

District Review Report

Whitman-Hanson Regional School District



Review conducted January 13-16, 2014

Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

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Whitman-Hanson RSD District Review Overview

Purpose

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

Districts reviewed in the 2013-2014 school year include districts classified into Level 2 or Level 3 of ESE's framework for district accountability and assistance. Review reports may be used by ESE and the district to establish priority for assistance and make resource allocation decisions.

Methodology

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

Site Visit

The site visit to the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District was conducted from January 13-16, 2014. The site visit included 27 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 108 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted 2 focus groups, 1 with 23 elementary school teachers and 1 with 4 high school teachers. No teachers came to the middle school teacher focus group.

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 78 classrooms in 7 schools. The team collected data using an instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District serves students from two communities, Whitman and Hanson. Each has a town manager form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected. There are 10 members of the school committee, 6 from Whitman and 4 from Hanson, and they meet monthly.

The current superintendent has been in the position for five years. The district leadership team includes the assistant superintendent of district operations; the assistant superintendent of teaching and learning; the administrator of special education and pupil personnel services; the director of business services; curriculum coordinators for ELA, mathematics, science, history and social studies and foreign languages and related arts; a director of guidance; six principals; and one interim principal. Central office positions have been decreasing in number over the past three years. The district has seven principals leading seven schools. There are 237.5 FTE teachers in the district in 2013-2014.

In 2013-2014, 4,165 students were enrolled in the district's 7 schools:

**Table 1: Whitman-Hanson Regional School District
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment,* 2013-2014**

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Indian Head Elementary School	ES	3-5	401
John H. Duval Elementary School	ES	K-5	565
Louise A. Conley Elementary School	ES	K-5	576
Maquan Elementary School	ES	PK-2	413
Hanson Middle School	MS	6-8	456
Whitman Middle School	MS	6-8	578
Whitman-Hanson Regional High School	HS	9-12	1,176
Totals	7 schools	PK-12	4,165
*As of October 1, 2013			
Source: ESE school/district profiles			

Between 2009 and 2014 overall student enrollment decreased by 6.7 percent (4,465 students in 2008-2009 and 4,165 students in 2013-2014). Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and English language learners (ELLs) and former ELLs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were lower than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for 24 districts of similar size (4,000-4,999 students) in fiscal year 2012: \$9,933 as compared with a median of \$11,704. Actual net school spending has been above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B8 in Appendix B.

Student Performance¹

Whitman-Hanson is a Level 2 district because its lowest performing schools are in a Level 2.

- The 2013 cumulative Progress and Performance Index (PPI) for the district was 56 for all students and 61 for high needs students; the target is 75.
- Two of the district's six schools with reportable data are in Level 1 for reaching their cumulative PPI goal of 75 for all students and high need students.
 - Conley Elementary is in the 42nd percentile of elementary schools and Whitman-Hanson Regional is in the 46th percentile of high schools.
- Four of the district's six schools with reportable data are Level 2 schools for not meeting their gap narrowing targets for all students and/or high needs students.
 - Duval is in the 44th percentile and Indian Head is in the 56th percentile of elementary schools.
 - Hanson Middle is in the 48th percentile and Whitman Middle is in the 28th percentile of middle schools.

The district did not meet its 2013 Composite Performance Index (CPI) target for ELA, mathematics, and science.

- ELA CPI was 88.6 in 2013, below the district's target of 91.2.
- Mathematics CPI was 81.8 in 2013, below the district's target of 84.6.
- Science CPI was 81.4 in 2013, below the district's target of 83.3.

The district's performance in ELA varied by grade and school.

- ELA proficiency for all students in the district was 71 percent in 2010 and 2013, above the state rate of 69 percent.
- ELA proficiency was above the state rate by 7 and 9 percentage points in the 3rd and 4th grades, respectively, and by 1 to 4 percentage points in the 5th, 8th, and 10th grades. ELA proficiency was below the state rate by 1 and 2 percentage points in the 6th and 7th grades, respectively.

¹ See also student performance tables in Appendix B

- ELA proficiency was higher in 2013 than 2010 in the 3rd grade by 3 percentage points and in the 4th and 10th grades by 12 and 13 percentage points, respectively. ELA proficiency was lower in 2013 than 2010 by 2 to 3 percentage points in the 5th and 8th grades and by 8 to 9 percentage points in the 6th and 7th grades.
- In 2013 the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced in ELA varied by elementary school, from 58 percent at Conley to 71 percent at Indian Head.

The district's performance in mathematics varied by grade and school.

- Mathematics proficiency rates for all students were 58 percent in 2010 and 61 percent in 2013, equal to the state rate of 61 percent.
- Mathematics proficiency in 2013 was above the state rate by 8 and 6 percentage points in the 3rd and 4th grades, respectively, and by 3 and 1 percentage points in the 5th and 10th grades, respectively. Math proficiency was higher in 2013 than 2010 by 8 to 14 percentage points in the 3rd through 5th grades.
- Mathematics proficiency in 2013 was below the state rate by 1 percentage point in the 6th grade and by 7 and 4 percentage points in the 7th and 8th grades, respectively.
 - Whitman Middle 8th grade mathematics proficiency was 46 percent compared with Hanson Middle's 8th grade mathematics proficiency of 60 percent.

Science proficiency rates were lower in 2013 than 2010 for the district as a whole and in grades 5 and 8, but higher in the 10th grade.

- Science proficiency in the 5th grade was 54 percent in 2013, 6 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate of 60 percent; above the state rate of 51 percent.
 - Science proficiency in the 5th grade varied by school, from 47 percent at Duval to 71 percent at Conley.
- Science proficiency in the 8th grade was 35 percent in 2013, 11 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate of 46 percent, and below the state rate of 39 percent.
 - In the 8th grade science proficiency was 42 percent at Hanson Middle 13 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate and at Whitman Middle science proficiency was 31 percent, 9 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate, compared to the state rate of 39 percent.
- In the 10th grade science proficiency was 79 percent in 2013, 4 percentage points higher than the 2010 rate of 75 percent, and above the state rate of 71 percent.

The district's high needs students improved in both ELA and mathematics between 2010 and 2013.

- High needs students' ELA proficiency was 50 percent in 2013, 6 percentage points higher than the 2010 rate of 44 percent.
- High needs students' mathematics proficiency steadily increased from 33 percent in 2010 to 38 percent in 2013, below the state rate of 40 percent.

The district improved its four year and five year cohort graduation rates, exceeded the 2014 annual four and five year cohort graduation rate targets of 80 percent and 85 percent, and steadily decreased its annual dropout rate.²

- The four year cohort graduation rate steadily improved from 86.7 percent in 2010 to 94.2 percent in 2013, above the state rate of 85.0 percent.
- The five year cohort graduation rate steadily improved from 86.1 percent in 2009 to 94.2 percent in 2012, above the state rate of 87.5 percent.
- The annual grade 9-12 dropout rate for Whitman-Hanson decreased steadily from 2.5 percent in 2010 to 0.8 percent in 2013, below the 2.2 percent statewide rate.

² Whether the 2014 graduation rate targets are met is determined based on the 2013 four year cohort graduation rate and 2012 five year cohort graduation rate. ESE's 2014 accountability determinations have not yet been released.

Whitman-Hanson RSD District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. **The superintendent has aligned the annual budget process, the development of school improvement plans (SIPs), and the establishment of administrator evaluation goals. Her collaborative leadership style has established an effective team of principals who are focused on the same expectations and promote the efficient allocation of limited resources in a difficult economic time.**
 - A. The district is experiencing difficult financial times.
 1. The district and town operational override for fiscal year 2014 was defeated in both Whitman and Hanson in the spring of 2013.
 2. A new school construction project to consolidate the Indian Head and the Maquan elementary schools in Hanson was not approved by voters last year.
 3. The fiscal year 2010 operational budget increase was 0 percent. Although an override for a 6 percent increase for fiscal year 2013 was approved in spring 2012, the superintendent stated that it has been hard to recover from fiscal year 2010.
 - B. District and school goals are aligned; therefore, district priorities are reflected in school priorities.
 1. The goals in SIPs are aligned to the district strategic plan and to the DIP.
 - C. The goals in SIPs and the DIP are used to set evaluation goals for administrators.
 1. Principals use the goals in SIPs to set their evaluation goals and told the team that they feel a greater connection to the school and the district by sharing their goals with teachers.
 2. The superintendent uses the goals in the DIP to set evaluation goals to avoid replication of effort and shares them with principals and teachers.
 - D. The superintendent wants all principals to be an integral part of the budget process and to reflect the needs of their schools and the district in the annual budget. Budget requests are transparent to all stakeholders in the district.
 1. The superintendent deliberately aligns the budget development and SIP development processes to ensure that the budget reflects district priorities.
 2. The superintendent looks to the DIP and the SIPs for priorities to include in the budget. The superintendent is aware of the issues included in the SIPs before the budget is developed.

3. Principals stated that the alignment of the budget and SIP development gives the SIPs more credibility in the budget process.
4. Principals are responsible for the improvement that takes place in their schools and they participate in district improvement. The leadership team understands all district needs.
5. Parents in a focus group stated that school data drives the budget requests.
6. The school district presents its priorities to the towns and the towns are aware of the district priorities.

Impact: The superintendent's strategy to align district timelines for the development of the annual budget and SIPs enables the administrative leadership team to promote school and district priorities in the spending plan. It also ensures that resources are allocated appropriately, which is particularly important during difficult financial times. The use of aligned district and school goals to set evaluation goals for administrators establishes an efficient accountability system. Sharing these goals with staff and faculty establishes a cohesive district improvement effort. Principals are aware of the entire district's financial picture and are able to effectively allocate funds for district priorities.

Curriculum and Instruction

2. **The district has initiated several good practices in curriculum, such as the use of common assessments and common templates to document the components of the curriculum.**
 - A. A review of documents showed that common curriculum templates are now being used in grades 6-12 as the district works toward aligning curricula with the 2011 Massachusetts ELA and Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks.
 1. The new curriculum template includes all components of a comprehensive curriculum document: course description, instructional strategies, student learning expectations, standards, resources (including hot links), Essential Questions, targeted skills, assessments, writing assignments, and terminology/vocabulary.
 2. Administrators and teacher-leaders spoke of the district's intent to use this template in grades 6-12 science when curriculum alignment with the Next Generation science standards begins.
 - B. Common benchmarks and end-of-unit assessments are embedded in newly revised curriculum documents at the elementary and high school levels.
 1. A document review and interviews with curriculum coordinators showed that revised curricula at the high school in ELA, mathematics, and science reflected embedded common assessments by course, including writing assignments, end-of-unit assessments, and authentic performance assessments using *Laying the Foundation* resources and lessons.

2. A document review of the district's PK-5 Literacy Guides identified the inclusion of benchmark and common assessments by grade level, including *Reading Street* end-of-unit assessments, running records benchmarks, the dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills (DIBELS), DAZE (a new DIBELS NEXT measure), and Fountas & Pinnell guided reading levels.
- C. There is evidence of good practices in vertical and horizontal coordination of curriculum across the district.
1. Curriculum leadership positions at the middle schools and the high school have been re-established to improve vertical and horizontal coordination of curriculum and instruction in grades 6-12.
 2. Common planning time for curriculum articulation and development has been built into teacher schedules, including grade level professional learning communities (PLCs) at the elementary level, common prep time at the middle and high schools, and grade level and vertical team meetings at the two middle schools.
 3. Teachers and administrators, particularly at the elementary and high schools, use data systematically to revise curricula, guide program decisions, and inform the instructional needs of students and the instructional practice of teachers.

Impact: The establishment of K-12 comprehensive curricula and embedded assessments will ensure that all students have equitable access to high quality core content and instruction. Additionally, the analysis of common assessment, benchmark, and other data will strengthen the district's capacity to inform instructional practice and meet the diverse academic needs of all students.

Assessment

3. **A balanced, comprehensive assessment system at the elementary level provides multiple sources of useful data to monitor progress, evaluate student achievement, and inform decision-making.**
 - A. A review of documents and interviews with leaders and teachers indicated that common summative, benchmark, and formative assessments are used in ELA and mathematics.
 1. Common summative assessments include unit post-tests from *Reading Street* and *enVisionMATH*, which teachers sometimes fine-tune to accommodate specific classroom learning needs. Teachers also use the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, DIBELS, and DAZE to monitor individual literacy progress and group students for instruction.
 2. K-2 teachers administer aimsweb literacy and mathematics assessments three times a year to assess and track progress in learning objectives and skills such as word fluency and

mathematics concepts and applications. At grade-level PLCs, teachers share and monitor data to group students and fine-tune curriculum and instruction.

3. Leaders described an increase in the use of formative assessments such as turn-and-talk and two-column notes. Review team members observed the clear and consistent use of formative assessments in 66 percent of visited elementary classes. (See Appendix C.)
- B. Common writing assessments are coordinated across elementary schools.
1. Six teacher-created common writing prompts, common writing rubrics, and teaching guides are now implemented at all elementary schools.
 2. This year, teachers and students will select writing samples focused on specific elements for each student's writing portfolio to show grade-to-grade progress.
- C. Elementary teachers are developing authentic assessments for science.
1. The DSAC is supporting teachers' development of performance assessments for science.
 2. Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) and mathematics are being integrated in the new curriculum units and assessments, beginning this year in grades 1 and 2.
- D. A district leader provided evidence of continuous improvement in how teachers record, manage, and communicate elementary assessment data.
1. Although there is access to BaselineEdge to manage assessment data, teachers currently piloting the Mastery Connect management tool noted that it enables clearer and more useable data.
 2. The standards-based report card will be aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- E. There are structures and systematic procedures at the elementary schools to collect, analyze, and use assessment data to improve teaching and learning.
1. At each elementary school, there are two teacher-leaders, weekly grade-level PLC meetings, common prep time (not daily at every school), monthly faculty meetings focused on teaching and learning, regular vertical team meetings, and regular data team meetings, (at varied frequency across elementary schools).
 2. School data teams have helped teachers review and discuss student progress and common assessment results. Transparent data displays posted in school data rooms have also ensured clarity and transparency of data for communication and decision-making.
 3. Elementary teachers noted that there is still a need for additional training to help them learn to analyze data more effectively.

- F. MCAS results are analyzed by principals, used to set SIP goals, and shared at faculty meetings.

Impact: At the elementary level, the district has designed and implemented a comprehensive, balanced assessment system for core academic subjects. Systems and practices are in place to maximize information from data and other sources to evaluate and monitor student progress, modify instruction, and gather information for curricular decision-making. Although teachers' expertise to use assessment data to adjust teaching practices and support the diverse learning needs of individual and groups of students may vary across schools, there are coherent systems and improvement practices in place.

4. Current district leadership and the leadership of re-established subject coordinators at the middle schools are strengthening the assessment system by ensuring equity, balance, and comprehensiveness across both schools.

- A. Until the current school year, there had been limited systematic leadership for curriculum and assessment at the middle schools for four years.
 - 1. In the past, middle school teachers used similar, multiple assessment formats. However, coordination and cross-school data analysis were difficult to achieve because of insufficient district oversight, an absence of school-based coordinators for the past four years, and different instructional materials. Additionally, study sequences varied among teachers.
 - 2. Under the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (2012-2015), the role of high school curriculum coordinators has expanded to include the responsibilities for the horizontal and vertical curriculum coordination, articulation, and alignment for grades 6-12.
- B. With subject curriculum coordinators now in place, there has been progress in implementing common teaching materials and using common benchmark assessments in ELA and mathematics, science, and history/social studies.
 - 1. The coordinators have set expectations for curriculum and assessment at the middle schools by meeting with teachers and sharing templates. They are now working once a month with curriculum liaisons and vertical teacher teams to inventory curriculum and to oversee the development of common curriculum and assessments across both middle schools.
 - a. An interviewee noted that middle school ELA teachers have now agreed to the same sequence of study for poetry and novels in both middle schools.
 - b. A district leader noted that a template is in place to align curriculum and assessments, but stated that teachers need more time to meet in order to complete alignment.
 - 2. Middle school teachers and leaders told the team that they welcome district support for curriculum work from the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. One leader noted that the schools were relying on the central office to help move the effort forward.

- C. A leader described the goal to use common benchmark assessments to monitor student progress and achievement and to identify how teachers can support student learning.
 - 1. In mathematics, teachers now implement common assessments using the pre- and post-chapter tests from the new *Math Connects* program. These have also been identified as potential district-determined measures (DDMs) for the purposes of educator evaluation. The mathematics coordinator is also helping teachers develop new tests to assess student growth, which may replace the pre- and post-tests as DDMs. Also, IXL mathematics assessments are administered for remedial mathematics.
 - 2. Teachers have aligned the ELA curriculum through trimester 1 to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and have administered common trimester 1 exams. The ELA coordinator has also introduced the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) rubric to middle school teachers.
 - 3. Guided by *Laying the Foundation* strategies, several new ELA units and assessments, especially writing assignments, have been used to evaluate students' understanding as well as knowledge gains and skill development.
 - a. For example, a grade 6 ELA post-assessment, which will be used as a DDM, asks students to "Choose a vivid time from your childhood. Narrate the events related to the childhood memory you have chosen so that your readers will understand why the event was important and memorable."
 - b. A few middle school teachers, part of a group of 20 secondary school teachers, have participated in the "Introduction to Laying the Foundation" (LtF) professional development. Interviewees noted that this has encouraged teachers to develop ideas in more depth and use higher order thinking in both instructional and assessment strategies, especially in writing assignments.
- D. This year, science teachers have designed and implemented common trimester exams based on the 2006 Massachusetts Science Frameworks while awaiting new science standards to revise curriculum. One trimester exam will be used as a DDM.
 - 1. The coordinator has graphed and arrayed data from multiple-choice questions on spreadsheets by classroom results/by teacher compared to the whole. Teachers from both middle schools and the subject coordinator analyzed the results to inform and adjust instruction. Teachers told the team that, at first, they found the process uncomfortable, but that is no longer the case.
- E. To assess writing, both middle schools now use common open response writing rubrics, common writing prompts, and common writing rubrics that are included in the middle school literacy rubric. Teacher teams have not yet examined data from writing assessments.
- F. Both middle schools provide time and structure for teacher teams to meet and collaborate.

1. PLCs meet in grade-level teams weekly and regular grade-level common prep time ensures better communications and shared decision-making within and across the schools.
 2. In addition, departmental vertical teams meet monthly with curriculum coordinators and grade-level teams meet monthly with curriculum coordinators to facilitate coordination and communication across both middle schools.
- G. Interviewees noted that a data team was started at the middle schools, but when two trained teachers left the district, the initiative was dropped. A middle school leader said that there are no data teams at the middle schools. Administrators reported that the initiative needed to be reevaluated and additional training has been provided.
- H. MCAS analysis to understand trends for strengths and weaknesses may take place in faculty meetings, in PLCs, and by individual teachers. In addition, teachers identify students on the cusp of moving up one performance level and use specific teaching strategies to help improve achievement.
- I. Although interviewees seemed knowledgeable about a range of formative assessments, teachers were observed clearly and consistently using formative assessments to check for understanding in only 40 percent of observed middle school lessons. (See Appendix C.)

Impact: The middle schools are in a transitional period in terms of assessments. The restoration of curriculum coordinators and stronger direction from the central office has meant that both middle schools are now collaborating more effectively to share common curriculum and assessments and have more equitable academic programs. Infrastructure supports of time to meet and leadership expertise from coordinators have facilitated progress; however, this work has just begun. Overall, both schools and ultimately the students benefit from the more thoughtful and coordinated effort that coordinators have brought to help teachers revise the curriculum, instruction, and assessments.

5. The high school assessment system includes a number of best practices and shows balance and comprehensiveness in the use of multiple assessment formats. Assessment has been enriched and deepened by the recent schoolwide literacy initiative, which promotes assessment for understanding, especially through writing.

- A. Information from interviews and a document review indicated that overall ELA, mathematics, and science assessments in core courses include a range of summative and formative assessments using multiple assessment formats. Teachers use assessment results to guide instructional and curricular decisions and can meet with subject coordinators to discuss assessment results.
1. In ELA, students take common trimester exams and complete multiple writing assignments, including writing to long response prompts. There is time to share and discuss results during common prep time (CPT). ELA teachers also use objective tests developed using items from

- a test bank that are not common. Teachers and students evaluate writing using schoolwide writing rubrics included in the school's Literacy Rubrics.
- a. A review of ELA curriculum materials posted on the district website for grades 9-12 showed unit assessments and activities for core courses. Some assessments can be characterized as generic, for example, "teacher-created tests, quizzes, class discussions, projects, and essays." However, teachers have also designed more inspiring assessments for which students do original research and writing.
 - b. Posted curriculum documents also included detailed long and short writing assignments for core courses, which require students to use analytical and creative thinking to demonstrate understanding of literary themes, elements, and genres.
2. In mathematics, teachers implement common trimester assessments and share and analyze results. The mathematics department has also formed its own data team.
- a. In an interview, the review team was told of the frequent on-the-spot formative assessments used in mathematics lessons to check for understanding, such as student white boards, "check ins," exit tickets, and the opportunity for students to correct tests to demonstrate mastery. In one observed classroom, a mathematics test labeled "Test Corrections" was posted for students to review.
3. In STE, students in core courses take teacher-developed trimester exams based on 2006 standards. Students use teacher-developed lab rubrics; although they are not common, they have similar requirements. Formative assessments include ticket-to-leave, turn-and-talk, clicker checks, and small white boards.
- a. Common science exams are reviewed informally to identify students who need to do test corrections and then meet with the teacher to explain their thinking and to demonstrate understanding of tested concepts.
4. The high school uses ESE's Early Warning Information System (EWIS) to identify at-risk students entering grade 9. The school invites the at-risk students to participate in the Mission Possible Academy where achievement data is tracked and monitored carefully by high school leaders and teachers to ensure that students receive academic support.
- B. Frequent formative classroom assessments to check for understanding are an integral component of lessons, based on information from interviews and classroom observations.
1. In classroom visits, review team members noted the clear and consistent use of formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction in 65 percent of observed high school classrooms. (See Appendix C.)
 2. Review team members also noted the clear and consistent use by teachers of questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding in 60 percent

of observed high school classes. Students were observed elaborating on content and ideas when responding to questions in 30 percent of visited high school classrooms. (See Appendix C.)

- C. The literacy initiative was described as a “culture change” at the high school that has had an impact on how literacy, especially writing, is assigned and assessed.
 - 1. The NEASC self-assessment along with MCAS, PSAT, and SAT results indicated that students could not develop topics well and led to the development of schoolwide literacy goals.
 - 2. Now ELA teachers are not the only writing teachers. Every teacher uses writing assignments to develop and assess students’ ability to write using both conventional thinking and higher order thinking. Teachers and students assess writing using common rubrics included in the school’s Literacy Rubric.
 - a. In algebra, students are asked to explain in writing, “How do transformations of algebraic functions translate to the differences in a graph?” An interviewee described how this assessment requires students to explain the theory and how and when it is used, noting that all teachers have incorporated assessments like this into instruction.
 - b. In a chemistry class, students are asked to apply their forensic analysis skills by writing a letter explaining who was guilty of a forgery and a murder and why.
 - c. In an observed ELA class, students who had read Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* were writing a personal oration based on Marc Antony’s speech that begins, “Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.” A good example of applying knowledge to real life was a student’s oration that began, “Friends, citizens and residents of Hanson, lend me your ears.” The text described the need to build a new school to benefit Hanson’s elementary students.
- D. The high school has recently organized a data team to analyze and share data to support improvements to curriculum and instruction.
 - 1. Leaders told the review team that the high school data team, composed of coordinators, guidance, and special education personnel, has mainly analyzed MCAS results and shared recommendations with departments.
 - 2. Coordinators used data team recommendations from MCAS analyses at department meetings to address challenges. For example, the science department revised the teaching of genetics. The ELA department looked more closely at how best to teach poetry.
- E. Unlike the elementary and middle schools, the high school schedule does not have dedicated time for teachers to convene regularly in PLCs to share practices, analyze data, and collaborate.

1. High school teachers meet monthly in department meetings to do collaborative work. They also share daily common prep time with colleagues.
2. Interviewees noted that teachers do meet during CPT, but are not required to do so. A leader noted that whether or not a teacher agrees to meet depends on the individual.

Impact: The assessment system at the high school provides teachers with a range of summative, benchmark, and formative assessments to monitor and measure student achievement and progress. Assessments provide data and other information to inform curricular and instructional decision-making. Assessment data also guides teachers' decisions to support the learning needs of individual students and groups of students. With support from a newly organized data team, teachers and leaders can also be informed by analyses of achievement data such as MCAS results. An example of the power of data analysis at the high school was the synergy of the outcomes of NEASC self-reflection exercises and the analyses of MCAS, PSAT, and SAT data. These drove the programmatic decision to ensure a stronger literacy initiative in all subjects, with a focus on writing across the curriculum. The schoolwide literacy program also aligns well with PARCC requirements to ensure that all students are well prepared for college and career through a strong background in reading and writing.

Human Resources and Professional Development

6. The district, as an early adopter of the new educator evaluation system, is using the process to record and track goals, to assign ratings to performance, and to promote focused performance alignment with SIP and DIP goals.

- A. Interviews and a document review showed that the district has been using the state's new evaluation system for three years.
 1. Administrators told the review team that the district's former system's rating protocols and procedures were similar to those used in the new system, which made it easy to adopt the new system.
 - a. A review of randomly selected personnel files, interviews, and documents showed that all four final ratings are used in the district's official evaluation records.
 2. A review of evaluation documents contained in personnel files showed that 75 percent of unit A personnel's student achievement goals were aligned with school improvement goals for their home school.
 - a. Goals that were not aligned with SIP academic goals were in non-core academic positions (for example, librarian, counselor, and physical education teacher), but were agreed to by the evaluator.

3. The district purchased an electronic tracking system to record walkthroughs and to track individual and schoolwide progress toward goal attainment, the results of which are filed in official records.
 - a. The electronic tracking system is in use in all schools and training for administrators in that system has taken place.
 4. The superintendent and principals discuss the administrator rubric during the superintendent's regularly scheduled school visits.
 - a. The evaluation rubric was filed in each administrator's personnel file viewed by the team.
 5. The district evaluation process included nine overall Needs Improvement (NI) ratings for 2012-2013. All educators who received a NI rating are on improvement plans using Research for Better Teaching's "The Skillful Teacher" protocol with time frames for improvement. One administrator received a final NI rating. Administrators reported that this administrator is no longer in a leadership position.
- B. The district is currently developing DDMs at several levels as a pilot to include in its educator evaluation system.
1. Several levels of staff and schools, including teachers' association leadership, are working on this project.

Impact: The district has exhibited a strong commitment to piloting and institutionalizing the new educator evaluation system, and as a result has modeled how substantial accountability measures can be integrated over time into the culture of an active regional school district. Additionally, the commitment to educator evaluation will improve staff competency and likely lead to improved student achievement.

Student Support

7. **The district provides practices at all three school levels that monitor and support students' academic and social-emotional progress. Efforts to support the district's overarching tenet of "Every child, every day" reach many students.**
 - A. At the elementary and middle school levels, the district has implemented practices to identify at-risk students and respond to their needs.
 1. The supervisor of attendance reviews attendance data weekly with assistant principals in the elementary schools. They calculate the percentage of absences in real time rather than waiting until the end of the semester, resulting in a more rapid response to students with a high rate of absence.

- a. When an elementary school student's absence level reaches 15 percent, a letter is sent home. At 18 percent, a school-based meeting with family and student is required and a support plan is documented. If absence exceeds 18 percent, the supervisor of attendance works with the family, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and area county probation teams, as required by Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) legislation.
 2. School administrators reported that attendance is a useful but insufficient indicator of students at risk, since some at-risk students regularly attend school. Therefore, elementary schools have implemented the Responsive Classroom curriculum addressing home-based problems through daily discussions. The curriculum promotes acceptance, builds community, and helps surface behavioral issues to which logical consequences can be applied.
 3. School administrators described instances of vertical and horizontal communication about students at risk. The supervisor of attendance alerts the middle schools' staff about transitioning at-risk students, and middle school guidance counselors have weekly meetings to discuss the at-risk students in their schools. Information about at-risk students is shared vertically in monthly meetings of middle school and high school guidance staff.
 4. Parents reported that some schools in the district welcome the participation of parents in the school. Additionally, parents can use the parent portal on the district website to monitor their child's performance data and homework assignments, although this information is not made available regularly on the parent portal by all teachers at all schools.
- B. The high school supports at-risk students as they transition to high school and seek to complete their high school education ready for college and career.
1. The high school principal uses EWIS data about middle schools students to identify those at risk in order to plan for their transition to high school. This may include placing students in the Mission Possible Academy (the Academy), a cohort-based transition program for grade 9 and 10 students, supporting their return to regular education classes within two years through counseling, school homework help, late transportation home, and online classes as needed for credit recovery and family engagement activities. An administrator told the team that a high school adjustment counselor with time split between daytime and evening classes has just been hired.
 2. The high school special education staff and guidance staff analyze attendance and performance data, get feedback from teachers and parents, and discuss the analysis in weekly meetings to proactively identify students needing tailored attention. Staff see about 200 students per year and test about 60 percent to ascertain which need individualized education programs (IEPs) or which might benefit from RTI and general education support (for example, students whose grades begin to suffer because of over-involvement in extra-curricular activities).

3. High school special education administrators reported they have strongly advocated for high quality instruction in the least restrictive learning environment for students with disabilities and that the district service model is shifting away from substantially separate classrooms to inclusion and in limited instances a co-teaching model.
4. The guidance department has communicated the overarching college and career readiness goal that all grade 12 students have a post-graduation plan (for employment, two-year college, four-year college, military, etc.). Interview participants reported that high school administrators, guidance, and special education staff monitor career and college readiness by directly supporting students' achievement (MCAS, PSAT and SAT results), high school graduation (offering evening school including a credit recovery option), and by reviewing all students' post-graduation plans. They support college and career readiness indirectly through pre-AP professional development for teachers.
 - a. School committee members told the team that the district was named to a "prestige" list of U.S. and Canadian schools for the number of its students receiving an AP score of 3 or above. According to ESE data, in the 2012-2013 school year 72.4 percent of AP test-takers in the district received scores of 3 or above, compared with the state average of 68.8 percent.
 - b. Participants reported that the guidance office actively engages parents in the college readiness process by inviting them to school to attend workshops on Naviance software that helps identify good college matches for specific student achievement profiles and on how to navigate FAFSA, the federal financial aid application.
 - c. The high school offers Community Evening School for students at risk of not graduating. This is an alternative route to high school graduation offered in afternoons and evenings and provides a 75-credit diploma versus the regular 106-credit high school diploma. Although this alternative route does not meet MassCore guidelines, it provides an option to keep at-risk students in school and studying to graduation. Career Explorations, in which community people visit to discuss various career paths with students, is a key component of the evening program. The graduation rate has risen to 94.2 percent in 2013 up from 83 percent in 2009 and higher than the 2013 state average of 85 percent. The district dropout rate was 0.8 percent in 2013, improved from the 2009 rate of 3.7 percent, and lower than the 2013 state rate of 2.2 percent.
 - d. A special education staff report estimated that 80 percent of students on education plans go on to post-high school education. Cognitively impaired students can participate in a transition-based project for 18-22 year olds to receive instruction in communication, literacy, mathematics, and community awareness as well as employment coaching.

Impact: The use of attendance data, consequences for absence that engage families and community partners, and classroom curriculum to address home-based problems daily, coupled with horizontal and

vertical communication among teachers and student support staff has created an environment that prevents at-risk students from “falling through the cracks.”

High schools that enact practices to know students well can support their academic and social-emotional development at critical junctures in students’ high school years, for example, transition to high school, high-stakes testing (MCAS, SATs and APs), and decisions about college and career based on knowledge and understanding of options. These practices increase the likelihood that students, including those at risk, can attain high achievement outcomes and college and career readiness.

8. Districtwide efforts are made to create an environment in which all students feel safe and supported.

- A. The district demonstrates a respect for students’ differences when it provides a variety of options for students as they progress toward college and career readiness.
 - 1. The district has organized specific special education service pathways by town. Students needing behavioral support are assigned to a Whitman elementary school and middle school and developmentally delayed students are assigned to a Hanson elementary school and middle school.
 - 2. The district provides three-tiered instruction to support differences in learning. Administrators told the review team that the district re-vamped the former four-tiered system by eliminating the lowest tier and raised the expectations at each tier level. In an effort to better serve students in substantially separate classrooms, special education staff has created a co-taught tiered curriculum in sections of grades 9 and 10 MCAS prep that provides students a fully integrated classroom experience.
 - 3. There is a small group of English language learners (ELLs) in the district (n=14). A provider, qualified to teach ELLs, is employed by the district and offers pull-out instruction based on the WIDA “Can dos” to the small group of ELLs across the district. A district administrator stated that the ESL specialist was especially effective in ensuring that ELLs graduate from high school.
- B. The district has created school environments in which students feel safe.
 - 1. All students who participated in the student interview (n=20) reported feeling safe socially and emotionally in school, citing strong police presence, practice lock-downs, and school security systems.
 - 2. Most parents on the school council voiced their perception that schools were safe for children, also citing the presence of police officers, as well as drop-off/pickup-up procedures and the welcoming attitude of school staff.

Impact: A sense of safety encompasses feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe in the spaces that students inhabit. When a district, through policies, procedures and options, strives to support

students and secure the physical space of the school, students' sense of safety in school is enhanced and they are able to focus on progressing academically and preparing for college and careers.

Financial and Asset Management

9. The district prepares its budget internally in an inclusive and transparent manner. In addition, the district considers the priorities and resource requests in the DIP and SIPs in preparing the annual budget.

- A. The superintendent involves the district's major stakeholders in the budget process.
 - 1. The fiscal year 2014 budget process began at the start of the 2013 school year with a meeting of the administrative team consisting of the assistant superintendents, the director of business services, the principals, the curriculum coordinators, and the guidance director. Principals are asked to consider their needs and to deliver their budgets to the superintendent in October and November.
 - 2. The superintendent begins initial budget discussions with the school committee in September, at which time budget goals are set. The finance subcommittee of the school committee meets throughout the fall.
- B. After losing override votes in both towns, the district is taking steps to improve communications, dialogue, and trust with town officials.
 - 1. Town officials are invited and regularly attend school committee meetings during the budget process.
 - 2. In an effort to improve communication among the school district, the school committee, and town officials, the superintendent established a Joint Finance Committee for the fiscal year 2015 budget preparation. This committee includes the superintendent, the assistant superintendent for operations, the director of business services, two school committee members, town administrators from Hanson and Whitman, and one member each from the Hanson Finance Committee and the Whitman Finance Committee.
- C. The DIP and SIPs were considered in preparing the fiscal year 2014 budget.
 - 1. The superintendent confirmed that out of a list of 31 requests identified in the DIP and the SIPs, 15 requests were either partially or totally addressed through the operating budget or grants. Many other items were included in the original budget but were reduced when the override requests in both towns were defeated. Principals agreed that their budget requests were considered, and when possible included in the fiscal year 2014 budget.

Impact: As a result of the inclusive and transparent internal budget process and the use of DIP and SIP recommendations in the development of the annual budget, school staff and town officials are well informed in a timely way about the school department budget, goals, and objectives

10. The district uses external partnerships to provide additional resources to its staff and students.

- A. Interviews and a document review showed that the district works with educational collaboratives to deliver services to students and staff.
 - 1. The district has agreements with both the North River Collaborative and the Pilgrim Area Collaborative to provide educational and medical services to students with IEPs.
 - 2. The North River Collaborative provides professional development opportunities to district staff and provides social work interns for students with disabilities.
- B. The district partners with area colleges and universities to provide learning opportunities to the district's staff and students as well as to the students of the colleges and universities.
 - 1. Bridgewater State University (BSU) provides a program for students with disabilities ages 19 to 22. A district leader said that BSU also has a program to provide student teachers an opportunity to learn and teach in district classrooms.
 - 2. A school principal described a Massasoit Community College post-program for high school students to earn college credits.
 - 3. Beginning teachers participate in an induction program that offers graduate credits from Fitchburg State University. The district provides mentor training on a regular basis.
 - 4. Lesley University works with the district on academic initiatives.**
- C. **The district partners with the Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board to provide work-study programs for at-risk students in the district.**

Impact: The district is leveraging limited financial resources to provide meaningful and cost-effective learning opportunities for its students and professional development for its staff.

Challenges and Areas for Growth

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

Leadership and Governance

11. The district and town officials are not consistently engaged in a collaborative and transparent dialogue to establish an educationally sound budget that supports district priorities and improves student achievement. Town officials have sometimes provided limited information to develop the budget.

- A. Efforts have been made to establish a transparent and collaborative relationship between district leaders and officials from member towns.
 - 1. The district aligns the budget development and the SIP development to ensure that the budget reflects district priorities.
 - 2. The district presents its priorities and the towns are aware of district priorities.
 - 3. District officials meet with town administrators and finance committee members.
 - 4. A special Joint Committee on Finance has been established to promote better communications between district and town officials.
 - a. Membership is composed of representatives of the school committee, the school superintendent, the assistant superintendent of district operations, the director of business services, town administrators, and representatives from both finance committees.
 - 5. Efforts by the school committee and superintendent have gained the trust of the town administrators; however, school committee members are not certain of this trust.
- B. Town officials have been generally collegial but not consistently forthcoming with school district officials. Town administrators and finance committees have not provided forecasting or projections of unused revenues to the school district.
 - 1. The towns were requested to present their financial picture at a meeting of the special Joint Committee on Finance. They provided anticipated costs but not revenues.
 - 2. The town finance committees have not engaged in an open discussion to establish a district budget to address priorities.
 - 3. Finance committee discussions are centered on regional assessment changes rather than on the budget needs.

4. Relations between district and town officials have generally been collegial, without animosity, and are considered to be improving.

Impact: The relationship between the district and town officials has not had the collaboration and transparency needed to establish an effective budget development process. In a difficult economic period the educational priorities of the district will not be addressed without an open dialogue about the financial assets needed by the school district and the financial assets available from the towns.

12. While SIPs are used to make budget decisions, they do not provide a pathway to achieving focused area goals, and the strategic plan does not describe how district goals are to be attained.

- A. Each SIP contains focus areas for school improvement.
 1. The goals in SIPs are aligned to the district strategic plan and to the DIP; however, they have no objectives, action steps, or strategies to delineate and attain the goals.
 2. The SIPs do not indicate timelines or responsible person(s) for each SIP goal to ensure attainment.
 3. The SIPs do not identify expected outcomes or how the SIP goals will be evaluated or measured.
- B. The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District Strategic Plan 2010-2015 Action Plans document identifies how goals were accomplished after the fact. The action steps used to accomplish each school improvement goal are listed by principals in the document a year after each goal was developed and are aligned to the strategic goals and objectives.
 1. The superintendent and the principals meet in June to review goals attained by each school.
 2. Principals list evidence of accomplishment by the end of August.
 3. The action plans document is prepared listing evidence of accomplishment of each goal.
 4. The action plans document is an accountability mechanism rather than an action plan.

Impact: SIPs do not provide clear action steps to address specific focus areas and account for goal attainment. Accountability mechanisms are not evident in school improvement plans but are noted in the district's action plan document, after the fact. Well-developed SIPs that include action steps and provisions for accountability may lead to better budgets that are supported by the public and include more resources to support teaching and learning.

Curriculum and Instruction

13. The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District's K-12 curriculum is incompletely aligned with the 2011 Massachusetts ELA and Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks. A documented and articulated system for continuous review and revision of curriculum and consistent practices to ensure both horizontal and vertical articulation has not been established.

A. Interviews and a review of documents indicated that the comprehensiveness and alignment of K-12 curricula in ELA and mathematics to the 2011 Massachusetts Frameworks vary by grade and level. Science documents K-12 are aligned with the 2006 Massachusetts Science Technology/Engineering Curriculum Frameworks.

1. Common district curriculum templates are used K-5 and in grades 6-12 for ELA. However, the documents vary in the extent of their development.
 - a. The elementary Literacy Guides (ELA curriculum) are a work in progress. While the kindergarten document is most complete and includes all elements of a comprehensive curriculum except Essential Questions, documents for grades 3-5 are in the early stages of development. There are separate pacing and writing guides that accompany the aforementioned ELA documents.
 - b. The middle school ELA curriculum is comprehensive and complete through Trimester 1 and incorporates some *Laying the Foundation* lessons and resources for ELA.
 - c. The high school ELA curriculum is the most complete, particularly in coursework for grades 9 and 10. It is comprehensive and includes *Laying the Foundation* activities for ELA and common writing assignments.
2. Common curriculum templates are used K-5 and in grades 6-12 for mathematics, but reviewed documents showed that they are in the early stages of development and alignment with the 2011 Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks.
 - a. The K-5 Math Pacing Charts (mathematics curriculum) are aligned with the 2011 mathematics standards, but are incomplete in scope, missing Essential Questions, assessments, learning objectives, resources, vocabulary, and any reference to the 2011 Standards for Mathematical Practice.
 - b. The middle school mathematics curriculum is comprehensive and organized by instructional focus (text chapters), but is a work in progress.
 - c. The high school mathematics curriculum documents are also a work in progress in their alignment to the 2011 Mathematics Frameworks and comprehensiveness, and are in various stages of development by course.

3. K-12 science curriculum documents are aligned with the 2006 Massachusetts Science Technology/Engineering Curriculum Frameworks but do not include all the elements of a comprehensive curriculum. Administrators told the team that the district plans to use common templates for 6-12 curriculum development when the Next Generation Science Standards are fully adopted and released.
- B. The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District does not have a formal, coordinated process for curriculum review and revision, including resource allocation and structures to support this work. Curriculum alignment and revision takes place but is limited by the absence of a districtwide process and dedicated time allocated for this work.
 1. Interviews with teachers and administrators identified an absence of centralized and systematic coordination and oversight for curriculum.
 - a. Principals and teachers expressed the need for a coordinated process for curriculum review and said that such a process has been absent for 10 years.
 - b. Teachers and principals stated that curriculum has been inconsistent among schools and across classes within schools.
 - c. As a result of the NEASC report of 2012, a curriculum review cycle has recently been documented and shared at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. However, this does not reflect districtwide practice.
 - d. Administrators and teachers said that historically many external factors have initiated curriculum review and revision in the district including NEASC, MCAS, PSAT, and SAT student performance data. Additionally, school-based initiatives and teacher prerogative have initiated curriculum revisions.
 2. Resources are not strategically allocated to support curriculum development, including time and the purchase of instructional materials and textbooks. Principals told the review team that requests are often cut because of budget issues.
 - a. Funding for textbooks and other instructional resources are not included in the budget for the office of the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning.
 - b. The Whitman Middle School piloted a new mathematics textbook series one year before the Hanson Middle School texts were funded.
 - c. Dedicated time for teachers to collaborate and work on curriculum alignment varies by level.
 - i. In interviews, teachers and administrators said that PLCs are not established at all levels and the number of grade level and department meeting times varies.

Additionally, different start times at the elementary level affect participation in inter-school PLCs as well as in staff meetings.

- ii. Because subject meetings with coordinators take place at the same time at the Hanson Middle School, content teachers teaching out of their subject area cannot regularly attend vertical team meetings and do not always have a voice in curricular decisions. Administrators reported that this had an impact on two teachers and was adjusted to ensure maximum participation.

Impact: Without fully aligned documents, a clearly documented and articulated process for curriculum development and review, regular and timely opportunities for horizontal and vertical collaboration at each level, and dedicated funding to support this work, the district cannot ensure that all students have access to a full, current, and high quality curriculum.

14. The district has not communicated its expectations for high quality instruction at all levels; district administrators and teachers do not share a common understanding of what constitutes best instructional practice.

- A. In interviews administrators and teachers did not express a common understanding of what constitutes best instructional practice.
 1. When asked whether there was an articulated instructional model in use in the district, a district administrator stated that she thought the district would like one. She referenced “The Skillful Teacher” when describing the kinds of practices administrators look for and said that all teachers had received this training at some point in time.
 2. In interviews, each principal stated different “look fors” when asked what effective instruction should look like or include and said that their instructional focus was often specific to their school’s needs and initiatives. Moreover, they referenced tools for lesson design and model lessons rather than specific instructional characteristics.
 - a. One principal stated that everyone has different views of instruction depending on their backgrounds but, in the end, principals set the stage for the best instruction.
 - b. Another principal looks for two to three activities in a 60-minute period, active participation from students, and students facilitating their own learning.
 - c. One administrator has used “Understanding by Design” to know what to look for in lessons, while another identified quality of planning, clear objectives, use of previous assessments to inform lesson design, questioning strategies, and chunking instruction with time for students to reflect on their learning (referred to as the Ten/Two theory).
 - d. All administrators agreed that the educator evaluation rubric was an instructional model. As a group, they talked about elements of the rubric that they see in classrooms.

However, their discussions and trainings for teachers were specific to using the rubric for supervision and the evaluation process.

3. When asked about the district's expectations for effective instruction, teachers generally cited instructional components that they or their department focus on.
 - a. Curriculum coordinators cited a variety of instructional characteristics that they expect to see when visiting classrooms, including posted agendas and discussion of the purpose of the day's activities, student engagement, use of prior knowledge and Essential Questions, backwards design in lesson planning, and two to three different ways to achieve the learning objective of the lesson.
 - b. Teachers also identified formative assessments, graphic organizers, and peer tutoring as a means of differentiating instruction, and referenced instructional materials ("Laying the Foundation") and programs (STEM) as models of instruction.
 - c. Curriculum coordinators recognized the educator evaluation rubric as an instructional model but said that it was not currently shared and implemented as a common guide for effective instructional strategies.

Impact: The absence of a shared instructional model for teaching and learning has resulted in an absence of clarity in district expectations among administrators and teachers. Without focused administrative monitoring of instruction and a consistent message of expectations for teachers, the district cannot strategically plan for targeted professional development for continuous growth and cannot ensure that students will achieve at high levels.

15. The absence of a shared instructional model in the district has contributed to the inconsistent quality of instruction in observed classrooms.

The team observed 78 classes throughout the district: 20 at the high school, 20 at the two middle schools, and 38 at the four elementary schools. The team observed 35 ELA classes, 26 mathematics classes, and 17 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were one special education class and one career/technical education class. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

- A. Observed instructional practices clearly and consistently reflected most elements of an optimal learning environment, the first category in the Instructional Inventory.
 1. Four of five characteristics of an optimal learning environment were observed in between 85 percent and 92 percent of observed classrooms in the district, showing evidence of clear and consistent practices in this domain.

2. The sixth characteristic, the availability of multiple resources to meet all students' diverse learning needs, was observed clearly and consistently in 56 percent of visited classrooms, with no notable difference across grade levels.
- B. Instructional practices that reflected elements of good instructional design or promotion of higher order thinking were observed inconsistently across school levels.
1. Lessons clearly and consistently reflected rigor and high expectations in 58 percent of all observed classrooms. This characteristic was most evident at the high school (70 percent of visited classes); this characteristic was noted in 55 percent and 50 percent, respectively of observed elementary and middle school classes.
 2. In 45 percent of all observed classrooms, teachers clearly and consistently communicated clear learning objectives aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Clear and consistent evidence of this characteristic was noted in 35 percent of high school, in 47 percent of elementary, and in 50 percent of middle school lessons.
 3. In observed classrooms, teachers clearly and consistently used appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objectives and content in 65 percent of high school lessons, in 58 percent of elementary lessons, and in 45 percent middle school lessons.
 4. Clear and consistent evidence that teachers provided multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking skills such as the use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge of concepts was demonstrated in 35 percent of all observed classrooms: 42 percent of elementary, 30 percent of high school, and 25 percent of middle school classrooms reflected this practice.
 5. The use of questioning techniques that required thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding of concepts was observed clearly and consistently in 53 percent of all visited classrooms. By level, this strategy was clearly and consistently used in 60 percent of high school classrooms and in 50 percent of elementary and middle school classrooms.
 6. Lessons were clearly and consistently paced to match content and meet students' learning needs in 50 percent of all observed classrooms: in 60 percent of visited classrooms at the high school, in 50 percent in the elementary schools, and in 40 percent in the middle schools.
 7. The frequent use of formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction was observed in 66 percent of visited elementary classes, in 65 percent of high school classes, and in 40 percent of middle school classrooms.
- C. Instructional practices to challenge students, provide opportunities to articulate and expand upon their thinking, or challenge them to make connections across disciplines and real world experiences were inconsistently observed in visited classes.

1. Students were observed clearly and consistently engaged in challenging academic tasks in 59 percent of all visited classrooms: in 50 percent of classes in the elementary schools, in 65 percent of classes at the high school, and in 70 percent of middle school classrooms.
 2. In 37 percent of visited classrooms, students were clearly and consistently observed articulating their thinking orally or in writing. The frequency with which this characteristic was observed decreased by level: from 47 percent of observed elementary lessons to 35 percent of classes at the middle schools to 20 percent of classrooms at the high school.
 3. Students clearly and consistently elaborated about content and ideas when responding to questions in 41 percent of all observed classrooms: in 61 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 25 percent of middle school classrooms, and in 30 percent of high school classrooms.
 4. There was clear and consistent evidence of students engaged in inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation of knowledge in 40 percent of all observed classrooms. This characteristic was documented in 53 percent of elementary, in 35 percent of middle school, and in 30 percent of high school classrooms.
- D. The use of technology to enhance instruction was inconsistent in observed classrooms. Teachers stated that they needed greater access to technology tools, training, and an infrastructure to support 21st Century skills.
1. Teachers clearly and consistently made use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning in 47 percent of observed classrooms. This practice was demonstrated in 30 percent of high school, in 50 percent of middle school, and in 55 percent of visited elementary classrooms.
 - a. In 28 percent of observed classrooms students were observed clearly and consistently using technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding. For example, students were observed using graphic calculators in a science class and sharing solutions to mathematics addition problems using the Prometheus white board.
 2. Principals noted that instructional technology such as mobile technology carts, iPads at the high school and elementary levels, Nooks at the middle schools, updates to a high school language lab, and teacher training on the use of instructional technology were needed in the district. They also stated that additional Internet access points were necessary in all schools, and grants were often used to purchase interactive, electronic, and white boards. High school students told review team members that money was their school's biggest challenge and said that the absence of technology, specifically iPads, was frustrating for them. They further stated that the school had to apply for grants to buy this technology.
 - a. In focus groups, teachers identified a need for further training on the use of Smart Boards, blended learning, wikis, and blogs. They told the review team that the district

does not have an in-house position to support teachers' use of instructional technology. However, teachers can take courses at the North River Collaborative and online.

- i. Review team members saw inconsistencies in the use of technology in classrooms. For example, in some observed classrooms, teachers used Smart Boards as overhead projectors.
- ii. In other visited classrooms the dynamic features of technology were being used to design and implement lessons such as instructional Power Point presentations for DNA study, modeling strategies for solving equations, and the use of Smart Boards as a tool for students to log their lab work before debriefing the activity.

Impact: Without a shared instructional model and without monitoring articulated best practices in classrooms, the district cannot ensure that teachers will consistently deliver high quality instruction that meets students' diverse learning needs and optimizes their college and career readiness.

Assessment

16. Limited resources (time, funding, and capacity) have delayed thorough data-based decision-making at all schools, and a data-driven culture has not been established districtwide.

- A. There are data teams at the elementary schools and at the high school, and school leaders have recognized the benefits of data teams.
 1. At one elementary school, data analysis by the data team showed a need to focus on reading fluency and comprehension. As a result, teachers tried "The Daily Five," a series of activities students complete individually or in pairs or small groups while the teacher meets with individual or groups of students. Teachers monitored and analyzed data about reading skills using aimsweb. Teachers had a clearer understanding of students' reading skills, shared results with students, and identified goals to achieve by the end of year.
 2. At another elementary school, the data team led staff in an analysis of running records and identified the need to improve students' ability to make "inferences."
 3. The high school data teams (whole school and mathematics) have mainly focused on shared analyses of standardized test results such as MCAS with departments and with the school as a whole. This helped establish the schoolwide literacy initiative and teachers' ability to target instructional and curricular improvements.
- B. One district leader observed, "The strength of data teams is dependent on the number of people going to trainings and the consistency of what training they get."

1. In the past three years, four to five people in each school have participated in the course “Unleashing the Power of Collaborative Inquiry—Professional Development for Data Coaches” at the North River Collaborative.
 2. Interviewees described the need to train additional staff to be more skillful in data analysis to guide improvement decisions.
 3. One elementary principal explained the continued need to train data team members because of turnover of staff who had received training. Another noted that only one person on the school data team had participated in training.
 4. There are no data teams at the middle schools. Two of the three trained staff members at one middle school had left the district and the data team initiative did not begin.
 5. Teachers are aware of the need for professional development in data analysis.
- C. The district has primarily used a train-the-trainer model to build data team members’ capacity:
1. A district leader stated that instead of identifying a team to send to the training to benefit student learning, the first consideration was whether the district had the funding, and the second, how each school could have representation in order to use a train-the-trainer model.
 2. The leader described the difficulty of the train-the-trainer model in a system with teachers already under pressure from multiple initiatives such as educator evaluation and other professional development priorities. In addition, the leader noted the difficulty in asking overcommitted teachers not only to participate in training but also to train others.
 3. Another consideration raised was the fact that classroom teachers are not professional trainers, consultants, or formal resource staff who can respond to any questions others may ask.
- D. Time allocated for data team meetings and PLC meetings varies and is sometimes insufficient to engage in the needed collaborative discussions to address students’ diverse learning needs and the required improvements to curriculum and instruction.
1. Leaders stated that at Duval Elementary School the data team meets once a week and at Conley Elementary School, once a month. Administrators reported that data teams were in the early stages of implementation.
 2. There are no data teams at the middle schools. Because of rescheduling caused by staff reductions, dedicated PLC time for teachers to meet to collect and analyze data and other information has been reduced from two sessions in a six-day cycle last year to once in a five-day cycle this year. This has meant a loss of 30 hours of embedded professional development.

3. Several middle school teachers also teach out of their subject area, which was described as “difficult for them.” Since subject meetings with coordinators all take place at the same time, teachers must choose one meeting to attend and miss the other, leaving them out of some key decisions about curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- E. The high school data team takes a comprehensive look at achievement data from standardized tests such as MCAS; however, the data team and departments do not appear to collect and analyze other student information and trends in a systematic way.
 1. At the high school, as described above, the data team has focused on MCAS and other external test results. Some departments’ more informal review of common exams and the absence of a thorough analysis of final exams indicate that data analysis, either by the data team or in department meetings, is not comprehensive.
 - a. Common science exams are reviewed only informally, according to a leader in an interview, and used mainly to identify students who need to do test corrections.
 - b. A high school leader expressed the belief that final assessment results are not thoroughly analyzed by departments because once assessments have been completed, students and teachers move on.
- F. High school leaders have a shared and keen understanding of the direction that the high school has set for its improvement process. One coordinator told the team that the high school is moving in a new direction and staff know that “we have a lot to do,” noting “Not having everyone on board to do training is hampering progress.”

Impact: The use of data teams to guide teachers’ understanding of student achievement data and other information is a fine strategy for continuous improvement in the district. However, only some personnel have had training to form and lead data teams and the middle schools do not yet have functioning data teams. Overall, there has been insufficient capacity building in data analysis among teachers. Additional complications stem from the limited time to meet in PLCs at the middle schools and also at the high school, apart from asking teachers to voluntarily give up common prep time. Finding the resources to provide adequate common planning time and the needed professional development is a barrier to having the district’s systems and practices include fully developed data teams and the full use of data to improve curriculum and instruction. The district is missing the opportunity to have a trained team bring expertise to the curriculum and instruction discussions conducted by the curriculum coordinators and the stronger direction from the central office.

Human Resources and Professional Development

17. The district provides a comprehensive mentoring program for new staff and invests in professional development training related to district initiatives for all educators; however, reductions in force because of budget restrictions have reduced the impact of this investment.

- A. As part of professional development oversight, the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning supervises the management of mentoring and professional development and educator development.
 - 1. The mentor program is a well-defined program contracted with a state university.
 - 2. A district teacher with a stipend supervises the program.
 - 3. The program is mandatory for first-year teachers and optional for a second and third year teachers, for graduate credit.
 - 4. The program includes specific scheduled dates of training with topics and assignments for the first year.
 - 5. More than 50 mentors have been trained in the district.
 - 6. The program includes detailed topics and assignments for a cohort of district teachers without professional status who stay for the three-year experience.
 - 7. Many of the district's initiatives are systematically covered in this comprehensive and well-thought-out training program, which includes classroom management, lesson planning, the district's educator evaluation system, the role of PLCs, coaching, and related subjects.
- B. Financial uncertainties have meant instability in conditions of employment.
 - 1. The superintendent indicated that in the spring of each year, as a result of annual budget uncertainties, "We know priorities and the budget don't always meet."
 - 2. Because the fiscal year 2014 budget was not approved until June 28, 2013, the district had already sent out RIF letters to teachers without professional status, who were recruited, hired, and trained during the previous three years.
 - 3. Also, the district sent RIF letters to certain teachers with professional status throughout the district. In the 2013 school year 10 positions had already been eliminated.
 - 4. As one staff member said, "We send out those letters, have NPS teachers rified, they find other jobs and then we ask them to come back— and they can't." Another interviewee noted, "We send out the RIF notices and the young people are looking and get hired, and we lose people."

Impact: As a result of layoffs and downsizing, the district's substantial investment in the professional development of these former teachers has been lost. These unrecoverable costs and the cost of unemployment insurance reduce any predicted savings related to releasing trained teachers to the marketplace. Hiring and systematically training teachers new to the district and then releasing them is counterproductive to building internal teacher capacity as the district pursues the challenges in its strategic plan.

18. The district's ability to plan long-term professional development is limited by time restrictions, schedule variations, and the unit A collective bargaining agreement. Budget restrictions in recent years have had a substantial impact on the number of days and the availability of resources allocated for PD.

- A. Objective three in the Teaching and Learning section of the district's strategic plan reads, *"Ensure time and resources are available for high quality professional development reflecting the needs of the staff and the district and also meeting state and federal mandates."*
- B. The district's Professional Development Plan 2013-2014 describes districtwide professional development (PD) opportunities for staff as well as site-based PD activities.
 - 1. The Introduction to the plan states in part: "Throughout the year, administrative teams plan, discuss, and organize programs and projects. Individual monthly meetings of the Central Office Team, Elementary Principals, Middle School & High School Administrators, Curriculum Coordinators, Teachers Leaders, Curriculum Liaisons, and Professional Learning Communities actively address the professional growth opportunities and needs of the staff."
- C. The district's practice of establishing annual schedules for PD stopped in recent years as three assistant superintendents for teaching and learning served the district in four years, and—except scheduled mentoring training—has not been restarted.
 - 1. Each incumbent in the office of assistant superintendent for teaching and learning has brought a unique style and approach to PD.
 - a. The current incumbent was promoted from a principalship to the current post and is familiar with the history of PD in the district. One interviewee said she was a great candidate because she had "lived through (district) uncertainty over many years with various leaders" and now is ready "to redo the professional development plan to regain predictability."
 - 2. An administrator told the review team, "We are limited in our ability to do long-term planning for PD."
- D. Teachers, administrators, and school committee members said that during the past three years, several budgetary decisions, including a failed override, affected the district's capacity to plan PD events.

1. PD was cut to one full day and several two-hour blocks during the year.
 2. Ancillary services were systematically reduced in order to protect class size; these reductions affected the availability of resources for PD.
- E. To accommodate these PD losses, and the resulting inability to plan job-embedded training events to support the district's strategic plan, the assistant superintendent was able to re-instate curriculum coordinators who provide coaching, guidance, and job-embedded training to support grade 6-12 professional staff in academic subjects during regular school hours.
1. While this PD model is a strong one in integrating new approaches to using data and new approaches to improving instruction, it is dependent on time during the school day, which in turn is dependent on bus schedules, common planning time, the unit A collective bargaining agreement, and lots of goodwill by teachers to stay after school and meet on their own time to make things work.
 2. One interviewee observed that the train-the-trainer model is a good model, but that with additional pressure on teachers these days "given the educator evaluation system and other initiatives we're doing such as Promethean white board training, it usually comes down to 'will you do this for me, please?'"
- F. The district works with educational collaboratives and area colleges and universities to provide learning opportunities to staff. (See the Financial and Asset Management finding above.)
- G. Of the district teachers who responded to the 2014 TELL Mass survey, 62 percent agreed or strongly agreed that school leadership makes a sustained effort to address teacher concerns about PD. Fifty-four percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that sufficient resources are available for PD. Sixty-three percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that an appropriate amount of time is provided for PD.

Impact: Without sufficient time and resources for professional development, central office staff has relied on ingenuity as well as the goodwill of teachers to provide sufficient high quality professional development. A more systematic approach would better support the needs of the staff in improving instruction.

Student Support

19. There is a gap between the district's philosophy of serving "every child, every day" and its implementation of practices that fulfill that philosophy. The district does not have a clear and documented plan to serve all at-risk students.

- A. The district does not have a comprehensive plan to adequately support the needs of *all* at-risk students, specifically an increasing number of students requiring hospitalization, which may

result in high absence and emotionally based barriers to returning to school. Interviewees said that while only a small number of students require hospitalization, the incidence is increasing. They reported that limited resources have had an impact on the implementation of practices to help these students.

1. Interview participants said that school personnel are not able to adequately respond to the growing number of students facing destructive problems such as substance abuse, by family members or students themselves, and self-harm by students; these problems can lead to high absence—up to two weeks—for (repeated) hospitalization, increasing the risk that students will drop out.
 2. There are no dedicated counseling services at the elementary level. The review team was told that at one elementary school, for example, where 70 students are on IEPs, identifying the social-emotional needs of hospitalized students becomes the task of the nurse and the assistant principal.
 3. There are psychologists at each school but their focus is testing.
 4. Hospitalized students receive instruction from tutors, not all are highly qualified teachers.
 5. The review team was told that many at-risk students have above average cognitive ability yet crises limit their progress.
 6. An administrator told the review team: “There aren’t enough hours in the day to accurately identify all the at-risk students. Class sizes are too large.”
 - a. According to ESE data, the district has a higher-than-average number of students per classroom. And the district has proportionately fewer teachers than the state average, as shown by its relatively high student-to-teacher ratio. In school year 2013, the district’s student-to-teacher ratio was 17.9:1. In school year 2012, the district’s student-to-teacher ratio was 17.8:1.
- B. While several strong efforts to support all students with disabilities have been implemented and others planned, the district has not enacted a comprehensive approach supported by broad-based professional development for teachers and support staff.
1. Although the district has designated separate pathways for students in need of services for learning issues and for those exhibiting behavioral issues, and there is strong advocacy for a shift in the service model from substantially separate classrooms to inclusion and co-taught classrooms, a documented model supported by comprehensive professional development is not evident.
 - a. Interview participants reported that the special education staff has secured some resources for professional development in co-teaching for some teachers and are also looking at training for non-teaching staff, such as nurses.

- i. One special education teacher is trained and assigned to each content area at the high school, providing colleagues with information about how to scaffold instruction.
 - ii. Training a single teacher per content area to be the “go to” person about co-teaching risks the sustainability of this important, long-term goal, because a trained teacher’s departure could leave a void in support for that content area.
 - b. The DIP and the SIPs do not reflect the goal of moving to a co-teaching model for students with disabilities, and do not include a comprehensive professional development plan that itemizes professional development or its implementation across the district to bring this goal to fruition.
- C. The structures in place supporting students who perform at lower levels in general education classes needs more development.
- 1. Although they told the review team that they believe all students can be college and career ready, interview participants reported that limited instructional strategies are in place to help students “in the middle” raise expectations of achievement and maintain progress.
 - 2. A school administrator reported that reteaching funded through the budget or professional development for supporting students struggling in class, i.e., the Tier II group, is no longer provided.
 - 3. A district administrator stated that the district needs to plan better for students who are not in honors and AP classes, in terms of preparing them for college and career, noting “We have terrific kids not taking AP—more creative hands-on performance-based kids. What are we doing for them?”
 - 4. High school students expressed the opinion that the high school could do a better job addressing disengaged students in regular education classes.

Impact: Without a documented, well-articulated districtwide plan stated in the DIP and the SIPs, to implement activities that support the needs of “every child, every day,” it is unclear that the district can respond to the needs of several groups of students, for example, those with harmful problems resulting in social-emotional barriers to returning to school, those accessing high quality special education instruction in the least restrictive environment, and those general education students who are achieving at lower levels. This situation exacerbates the risk of these students becoming disengaged and dropping out of school, and not being ready for college and career.

Financial and Asset Management

20. Although the district’s budget development process is inclusive and transparent, there is an

absence of detail and clarity in financial documents, such as specific staffing data. As a result, it is difficult to analyze past spending and make informed decisions in the budget process. The district is in the process of addressing recommendations to improve financial practices and procedures and to foster transparency.

- A. The absence of historical expense data in the superintendent's budget document dated February 6, 2013, hinders the district's ability to identify and analyze historical expense patterns
 - 1. The budget document contained 22 pages of account budget requests but historical actual expense data were missing.
 - a. Some historical data was available on page 22 of the budget document but only for 7 budget functions. None of this historical data was detailed.
 - b. A "budget book" provided by the district includes staff lists, but not salaries.
- B. Missing from the February 6, 2013 budget document was actual staffing data for all personnel as well as any expected changes or requests for fiscal year 2014.
 - 1. Although the budget document contains a two-page printout of the "DESE District Summary: Total Teachers by Subject and Grade," dated October 26, 2012, there is no information for non-teaching staff or any expected or requested staffing change for fiscal year 2014. Including staffing data, which accounts for approximately 70 percent of the district's costs, would be more effective in the presentation and understanding of the total budget.
 - 2. Administrators reported that at the time of the review the district was transitioning to a new financial management system, noting that historical information was available for budgeting purposes and for school committee use.
- C. A list of fiscal year 2013 grant revenues FTEs and salaries paid from grant and revolving funds were included in the budget document. However, historical expense data and anticipated fiscal year 2014 revenue were missing from the document.
- D. The fiscal year 2014 budget document, known as the "budget binder," and presented at the public meeting on February 6, 2013, was 66 pages long. The "Community Guide to Understanding the School Budget" while much shorter, was still nine pages long, primarily containing narrative, and did not include historical budget versus actual data as described above.
 - 1. School committee members described a recent school district budget override attempt at one town's town meeting as confusing and contentious. The override attempt failed.
- E. Some important financial data is inaccessible on the district's website.

1. Important financial documents typically located on school district websites were not found on the district's website, including the approved fiscal year 2014 budget and the fiscal year 2015 budget development timeline approved by the school committee.
- F. For the past three years, the district's outside auditors have made recommendations to improve accounting procedures and internal controls after citing at least four practices and procedures cited as improper or insufficient. Administrators reported that recommendations have been followed, including hiring a treasurer and forming a warrant subcommittee of the school committee to sign payroll and vendors' warrants as requested.

Impact:

- The district's fiscal year 2014 budget documents do not include specific data such as historical revenue and expense trends for both general and revolving funds and current and projected staffing levels. The absence of this important information results in a budget document that does not provide the context that would be helpful to all constituents in fully understanding and supporting a school budget that totals over \$45,000,000.
- By not addressing and correcting financial procedures and internal control issues as identified by the auditors, the district could have incomplete and inaccurate financial records at the end of the fiscal year. This could undermine the integrity and credibility of the district's financial management practices.

21. Although the district meets Net School Spending requirements, it is well below the median for in-district per pupil funding by similar size districts and has been unable to fund most of the educational initiatives in the DIP.

- A. The district's average per pupil expenditure was \$9,933 in fiscal year 2012, which is 18 percent less than the median for in-district per pupil expenditure by similar size districts of \$11,704 and only \$165 per pupil above the lowest-spending district in that group.
 1. The superintendent, school leaders, teachers, and students voiced their concerns that limited finances in the district are a problem. In answering the question of whether or not the school committee is developing and approving an educationally sound budget that meets the priority needs of the district, two of three school committee members present said, "Absolutely, no."
 2. The superintendent and school principals expressed concerns that district and school improvement goals and student needs are not being met due to inadequate funding. Less than half of the budget requests contained in the improvement plans were able to be included in the final fiscal year 2014 budget.
 3. Although the superintendent has articulated the priority of maintaining reasonable class size, the district continues to have a higher-than-average number of students per classroom teacher.

- a. The district has proportionately fewer teachers than the state average, as shown by its relatively high student to teacher ratio, at 17.9 to 1 in school year 2013.
4. Teachers are teaching out of their subject area in some subjects, which district leaders attribute to financial constraints.
- B. In an interview, members of the review team were told that the district has been successful in finding administrative financial savings in transportation costs and outsourcing custodial and copying services as well as realizing significant utility savings through National Grid programs. The district administrators have been diligent in their attempts to identify and reallocate funds when possible.
- C. The district was successful in obtaining overrides in both Hanson and Whitman for school operating budget increases for fiscal year 2013 but unsuccessful for similar overrides for fiscal year 2014.

Impact: Although the district has had some success with its attempts to increase revenues through overrides and with decreasing administrative and utility expenses, there appear to be significant unmet educational needs. Larger than average elementary classroom size, absence of adjustment counselors at the elementary and middle schools, and limited professional development time and opportunities may all weaken the district's effort to improve student achievement and to attain the goals in both the district and each school's improvement plan.

22. The current Whitman-Hanson Regional Agreement limits the district's administrative staff in addressing building repairs that cost more than \$5,000.

- A. The current regional agreement, which was amended on July 31, 1991, limits the district's ability to pay for repairs from the operating budget to those estimated not to exceed \$5,000. Any repairs estimated to exceed \$5,000 must be referred to the town that owns the building to approve and pay for those repairs on a case-by-case basis.
 1. After 22 years of inflation (58.7 percent since 1991) and increased maintenance costs, the \$5,000 limit on "capital" repairs is neither reasonable nor feasible.
 - a. Two years ago the district requested that the town of Hanson appropriate \$10,000 to repair cracked floor tiles in the Maquan School cafeteria; the tiles presented a tripping hazard and possibly a health hazard because of the type of adhesive used in securing the tiles. The town has neither appropriated the funds nor made the repair. The district is still waiting for the town to remedy this problem. Administrators reported that since the review the problem has been taken care of.

Impact: The district's operations and maintenance staff cannot address in a timely manner either routine or one-time building repairs that exceed \$5,000. This has hindered the district's ability to adequately protect the health and safety of the students, staff, and community members who use the public buildings.

Whitman-Hanson RSD District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. **The school district and town officials should continue to make the budgeting and budget review process more collaborative and effective by ensuring that all participants have accurate, transparent, and timely financial information.**
 - A. The school committee chair should become thoroughly familiar with the operating budget analysis process of both towns, including revenues, expenditures, tax recap items, and unused tax levy.
 - B. The school committee chair should establish a schedule of meetings during the budget process with each town administrator.
 1. These meetings should dovetail with current scheduled budget meetings.
 2. The agenda should focus on presenting a clear picture of the district's financial needs and the towns' available financial assets.

Recommended resources:

- *At-A-Glance Community Reports* (<http://www.mass.gov/dor/local-officials/dls-newsroom/employee-contacts/dls/at-a-glance-community-reports.html>) are community-specific overviews of key data from the Department of Revenue, including socioeconomic data, cherry sheet data, tax revenue information, and other data.
- *Per-Pupil Expenditure Reports* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/ppx.html>) is a report series that provides summary and detail per pupil spending data for each school district.
- ESE's *School Finance Statistical Comparisons* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/>) provides comparisons of per-pupil expenditure, long-term enrollment, teacher salaries, and special education direct expenditure trends.
- The Rennie Center's *Smart School Budgeting* (http://www.renniecenter.org/topics/smart_school_budgeting.html; direct link: <http://www.renniecenter.org/research/SmartSchoolBudgeting.pdf>) is a summary of existing resources on school finance, budgeting, and reallocation.

Benefits: A clear financial picture of the district's needs and the towns' available assets will ensure that the towns' resources are appropriately directed in order to provide sound educational programs to the children of both communities.

2. All SIPs should include specific action steps, timelines, and measureable outcomes.

- A. Each school's SIP should include an action plan for each area of focus, similar to the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District Strategic Plan's 2010-2015 Action Plan, including activities or strategies, timelines and resources, and the responsible person(s) or group, evaluation or measure and outcome.
- B. Reporting on SIP progress should occur periodically during the school year at faculty meetings, district leadership meetings, and school committee meetings.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Planning for Success* tools (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/success/>) support the improvement planning process by spotlighting practices, characteristics, and behaviors that support effective planning and implementation and meet existing state requirements for improvement planning.
- *District Accelerated Improvement Planning - Guiding Principles for Effective Benchmarks* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level4/AIP-GuidingPrinciples.pdf>) provides information about different types of benchmarks to guide and measure district improvement efforts.
- *What Makes a Goal Smarter?* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/presentations/SMARTGoals/Handout5.pdf>) is a description of SMART goals with accompanying examples. The handout was designed to support educators in developing goals as part of the educator evaluation system, but could also be a useful reference for districts as they develop or refine their DIP and SIPs.

Benefits: The SIPs will be a roadmap for staff to follow to address areas of focus and to make midcourse corrections during the year as needed. All stakeholders will be informed in an ongoing way about each school's progress toward its goals.

Curriculum and Instruction

3. The district should continue its work to complete K-12 English Language Arts and Literacy and mathematics curriculum revisions so all students have access to a comprehensive and aligned curriculum.

- A. The district has developed in grades 6-12 comprehensive curriculum templates that include essential research-based components. These components should be represented in the K-5 documents to ensure the development of comprehensive curricula at this level.
 - 1. The district is encouraged to reference ESE's Model Curriculum Units to identify essential components of a comprehensive curriculum.

- B. In light of the adoption of new elementary and middle school mathematics textbooks, the district should ensure that the K-8 mathematics documents reflect the full 2011 Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks.
- C. As teachers design new curriculum units aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, they should simultaneously develop or identify formative, summative, and benchmark assessments, as well as student self-assessments, as appropriate.
 - 1. In addition to assessing mastery of knowledge and skills, new assessments should also provide students with opportunities to use higher order thinking skills to demonstrate and build understanding.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Common Core State Standards Initiative* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/>) includes links to several resources designed to support the transition to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, which incorporate the Common Core.
- *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.
- *Creating Model Curriculum Units* (<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssquWrLjKc9h5h2cSpDVZqe6t>) is a series of videos that captures the collaboration and deep thinking by curriculum design teams over the course of a full year as they worked to develop Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units. The series includes videos about developing essential questions, establishing goals, creating embedded performance assessments, designing lesson plans, selecting high-quality materials, and evaluating the curriculum unit.
- *Model Curriculum Units* (http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTuqmiQ9ssqvX_Yjra4nBfqQPwc4auUBu) is a video series that shows examples of the implementation of Massachusetts' Model Curriculum Units.
- *The Model Curriculum Unit and Lesson Plan Template* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/MCUtemplate.pdf>) includes Understanding by Design elements. It could be useful for districts' and schools' curriculum development and revision.

Benefits of implementing this recommendation include updated and clearly articulated alignment of K-12 curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. Completion of this work will ensure that comprehensive and informed curricula will be implemented in all classrooms, providing all students with access to a high quality education that enables them to be college and career ready. Implementation of

this recommendation will ensure that students have a variety of opportunities to demonstrate understanding and mastery and to apply knowledge and skills to real world examples.

4. The district should establish a process for the regular and timely review and revision of K-12 curricula to ensure consistent use, alignment, and effective delivery of curriculum. This process should be collaborative and supported by necessary resources.

- A. The district should develop a multi-year plan for curriculum review and renewal.
 - 1. The district's plan should provide a timeline for review of K-12 curricula in each discipline as well as who will complete the work. It should be continually updated to ensure timely and regular review of curriculum.
 - 2. This process should be informed by student performance data and should involve educators at all levels.
 - 3. The high school recently drafted a curriculum review cycle that may serve as a resource for establishing this process districtwide.
- B. The district should identify resources, including time during and after school and during the summer, stipends, etc. that would be routinely needed to support this work at all levels.
- C. The plan should ensure that curriculum materials are regularly reviewed and monitored for effectiveness and currency.
 - 1. Practices might include conducting a systematic review of lesson plans, engaging in regular collaborative discussions of what materials work well, and identifying which materials (including textbooks) need revisions or replacement.

Recommended resource:

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

Benefits: Implementing this recommendation will yield a comprehensive curriculum review process that can guarantee the quality, currency, and effectiveness of the district's curriculum.

5. The district should identify a shared instructional model in order to support improvement in instructional practice.

- A. The district should convene a representative group of teachers and administrators to define the characteristics of good instruction that should be evident in classrooms districtwide.
 - 1. Whitman-Hanson currently has several resources to support this, including *Understanding by Design*, *The Skillful Teacher*, and the district's educator evaluation rubric. The district may also wish to refer to ESE's Instructional Inventory (Appendix C).

2. The district's instructional expectations should include an emphasis on higher order thinking, rigorous tasks and discussions, and the use of technology to extend learning.
- B. Once a model of instructional practice is developed and defined, district administrators should share these instructional expectations with staff.
1. Grade level meetings, department meetings, faculty meetings, PLCs and professional development days can be opportunities to discuss ideas and strategies related to the instructional model.
 - a. Teachers and administrators can share best practices that reflect components of the instructional model.
 - b. These structures may also provide opportunities for staff to watch videos of effective teaching and discuss effective strategies observed.
 - c. District administrators should consider providing coverage so teachers have the opportunity to observe effective practice in classrooms in their school and throughout the district.
 2. The administrative team should devise a plan for phasing in components of the district's instructional model and should also include key instructional practices that will be a focus for districtwide improvement.
 - a. Administrators are also encouraged to conduct learning walks in administrative teams, generalize feedback from what they observe, share this feedback, and discuss improvement strategies regularly with teachers.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/ImplementationGuide.pdf>) 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.

Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/walk/04.0.pdf>) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.

- *Characteristics of a Standards-Based K-12 Science and Technology/Engineering Classroom* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/Standards-BasedClassroom.pdf>) and *Characteristics of a Standards-Based Mathematics Classroom* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/news07/mathclass_char.pdf) are references 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.

Benefits include clear, shared expectations of what constitutes good teaching for both administrators and teachers. This can facilitate a common districtwide language about teaching and learning and can provide focus for professional development and planning.

Assessment

6. The district should build on its existing assessment system by ensuring that data teams are embedded and supported at all schools.

- A. Both middle schools should establish, or re-establish, data teams to guide teachers' analysis and use of data.
- B. The district should ensure that all data teams have the resources they need to be effective.
 1. Regular and frequent data team meetings are essential for the teams to engage in deep, ongoing analysis of data and planning for schoolwide data use.
 2. The district may wish to reallocate funds or request additional funding in order to support thorough professional development in data analysis for data team members and for all educators in the district.
- C. The high school data team should apply the thoughtful approach it has used in the past to analysis of data beyond MCAS data.
 1. Data teams can use multiple sources of achievement and behavioral data as well as data from non-evaluative learning walks.
 2. Student work is another form of data that can provide opportunities for data teams and individual educators to examine the products of instruction and identify ways to reshape curriculum and teaching.

Recommended resources:

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

- ESE's *District Data Team Toolkit* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apu/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf>) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team. Some of the resources in the *Toolkit* might be helpful for the district as it strengthens its school data teams.

Benefits: Data teams can serve as a strategy for continuous improvement, and can ensure that teachers and students receive the maximum possible benefit from the careful work the district has already invested in its assessment system. By continuing and strengthening support for data teams, the district can provide the teams with the resources they need to help educators districtwide to make meaningful changes to improve teaching, curriculum, and learning.

Human Resources and Professional Development

7. The district should conduct a study of the impact of the frequent practice of releasing staff on the district's ability to hire and retain top talent and make progress toward its goals. As part of the study, the district should consider how budget restrictions and the timing of the budget's approval affects teacher retention.

- A. The district should initiate exit interviews with all staff that are leaving the system.
 1. The district could do this by mail or email with recently departed staff.
- B. The district should track the loss of personnel by role/experience caused by budgetary uncertainties and cuts, and publish it so that the public is aware of the extent to which the district is losing talent.
 1. This documentation could include the district's investments in professional development and other support for the educators who leave the district due to reductions in force.

Benefits: Documenting and communicating the connection between annual budgetary uncertainties/restrictions and the loss of capacity and talent in the district can begin or continue a public discussion about the consequences of the release of staff. It can also mean the development of a plan to improve personnel stability and the district's capacity to meet its goals.

8. The district should develop a comprehensive multi-year professional development plan that is aligned to the district strategic plan, the DIP and SIPs, and the educator evaluation system.

- A. A professional development committee should be formed, under the leadership of the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, to determine the components of this plan.
 1. The committee should also seek to identify ways to modify scheduling to allow more time for professional development throughout the year.
 - The committee should conduct an inventory of capacity, listing the expertise of various staff members and external providers.

1. A number of agencies have provided well-received PD in the district.
 2. The district is providing job-embedded PD in its schools.
 3. This inventory should be matched with the information, skills, and competencies that the district's strategic plan requires.
- As part of its professional development plan and DIP, the district should develop a multi-year approach to prepare teachers, administrators, and specialists to address the needs of all students, including those students most at risk.
 - Each school should develop an annual PD plan that is aligned with the district PD plan; each school's PD plan should be aligned with, or part of, its SIP.
 1. Each school-level PD plan should include embedded PD, such as PLCs.
 2. School PD plans should describe opportunities to coordinate horizontally and vertically with other schools.
 3. Professional development topics and specific sub-groups could be considered as a focus.

Recommended resources:

- *The Massachusetts Standards for Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/standards.pdf>) describe, identify, and characterize what high quality learning experiences should look like for educators.
- The *Teacher Education Materials Project Database* (<http://www.te-mat.org/default.aspx>) is a website that was developed to support professional development providers as they design and implement programs for pre-service and in-service K - 12 mathematics and science teachers.
- The *PLC Expansion Project* website (<http://plcexpansionproject.weebly.com/>) is designed to support schools and districts in their efforts to establish and sustain cultures that promote Professional Learning Communities.
- *PBS LearningMedia* (<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/>) is a free digital media content library that provides relevant educational resources for PreK-12 teachers. The flexible platform includes high-quality content tied to national curriculum standards, as well as professional development courses.
- *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation & Professional Development* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-ProfessionalDevelopment.pdf>) describes how educator evaluation and professional development can be used as mutually reinforcing systems to improve educator practice and student outcomes.

- *The Relationship between High Quality Professional Development and Educator Evaluation* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-aDxtEDncg&list=PLTuqmiQ9ssqt9EmOcWkDEHPKBqRvurebm&index=1>) is a video presentation that includes examples from real districts.

Benefit: Developing a long-term professional development plan will support educators' ongoing growth. It will strengthen the district's ability to train and retain experienced staff and meet students' diverse needs. The plan will build shared expertise across schools, and will ensure that professional development is focused on helping educators meet individual, school-level, and district goals.

Financial and Asset Management

9. The district should create budget documents for public presentation that contain clear, comprehensive and historical data and trends (including revolving fund data) to concisely communicate the financial and programmatic needs of the district to all stakeholders.

- A. To address the perception of some stakeholders that the district's budget and assessments are complex and have resulted in sometimes confusing and unsuccessful attempts to increase district budgets, the district should consider revising the annual budget documents that are used in presentations to the school committee, town officials, and town residents.
 1. Although both the "budget binder" and the Community Guide to Understanding the School Budget contain useful information, less lengthy documents that focus on the important historical revenue and spending trends of the operating and revolving accounts and the district's educational success and priorities will help make a succinct case for community support.
 2. The district might also consider presenting the capital debt portion of the annual budget separately from the operating budget. Annual payments for capital debt already approved by the member towns are legally binding, which should be made clear in the budget document.
 3. The district could research the budget documents of other Massachusetts regional school districts to determine if they offer a suitable template to meet their needs.
- B. The district should include its past and proposed budget documents, recent audits, capital maintenance plans, and other important financial documents on its website for public access.

Benefits: A clear, comprehensive, and concise financial snapshot of the district's multi-year attempts to control spending and target its resources for improving student achievement will make the district's budget appear less complex. In turn this will promote a better understanding of, and appreciation for, the district's current status and future needs. Providing financial documents on the district's website will promote transparency with all stakeholders. Noting the payoff date for individual debt-funded projects

will also inform town officials and residents of when those debt payments will no longer be included in the annual budget appropriation, aiding their future budget planning.

10. The district should continue to examine all of its operations to search out savings and efficiencies and reallocate according to the district's priorities.

- A. Although the district has been successful in decreasing administrative expenses in ways such as outsourcing services and utility savings, a comprehensive analysis of staffing levels has not been undertaken.
 - 1. With salaries and benefits representing 70 percent of the district's budget, it would be beneficial to district leaders to understand whether or not the current staffing levels are optimal for meeting all of the students' needs or whether or not efficiencies and/or changes in staff deployment may be found that could result in financial savings. According to a district leader, the district's new accounting system has the capability for such an analysis.

Benefits: By continuing to focus on finding efficiencies and decreasing expenses, the district can potentially reallocate limited funds to address its priorities.

11. District leaders should be an integral part of the upcoming discussions on revisions to the Regional Agreement with a focus on increasing the dollar limit for maintenance and repairs paid for within the district's operating budget.

- A. The district and member towns should engage in discussions about potentially revising the Regional Agreement to clarify responsibility for building repairs and renovations.
 - 1. The current limit of \$5,000 for maintenance and repairs paid out of the operating budget should be increased to a more reasonable amount.
 - 2. The district should analyze past, current, and future maintenance and repair needs of the school buildings to ascertain a reasonable limit that will allow the district to make timely repairs without going to the member towns for approval and appropriation.
 - a. It is a common arrangement in Massachusetts regional school districts for the district to have total responsibility for repairs and renovations.
 - 3. The Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools may be able to provide advice and guidance on this issue.

Recommended resources:

- *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003347>), from the National Center for Education Statistics, is intended to help school districts plan for efficient and effective operations. It addresses various topics, including conducting a facilities audit, planning and evaluating maintenance, and managing staff and contractors.

- *The Massachusetts School Checklist* (<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/environmental-health/exposure-topics/iaq/iaq-methods/the-mass-school-checklist.html>) is a list of the most important environmental health and safety issues for schools to address. It includes regulations and industry standards/guidelines related to elements on the checklist, as well as additional resources.
- ESE's *School Building Issues* web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/sbuilding/>) includes funding opportunities, guidelines, and resources related to school buildings.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation include ensuring that the appropriate resources are directed to the district's facilities and that maintenance and repair issues can be addressed in a timely way. Ultimately, this will support the district's efforts to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for the community's children.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from January 13-16, 2014, by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Wilfrid Savoie, E.T.D. (hon.), leadership and governance
2. Michele Kingsland-Smith, M. Ed., curriculum and instruction
3. Linda L. Greyser, Ed.D., assessment and review team coordinator
4. Thomas Johnson, Ed.D., human resources and professional development
5. Janet Smith, Ph. D., student support
6. Marge Foster, M.B.A., financial and asset management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: the director of business services, the accountant, the assistant superintendent of district operations, the treasurer of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District, and the Hanson town accountant. Also interviewed about finances were the Hanson town administrator, the Whitman town administrator, and the chair of the Whitman Board of Selectmen.

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

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers' association: the president and the vice-president/chair of negotiations, and the professional rights and responsibilities sub-committee.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the superintendent, the assistant superintendent of district operations, the assistant superintendent of teaching and learning, the administrator of special education and pupil personnel services, the director of business services, and the director of guidance.

The team visited the following schools: John H. Duval Elementary School (K-5), Louise A. Conley Elementary School (K-5), Maquan Elementary School (PK-2), Indian Head Elementary School (K-5), Hanson Middle School (grades 6-8), Whitman Middle School (grades 6-8), and Whitman-Hanson Regional High School (grades 9-12).

During the onsite, the team conducted interviews with all 7 principals and focus groups with 23 elementary school teachers and 4 high school teachers. No middle school teachers came to the middle school focus group.

The team observed 78 classes in the district: 20 at the regional high school, 20 at the two middle schools, and 38 at the four elementary schools.

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

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
- Data on the district's staffing and finances.
- Published educational reports on the district by ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).
- District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district's end-of-year financial reports.
- All completed program and administrator evaluations, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 1/13/14	Tuesday 1/14/14	Wednesday 1/15/14	Thursday 1/16/14
Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers' association.	Interviews with district staff and principals; interview with town officials; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; parent focus group; visits to Conley Elementary School and Whitman-Hanson Regional High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with school and district leaders; interviews with school committee members; visits to Conley Elementary School, Maquan Elementary School, Indian Head Elementary School, and Hanson Middle School for classroom observations.	Follow-up interviews; district review team meeting; visits to Whitman-Hanson Regional High School, Whitman Middle School, and Duval Elementary School for classroom observations; emerging themes meeting with district and school leaders and principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

Table B1a: Whitman-Hanson RSD
2013-2014 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	76	1.8%	82990	8.7%
Asian	36	0.9%	58455	6.1%
Hispanic	105	2.5%	162647	17.0%
Native American	11	0.3%	2209	0.2%
White	3844	92.3%	620628	64.9%
Native Hawaiian	5	0.1%	1007	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	88	2.1%	27803	2.9%
All Students	4165	100.0%	955739	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2013

Table B1b: Whitman-Hanson RSD
2013-2014 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations

Student Groups	District			State		
	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of District	N	Percent of High Needs	Percent of State
Students w/ disabilities	594	45.9%	14.1%	164336	34.8%	17.0%
Low Income	877	67.7%	21.1%	365885	77.5%	38.3%
ELLs and Former ELLs	10	0.8%	0.2%	75947	16.1%	7.9%
All high needs students	1295	100.0%	30.7%	472001	100.0%	48.8%

Notes: As of October 1, 2013. 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 4,213; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 966,360.

**Table B2a: Whitman-Hanson RSD
English Language Arts Performance, 2010-2013**

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	342	86.6	86.9	87.8	86	83.3	-0.6	-1.8
	P+	342	61.0%	64.0%	67.0%	64.0%	57.0%	3.0%	-3.0%
4	CPI	345	81.3	82.1	84.5	83.6	78.9	2.3	-0.9
	P+	345	50.0%	57.0%	62.0%	62.0%	53.0%	12.0%	0.0%
	SGP	330	45	59	54	60	49	15	6
5	CPI	336	88.7	86.6	84.2	87.5	84.7	-1.2	3.3
	P+	336	71.0%	67.0%	62.0%	68.0%	66.0%	-3.0%	6.0%
	SGP	319	51	47	48	51	52	0	3
6	CPI	337	91	90.2	84.1	85.9	85.1	-5.1	1.8
	P+	337	75.0%	73.0%	64.0%	66.0%	67.0%	-9.0%	2.0%
	SGP	324	44	45.5	42.5	41	52	-3	-1.5
7	CPI	370	91.9	91.3	90.1	88.5	88.4	-3.4	-1.6
	P+	370	78.0%	74.0%	74.0%	70.0%	72.0%	-8.0%	-4.0%
	SGP	359	48	39	35.5	36	48	-12	0.5
8	CPI	344	94.5	93.7	93.2	93.5	90.1	-1	0.3
	P+	344	84.0%	84.0%	82.0%	82.0%	78.0%	-2.0%	0.0%
	SGP	328	51	54	46	49	50	-2	3
10	CPI	271	92.5	96	96.9	97.2	96.9	4.7	0.3
	P+	271	79.0%	89.0%	90.0%	92.0%	91.0%	13.0%	2.0%
	SGP	250	43	46	37	46	57	3	9
All	CPI	2345	89.4	89.4	88.6	88.6	86.8	-0.8	0
	P+	2345	71.0%	72.0%	71.0%	71.0%	69.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	SGP	1910	46	48	43	46	51	0	3

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time.

Table B2b: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Mathematics Performance, 2010-2013

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
3	CPI	342	84.6	89.7	88.5	88.3	84.3	3.7	-0.2
	P+	342	65.0%	75.0%	73.0%	74.0%	66.0%	9.0%	1.0%
4	CPI	342	78	80.1	84.3	85.1	80.2	7.1	0.8
	P+	342	44.0%	47.0%	60.0%	58.0%	52.0%	14.0%	-2.0%
	SGP	327	46	51.5	50	50	54	4	0
5	CPI	335	80.1	80.9	79.7	83.1	80.6	3	3.4
	P+	335	56.0%	57.0%	58.0%	64.0%	61.0%	8.0%	6.0%
	SGP	321	53	49	44	46	54	-7	2
6	CPI	337	80.1	81	78.1	81.6	80.3	1.5	3.5
	P+	337	58.0%	56.0%	53.0%	60.0%	61.0%	2.0%	7.0%
	SGP	323	42	39	38.5	42	50	0	3.5
7	CPI	371	76.2	73.1	74.5	71.8	74.4	-4.4	-2.7
	P+	371	53.0%	46.0%	47.0%	45.0%	52.0%	-8.0%	-2.0%
	SGP	361	47	42	48.5	38	46	-9	-10.5
8	CPI	343	77.4	76.4	76.6	74.4	76	-3	-2.2
	P+	343	53.0%	56.0%	52.0%	51.0%	55.0%	-2.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	329	41	63	51	45	50	4	-6
10	CPI	271	92.4	91.8	93.4	91.5	90.2	-0.9	-1.9
	P+	271	80.0%	82.0%	85.0%	81.0%	80.0%	1.0%	-4.0%
	SGP	252	50	40	51	43.5	51	-6.5	-7.5
All	CPI	2341	81	81.5	81.9	81.8	80.8	0.8	-0.1
	P+	2341	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	61.0%	61.0%	3.0%	0.0%
	SGP	1913	47	48	47	43	51	-4	-4

Notes: The number of students included in CPI and percent *Proficient* or *Advanced* (P+) calculations may differ from the number of students included in median SGP calculations. A median SGP is not calculated for students in grade 3 because they are participating in MCAS tests for the first time.

Table B2c: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Science and Technology/Engineering Performance, 2010-2013

Grade and Measure		Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year					Gains and Declines	
			2010	2011	2012	2013	State 2013	4-Year Trend	2 Year Trend
5	CPI	336	84.1	74.4	78.9	81.9	78.5	-2.2	3
	P+	336	60.0%	40.0%	49.0%	54.0%	51.0%	-6.0%	5.0%
8	CPI	342	77.3	75.7	74.5	72	71	-5.3	-2.5
	P+	342	46.0%	43.0%	41.0%	35.0%	39.0%	-11.0%	-6.0%
10	CPI	256	89.9	92.5	94	93.2	88	3.3	-0.8
	P+	256	75.0%	80.0%	83.0%	79.0%	71.0%	4.0%	-4.0%
All	CPI	934	83.2	79.9	81.8	81.4	79	-1.8	-0.4
	P+	934	59.0%	52.0%	57.0%	54.0%	53.0%	-5.0%	-3.0%

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

Table B3a: Whitman-Hanson RSD
English Language Arts (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	816	77.3	77.2	76.7	78.6	1.3	1.9
		P+	816	44.0%	47.0%	47.0%	50.0%	6.0%	3.0%
		SGP	643	42	41	38	42	0	4
	State	CPI	237163	76.1	77	76.5	76.8	0.7	0.3
		P+	237163	45.0%	48.0%	48.0%	48.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	180087	45	46	46	47	2	1
Low Income	District	CPI	571	83.5	83.5	81.6	83.1	-0.4	1.5
		P+	571	55.0%	59.0%	56.0%	60.0%	5.0%	4.0%
		SGP	464	42	41	37	42	0	5
	State	CPI	184999	76.5	77.1	76.7	77.2	0.7	0.5
		P+	184999	47.0%	49.0%	50.0%	50.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	141671	46	46	45	47	1	2
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	375	67.8	67.4	64.5	64.5	-3.3	0
		P+	375	24.0%	27.0%	24.0%	25.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		SGP	274	37.5	39	34	40.5	3	6.5
	State	CPI	88956	67.3	68.3	67.3	66.8	-0.5	-0.5
		P+	88956	28.0%	30.0%	31.0%	30.0%	2.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	64773	41	42	43	43	2	0
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	10	68.2	0	0	85	16.8	85
		P+	10	55.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	-5.0%	50.0%
		SGP	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	46676	66.1	66.2	66.2	67.4	1.3	1.2
		P+	46676	32.0%	33.0%	34.0%	35.0%	3.0%	1.0%
		SGP	31672	51	50	51	53	2	2
All students	District	CPI	2345	89.4	89.4	88.6	88.6	-0.8	0
		P+	2345	71.0%	72.0%	71.0%	71.0%	0.0%	0.0%
		SGP	1910	46	48	43	46	0	3
	State	CPI	496175	86.9	87.2	86.7	86.8	-0.1	0.1
		P+	496175	68.0%	69.0%	69.0%	69.0%	1.0%	0.0%
		SGP	395568	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

**Table B3b: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Mathematics (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI	811	66.8	67.2	66.8	68.9	2.1	2.1
		P+	811	33.0%	34.0%	37.0%	38.0%	5.0%	1.0%
		SGP	644	41	44	41	41	0	0
	State	CPI	237745	66.7	67.1	67	68.6	1.9	1.6
		P+	237745	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	40.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	180866	46	46	46	46	0	0
Low Income	District	CPI	569	72.9	73.6	72.5	73.1	0.2	0.6
		P+	569	43.0%	44.0%	44.0%	45.0%	2.0%	1.0%
		SGP	466	42	45	40	40	-2	0
	State	CPI	185392	67.1	67.3	67.3	69	1.9	1.7
		P+	185392	37.0%	38.0%	38.0%	41.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	142354	47	46	45	46	-1	1
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI	373	56.7	56.4	53.4	55.6	-1.1	2.2
		P+	373	16.0%	17.0%	17.0%	19.0%	3.0%	2.0%
		SGP	276	38	43	37	41	3	4
	State	CPI	89193	57.5	57.7	56.9	57.4	-0.1	0.5
		P+	89193	21.0%	22.0%	21.0%	22.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		SGP	65068	43	43	43	42	-1	-1
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI	9	48.1	0	0	0	-48.1	0
		P+	9	31.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-31.0%	0.0%
		SGP	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
	State	CPI	47046	61.5	62	61.6	63.9	2.4	2.3
		P+	47046	31.0%	32.0%	32.0%	35.0%	4.0%	3.0%
		SGP	31986	54	52	52	53	-1	1
All students	District	CPI	2341	81	81.5	81.9	81.8	0.8	-0.1
		P+	2341	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	61.0%	3.0%	0.0%
		SGP	1913	47	48	47	43	-4	-4
	State	CPI	497090	79.9	79.9	79.9	80.8	0.9	0.9
		P+	497090	58.0%	58.0%	59.0%	61.0%	3.0%	2.0%
		SGP	396691	50	50	50	51	1	1

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

**Table B3c: Whitman-Hanson Public Schools
Science and Technology/Engineering (All Grades)
Performance for Selected Subgroups Compared to State, 2010-2013**

Group and Measure			Number Included (2013)	Spring MCAS Year				Gains and Declines	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	4 Year Trend	2-Year Trend
High Needs	District	CPI							
		P+							
	State	CPI	96902	64.3	63.8	65	66.4	2.1	1.4
		P+	96902	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	31.0%	3.0%	0.0%
Low Income	District	CPI							
		P+							
	State	CPI	75485	63.6	62.8	64.5	66.1	2.5	1.6
		P+	75485	28.0%	28.0%	31.0%	32.0%	4.0%	1.0%
Students w/ disabilities	District	CPI							
		P+							
	State	CPI	37049	59	59.2	58.7	59.8	0.8	1.1
		P+	37049	19.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	1.0%	0.0%
English language learners & Former ELLs	District	CPI							
		P+							
	State	CPI	16179	51.8	50.3	51.4	54	2.2	2.6
		P+	16179	16.0%	15.0%	17.0%	19.0%	3.0%	2.0%
All students	District	CPI							
		P+							
	State	CPI	209573	78.3	77.6	78.6	79	0.7	0.4
		P+	209573	52.0%	52.0%	54.0%	53.0%	1.0%	-1.0%

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

**Table B4: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Annual Grade 9-12 Dropout Rates, 2010-2013**

	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent	Percentage Points	Percent	
All students	2.5	1.9	1.3	0.8	-1.7	-68.0%	-0.5	-38.5%	2.2

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

Table B5a: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2010-2013

Group	Number Included (2013)	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
		2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	106	71.6%	84.2%	83.8%	88.7%	17.1	23.9%	4.9	5.8%	74.7%
Low income	70	73.0%	84.9%	79.5%	90.0%	17.0	23.3%	10.5	13.2%	73.6%
Students w/ disabilities	60	64.4%	80.6%	79.4%	85.0%	20.6	32.0%	5.6	7.1%	67.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	63.5%
All students	294	86.7%	89.7%	92.6%	94.2%	7.5	8.7%	1.6	1.7%	85.0%

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

Table B6: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Attendance Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
All students	94.7%	94.8%	95.1%	95.1%	0.4	0.4%	0.0	0.0%	94.8%

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

Table B7: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Suspension Rates, 2010-2013

Group	School Year Ending				Change 2010-2013		Change 2012-2013		State (2013)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
In-School Suspension Rate	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.1	25.0%	-0.1	-16.7%	2.2%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	2.9%	2.7%	2.6%	1.7%	-1.2	-41.4%	-0.9	-34.6%	4.3%

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

Table B8: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending
Fiscal Years 2011–2013

	FY11		FY12		FY13	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From school committee budget	\$45,052,557	\$65,042,935	\$43,408,810	\$42,555,362	\$43,436,271	--
From revolving funds and grants	--	\$5,923,199	--	\$4,724,802	--	--
Total expenditures	--	\$70,966,134	--	\$47,280,164	--	--
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	\$23,339,328	--	\$23,464,624	--	\$23,680,501
Required local contribution	--	\$13,057,622	--	\$13,430,108	--	\$14,011,112
Required net school spending**	--	\$36,396,950	--	\$36,894,732	--	\$37,691,613
Actual net school spending	--	\$38,206,481	--	\$38,147,108	--	\$39,782,182
Over/under required (\$)	--	\$1,809,531	--	\$1,252,376	--	\$2,090,569
Over/under required (%)	--	5.0%	--	3.4%	--	5.5

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

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

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

**Table B9: Whitman-Hanson RSD
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010-2013**

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012	2013
Administration	\$429	\$451	\$478	\$262
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$1,061	\$941	\$1,097	\$698
Teachers	\$4,703	\$4,982	\$5,272	\$4,182
Other teaching services	\$723	\$632	\$676	\$591
Professional development	\$205	\$216	\$62	\$36
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	\$509	\$235	\$347	\$588
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$420	\$399	\$437	\$266
Pupil services	\$564	\$736	\$776	\$912
Operations and maintenance	\$1,114	\$1,202	\$931	\$816
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	\$2,067	\$2,195	\$2,289	\$1,493
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$11,795	\$11,988	\$12,364	\$9,844

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

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

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

Learning Environment	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive and respectful.	ES	1	2	35	#	1	5	72
	MS	0	0	20	%	1%	6%	92%
	HS	0	3	17	---	---	---	---
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	ES	2	2	34	#	5	8	65
	MS	1	1	18	%	6%	10%	83%
	HS	2	5	13	---	---	---	---
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	0	4	34	#	0	11	67
	MS	0	4	16	%	0%	14%	86%
	HS	0	3	17	---	---	---	---
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	ES	3	2	33	#	6	6	66
	MS	2	1	17	%	8%	8%	85%
	HS	1	3	16	---	---	---	---
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	5	11	22	#	16	18	44
	MS	5	3	12	%	21%	23%	56%
	HS	6	4	10	---	---	---	---

(Please see next page)

Teaching	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	7	1	30	#	9	6	63
	MS	0	4	16	%	12%	8%	81%
	HS	2	1	17	---			
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	7	10	21	#	11	22	45
	MS	3	7	10	%	14%	28%	58%
	HS	1	5	14	---	---	---	---
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	ES	14	6	18	#	29	14	35
	MS	8	2	10	%	37%	18%	45%
	HS	7	6	7	---	---	---	---
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	ES	5	11	22	#	14	20	44
	MS	7	4	9	%	18%	26%	56%
	HS	2	5	13	---	---	---	---
10. The teacher uses appropriate modifications for English language learners and students with disabilities such as explicit language objective(s); direct instruction in vocabulary; presentation of content at multiple levels of complexity; and, differentiation of content, process, and/or products.	ES	24	5	9	#	51	10	17
	MS	15	3	2	%	65%	13%	22%
	HS	12	2	6	---	---	---	---
11. The teacher provides multiple opportunities for students' to engage in higher order thinking such as use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	14	8	16	#	24	27	27
	MS	6	9	5	%	31%	35%	35%
	HS	4	10	6	---	---	---	---

(Please see next page)

Teaching (continued)	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	7	12	19	#	12	25	41
	MS	3	7	10	%	15%	32%	53%
	HS	2	6	12	---			
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a learning environment where students can take risks---for instance, where they can make predictions, make judgments and investigate.	ES	8	5	25	#	18	15	45
	MS	5	4	11	%	23%	19%	58%
	HS	5	6	9	---	---	---	---
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	ES	5	14	19	#	15	24	39
	MS	6	6	8	%	19%	31%	50%
	HS	4	4	12	---	---	---	---
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	8	5	25	#	13	19	46
	MS	3	9	8	%	17%	24%	59%
	HS	2	5	13	---	---	---	---
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	12	5	21	#	22	19	37
	MS	3	7	10	%	28%	24%	47%
	HS	7	7	6	---	---	---	---

(Please see next page)

Learning	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	8	11	19	#	14	18	46
	MS	4	2	14	%	18%	23%	59%
	HS	2	5	13	---	---	---	---
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	9	11	18	#	21	28	29
	MS	6	7	7	%	27%	36%	37%
	HS	6	10	4	---			
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	13	6	21	#	27	21	32
	MS	7	8	5	%	34%	26%	40%
	HS	7	7	6	---	---	---	---
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	5	6	17	#	24	16	28
	MS	11	4	5	%	35%	24%	41%
	HS	8	6	6	---	---	---	---
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	14	5	19	#	26	14	38
	MS	6	5	9	%	33%	18%	49%
	HS	6	4	10	---	---	---	---
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	24	5	9	#	49	7	22
	MS	12	2	6	%	63%	9%	28%
	HS	13	0	7	---	---	---	---
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	5	10	23	#	13	18	47
	MS	5	5	10	%	17%	23%	60%
	HS	3	3	14	---	---	---	---

24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	31	2	5	#	53	11	14
	MS	12	4	4	%	68%	14%	18%
	HS	10	5	5	---	---	---	---

Instructional Inventory in Percentages, by School Level

Learning Environment	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	% None	% Partial	% Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
1. Tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students is positive and respectful.	ES	3%	5%	92%	#			
	MS	0%	0%	100%	%			
	HS	0%	15%	85%	---	---	---	---
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	ES	5%	5%	89%	#			
	MS	5%	5%	90%	%			
	HS	10%	25%	65%	---	---	---	---
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	ES	0%	11%	89%	#			
	MS	0%	20%	80%	%			
	HS	0%	15%	85%	---	---	---	---
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	ES	8%	5%	87%	#			
	MS	10%	5%	85%	%			
	HS	5%	15%	80%	---	---	---	---
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	ES	13%	29%	58%	#			
	MS	25%	15%	60%	%			
	HS	30%	20%	50%	---	---	---	---

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Teaching	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
6. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of subject and content.	ES	18%	3%	79%	#			
	MS	0%	20%	80%	%			
	HS	10%	5%	85%	---			
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	ES	18%	26%	55%	#			
	MS	15%	35%	50%	%			
	HS	5%	25%	70%	---	---	---	---
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	ES	37%	16%	47%	#			
	MS	40%	10%	50%	%			
	HS	35%	30%	35%	---	---	---	---
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	ES	13%	29%	58%	#			
	MS	35%	20%	45%	%			
	HS	10%	25%	65%	---	---	---	---
10. The teacher uses appropriate modifications for English language learners and students with disabilities such as explicit language objective(s); direct instruction in vocabulary; presentation of content at multiple levels of complexity; and, differentiation of content, process, and/or products.	ES	63%	13%	24%	#			
	MS	75%	15%	10%	%			
	HS	60%	10%	30%	---	---	---	---
11. The teacher provides multiple opportunities for students' to engage in higher order thinking such as use of inquiry, exploration, application, analysis, synthesis, and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	37%	21%	42%	#			
	MS	30%	45%	25%	%			
	HS	20%	50%	30%	---	---	---	---

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Teaching (continued)	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	ES	18%	32%	50%	#			
	MS	15%	35%	50%	%			
	HS	10%	30%	60%	---			
13. The teacher implements teaching strategies that promote a learning environment where students can take risks---for instance, where they can make predictions, make judgments and investigate.	ES	21%	13%	66%	#			
	MS	25%	20%	55%	%			
	HS	25%	30%	45%	---	---	---	---
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	ES	13%	37%	50%	#			
	MS	30%	30%	40%	%			
	HS	20%	20%	60%	---	---	---	---
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	ES	21%	13%	66%	#			
	MS	15%	45%	40%	%			
	HS	10%	25%	65%	---	---	---	---
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	ES	32%	13%	55%	#			
	MS	15%	35%	50%	%			
	HS	35%	35%	30%	---	---	---	---

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Learning	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall			
	Grade Span	None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	21%	29%	50%	#			
	MS	20%	10%	70%	%			
	HS	10%	25%	65%	---	---	---	---
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	24%	29%	47%	#			
	MS	30%	35%	35%	%			
	HS	30%	50%	20%	---			
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	33%	15%	53%	#			
	MS	35%	40%	25%	%			
	HS	35%	35%	30%	---	---	---	---
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	18%	21%	61%	#			
	MS	55%	20%	25%	%			
	HS	40%	30%	30%	---	---	---	---
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	37%	13%	50%	#			
	MS	30%	25%	45%	%			
	HS	30%	20%	50%	---	---	---	---
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	63%	13%	24%	#			
	MS	60%	10%	30%	%			
	HS	65%	0%	35%	---	---	---	---
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	13%	26%	61%	#			
	MS	25%	25%	50%	%			
	HS	15%	15%	70%	---	---	---	---

24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	82%	5%	13%	#			
	MS	60%	20%	20%	%			
	HS	50%	25%	25%	---	---	---	---