across the district resulting in greater fidelity and consistency in the curriculum.
 - 1. Teachers reported that adding content support for curriculum was needed at all levels as content-driven work was not happening in the district.

- D.** The assistant superintendent has added curricular leaders at the district and school levels to address the district’s curriculum needs.
 - 1. In the 2014–2015 and 2015–2016 school years, the district did not have content-specific leaders at the school level. In January 2017, the position of content leaders was restored.
 - a. At the elementary level, there are content leaders in ELA and math Pre-K–2 and in grades 3–5. The middle and high schools each have content leaders in ELA, math, science, and social studies. In addition, there are districtwide content leaders in Spanish, wellness, fine arts, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).
 - b. Content leaders, who are full-time teachers, receive stipends.
 - c. Teachers reported that the district has not provided training for content leaders.
 - d. Because content leaders teach full time, they do not have a role in ensuring that the taught curriculum is aligned with the written curriculum and the standards.
 - e. Content leaders said that the high school does not have structured time for teachers to collaborate. Content leaders reported that content groups meet at 6:45 a.m.
 - f. Teachers stated that content leaders have a lot to do with little available time to meet.
 - 2. The review team was told that content leaders met for the first time with their school-level teams in January 2017 during a half-day of professional development. Content leaders plan to continue to meet with teams in 2016–2017 during the remaining half days of professional development and during the remaining two full days of professional development.
 - a. Content leaders told the team they have started to collect data about curriculum and resources and are assessing where “we are.”
 - b. Content leaders stated that their main focus was the curriculum, including vertical and course alignment and developing a common format for the written curriculum. They

told the team that the plan was for content leaders to meet with the assistant superintendent and then share information with teachers.

Impact: Given the responsibilities of full-time teaching and the level of curriculum needs in the district, content leaders may be challenged to provide content support for curriculum. Limited structured time for content leaders to collaborate with teachers, in particular at the high school, may present an additional impediment to developing strong curriculum leadership at the school level.

2. The district has not developed a system that ensures that the curriculum is consistent, aligned, and comprehensive, and is regularly reviewed and revised.

A. In recent years, the district and each of its schools did not have content-specific leaders to set expectations and to provide oversight to curriculum development and documentation. This resulted in school-based and teacher-driven documents.

1. Teachers at all levels stated that they took responsibility for developing, revising, and documenting their own curriculum.

B. The district's written curriculum is not comprehensive or consistent.

1. Interviews and a review of the district's curriculum documents K–12 indicated that the district's written curriculum is incomplete and inconsistent.

a. At the elementary level, teachers use scope and sequence documents from enVisionMath, Readers and Writers Workshop, and FUNdations (K–2).

b. School leaders at the middle school described curriculum documentation as incomplete, noting that the school did not have scope and sequence documents except for grade 6 math.

c. The high school has written curriculum for each course visit. Teachers and school leaders stated that scope and sequence documents have not been consistently developed in all content areas.

C. Curriculum maps are not complete.

1. Most maps contain the following elements: pacing guides, standards by number, concepts/skills, and assessments; high school maps often include essential questions and enduring understandings. However, with the exception of pacing guides and standards, the elements are not consistently complete, and the maps often consist of pacing guides only.

a. Strategies to reach all learners, such as suggestions for differentiation, are not addressed in the curriculum maps reviewed by the team. Strategies to address the literacy standards of reading, writing, speaking, and listening are not included.

- b. Assessments are either not listed or are limited to quizzes, tests, homework, projects, and warm-ups. Only two curriculum maps addressed formative, summative, and authentic assessments in any detailed and meaningful way.
- D. Alignment across and between grades is an issue in the district, particularly at the transition point between the elementary and middle schools.
 - 1. When school leaders were asked to identify an overarching need in curriculum, they cited the need to have better vertical alignment at transitions points, particularly between the K–5 school and the middle school. Interviewees stated that since January 2017 teachers in grades 5 and 6 have had an opportunity for vertical conversations.
 - a. School leaders and teachers reported that vertical alignment was easier to achieve between the middle and high schools because of the proximity of the schools and more opportunities to meet informally.
 - 2. The team was told that the middle school uses different math programs and textbooks. Grade 6 uses enVisionMath, while grade 7 uses the McDougal-Littell series which interviewees described as outdated. When asked whether the district did a crosswalk between the two programs and textbooks to ensure alignment, district leaders stated that it had not been done and agreed that the programs and textbooks are probably not aligned. In addition, grade 8 does not have one textbook; students use two different math texts.
 - a. When teachers were asked about horizontal alignment, they told the team that common assessments provide alignment.
- E. At the time of the review in late January/early February 2017, interviews and a document review indicated that the district had begun to consider a process for curriculum review and revision, and to address K–12 alignment of the science curriculum alignment with the 2016 Massachusetts Science, Technology/Engineering Framework.
 - 1. In January 2017, content leaders, principals, and the assistant superintendent met for the first time in the district’s newly formed Curriculum Council.
 - a. One goal of the Curriculum Council is to develop a process for curriculum review and revision.
 - 2. In January 2017 science teachers at all levels met with their respective science-content leaders.
 - a. District leaders told the review team that the district has set September 2017 as the goal for science curriculum to be fully aligned with the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Framework. The district plans to provide science teachers with additional time and substitute coverage to do this work.

Impact: Without aligned, cohesive, and comprehensive curriculum, the district cannot ensure that students have access to their grade-level curricula. Without ongoing curriculum development and timely review and revisions, the curriculum may not be sufficiently rigorous or reflect the continuous analysis of MCAS results and other assessments. Without vertical and horizontal alignment of curricula, all students may not have access to a full and coherent curriculum.

Instruction

The team observed 52 classes throughout the district: 20 at the high school, 14 at the middle school, and 18 at the elementary school. The team observed 19 ELA classes, 19 mathematics classes, and 14 classes in other subject areas. 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.

3. In observed classrooms, instructional practices were implemented unevenly and inconsistently. Review team members found these inconsistencies most pronounced at the middle school.

A. Focus Area #1- Learning Objectives & Instruction In observed classrooms, there was variation in teachers' knowledge of subject matter and content; provision and use of learning objectives; the presence of high expectations aligned to the learning objective; and the use of appropriate instructional strategies well matched to the learning objective.

1. Team members observed moderate and strong evidence that teachers implemented a lesson that reflected high expectations aligned to learning objectives (characteristic # 3) in 50 percent of middle-school classrooms, in 73 percent of elementary classrooms, and in 65 percent of high-school classes.
 - a. In an example of low expectations, in a middle-school class, the teacher asked for, and accepted, one-word answers without asking students for more detail.
 - b. In contrast, in a grade 2 ELA class on "tricky" words and suffixes, students explored the differences between "chili" and "chilly." The teachers asked "What is the base word [in chilly]? What is the suffix?" and the students used the words "chili" and "chilly" in sentences to show that they understood the meaning of each word.

B. Focus Area #2- Student Engagement & Critical Thinking Team members observed variation in the facilitation of tasks that encourage students to develop and engage in critical thinking and in students assuming responsibility for their learning.

1. Observers noted moderate and strong evidence of teachers facilitating tasks that encourage students to develop and engage in critical thinking (characteristic # 6) in only 43 percent of middle-school classes, in 67 percent of elementary classes, and in 70 percent of high-school classrooms.

- a. In a classroom in which an opportunity to encourage students to develop critical thinking was lost, the teacher asked students to pick words from a book but then told the students the meanings of the words instead of asking them for the meaning.
2. Similarly, team members saw moderate and strong evidence of students assuming responsibility for their own learning (characteristic # 7) in 50 percent of middle-school classes, in 75 percent of elementary classes, and in 70 percent of high-school classes.
 - a. In an example of students not taking responsibility for their own learning, in a middle-school class students sat in groups but did not work collaboratively.
 - b. Positive examples of students taking responsibility for their own learning were observed in science classes in which students were working in groups as they completed laboratory assignments.
- C. Focus Area #3- Differentiated Instruction & Classroom Climate** In most observed classes classroom climate was characterized by respectful behavior and tone and established routines. At the secondary level, often review team members observed low-level use of available technology.
 1. Observers found strong and moderate evidence of teachers using appropriate resources aligned to diverse learning needs such as technology and support personnel (characteristic # 9) in only 36 percent of middle-school classes, in 78 percent of elementary classes, and in 50 percent of high-school classes.
 2. At the middle school, interactive whiteboards were observed in most classrooms and graphing calculators and 360 degree whiteboards were observed in one classroom. However, in one middle-school class, a video was being shown that was not appropriate to the grade level and students were not given any guidance on how the video was aligned with the learning objective.
 3. Most observed high-school classrooms included interactive whiteboards, which were often used to project the teacher's work or to show a worksheet. Books, whiteboards, and worksheets were the most frequently observed and used resources in the lessons. Some observed classrooms also had laptops and iPads for students' use.

Impact: Without consistent implementation of instruction that reflects high expectations, strategies well-matched to learning objectives, and tasks that require critical thinking and analysis, and without effective use of appropriate classroom resources, all students do not have the tools they need to achieve improved academic outcomes.

4. Review team members rarely observed instruction that was appropriately differentiated so that the lesson content was accessible for all learners. Some teachers said that the district provides limited guidance and professional development on differentiated instruction.

- A.** Observers found moderate and strong evidence of teachers differentiating instruction so that lesson content is accessible for all learners (characteristic #8) in just 39 percent of elementary classrooms, in only 7 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in only 25 percent of high-school lessons.
1. Team members noted that in elementary classes often all students were doing the same work. In just 4 of 18 observations (39 percent), one or more students received individual attention or help in small groups by a teacher or a paraprofessional.
 2. At the middle school, in observed classes most students were doing the same work. Occasionally, a paraprofessional or a teacher would work one-on-one with a student.
 3. Review team members observed moderate and strong evidence that teachers appropriately differentiated instruction in only 5 of 20 high-school classrooms (25 percent).
 - a. In most observed high-school classes, observers noted that all students were working on the same lesson with the same resources.
 - b. Positive examples of appropriate differentiation included a teacher in an ELA class working with individual students on research papers and a teacher and a paraprofessional in a geometry class supporting students working on a tessellation project.
- B.** The district has a 2016–2017 District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) for instructional supports and strategies.
1. Some teachers said that they were not familiar with the DCAP; others indicated that they knew about the DCAP and had been “asked to add to the plan” but had not seen the final document.
- C.** Some teachers at the elementary level told the team that differentiated instruction was teacher directed and the district has not put in place “a structured plan or process.”
1. Some teachers at the middle school said that they have leveled classes but have not received guidance about how to appropriately differentiate instruction.
 2. Some high-school teachers said that some experienced staff at the high school recognize students’ individual needs, noting that they are encouraged to differentiate.
- D.** Some teachers stated that the district provides little professional development for differentiated instruction.

Impact: Without appropriate instructional strategies to ensure that lessons are accessible for all learners, the district cannot ensure that teachers consistently and effectively deliver instruction that meets the diverse needs of students, and students cannot meet their full academic potential.

5. In recent years, the district has not clearly identified instructional leaders or articulated a common instructional model.

- A.** A document review indicated that although the first goal in the District Improvement Plan states in part: “Teachers and leaders will promote the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction. . .” it does not delineate district expectations for high-quality instruction.
- B.** When interviewees were asked who the instructional leaders are in the district and in their schools, interviewees gave varying answers.
 - 1. In a focus group elementary teachers stated that there are no current instructional leaders in the district. In another interview, teachers from across the district stated that the new assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development is the district’s instructional leader.
 - 2. Teachers stated that they rely on mentors and informally on each other for instructional leadership.
 - 3. The superintendent and other interviewees said that the district used to have instructional coaches and noted that those positions no longer exist.
- C.** There is no established instructional model in the district.
 - 1. When administrators were asked about district expectations for classroom instruction, an administrator said that administrators wanted a “fundamental shift from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction” and changes in practice every 15–20 minutes, noting that students should know expectations.
 - 2. When high-school teachers were asked the same question, some said that they are expected to use a beginning-of-class “warm-up activator,” to post objectives and an agenda, and to have objectives and a closing activity.

Impact: Without a systematic and strategic guide for effective instruction, and designated leaders to support classroom teachers in the implementation of the expected practices, students may not receive consistent and effective instruction that will provide opportunities for academic improvement.

Recommendations

- 1. The district should continue to develop effective curriculum leadership at the district and school levels to ensure that the district has a fully documented and aligned curriculum that is consistently used and effectively delivered districtwide.**
 - A.** The district should continue to develop curriculum leadership at the district and the school levels to set the district's curriculum expectations, and to provide expertise and oversight to curriculum development, documentation, and timely revision.
 1. The assistant superintendent should review and assess the effectiveness of the content leader position as it is currently described.
 2. The district should consider providing content leaders with on-going training to effectively guide teachers to develop high-quality curriculum documents.
 - a. The district should consider expanding the role of content leaders to enable them to monitor alignment of the written and taught curriculum in their content areas.
 3. The district's newly formed curriculum council should continue, and the district should support its efforts to establish an effective, ongoing district process for curriculum review and revision.
 - B.** The district should ensure that there are updated and aligned scope and sequence documents in core subjects at all levels.
 1. The district should consider providing additional time for teachers to collaborate with content leaders to develop scope and sequence documents that are fully aligned with the 2017 Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and the 2016 Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Curriculum Framework.
 2. The district should move forward with its plans to fully align science in kindergarten through grade 12 with the 2016 Massachusetts STE Framework by September 2017 and to provide teachers with additional time to do so, if required.
 - C.** The district should ensure that the curriculum is aligned vertically at the transition points between grades 5 and 6 and between grades 8 and 9. Particular attention should be given to vertical alignment within the middle school.
 1. The district should ensure that the middle school has updated math resources including textbooks at all grades.
 - D.** As the district moves forward with the development of consensus curriculum maps, it should ensure that district's format includes the following elements: standards, objectives, resources, instructional strategies addressing the needs of all learners, timelines, and assessments. The district should ensure that the curriculum maps are usable documents.

1. The district should ensure that the intent of the 2017 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to include literacy standards across the curriculum is addressed in its curriculum documentation.

E. The district should explore possible ways to provide high-school teachers with weekly structured time to formally collaborate about curriculum with content partners from the same departments.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include district and school level oversight for the consistent use, alignment, and delivery of the district's curricula. Scope and sequence documents aligned to the standards will provide teachers with a solid underpinning on which to develop their curriculum maps. A comprehensive approach to curriculum development, implementation, and revision can lead to greater rigor in classrooms and higher student achievement.

Recommended resources:

- Curriculum Mapping: Raising the Rigor of Teaching and Learning (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/Candi/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf>) is a presentation that provides definitions of curriculum mapping, examples of model maps, and descriptions of curriculum mapping processes.
- Sample curriculum maps (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/default.html>) were designed to assist schools and districts with making sense of students' learning experiences over time, ensuring a viable and guaranteed curriculum, establishing learning targets, and aligning curriculum to ensure a consistent implementation of the MA Frameworks.
- The Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/review.html>) provides links to the current frameworks and supporting documents, including updated strand maps, crosswalks, and other guidance materials.
- Creating Curriculum Units at the Local Level (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/mcu_guide.pdf) is a guidance document that can serve as a resource for professional study groups, as a reference for anyone wanting to engage in curriculum development, or simply as a way to gain a better understanding of the process used to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.

2. The district should identify effective instructional leaders at both the district and school levels, establish and communicate a common instructional model for high-quality instruction, and then monitor its implementation.

A. District administrators should clarify roles and responsibilities with regard to instruction and identify those individuals at both the district and school levels who will be responsible for ensuring quality teaching and learning within the district.

1. District administrators should communicate expectations for principals to have instructional leadership as a key responsibility.
- B.** District leaders, school leaders, and teachers should collaboratively develop and adopt a research-based instructional model of what constitutes excellent teaching.
 1. The instructional model should address rigorous learning expectations, higher-order thinking skills, and recommend strategies, technologies, and resources to align with and support students' diverse learning needs.
 2. Administrators should develop a plan to share the instructional model with all educators.
- C.** Instructional leaders at the school level should monitor classroom instruction to ensure consistent practices based on the model through the use of walkthroughs and effective educator evaluation.
 1. Useful feedback should be provided on how educators can modify classroom practices to align with the model.
 2. District administrators should also distribute and support the current District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) to all educators and support its use.
- D.** Opportunities for teachers to share their expertise and exemplary practices with their colleagues should be facilitated by school instructional leaders.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include a common understanding and application of high-quality instructional practices throughout the district that will result in higher expectations for students, tasks that encourage critical thinking, differentiated instruction, and the effective use of appropriate classroom resources. In addition, by encouraging the sharing of best practices, the district will build its capacity for continuous improvement.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/government/departments-and-boards/ese/programs/accountability/tools-and-resources/district-analysis-review-and-assistance/learning-walkthrough-implementation-guide.html>) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a *Learning Walkthrough* process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner. (The link above includes a presentation to introduce Learning Walkthroughs.)

Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf>) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.

- *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf>) is a reference for instructional planning and observation, intended to support activities that advance standards-based educational practice, including formal study, dialogue and discussion, classroom observations, and other professional development activities.
- ESE's *Calibration Video Library* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/calibration/>) is a collection of professionally created videos of classroom instruction produced by the School Improvement Network. These videos depict a range of practice (this is NOT a collection of exemplars) to support within-district calibration activities that promote a shared understanding of instructional quality and rigor.
- ESE's *Online Calibration Training Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/calibration/tool/>) uses videos of classroom instruction from ESE's Calibration Video Library to simulate brief, unannounced observations. Groups of educators, such as a district leadership team, watch a video together and then individually assess the educator's practice related to specific elements from the Model Classroom Teacher Rubric and provide the educator with written feedback. Through real-time data displays, the group members can then see how their conclusions compare to each other, as well as educators throughout the state.
- ESE's *"What to Look For" Observation Guides* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/observation/>) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use, but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.

Assessment

Contextual Background

The district recognizes how little attention has been paid in recent years to curriculum and assessment. Curriculum documents are not complete; as a result, the assessments in place vary with the various curricula implemented and do not systematically measure the achievement of the district's students against a fully documented curriculum.

The newly appointed assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development has undertaken to establish the extent of the district's needs about curriculum and assessment. And the district has taken an important step by identifying content leaders across the district. The review team believes that the district's needs about curriculum and assessment are substantial and that addressing them may require significant reallocation of resources. There are important decisions ahead for the district to build effective curriculum and assessment systems.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

- 1. The district does not have a comprehensive system of assessments that measure student progress. The elementary school has some elements of an assessment system in place.**
 - A.** The district is in the beginning stages of developing a systematic approach to monitoring its students' progress.
 1. The district's assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development has indicated his commitment to analyzing the district's needs in this area and to building effective systems.
 2. At the time of the site visit in late January/early February 2017, the district had just formed a Curriculum Council made up of newly appointed content leaders whose role is to provide some leadership in the areas of curriculum and assessment.
 - a. Some content leaders told the review team that they were supporting the assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development by determining where the district was with curriculum and assessment. They reported that their initial focus was curriculum and that assessment would be next.
 3. The elementary and middle schools plan to adjust their 2017–2018 school year schedules to include a block of time for interventions.
 4. The district is reviewing progress monitoring tools for adoption in the 2017–2018 school year; these would provide teachers with data about students' progress.
 - B.** Interviews and a review of the district's self-assessment submitted before the onsite indicated that the elementary school has some elements of an assessment system in place.

1. K–5 teachers have ELA benchmark data from the Fountas & Pinnell assessment system.
 - a. This data is available 2–3 times per year.
 - b. Teachers enter the results into Google docs so they are available for review. The principal and the assistant and associate principals review the results. The superintendent and the assistant superintendent have access to but do not review the results.
 - c. Grade-level teams have 25 minutes of Professional Learning Time each week to review assessment data. However, interviewees reported that teams use the time for a variety of purposes.
 2. K–6 teachers receive benchmark data from EnVisionMATH 4 times per year.
 - a. The associate principal enters mathematics benchmark results into PowerSchool,⁷ a platform that allows teachers to review results to group students. The grade 2 team reviews results to group students across the grade level. In most grades teachers review results for their own classrooms and group students accordingly.
 3. K–5 teachers administer locally developed writing prompts and score their students' drafts.
 - a. Teachers record the scores in Google docs and reviewed them at their weekly ELA team meeting. Individual teachers monitor the progress of students with low scores.
- C.** The self-assessment for the middle school lists common assessments in grades 7 and 8 in ELA, science, and mathematics. The self-assessment lists the SRI Reading Inventory for grade 6 ELA, common projects for grade 6 science, and common assessments for grade 6 mathematics.
1. Administrators and content leaders said that in grade 8 math students do not have common textbooks, making it difficult to develop common assessments.
 - a. Middle-school administrators stated that they review data from mathematics common assessments only when determining student placement.
- D.** The self-assessment for the high school lists common trimester exams in ELA and mathematics. Interviewees described common assessments in chemistry but noted that trimester exams in biology are similar rather than common because of variations in biology curriculum.
1. High-school teachers do not have common planning time to develop and analyze common assessment data.

⁷ PowerSchool is an educational technology platform for K–12 classrooms.

2. High-school content leaders said that that they do not share their assessment results with the principal.

Impact: An effective system for measuring and monitoring students' achievement is built on a cohesive, standards-based curriculum. With limited curriculum development in the district, the district does not have a solid base upon which to establish such an assessment system. New leaders at the district and school levels as well as the appointment of content leaders across the district may enable the district to begin to establish a systematic approach to assessing and monitoring students' achievement.

Recommendation

1. **The district should continue its efforts to determine which elements of an assessment system it is missing and move rapidly to develop and implement those elements not in place. Assessments should be developed simultaneously with curriculum rather than after the curriculum is completed.**
 - A. As planned, the district should investigate the status of curriculum and assessment in the district.
 1. The investigation should include assessment as well as curriculum since assessment is an essential component of curriculum.
 - B. Administrators and content leaders should develop specific strategies, timelines, and clear expectations for the use of data districtwide.
 1. Building on the practices in place in some grade levels, the district should establish systematic, consistent processes for the analysis and use of assessment data.
 2. The district should ensure that educators at all levels use data strategically to inform instruction, ongoing curriculum revision, and program evaluation.
 - C. Ongoing, targeted staff training in the collection, analysis and use of student achievement data should be provided for each school, grade level, and content area.
 - D. Teachers and administrators at all levels should review and analyze assessment results to understand their students' level of achievement and to differentiate the support and instruction provided to students.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district will develop a foundation for making decisions about instruction, resources, and programs based upon established student needs. The use of a comprehensive assessment system will better inform classroom teachers about student progress as well as their instructional strengths and challenges and help them plan more targeted instruction.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/ddm/webinar/PartI-GapAnalysis.pdf>) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, districts can determine potential next steps.

Student Support

Contextual Background

Tyngsborough is a small district where teachers know students' needs and respond to these needs to the best of their ability. Though the district is small, the number of students with disabilities and English language learners has increased in recent years.⁸ The district is addressing these students' needs in part through several in-district programs for students with disabilities; the predominant model of services for these students is inclusion. The district has some co-taught classes and plans to expand this model. English language learners are served by two full-time ESL teachers for pull-out and by SEI-endorsed teachers in class.

While the district has some elements of a student support system including an intervention process and student support teams, it does not have a clearly articulated tiered system of support that ensures that all students K–12 who are struggling in ELA or mathematics are identified and quickly provided with effective interventions.

Intervention and support teams are in place at all schools to support the social-emotional needs of students. Students and staff at the elementary school participate regularly in social-emotional activities. The high school has a social-emotional room and as part of a Wellness course, students are offered training in depression awareness and suicide prevention. Staff to support the social-emotional needs of students is in place at the district level and at all schools. Parents and students emphasized the need to provide social-emotional support services and told the team that administrators were very supportive of students.

The district has implemented programs and practices to ensure that students graduate on time and has provided opportunities such as a credit recovery program and a night school for students to meet graduation requirements. Graduation rates are higher than state rates and the dropout rate is lower than the state rate.

The team found that the main entrances at the middle and high schools do not have an electronic entry system to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the schools. The district is researching ways to fund the installation of an electronic entry system.

⁸ According to ESE data, the percentage of students with disabilities has fluctuated with an overall increase, from 12.7 percent in 2013 to 13.6 percent in 2014 to 15.0 percent in 2015 to 14.6 percent in 2016 and 2017. The percentage of English language learners also has fluctuated with an overall increase, from 1.3 percent in 2013 and 2014 to 0.1 percent in 2015 to 0.8 percent in 2016 to 1.6 percent in 2017.

Strength Findings

- 1. The district has implemented practices and procedures to address the social-emotional needs of students.**
 - A.** The district has established an intervention process through the use of student support teams and social-emotional teams.
 1. The elementary school has a social-emotional team whose members may include administrators, teachers, school counselors, the school psychologist, a behavior specialist, and the school nurse.
 2. At the middle school, the student support team (SST) meets monthly. In addition, because teacher teams have common prep time, they can meet more frequently with counselors as a team to discuss students struggling with social-emotional issues.
 - a. Middle-school teachers said that social-emotional issues are discussed at SST meetings and the school has resources such as a psychologist and a behaviorist for students struggling with social-emotional issues.
 3. The high-school SST meets monthly. Students with significant struggles may be referred for an intervention or receive a 504 or special education referral.
 - B.** A commitment to social-emotional support is evident in the social-emotional programming, professional development, and resources in the district.
 1. At the elementary schools, students participate in at least one social-emotional lesson/activity per week and staff participate in one professional development opportunity per trimester to help develop a culture to support social-emotional growth.
 - a. Interviewees told the team that social-emotional programming is pivotal to what is happening at the elementary school; the school holds community-building assemblies as well as morning meeting and mindfulness activities to support the social-emotional growth of students.
 - b. Elementary teachers said that the school's principal values the social-emotional needs of students. Counselors are assigned to each grade and the school has a behavior specialist and psychologist.
 2. High-school teachers said that the school has a psychologist and guidance counselors. The school also has a social-emotional room. As part of a Wellness course, students are offered depression awareness and suicide prevention training.
 - C.** Across the district, substantial human resources are allocated to support the social-emotional needs of students.

1. A review of the staff listing as well as the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) indicated that staff to support the social-emotional needs of students are in place at the district level and at all schools. For example, the district has three school psychologists; the elementary school has three school counselors and a behavior specialist; the middle school has a school counselor; and the high school has a director of school counseling and three counselors.

D. Parents told the team that administrators recognize the social-emotional needs of the students and are visible around the schools. They are always available and “hands-on.” Parents reported that the schools provide students with access to counselors and school psychologists and said that they are always checking in with the kids.

E. The high school has Core Value awards. Students articulated the core values of the high school: Collaboration, Honesty, Engagement, Perseverance, and Respect. However, they told the team that they do not need those words to know how to be a good person. They told that team that they have access to counselors, and teachers are always checking on the welfare of students.

Impact: Implementing social-emotional support practices and interventions reduces student stress and improves behavior. A focus on social-emotional development improves how students feel about themselves and their fellow students and likely improves student achievement.

2. The district has implemented programs and practices to improve graduation and attendance rates and to reduce the drop-out rate and disciplinary referrals.

A. According to the latest available ESE data, the district’s four- and five-year cohort graduation rates exceed state graduation rates and the district’s dropout rate is lower than the state’s drop-out rate.

1. In 2016, the district’s four-year cohort graduation rate was 94 percent, compared with 87.5 percent statewide.

a. In 2016, the district’s four-year cohort graduation rate for students with disabilities was 94.0 percent, while the state rate was 71.8 percent.

2. In 2015, the district’s five-year cohort graduation rate was 97 percent, compared with 89.4 percent statewide.

3. In 2016, the district’s drop-out rate was 0.3 percent, compared with 1.9 percent statewide.

4. School and district leaders attributed high graduation rates and a low drop-out rate to early intervention support strategies. They told the team that high-school counselors begin meeting with students early in grade 9 to make sure that they are taking the right courses and they are “getting what they need.” Additionally, they said that Student Support Teams (SSTs) reach out to struggling students to provide support and to keep students enrolled and on track.

- a. To keep students enrolled and on track to graduate, the district offers a virtual classroom, a night school, a summer school, and a credit recovery program.
 - b. School leaders and counselors said that they identify juniors and seniors who are at risk of not graduating on time or of dropping out and offer options such as night school, credit recovery, and the virtual classroom.
- B.** In 2016, the attendance rate for the district as a whole was 95.9 percent, higher than the state rate of 94.9 percent, and the chronic absence rate was 7.6 percent, lower than the state rate of 12.3 percent.⁹
1. Interviews and a document review indicated that strict procedures are followed when students do not attend school.
 - a. Staff at the middle and elementary schools make calls every day when students are absent.
 - b. At the high school, the dean calls home when a student does not attend for three consecutive days. After 7 absences students receive detention and after 10 absences the school resource officer is informed for possible intervention.
- C.** The district has few discipline referrals.
1. According to ESE data, in 2016 7 of 1,772 students (0.1 percent of the district’s enrollment) received in-school or out-of-school suspensions.
- D.** Most classes observed by the team had a positive climate that included respectful behavior, routines, tone, and discourse and were conducive to teaching and learning (see characteristic #10 in the Instructional Inventory, Appendix C below).
1. School and district leaders told the team that the elementary school has implemented a mindfulness initiative, an anti-bullying curriculum, and the Second Step program.¹⁰
 2. The middle school has anti-bullying and social thinking programs.
 3. The high school dean oversees discipline, and a code of conduct describes consequences for improper behavior. Teachers have also been trained in de-escalation methods.

Impact: By implementing policies and practices that promote regular attendance, support course completion and grade promotion, encourage on-time graduation, and support the social-emotional

⁹ These data reflect the percentage of students absent more than 10 percent of the days in membership.

¹⁰ Second Step is an early learning program that helps students develop their social-emotional skills, including “making friends, managing emotions, and solving problems to set them on a path for social success and academic readiness.”

development of all students, the district is creating a productive social culture that limits problem behavior and enables students to assume increasing responsibility for their own behavior and learning.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

3. The district does not have a clearly delineated tiered system of support that ensures that all students' academic needs are addressed.

- A.** The district has some structures in place for teachers to discuss and seek support for students' academic needs.
 - 1. Administrators reported that teachers at the elementary and middle schools have common planning time when they are encouraged to consult each other about students' needs.
 - 2. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district has Student Support Teams (SSTs) in place at the middle and high schools where teachers can refer students with academic concerns.
 - a. SSTs are composed of the referring teacher, the principal, a special education teacher, a guidance counselor, the nurse, and other support staff identified by the principal. The teams meet every month or as necessary.
 - b. The goal of the teams is to provide new and different interventions from what the classroom teacher has already provided and to revisit the student's progress after four to six weeks.
 - 3. Middle-school teachers reported that they identify struggling students informally and discuss them among themselves before referring students to the SST.
 - 4. The team was told that some common assessments are administered in the high school, but teachers have limited time to discuss results. Teachers reported that grades are often used to identify struggling students.
- B.** The district has limited interventions in addition to those provided by the classroom to support struggling students.
 - 1. The team was told that there are only two Title I reading specialists at the elementary school (enrollment 787 in 2016–2017) who work primarily with students in kindergarten and grades 1–2. Elementary teachers told the team that student support for specific skills is provided primarily through in-class flexible groupings.
 - 2. Math interventions are provided only in grade 2 at the elementary school; during flex time all grade 2 students are grouped based on need and provided support by different teachers. This re-arranging of students takes place once a week.

3. Interviewees reported that the district does not have a true Response to Intervention (RtI) model and they identified the need for more interventions at the early grades—specifically, more reading and mathematics support.
 4. Interviewees told the team that at the middle school general education teachers provide support through flexible groupings based on results of the Scholastic Reading Inventory and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark assessments from grade 5.
 5. Interviewees reported that there is not a lot of time during the day to provide support for students at the high school; however, a mathematics lab is offered to all students after school two times a week.
 6. Students reported that teachers at the high school help them after school whenever they can.
- C.** There is little differentiation of instruction in classrooms across the district.
1. Interviewees told the review team that the district is “on our way to developing a process [to differentiate instruction]” but does not have a “structured plan or process.”
 2. In observed classrooms the team found moderate and strong evidence that the teacher appropriately differentiated instruction so the lesson content is accessible to all learners in only 25 percent of classes overall.
- D.** There are some plans in place to further develop and support an effective tiered system of support for students.
1. Interviewees in several interviews reported that the district plans to provide intervention blocks in the elementary and middle schools in 2017–2018.
 - a. Interviewees said that the schedule will include What I Need (WIN) time, when students in the middle and elementary schools will be divided based on skills needed and general and special education teachers and paraprofessionals will provide instruction.
 2. The team was told that the district is looking to identify a systemic approach to monitoring students’ progress and specific tools to use in this work.

Impact: Without a continuum of supports in ELA and mathematics including differentiation of instruction and an aligned assessment system for universal screening and on-going progress monitoring K–12, all students’ academic needs are not being addressed.

4. The main entrances to the high school and the middle school do not have electronic entry systems that prevent non-authorized personnel from entering the buildings.

- A.** During the three-day onsite review, team members entered and exited the middle school and the high school numerous times through unlocked doors.

1. A review of the minutes of the October 2016 school committee meeting indicated that full glass doors have been installed the high school and the middle school. A member of the committee noted that the doors make it easier to see visitors entering and leaving the schools.
 - a. While doors have been installed at the middle and high schools, the schools have not installed an electronic entry system that requires visitors to identify themselves and the purpose of their visit to school staff, and to have school staff unlock the door electronically.
 - i. The school resource officer (SRO) told the review team that the district is in the process of obtaining “buzzers” for both schools. The SRO said that there are some cameras in both schools, but the high school has the most.
 - ii. At the middle school, main office staff have a video link to a camera that enables them to see who is entering the school; however, they cannot prevent a non-authorized person from entering the school.
 - iii. Safety drills have been held at the middle school and the high school, in collaboration with the SRO and the Tyngsborough Police Department. All schools participate in ALICE training¹¹ conducted by the SRO.
 2. School committee members confirmed that they are researching how to fund the cost of upgrading door security, and anticipated that the project would be completed during the summer of 2017. They also said that more cameras were needed at the middle school.
- B.** The district has allocated security resources at the elementary school. The team observed that the main entrance was locked and visitors were required to ring a doorbell and identify themselves before being “buzzed in” by school personnel.
1. Interviewees told the team that the elementary school had 15–20 cameras throughout the school.

Impact: Entrances to schools that do not lock and inadequate camera coverage compromise the safety of students and staff.

¹¹ ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate.

Recommendations

1. **The district should move forward with plans to enhance its academic student support system with a clearly documented and practiced tiered system of support which includes supporting teachers in effective differentiation of instruction, providing a sufficient range of interventions, and identifying assessment tools to assess and monitor student progress.**
 - A. The district should provide professional development for all teachers K–12 in differentiation of instruction, which is the first and primary tier of an effective tiered system of support.
 - B. The district should move forward with its plans for scheduling WIN (What I Need) blocks in all grades at the elementary and middle schools.
 1. Schedules should ensure reliable and consistent time to address students’ academic needs in ELA and mathematics, using research-based interventions, for students in all grade levels.
 - C. The district should review the high-school schedule and identify times that could be used to support student’s academic needs that are accessible for all students including but not limited to students with disabilities and English language learners.
 - D. Additionally, the district should move forward with identifying and implementing assessment tools that will easily identify struggling students and effectively monitor students’ progress.
 - E. The student support system should be documented and clearly communicated to all teachers.

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will lead to a district with a continuum of student support, with clear systems for identifying struggling students, continued use of the intervention process for referrals, and differentiation of instruction and additional time for interventions K–12. Together, these elements can help ensure that all students’ academic needs are met with timely and effective interventions, thus paving the way for the district to increase achievement and close proficiency gaps.

Recommended resources:

- ESE’s *Early Warning Indicator System* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html>) is a tool to provide information to districts about the likelihood that their students will reach key academic goals. Districts can use the tool in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions and to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede students’ ability to meet academic goals.
- *The Early Warning Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/2014ImplementationGuide.pdf>) provides information on how to use early warning data, including the Massachusetts Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS), to identify, diagnose, support and monitor students in grades 1–12. It offers educators an overview

of EWIS and how to effectively use these data in conjunction with local data by following a six-step implementation cycle.

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)* (www.mass.gov/ese/mtss) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students. The MTSS website includes links to a self-assessment and a variety of helpful resources.

2. The district should collaborate with the town to complete the safety infrastructures of the middle and high schools.

A. District leaders and the school committee should continue to work together with town officials to complete door safety upgrades at the middle and high schools and explore any of the following options or a combination of them to finance the project.

1. The district should consider reallocating resources to purchase an electronic entry system for the main doors of the middle and high schools.
2. District leaders and school committee members should investigate with town officials the viability of using “free cash” to fund security upgrades.
3. The district should consider petitioning the town’s capital asset committee for door safety upgrades.
4. The district should investigate the availability of state, federal, and private grants from business and foundations to fund school security upgrades.

B. To improve safety inside and outside the school, the district, in collaboration with the SRO, should evaluate the placement and number of cameras at the middle and high schools.

1. To reduce the cost of installing additional cameras, the district should request that town electricians install camera equipment purchased by the district.
2. The district and the school resource officer should evaluate the capacity of the current video workstations to view all camera positions.
3. Training should be provided to all staff responsible for monitoring video workstations.

Benefits: A safe and secure school setting that prevents strangers from entering schools reduces staff and student anxiety and creates an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Having cameras strategically placed inside and outside a school make it more secure.

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

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from January 30–February 1, 2017, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Marge Foster, curriculum and instruction
2. Jim Hearn, student support
3. Lenora Jennings, student support and *review team coordinator*
4. Sue Kelly, curriculum and instruction
5. Pat Williams, assessment

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: chair, vice chair, and four members.

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

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

The team visited the following schools: Tyngsborough Elementary School (Pre-K–5), Tyngsborough Middle School (grades 6–8), and Tyngsborough High School (grades 9–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with 3 principals and focus groups with 12 elementary-school teachers, 9 middle-school teachers, and 7 high-school teachers.

The team observed 52 classes in the district: 20 at the high school, 14 at the middle school, and 18 at the elementary school.

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

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
- Data on the district's staffing and finances.

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

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 01/30/2017	Tuesday 01/31/2017	Wednesday 02/01/2017
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers’ association; two teacher focus groups and visits to Tyngsborough elementary and high schools for classroom observations.	Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus group; parent focus group; interview with school committee, parent focus group and visits to Tyngsborough elementary, middle, and high schools for classroom observations.	Interview with students; district review team meeting; and visits to Tyngsborough elementary, middle, and high schools for classroom observations; District wrap-up meeting with the superintendent.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

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

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	50	2.9%	84,996	8.9%
Asian	105	6.1%	63,690	6.7%
Hispanic	73	4.3%	184,782	19.4%
Native American	2	0.1%	2,125	0.2%
White	1,431	83.5%	584,665	61.3%
Native Hawaiian	--	--	855	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	52	3.0%	32,635	3.4%
All Students	1,713	100.0%	953,748	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2016

**Table B1b: Tyngsborough Public Schools
2016–2017 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	254	55.5%	14.6%	167,530	38.4%	17.4%
Econ. Disad.	240	52.4%	14.0%	288,465	66.1%	30.2%
ELLs and Former ELLs	28	6.1%	1.6%	90,204	20.7%	9.5%
All high needs students	458	100.0%	26.4%	436,416	100.0%	45.2%

Notes: As of October 1, 2016. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 1,735; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 964,514.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS Year		PARCC		Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014		2015	2016	2-Year Trend
3	CPI	114	88.4	86.3	CPI	80.3	88.6	8.3
	P+	116	65%	60%	Lv 4&5	51%	60%	9
4	CPI	114	86	86	CPI	78.6	80.7	2.1
	P+	115	64%	65%	Lv 4&5	60%	61%	1
	SGP	112	57.0	50.5	SGP	42.0	55.0	13.0
5	CPI	136	89.3	89.3	CPI	88.3	85.2	-3.1
	P+	137	77%	75%	Lv 4&5	64%	59%	-5
	SGP	131	48.0	53.0	SGP	38.0	42.0	4.0
6	CPI	134	92.1	89.8	CPI	83.1	87.4	4.3
	P+	137	79%	78%	Lv 4&5	50%	57%	7
	SGP	131	52.0	42.0	SGP	26.0	33.0	7.0
7	CPI	135	92	95.1	CPI	91.0	93.2	2.2
	P+	137	83%	88%	Lv 4&5	74%	71%	-3
	SGP	126	60.5	57.5	SGP	54.0	49.0	-5.0
8	CPI	155	94.7	93.3	CPI	97.0	90.6	-6.4
	P+	157	89%	86%	Lv 4&5	72%	59%	-13
	SGP	152	53.0	48.0	SGP	43.0	35.0	-8.0

**Table B2b: Tyngsborough Public Schools
English Language Arts Performance, 2013–2016¹²**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS/Accountability Year				State (2016)	Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016		4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
10	CPI	126	98.5	96.4	99.4	98.8	96.7	0.3	-0.6
	P+	126	96%	93%	98%	97%	91%	1	-1
	SGP	115	44.5	50.5	57.0	46.0	50.0	1.5	-11.0
All	CPI	929	91.6	90.9	88.3	89.1	87.2	-2.5	0.8
	P+	--	79%	78%	--	--	--	--	--
	SGP	769	54.0	50.0	41.0	42.0	50.0	-12.0	1.0

¹² In the All category 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS Year			PARCC		Gains and Declines
			2013	2014		2015	2016	2-Year Trend
3	CPI	114	93.5	87.8	CPI	89.3	93.5	4.2
	P+	116	84%	75%	Lv 4&5	56%	78%	22
4	CPI	115	87.6	82.6	CPI	81.0	82.6	1.6
	P+	115	62%	53%	Lv 4&5	55%	61%	6
	SGP	112	60.0	36.0	SGP	42.0	51.0	9.0
5	CPI	134	83.2	83.3	CPI	89.5	86.1	-3.4
	P+	135	62%	65%	Lv 4&5	63%	55%	-8
	SGP	130	43.0	42.0	SGP	59.0	50.0	-9.0
6	CPI	134	88	82.6	CPI	79.9	84.9	5
	P+	137	73%	64%	Lv 4&5	44%	57%	13
	SGP	130	56.5	49.0	SGP	39.0	36.0	-3.0
7	CPI	132	77.9	83.4	CPI	82.0	84.9	2.9
	P+	134	56%	64%	Lv 4&5	58%	57%	-1
	SGP	123	64.5	65.0	SGP	66.0	66.0	0.0
8	CPI	80	86.8	77.2	CPI	74.6	74.7	0.1
	P+	82	75%	52%	Lv 4&5	35%	28%	-7
	SGP	77	60.0	50.0	SGP	43.0	52.0	9.0

**Table B2d: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Mathematics Performance, 2013–2016¹³**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	MCAS/Accountability Year				State (2016)	Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016		4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
10	CPI	126	94.2	93.4	93.4	96.4	89.7	2.2	3
	P+	126	87%	87%	86%	91%	78%	4	5
	SGP	114	36.0	49.0	59.5	57.5	50.0	21.5	-2.0
All	CPI	929	87.1	84.2	88.3	89.1	81.5	2.0	0.8
	P+	--	71%	65%	--	--	--	--	--
	SGP	769	54.0	48.0	41.0	42.0	50.0	-12.0	1.0

¹³ In the All category 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

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

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2016)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2013	2014	2015	2016	State (2016)	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
5	CPI	137	87.7	79.7	81.6	83.4	76.4	-4.3	1.8
	P+	137	67%	48%	46%	58%	47%	-9	12
8	CPI	160	76.3	76.1	81.6	77.2	71.3	0.9	-4.4
	P+	160	44%	45%	50%	44%	41%	0	-6
10	CPI	119	97.6	93.5	95.4	97.9	88.9	0.3	2.5
	P+	119	93%	83%	86%	92%	73%	-1	6
All	CPI	416	86.4	82.7	85.5	85.2	78.7	-1.2	-0.3
	P+	416	66%	58%	59%	62%	54%	-4	3

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

**Table B3a: Tyngsborough Public Schools
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2013–2016¹⁴**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Accountability					2-Year Trend	4-Year Trend
				MCAS			PARCC			
				2013	2014		2015	2016		
High Needs	District	CPI	251	75.1	78.2	CPI	68.9	72.7	3.8	-2.4
		P+	--	46%	52%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	191	53.0	47.0	SGP	35.5	39.0	3.5	-14.0
	State	CPI	222,707	76.8	77.1	CPI	76.3	77.1	0.8	0.3
		P+	--	48%	50%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	165,487	47.0	47.0	SGP	47.0	47.0	0.0	0.0
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	128	--	--	CPI	76.3	79.9	3.6	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	99	--	--	SGP	38.0	39.0	1.0	--
	State	CPI	152,877	--	--	CPI	77.6	78.2	0.6	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	114,361	--	--	SGP	46.0	46.0	0.0	--
SWD	District	CPI	153	66.0	67.6	CPI	56.0	62.7	6.7	-3.3
		P+	--	32%	33%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	119	44.5	43.0	SGP	31.0	37.0	6.0	-7.5
	State	CPI	91,177	66.8	66.6	CPI	67.4	68.2	0.8	1.4
		P+	--	30%	31%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	66,633	43.0	43.0	SGP	43.0	43.0	0.0	0.0
ELL or Former ELLs	District	CPI	17	--	76.8	CPI	--	--	--	--
		P+	--	--	50%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	9	--	--	SGP	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	52,960	67.4	67.8	CPI	68.9	70.7	1.8	3.3
		P+	--	35%	36%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	35,109	53.0	54.0	SGP	53.0	54.0	1.0	1.0
All students	District	CPI	929	91.6	90.9	CPI	88.3	89.1	0.8	-2.5
		P+	--	79%	78%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	769	54.0	50.0	SGP	41.0	42.0	1.0	-12.0
	State	CPI	491,267	86.8	86.7	CPI	86.8	87.2	0.4	0.4
		P+	--	69%	69%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	388,999	51.0	50.0	SGP	50.0	50.0	0.0	-1.0

¹⁴ 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

**Table B3b: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2013–2016¹⁵**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Accountability					2-Year Trend	4-Year Trend
				MCAS			PARCC			
				2013	2014		2015	2016		
High Needs	District	CPI	248	66.9	65.3	CPI	64.4	67.2	2.8	0.3
		P+	--	36%	36%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	188	45.5	42.5	SGP	43.0	43.0	0.0	-2.5
	State	CPI	222,349	68.6	68.4	CPI	67.9	68.8	0.9	0.2
		P+	--	40%	40%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	165,191	46.0	47.0	SGP	46.0	46.0	0.0	0.0
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	127	--	--	CPI	72.3	72.2	-0.1	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	98	--	--	SGP	44.5	42.5	-2.0	--
	State	CPI	152,560	--	--	CPI	69.2	70.0	0.8	--
		P+	--	--	--	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	114,091	--	--	SGP	46.0	45.0	-1.0	--
SWD	District	CPI	151	57.5	51.7	CPI	50.5	55.5	5.0	-2.0
		P+	--	24%	16%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	116	39.5	33.0	SGP	38.5	39.0	0.5	-0.5
	State	CPI	91,049	57.4	57.1	CPI	57.3	58.1	0.8	0.7
		P+	--	22%	22%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	66,511	42.0	43.0	SGP	43.0	44.0	1.0	2.0
ELL or Former ELLs	District	CPI	17	--	73.2	CPI	--	--	--	--
		P+	--	--	50%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	9	--	--	SGP	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	53,048	63.9	63.8	CPI	64.5	65.8	1.3	1.9
		P+	--	35%	36%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	35,290	53.0	52.0	SGP	51.0	50.0	-1.0	-3.0
All students	District	CPI	924	87.1	84.2	CPI	85.3	87.3	2.0	0.2
		P+	--	71%	65%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	763	54.0	48.0	SGP	53.0	51.0	-2.0	-3.0
	State	CPI	490,612	80.8	80.3	CPI	80.7	81.5	0.8	0.7
		P+	--	61%	60%	Lv 4&5	--	--	--	--
		SGP	388,423	51.0	50.0	SGP	50.0	50.0	0.0	-1.0

¹⁵ 2015 and 2016 CPI and SGP are based on MCAS and PARCC test scores.

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

Group and Measure			Number Included (2016)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2013	2014	2015	2016	4-Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	100	69.8	66.5	71.1	68.5	-1.3	-2.6
		P+	100	36%	30%	29%	35%	-1	6
	State	CPI	89,857	66.4	67.3	66.3	65.4	-1.0	-0.9
		P+	89,857	31%	33%	32%	31%	0	-1
Econ. Disad.	District	CPI	48	--	--	74.5	68.8	--	-5.7
		P+	48	--	--	35%	38%	--	3
	State	CPI	61,476	--	--	67.1	65.8	--	-1.3
		P+	61,476	--	--	33.0%	29%	--	-4
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	63	67	55.8	65.3	63.1	-3.9	-2.2
		P+	63	30%	14%	19%	27%	-3	8
	State	CPI	38,109	59.8	60.1	60.2	59.7	-0.1	-0.5
		P+	38,109	20%	22%	22%	21%	1	-1
English language learners or Former ELLs	District	CPI	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
		P+	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	18,594	54	54	53.9	54.1	0.1	0.2
		P+	18,594	19%	18%	18%	19%	0	1
All students	District	CPI	416	86.4	82.7	85.5	85.2	-1.2	-0.3
		P+	416	66%	58%	59%	62%	-4	3
	State	CPI	208,262	79	79.6	79.4	78.7	-0.3	-0.7
		P+	208,262	53%	55%	54%	54%	1	0

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

**Table B4: Tyngsborough Public Schools
Annual Grade 9-12 Drop-Out Rates, 2012–2015**

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2012–2015		Change 2014–2015		State (2015)
	2012	2013	2014	2015	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High Needs	1.3%	4.8%	0.0%	2.2%	0.9	69%	2.2	--	3.4
Econ. Disad. ¹⁶	2.3%	4.4%	0.0%	4.9%	2.6	113%	4.9	--	3.3
Students w/ disabilities	2.3%	5.9%	0.0%	1.6%	-0.7	-30%	1.6	--	3.5
ELL	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	5.7
All students	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	-0.2	-25%	0	0%	1.9

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

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

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2013–2016		Change 2015–2016		State (2016)
	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	95.6%	95.6%	95.3%	95.9%	0.3	0.3%	0.6	0.6%	94.9%

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

¹⁶ Low income numbers used for economically disadvantaged for 2012, 2013, 2014

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

	FY14		FY15		FY16	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	\$16,047,397	\$17,646,227	\$18,270,971	\$18,225,971	\$18,523,769	\$18,663,735
By municipality	\$6,651,931	\$5,784,863	\$6,423,710	\$6,598,069	\$7,951,430	\$7,973,244
Total from local appropriations	\$22,699,328	\$23,431,090	\$24,694,681	\$24,824,040	\$26,475,199	\$26,636,979
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$3,041,599	--	\$2,852,319	--	\$2,917,733
Total expenditures	--	\$26,472,689	--	\$27,676,359	--	\$29,554,712
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$7,080,574	--	\$7,125,624	--	\$7,169,374
Required local contribution	--	\$10,531,483	--	\$10,954,033	--	\$11,087,277
Required net school spending**	--	\$17,612,057	--	\$18,079,657	--	\$18,256,651
Actual net school spending	--	\$19,912,667	--	\$20,652,734	--	\$21,034,632
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$2,300,610	--	\$2,573,077	--	\$2,777,981
Over/under required (%)	--	13.1%	--	14.2%	--	15.2%

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

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

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

Data retrieved 12/13/16 and 5/10/17

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

Expenditure Category	2013	2014	2015
Administration	\$459	\$498	\$600
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$757	\$800	\$842
Teachers	\$4,949	\$5,140	\$5,510
Other teaching services	\$921	\$985	\$1,101
Professional development	\$182	\$88	\$89
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$141	\$151	\$160
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$336	\$356	\$381
Pupil services	\$1,262	\$1,435	\$1,493
Operations and maintenance	\$1,049	\$1,103	\$1,126
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$1,503	\$1,516	\$1,523
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$11,560	\$12,072	\$12,825

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

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0 to 3)
Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Instruction						
1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject matter and content.	ES	0%	0%	50%	50%	2.5
	MS	7%	36%	29%	29%	1.8
	HS	0%	15%	40%	45%	2.3
	Total #	1	8	21	22	2.2
	Total %	2%	15%	40%	42%	
2. The teacher provides and refers to clear learning objective(s) in the lesson.	ES	6%	17%	50%	28%	2.0
	MS	14%	29%	36%	21%	1.6
	HS	6%	29%	47%	18%	1.8
	Total #	4	12	22	11	1.8
	Total %	8%	24%	45%	22%	
3. The teacher implements a lesson that reflects high expectations aligned to the learning objective (s).	ES	0%	28%	67%	6%	1.8
	MS	14%	36%	50%	0%	1.4
	HS	0%	35%	50%	15%	1.8
	Total #	2	17	29	4	1.7
	Total %	4%	33%	56%	8%	
4. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to the learning objective(s).	ES	0%	22%	72%	6%	1.8
	MS	7%	36%	50%	7%	1.6
	HS	0%	30%	60%	10%	1.8
	Total #	1	15	32	4	1.8
	Total %	2%	29%	62%	8%	
Total Score For Focus Area #1	ES					8.1
	MS					6.4
	HS					7.7
	Total					7.5

		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points (0 to 3)
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	
Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Critical Thinking						
5. Students are motivated and engaged in the lesson.	ES	0%	22%	61%	17%	1.9
	MS	0%	36%	64%	0%	1.6
	HS	0%	25%	50%	25%	2.0
	Total #	0	14	30	8	1.9
	Total %	0%	27%	58%	15%	
6. The teacher facilitates tasks that encourage students to develop and engage in critical thinking.	ES	0%	33%	50%	17%	1.8
	MS	7%	50%	43%	0%	1.4
	HS	0%	30%	65%	5%	1.8
	Total #	1	19	28	4	1.7
	Total %	2%	37%	54%	8%	
7. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	0%	25%	69%	6%	1.8
	MS	7%	43%	43%	7%	1.5
	HS	0%	30%	50%	20%	1.9
	Total #	1	16	27	6	1.8
	Total %	2%	32%	54%	12%	
Total Score For Focus Area #2	ES					5.6
	MS					4.5
	HS					5.7
	Total					5.3

		Insufficient	Minimal	Moderate	Strong	Avg Number of points
		(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(0 to 3)
Focus Area #3: Differentiated Instruction & Classroom Culture						
8. The teacher appropriately differentiates instruction so the lesson content is accessible for all learners.	ES	11%	50%	39%	0%	1.3
	MS	36%	57%	7%	0%	0.7
	HS	20%	55%	20%	5%	1.1
	Total #	11	28	12	1	1.1
	Total %	21%	54%	23%	2%	
9. The teacher uses appropriate resources aligned to students' diverse learning needs. (e.g., technology, manipulatives, support personnel).	ES	0%	22%	78%	0%	1.8
	MS	7%	57%	29%	7%	1.4
	HS	0%	50%	45%	5%	1.6
	Total #	1	22	27	2	1.6
	Total %	2%	42%	52%	4%	
10. The classroom climate is characterized by respectful behavior, routines, tone, and discourse.	ES	0%	6%	72%	22%	2.2
	MS	0%	14%	71%	14%	2.0
	HS	0%	10%	70%	20%	2.1
	Total #	0	5	37	10	2.1
	Total %	0%	10%	71%	19%	
11. The teacher conducts appropriate formative assessments to check for understanding and provide feedback to students.	ES	0%	11%	83%	6%	1.9
	MS	14%	36%	43%	7%	1.4
	HS	0%	35%	40%	25%	1.9
	Total #	2	14	29	7	1.8
	Total %	4%	27%	56%	13%	
Total Score For Focus Area #3	ES					7.2
	MS					5.5
	HS					6.7
	Total					6.5