District Review Report

Woburn Public Schools

Review conducted April 7-10, 2014

Center for District and School Accountability

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education

Organization of this Report

This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000   TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu

Woburn Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of 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 Woburn Public Schools was conducted from April 7-10, 2014. The site visit included 26.5 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 50 stakeholders, including the superintendent, school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted two focus groups with five elementary school teachers, and ten high school teachers.[1] 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 104 classrooms in 11 schools. The team collected data using an

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[1] No middle school teachers attended the scheduled middle school focus group.

instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

District Profile

The Woburn Public Schools has a mayor/city council form of government and the chair of the school committee is elected by the committee. There are seven members of the school committee and they meet twice monthly.

The current superintendent has been in the position since 2009. The district leadership team includes the assistant superintendent for curriculum and assessment, the assistant superintendent for finance and operations, and the special education director. Central office positions have been mostly stable in number over the past several years, although a human resource position was eliminated a few years ago. The district has eleven principals leading eleven schools. There are several other administrators, including a district technology director, two assistant principals at the high school and one assistant principal at each of the two middle schools. The elementary schools do not have assistant principals. In addition, the principals are members of a bargaining unit. There are a total of 362.2 FTE teachers in the district in the current (2014) school year.

As of October 2013, 4,840 students were enrolled in the district's 11 schools:

Table 1: Woburn Public Schools
Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment, 2013-2014

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Clyde Reeves Elementary School	ES	PK-5	529
Daniel P. Hurld Elementary School	ES	K-5	206
Goodyear Elementary School	ES	K-5	349
Linscott-Rumford Elementary Schools	ES	K-5	239
Malcolm White Elementary School	ES	K-5	328
Mary D. Altavesta Elementary School	ES	K-5	218
Shamrock Elementary School	ES	PK-5	349
Wyman Elementary School	ES	K-5	186
Daniel L. Joyce Middle School	MS	6-8	551
John F. Kennedy Middle School	MS	6-8	553
Woburn Memorial High School	HS	9-12	1,332

School Name	School Type	Grades Served	Enrollment
Totals	11 schools	PK-12	4,840
*As of October 2013, ESE Warehouse data.			

Between 2009 and 2014 overall student enrollment increased by 0.7%. 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 to the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

Total in-district per-pupil expenditures were 13% higher than the median in-district per pupil expenditures for districts of similar size in fiscal year 2013: total in-district per-pupil expenditures were $13, 249 as compared with a median of $11,729 (see District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance). Actual net school spending has been well above (i.e., 28.8% or more above for at least five years) what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B8 in Appendix B.

Student Performance[2]

Woburn is a Level 2 district because all of its schools are in Level 2, except for Wyman Elementary, which is in Level 1.

- Of Woburn's 8 elementary schools, which range from the 39th to the 72nd percentile of elementary schools, 7 are in Level 2 for not meeting their gap narrowing goals for all students and high needs. Wyman Elementary is in Level 1 at the 58th percentile of elementary schools, with a Progress Performance Index (PPI) of 97 for all students and 100 for high needs students.

- Joyce Middle and Kennedy Middle, at the 47th and 37th percentile of middle schools, are in Level 2 for failing to meet their gap narrowing targets for all students and high needs students.

- Woburn High, at the 23rd percentile of high schools, is in Level 2 with a cumulative PPI of 73 for all students and 81 for high needs students; the target is 75. It is also in Level 2 for low MCAS participation (less than 95 percent) for low income students.

The district did not reach its 2013 Composite Performance Index (CPI) targets for ELA, math, and science.

- ELA CPI was 90.0 in 2013, below the district's target of 92.5.

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[2] See also student performance tables in Appendix B.

- Math CPI was 82.2 in 2013, below the district's target of 84.0.

- Science CPI was 79.3 in 2013, below the district's target of 84.0.

In 2013 ELA proficiency rates were above the state rate for the district as a whole and for every grade except the 5th grade, which was equal to the state. ELA performance varied in the elementary schools.

- ELA proficiency rates for all students in the district were 74 percent in 2010 and 73 percent in 2013, above the state rate of 69 percent.

- In 2013 ELA proficiency was equal to the state rate in the 5th grade, above the state by 1 to 4 percentage points in the 3rd, 4th, 8th, and 10th grades, and above the state by 10 and 9 percentage points, respectively, in the 6th and 7th grades.

     o In the elementary schools ELA proficiency ranged from 48 percent at White Elementary to 72 percent at Wyman Elementary.

- ELA proficiency was higher in 2013 than in 2010 by 16 percentage points in the 10th grade and lower in 2013 than in 2010 by 12 percentage points in the 3rd and 4th grades.

Math proficiency rates and performance varied by grade and school.

- Math proficiency rates for all students in the district were 60 percent in 2010 and 2013, compared with the state rate of 61 percent in 2013.

- In 2013 math proficiency in the district was equal to the state rate in the 4th grade, above the state rate in the 6th and 7th grades by 5 and 2 percentage points respectively, below the state rate by 1 to 3 percentage points in the 3rd, 5th, and 10th grades, and below the state rate by 5 percentage points in the 8th grade.

     o In the elementary schools math proficiency ranged from 47 percent at White Elementary to 71 percent at Linscott-Rumford Elementary.

- Math proficiency was higher in 2013 than in 2010 by 9 percentage points in the 6th and 7th grades, by 3 percentage points in the 8th and 10th grades, and was lower in 2013 than 2010 by 10 and 9 percentage points, respectively, in the 3rd and 4th grades.

Science proficiency and performance varied by grade and school.

- 5th grade science proficiency was 54 percent in 2013, 10 percentage points lower than the 2010 rate of 64 percent, and above the 2013 state rate of 51 percent.

- o Science proficiency in the 5th grade ranged from 32 percent at Hurld Elementary to 75 percent at Wyman Elementary.

- 8th grade science proficiency was 39 percent in 2013, 4 percentage points higher than the 2010 rate of 35 percent, and equal to the 2013 state rate.

  - o Science proficiency was 34 percent at Joyce Middle and 44 percent at Kennedy Middle.

- 10th grade science proficiency was 65 percent, 17 percentage points higher than the 2010 rate of 48 percent, and below the 2013 state rate of 71 percent.

Woburn met the 2014 four year cohort graduation rate target of 80.0 percent and five year cohort graduation rate target of 85.0 percent.[3]

- The four year cohort graduation rate was 86.2 percent in 2010 and 86.1 percent in 2013, above the state graduation rate of 85.0 percent.

- The five year cohort graduation rate was 86.3 percent in 2009 and 86.5 percent in 2012, compared with the state graduation rate of 87.5 percent.

- The annual dropout rate for Woburn was 2.2 percent in 2010 and 1.7 percent in 2013, below the statewide rate of 2.2 percent.

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[3] 2014 graduation targets are 80 percent for the four year and 85 percent for the five year cohort graduation rates and refer to the 2013 four year cohort graduation rate and 2012 five year cohort graduation rates.

Woburn Public Schools District Review Findings

Strengths

Leadership and Governance

1. The district is characterized by a culture of cooperation. Pride in the schools is evident.

    A. There is a culture of cooperation in the school district at each institutional level.

        1. The superintendent expressed confidence in the leadership team and school principals reported that the superintendent supports them.

        2. The review team learned in interviews with school committee members and with the superintendent that the committee understands its policy-setting role and works cooperatively with the superintendent on broad district issues. The school committee does not involve itself in the day-to-day operations of the schools.

        3. The mayor reported that the city enjoys a positive relationship with the school district and praised the superintendent for his willingness to work cooperatively with the city to arrive at an affordable budget.

        4 Teachers also provided evidence of the positive atmosphere that permeates the district.

            a. The teachers' association told the review team that school leaders have created a healthy atmosphere marked by trust and mutual respect.

            b. Eighty percent of the 223 Woburn teachers responding to the 2012 TELL Mass Survey reported that they are supported by the leadership team in their schools.[4]

    B. The pride Woburn takes in its schools is evident in a number of ways.

        1. Administrators, teachers, school committee members and parents spoke to the review team about their positive history in the district as students and their willingness to serve the district as adults.

        2. The community's pride in its schools and their history is evidenced by the incorporation of several architectural elements from the old high school into the design of the recently completed Woburn High School.

        3. The district's aggressive school building construction program and its five-year plan for capital projects are also evidence of a pride in ownership, resulting in buildings that are well maintained and appropriate sites for student learning.

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[4] In 2014, fewer than 50% of teachers responded to the survey, so districtwide results are not available.

Impact: Loyalty to the community and pride in the schools resonate throughout the culture of the Woburn Public Schools. The positive relationships and cooperative atmosphere that mark the district provide a strong foundation for continued progress as the district formulates new plans to improve student achievement.

Instruction

2. **In observed lessons districtwide, the classroom environment was conducive to effective learning and teachers demonstrate strong knowledge of subject and content.**

   A. Districtwide, the tone of interactions between teachers and students and among students was consistently positive and respectful.

      1. In 92% of observed classrooms, the review team found clear and consistent evidence that the tone of interactions between teacher and students and among students was positive and respectful. Observers characterized students as being "very respectful" and "ready to learn" and used terms such as "friendly, positive and supportive" to describe the interactions between teachers and students.

   B. Across the district, behavioral standards have been established and students understood and followed school and classroom rules, whether they were posted or not.

      1. Effective behavioral standards were clearly evident in 92% of classes. If disruptions occurred, they were managed effectively and equitably in most classrooms. The review team described students as "well-behaved" and "knowing and following standards of behavior."

         a. While classroom rules were not consistently displayed in most observed classrooms, students demonstrated understanding of classroom expectations for behavior and followed them.

         b. The review team more often observed posted behavioral standards at the elementary level. For example, in a grade 3 ELA class, "diligence" was displayed as the trait of the month for students to follow. In a grade 5 math class, rules were posted following the format of the Constitution: Article I, No bullying; Article II, Classwork and homework must be completed; Article III, Listen and follow directions, with students' signatures beneath the rules.

   C. Classrooms are arranged to ensure students full access to learning activities while clearly established routines promote smooth transitions from one learning activity the next.

      1. In 94% of observed classrooms, the physical arrangement of desks and tables ensured students had full access to learning activities.

2. In 86%, students moved from one activity to the next with a minimal loss of instructional time.

3. Many examples of seamless transitions observed by the team included a grade 6 teacher using pair sticks to quickly organize students from a large group to partner work with a minimal loss of time and a grade 1 ELA class where students made a quick transition from sitting on a rug for a large group presentation on a writing assignment to their desks where they got right to work.

D. Most teachers throughout the district demonstrated strong knowledge of subject and content. In 83% of the observed classes, teachers clearly and consistently showed subject and content mastery.

Impact: By having knowledgeable teachers and by creating a safe, positive and respectful learning environment where classroom rules have been established and are followed by students. the essential conditions for learning have been met. The district is in an advantageous position to further develop common and best instructional practices and to enhance students' learning.

Assessment

3. **The district is developing a system of common assessments to promote a data-driven approach to measure student achievement and inform decision-making.**

A. In interviews, district and school leaders as well as teachers described common assessments used to assess and monitor student progress in English Language Arts.

1. In grades K-2, teachers used DIBELS three times a year to assess reading proficiency, progress monitor, group students for instruction and, at some schools, for Response to Intervention (RtI). In the three Title 1 schools, teachers also used GRADE to assess reading comprehension for at-risk students.

2. In grades 3-5, teachers used standards-based *i-Ready* assessments for the first time this year. I-Ready assessments are diagnostic and provide five proficiency reports on common core standards: class proficiency, student proficiency, an overall Excel chart of question results, an overall score and an item analysis. They are administered two or three times a year and are also used to help form reading groups.

3. At the high school this year, for the first time, there were common mid-year exams in comparable classes in all subjects and plans for common final exams. Mid-year exams were used for grading purposes only. English mid-year exams used common writing prompts although other exam questions were differentiated due to different readings. Exam questions were described as being aligned to 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks and assessed common grade-level vocabulary and literary conventions.

B. The district has recently prioritized the improvement of students' writing skills as well as improved achievement on MCAS open response items.

1. At the elementary level, *Traits Writing* was implemented districtwide for the first time this year after being piloted in several schools. In the summer of 2013, a group of elementary principals developed quarterly writing prompts for use with the *Traits Writing* program. Teachers use the *Traits Writing* rubrics to assess student writing.

2. At the middle schools, there is one common open-response writing assessment administered in January using a released MCAS writing prompt. Teachers use results to identify students at risk of low performance on MCAS and eligible for extra support. ELA teachers choose classroom writing prompts from "books that have prompts" and assess results using the district's common writing rubrics for grades 6-12.

3. At the high school, English teachers used the common writing rubrics for grades 6-12 for the various types of writing. There is also a common reading rubric in use.

C. Under the leadership of the assistant superintendent, the district is developing a common standards-based report card for grades K-5.

1. A team comprised of three teachers, one part-time ELA coordinator and the assistant superintendent has drafted a new standards-based report card for grades K-5 aligned to 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks. It was about to be reviewed by teachers for implementation next year. The new report card assesses student progress in meeting standards-based indicators of academic performance skills and personal growth.

D. In interviews, leaders, teachers and leaders described common assessments in mathematics.

1. Elementary teachers give quarterly common mathematics assessments as pre- and post-tests at the elementary level. Representative teachers from the ten SEEM Collaborative districts developed the assessments, which are aligned to 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks. They are used summatively to evaluate achievement and formatively to inform mathematics instruction at the classroom level.

2. At the middle school this year, teachers also administered the common, standards-based *i-Ready* assessments as benchmark tests in mathematics. *i-Ready* assessments will be given twice this year and three times next year. Teachers use *i-Ready* results to better understand students' proficiency on standards and to plan for instruction.

3. At the end of the year, middle school teachers also administer a common mathematics placement test to help assign students for mathematics classes in the next school year.

4. At the high school, interviewees noted that common mid-year and final assessments were given in comparable courses. A recent effort emphasizes using standards to inform

test composition. In addition, common unit tests are implemented in most but not all honors sections.

5. In honors mathematics classes, particularly in geometry, teachers have developed common cooperative learning assessments to encourage students to work at higher levels; however, teachers have not been able to share results due to lack of time.

E. Interviewees described common assessments in science only at the high school level.

1. In core high school science courses, there are common mid-year and final exams in introduction to physics, biology, chemistry, anatomy and physiology. According to interviewees, these assessments are used for grading purposes only.

2. The review team was told, however, that some physics and biology teachers do examine test results for their students and discuss topics for improvement.

Impact: With common assessments in place, district staff can compare student progress across course sections and school buildings and can identify opportunities to collaborate to improve instruction.

Human Resources and Professional Development

4. **In the 2014 school year, the district began to implement its new educator evaluation system, which was adapted from the ESE model.**

A. The district has completed the required trainings for administrators and teachers.

1. The superintendent told review team members that the district initially engaged the Seaside Group to train administrators, but the sessions were not well received. They then engaged Teachers 21 to train both administrators and the teachers' association leadership. Teachers also received training on the first day of the school year.

2. The superintendent has attended District Determined Measures (DDM) training. The district's new educator evaluation negotiating group is currently working with administrators during early release days to identify DDMs, based on current initiatives.

B. The review team examined the new performance evaluations of 40 randomly selected teachers.

1. Reviewed evaluations provided evidence of goal setting, self-assessments, observations, and formative assessments, and some contained evidence forms.

2. When asked about qualities and expectations for good teaching in Woburn, teachers reported that evaluators looked for "engaged learners." Teachers noted receiving both written and oral feedback on observations, and said that formative evaluations have taken place. No summative evaluations have yet been conducted, according to teachers. Teachers indicated that half of the staff was being evaluated this year and that they felt "well monitored."

3. Principals report that with the new evaluation system, they have conducted regular observations (announced and unannounced), followed by conversations and data entry on the new *Talent Ed Perform* software. They had also completed classroom observations, and preparations were underway to write summative evaluations.

   a. Observations examined by the review team were timely, informative and half were found to be instructive.

C. The review team also examined administrators' performance evaluations.

1. All administrators were appropriately certified and had completed goal setting, self-assessments (all but one), mid-cycle reviews, and summative assessments.

   a. Principals indicated that they were evaluated at mid-year using the new system. They had set goals, which could include student growth goals plus two goals from their SIP and a professional development goal, and also had presented evidence to support their progress toward the goals.

Impact: With goal setting, self-assessments, observations, and evidence forms in place, the district is poised to use the new performance evaluation system to promote improvements in professional practices at the district, school and classroom levels.

Student Support

5. **The high school has taken important steps to lower the grade 9 retention rate.**

A. A grade 9 mentoring program assists students in making a smooth transition to high school.

1. An outside provider was employed by the district to offer training on mentoring to a core group of high school staff.

2. A staff member supervises 65 seniors who visit freshmen students once per month in their social studies class.

3. Students said that the mentoring program was instrumental in their feeling more comfortable with the transition to the large high school building.

B. The high school offers a directed study for up to 30 at-risk ninth grade students.

1. Three small groups of 8 to 10 students receive special academic support daily during directed study.

   a. Students are identified by recommendation of the sending middle school or because of academic performance.

   b. Students may enter or exit as needed during their freshman year.

   c. A social studies teacher offers tutoring and MCAS help for one period daily to each of the three groups of students.

C. The retention rate of grade 9 students declined from 7.1% to 0.8% between 2010 and 2013.

D. The high school administration has revised the Student Support Team (SST) process to focus on academic issues rather than behavioral ones.

1. The SST is composed of the principal, assistant principal responsible for the grade of the student being referred, regular education teacher, a special education teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, and school adjustment counselor.

   a. The guidance counselor collects input about the student from teachers in order to provide the SST with a framework for arranging appropriate support.

   b. At the meeting, the guidance counselor and teacher present information about the student. The teacher may receive suggestions for instruction or another meeting with a larger number of teachers might be assembled to offer those suggestions.

   c. Progress is monitored and a time frame for action is set. If a second meeting does not resolve the issue, the child may be referred for evaluation for services.

Impact: With the institution of a yearlong mentoring program for grade 9 students, proactive support for an identified group of high-risk students, and a revised SST process that helps all students who have begun to falter, the high school has provided an academic and social/emotional safety net for grade 9 students. These programs have provided a strong start for students to reach graduation successfully.

Financial and Asset Management

6. **The city has supported its schools at a level well above that required by the Chapter 70 state aid program, and has made supplemental appropriations for unexpected changes. It has also**

supported five school construction projects over the past 14 years and funded several capital improvement projects.

A. City funding for the schools exceeds net school spending requirements and the median per pupil expenditure for similar size districts by a substantial amount (see District Profile).

   1. The city's net school spending on education for FY2013 was $61,124,603, 30.9% above the requirement, and it budgeted $62,962,470 for FY2014, 31.1% above the requirement. Of the $61 million spent on education in FY2013, 89% came from general appropriations and 11% from Chapter 70).

   2. Woburn spent $13,249 per in-district pupil in FY2013, 13 percent more than the median for similar sized districts of $11,729.

   3. Reviewers found class sizes to be reasonable in the district, and student/teacher ratios in 2013 were close to the state average (13.8:1 compared to 13.5:1 for the state).

   4. The city is in a strong financial position, with FY2014 free cash of $13,332,313 and a FY2013 stabilization fund of $10,706,176.

B. School committee members and administrators reported that recent approvals of school budgets by the mayor and city council have been smooth.

C. School administrators and city officials reported that the city has assisted the schools with additional funding when unusual circumstances have required it.

   1. They reported that in the fall of 2013 the city council approved $330,000 for the schools to offset reductions in federal grants due to sequestration.

   2. Administrators also reported that a few years ago the city approved an additional appropriation to cover overages in special education.

   3. City officials stated that approximately $325,000 of the Medicaid reimbursements turned over to the city is available to the schools if needed for unexpected expenses.

Impact: The support of the city for funding for the schools has enabled the district to include some new professional staff such as elementary ELA coordinators and special education staffing, and has provided flexibility in the face of unforeseen changes.

7. **The city and the district have engaged in an aggressive school construction program, building five new schools over the past 14 years, and they have invested additional funds in capital improvements and technology for the schools.**

A. According to administrators and city officials, the community has built four new elementary schools and a new high school in the past 14 years.

1. They reported that the MSBA contributed support for all four elementary schools, and the city's share was funded by the city's existing debt capacity with no need for additional funding through an override vote.

2. The new high school, completed five years ago, was funded through a debt exclusion override supported by the school committee and city council and approved by voters.

3. School committee minutes and interviewees indicated the district is currently engaged in a feasibility study, funded in part by the MSBA, for a new Wyman-Hurld school.

4. Two of the construction projects (Goodyear-Clapp and Wyman-Hurld) combine two school buildings into one, eliminating small schools with 197 and 154 pupils.

5. Administrators indicated that renovations or new construction for the remaining two elementary schools are planned for the future.

B. In addition to new construction the city has invested in school capital improvements.

1. The city has a five-year capital improvement plan and funds for annual school projects.

    a. District administrators and city officials reported they have earmarked approximately $500,000 per year for 2013-18 for school capital improvements, funded through free cash and the stabilization fund. Previous projects included roofs, paving, storage sheds, HVAC improvements, security, and technology.

    b. District administrators reported they expect to use part of the capital improvement funding to make major improvements in district technology, and a five-year plan for technology has been submitted to the school committee.

2. The city and the district have contracted with Johnson Controls and NSTAR to do energy audits and assist with improvements of school buildings, resulting in lighting projects, insulated roofs, and updated HVAC control systems.

C. The district has made a priority of maintaining its schools in good condition.

1. Administrators reported that the district has an electrician, two HVAC technicians and two carpenters on staff to keep buildings well maintained, comfortable and healthy. Other maintenance services, such as boiler and alarm systems are contracted out.

2. Reviewers found the schools to be well maintained and conducive to learning, with the exception of the older Hurld and Wyman schools, which are scheduled to be replaced.

3. On the 2012 TELL Mass Survey, 84 percent of Woburn teachers indicated the schools were clean and well maintained.

4. In FY2013 Woburn spent $1182 per pupil on operations and maintenance, 11% more than the state average, and in FY2012 the district spent 19% more than average.

Impact: The commitment of the district and the city to maintain and improve school buildings has made school environments healthy, safe, and conducive to learning. In some cases two small elementary schools have been combined into one, making them more efficient and more cost effective. The district has planned for and also constructed state of the art facilities while maintaining reasonable class sizes and maintenance costs.

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. Furthermore, practices may have changed in the district between the time of the site visit and the final report; the report reflects what the review team observed during its visit.

Leadership and Governance

8. **Recently, the district has not operated under the guidance of a long-term vision and multi-year district improvement plan.**

    A. The district has not recently established a clear vision that is supported, by all stakeholders and based on data-determined priorities focused on student achievement.

        1. The superintendent noted that the district has not made adjustments to its vision statement in over five years. He stated that he has begun to address this topic.

        2. In the absence of a revised vision, the district has relied on broad superintendent's goals, developed by the superintendent and endorsed by the school committee, to shape its budget priorities and guide improvement efforts.

            a. The established goals are not explicitly supported by an analysis of student achievement data. The goals are general and do not specifically state improvements in student achievement.

            b. The superintendent noted that his goals, developed with the school committee, have served as the district improvement plan.

                i. In a focus group, teachers reported that they were not aware of a district vision or of any district improvement planning efforts.

    B. A review of several planning documents submitted by the central office shows that current and prior district planning tools do not contain measureable goals that are strategic, time-bound and clearly linked to student performance data.

1. The district does not have a current district improvement plan.

2. The *Blueprint for the Enhancement of Student Achievement* contains district goals and objectives dating from and before 2008 or 2009.

   a. Implementation activities associated with this plan have not been updated since the 2008-09 school year.

   b. The goals contained in this document are general and not measureable.

3. The updated goals contained in the *Summary of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget for FY2015* are also general, and do not include student performance data or objectives that are time-bound and measureable.

4. *Vision 2020: A Plan for Grades K-5,* which addresses the need for multiple personnel to assist with student intervention and teacher support, does not contain specific and measureable objectives that are connected to student performance.

C. Similarly, school improvement plans do not generally contain current measureable goals that are strategic, time-bound, and linked to student performance.

1. Most school improvement plans do not include elements commonly found in improvement planning documents to facilitate the tracking of progress with respect to action initiatives.

   a. Of the six plans that mention district goals, two different sets of district goals are referenced.

2. Most school plans do not contain measureable goals that are tied to student achievement.

   a. Increasing student achievement was addressed in seven plans submitted to the review team.

   b. While there appears to be an emerging interest in the development of SMART goals in two schools, almost all school improvement plan goals reviewed by the team are general and do not include an analysis or a display of trends in student achievement data and demographics to identify or validate improvement priorities.

Impact: Without the benefit of a unified vision, measurable district- and school-level goals, and benchmarks to gauge progress, the district's improvement efforts are likely to be uneven in implementation.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum

9. **Apart from elementary math curriculum documents and recently revised high school course syllabi, the district has not developed cohesive curriculum materials in ELA and in math that are aligned to the 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks.**

   A. As a Race to the Top (RTTT) district, Woburn received an orientation to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and resources to help accomplish curriculum alignment. However, Woburn did not fulfill the ESE expectation that all districts would align their ELA and math curricula through grade 12 to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks by the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year.[5]

   B. Aligned, fully documented, and cohesive ELA curriculum for the elementary and middle school levels have not been completed. At the high school level, documentation for the taught English curriculum includes revised syllabi and resources for individual courses.

      1. At the time of the review, the district did not have a documented ELA curriculum at the elementary level aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Teachers use the standards and work in grade-level teams to align ELA instruction to the 2011 frameworks.

         a. Interviewees reported that teachers use various materials to teach ELA and that resources vary from school to school. Guided reading or basal readers may be used along with building-based resources, such as Scott Foresman Reading from 2002 (not aligned to the 2011 Frameworks), benchmark textbooks, which are used at the three Title I schools, leveled readers and trade books.

            i. While resources for reading vary across the district, the *Traits Writing* program (Scholastic) is districtwide (as of fall 2013). Teachers participated in one half day of districtwide grade-level training for the program.

         b. School leaders described the ELA curriculum as currently "building based" with principals providing curriculum leadership to teachers. They expressed the need for curriculum coordinators who can provide a districtwide approach for alignment to the Common Core.

            i. In 2013-2014, the district created the position of K-5 ELA coordinator (see second curriculum finding below) to align and document the elementary ELA curriculum, with the expected completion date set for September 2014.

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[5] See *Guidelines for Years 2 to 4 of Race to the Top*, p. 31, available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/rttt/district.html.

c. In its current state, districtwide alignment of the elementary ELA curriculum was described as a challenge, with the building-based approach described as "fractured" and with "teachers piece-mealing" the curriculum.

2. At the middle school level, there is no written plan for ELA instruction; teachers rely on standards and various resources aligned to the 2011 frameworks.

   a. There are no curriculum guides for ELA at the middle level. Work on common assessments and aligning to the 2011 Frameworks takes place in monthly department meetings chaired by the principal. Alignment between the two middle schools occurs periodically when departments meet districtwide.

   b. Teachers use a literature anthology, grammar books, vocabulary workbooks and novels, which are shared. Teachers reported being "given the freedom to do the standards whenever we have the resources." Binders and the previous year's curriculum, as well as magazines and newspapers for non-fiction, are also used as resources.

3. At the high school, documentation for the English curriculum includes revised (2012-2013) course syllabi that reflect the 2011 Frameworks and provide a course description, components of the course, texts and resources, but do not include units of study. Teachers also have binders for courses and/or books with additional resources.

C. Documentation for the math curriculum is more complete at the elementary level than at other levels in the district. At the high school level, documentation for the math curriculum is reflected in syllabi, which were recently revised to align with the 2011 Frameworks. At the middle level, the math curriculum is not documented and there is a strong reliance on textbooks.

1. At the elementary level, documentation of the math curriculum is complete and the curriculum is now used districtwide.

   a. The math curriculum is organized in multiple binders for each grade 1-4 and online for grade 5. It consists of standards with objectives by term, a pacing guide, a crosswalk for *Math Expressions* including resources to supplement the text for alignment to the 2011 frameworks, website resources, resources by term, common core lessons, assessments by term both paper-and-pencil and the new *i-Ready* assessments. It does not include curriculum units.

2. At the middle schools, different math programs are used at different grade levels.

   a. For example, McGraw Hill texts are used in grade 6. Although the text is new to the district, it pre-dates the Common Core and teachers are supplementing it with other materials. A pacing guide is being developed.

       b.   In grade 8, teachers use *Math Connects* (Glencoe) and have created content objectives for each semester. While teachers have power standards, there are no pacing guides.

       c.   Early release days are used for alignment when math teachers meet by department.

3.   Math teachers at the high school spent three years writing syllabi aligned to the 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks for all courses. They now use "extensive syllabi with pacing guides" to teach, as well as the text, and also rely on Khan Academy. In addition, teachers share resources for courses on the school's "M" drive.

       a.   Rather than holding large department meetings, the department head convenes math teachers who teach the same course in PLCs during department meeting time to collaborate and align their courses.

D.   Although documentation of ELA and math is not cohesive across the district, teachers, school leaders and district leaders reported that instruction is aligned to the 2011 frameworks.

1.   This is confirmed by the *TELL Mass* survey (2012) where 91% of respondents (n=217) agreed that "curriculum taught in this school is aligned to the common core state standards."

E.   The district is at the initial stage of addressing WIDA standards and 50 teachers are currently taking the RETELL course.

Impact: Without an established process for regular and timely review and revision of curriculum, the district's task of documenting and aligning the ELA and math curriculum presents a greater challenge. The district has taken important first steps in curriculum development by aligning and documenting elementary math and revising syllabi at the high school. However, the district has relied upon teachers to align their taught curriculum in ELA and math to the 2011 Frameworks without the benefit of a written curriculum that could improve rigor and help students develop deeper understanding of content.

10. **The role of department chairs at the middle and high school levels to actively lead and support teachers is not maximized.**

A.   The new position of elementary ELA coordinator has the potential to provide content expertise and support to teachers and principals, but direct services have not begun.

1.   In the 2014 school year, the district created the position of elementary ELA coordinator and hired two individuals to share the position (K-2, 3-5). Next year, there will be one person appointed for the position.

2. Although the job description for the ELA coordinator details multiple direct services to teachers and principals to implement the curriculum and provide instructional support, the priority of the coordinators during the current school year is to align and document the ELA curriculum and develop pacing guides. Direct services to teachers were planned to begin in September 2014.

B. Elementary principals recognize the need for additional content and curricular support**.**

1. Principals expressed the need for curriculum coordinators who can provide a districtwide approach and support for both ELA and for math.

    a. Elementary principals outlined a five-year plan to increase content and instructional support at the elementary level in a document entitled, *Vision 2020* (2013-2014). The plan calls for an elementary math coordinator for the 2014-2015 school year, as well as reading and math interventionists and reading specialists (17 positions to be rolled out over five years).

    b. There is no instructional coaching support for teachers in the district. There are two math specialists at the middle schools working directly with students. They do not work directly with teachers on instructional improvement efforts.

C. Teachers of core subjects at the middle schools have very limited structured opportunities to meet with department chairs, who are based at the high school.

1. The team was told that department chairs are responsible for grades 6-12 but do not interact frequently at the middle schools. Department chairs teach one fewer block per day and are relieved of a duty. There is little time for middle school meetings. Department chairs do not have a supervisory role at the middle and high schools.

    a. Principals chair monthly department meetings where curricular issues are discussed.

    b. Interviewees stated, "Most curriculum support and monitoring is done by colleagues."

    c. Interviewees also described "periodic" districtwide meetings for middle school teachers to meet by departments, as well as an opportunity for one department to meet with a department chair during a recent release day. Emails are used to reach one department chair, while other middle school teachers "rely on each other" or seek out the help of the assistant superintendent.

D. At the high school, department chairs in core subjects have limited roles. While they provide curriculum leadership, they do not directly monitor the implementation of the curriculum to ensure sufficient rigor or a focus on higher order thinking.

1. Teachers and school leaders told the team that department heads meet monthly (30-45 minutes) with teachers. The math department meets in small groups (PLCs) by shared courses. Department chairs also meet monthly as a group with the principal.

   a. Department time is used to take care of department "housekeeping," to work on curriculum, alignment, common assessments, and rubrics. More recently, meetings have focused on district initiatives, such as Educator Evaluation.

2. Interviewees told the team that the role of department chairs needs to be clarified. They do not have a supervisory role and without being able to observe lessons, they cannot monitor "fidelity to the curriculum." The principal and assistant principals, who supervise, may not be aware of what a teacher should be covering.

Impact: When the elementary ELA coordinator is able to provide direct services to teachers in the form of coaching, modeling lessons, districtwide professional development and support for the implementation of the ELA curriculum and delivery of districtwide common assessments, it will increase the likelihood that student learning outcomes will improve. Without regular and structured opportunities for middle level teachers to meet with and be supervised by content experts, efforts to develop and implement a rigorous curriculum aligned to the 2011 frameworks are impeded. Similarly, at the high school level, without the expertise of content specialists to ensure that the curriculum is implemented with fidelity, the district is compromising an opportunity to ensure that students can benefit from a rigorous and aligned curriculum.

Instruction

The team observed 104 classes throughout the district: 20 at the high school, 19 at the two middle schools and 65 at the eight elementary schools. The team observed 45 ELA classes, 39 mathematics classes, and 20 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed was one ELL class. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using ESE's instructional inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented by indicator and school type in Appendix C.

11. **While there are examples of effective teaching and learning districtwide, implementation of high quality instructional practices varied across schools.**

   A. The team observed a relatively low incidence of rigorous instructional practices that encouraged higher-order thinking.

      1. The team found clear evidence of lessons reflecting rigor and high expectations in 40% of observed classes.

2. In addition, the team found that in only 29% of classes, teachers provided multiple opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking skills such as the use of inquiry, exploration, analysis, synthesis and/or evaluation of knowledge or concepts.

B. High quality teaching and learning practices were inconsistent across the district.

1. At the elementary level, the team found clear and consistent evidence of students engaged in challenging academic tasks in 49% of classrooms, while at the middle schools, it was 32%, and at the high school, 25%.

2. In addition, in 60% of elementary classrooms, the team found teachers implementing strategies that encouraged students to take academic risks, while this practice was observed less frequently in the middle schools (47%) and high school (45%).

3. In observed examples of high quality teaching and learning, students answered questions using higher order thinking skills, explained their answers, were encouraged to take academic risks, were provided with alternatives and choices, worked in pairs and/or groups on challenging tasks, shared their thinking and explained "this is how it works," explored, applied and evaluated a reading, and used a graphic organizer focused on higher order thinking. In some cases, several learning activities took place simultaneously in a classroom.

C. In most observed classrooms, instruction was teacher centered, with limited opportunities for students to assume responsibility for their learning and demonstrate understanding.

1. Although the district emphasized higher order thinking skills, in less than a third of classrooms (27%) were students observed inquiring, exploring, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and/or evaluating knowledge or concepts. The review team found clear and consistent evidence of students articulating their thinking verbally or in writing in 33% of classrooms.

2. Students were observed to be making connections to prior knowledge and/or applying understanding to other subjects in 43% of classes.

3. The review team observed students taking responsibility for their learning individually, in pairs or in groups in 46% of observed classrooms.

4. The review team found that in 36% of classrooms teachers used questioning techniques that required students to provide thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding. At the middle school level, where higher order thinking skills were identified as an instructional goal, the practice occurred at a higher rate (53%). The team found students elaborating about content and ideas when responding to questions in 22% of observed classrooms districtwide.

5. The team observed teachers using frequent formative assessments to check for student understanding and inform instruction in approximately 52% of observed classrooms.

D. Instructional time was not consistently optimized.

1. Practices observed by the team that did not support the effective use of instructional time included: students watching teachers solve math problems at the board for long periods of time, lectures with students providing only occasional short answers to questions, students copying what the teacher did on the board, and teachers allowing students to pack up five minutes before the end of class.

E. Observed instructional practices in the district showed that the needs of diverse learners are not consistently met.

1. Observers found clear and consistent evidence of teachers communicating lesson objectives aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in 23% of classrooms. At the middle schools, this practice was observed in 42% of classes.

   a. In 43% of observed classes, instructional strategies were well matched to the lesson content. In 45% of observed classes, the team found lessons paced to match content and meet students learning needs.

2. The team found clear evidence of appropriate modifications for students with special learning and language needs in 11% of classrooms.

3. Observations of the availability of multiple resources to meet students' diverse learning needs varied across school levels. Clear evidence of multiple available resources to meet all students' learning needs was highest at the elementary level (57%) while observed to a much lesser degree at the middle schools (26%) and high school (25%).

   a. The clear and consistent use of technology to support instruction and enhance learning was observed in 21% of classrooms, while student use of technology as a tool for learning and understanding was observed in only 1% of classrooms.

4. Observed examples of effective instructional practices to meet the needs of all learners included: differentiating instruction and grouping students according to their learning needs, the communication to students of learning objectives, providing explicit language objectives and vocabulary for ELLs, reinforcing math vocabulary in a grade one classroom, the use of content word walls, reinforcing vocabulary for a reading assignment in a grade 2 classroom, small group reading instruction by the teacher while other students worked independently, effective support for all students from a special education teacher in a middle school math class, providing ELLs with audio recordings of stories they were reading, and explicit instruction in science vocabulary in a grade 3 classroom.

Impact: While there were examples of effective teaching practices across the district, they were not found to be strongly evident districtwide. When teaching and learning practices do not consistently ensure that instruction is rigorous and meets students' diverse learning needs, student learning opportunities are not maximized. In addition, while the district is experiencing increasing diversity in its student population, effective instructional practices to meet the needs of ELL and students with disabilities were not in place in most observed classrooms, potentially limiting learning opportunities for these students.

Assessment

12. **The district has not yet provided the time, expectations, or support necessary to fully develop systematic districtwide data analysis practices that would lead to improved district, school, educator and student outcomes.**

    A. The district does not have professional learning communities districtwide that are well organized and data-focused and afford teachers consistent and sufficient time to collaborate for instructional improvement.

       1. Only the two middle schools provide ample regularly scheduled time for teachers to meet and collaborate. Grade 6 teachers share three periods of common planning time weekly. Teachers in grades 7 and 8 are allocated one period for common planning time and one period for team meetings each day. Teachers use this time to meet with colleagues to plan instruction, or meet with the principal to discuss student achievement data such as MCAS results including subgroups, or meet with parents.

       2. By contractual agreement, teachers can only meet for up to 90 minutes a month outside the regular school day. Faculty meetings occur once a month after school for "a reasonable amount of time," described by teachers as "usually 35 minutes." Principals can also convene teachers in two additional 30-minute meeting blocks each month, or combine the three 30-minute blocks into one or two longer meetings.

       3. Elementary principals said that K-5 teachers do not have sufficient common time to plan and collaborate. Time to meet is guided by the specialists' schedule. Principals try to pair same-grade classes in specials to give those teachers time for common planning. Often, the principal will join the meeting to look at student assessment data. Grade-level meetings vary across schools in frequency from once a week to once every two weeks during "specials" or, at one school, sometimes also during lunch.

4. At the middle schools, departments meet once a month. There is limited content leadership at middle school department meetings since high school department heads, described as responsible for grades 6-12, spend little time at the middle schools.

5. At the high school, there is one 35 minute faculty meeting and one 30-45 minute department meeting each month. Interviewees described the limited amount of time to meet to conduct school and department business, noting that the several districtwide half-days of released time are now mainly used for district business, most of which is useful, such as educator evaluation and DDMs. However, this lack of sufficient meeting time leaves high school teachers with limited time to develop department work, analyze achievement data, and plan instruction to meet students' diverse learning needs.

6. A leader stated that "time was a scarce commodity at all levels." In one department, the head arranges department meeting time for teachers who teach the same course. That way, the group can at least focus on frameworks, assessments, course development and data.

B. Principals do not have the benefit of clear district-level expectations or coordinated district support for collecting and analyzing data about instruction.

1. This year, the district provided four walkthrough templates to use to document observational data on teaching practices as part of educator evaluation. A district leader told the team that the templates are optional and feedback may or may not be provided using the templates.

    a. According to principals, other than providing written feedback when a lesson is observed for ten minutes or more, there are no districtwide requirements or a protocol for conducting classroom walkthroughs or using the templates. There was a wide variance reported by principals.

    b. One principal noted not using the walkthrough templates but still observing lessons regularly and providing feedback in a school newsletter.

    c. Another principal noted spending two hours each day observing classes while another noted spending two hours a week observing lessons.

    d. A district leader noted that the walkthrough documents were new this year and came with the *Talent Ed Perform* software used for the new educator evaluation system. He stated, "The data had not been looked at" [yet] and "maybe would be eventually."

    e. Teachers and leaders reported, however, that the new educator evaluation model has brought more frequent classroom observations, provided useful feedback, and

has created a forum for conversations about instruction between leaders and teachers.

C. The district's structures and support for data analysis vary among schools.

   1. According to a district leader, principals are responsible for data analysis at the school level and there are no organized data teams at each school to share responsibility for analyzing data and discussing results.

   2. At one elementary school, however, there is a language-based data team that meets after school composed of teachers from grades 3-5, a special education teacher and the principal. The team analyzes and shares MCAS results for the whole school. Interviewees agreed that a similar format existed at several elementary schools.

   3. Teachers have not had comprehensive training in data analysis. A district leader noted availability of "some data warehouse training a couple of years ago." Elementary teachers in a focus group noted that they had not experienced professional development or had in-service time to learn to analyze achievement data. Some have learned independently, however, and could describe using DIBELS and *i-Ready* data to group students for instruction and RtI.

   4. A few years ago, under Race to the Top, a consultant trained district leaders and some teacher teams to use data to make instructional decisions. A district leader noted that the teams are now in place only "sporadically." Currently, three district leaders as well as staff from each grade level cluster are participating in ESE trainings and online webinars for EDWIN data use and analysis.

   5. School committee members were conversant and knowledgeable about district data.

      a. In September 2013, a district leader provided an overview of each school's 2013 ESE Accountability data. This was followed by an October 2013 presentation of ESE's Accountability Framework (Levels 1-5) and the ESE concepts of PPI, CPI and SGP.

      b. In interviews, school committee members noted having seen sufficient ELA and math data to understand the need for reading and math specialists in the *Vision 2020* plan. Members described adding math specialists at the middle schools based on MCAS math results. Members also understood descriptive accountability data identifying comparable districts and neighboring districts, trends in subgroup demographics and performance as well as dropping high school graduation rates.

Impact: With limited common planning time at the school level, teachers cannot consistently collaborate to analyze and use data well to plan for improvement. Without clear district expectations and consistent support for the implementation and analysis of walkthroughs, the district cannot maximize the benefits of informal classroom observations to improve instruction.

Human Resources and Professional Development

13. The potential benefit of educator evaluation in the district has been limited by past evaluation practices, as well as by the delayed implementation of the new system. There is a need for greater clarity regarding oversight and documentation to fully implement the system.

1. The district did not implement its new educator evaluation system in accordance with Race to the Top (RTTT) benchmarks for Year 3 (2012-2013) due to a negotiation delay.

2. The superintendent told review team members that because the district had not been able to successfully ratify the new educator evaluation system language until March 27, 2013, it was unable to meet the RTTT implementation performance benchmark for the 2013 school year. The district did sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Woburn Teachers Association entitled "Article 13, Section F (NEW ADDITION): The Superintendent and the Woburn Teachers' Association agree that the current evaluation tool may need to be renegotiated during the life of this contract."

3. Responsibility and accountability for the oversight and monitoring of the new educator evaluation system is unclear and dispersed to the business and the central office staff.

4. After the elimination of a human resource position several years ago, the business office absorbed the duties of that function.

5. Some of the clerical responsibilities of the human resource position were taken on by clerical staff in the central office. Performance evaluations are kept in files separate from the employee's official personnel file in the superintendent's office.

6. It was not clear where the administrative oversight and monitoring responsibilities for educator evaluation were delegated. There is no reference to educator evaluation, now a key human resource function, in the current professional practice goals or department improvement goals for the assistant superintendent for finance and operations. The current professional practice goals for the assistant superintendent for curriculum and assessment describe learning about educator evaluation and developing a plan for implementation, mainly using technology, professional training sessions and collecting evidence, but no mention is made of systems and practices to monitor and oversee the process.

7. The district has begun to implement the new educator evaluation system in the current school year (2014) using its *Teacher Ed Perform* software, and many new evaluations were informative and instructive. However, the system has lacked demonstrable documentation in many instances.

8. For the 2011-2012 school year, of the 40 randomly selected personnel files identified for review, only two yielded classroom observations and one included a summative evaluation (i.e., evaluation documents were available for only three of 40 teachers).

9. For the 2012-2013 school year, there were no teacher performance evaluations available to review. The superintendent attributed this to the district being unable to attain ratification of the new educator evaluation language until March 27, 2013.

10. For the current school year, in April 2014, the district had not yet created files for educator evaluations in its system for 15% percent of the 40 randomly selected teachers (i.e., 6 of the 40). A review team member reported this fact to the assistant superintendent, who identified all of them as high school teachers.

11. In a focus group, one teacher reported not having been evaluated in ten years. Another indicated having signed a "mock observation" for an observation that never occurred.

12. Principals' evaluation documents contained standardized recommendations that did not account for individual differences in performance. The shared recommendations were, "Move staff to the next level of educator evaluation implementation. Continue to implement *Edline* as a means of enhanced student learning opportunities and parent communication. Continue to use MCAS data, including student growth percentile data, to direct educator goals. Continue to promote practices that result in high-quality instruction and assessment."

13. There were no evaluations found in the superintendent's file, including the one that the school committee indicated that they completed in December 2013 and was referenced in school committee meeting minutes. It was not produced after multiple requests to both the superintendent and to school committee members at one school committee interview. The review team did receive a copy of the *Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Review* presented to the school committee on September 25, 2013. The mid-cycle review documents presented evidence and artifacts of progress in attaining five goals.

Impact: Effective oversight and monitoring are essential conditions to ensure fair, systematic, and thorough evaluation practices. Without careful and effective monitoring and oversight of evaluation systems and procedures, the district cannot effectively use the evaluation system to improve practice or keep track of its efforts to improve teaching and learning through the evaluation process.

14. Professional development is informally determined and is not systematically evaluated.

A. There is no formal, systematic, process to determine the professional development program.

1. The 2014 school calendar provides for six early release days: five for all students and one additional day for elementary students. Activities for four of the early release days

are contractually determined in consultation with the teachers' association, and the district routinely prescribes the other two.

2. The district's Professional Development Committee is inactive. Input into professional development decisions at the school and/or district level is obtained from informal feedback to the assistant superintendent for curriculum and assessment from principals, department heads and the Woburn Teachers Association. The assistant superintendent and teachers association officers indicated that they are attempting to reactivate the Professional Development Committee.

3. District-level professional development trainings during the 2013-2014 school year had a focus on writing, the use of Edline, and using the *Teacher Ed Perform* software.

    a. The district's 2013-2014 Professional Development Course Catalog lists mandatory trainings in Traits Writing, Mathematical Thinking, and Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of an Educator.

    b. Other optional professional development opportunities for staff include School Adjustment Clinical Counseling, Seasonal Schoolyard Science, Nature Awareness in Autumn, Utilizing Technology in Your Instruction/Digital Portfolios, Understanding and Teaching Students with Disabilities: The Behavior Code, trainings on Edline Website Management and Organization, Discovery Education Basics, Introduction to Laboratory Safety, Teaching with Objects/Introduction to Arts Integration Introduction to Talent Ed Perform, and The Flipped Classroom.

    c. An administrator indicated that substitutes were required in order for professional development to occur during the school day.

    d. The district also offers staff the opportunity to access workshops through the Salem State Collaborative at no cost to the teacher, providing the workshop is applicable to their classroom instruction and is content specific. Most of the workshops are offered after school hours with a few full-day offerings. A catalogue of the collaborative offerings is distributed to teachers in September.

B. There is no formal, systematic evaluation of the district's professional development.

1. Administrators indicate that there is no formal evaluation of professional development, adding that feedback is most often received from asking teachers informally about the relative value of a professional development activity.

2. Administrators report that they did not use the 2012 TELL Mass Survey data as evaluative feedback on PD because of the low levels of teacher participation, even though more than 50% of teachers participated.

      a. Of the teachers who took the survey, 45% to 72% reported needing professional development to teach their students more effectively in the following areas: Common Core Standards, using student assessments, using data to drive instructional decision making, differentiating instruction, teaching students with disabilities, teaching gifted and talented students, teaching English language learners, closing the achievement gap, promoting cultural proficiency, separating learning needs from a disability in culturally and linguistically diverse students, methods of teaching, using reading/writing strategies, integrating technology into instruction, co-teaching /collaborative teaching, managing student behavior.

3. On the 2012 TELL Mass Survey, staff indicated their views on professional development:

      a. 79% noted having a small or no role in determining content of in-service PD

      b. 26% reported that sufficient time is provided for PD

      c. 34% noted that follow-up is provided on PD

      d. 39% noted that PD provided ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices

      e. 24% agreed that PD is evaluated and results communicated to teachers

Impact: Without professional development that supports instructional practice the district will find it difficult to systemically improve the rigor needed to bring students to higher levels of understanding of content.

Student Support

15. The district's tiered instruction services are impeded by limitations of time, training, instructional materials, and personnel.

A. Classroom instruction (Tier I) does not support a full range of learners.

1. Teachers have received limited training in strategies that help them reach students with disabilities, English language learners, and those who need routine accommodations.

      a. The district's professional development catalogue for 2013-2014 includes one course that addresses behavior for young children. Beyond, this, courses in instructional strategies for at-risk learners and special populations are not offered.

      b. When asked about professional development that they had received for supporting all learners, teachers and staff in other interviews mentioned Keys for Literacy and

this year's RETELL course. They said that they had not have recent professional development in differentiating instruction.

c. In the 2012 TELL Mass Survey, a majority of teacher respondents reported that they needed training in teaching students with disabilities (66%) and English language learners (65%) as well as in closing the achievement gap (70%). A majority or respondents also reported having had no professional development in these areas in the prior two years. [6] However, this year, a cohort of teachers is taking the RETELL training.

  i. In interviews, when asked about professional development for teaching the full range of students, staff members reported that they had asked the ELL or SPED teacher for advice about adapting instruction for these populations.

  ii. The Walker Report (Spring 2013) commissioned by the district found that teachers needed additional training for teaching students with disabilities.

2. Observation of teaching practices in the district's classrooms does not reveal instruction appropriate for addressing a variety of needs.

a. Classroom observations performed by the review team revealed that differentiation of instruction, accommodations for students with disabilities, and/or sheltering of instruction for ELLs was not observed in 72 percent of classrooms.

3. The supervision practices of the district do not monitor the regular use of instructional strategies that address the multiple needs of its students as evidenced by its classroom observation and walkthrough tools.

4. The district's instructional resources are limited, offering little assistance to teachers in the way of appropriately designed materials that could assist them in handling the needs of its increasingly diverse student populations.

a. Title I schools use the *Fundations* phonics program and benchmark books that give teachers the resources to teach content at different levels of literacy and proficiency. Teachers in non-Title I schools use basal readers and trade books.

b. Other than those made by only a few teachers, the review team did not often see math manipulatives used during classroom visits.

c. There are several software programs teachers may use with students, such as Lexia, IXL, and Plato. However, not all software is available in every school. Most are for regular classrooms, but Lexia is also used for intervention in some schools.

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[6] TELL Mass Survey, pp.22-23. They also said that, in the past two years, they had not had professional development for differentiating instruction (62%), using data for decision-making (81%), using student assessment results (75%), teaching students with disabilities (77%), or teaching ELL students (88%).

    d.   District expenditures for instructional materials are below the state average. In FY2013, the district spent $183 per student versus the state average of $410.

B.   The composition and functioning of the Instructional Support Team (IST) varies by school.

    1.   The high school student support team is composed of a variety of personnel that includes school leadership, health, guidance, a regular education and a special education teacher. If the student's problem is academic achievement, a larger group of teachers may be assembled to help find a good instructional solution. Assessment is accomplished through the teacher's report of the students' grades.

    2.   At the middle and elementary schools, the IST is generally composed of the principal and support staff such as the school psychologist, adjustment counselor, special educational teacher, speech therapist, and a classroom teacher. Usually the first meeting takes place between the teacher and the principal without others present.

C.   Interviews and the Walker Report reveal that Response to Intervention (RtI) is limited and varies by school.

    1.   Although the district is making some progress in using data, most schools do not have the ability to merge data to create individual student reports nor do most school retest to monitor progress.

        a.   Elementary school leaders report the use of assessments such as the DRA, DIBELS, *i-Ready*, Traits Writing assessment, and purchased or local benchmark tests. These are given two or three times per year on a regular schedule. The district does not have software than can merge the data and create reports on individual children.

            i.   In addition to other building assessments, Title I uses GRADE.

            ii.   One school reports setting a timeline for interventions and using *i-Ready* and Lexia for progress monitoring.

        b.   Staff members report that the middle school uses *i-Ready* to establish a baseline for each student in math. It also uses MCAS scores to identify students at risk. It does not retest to monitor progress.

        c.   The high school is beginning to develop and examine common assessments. The SST also uses MCAS data and teacher records.

    2.   Tier 2 interventions are limited at some schools and are not implemented in other schools.

        a.   Altavesta, a Title I school, has an RtI program for 30 minutes per day in grades K-2. Lack of time and staffing prevents the school from extending RtI through grade 5.

b. One Title I school improvement plan indicates that a plan for Tier 2 intervention will be more fully developed during the 2014-2015 school year. The school improvement plan for the third Title I school does not mention plans for RtI.

c. The Reeves School does math grouping in grades 3 through 5 in order to provide intervention. Other schools did not identify intervention practices.

3. A variety of stakeholders said that limited staff, services, and resources were available for interventions.

   a. The elementary schools use the resources that are available. The reading specialist with the language-based program or an ELL teacher may provide some time for other students. A Title I paraprofessional made some reading skills kits for teacher use. One school reported using a high school student tutor for Tier 2 support.

   b. According to interviews, the special education team member at the middle school may provide suggestions for instruction when asked.

   c. The lack of sufficient common planning time at the elementary level hinders access to discussions and sharing of instructional strategies that would help to provide accommodations.

   d. *i-Ready* and Lexia are used for intervention as well as assessment.

D. The district offers other general supports such as MCAS preparation classes or tutoring at every level.

1. At the high school, students can find help with homework and more at the Learning Center. Directed studies provide specific content-area help daily for at-risk students.

2. The middle schools each have a math coach that provides math or study skills instruction twice per week.

3. Elementary schools offer after school preparation for MCAS in a six- or eight-week block. The middle schools offer it once per week from January to May.

E. Due to limited staffing, English language learners miss academic time in their general education classroom in the elementary schools.

1. ELL teachers, who are in elementary buildings on a part-time basis, must pull ELL students out of class for ESL instruction. As a result, students, beginners in particular, miss some of their regular access to the curriculum to receive English instruction.

2. The ELL department does not have paraprofessionals to provide language and literacy assistance in class in the absence of sheltering strategies by staff as noted above.

Impact: The tiered instruction model is meant to help regular education students and special populations reach the goals of the new curriculum frameworks. A missed opportunity to implement significant portions of this support system will reduce students' access to the regular curriculum and thus, their academic performance. The current lack of a systematic and well-understood assessment and data analysis program impedes its ability to identify needs and monitor progress.

16. **The district has not taken a system-wide approach to providing systems to ensure non-academic support and consistency for students.**

    A. Procedures for helping students make the transitions between school levels are minimal and do not provide needed support elements for all students.

        1. Students entering one middle school visit the middle school in June for 2.5 hours. At that time, they meet the principal and receive a tour of the building from grade 8 students. In the spring, members of the middle school staff visit the elementary schools. Recommendations for the needs and placements of regular education students are passed between guidance staff in May or June.

            a. Fifteen to twenty at-risk students from five elementary schools feeding into the Kennedy Middle School attend a 2.5 hour session in August to facilitate the transition.

        2. Some students entering the high school reported a sense of discomfort as they enter grade 9. The ninth grade mentoring program was created to address this concern.

            a. Outreach from the high school to the general grade 8 population begins with an evening presentation to parents and students. At that time, department heads are available to discuss course selection.

            b. Guidance counselors and the assistant principal responsible for the incoming class go to the middle school for a meeting with students.

            c. Students have a move-up day in June during which they visit the high school.

        3. Staff members said that more transition procedures were needed at the elementary school.

    B. There are no transitioning practices for ELL students or procedures for the transfer of their documentation.

    C. Staff members reported that, other than the transition meeting held with the parent and child, the special education department does not provide special transition practices for students with disabilities unless written into the IEP.

        1. The Walker Report cites the need for more consistent transitioning practices in the district.

D. Secondary school staff and an independent study mentioned persistent tardiness and attendance problems. Each of the secondary schools has a different attendance and tardiness policy.

1. The high school attendance for 2013 fell after ninth grade. For grades 10 through 12, attendance ranged from 91.6 to 93.3 percent, with the lowest attendance posted by grade 11 students.

   a. In 2013, the chronic absenteeism rates for grades 10, 11, and 12 were 16.8, 24.2, and 20.2 percent respectively.

2. ESE data shows that the trend of lower attendance rates and increasing chronic absence rates begins in grade 8. In 2013, grade 8 had a lower attendance rate than each of the grades K-7. The attendance rate dropped each subsequent grade, 9-12. Similarly, the 2013 chronic absence rate was higher in grade 8 than for each of the grades K-7 and increased in each subsequent grade.

3. The high school handbook does not include practices that deter frequent tardiness or set clear limits on the total number of absences that can be accrued during the school year.

   a. The high school handbook does not limit the number of total absences, excused and unexcused, that are permissible for the year.

   b. Students who are absent without excuse the number of days that the course meets weekly (i.e., five unexcused absences for a course that meets daily) will fail the class for that marking period.

   c. Absences beyond the number that trigger the automatic failure do not count toward the limit for the next marking period.

   d. Students are allowed 12 unexcused tardies per semester and will receive a warning after the sixth one.

   e. The school has postponed the taking of attendance until second period.

   f. The high school assistant principals and a school resource officer often visit absent students at home to address unexcused absences.

4. The Kennedy Middle School encourages good attendance and expects parents to report their child's absence to the school; however, it does not mention a limit on non-attendance or consequences.

   a. The Kennedy Middle School handbook does not mention policies for tardiness.

5. According to the Joyce Middle School handbook, students will not be allowed to attend end-of-year activities if they have more than 20 unexcused absences in a school year. Absence due to illness will be considered as unexcused if the child does not bring in a doctor's note.

   a. Students receive the same penalty for 20 tardies per school year as for absence. After five tardies in a quarter, students will not be admitted to school without a parent meeting.

E. Staff members spoke about a recent and dramatic rise in the number of children with social, emotional, and behavioral problems.

   1. Asked about support for students with behavioral challenges, staff and parents mentioned positive behavioral intervention supports (PBIS).

F. At the high school, both the general student population and the population of students with disabilities have high dropout rates.

   1. In 2013, the district was awarded zero points out of a maximum of 100 in the state accountability system for the dropout rate of both the general population and students with disabilities. For all students the dropout rate increased from 2.4 percent to 3.4 percent, above the state rate. For students with disabilities the dropout rate increased from 2.8 percent to 6.1 percent, above the state rate.

   2. The regular summer school is designed to help students improve their grades. Students who fail a class must take classes at extended summer school or evening school. Students who have attended less than 75 percent of the classes and have failed a class may only recover credits through an extended summer school. Other options such as night school are not listed.

   3. The high school has instituted semester courses for credit recovery. It also has an alternative education program.

   4. High school staff members cited student problems with drugs, alcohol, poverty, and family issues. They indicated that their ability to connect with community agencies was limited by the number of students involved. Staff members believe that if they could offer a different schedule for the school day, they might have some success in preventing students from dropping out.

G. The high school offers an Enhanced Comprehension level in its course of studies. It is the level below the Academic, Honors, and AP. Ten to fifteen percent of the regular high school population is typically scheduled for this level.

Impact: Transitions are difficult for all students, but especially for special populations who may need additional support to navigate substantial change. Without a districtwide system of support,

challenges that require cooperation between buildings and levels or expansion of district resources are difficult to address. Similarly, without sustained focus on strategies and programs for keeping students in school, the dropout rate will increase and graduation rate will decrease.

Financial and Asset Management

17. **The district budget process offers opportunities for stakeholders to request resources to meet school needs. The budget document makes proposed initiatives and increases/decreases clear but does not refer to a district improvement plan with specific action steps or to data to justify proposals or to set resource allocation priorities.**

    A. Administrators, the school committee and the public have ample opportunities to present needs during the budget process.

       1. Administrators reported that budget development begins in the fall with meetings to discuss needs. They then submit documentation for proposed initiatives.

          a. Administrators reported that all their initiatives are presented in the proposed budget to the school committee in February.

          b. In 2014 the proposed budget was $55,145,878, a 7.0% increase. The presentation highlighted proposed initiatives and requested over 18 new positions.

       2. Principals and other administrators, parents, and the public participate in budget meetings of the school committee.

       3. A series of meetings of the mayor and superintendent have resulted in an agreed bottom line for the school budget, which the school committee and the city council have generally supported. Initiatives and needs are reviewed during these meetings.

       4. In 2013 the district had to cut $1,320,632 from the proposed budget to meet the budget agreed upon with the mayor and city council. Administrators and city officials expected to cut a similar amount in 2014.

    B. Budget documentation and running lists of budget changes clearly present proposed staffing, initiatives, and budget increases and reductions, but a condensed version is not available for the general public.

       1. The budget document given to school committee members is a large binder which includes the proposed budget for each school's budget lines with the comparison data from the previous two years, staffing lists highlighting new positions (such as elementary curriculum coordinators, special education staff, and custodians), and administrators' proposed initiatives.

2. The superintendent's presentation of his proposed budget is a PowerPoint presentation that highlights proposed new positions and other initiatives.

3. No shortened version of the proposed budget was on the district website or made available to review team members.

4. During the budget season the school committee votes additions and reductions to the budget, and they are provided with a running list of changes at each meeting.

C. The presentation of the proposed budget referenced general goals but no district improvement plan or specific action steps and no mention of achievement data.

1. The PowerPoint presentation of the superintendent's proposed FY2015 budget grouped proposed new positions under three general goals for curriculum, student support, and learning environments.

a. The presentation did not reference a district improvement plan, and its goals did not correspond to other planning documents such as the superintendent's annual goals or the out-of-date district Blueprint (with timelines 2005-2009).

b. Goals in the budget presentation did not include timelines or specific action steps.

D. In the absence of a district improvement plan and references to data, priorities for initiatives and for additions and reductions in the budget were not evident. The rationale for some budget decisions was not clear and initiatives may not have been sustained.

1. The budget documents did not include priorities. While the rationale for budget additions and reductions were discussed and agreed to at school committee meetings they are not published in minutes or in the list of budget changes.

2. Teachers reported that some past initiatives, such as phonics, reading support, the *Fundations* reading program, and ELL strategies have not been sustained or are inconsistently implemented across schools.

Impact: Without a district improvement plan with specific action steps and without references to data, it is difficult for the district to ensure that its budget decisions allocate resources to support district goals intended to support improved student achievement. The absence of a district improvement plan with clear action steps and references to data also makes decisions about priorities and budget reductions unclear, and initiatives may not lead to sustained programs and progress.

Woburn Public Schools District Review Recommendations

Leadership and Governance

1. **The district should adopt a more focused improvement planning process, with specific district and school goals based on improving student achievement and structures for accountability and continuous improvement.**

   A. A three-year district improvement plan (DIP) should be developed.

      1. The plan should be grounded in a vision that is created with input from key stakeholders.

      2. The district should conduct a thorough analysis of challenges to be addressed and strengths upon which to capitalize as it establishes priorities for the plan. The basis for this analysis should be an extensive review of current student achievement and other important measures and information.

      3. The district should use this analysis to establish SMART goals (Specific and Strategic; Measureable; Action Oriented and Results Focused; and Timed and Tracked.)

      4. The DIP should include the elements of SMART goals. Specifically, the plan should include specific objectives, action steps, benchmarks, responsible parties, necessary resources and timelines.

   B. The DIP should be used as a tool for continuous improvement.

      1. The district should establish procedures to review the DIP on an annual basis. Strategic activities and benchmarks should be adjusted when necessary to meet current conditions.

      2. The superintendent and school committee should consider aligning some goals in the Superintendent's Educator Plan (part of the district's educator evaluation system) with DIP goals.

   C. Principals should develop school improvement plans (SIPs) that contain SMART goals, some of which are aligned with the DIP and, as appropriate, others that address school-based priorities.

      1. This plan should be developed after an extensive review of current student achievement data and other important measures and information.

      2. The plan should be formulated with input from the school council and other stakeholders.

3. Principals should share SIPs with their faculties and the school committee, and should provide regular updates on progress toward meeting improvement goals.

D. SIP implementation should include consistent monitoring and midcourse corrections.

1. District administration should meet regularly with principals to review progress made on objectives outlined in the SIPs, especially those that relate to student achievement.

2. The principal should use the SIP to inform his/her self-assessment and goal setting process when creating the Educator Plan, and progress toward Educator Plan goals should be used as evidence during implementation.

3. Teachers should consider aligning the goals in their Educator Plans with SIP goals. Team goals may be an appropriate opportunity to focus on addressing growth areas identified in the SIP.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *District Analysis and Review Tool (DART)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/) is organized by the District Standards and can help district leaders see where similar districts in the state are showing progress in specific areas to identify possible best practice.

- ESE's *Statistical Reports* page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/) provides links to downloadable district-level reports on graduation rates, grade retention, dropout rates, educator evaluation data, enrollment, mobility, and other data.

- ESE's *District Standards and Indicators* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/review/district/StandardsIndicators.pdf) identify the characteristics of effective districts in supporting and sustaining school improvement.

- The *District Self-Assessment* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/review/district/district-self-assessment.pdf) frames the District Standards and Indicators, along with key questions, in a rubric for conducting a scan of current practice, identifying areas of strength and highlighting areas requiring greater focus.

- ESE's *Conditions for School Effectiveness* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/CSE.pdf) identify the research-based practices that all schools, especially the state's most struggling schools, require to effectively meet the learning needs of all students. This tool also defines what each condition looks like when implemented purposefully and with fidelity.

- The *Conditions for School Effectiveness Self-Assessment* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/CSESelf-Assesment.pdf) is a tool for conducting a scan of current practice, identifying areas of strength, and highlighting areas requiring greater focus.

- *Massachusetts Transfer Goals* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/MATransferGoals.pdf) are long range goals that students should work toward over the course of their PK-12 academic

experience. They were written to provide an explicit connection between the standards-based Model Curriculum Units and Massachusetts' definition of College and Career Readiness. They are not recommended for use as a checklist, evaluation tool, or as an assessment tool, but they could be a helpful resource for districts as they articulate a vision and engage in long-term planning.

- 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 promote 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: Formulating integrated district and school improvement plans marked by clear objectives, benchmarks and deadlines will establish a structure in the district that can serve as a road map to success. Long-range planning, regular monitoring of progress, and annual fine-tuning of effort will allow the district to gain focus, to reduce fragmentation, and to promote continuous improvement.

Curriculum

2. **The district should ensure that the core curricula in ELA and math at all levels are aligned to the 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks and that there is documentation to support the alignment in the form of cohesive curriculum materials**.

    A. The district should ensure that the documentation for both the ELA and math curricula includes units with objectives, curriculum maps and/or pacing guides, resources, instructional strategies and a balanced set of assessments.

        1. The district should ensure that the documentation for the ELA curriculum in grades K-5 is completed in a timely way and aligned with fidelity to the 2011 MA Curriculum Frameworks.

2. The district should ensure that there is documentation for the taught curriculum in math and in ELA in grades 6-8 and that it is well aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

3. To set high expectations and ensure academic rigor, the district should ensure that documentation for math and English in grades 9-12 is expanded beyond syllabi and pacing guides to include units of study that emphasize teaching and assessing for understanding.

B. With guidance from the assistant superintendent for curriculum and assessment, department chairs, and the new ELA and math coordinators, the district should establish a regular cycle for the timely review and revision of curricula.

1. This process should involve educators at all levels.

a. Curriculum development and revision could provide an opportunity for educators rated as exemplary to be assigned leadership roles.[7]

2. The process should be informed by a careful analysis of student performance data.

C. The district should develop a coherent approach to implementing WIDA standards districtwide to ensure full implementation at all levels in a timely manner.

1. WIDA standards were required to be integrated into some district curriculum in 2013-14; full integration is required to be completed in time for the 2016-17 school year.

2. The district should incorporate the WIDA standards during the curriculum development process, rather than doing this once the curriculum is completed.

D. The district should establish systems and processes for monitoring curriculum implementation and providing support to teachers as needed.

1. The district should consider revising the role of department chairs so that they are able to monitor and support curriculum implementation, including at the middle school level.

2. Learning walks can provide useful information about curriculum implementation and can help district and school leaders to identify the types of support that would help teachers to use the curriculum effectively.

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[7] "Educators whose summative performance rating is exemplary and whose impact on student learning is rated moderate or high shall be recognized and rewarded with leadership roles, promotion, additional compensation, public commendation or other acknowledgement." 603 CMR 35.08(7).

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.

- *Quick Reference Guide: Educator Evaluation and the MA Curriculum Frameworks* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/implementation/EdEvalandCF.pdf) provides an overview of how the Educator Evaluation System supports implementation of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, including ways to embed the Frameworks within the 5-Step Cycle for Educator Evaluation and to incorporate them into evidence collection.

- *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.

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

- *Curriculum Mapping: Raising the Rigor of Teaching and Learning* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/CandI/model/maps/CurriculumMaps.pdf) is a presentation that provides definitions of curriculum mapping, examples of model maps, and descriptions of curriculum mapping processes.

- Sample curriculum maps (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/model/maps/default.html) were designed to assist schools and districts with making sense of students' learning experiences over time, ensuring a viable and guaranteed curriculum, establishing learning targets, and aligning curriculum to ensure a consistent implementation of the MA Frameworks.

- *Mathematics Framework Exploration Activities* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/commoncore/mathexplore/default.html) are a growing set of activities designed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mathematics staff and educators. The activities can be accessed and used to promote discussion and collaborative inquiry.

- *Science and Technology/Engineering Concept and Skill Progressions* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/STEM/ste/default.html) articulate of possible ways for students to progress through levels of understanding of concepts.

- ESE's *Writing Standards in Action* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/candi/wsa/) provide examples of high-quality student writing with annotations that highlight how each piece demonstrates competence in learning standards at each grade level.

- The *World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development Standards Implementation Guide (Part I)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/Guidance-p1.pdf) provides general information about the WIDA ELD standards framework, expectations for district implementation, and available support.

- The *World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Download Library* (http://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx) provides resources and materials for ELL educators, including standards, guiding principles, sample items, and CAN DO descriptors.

- *Useful WIDA ELD Standards Resources from the Download Library* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/DownloadLibrary.html) can be used as a type of recommended reading list for educators new to the WIDA ELD standards who are interested in developing a deeper understanding of the framework's components and how to apply them into classroom instruction and assessment.

- Presentations from WIDA discussions with district leaders (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/2013-03MathLiaisons-ELLDirectors.pdf and http://www.doe.mass.edu/ell/wida/2013-01LiteracyLeaders-ELLDirectors.pdf) provide information about developing and using Model Performance Indicators to support instruction.

Benefits from implementing these recommendations will include a greater assurance that what is taught in math and in ELA in classrooms, K-12, districtwide, is aligned to the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Teachers will develop units of study focused on student understanding and higher expectations for learning. WIDA standards will be addressed, ensuring that the learning needs of English Language Learners are met. Documenting and regularly updating the curriculum

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will bring greater consistency across the district, strengthening vertical and horizontal alignment, and will continually improve the quality and relevance of the curriculum. Systems for monitoring the implementation of curriculum will help to ensure rigorous instruction in all classrooms.

Instruction

3. **The district should ensure that instructional practices meet district-established expectations, address the needs of all learners, and reflect high expectations for teaching and learning.**

   A. District leaders, school leaders, and teachers should collaboratively develop and articulate district expectations for high quality teaching.

      1. The district should provide opportunities to district leaders, principals, assistant principals, department chairs, coordinators and teachers to conduct shared observations across the district's schools in order to develop a common understanding of rigor and high quality learning expectations and to define practices that need to be in place districtwide.

      2. District expectations should include: strategies that emphasize higher order thinking skills; questioning techniques that encourage students to demonstrate deep understanding; and approaches that give students greater responsibility for their learning.

      3. Expectations should also include strategies to meet the needs of all learners, including differentiated instruction and accommodations to meet the needs of English language learners and students with disabilities.

      4. Once a shared understanding or definition of what constitutes rigor and high expectations for learning is developed, it should be widely communicated so that all teachers consistently develop lessons that reflect this shared understanding.

         a. District and school leaders should identify and disseminate examples of instructional rigor and high learning expectations.

   B. The district should explore ways to strengthen instructional supervision throughout the district to provide targeted improvement of instruction.

      1. As it implements *Vision 2020*, the district might also consider adding instructional coaching support for teachers.

      2. The district should assiduously implement the new educator evaluation framework so that teachers can receive frequent constructive feedback on instructional practices.

C. The district should consider forming a technology task force to develop an action plan to increase teachers' technology use and to provide students with more access to technology in class to enhance their learning and deepen their understanding.

Recommended resource:

- 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.

- The March 2014 ESE Educator Evaluation e-Newsletter (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/communications/newsletter/2014-03.pdf) includes a section called *Implementation Spotlight: Strategies for Focusing Observations and Providing Consistent, Constructive Feedback*.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will include a shared, districtwide understanding of high quality instructional practices that are expected to be used in all classrooms. Lessons will reflect increased rigor and high expectations, and students will have more opportunities to express and explain their thinking and use higher order thinking skills. Classrooms will be less teacher-centered and more student-centered, with students having more responsibility for their learning including the use of technology routinely to deepen their understanding. Teachers will increase their repertoire of teaching strategies to reach all learners. Frequent, constructive feedback on instruction will enable teachers to continuously improve their practice.

Assessment

4. To ensure continuous improvement, strong capacity in data analysis, and a data-driven culture at each school and district-wide, the district should organize more systematically for collaborative inquiry using data.

A. As part of its development of a shared vision for instruction (see Instruction recommendation above), the district should create systems for identifying trends across classrooms and for collecting and analyzing data about instruction.

1. District leaders should establish clear and consistent expectations for principals' classroom walkthroughs.

2. Along with these expectations, the district should provide professional development and coaching for principals and others who will conduct walkthroughs to help them understand and standardize the strategies and intricacies of gathering instructional data and providing feedback about schoolwide trends, which is outside of the educator evaluation system.

3. A representative group of teachers should also undergo professional development in conducting walkthroughs to help them and their colleagues understand how the process can be a helpful tool for improvement.

4. The current walkthrough templates could form the basis for a district-wide protocol.

5. Walkthroughs should be a required format for instructional improvement that are carried out regularly as a way for teachers and leaders to learn about the status and nature of instruction in the district and identify strengths and challenges.

B. The district should create school data teams, clearly define their role and responsibilities, and provide the professional development and support necessary for them to be effective.

1. Data teams should establish protocols for the collection, analysis, and use of data schoolwide.

2. Teams should have the opportunity to collaborate across schools to ensure consistency and share best practices.

C. The district should provide professional development focused on helping educators to identify, collect, analyze, and disseminate data.

D. In order to make best use of data from the assessments that the district has put in place, educators at all levels should have sufficient common planning time in order to work together to analyze data and determine how to use it to guide their instruction.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/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.

- The *Edwin Analytics* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/) includes links to a Getting Started Guide, as well as a video tutorial series.

- 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.

Benefits to the district from implementing this recommendation include a district and school culture that is built on a reflective and active culture of inquiry, supported and guided by a wide range of information about teaching and learning. With such a culture, there can be a more effective use of data by leaders and teachers as part of a continuous improvement process for curriculum, instruction and assessments.

Human Resources and Professional Development

5. **The district should implement new administrative practices, or clarify current practices, to ensure regular oversight and frequent monitoring of the educator evaluation system, including the effective and timely completion of all evaluations.**

    A. The district should clearly define and communicate its administrative procedures relative to effectively implementing the district's new educator evaluation system.

        1. Procedures should clearly identify the individual(s) responsible for oversight and implementation of evaluations. These responsibilities include:

            a. Building a commonly understood focus on the role of evaluation in the improvement of instructional practices.

            b. Identifying individuals responsible for ensuring that all evaluations take place in a timely manner, both at the district and individual school levels.

            c. Clarifying specific roles and duties of principals and other administrators in implementing the evaluation system.

            d. Providing opportunities for evaluators to learn about providing effective feedback.

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     e.   Clearly defining timelines for conducting evaluations as per the teachers' contract.

     f.   Providing supervision and support to enable teachers to meet the expectations and goals of the evaluation process, including appropriate professional development as needed.

Benefits: By implementing new or modifying existing administrative procedures to include clearly defined oversight accountability and frequent monitoring, the district will be more likely to realize the full benefits of its new educator evaluation system. A commonly understood set of administrative procedures will support the important role of evaluation in the improvement of teaching and leading.

6. **The district should institute formal collaborative planning practices to determine its professional development program and ensure that the necessary resources are in place to support it.**

   A.   The district should carry out its plans to reactivate the professional development committee. The committee should include administrators and teachers from all levels.

      1.   The professional development committee should guide the selection and planning of professional development in the district. This process could be informed by:

         a.   An analysis of student performance data

         b.   Goals and opportunities that are aligned with district and school improvement plans

         c.   The differentiated needs of groups of educators

         d.   The support needed by teachers new to the district

         e.   Formal input (e.g., through a survey) from educators throughout the district

      2.   The committee should identify budgetary and grant funding sources to support professional development, and seek additional funding as needed.

      3.   The committee should also establish ways to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of professional development programs.

   B.   The district should review schedules and prioritize time for job-embedded professional development for all educators.

      1.   For professional development to be effective, the district should identify sufficient time for job-embedded professional development, including for professional learning communities to meet regularly.

2. Other examples of job-embedded professional development include teacher-leaders or academic coaches at the elementary and middle school levels, as well as time for department heads to be able to serve as coaches at the middle school level.

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 *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.

Benefits: By implementing this recommendation, the district can provide a collaboratively developed professional development program that addresses identified needs and is aligned with district and school priorities for improvement. A focused approach to professional development can support educators' continual growth and can help the district make progress toward its goals.

Student Support

7. **The district should build a system of tiered support to meet the needs of all learners.**

   A. The district should provide continuing professional development for teachers to improve Tier 1 instruction (core instruction) that meets the needs of all of its students.

      1. The district should provide training to help teachers expand their use of differentiated instruction, including formative assessment strategies, flexibly grouping students, introducing more active learning, and providing more instructional variety based on content and students' strengths and needs.

      2. Professional development should address the way in which disabilities can affect how students learn and focus on appropriate strategies to modify instruction while maintaining rigor.

      3. The district should ensure that differentiation, accommodations, and sheltering practices are in place by noting them through the observation and evaluation processes.

4. The high school should consider eliminating the EC level courses, since this track may not sufficiently challenge students or develop 21st century skills.

   a. Improved instructional strategies and differentiated instruction should allow for all students to be provided with a rigorous curriculum with high expectations and the support systems necessary to ensure success.

5. District leaders should work with coordinators, principals, and department chairs to identify instructional materials that are needed in order to support high-quality instruction in all classrooms.

B. The district should create a more consistent and effective IST process systemwide.

1. The district should identify and communicate the specific data that should be used to identify students in need of support and to monitor their progress.

2. The student support team should include staff able to help teachers find ways to address the academic and behavioral needs of students within the classroom. The team should be composed of regular education teachers, counselors, and specially trained staff. It may also include school leaders.

   a. The composition of the high school student support team provides a good model for the district as a whole.

C. The district should strengthen its Tier 2 intervention resources to ensure that all students who need Tier 2 support receive it with appropriate staffing, frequency, and materials.

1. The district should review student data—perhaps drawing on the work of school data teams and/or student support teams—to identify the specific interventions that students appear to require in order to achieve success.

2. Scheduling, staffing, and instructional resources should be reallocated or enhanced as needed in order to provide these interventions. Students who need Tier 2 support should receive it, regardless of the school they attend.

   a. The district should carry out its plans to hire reading and math interventionists and reading specialists.

   b. The district should also consider whether funds are available (or could be reallocated) to purchase teaching resources and materials to support Tier 2 interventions.

   c. In implementing Tier 2 interventions, the district might look to the early grades at the Altavesta elementary school as a model of collaboration among teachers for a regular block of time, during which students are grouped and provided with targeted Tier 2 services.

D. The district should schedule ESL instruction for elementary students so it does not compromise their access to the regular curriculum.

1. The district should consider the use of paraprofessionals, supervised by ELL staff, who could provide assistance for ELL students in the regular education classroom.

Recommended resources:

- ESE's *Early Warning Indicator System* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edwin/analytics/ewis.html) is a tool to provide information to districts about the likelihood that their students will reach key academic goals. Districts can use the tool in conjunction with other data and sources of information to better target student supports and interventions and to examine school-level patterns over time in order to address systemic issues that may impede students' ability to meet academic goals.

- The *Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS)* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/) is a blueprint for school improvement that focuses on systems, structures and supports across the district, school, and classroom to meet the academic and non-academic needs of all students.

  MTSS Self-Assessment Overview (includes links to the MTSS Self-Assessment tool and *How to Complete the MTSS Self-Assessment*): http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtss/sa/

- ESE's *RETELL: Extending the Learning* web page (http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/courses.html) provides a registry of SEI-related courses which have been reviewed and approved by the Department's Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement. These courses provide opportunities for educators to extend their learning and practice beyond the Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) Endorsement course.

Benefits: By implementing these recommendations, the district will provide a fully implemented tiered system of support that addresses the needs of all students. Students who are falling behind will be identified and will have access to a system of additional supports as needed. This approach will enhance teachers' skills to meet the needs of all students and will make learning more accessible to everyone in the general education classroom.

8. **The district should develop systemwide practices to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral well-being.**

    A. The district should improve the transition process from the elementary through the middle and high school levels. The process should include a specific timeline and practices.

    1. Transitions should include time for students to meet staff members of the new school, an opportunity for parents to receive information and meet staff, a visit to the school, transfer of student information (including placement information), and sharing of guidance and behavioral notes in a more formal way.

   a. When feasible, if children from many schools are moving into one larger school, the school should consider providing an opportunity for students to meet each other before the school year begins.

   b. Additional transitional support should be provided to students who would benefit from this.

B. The district should address the reasons for tardiness and attendance problems at the secondary level. For those students who have fallen behind due to non-attendance, the district should create options to help them finish their high school career.

   1. The district should consider rewriting the middle and high school attendance and tardiness policies to reflect reasonable limits and ensure positive consequences.

      a. Each school should proactively communicate with parents when absences or tardies begin to be a concern.

   2. The district should consider the extent to which school environments are student-centered, and whether classes with limited active learning or engagement may be contributing to absenteeism.

   3. The district should consider creating programs that incorporate career exploration and immersion.

   4. The high school should consider adding credit recovery options such as online courses and evening school, including for students with extended absences.

C. The district is encouraged to consider local hospitals and social service agencies to identify possible collaborative partners for addressing students' emotional and behavioral challenges.

   1. In addition to having places to refer students and families for assistance, some organizations may be able to provide clinical assistance to district staff and to students in dealing with behavioral problems, or to collaboratively deliver programs for students.

Recommended resources:

- *Safe and Healthy Learning Environments* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/safety.html) is a web page outlining a number of Department of Elementary and Secondary Education programs and related resources that can help school districts and communities build safe and healthy learning environments for all students.

- The *Behavioral Health and Public Schools Framework* (http://bhps321.org/viewframework.asp) is a guidance document to help schools establish supportive environments with collaborative services that will enable all students – including those with behavioral health needs – to achieve at their highest potential.

- *Addressing Students' Social, Emotional, and Health Needs*
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/StudentsNeeds.pdf) provides guidance and
  promising practices to help schools create a safe school environment and make effective use of
  a system for addressing the social, emotional, and health needs of its students that reflects the
  behavioral health and public schools framework.

- The *Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling*
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/mscamodel.html) is a standards-based model for school
  counseling outlining how school counseling programs can support student achievement and
  education reform objectives.

- Several ESE presentations related to College and Career Readiness might be useful, including:

  o *Transition to High School through Summer Bridge and Other Ninth Grade Transition
    Programming* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/news/2013/1112SummerBridge.pdf)

  o *Career Development Education: Career Awareness, Exploration and Immersion*
    (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/news/2013/1015CareerDevelopEd.pdf)

  o *Integration of the Academic, Workplace Readiness and Personal /Social Domains*
    (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/news/2014/0107Integration.pdf)

  o (Other presentations and resources are available at http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/ccrta/.)

- The *Contextual Learning Portal* (http://resources21.org/cl/default.asp) is a searchable collection
  of contextual learning projects. Contextual learning projects engage students in academic work
  applied to a context related to their lives, communities, workplaces or the wider world.

- *Youth Voices - How High Schools can Respond to the Needs of Students and Help Prevent
  Dropouts* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/YouthFocusGroup.pdf) is a report based on youth
  focus groups across the Commonwealth who shared their insight about what they liked most
  and least about school; why students drop out; and how schools should be improved.

- *Expanding Learning Opportunities for Students*
  (http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/framework/level4/LearningOpportunities.pdf) is a compilation
  of research, school profiles and practical examples related to how schools have expanded
  learning opportunities for students.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation will be a safer and more engaging school
environment that provides students with a pathway to achieving their post-graduation goals.

Finance and Asset Management

9. **Once a district improvement plan is developed, it should be used to make budget decisions about initiatives, new programs and personnel, and reductions. Data, especially student achievement data, should also be used to make budget decisions and to reallocate funds.**

    A. As administrators and school councils prepare proposals for their budgets they should ensure that they include proposals needed to implement the district and school plans.

        1. Specific objectives and timelines in the plan will often depend on budget allocations, such as staffing or curriculum materials. These should be included in administrators' budget proposals and prioritized accordingly.

            a. Additional proposals may be included, but those reflecting district and school improvement plans should be given appropriate priority.

            b. Existing programs and activities not reflected in the plans may be considered when reallocating resources to implement the plans, as appropriate.

        2. The use of district and school improvement plans and of data in making budget decisions is recommended in guidelines for Smart School Budgeting: http://www.renniecenter.org/topics/smart_school_budgeting.html

    B. Student achievement and other data are also useful in setting budget priorities and in justifying proposals.

        1. The needs of certain schools, student subgroups, and programs may be more precisely evident following the analysis of achievement and other data, and can be given appropriate priority when budget proposals are considered.

        2. The justification for initiatives based on data is also effective in advocating for funding.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation include:

- A clear plan and references to data can help justify and build support for budgeting appropriate new initiatives and would increase confidence in the budget process and district needs. It can also reinforce the need for programs that have shown that they are effective in raising student achievement.

- The reallocation of funds from existing programs, as appropriate, could also be based on a plan with clear goals and action steps and on relevant data identifying needs.

- The incorporation of planning goals and action steps into the budget process also reinforces the importance of the plan itself and its goals.

10. **The district should consider preparing a summary version of the budget document to make available to the general public.**

   A. The existing budget document is a large binder of proposals and recommended budgets for each school and program, a complete list of staff with their salaries, and historical data showing increases and trends for each budget line.

      1. While comprehensive, the binder is not suitable for the general public or for city officials who may not need such complete detail.

      2. It is impractical to post the document on the district website because of its size, length, and detail.

   B. A shortened summary version could be prepared for the general public and posted on the website, ideally consisting of a page or so for priorities at the district and at each school and program.

      1. It could, in a few pages, show staffing FTEs, proposed budgets, and historical trends, and it could highlight proposed changes for each school and program along with their relationships to district plan goals and objectives.

      2. Collaborating with city officials about the content of the shortened document could help satisfy their needs and questions without the need to consult the detailed binder of budget information.

Benefits from implementing this recommendation could include:

- It could make the budgetary needs of the district more readily available to interested parents and other citizens.

- It could be used to emphasize initiatives and program changes along with the reasons for them.

- It might be used effectively to make city officials more aware of the district's programmatic needs and improvement plans.

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Site Visit Schedule

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from April 7-10, 2014 by the following team of independent ESE consultants.

1. Tom Pandiscio, Ed. D., leadership and governance

2. Suzanne Kelly, curriculum and instruction

3. Linda L. Greyser, Ed. D., assessment and review team coordinator

4. William Contreras, Ed. D., human resources and professional development

5. Katherine Lopez-Natale, Ph. D., student support

6. George Gearhart, Ed. D., financial and asset management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: assistant superintendent for finance and operations, finance analyst, city auditor, director of facilities

The team conducted interviews with all seven members of the School Committee

The review team conducted interviews with the co-presidents of the teachers' association

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: superintendent, assistant superintendent for curriculum and assessment, assistant superintendent for finance and operations, special education director, Title 1 director, and technology director. The team conducted one interview with the superintendent. The district review protocol includes a second interview and a briefing with the superintendent to discuss emerging themes from the review, but the superintendent was unavailable for these.

The team visited the following schools: Clyde Reeves Elementary School (PK-5), Daniel P. Hurld School (K-5), Goodyear Elementary School (K-5), Linscott-Rumford Elementary School (K-5), Malcolm White Elementary School (K-5), Mary D. Altavesta Elementary School (K-5), Shamrock Elementary School (PK-5), Wyman Elementary School (K-5), Daniel L. Joyce Middle School (grades 6-8), John F. Kennedy Middle School (grades 6-8) and Woburn Memorial High School (grades 9-12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews with seven of eleven principals and focus groups with five elementary school teachers and ten high school teachers. No middle school teachers attended the focus group for middle school teachers. It should also be noted that district staff

(mainly principals and teachers) did not know about the district review and the review schedule until the Friday before the site visit.

The team observed 104 classes in the district: 20 at the high school, 19 at the two middle schools, and 65 at the 8 elementary schools.

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

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

o Data on the district's staffing and finances.

o Published educational reports on the district by ESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).

o 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.

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

Site Visit Schedule

Monday 04/07/2014	Tuesday 04/08/2014	Wednesday 04/09/2014	Thursday 04/10/2014
Orientation with district leaders and several principals; interviews with district leaders, staff, and principals; document reviews; review of personnel files, interview with teachers' association.	Interviews with district staff and principals; interview with city personnel; interview with high school students; interview with school committee members; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; and visits to Woburn Memorial High School for classroom observations.	Interviews with school leaders; interviews with school committee members; parent focus group; visits to Kennedy Middle School, Joyce Middle School, Altavesta Elementary School, Malcolm White Elementary School, Reeves Elementary School, and Linscott-Rumford Elementary School for classroom observations.	Visits to Woburn Memorial High School, Wyman Elementary School, Goodyear Elementary School and Hurld Elementary School for classroom observations; district review team meeting; emerging themes meeting with district leaders and several principals.

Appendix B: Enrollment, Performance, Expenditures

Table B1a: Woburn Public Schools
2013-2014 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Student Group	District	Percent of Total	State	Percent of Total
African-American	323	6.7%	82990	8.7%
Asian	367	7.6%	58455	6.1%
Hispanic	445	9.2%	162647	17.0%
Native American	17	0.4%	2209	0.2%
White	3570	73.8%	620628	64.9%
Native Hawaiian	9	0.2%	1007	0.1%
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	109	2.3%	27803	2.9%
All Students	4840	100.0%	955739	100.0%

Note: As of October 1, 2013

Table B1b: Woburn Public Schools
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	733	38.5%	15.0%	164336	34.8%	17.0%
Low Income	1296	68.1%	26.8%	365885	77.5%	38.3%
ELLs and Former ELLs	186	9.8%	3.8%	75947	16.1%	7.9%
All high needs students	1904	100.0%	38.8%	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 4,902; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 966,360.

Table B2a: Woburn Public Schools
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	383	90.3	88.1	87.5	86.8	83.3	-3.5	-0.7
	P+	383	71.0%	65.0%	65.0%	59.0%	57.0%	-12.0%	-6.0%
4	CPI	336	89.7	87.6	84.9	83.5	78.9	-6.2	-1.4
	P+	336	69.0%	67.0%	63.0%	57.0%	53.0%	-12.0%	-6.0%
	SGP	313	63	63	56	54	49	-9	-2
5	CPI	356	88.1	92.8	87.6	86.7	84.7	-1.4	-0.9
	P+	356	68.0%	78.0%	70.0%	66.0%	66.0%	-2.0%	-4.0%
	SGP	324	47	44.5	40	45	52	-2	5
6	CPI	375	89.6	90.5	91.6	90.3	85.1	0.7	-1.3
	P+	375	73.0%	75.0%	78.0%	77.0%	67.0%	4.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	350	54	52	52	51.5	52	-2.5	-0.5
7	CPI	364	91.7	91.9	90.8	93.3	88.4	1.6	2.5
	P+	364	78.0%	76.0%	76.0%	81.0%	72.0%	3.0%	5.0%
	SGP	339	53	47	48	55	48	2	7
8	CPI	350	92.7	91.8	92.3	92.4	90.1	-0.3	0.1
	P+	350	81.0%	80.0%	80.0%	82.0%	78.0%	1.0%	2.0%
	SGP	330	37.5	40	39	46	50	8.5	7
10	CPI	308	91.7	94.8	95.4	97.7	96.9	6	2.3
	P+	308	76.0%	86.0%	88.0%	92.0%	91.0%	16.0%	4.0%
	SGP	271	32	30	39	42	57	10	3
All	CPI	2472	90.5	91	90	90	86.8	-0.5	0
	P+	2472	74.0%	75.0%	74.0%	73.0%	69.0%	-1.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	1927	49	47	45	49	51	0	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 B2b: Woburn Public Schools
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	384	89	85.2	83.3	84	84.3	-5	0.7
	P+	384	73.0%	64.0%	64.0%	63.0%	66.0%	-10.0%	-1.0%
4	CPI	340	87	83.5	79.5	82.1	80.2	-4.9	2.6
	P+	340	61.0%	55.0%	46.0%	52.0%	52.0%	-9.0%	6.0%
	SGP	315	63	50	47.5	58	54	-5	10.5
5	CPI	354	81.5	86.1	83.4	81.8	80.6	0.3	-1.6
	P+	354	61.0%	64.0%	61.0%	60.0%	61.0%	-1.0%	-1.0%
	SGP	322	46	42.5	40	58	54	12	18
6	CPI	376	78.3	78.2	83.6	84.3	80.3	6	0.7
	P+	376	57.0%	53.0%	62.0%	66.0%	61.0%	9.0%	4.0%
	SGP	347	34	37	40.5	43	50	9	2.5
7	CPI	364	74	71.5	71.8	78.8	74.4	4.8	7
	P+	364	45.0%	46.0%	43.0%	54.0%	52.0%	9.0%	11.0%
	SGP	340	43.5	46.5	43.5	43	46	-0.5	-0.5
8	CPI	353	73.6	72.7	72.8	74.2	76	0.6	1.4
	P+	353	47.0%	47.0%	45.0%	50.0%	55.0%	3.0%	5.0%
	SGP	333	44	49	48	44	50	0	-4
10	CPI	308	89.3	88.9	88.8	91.1	90.2	1.8	2.3
	P+	308	75.0%	73.0%	73.0%	78.0%	80.0%	3.0%	5.0%
	SGP	274	48	41	43	44.5	51	-3.5	1.5
All	CPI	2479	82	80.8	80.2	82.2	80.8	0.2	2
	P+	2479	60.0%	57.0%	56.0%	60.0%	61.0%	0.0%	4.0%
	SGP	1931	47	45	44	48	51	1	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: Woburn Public Schools
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	353	86	85.9	85	80.7	78.5	-5.3	-4.3
	P+	353	64.0%	60.0%	65.0%	54.0%	51.0%	-10.0%	-11.0%
8	CPI	352	71.3	74.8	72.2	71.8	71	0.5	-0.4
	P+	352	35.0%	44.0%	41.0%	39.0%	39.0%	4.0%	-2.0%
10	CPI	295	78.7	81	80.7	86.5	88	7.8	5.8
	P+	295	48.0%	52.0%	52.0%	65.0%	71.0%	17.0%	13.0%
All	CPI	1000	78.8	80.8	79.1	79.3	79	0.5	0.2
	P+	1000	49.0%	52.0%	53.0%	52.0%	53.0%	3.0%	-1.0%

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: Woburn Public Schools
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	1092	82.7	84.2	82.5	82.8	0.1	0.3
		P+	1092	54.0%	58.0%	58.0%	56.0%	2.0%	-2.0%
		SGP	819	45	45	42	45	0	3
	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	756	84.6	85.4	83.7	83.9	-0.7	0.2
		P+	756	59.0%	62.0%	62.0%	60.0%	1.0%	-2.0%
		SGP	573	45	47	42	46	1	4
	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	508	75.2	77.3	74.3	75.5	0.3	1.2
		P+	508	36.0%	39.0%	39.0%	40.0%	4.0%	1.0%
		SGP	370	40	37	38	39	-1	1
	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	130	80.9	80.3	78.9	79.6	-1.3	0.7
		P+	130	50.0%	52.0%	53.0%	48.0%	-2.0%	-5.0%
		SGP	87	57.5	54.5	47	57	-0.5	10
	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	2472	90.5	91	90	90	-0.5	0
		P+	2472	74.0%	75.0%	74.0%	73.0%	-1.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	1927	49	47	45	49	0	4
	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: Woburn Public Schools
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	1094	71.3	71.4	70.1	72.7	1.4	2.6
		P+	1094	41.0%	39.0%	38.0%	43.0%	2.0%	5.0%
		SGP	821	41	42	41	46	5	5
	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	757	73.2	72.4	70.9	74.2	1	3.3
		P+	757	43.0%	41.0%	39.0%	46.0%	3.0%	7.0%
		SGP	573	44	41	43	49	5	6
	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	510	60.8	62.4	60.2	62.5	1.7	2.3
		P+	510	25.0%	23.0%	23.0%	26.0%	1.0%	3.0%
		SGP	370	36	40	41	42	6	1
	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	130	76.8	75.8	71.4	74.4	-2.4	3
		P+	130	50.0%	48.0%	46.0%	45.0%	-5.0%	-1.0%
		SGP	87	55	59.5	46.5	56	1	9.5
	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	2479	82	80.8	80.2	82.2	0.2	2
		P+	2479	60.0%	57.0%	56.0%	60.0%	0.0%	4.0%
		SGP	1931	47	45	44	48	1	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: Woburn 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	448	68.2	70.2	68.6	68.9	0.7	0.3
		P+	448	30.0%	32.0%	34.0%	33.0%	3.0%	-1.0%
	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	319	68.9	72	70.5	70.1	1.2	-0.4
		P+	319	30.0%	35.0%	37.0%	36.0%	6.0%	-1.0%
	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	214	62.9	65.3	60.5	61.6	-1.3	1.1
		P+	214	20.0%	23.0%	22.0%	21.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
	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	47	71.2	65.3	65.7	65.4	-5.8	-0.3
		P+	47	26.0%	20.0%	37.0%	28.0%	2.0%	-9.0%
	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	1000	78.8	80.8	79.1	79.3	0.5	0.2
		P+	1000	49.0%	52.0%	53.0%	52.0%	3.0%	-1.0%
	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: Woburn Public Schools
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	2.2	2.4	3.4	1.7	-0.5	-22.7%	-1.7	-50.0%	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: Woburn Public Schools
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	163	74.1%	76.5%	72.7%	74.2%	0.1	0.1%	1.5	2.1%	74.7%
Low income	117	70.7%	75.2%	73.9%	73.5%	2.8	4.0%	-0.4	-0.5%	73.6%
Students w/ disabilities	72	69.4%	64.6%	69.2%	61.1%	-8.3	-12.0%	-8.1	-11.7%	67.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	19	70.6%	76.5%	61.9%	89.5%	18.9	26.8%	27.6	44.6%	63.5%
All students	353	86.2%	85.7%	85.3%	86.1%	-0.1	-0.1%	0.8	0.9%	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 B5b: Woburn Public Schools
Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2009-2012

Group	Number Included (2012)	School Year Ending				Change 2009-2012		Change 2011-2012		State (2012)
		2009	2010	2011	2012	Percentage Points	Percent Change	Percentage Points	Percent Change	
High needs	154	77.3%	78.4%	78.2%	74.7%	-2.6	-3.4%	-3.5	-4.5%	78.9%
Low income	119	74.2%	76.1%	76.6%	74.8%	0.6	0.8%	-1.8	-2.3%	77.5%
Students w/ disabilities	65	78.5%	75.8%	68.4%	70.8%	-7.7	-9.8%	2.4	3.5%	73.8%
English language learners & Former ELLs	21	63.6%	76.5%	76.5%	66.7%	3.1	4.9%	-9.8	-12.8%	68.5%
All students	326	86.3%	88.1%	87.0%	86.5%	0.2	0.2%	-0.5	-0.6%	87.5%

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

Table B6: Woburn Public Schools

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	94.3%	94.6%	95.0%	95.1%	0.8	0.8%	0.1	0.1%	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: Woburn Public Schools

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	2.3%	2.4%	1.5%	0.7%	-1.6	-69.6%	-0.8	-53.3%	2.2%
Out-of-School Suspension Rate	5.5%	4.7%	4.0%	1.5%	-4.0	-72.7%	-2.5	-62.5%	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: Woburn Public Schools

Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2011–2013

	FY11		FY12		FY13	
	Estimated	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**	**Estimated**	**Actual**
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools:						
By school committee	$46,690,187	$46,287,577	$47,230,977	$47,468,945	$49,212,369	--
By municipality	$21,641,596	$32,541,876	$18,578,819	$22,401,353	$22,008,357	--
Total from local appropriations	$68,331,783	$78,829,453	$65,809,796	$69,870,298	$71,220,726	--
From revolving funds and grants	--	$6,087,787	--	$6,125,523	--	--
Total expenditures	--	$84,917,240	--	$75,995,820	--	--
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid*	--	$6,189,936	--	$6,256,312	--	$6,819,375
Required local contribution	--	$37,654,434	--	$38,469,627	--	$39,862,499
Required net school spending**	--	$43,844,370	--	$44,725,939	--	$46,681,874
Actual net school spending	--	$57,598,360	--	$58,101,723	--	$60,142,867
Over/under required ($)	--	$13,753,990	--	$13,375,784	--	$13,460,993
Over/under required (%)	--	31.4%	--	29.9%	--	28.8

*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: Woburn Public Schools
Expenditures Per In-District Pupil
Fiscal Years 2010-2012

Expenditure Category	2010	2011	2012
Administration	$439	$334	$298
Instructional leadership (district and school)	$654	$742	$750
Teachers	$5,009	$5,029	$5,140
Other teaching services	$867	$908	$998
Professional development	$165	$158	$160
Instructional materials, equipment and technology	$208	$273	$194
Guidance, counseling and testing services	$290	$314	$380
Pupil services	$1,380	$1,345	$1,204
Operations and maintenance	$1,349	$1,243	$1,234
Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs	$3,032	$2,387	$2,433
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	$13,394	$12,732	$12,793

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**	0%	6%	94%	#	2	6	96
	MS	5%	0%	95%	%	**2%**	6%	92%
	HS	5%	10%	85%	---	---	---	---
2. Behavioral standards are clearly communicated and disruptions, if present, are managed effectively and equitably.	**ES**	2%	2%	97%	#	4	4	96
	MS	5%	5%	89%	%	4%	4%	92%
	HS	10%	10%	80%	---	---	---	---
3. The physical arrangement of the classroom ensures a positive learning environment and provides all students with access to learning activities.	**ES**	0%	2%	98%	#	0	6	98
	MS	0%	5%	95%	%	0%	6%	94%
	HS	0%	20%	80%	---	---	---	---
4. Classroom rituals and routines promote transitions with minimal loss of instructional time	**ES**	3%	9%	88%	#	3	12	89
	MS	0%	11%	89%	%	3%	12%	86%
	HS	5%	20%	75%	---	---	---	---
5. Multiple resources are available to meet all students' diverse learning needs.	**ES**	18%	25%	57%	#	25	32	47
	MS	26%	47%	26%	%	24%	31%	45%
	HS	40%	35%	25%	---	---	---	---

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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**	3%	17%	80%	#	2	16	86
	MS	0%	11%	89%	%	2%	15%	83%
	HS	0%	15%	85%	---			
7. The teacher plans and implements a lesson that reflects rigor and high expectations.	**ES**	23%	31%	46%	#	21	41	42
	MS	26%	53%	21%	%	20%	39%	40%
	HS	5%	55%	40%	---	---	---	---
8. The teacher communicates clear learning objective(s) aligned to 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. SEI/language objective(s) are included when applicable.	**ES**	71%	14%	15%	#	65	15	24
	MS	37%	21%	42%	%	63%	14%	23%
	HS	60%	10%	30%	---	---	---	---
9. The teacher uses appropriate instructional strategies well matched to learning objective(s) and content.	**ES**	17%	38%	45%	#	19	40	45
	MS	16%	37%	47%	%	18%	38%	43%
	HS	25%	40%	35%	---	---	---	---
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**	66%	22%	12%	#	75	18	11
	MS	84%	5%	11%	%	72%	17%	11%
	HS	80%	15%	5%	---	---	---	---
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**	42%	28%	31%	#	47	27	30
	MS	47%	21%	32%	%	45%	26%	29%
	HS	55%	25%	20%	---	---	---	---

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Teaching (continued)	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)		None (0)	Partial (1)	Clear & Consistent (2)
12. The teacher uses questioning techniques that require thoughtful responses that demonstrate understanding.	**ES**	38%	26%	35%	#	38	29	37
	MS	32%	16%	53%	%	37%	28%	36%
	HS	35%	45%	20%	---	---	---	---
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**	18%	22%	60%	#	26	21	57
	MS	32%	21%	47%	%	25%	20%	55%
	HS	40%	15%	45%	---	---	---	---
14. The teacher paces the lesson to match content and meet students' learning needs.	**ES**	15%	40%	45%	#	20	37	47
	MS	26%	32%	42%	%	19%	36%	45%
	HS	25%	25%	50%	---	---	---	---
15. The teacher conducts frequent formative assessments to check for understanding and inform instruction.	**ES**	17%	29%	54%	#	18	32	54
	MS	16%	37%	47%	%	17%	31%	52%
	HS	20%	30%	50%	---	---	---	---
16. The teacher makes use of available technology to support instruction and enhance learning.	**ES**	68%	14%	18%	#	68	14	22
	MS	63%	16%	21%	%	65%	13%	21%
	HS	60%	10%	30%	---	---	---	---

Learning	Grade Span	Evidence by Grade Span				Evidence Overall		
		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent		None	Partial	Clear & Consistent
		(0)	(1)	(2)		(0)	(1)	(2)
17. Students are engaged in challenging academic tasks.	ES	20%	31%	49%	#	19	42	43
	MS	16%	53%	32%	%	18%	40%	41%
	HS	15%	60%	25%	---	---	---	---
18. Students articulate their thinking orally or in writing.	ES	34%	31%	35%	#	39	31	34
	MS	47%	21%	32%	%	38%	30%	33%
	HS	40%	35%	25%	---			
19. Students inquire, explore, apply, analyze, synthesize and/or evaluate knowledge or concepts (Bloom's Taxonomy).	ES	43%	25%	32%	#	46	30	28
	MS	42%	42%	16%	%	44%	29%	27%
	HS	50%	30%	20%	---	---	---	---
20. Students elaborate about content and ideas when responding to questions.	ES	51%	26%	23%	#	58	23	23
	MS	53%	21%	26%	%	56%	22%	22%
	HS	75%	10%	15%	---	---	---	---
21. Students make connections to prior knowledge, or real world experiences, or can apply knowledge and understanding to other subjects.	ES	32%	23%	45%	#	35	24	45
	MS	26%	21%	53%	%	34%	23%	43%
	HS	45%	25%	30%	---	---	---	---
22. Students use technology as a tool for learning and/or understanding.	ES	95%	3%	2%	#	100	3	1
	MS	100%	0%	0%	%	96%	3%	1%
	HS	95%	5%	0%	---	---	---	---
23. Students assume responsibility for their own learning whether individually, in pairs, or in groups.	ES	25%	25%	51%	#	31	25	48
	MS	42%	21%	37%	%	30%	24%	46%
	HS	35%	25%	40%	---	---	---	---
24. Student work demonstrates high quality and can serve as exemplars.	ES	71%	11%	18%	#	76	14	14
	MS	68%	26%	5%	%	73%	13%	13%
	HS	85%	10%	5%	---	---	---	---

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