

Holliston Public Schools

Targeted District Review Report

March 2022



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906
781-338-3000
www.doe.mass.edu

American Institutes for Research

Education Systems and Policy

201 Jones Road, Suite 100
Waltham, MA 02451
(202) 403-5000
www.air.org

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Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

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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



Executive Summary

In accordance with Massachusetts state law, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to conduct a targeted review of Holliston Public Schools (hereafter, HPS) in March 2022. Data collection activities associated with the review focused on understanding how district systems, structures, and practices operate in support of district continuous improvement efforts. The review focused on three of the six standards (and related indicators) that DESE has identified as being important components of district effectiveness.

All data collection procedures for this report took place during the 2021-2022 academic year. This school year represents the third year affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a significant impact on educational systems since March 2020. The districts reviewed during the 2021-2022 school year experienced school closures, significant illness among staff and students, shortages of instructional and noninstructional staff, transportation issues, and other challenges during the two preceding school years, and some of these challenges continued during 2021-2022 as these districts were reviewed. Site visit and report writing teams considered these factors as they collected data and wrote reports.

HPS's superintendent, Dr. Susan Kustka, is in her second year in the role. Dr. Kustka leads the district with a central office staff that includes an assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, an assistant superintendent of finance and operations, a student services director, a director of social-emotional learning and equity, a director of technology and digital learning, a data resource manager, a data systems specialist, and HR analysts.

Curriculum and Instruction

At the time of the on-site review, HPS was working on aligning its curricula to state standards, creating comprehensive and consistent curriculum maps, and ensuring that curricula were aligned vertically and horizontally. During the 2021-2022 school year, the district used its previously-established curriculum council to update the curricular review process to include an equity lens, developed a curriculum map template, and created new curriculum coordinator positions to begin in the 2022-2023 school year. The district expects teachers to adjust and modify their instruction to meet students' learning needs, skill levels, and levels of readiness. The district has a wide variety of academic offerings, including French Immersion and Montessori programs at the elementary level and honors, Advanced Placement, and elective offerings at the high-school level.

Aggregate instructional observations indicated that instructional expectations and rigorous instruction were not being implemented consistently across all classrooms. Overall, instructional observations suggested generally strong emotional support, classroom organization, and student engagement and mixed evidence of consistently rigorous instructional support.

Assessment

HPS's culture values the use of assessment data in improving teaching, learning, and decision making. Focus groups and interviews with teachers and school and district leaders and a document

review indicated that educators had access to a variety of assessments to inform their classroom instruction, including STAR, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System), and Mood Check. STAR was a new assessment in the 2021-2022 school year, and teachers received professional development to support their interpretation and use of this data source. The district has implemented systems for supporting data use, including student assistance team meetings at every school in the district. The district is establishing mechanisms for transparently sharing data with students' families.

Student Support

The district is making concerted efforts to ensure that schools equitably support all students' safety, well-being, and sense of belonging; systematically identify and address students' needs; and engage families and students in planning and decision making. During the 2021-2022 school year, the district hired the director of social-emotional learning and equity to build systems and staff capacity to identify and address inequities. The district has partnered with the Anti-Defamation League, Safe and Supportive Schools, and DESE's PBIS (positive behavioral interventions and supports) Academy to create a safer and more supportive learning environment. However, meaningfully promoting and using student and family voice in planning and decision making is an area for growth.

District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, targeted district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews carefully consider the effectiveness of systemwide functions, referring to the six district standards used by DESE: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, Student Support, and Financial and Asset Management.¹ The HPS review focused only on the three student-centered standards: Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, and Student Support. Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. In addition, the design of the targeted review promotes district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. In addition to providing information to each district reviewed, DESE uses review reports to identify resources and/or technical assistance to provide to the district.

Methodology

A district review team consisting of AIR staff members and subcontractors, with expertise in each district standard, reviews documentation and extant data before conducting an on-site visit. On-site data collection includes team members conducting interviews and focus group sessions with a wide range of stakeholders, including school committee members, teachers' association representatives, district and school administrators, teachers, students, and students' families. Team members also observe classroom instruction and collect data using the Teachstone Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) protocol, developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia.² Virtual interviews and focus groups also are conducted as needed. Following the site visit, the team members code and analyze the data to develop a set of objective findings. The team lead and multiple quality assurance reviewers, including DESE staff, then review the initial draft of the report. DESE staff provides recommendations for the district, based on the findings of strengths and areas of growth identified before AIR finalizes and submits the report to DESE. DESE reviews and then sends the report to the district for factual review before publishing it on the DESE website.

Site Visit

The site visit to HPS occurred from March 28 to April 1, 2022. The site visit included approximately 20 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 50 stakeholders, including district administrators, school principals, school staff, middle- and high-school students, students' families, and teachers' association representatives. The review team conducted interviews with the superintendent, the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, the student services director, and the director of social-emotional learning and equity. In addition, the review team conducted six teacher focus groups (e.g., general education and special education teachers), with

¹ DESE's District Standards and Indicators are at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/district-standards-indicators.pdf>.

² For more information on the Teachstone CLASS protocol, visit <https://teachstone.com/class/>.

11 elementary-school teachers, seven middle-school teachers, and seven high-school teachers. An additional three focus groups were conducted with specialists (e.g., English learner [EL] specialists and school counselors) with four elementary-school specialists, two middle-school specialists, and three high-school specialists. Two student focus groups were conducted with seven middle-school students and four high-school students. Three administrator interviews or focus groups were conducted with two elementary-school principals, one middle-school principal, and one high-school principal. The president and vice-president of the teachers' association also were interviewed.

The site team conducted 61 observations of classroom instruction in four schools.³ Certified team members conducted instructional observations using the Teachstone CLASS protocol.

Additional information is in the appendices. Appendix A includes details about the site visit review activities. Appendix B provides information about district enrollment, attendance, and expenditures. The Districtwide Instructional Observation Report is in Appendix C. Appendix D contains resources to support implementation of DESE's District Standards and Indicators. Lastly, Appendix E contains student performance tables.

District Profile

HPS is led by a superintendent in her second year in the role, as well as a central office staff, including the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, the student services director, the director of social-emotional learning and equity, the director of technology and digital learning, the data resource manager, a data systems specialist, and HR analysts.

In the 2021-2022 school year, there were 217 teachers in the district, with 2,809 students enrolled in the district's four schools. Table 1 provides an overview of student enrollment by school.

Table 1. Holliston Public Schools: Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment, 2021-2022

School	Type	Grades served	Enrollment
Sam Placentino Elementary	Elementary	PreK-2	712
Fred Miller Elementary	Elementary	3-5	609
Robert H. Adams Middle	Middle	6-8	676
Holliston High	High	9-12	812
Totals			2,809

Note. [Enrollment Data \(2021-2022\) for Holliston \(01360000\)](#) as of October 1, 2021.

HPS's student enrollment has decreased slightly in the past four years (2,905 in 2018; 2,809 in 2022). In 2022, students from low-income households made up 11.5 percent of the district (state average is 43.8 percent). The district served a lower percentage of students with disabilities than the state (16.5 percent versus 18.9 percent), and a smaller percentage of ELs (2.2 percent versus 11 percent), and a smaller percentage of students whose first language is not English (11.9 percent

³ DESE exempted the early childhood center from instructional observation.

versus 23.9 percent). Additional enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high-need populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students who are economically disadvantaged, and ELs and former ELs) compared with the state are in Tables B1 and B2 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

The percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next-Gen MCAS is greater than the state average for all tested grades and subject areas. Tables 2-4 provide an overview of student performance in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science by grade level between 2018 and 2021.

Table 2. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, 2018-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
3	208	59%	65%	73%	14	51%	22
4	220	56%	59%	58%	2	49%	9
5	230	58%	55%	58%	0	47%	11
6	225	65%	65%	67%	2	47%	20
7	224	67%	61%	61%	-6	43%	18
8	227	73%	71%	52%	-21	41%	11
3-8	1,334	63%	62%	61%	-2	46%	15
10	192	—	73%	89%	—	64%	25

Note. Data sourced from https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=01360000&orgtypecode=5& (2021).

Table 3. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, 2018-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
3	209	54%	53%	51%	-3	33%	18
4	221	36%	40%	39%	3	33%	6
5	228	52%	62%	65%	13	33%	32
6	226	69%	61%	60%	-9	33%	27
7	224	76%	69%	52%	-24	35%	17
8	226	73%	72%	38%	-35	32%	6
3-8	1,334	60%	60%	51%	-9	33%	18
10	192	—	82%	85%	—	52%	33

Note. Data sourced from https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=01360000&orgtypecode=5& (2021).

Table 4. Next-Generation MCAS Science Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, 2018-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	3-year change	State (2021)
5	230	62%	—	60%	-2	42%
8	189	67%	—	52%	-15	41%
5 and 8	419	65%	—	57%	-8	42%
10	—	—	—	—	—	—

Note. Grade 10 results for the spring 2021 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about Competency Determination requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>. In 2019, 10th graders took the Legacy MCAS science test. Data sourced from https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=01360000&orgtypecode=5& (2021).

In addition, the district's four- and five-year graduation rates, 94.1 percent and 96.9 percent in 2020, respectively, are both greater than the state averages of 89 percent and 90.1 percent.

Curriculum and Instruction

At the time of the on-site review, HPS was working on aligning its curricula to state standards, creating comprehensive and consistent curriculum maps, and ensuring vertical and horizontal alignment of its curricula. During the 2021-2022 school year, the district used its previously-established curriculum council to update the curricular review process to include an equity lens, developed a curriculum map template, and created new curriculum coordinator positions to begin in the 2022-2023 school year. The district expects teachers to adjust and modify their instruction to meet students' learning needs, skill levels, and levels of readiness. The district has a wide variety of academic offerings, including French Immersion and Montessori programs at the elementary level and many offerings at the high-school level (e.g., honors, Advanced Placement, electives), some of which are created by teachers in response to student interest. Aggregate instructional observations indicated that instructional expectations and rigorous instruction were not implemented consistently across all classrooms. Table 5 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in curriculum and instruction.

Table 5. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Curriculum and Instruction Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
Curriculum selection and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing a curriculum council which conducts curriculum reviews and is updating the curriculum review process to include an equity lens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that curriculum materials are high quality, aligned with appropriate state standards, and vertically aligned Creating comprehensive and consistent curriculum maps for all grades and subject areas to ensure that content aligns with state standards
Classroom instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing clear expectations that teachers make adjustments and accommodations to instruction informed by students' learning needs and skill levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing all teachers with constructive, growth-promoting feedback to ensure that teachers provide effective instruction that challenges and supports all students Providing all students with opportunities to learn collaboratively and take ownership of their learning
Student access to coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a variety of academic offerings that encourage students to pursue rigorous learning experiences aligned with their interests Providing fully funded full-day kindergarten for all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that all students have equitable access to advanced coursework and other academic offerings

Curriculum Selection and Use

Curriculum selection and use is an area of growth for the district. At the time of the review, few taught curricula were rated on CURATE,⁴ and district leaders were working on an overhaul of the

⁴ CURriculum RATings by TEachers (CURATE): Center for Instructional Support (mass.edu).

curricular mapping and documentation process. A review of the district's CURATE curriculum table indicated that one curriculum met expectations: enVisions Math for kindergarten through Grade 5. Elementary schools also use Fountas and Pinnell and Heggerty curricula. Special educators described pulling additional resources from multiple curricula to meet the specific needs of their students, including EdMark, Raz-Kids, Telian, and Orton-Gillingham. These curricula are not on the district's CURATE table, so it is unclear how they are rated and whether they meet state standards. District leaders said that they were aware that many of the curricula used were not rated and expressed a concern about the alignment of current curricula to state standards. Interviews and a review of the district's CURATE table and other curriculum documents indicated that almost all curricula at the middle- and high-school levels were teacher created.

School and district leaders said that HPS has a long-standing curriculum council that has been redesigned with new curriculum coordinators beginning in the 2022-2023 school year. A review of the council's meeting agendas showed it has been meeting monthly, primarily focusing on understanding the importance of curricular mapping and providing time for teams to create these resources. The council also has been focusing on ensuring alignment of curricula to state standards. School and district leaders told the team that ensuring this alignment was a top priority for 2021-2022. District leaders, school leaders, and teachers stated that the equity audit would focus on ensuring that taught curriculum was inclusive and diverse and enable children of diverse backgrounds to "see themselves in books" and other resources. The curriculum council has been working on developing the equity review process during the 2021-2022 school year and plans to start implementing this process in 2022-2023.

Some district leaders expressed concern about the absence of consistent curriculum maps and standards alignment. District leaders stated a desire to create curriculum maps that were "living, breathing documents." However, district leaders described a perceived resistance from some educators because there was less focus on standards alignment and documenting curriculum in accessible ways in the past. The need for curriculum mapping became clear in both interviews and a review of agendas from curriculum council meetings. These documents state that a goal of the council is for all content areas to build curriculum maps that will meet and align with state standards and be accessible to staff and community members by posting to the district's website.

Interviews and a document review also indicated that the district was beginning to work on improving the vertical alignment of curricula during the 2021-2022 school year. Stakeholders told the team that within schools and within subject areas, curricula often were not aligned. A review of the district's CURATE table indicated that different grades used different curricula, and teachers said this was especially worrisome when students transitioned from elementary school to middle school. Teachers noted that there was "always a speed bump" when students transitioned to new grades, but the differences between elementary- and middle-school curricula were "more concerning." District leaders said that developing curriculum alignment across all grades was a major goal.

Classroom Instruction

Interviews and a document review indicated that adjusting classroom instruction was an area of strength across the district. Resources or supports available to meet the needs of diverse learning styles within the general education setting include content materials (e.g., manipulatives, exemplars,

computer-assisted instruction, leveled readers, and reference tools), environmental changes (e.g., providing multimodal presentations of materials, targeted small groups, and frequent breaks), and executive functioning supports (e.g., frequent progress monitoring, allowing for extra time, and academic improvement plans). Both special education and general education teachers said that the district expected teachers to make adjustments and accommodations for students to best meet students' needs and consistently referred to HPS's District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) as a tool that they used to do so.

For students who need more intensive supports, district leaders described a multitiered system of support. A document review indicated that Tier 2 supports include intervention groups taught by reading tutors or teachers with an explicit focus on specific skills (e.g., fluency, comprehension, and phonemic awareness) and targeted reading or mathematics instruction. Tier 3 supports include specialized instruction provided by a special educator or specialist and may include programs such as Orton-Gillingham, the Wilson Reading System, Leveled Literacy Instruction, and EdMark. However, families expressed concern that the district did not have adequate resources to meet the needs of all students, regardless of whether students had individualized education programs or Section 504 plans. District leaders, school leaders, and teachers stated that the district was working on incorporating more social-emotional learning competencies into the curriculum and providing professional development for teachers on this topic.

Five observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited HPS during the week of March 28, 2022. The observers conducted 61 observations in a sample of classrooms across grade levels, focused on literacy, ELA, and mathematics. The CLASS protocol guided all classroom observations in the district, using the three grade-band levels of CLASS protocols: K-3, Upper Elementary (4-5), and Secondary (6-12).

The K-3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support, in addition to Student Engagement. The three domains observed at all levels broadly are defined as follows:

- **Emotional Support.** Describes the social-emotional functioning of the classroom, including teacher-student relationships and responsiveness to social-emotional needs.
- **Classroom Organization.** Describes the management of students' behavior, time, and attention in the classroom.
- **Instructional Support.** Describes the efforts to support cognitive and language development, including cognitive demand of the assigned tasks, the focus on higher-order thinking skills, and the use of process-oriented feedback.

When conducting a classroom visit, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 (low range) indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 (middle range) indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 (high range) indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

In HPS, ratings are provided across three grade bands: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. For each grade band, ratings are provided across the overarching domains, as well as at individual dimensions within those domains. The full report of findings from observations conducted in the district is in Appendix C, and summary results are in Tables 17, 18, and 19 in this appendix.

In summary, findings from district observations were as follows:

- **Emotional Support.** Ratings were at the high end of the middle range for the K-5 and 6-8 grade bands (average 5.1 and 5.0, respectively) and in the middle range for the 9-12 grade band (average 4.4).
- **Classroom Organization.** Ratings were in the high range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (average 6.6 and 6.8, respectively) and just below the high range for the K-5 grade band (average 5.8).
- **Instructional Support.** Ratings were in the middle range for all grade bands (average 3.2 in the K-5 grand band, 4.0 in the 6-8 grade band, and 4.0 in the 9-12 grade band).
- **Student Engagement.** For Grades 4 and up, where student engagement was measured as an independent domain, ratings were at the high end of the middle range for the 4-5 and 6-8 grade bands (average 5.0 and 5.4, respectively) and in the middle range for the 9-12 grade band (average 4.6).

Students described various methods of instruction across classes and subjects. Specifically, students said that some classes were characterized by interactive activities and group work, whereas others primarily used independent work and note taking. Data from the District Instructional Observation Report (see Appendix C) support those statements: HPS's middle range scores in the Instructional Learning Formats dimension (average 5.1 in the K-5 grand band, 5.0 in the 6-8 grade band, and 4.5 in the 9-12 grade band) indicate that teachers sometimes use instructional methods that facilitate active engagement and sometimes use a variety of modalities. The district also scored in the middle range for Analysis and Inquiry (average 2.9 in the 4-5 grand band, 3.6 in the 6-8 grade band, and 3.7 in the 9-12 grade band), supporting students' statements that instruction may focus more on rote learning rather than on higher order thinking. The district did, however, score at the high end of the middle range for Student Engagement, supporting statements from teachers and students that students enjoyed their classes and teachers tried to make class time engaging.

Stakeholders expressed differing views about the frequency of observations and feedback. District and school leaders described a system for observing teachers and providing both formal and informal feedback; however, teachers spoke about rarely receiving feedback. For example, some teachers stated that administrators observed their classes for "maybe five to 10 minutes a year." Teacher leaders also said that administrators paid more attention to some teachers than others. They said that administrators had a "concern list" that created "hyper attention towards teachers who are on the concerning list." Teacher leaders expressed concern that this practice could breed favoritism because it could create an environment where some teachers were deemed as "fine" and observed infrequently, whereas others were observed and monitored much more frequently. Teacher leaders also said that they and their colleagues often viewed feedback and evaluations as punitive, not constructive.

Student Access to Coursework

Interviews and a document review indicated that HPS had a wide variety of educational offerings across all levels. However, at the time of the on-site review, the district was in the early stages of ensuring that all students had equitable access to these educational offerings. The superintendent noted that in prior years, the district offered both half-day and full-day kindergarten options; however, families had to pay for full-day kindergarten, and some families were unable to afford the full-day program. As of the 2021-2022 school year, the district has a fully funded full-day kindergarten program that enables all students to enroll regardless of socioeconomic status.

A review of the district- and school-level websites indicated that the district offered three different programs at the elementary level: a Montessori Program (prekindergarten through Grade 4), a French Immersion Program (prekindergarten through Grade 5), and a Traditional Program (prekindergarten through Grade 5). District leaders expressed concerns about inequitable access to the various programming options at the elementary level. A document review indicated that the Montessori and French Immersion programs had limited enrollment. So that all families have equal opportunity, the programs use a lottery system once registration exceeds the number of spaces available. However, even with the lottery systems, there are still concerns about access. For example, if students are not selected from the lottery in kindergarten for the French Immersion program, there is limited opportunity for them to participate in the program moving forward.

At the high school, students reported and a review of the program of studies confirmed a wide variety of courses offered. School leaders and teachers noted that teachers could propose new classes each year to respond to student interest. Some examples identified were classes on the history of hip hop, medieval simulations, conspiracy theories, and podcasting. Additionally, students may choose to participate in two endorsement⁵ programs at the high school: the Computer Science Endorsement Program, which provides students with the opportunity to engage in courses and projects on coding and programming, hardware systems, complex applications, and societal issues; and the Global Citizens Program, a new program in 2021-2022 that focuses on interdisciplinary globally centered courses for students to become active problem solvers and change makers. After completing the course requirements, students in either program earn an endorsement when graduating. Teachers and school leaders stated there were no barriers to students enrolling in these various courses—“students can take whatever class they want,” based on conversations with their teachers. If students disagree with their course placement, their families can appeal to enable the students to enroll in the desired class.

Students said that they felt academically prepared for life after high school but also reported a desire for more “major-specific” classes (e.g., coding classes for those pursuing engineering in college). Interviews and a review of the high-school’s program of studies webpage indicated that opportunities to explore college and career options were offered asynchronously through The Education Cooperative and Educere. These offerings provide students with a wide variety of courses that can be taken as a fifth class (for all high-school students) or substituted into their schedules (for seniors

⁵ High-school endorsements consist of a related series of courses grouped together by interest or skill set. They provide students with in-depth knowledge of a subject area.

only). Seniors also may enroll in an internship class designed to provide students with opportunities to begin exploring and making career decisions.

Although a variety of opportunities are available to students, the district does not have a process in place to ensure that all students have equitable access to these opportunities. Some teachers noted that the middle school has moved away from tracking and leveling, but others expressed concern that this limited options for higher achieving students. Teachers said that they were not aware of how schools tracked enrollment in advanced coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement, The Education Cooperative courses).

Recommendations

- The district should take steps to ensure that curricular materials are high quality, cohesive, aligned with appropriate standards, and aligned vertically between contiguous grades and horizontally across grades and schools.
- The district should consistently provide constructive, growth-related feedback to teachers to ensure that all teachers provide effective instruction that challenges and supports all students.
- The district should ensure that all students are prepared for and have equitable access to a range of academic coursework.

Assessment

District and school leaders in HPS established and continue to support a culture that values the use of assessment data in improving teaching, learning, and decision making. Interviews with teachers and school and district leaders and a document review indicated that educators had access to a variety of data to inform their classroom instruction, including STAR, DIBELS, MCAS, and Mood Check. STAR was a new assessment in 2021-2022, and teachers received professional development to support their interpretation and use of this data source. The district has implemented systems for supporting data use, including student assistance team meetings at every school in the district. The district is establishing mechanisms for transparently sharing data with students' families. Table 6 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in assessment.

Table 6. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Assessment Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
Data and assessment systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using multiple data sources that provide information about students' academic performance across grade levels ■ Using data sources explicitly stated in the district's and the schools' 2021-2022 improvement goals ■ Screening students' social-emotional needs (e.g., Mood Check and the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey) at the high-school level 	
Data use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using data to identify students' strengths and areas of need ■ Reviewing and discussing student data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Analyzing disaggregated student performance data to identify and address inequities across the district
Sharing results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Informing families about students' progress through report cards, conferences, PowerSchool, and Google Classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensuring that communication with all students and families about students' progress takes place frequently and provides families with opportunities to provide feedback or input ■ Sharing results from the STAR assessment with families in an easily understandable format throughout the year

Data and Assessment Systems

Interviews, focus groups, and a document review indicated that HPS has a system for collecting data that provides a comprehensive picture of student, school, and district performance from multiple data sources. Teachers, school leaders, and district leaders spoke about adopting the STAR assessment in 2021-2022 as one of the primary data sources for measuring students' academic achievement in both ELA and mathematics. STAR is administered in Grades K-10 three times per year: September, January, and June.

The middle and high schools also include a commitment to using various data sources in their improvement goals. For example, the 2021-2022 Robert H. Adams Middle School improvement goals describe the school's approach to using STAR data in classrooms. The goals state that STAR will be implemented across the school and all mathematics, ELA, social studies, science, and special education teachers will be trained in how to administer the assessment. This use of data aligns with the 2017-2022 strategic plan for the district, which states in the Student Outcomes section that educators will "make adjustments to their practice based upon their examination of data about student learning from a prioritized set of assessments."

In addition to STAR, district leaders, school leaders, and teachers described using DIBELS for all students in Grades K-5 to track literacy achievement and outcomes. The Miller Elementary 2021-2022 improvement goals, which align with HPS's districtwide improvement goals, describe the school's approach to using DIBELS for monitoring literacy outcomes: DIBELS is for progress monitoring to "inform and amend short-term, targeted instruction/intervention." At the middle-school level, teachers and specialists are using DIBELS along with other data sources to look at how students are progressing and if they need to make adjustments in their instruction. DIBELS also is a main data point used by middle-school staff to determine Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.

In addition to academic diagnostic assessments, HPS administers a social-emotional assessment, called Mood Check, to students in Grades 9 and 11 to identify students' needs and connect them with supports. The HPS Student Services webpage describes this assessment as "a depression prevention initiative" that is in the form of a brief, self-report survey. This assessment aligns with the second priority of Holliston High School's 2021-2022 schoolwide improvement goals: "to provide an equitable, safe, and supportive learning environment." These data sources are used in conjunction with MCAS data to plan student supports and enrichment at the school level. The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey is another assessment used to measure the social-emotional health of students in Grades 9-12. The Mood Check and MetroWest assessments are in line with the second priority of Holliston High School's schoolwide improvement goals: Social/Emotional Health of Students and Staff, which supports the second priority of HPS's districtwide improvement goals.

Data Use

Interviews with teachers and district and school leaders and a review of HPS's Assessment Inventory and Student Opportunity Action Plan indicated that the district is committed to using assessments and data to monitor student outcomes. Commitment 3 of the action plan states that outcome metrics will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups. The plan also highlights specific metrics that the district will use to track student growth, such as DIBELS, the student growth percentile, the Developmental Reading Assessment, and the Benchmark Assessment System.

The district also uses STAR assessment data for kindergarten through Grade 10. For example, Miller Elementary's draft 2021-2022 schoolwide goals describe using STAR data to "analyze horizontal and vertical curriculum and instructional strengths and gaps." Similarly, Robert H. Adams Middle School's 2021-2022 improvement goals describe using STAR data in conjunction with curriculum maps to improve students' educational outcomes, particularly for student groups identified to have the highest needs (Black, indigenous, ELs, students with disabilities, and students from economically disadvantaged families). For example, teachers described using STAR and MCAS data to analyze the

efficacy of classrooms in which two adults were teaching to better support students with disabilities. At the high-school level, the 2021-2022 Holliston Highlight and Student Performance document describes how the district routinely compares MCAS data to state averages. This document clearly outlines how the district disaggregates MCAS data to review the performance of student groups.

Interviewees consistently stated that staff met regularly to discuss student performance data. A review of schools' professional development agendas clearly showed how time was allotted to the review and analysis of various data sources. For example, in December 2021 Miller teachers spent time reviewing Benchmark Assessment System data "to inform small groups, book clubs, and guided reading instruction." Similarly, in January 2022, middle-school teachers dedicated time to reviewing STAR data. In addition, each school has a student assistance team comprising teachers who meet regularly (e.g., every six weeks). School leaders and specialists stated that the team convened to identify new students who need support and to monitor progress for students already receiving interventions. A review of Placentino's student assistance team process form indicated that teams were expected to "collaborate to generate accommodations, interventions, and other strategies to be implemented to help the child make progress in the identified areas of underdeveloped skills." Miller's student assistance team process form outlines the specific assessments considered when providing student supports, such as ELA MCAS data, Developmental Reading Assessment and Benchmark Assessment System data, and DIBEL scores. Teachers also consider other factors, such as social-emotional and critical thinking, when identifying students for supports.

Sharing Results

District leaders have ensured that individual educators, as well as students and their families, have easy access to relevant data by adopting the PowerSchool program. PowerSchool is a comprehensive program that provides data insights to teachers and school and district leaders, and it is the primary way in which data are shared with families and students throughout the district.

PowerSchool is live to teachers, students, and their families 24 hours per day seven days per week and is available on the district's website. Daily classwork, homework, common assessments, and more are uploaded into PowerSchool and immediately become available. Students told the review team that their parents had access to PowerSchool, so parents were able to check in regularly to see how their children were doing in class. In addition, the use of PowerSchool is listed as a requirement in the district employee handbook. The BrightArrow system is another way in which teachers can send updates and communications to parents and families via email. This system aligns with HPS's districtwide improvement goals, specifically the fourth priority: Communication.

Interviews with teachers and families and a document review indicated that, starting in Grade 4, the district uses Google Classroom in all classrooms so that families and students can see progress on classwork and assessments "in real time." Elementary-, middle-, and high-school improvement goals describe the use of Google Classroom. For example, the 2021-2022 Robert H. Adams Middle School improvement goals state that Google Classroom should be used for "communicating between administration/staff, staff/students, and staff/families."

School and district leaders consistently stated that because STAR was a new data source in the 2021-2022 school year, STAR results were not shared with families unless they explicitly asked. The

Robert H. Adams Middle School improvement goals state that STAR progress would be shared with families. Other schools did not explicitly describe sharing STAR results in their improvement goals, but interviewees described that as a district goal.

Recommendations

- The district should regularly communicate with all families evidence of their students' progress toward attaining grade-level standards as well as evidence of the school and district's performance and the effectiveness of current strategies.
- The district should analyze disaggregated student performance data, particularly to identify and address performance, access, and opportunity outcomes and gaps.

Student Support

At the time of the on-site review, the district was making concerted efforts to ensure that schools equitably supported all students' safety, well-being, and sense of belonging; systematically identified and addressed students' needs; and engaged families and students in planning and decision making. In the 2021-2022 school year, the district hired the director of social-emotional learning and equity to build systems and staff capacity to identify and address inequities. The district has partnered with the Anti-Defamation League, Safe and Supportive Schools, and DESE's PBIS Academy to create a safer and more supportive learning environment. However, meaningfully promoting and using student and family voice in planning and decision making is an area for growth. Table 7 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in student support.

Table 7. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Student Support Standard

Indicator	Strengths	Areas for growth
Safe and supportive school climate and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district focuses on cultivating a challenging, safe, and supportive learning environment for students and staff. The district promotes positive student behavior approaches. The district is in the beginning stages of working to identify and address issues of inequity in the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop staff capacity to examine and dismantle implicit biases and systemic inequalities to create safe learning environments. Meaningfully promote and use student voice when making educational decisions.
Tiered systems of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district provides and teachers use the DCAP. Each school has systematic processes to make collaborative decisions about students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involve parents and caregivers in the student support team and student assistance team process. Continue work to identify gaps where supports are needed.
Family, student, and community engagement and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families and students have opportunities to get involved in the district. The district has established numerous community partnerships to support students' social, emotional, and mental wellness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to actively involve and partner with families in planning and decision making. Conduct a comprehensive mapping of partners and create clear processes to find, establish, and manage community partnerships.

Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture

The district is making efforts to promote a safe and supportive environment. A review of the district's fiscal year 2017 to fiscal year 2022 strategic goals indicated that HPS was committed to cultivating a "challenging, safe and supportive learning environment for students and staff," with similar goals found in each school's improvement plan. To achieve this, HPS is investing in implementing trauma-sensitive practices with professional development provided to instructional staff. A review of professional development session agendas indicated that these sessions covered topics such as reducing and responding to trauma, the impact of trauma, and how to create trauma-informed classrooms.

HPS's positive behavioral approaches also contribute to fostering a safe and supportive environment. As described in the Equitable Safe and Supportive Schools Update, at the time of the on-site review, the elementary and middle schools were implementing a PBIS framework. To support the work, HPS enrolled in DESE's PBIS Academy, led by the University of Connecticut, to receive professional development and coaching for 2021-2022 through 2022-2023. Average instructional observation scores for the Behavior Management dimension of the CLASS protocol were in the high range for all grade bands (average 6.1 in the K-5 grand band, 6.7 in the 6-8 grade band, and 7.0 in the 9-12 grade band). These scores suggest that students understand the rules for classroom behavior and expectations, which are consistently reinforced by teachers. Interviews and focus groups with students, faculty, and district leaders indicated that the district has implemented restorative justice practices to address negative behavior. Proactive behavior management also extends beyond the school environment. In May 2021, elementary- and middle-school board certified behavior analysts facilitated the presentation "Developing Positive Behavior Routines at Home" for HPS families to develop strategies to reinforce positive behaviors and processes for redirecting negative behaviors. The presentation is accessible on the district's website as a long-term resource for the community.

Evidence from the 2020-2021 Views of Climate and Learning survey across Grades 4 and 8 in two HPS schools suggests that the district fosters a safe and supportive environment, with most scores at the district level in the "relatively strong" range. The 165 eighth graders surveyed rated their school's environment climate in the "typical" range, which contrasts with the "relatively strong" range rated by 14 fourth graders. HPS's Districtwide Instructional Observation Report supports these sentiments. Scores in the middle range for Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity dimensions of the CLASS protocol suggest that some teachers and students share warm and supportive relationships, and teachers are sometimes aware of students' emotional and academic needs (averages for Positive Climate were 4.9 in the K-5 grand band, 5.3 in the 6-8 grade band, and 4.7 in the 9-12 grade band; averages for Teacher Sensitivity were 5.0 in the K-5 grand band, 5.9 in the 6-8 grade band, and 4.7 in the 9-12 grade band).

Students, teachers, and district leaders expressed a need for increased cultural competence within and outside the classroom. Multiple school leaders said that their schools used the [7 Forms of Bias](#) to mitigate implicit bias embedded into the curriculum. Specifically, the district has checklists for teachers to reflect on the various types of biases found in curriculum and instruction, including invisibility, stereotyping, imbalance and selectivity, unreliability, fragmentation and isolation, linguistic bias, and cosmetic bias. After incidents of hate speech took place at the middle and high schools at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year, the district introduced different educational programs to address equity and diversity. HPS partnered with the Anti-Defamation League and Safe and Supportive Schools to facilitate lessons to students about antiracism, antisemitism, and discrimination. A middle-school teacher stated that these 30- to 45-minute lessons took place every month and included a series of slides, videos, and small-group activities for students.

A review of district meeting notes indicated that in addition to fostering an antiracist community, a goal for HPS was to invest in a representative workforce. Prior to the 2021-2022 school year, the district created the position of and hired a director of social-emotional learning and equity. This person leads the work of embedding equity throughout the district by building systems and staff

capacity to identify and address inequities (such as in curricula, interventions, and supports). Students and families spoke of the need for more cultural representation in the teaching force, and district leaders agreed, noting that “having a diverse staff benefits everyone—what we’re saying is we can’t achieve HPS’s vision without offering a diverse workforce.”

Students have some opportunities to be involved in leadership activities in their schools. Across the middle and high schools, teachers stated that students could start extracurricular clubs and serve on leadership councils. A review of the high-school’s website indicated that student council and student advisory leaders were two clubs focused on student leadership and advocacy. District and school leaders said that student voices were essential to hiring new faculty and staff, and students’ feedback was “non-negotiable.” Although students confirmed having opportunities for student leadership, they said that they felt as though their ability to influence educational decisions was sometimes superficial. One student stated,

You’re empowered, but you’re also limited by what [administration] wants to do. And I think sometimes, I’ll really be trying to do something and they just won’t really respond and they’ll be very slow . . . sometimes they’ll make decisions for you.

This mixed evidence suggests that there is room for growth in promoting student voice.

Tiered Systems of Support

Overall, the use of a multitiered system of support is new and developing in HPS. District leaders reported a need for faculty and administrators to better identify gaps where supports were needed. All HPS students receive Tier 1 instruction and support, including access to guidance and adjustment counselors, participating in the advisory program, receiving enrichment support, and receiving supports as needed from the DCAP (see the Classroom Instruction section). The middle school has a daily 20-minute block in which students can “have extra time on things, work with teachers one-to-one; it’s academic time within the school day to work with teachers.” Similarly, the high school has a 77-minute directed study block. Lastly, teachers describe the high school’s new Academic Development Center as an invaluable resource for “students who are not on IEPs [individualized education programs] but might be struggling in a particular class or struggling with some of their own personal organization or for students who may be absent for extended periods of time.”

Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports focus on specific goals and needs and are part of a continuum of services. Across the district, Tier 2 supports involve small-group instruction and intervention. Instructional staff said that pull-out and push-in efforts facilitated these supports. One district leader stated that Tier 2 is not meant to be this very long-term kind of support,” noting that Tier 2 was meant to help students master specific skills. Regarding special education, the district offers three continuums of support for students with disabilities and students with Section 504 plans: the BASIS continuum supports students diagnosed with autism, whereas the Network and Pathway continuums support students with cognitive challenges and social-emotional disabilities. Students are taught in inclusive classrooms with the support of paraprofessionals and coteachers.

Interviews and a document review indicated that HPS uses student support team and student assistance team processes across all schools to systematically refer students to varying levels of support. The district’s DCAP states that the student assistance team “collaborates on a student’s

strengths and areas of skill development, discuss strategies, develop goals, and track and monitor progress.” The student assistance team process addresses students’ academic needs. School leaders said that instructors and interventionists were part of this process. In contrast, HPS’s student support team addresses students’ behavioral and social-emotional needs. A document review indicated that Holliston High School’s student support team included a student services administrator, a school psychologist, school counselors, and board-certified behavior analysts. Both teams brainstorm interventions to implement, and after six weeks of implementation regroup to monitor students’ progress and determine next steps. Although parents can refer their children to either process, parents are not actively included in the process, which is an area for growth in HPS. Progress monitoring takes place across grade levels. School leaders and instructional staff at the elementary level also reported using MCAS, the Benchmark Assessment System, Heggerty for Phonemic Awareness, and DIBELS for academic screening and progress monitoring (see Data and Assessment Systems).

Family, Student, and Community Engagement and Partnerships

Interviews and focus groups and a document review indicated that HPS recognizes the importance of engaging with families, students, and the broader HPS community. Instructional staff said that frequent school-parent communication, a district goal, took place via email, telephone, and ZOOM across the elementary-, middle-, and high-school levels. This process is exemplified by Adams Middle School’s improvement plan priority of communication, which states “We will continue to develop and expand upon our means of communication between administration/staff, staff/students, and staff/families by utilizing current digital platforms and other modes of communication that are equitable to ALL.” One elementary-school teacher said that she sent weekly newsletters in English and Portuguese to parents through the BrightArrow system. Staff said that information was available to families in multiple languages on the district’s website and identified the English as a second language coordinator as the point of contact for families whose first different language was not English. This coordinator also translates district documents that are sent to families into the necessary home languages so that all families can access the information.

Families have some opportunities to participate in planning and decision making. HPS’s parent-teacher organization and the town’s Music and Arts Parents’ Association are two volunteer organizations that support student enrichment programs. In addition, a document review indicated that one of HPS’s special education parent advisory council’s goals was collaborating “with the school community and school council to continually improve the educational opportunities available within our school that promote improved educational outcomes for children with disabilities.” The superintendent said that family engagement events were generally well received, although the district could improve its outreach.

HPS has established numerous community partnerships to support students’ social, emotional, and mental wellness. A review of the district’s website indicated that HPS had a mental health partnership with Wellesley Center for Women. Clinical psychologists visited the middle and high schools and facilitated the Mood Check social-emotional assessment, a depression prevention initiative. One district leader reported a new partnership with the Boston-based organization “And Still We Rise,” which was prompted by incidents of hate speech in HPS in fall 2021. The organization provides facilitated dialogue and professional development for “communities that have experienced

marginalization,” and teachers reported that students could participate in these conversations every week during lunch.

The district could benefit from conducting a comprehensive mapping of partners and resources and creating clear processes to find, establish, and manage community partnerships. A district leader said that most partnerships with local businesses were maintained by an individual staff member for the high-school internship program. The leader stated, “[there is] more we can be doing for community partnerships. But, you know, it wasn’t something that was a priority when all this pandemic was happening.”

Recommendations

- The district should continue to develop staff capacity to examine and dismantle implicit biases and systemic inequalities and create environments in which all students can deeply learn, grow, and thrive, including the work of the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee.
- The district should put practices into place to ensure that all students are provided with instruction and supports that meets their needs.
- The district should continue to involve parents and caregivers in planning and decision making.
- The district should conduct a comprehensive mapping of partnerships and create clear processes to find, establish, and manage community partnerships.

Appendix A. Summary of Site Visit Activities

The AIR team completed the following activities as part of the district review activities in HPS. The team conducted 61 classroom observations during the week of March 28, 2022, and held interviews and focus groups between March 28 and 31, 2022. The site visit team conducted interviews and focus groups with the following representatives from the school and the district:

- Superintendent
- Other district leaders
- Teachers' association representatives
- Principals
- Teachers
- Support specialists
- Families
- Students

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

- Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates
- Data on the district's staffing and finances
- Published educational reports on the district by DESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability
- 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

Appendix B. Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

Table B1. Holliston Public Schools: 2021-2022 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Group	District	Percentage of total	State	Percentage of total
All	2,809	100.0%	911,529	100.0%
African American	37	1.3%	84,970	9.3%
Asian	289	10.3%	65,813	7.2%
Hispanic	142	5.1%	210,747	23.1%
Native American	12	0.4%	2,060	0.2%
White	2,242	79.8%	507,992	55.7%
Native Hawaiian	8	0.3%	788	0.1%
Multirace, Non-Hispanic	79	2.8%	39,159	4.3%

Note. Data as of October 1, 2021.

Table B2. Holliston Public Schools: 2021-2022 Student Enrollment by High-Need Populations

Group	District			State		
	N	Percentage of high need	Percentage of district	N	Percentage of high need	Percentage of state
All students with high needs	783	100.0%	27.6%	512,242	100.0%	55.6%
Students with disabilities	469	59.9%	16.5%	174,505	34.1%	18.9%
Low-income households	324	41.4%	11.5%	399,140	77.9%	43.8%
ELs and former ELs	62	7.9%	2.2%	100,231	19.6%	11.0%

Note. Data as of October 1, 2021. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and students with high needs are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 2,842; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 920,971.

Table B3. Holliston Public Schools: Chronic Absence Rates^a by Student Group, 2018–2021

Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year change	State (2021)
All	6.3	7.3	9.0	5.5	-0.8	17.7
African American/Black	15.2	6.7	12.1	14.7	-0.5	24.1
Asian	9.1	11.3	12.5	3.8	-5.3	7.2
Hispanic/Latino	12.9	13.0	17.3	11.3	-1.6	29.0
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	13.0	14.9	8.5	6.3	-6.7	18.9
White	5.2	6.2	7.8	4.8	-0.4	13.2
High need	12.6	14.3	14.9	13.8	1.2	26.3
Economically disadvantaged	15.4	14.8	17.7	20.1	4.7	30.2
ELs	21.4	14.5	13.3	13.8	-7.6	29.0
Students with disabilities	12.1	14.9	15.6	13.9	1.8	26.8

^a The percentage of students absent 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school.

Table B4. Holliston Public Schools: Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years, 2019-2021

	2019		Fiscal year 2020		Fiscal year 2021	
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual
Expenditures						
From local appropriations for schools						
By school committee	\$33,632,813	\$33,927,745	\$34,947,263	\$35,833,893	\$35,139,715	\$35,232,340
By municipality	\$9,605,207	\$9,460,093	\$9,917,648	\$9,594,401	\$7,788,225	\$7,699,751
Total from local appropriations	\$43,238,020	\$43,387,838	\$44,864,911	\$45,428,294	\$42,927,940	\$42,932,091
From revolving funds and grants	—	\$6,959,057	—	\$6,302,683	—	\$5,826,252
Total expenditures	—	\$50,346,895	—	\$51,730,977	—	\$48,758,343
Chapter 70 aid to education program						
Chapter 70 state aid ^a	—	7,521,070	—	7,936,216	—	7,936,216
Required local contribution	—	19,393,070	—	20,267,619	—	21,202,129
Required net school spending ^b	—	26,914,140	—	28,203,835	—	29,138,345
Actual net school spending	—	35,971,647	—	37,755,625	—	37,551,537
Over/under required (\$)	—	9,057,507	—	9,551,790	—	8,413,192
Over/under required (%)	—	33.7%	—	33.9%	—	28.9%

Note. Data as of June 1, 2022, and sourced from fiscal year 2020 district end-of-year reports and Chapter 70 program information on DESE website.

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

Table B5. Holliston Public Schools: Expenditures Per In-District Pupil, Fiscal Years 2019-2021

Expenditure category	2019	2020	2021
Administration	\$415.56	\$498.88	\$470.57
Instructional leadership (district and school)	\$1,242.89	\$1,295.05	\$1,267.33
Teachers	\$6,049.05	\$6,177.49	\$6,560.37
Other teaching services	\$1,447.66	\$1,499.89	\$1,728.74
Professional development	\$80.74	\$79.49	\$82.49
Instructional materials, equipment, and technology	\$278.54	\$372.75	\$196.24
Guidance, counseling and testing services	\$588.40	\$620.57	\$602.86
Pupil services	\$996.86	\$957.24	\$1,179.08
Operations and maintenance	\$1,090.97	\$956.97	\$1,059.03
Insurance, retirement, and other fixed costs	\$1,373.54	\$1,409.28	\$1,511.93
Total expenditures per in-district pupil	\$13,561.20	\$13,831.63	\$14,658.64

Note. Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding. Data are from [per-pupil expenditure reports on DESE website](#).

Appendix C. Districtwide Instructional Observation Report



Holliston Public Schools

Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings

Districtwide Instructional Observation Report

March 2022



201 Jones Road
Waltham, Massachusetts
781-373-7000 | TTY 877.334.3499
www.air.org

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Introduction

The *Districtwide Instructional Observation Report* presents ratings for the classroom observations that were conducted by certified observers at American Institutes for Research (AIR) as part of the Massachusetts District Reviews.

Observers visited Holliston Public Schools during the week of March 28, 2022. The observers conducted 61 observations in a sample of classrooms across four schools. Observations were conducted in grades K-12 and focused primarily on literacy, English language arts, and mathematics instruction.

The classroom observations were guided by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. Three levels of CLASS Manuals were used: K-3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. The K-3 tool was used to observe grades K-3, the Upper Elementary tool was used to observe grades 4-5, and the Secondary tool was used to observe grades 6-12.

The K-3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 1).

Table 1. CLASS K-3 Domains and Dimensions

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive Climate ■ Negative Climate ■ Teacher Sensitivity ■ Regard for Student Perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Behavior Management ■ Productivity ■ Instructional Learning Formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concept Development ■ Quality of Feedback ■ Language Modeling

The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 2), in addition to Student Engagement.

Table 2. CLASS Upper Elementary and Secondary Domains and Dimensions

Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Positive Climate ■ Teacher Sensitivity ■ Regard for Student Perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Behavior Management ■ Productivity ■ Negative Climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Instructional Learning Formats ■ Content Understanding ■ Analysis and Inquiry ■ Quality of Feedback ■ Instructional Dialogue
Student Engagement		

When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. For example, a rating of 1 or 2 on Teacher Sensitivity indicates that, at the time of the visit, the teacher was not aware of students who needed extra support or attention, was

unresponsive to or dismissive of students, or was ineffective at addressing students' problems; as a result, students rarely sought support from the teacher or communicated openly with the teacher. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

Members of the observation team who visited the classrooms all received training on the CLASS protocol and then passed a rigorous certification exam for each CLASS protocol to ensure that they were able to accurately rate the dimensions. All observers must pass an exam annually to maintain their certification.

Research on CLASS protocol shows that students in classrooms that rated high using this observation tool have greater gains in social skills and academic success than students in classrooms with lower ratings (MET Project, 2010; CASTL, n.d.). Furthermore, small improvements on these domains can affect student outcomes: "The ability to demonstrate even small changes in effective interactions has practical implications—differences in just over 1 point on the CLASS 7-point scale translate into improved achievement and social skill development for students" (CASTL, n.d., p. 3).

In this report, each CLASS dimension is defined, and descriptions of the dimensions at the high (6 or 7), middle (3, 4, or 5), and low levels (1 or 2) are presented (*definitions and rating descriptions are derived from the CLASS K-3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary Manuals*). For each dimension we indicate the frequency of classroom observations across the ratings and provide a districtwide average of the observed classrooms. In cases where a dimension is included in more than one CLASS manual level, those results are combined on the dimension-specific pages. In the summary of ratings table following the dimension-specific pages the averages for every dimension are presented by grade band (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). For each dimension, we indicate the grade levels for which this dimension is included.

Positive Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12

Positive Climate reflects the emotional connection between the teacher and students and among students and the warmth, respect, and enjoyment communicated by verbal and nonverbal interactions (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 23, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 21, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 21). Table 3 (as well as tables for the remaining dimensions) includes the number of classrooms for each rating on each dimension and the district average for that dimension.

Table 3. Positive Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Positive Climate District Average*: 5.0

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	2	7	4	6	1	20	4.9
Grades 6-8	0	0	1	2	9	8	1	21	5.3
Grades 9-12	0	0	3	5	8	3	1	20	4.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 3, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 6] + [4 \times 14] + [5 \times 21] + [6 \times 17] + [7 \times 3]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 5.0$

Ratings in the Low Range. All indicators are absent or only minimally present. Teachers and students do not appear to share a warm, supportive relationship. Interpersonal connections are not evident or only minimally evident. Affect in the classroom is flat, and there are rarely instances of teachers and students smiling, sharing humor, or laughing together. There are no, or very few, positive communications among the teacher and students; the teacher does not communicate encouragement. There is no evidence that students and the teacher respect one another or that the teacher encourages students to respect one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some indications that the teacher and students share a warm and supportive relationship, but some students may be excluded from this relationship, either by the teacher or the students. Some relationships appear constrained—for example, the teacher expresses a perfunctory interest in students, or encouragement seems to be an automatic statement and is not sincere. Sometimes, teachers and students demonstrate respect for one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There are many indications that the relationship among students and the teacher is positive and warm. The teacher is typically in close proximity to students, and encouragement is sincere and personal. There are frequent displays of shared laughter, smiles, and enthusiasm. Teachers and students show respect for one another (e.g., listening, using calm voices, using polite language). Positive communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and mutual respect are evident throughout the session.

Teacher Sensitivity

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12

Teacher Sensitivity encompasses the teacher’s awareness of and responsiveness to students’ academic and emotional needs. High levels of sensitivity facilitate students’ abilities to actively explore and learn because the teacher consistently provides comfort, reassurance, and encouragement (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 32, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 27, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 27).

Table 4. Teacher Sensitivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Teacher Sensitivity District Average*: 5.2

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	3	3	6	8	0	20	5.0
Grades 6-8	0	0	1	0	6	7	7	21	5.9
Grades 9-12	0	0	1	8	7	4	0	20	4.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 4, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 5] + [4 \times 11] + [5 \times 19] + [6 \times 19] + [7 \times 7]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 5.2$

Ratings in the Low Range. In these sessions, the teacher has not been aware of students who need extra support and pays little attention to students’ needs. As a result, students are frustrated, confused, and disengaged. The teacher is unresponsive to and dismissive of students and may ignore students, squash their enthusiasm, and not allow them to share their moods or feelings. The teacher is not effective in addressing students’ needs and does not appropriately acknowledge situations that may be upsetting to students. Students rarely seek support from the teacher and minimize conversations with the teacher, not sharing ideas or responding to questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher is sometimes aware of student needs or aware of only a limited type of student needs, such as academic needs, not social-emotional needs. Or the teacher may be aware of some students and not of other students. The teacher does not always realize a student is confused and needs extra help or when a student already knows the material being taught. The teacher may be responsive at times to students but at other times may ignore or dismiss students. The teacher may respond only to students who are upbeat and positive and not support students who are upset. Sometimes, the teacher is effective in addressing students’ concerns or problems, but not always.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher’s awareness of students and their needs is consistent and accurate. The teacher may predict how difficult a new task is for a student and acknowledge this difficulty. The teacher is responsive to students’ comments and behaviors, whether positive or negative. The teacher consistently addresses students’ problems and concerns and is effective in doing so. Students are obviously comfortable with the teacher and share ideas, work comfortably together, and ask and respond to questions, even difficult questions.

Regard for Student Perspectives

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–12

Regard for Student Perspectives captures the degree to which the teacher’s interactions with students and classroom activities place an emphasis on students’ interests, motivations, and points of view and encourage student responsibility and autonomy (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 38, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 35, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 35).

Table 5. Regard for Student Perspectives: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Regard for Student Perspectives District Average*: 3.6

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	6	5	4	4	1	0	20	3.5
Grades 6-8	0	2	9	5	4	1	0	21	3.7
Grades 9-12	1	2	9	1	5	2	0	20	3.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 5, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 1] + [2 \times 10] + [3 \times 23] + [4 \times 10] + [5 \times 13] + [6 \times 4]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 3.6$

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher exhibits an inflexible, rigid adherence to his or her plan, without considering student ideas or allowing students to make contributions. The teacher inhibits student enthusiasm by imposing guidelines or making remarks that inhibit student expression. The teacher may rigidly adhere to a lesson plan and not respond to student interests. The teacher does not allow students any autonomy on how they conduct an activity, may control materials tightly, and may offer few opportunities for students to help out with classroom responsibilities. There are few opportunities for students to talk and express themselves.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher exhibits control at times and at other times follows the students’ lead and gives them some choices and opportunities to follow their interests. There are some opportunities for students to exercise autonomy, but student choice is limited. The teacher may assign students responsibility in the classroom, but in a limited way. At times, the teacher dominates the discussion, but at other times the teacher allows students to share ideas, although only at a minimal level or for a short period of time.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher is flexible in following student leads, interests, and ideas and looks for ways to meaningfully engage students. Although the teacher has a lesson plan, students’ ideas are incorporated into the lesson plan. The teacher consistently supports student autonomy and provides meaningful leadership opportunities. Students have frequent opportunities to talk, share ideas, and work together. Students have appropriate freedom of movement during activities.

Negative Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K–3

Classroom Organization domain, Grades 4–12

Negative Climate reflects the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. The frequency, quality, and intensity of teacher and student negativity are key to this dimension (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 28, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 55, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 55). For the purposes of this report, we have inversed the observers scores, to be consistent with the range scores across all dimensions. Therefore, a high range score in this dimension indicates an absence of negative climate, and a low range score indicates the presence of negative climate.¹

Table 6. Negative Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Negative Climate District Average*: 6.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	20	7.0
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	21	6.6
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	7.0

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 6, the district average is computed as: $([6 \times 2] + [7 \times 58]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 6.9$

Ratings in the Low Range. Negativity is pervasive. The teacher may express constant irritation, annoyance, or anger; unduly criticize students; or consistently use a harsh tone and/or take a harsh stance as he or she interacts with students. Threats or yelling are frequently used to establish control. Language is disrespectful and sarcastic. Severe negativity, such as the following actions, would lead to a high rating on negative climate, even if the action is not extended: students bullying one another, a teacher hitting a student, or students physically fighting with one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some expressions of mild negativity by the teacher or students. The teacher may express irritability, use a harsh tone, and/or express annoyance—usually during difficult moments in the classroom. Threats or yelling may be used to establish control over the classroom, but not constantly; they are used more as a response to situations. At times, the teacher and students may be sarcastic or disrespectful toward one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There is no display of negativity: No strong expressions of anger or aggression are exhibited, either by the teacher or students; if there is such a display, it is contained and does not escalate. The teacher does not issue threats or yell to establish control. The teacher and students are respectful and do not express sarcasm.

¹ When observers rate this dimension it is scored so that a low rating (indicating little or no evidence of a negative climate) is better than a high rating (indicating abundant evidence of a negative climate). To be consistent across all ratings, for the purposes of this report we have inversed this scoring.

Behavior Management

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12

Behavior Management refers to the teacher’s ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 45, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 41, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 41).

Table 7. Behavior Management: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Behavior Management District Average*: 6.6

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	0	2	2	8	8	20	6.1
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	1	5	15	21	6.7
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	20	7.0

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 7, the district average is computed as: $([4 \times 2] + [5 \times 3] + [6 \times 14] + [7 \times 42]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 6.6$

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the classroom is chaotic. There are no rules and expectations, or they are not enforced consistently. The teacher does not monitor the classroom effectively and only reacts to student disruption, which is frequent. There are frequent instances of misbehavior in the classroom, and the teacher’s attempts to redirect misbehavior are ineffective. The teacher does not use cues, such as eye contact, slight touches, gestures, or physical proximity, to respond to and redirect negative behavior.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Although rules and expectations may be stated, they are not consistently enforced, or the rules may be unclear. Sometimes, the teacher proactively anticipates and prevents misbehavior, but at other times the teacher ignores behavior problems until it is too late. Misbehavior may escalate because redirection is not always effective. Episodes of misbehavior are periodic.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the rules and guidelines for behavior are clear, and they are consistently reinforced by the teacher. The teacher monitors the classroom and prevents problems from developing, using subtle cues to redirect behavior and address situations before they escalate. The teacher focuses on positive behavior and consistently affirms students’ desirable behaviors. The teacher effectively uses cues to redirect behavior. There are no, or very few, instances of student misbehavior or disruptions.

Productivity

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–12

Productivity considers how well the teacher manages instructional time and routines and provides activities for students so that they have the opportunity to be involved in learning activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 51, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 49, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 49).

Table 8. Productivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Productivity District Average*: 6.4

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	0	0	5	7	8	20	6.2
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	0	2	5	14	21	6.6
Grades 9-12	0	0	0	0	2	5	13	20	6.6

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 8, the district average is computed as: $([5 \times 9] + [6 \times 17] + [7 \times 35]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 6.4$

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low level, the teacher provides few activities for students. Much time is spent on managerial tasks (such as distributing papers) and/or on behavior management. Frequently during the observation, students have little to do and spend time waiting. The routines of the classroom are not clear and, as a result, students waste time, are not engaged, and are confused. Transitions take a long time and/or are too frequent. The teacher does not have activities organized and ready and seems to be caught up in last-minute preparations.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher does provide activities for students but loses learning time to disruptions or management tasks. There are certain times when the teacher provides clear activities to students, but there are other times when students wait and lose focus. Some students (or all students, at some point) do not know what is expected of them. Some of the transitions may take too long, or classrooms may be productive during certain periods but then not productive during transitions. Although the teacher is mostly prepared for the class, last-minute preparations may still infringe on learning time.

Ratings in the High Range. The classroom runs very smoothly. The teacher provides a steady flow of activities for students, so students do not have downtime and are not confused about what to do next. The routines of the classroom are efficient, and all students know how to move from one activity to another and where materials are. Students understand the teacher's instructions and directions. Transitions are quick, and there are not too many of them. The teacher is fully prepared for the lesson.

Instructional Learning Formats

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K–3

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4–12

Instructional Learning Formats refer to the ways in which the teacher maximizes students' interest, engagement, and abilities to learn from the lesson and activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 57; *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 63, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 61).

Table 9. Instructional Learning Formats: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Learning Formats District Average*: 4.9

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	0	0	1	2	11	6	0	20	5.1
Grades 6-8	0	0	2	3	9	6	1	21	5.0
Grades 9-12	0	0	5	5	6	4	0	20	4.5

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 9, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 8] + [4 \times 10] + [5 \times 26] + [6 \times 16] + [7 \times 1]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 4.9$

Ratings in the Low Range. The teacher exerts little effort in facilitating engagement in the lesson. Learning activities may be limited and seem to be at the rote level, with little teacher involvement. The teacher relies on one learning modality (e.g., listening) and does not use other modalities (e.g., movement, visual displays) to convey information and enhance learning. Or the teacher may be ineffective in using other modalities, not choosing the right props for the students or the classroom conditions. Students are uninterested and uninvolved in the lesson. The teacher does not attempt to guide students toward learning objectives and does not help them focus on the lesson by providing appropriate tools and asking effective questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher sometimes facilitates engagement in the lesson but at other times does not, or the teacher facilitates engagement for some students and not for other students. The teacher may not allow students enough time to explore or answer questions. Sometimes, the teacher uses a variety of modalities to help students reach a learning objective, but at other times the teacher does not. Student engagement is inconsistent, or some students are engaged and other students are not. At times, students are aware of the learning objective and at other times they are not. The teacher may sometimes use strategies to help students organize information but at other times does not.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher has multiple strategies and tools to facilitate engagement and learning and encourage participation. The teacher may move around, talk and play with students, ask open-ended questions of students, and allow students to explore. A variety of tools and props are used, including movement and visual/auditory resources. Students are consistently interested and engaged in the activities and lessons. The teacher focuses students on the learning objectives, which students understand. The teacher uses advanced organizers to prepare students for an activity, as well as reorientation strategies that help students regain focus.

Concept Development

Instructional Support domain, Grades K–3

Concept Development refers to the teacher’s use of instructional discussions and activities to promote students’ higher order thinking skills and cognition and the teacher’s focus on understanding rather than on rote instruction (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 64).

Table 10. Concept Development: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Concept Development District Average*: 3.2

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-3**	2	1	5	3	2	0	0	13	3.2

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 10, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 2] + [2 \times 1] + [3 \times 5] + [4 \times 3] + [5 \times 2]) \div 13 \text{ observations} = 3.2$

**Concept Development does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher does not attempt to develop students’ understanding of ideas and concepts, focusing instead on basic facts and skills. Discussion and activities do not encourage students to analyze and reason. There are few, if any, opportunities for students to create or generate ideas and products. The teacher does not link concepts to one another and does not ask students to make connections with previous content or their actual lives. The activities and the discussion are removed from students’ lives and from their prior knowledge.

Ratings in the Middle Range. To some extent, the teacher uses discussions and activities to encourage students to analyze and reason and focuses somewhat on understanding of ideas. The activities and discussions are not fully developed, however, and there is still instructional time that focuses on facts and basic skills. Students may be provided some opportunities for creating and generating ideas, but the opportunities are occasional and not planned out. Although some concepts may be linked and also related to students’ previous learning, such efforts are brief. The teacher makes some effort to relate concepts to students’ lives but does not elaborate enough to make the relationship meaningful to students.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the teacher frequently guides students to analyze and reason during discussions and activities. Most of the questions are open ended and encourage students to think about connections and implications. Teachers use problem solving, experimentation, and prediction; comparison and classification; and evaluation and summarizing to promote analysis and reasoning. The teacher provides students with opportunities to be creative and generate ideas. The teacher consistently links concepts to one another and to previous learning and relates concepts to students’ lives.

Content Understanding

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Content Understanding refers to the depth of lesson content and the approaches used to help students comprehend the framework, key ideas, and procedures in an academic discipline. At a high level, this dimension refers to interactions among the teacher and students that lead to an integrated understanding of facts, skills, concepts, and principles (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 70, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 68).

Table 11. Content Understanding: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Content Understanding District Average*: 4.3

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades 4-5**	0	0	3	1	3	0	0	7	4.0
Grades 6-8	0	3	4	3	5	4	2	21	4.4
Grades 9-12	0	3	3	4	6	2	2	20	4.4

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 11, the district average is computed as: $([2 \times 6] + [3 \times 10] + [4 \times 8] + [5 \times 14] + [6 \times 6] + [7 \times 4]) \div 48 \text{ observations} = 4.3$

**Content Understanding does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the focus of the class is primarily on presenting discrete pieces of topically related information, absent broad, organizing ideas. The discussion and materials fail to effectively communicate the essential attributes of the concepts and procedures to students. The teacher makes little effort to elicit or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions or to integrate previously learned material when presenting new information.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students' background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned materials; however, these moments are limited in depth or inconsistent.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the focus of the class is on encouraging deep understanding of content through the provision of meaningful, interactive discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. Class discussion and materials consistently communicate the essential attributes of concepts and procedures to students. New concepts and procedures and broad ideas are consistently linked to students' prior knowledge in ways that advance their understanding and clarify misconceptions.

Analysis and Inquiry

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4 – 12

Analysis and Inquiry assesses the degree to which students are engaged in higher level thinking skills through their application of knowledge and skills to novel and/or open-ended problems, tasks, and questions. Opportunities for engaging in metacognition (thinking about thinking) also are included (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 81, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 76).

Table 12. Analysis and Inquiry: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Analysis and Inquiry District Average*: 3.5

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades 4-5**	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	7	2.9
Grades 6-8	0	4	8	3	4	2	0	21	3.6
Grades 9-12	1	3	5	6	3	1	1	20	3.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 12, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 2] + [2 \times 9] + [3 \times 15] + [4 \times 10] + [5 \times 8] + [6 \times 3] + [7 \times 1]) \div 48 \text{ observations} = 3.5$

**Analysis and Inquiry does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, students do not engage in higher order thinking skills. Instruction is presented in a rote manner, and there are no opportunities for students to engage in novel or open-ended tasks. Students are not challenged to apply previous knowledge and skills to a new problem, nor are they encouraged to think about, evaluate, or reflect on their own learning. Students do not have opportunities to plan their own learning experiences.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Students occasionally engage in higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry, but the episodes are brief or limited in depth. The teacher provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills within familiar contexts and offers guidance to students but does not provide opportunities for analysis and problem solving within novel contexts and/or without teacher support. Students have occasional opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning; these opportunities, however, are brief and limited in depth.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, students consistently engage in extended opportunities to use higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry. The teacher provides opportunities for students to independently solve or reason through novel and open-ended tasks that require students to select, utilize, and apply existing knowledge and skills. Students have multiple opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning.

Quality of Feedback

Instructional Support domain, Grades K–12

Quality of Feedback refers to the degree to which the teacher provides feedback that expands learning and understanding and encourages continued participation in the learning activity (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 72). In the upper elementary and secondary classrooms, significant feedback also may be provided by peers (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 89, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 93). Regardless of the source, the focus of the feedback motivates learning.

Table 13. Quality of Feedback: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Quality of Feedback District Average*: 3.5

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-5	1	5	4	5	2	3	0	20	3.6
Grades 6-8	1	7	5	3	4	1	0	21	3.2
Grades 9-12	0	6	3	5	3	3	0	20	3.7

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 13, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 2] + [2 \times 18] + [3 \times 12] + [4 \times 13] + [5 \times 9] + [6 \times 7]) \div 61 \text{ observations} = 3.5$

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher dismisses incorrect responses or misperceptions and rarely scaffolds student learning. The teacher is more interested in students providing the correct answer than understanding. Feedback is perfunctory. The teacher may not provide opportunities to learn whether students understand or are interested. The teacher rarely questions students or asks them to explain their thinking and reasons for their responses. The teacher does not or rarely provides information that might expand student understanding and rarely offers encouragement that increases student effort and persistence.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, the teacher sometimes scaffolds students, but this is not consistent. On occasion, the teacher facilitates feedback loops so that students may elaborate and expand on their thinking, but these moments are not sustained long enough to accomplish a learning objective. Sometimes, the teacher asks students about or prompts them to explain their thinking and provides information to help students understand, but sometimes the feedback is perfunctory. At times, the teacher encourages student efforts and persistence.

Ratings in the High Range. In this range, the teacher frequently scaffolds students who are having difficulty, providing hints or assistance as needed. The teacher engages students in feedback loops to help them understand ideas or reach the right response. The teacher often questions students, encourages them to explain their thinking, and provides additional information that may help students understand. The teacher regularly encourages students' efforts and persistence.

Language Modeling

Instructional Support domain, Grades K–3

Language Modeling refers to the quality and amount of the teacher’s use of language stimulation and language facilitation techniques (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 79).

Table 14. Language Modeling: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Language Modeling District Average*: 2.8

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades K-3**	1	6	2	3	1	0	0	13	2.8

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 14, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 1] + [2 \times 6] + [3 \times 2] + [4 \times 3] + [5 \times 1]) \div 13 \text{ observations} = 2.8$

**Language Modeling does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, there are few conversations in the classroom, particularly between the students and the teacher. The teacher responds to students’ initiating talk with only a few words, limits students’ use of language (in responding to questions) and asks questions that mainly elicit closed-ended responses. The teacher does not or rarely extends students’ responses or repeats them for clarification. The teacher does not engage in self-talk or parallel talk—explaining what he or she or the students are doing. The teacher does not use new words or advanced language with students. The language used has little variety.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In this range, the teacher talks with students and shows some interest in students, but the conversations are limited and not prolonged. Usually, the teacher directs the conversations, although the conversations may focus on topics of interest to students. More often, there is a basic exchange of information but limited conversation. The teacher asks a mix of closed- and open-ended questions, although the closed-ended questions may require only short responses. Sometimes, the teacher extends students’ responses or repeats what students say. Sometimes, the teacher maps his or her own actions and the students’ actions through language and description. The teacher sometimes uses advanced language with students.

Ratings in the High Range. There are frequent conversations in the classroom, particularly between students and the teacher, and these conversations promote language use. Students are encouraged to converse and feel they are valued conversational partners. The teacher asks many open-ended questions that require students to communicate more complex ideas. The teacher often extends or repeats student responses. Frequently, the teacher maps his or her actions and student actions descriptively and uses advanced language with students.

Instructional Dialogue

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4–12

Instructional Dialogue captures the purposeful use of content-focused discussion among teachers and students that is cumulative, with the teacher supporting students to chain ideas together in ways that lead to deeper understanding of content. Students take an active role in these dialogues, and both the teacher and students use strategies that facilitate extended dialogue (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 97, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 101).

Table 15. Instructional Dialogue: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Dialogue District Average*: 3.6

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades 4-5**	3	0	1	1	2	0	0	7	2.9
Grades 6-8	0	6	5	3	5	2	0	21	3.6
Grades 9-12	3	2	6	0	6	1	2	20	3.8

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 15, the district average is computed as: $([1 \times 6] + [2 \times 8] + [3 \times 12] + [4 \times 4] + [5 \times 13] + [6 \times 3] + [7 \times 2]) \div 48 \text{ observations} = 3.6$

**Instructional Dialogue does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, there are no or few discussions in the class, the discussions are not related to content or skill development, or the discussions contain only simple question-response exchanges between the teacher and students. The class is dominated by teacher talk, and discussion is limited. The teacher and students ask closed-ended questions; rarely acknowledge, report, or extend other students' comments; and/or appear disinterested in other students' comments, resulting in many students not being engaged in instructional dialogues.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At this range, there are occasional content-based discussions in class among teachers and students; however, these exchanges are brief or quickly move from one topic to another without follow-up questions or comments from the teacher and other students. The class is mostly dominated by teacher talk, although there are times when students take a more active role, or there are distributed dialogues that involve only a few students in the class. The teacher and students sometimes facilitate and encourage more elaborate dialogue, but such efforts are brief, inconsistent, or ineffective at consistently engaging students in extended dialogues.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, there are frequent, content-driven discussions in the class between teachers and students or among students. The discussions build depth of knowledge through cumulative, contingent exchanges. The class dialogues are distributed in a way that the teacher and the majority of students take an active role or students are actively engaged in instructional dialogues with each other. The teacher and students frequently use strategies that encourage more elaborate dialogue, such as open-ended questions, repetition or extension, and active listening. Students respond to these techniques by fully participating in extended dialogues.

Student Engagement

Student Engagement domain, Grades 4–12

Student Engagement refers to the extent to which all students in the class are focused and participating in the learning activity that is presented or facilitated by the teacher. The difference between passive engagement and active engagement is reflected in this rating (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 105).

Table 16. Student Engagement: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Student Engagement District Average*: 5.0

Grade Band	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Grades 4-5**	0	0	0	1	5	1	0	7	5.0
Grades 6-8	0	0	0	2	9	9	1	21	5.4
Grades 9-12	0	0	6	3	6	4	1	20	4.6

*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 16, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 6] + [4 \times 6] + [5 \times 20] + [6 \times 14] + [7 \times 2]) \div 48 \text{ observations} = 5.0$

**Student Engagement does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, the majority of students appear distracted or disengaged.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, students are passively engaged, listening to or watching the teacher; student engagement is mixed, with the majority of students actively engaged for part of the time and disengaged for the rest of the time; or there is a mix of student engagement, with some students actively engaged and some students disengaged.

Ratings in the High Range. In the high range, most students are actively engaged in the classroom discussions and activities.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades K–5

Table 17. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades K–5

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	0	6	10	14	14	16	20	80	5.1
Positive Climate	0	0	2	7	4	6	1	20	4.9
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	20	7.0
Teacher Sensitivity	0	0	3	3	6	8	0	20	5.0
Regard for Student Perspectives	0	6	5	4	4	1	0	20	3.5
Classroom Organization Domain	0	0	1	4	18	21	16	60	5.8
Behavior Management	0	0	0	2	2	8	8	20	6.1
Productivity	0	0	0	0	5	7	8	20	6.2
Instructional Learning Formats***	0	0	1	2	11	6	0	20	5.1
Instructional Support Domain	8	14	17	14	11	3	0	67	3.2
Concept Development (K-3 only)	2	1	5	3	2	0	0	13	3.2
Content Understanding (UE only)	0	0	3	1	3	0	0	7	4.0
Analysis and Inquiry (UE only)	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	7	2.9
Quality of Feedback	1	5	4	5	2	3	0	20	3.6
Language Modeling (K-3 only)	1	6	2	3	1	0	0	13	2.8
Instructional Dialogue (UE only)	3	0	1	1	2	0	0	7	2.9
Student Engagement (UE only)	0	0	0	1	5	1	0	7	5.0

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 2] + [4 \times 7] + [5 \times 4] + [6 \times 6] + [7 \times 1]) \div 20 \text{ observations} = 4.9$

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: $([6 \times 1] + [7 \times 19]) \div 20 \text{ observations} = 7.0$. In addition, Negative Climate appears in the Classroom Organization Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

***Instructional Learning Formats appears in the Instructional Support Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 6–8

Table 18. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 6–8

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	0	2	11	7	19	16	8	63	5.0
Positive Climate	0	0	1	2	9	8	1	21	5.3
Teacher Sensitivity	0	0	1	0	6	7	7	21	5.9
Regard for Student Perspectives	0	2	9	5	4	1	0	21	3.7
Classroom Organization Domain	0	0	0	0	3	11	48	63	6.6
Behavior Management	0	0	0	0	1	5	15	21	6.7
Productivity	0	0	0	0	2	5	14	21	6.6
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	21	6.6
Instructional Support Domain	1	20	24	15	27	15	3	105	4.0
Instructional Learning Formats	0	0	2	3	9	6	1	21	5.0
Content Understanding	0	3	4	3	5	4	2	21	4.4
Analysis and Inquiry	0	4	8	3	4	2	0	21	3.6
Quality of Feedback	1	7	5	3	4	1	0	21	3.2
Instructional Dialogue	0	6	5	3	5	2	0	21	3.6
Student Engagement	0	0	0	2	9	9	1	21	5.4

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 1] + [4 \times 2] + [5 \times 9] + [6 \times 8] + [7 \times 1]) \div 21 \text{ observations} = 5.3$

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: $([6 \times 1] + [7 \times 19]) \div 21 \text{ observations} = 6.6$

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 9–12

Table 19. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 9–12

	Low Range		Middle Range			High Range		n	Average Scores*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Emotional Support Domain	1	2	13	14	20	9	1	60	4.4
Positive Climate	0	0	3	5	8	3	1	20	4.7
Teacher Sensitivity	0	0	1	8	7	4	0	20	4.7
Regard for Student Perspectives	1	2	9	1	5	2	0	20	3.7
Classroom Organization Domain	0	0	0	0	2	6	52	60	6.8
Behavior Management	0	0	0	0	0	1	19	20	7.0
Productivity	0	0	0	0	2	5	13	20	6.6
Negative Climate**	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	20	7.0
Instructional Support Domain	4	14	22	20	24	11	5	100	4.0
Instructional Learning Formats	0	0	5	5	6	4	0	20	4.5
Content Understanding	0	3	3	4	6	2	2	20	4.4
Analysis and Inquiry	1	3	5	6	3	1	1	20	3.7
Quality of Feedback	0	6	3	5	3	3	0	20	3.7
Instructional Dialogue	3	2	6	0	6	1	2	20	3.8
Student Engagement	0	0	6	3	6	4	1	20	4.6

*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: $([3 \times 3] + [4 \times 5] + [5 \times 8] + [6 \times 3] + [7 \times 1]) \div 20 \text{ observations} = 4.7$

**Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: $([7 \times 20]) \div 20 \text{ observations} = 7.0$

References

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Appendix D. Resources to Support Implementation of DESE’s District Standards and Indicators

Table D1. Resources to Support Curriculum and Instruction

Resource and Link	Description
Quick Reference Guide: The Case for Curricular Coherence	This guide describes three types of curricular coherence that support student learning: vertical coherence, aligned tiers of instruction, and cross-subject coherence.
CURATE	CURATE convenes panels of Massachusetts teachers to review and rate evidence on the quality and alignment of specific curricular materials, then publish their findings for educators across the Commonwealth to consult.

Table D2. Resources to Support Assessment

Resource and Link	Description
DESE’s District Data Team Toolkit	A set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a district data team.

Table D3. Resources to Support Student Support

Resource and Link	Description
https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/mtss/	A multitiered system of support is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that all students receive a high-quality educational experience.

Appendix E. Student Performance Tables

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the 2020-2021 school year. Data reported in this appendix may have been affected by the pandemic. Please keep this in mind when reviewing the data and take particular care when comparing data across multiple school years.

Table E1. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Scaled Scores in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
All	1,334	507.1	505.8	505.0	-2.1	496.5	8.5
African American/Black	12	495.3	490.6	481.3	-14.0	486.4	-5.1
Asian	126	512.9	512.6	514.4	1.5	508.5	5.9
Hispanic/Latino	80	493.4	493.6	496.2	2.8	484.3	11.9
Multirace	52	506.8	507.0	506.2	-0.6	499.7	6.5
White	1,059	507.6	506.3	504.8	-2.8	501.3	3.5
High need	398	492.6	491.4	491.1	-1.5	485.9	5.2
Economically disadvantaged	144	494.1	493.5	492.5	-1.6	485.2	7.3
ELs and former ELs	89	493.1	492.3	494.4	1.3	482.8	11.6
Students with disabilities	257	487.6	486.2	485.3	-2.3	478.1	7.2

Note. Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440-469 Not Meeting Expectations; 470-499 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500-529 Meeting Expectations; 530-560 Exceeding Expectations.

Table E2. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Scaled Scores in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
All	1,334	504.3	505.2	500.5	-3.8	489.7	10.8
African American/Black	12	490.1	491.9	473.8	-16.3	477.3	-3.5
Asian	126	517.2	518.2	520.5	3.3	508.6	11.9
Hispanic/Latino	80	488.5	490.8	489.9	1.4	476.5	13.4
Multirace	52	502.7	502.8	497.6	-5.1	492.1	5.5
White	1,059	504.4	505.3	499.3	-5.1	494.3	5.0
High need	398	490.0	490.5	488.1	-1.9	479.0	9.1
Economically disadvantaged	143	490.3	493.4	487.9	-2.4	477.4	10.5
ELs and former ELs	89	494.9	492.7	494.5	-0.4	477.8	16.7

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
Students with disabilities	257	484.6	485.2	481.6	-3.0	472.5	9.1

Note. Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440-469 Not Meeting Expectations; 470-499 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500-529 Meeting Expectations; 530-560 Exceeding Expectations.

Table E3. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
All	1,334	63%	62%	61%	-2%	46%	15%
African American/Black	12	50%	44%	25%	-25%	28%	-3%
Asian	126	73%	75%	79%	6%	66%	13%
Hispanic/Latino	80	33%	34%	41%	8%	26%	15%
Multirace	52	58%	60%	63%	5%	51%	12%
White	1,059	64%	64%	61%	-3%	54%	7%
High need	398	31%	31%	31%	0%	28%	3%
Economically disadvantaged	144	42%	39%	32%	-10%	27%	5%
ELs and former ELs	89	37%	33%	39%	2%	24%	15%
Students with disabilities	257	19%	20%	21%	2%	16%	5%

Table E4. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
All	1,334	60%	60%	51%	-9%	33%	18%
African American/Black	12	38%	50%	17%	-21%	14%	3%
Asian	126	78%	82%	83%	5%	64%	19%
Hispanic/Latino	80	26%	28%	30%	4%	14%	16%
Multirace	52	61%	54%	50%	-11%	37%	13%
White	1,059	61%	60%	49%	-12%	40%	9%
High need	398	30%	31%	27%	-3%	16%	11%
Economically disadvantaged	143	35%	40%	29%	-6%	14%	15%
ELs and former ELs	89	44%	37%	39%	-5%	17%	22%

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
Students with disabilities	257	19%	22%	17%	-2%	10%	7%

Table E5. Holliston Public Schools: Next Generation MCAS ELA and Mathematics Scaled Scores in Grade 10, 2021

Group	ELA				Mathematics			
	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/below	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/below
All	192	521.9	507.3	14.6	192	518.0	500.6	17.4
African American/Black	3	—	494.6	—	3	—	486.7	—
Asian	17	519.7	518.2	1.5	16	523.8	520.9	2.9
Hispanic/Latino	14	520.0	491.9	28.1	14	506.6	485.3	21.3
Multirace	6	—	510.6	—	6	—	503.9	—
White	150	522.6	512.5	10.1	151	518.9	504.9	14.0
High need	35	506.2	493.3	12.9	36	497.5	486.5	11.0
Economically disadvantaged	11	506.1	493.7	12.4	12	501.3	486.6	14.7
ELs and former ELs	5	—	477.9	—	5	—	477.6	—
Students with disabilities	27	504.8	487.2	17.6	28	493.0	479.6	13.4

Table E6. Holliston Public Schools: Next Generation MCAS ELA and Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021

Group	ELA				Mathematics			
	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/below	N (2021)	2021	State	Above/below
All	192	89%	64%	25%	192	85%	52%	33%
African American/Black	3	—	41%	—	3	—	27%	—
Asian	17	88%	80%	8%	16	94%	80%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	14	79%	39%	40%	14	64%	26%	38%
Multirace	6	—	67%	—	6	—	55%	—
White	150	89%	73%	16%	151	87%	60%	27%
High need	35	69%	39%	30%	36	47%	26%	21%
Economically disadvantaged	11	73%	41%	32%	12	58%	27%	31%
ELs and former ELs	5	—	19%	—	5	—	15%	—
Students with disabilities	27	63%	25%	38%	28	39%	14%	25%

Table E7. Holliston Public Schools: Next Generation MCAS Science Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5 and 8, 2019–2021

Group	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)	Above/below
All	419	65%	57%	42%	15%
African American/Black	4	—	25%	19%	6%
Asian	32	78%	75%	62%	13%
Hispanic/Latino	23	31%	43%	20%	23%
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	14	58%	64%	47%	17%
White	344	67%	56%	50%	6%
High need	116	35%	32%	23%	9%
Economically disadvantaged	43	46%	37%	21%	16%
ELs and former ELs	20	33%	15%	18%	-3%
Students with disabilities	80	28%	25%	15%	10%

Note. Grade 10 results for the spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about Competency Determination requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

Table E8. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-10, 2018-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
3	208	59%	65%	73%	14%	51%	22%
4	220	56%	59%	58%	2%	49%	9%
5	230	58%	55%	58%	0%	47%	11%
6	225	65%	65%	67%	2%	47%	20%
7	224	67%	61%	61%	-6%	43%	18%
8	227	73%	71%	52%	-21%	41%	11%
3-8	1,334	63%	62%	61%	-2%	46%	15%
10	192	—	73%	89%	—	64%	25%

Table E9. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-10, 2018-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2018	2019	2021	Change	State (2021)	Above/below
3	209	54%	53%	51%	-3%	33%	18%
4	221	36%	40%	39%	3%	33%	6%
5	228	52%	62%	65%	13%	33%	32%
6	226	69%	61%	60%	-9%	33%	27%
7	224	76%	69%	52%	-24%	35%	17%
8	226	73%	72%	38%	-35%	32%	6%
3-8	1,334	60%	60%	51%	-9%	33%	18%
10	192	—	82%	85%	—	52%	33%

Table E10. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5 and 8, 2019-2021

Grade	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	Change	State (2021)
5	230	62%	—	60%	—	42%
8	189	67%	—	52%	—	41%
5 and 8	419	65%	—	57%	—	42%
10	—	—	—	—	—	—

Note. Grade 10 results for the spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about Competency Determination requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>. In 2019, 10th graders took the Legacy MCAS science test.

Table E11. Holliston Public Schools: ELA and Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile in Grades 3-10, 2019-2021

Grade	ELA				Mathematics			
	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)	N (2021)	2019	2021	State (2021)
3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	—	46.9	—	—	—	34.1	—	—
5	218	40.5	36.8	34.9	217	67.6	55.0	31.9
6	212	51.8	57.8	37.3	213	55.4	56.8	26.3
7	210	47.6	46.4	36.1	208	54.8	49.5	35.8
8	218	40.7	37.4	34.8	218	41.8	30.0	27.4
3–8	858	45.6	44.5	35.8	856	50.9	47.7	30.4
10	184	45.9	62.3	52.5	182	58.8	49.0	36.5

Table E12. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Miller	74%	58%	59%	—	—	—	63%	—
Placentino	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	—	—	—	68%	62%	52%	60%	—
Holliston High	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	89%
District	73%	58%	58%	67%	61%	52%	61%	89%
State	51%	49%	47%	47%	43%	41%	46%	64%

Table E13. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021

School	3	4	5	6	7	8	3-8	10
Miller	51%	39%	66%	—	—	—	52%	—
Placentino	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	—	—	—	61%	52%	38%	50%	—
Holliston High	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	86%
District	51%	39%	65%	60%	52%	38%	51%	85%
State	33%	33%	33%	33%	35%	32%	33%	52%

Table E14. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by Grade and School, 2021

School	5	8	5 and 8	10
Miller	61%	—	61%	—
Placentino	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	—	52%	52%	—
Holliston High	—	—	—	—
District	60%	52%	57%	—
State	42%	41%	42%	—

Note. Grade 10 results for the spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test. Information about Competency Determination requirements is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>.

Table E15. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percentage Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021

School	All	High need	Economically disadvantaged	Students with disabilities	ELs and former ELs	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multirace	White
Miller	63%	32%	32%	23%	42%	—	81%	48%	67%	63%
Placentino	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	60%	33%	35%	23%	36%	—	77%	37%	59%	61%
Holliston High	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
District	61%	31%	32%	21%	39%	25%	79%	41%	63%	61%
State	46%	28%	27%	16%	24%	28%	66%	26%	51%	54%

Table E16. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3-8 by School, 2021

School	All	High need	Economically disadvantaged	Students with disabilities	ELs and former ELs	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multirace	White
Miller	52%	30%	27%	22%	42%	—	84%	33%	50%	50%
Placentino	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	50%	25%	30%	14%	33%	—	84%	26%	50%	49%
Holliston High	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
District	51%	27%	29%	17%	39%	17%	83%	30%	50%	49%
State	33%	16%	14%	10%	17%	14%	64%	14%	37%	40%

Table E17. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS ELA Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021

School	All	High need	Economically disadvantaged	Students with disabilities	ELs and former ELs	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multirace	White
Holliston High	89%	70%	70%	64%	—	—	88%	79%	—	90%
District	89%	69%	73%	63%	—	—	88%	79%	—	89%
State	64%	39%	41%	25%	19%	41%	80%	39%	67%	73%

Table E18. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2021

School	All	High need	Economically disadvantaged	Students with disabilities	ELs and former ELs	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multirace	White
Holliston High	86%	52%	70%	44%	—	—	94%	64%	—	89%
District	85%	47%	58%	39%	—	—	94%	64%	—	87%
State	52%	26%	27%	14%	15%	27%	80%	26%	55%	60%

Table E19. Holliston Public Schools: Next-Generation MCAS Science Percentage Meeting and Exceeding Expectations in Grades 5-8 by School, 2021

School	All	High need	Economically disadvantaged	Students with disabilities	ELs and former ELs	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Multirace	White
Miller	61%	39%	43%	34%	20%	—	73%	55%	—	60%
Placentino	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adams Middle	52%	22%	28%	15%	—	—	—	27%	—	53%
Holliston High	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
District	57%	32%	37%	25%	15%	—	75%	43%	64%	56%
State	42%	23%	21%	15%	18%	19%	62%	20%	47%	50%

Table E20. Holliston Public Schools: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year change	State (2021)
All	204	96.8	92.0	96.1	94.1	-2.7	89.8
African American/Black	2	—	—	—	—	—	84.4
Asian	15	100	90.9	100	100	0	96.1
Hispanic/Latino	6	—	75.0	85.7	50	—	80.0
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	2	83.3	—	—	—	—	88.8
White	177	97.0	93.3	97.0	94.9	-2.1	93.2
High need	62	89.1	72.3	86.4	82.3	-6.8	82.4
Low-income households	27	94.1	72.2	86.2	70.4	-23.7	81.7
ELs	4	—	—	—	—	—	71.8
Students with disabilities	44	84.8	66.7	79.5	79.5	-5.3	76.6

Table E21. Holliston Public Schools: Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2017-2020

Group	N (2020)	2017	2018	2019	2020	4-year change	State (2020)
All	229	96.7	97.8	94.1	96.9	0.2	91.0
African American/Black	1	—	—	—	—	—	87.2
Asian	14	100	100	90.9	100	0	95.8
Hispanic/ Latino	7	83.3	—	75.0	85.7	2.4	81.0
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	5	—	100	—	—	—	90.8
White	201	96.9	97.6	95.7	98.0	1.1	94.4
High need	59	90.3	93.5	78.7	89.8	-0.5	84.5
Low-income households	29	80.0	94.1	83.3	89.7	9.7	84.1
ELs	5	—	—	—	—	—	74.7
Students with disabilities	39	89.4	90.9	75.0	84.6	-4.8	79.3

Table E22. Holliston Public Schools: In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021

Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year change	State (2021)
All	1.6	0.7	0.3	0.2	-1.4	0.3
African American/Black	—	—	—	—	—	0.3
Asian	—	—	—	—	—	0.0
Hispanic/Latino	2.8	—	—	—	—	0.2
Multirace, non-Hispanic or Latino	—	—	—	—	—	0.4
White	1.6	0.6	0.3	0.2	-1.4	0.3
High need	3.4	1.5	1.2	—	—	0.4
Economically disadvantaged	3.2	1.5	1.5	—	—	0.3
ELs	—	—	—	—	—	0.1
Students with disabilities	4.5	2.3	1.2	—	—	0.6

Table E23. Holliston Public Schools: Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021

Group	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year change	State (2021)
All	1.3	1.8	0.8	0.0	-1.3	0.5
African American/Black	—	—	—	—	—	0.6
Asian	—	—	—	—	—	0.1
Hispanic/Latino	3.5	—	—	—	—	0.5
Multirace, non-Hispanic or Latino	—	—	—	—	—	0.7
White	1.2	1.9	1.0	0.0	-1.2	0.5
High need	2.3	3.2	1.6	—	—	0.7
Economically disadvantaged	2.4	3.8	1.5	—	—	0.7
ELs	—	—	—	—	—	0.3
Students with disabilities	2.5	3.6	1.8	—	—	1.1

Table E24. Holliston Public Schools: Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2018-2021

Group	N (2021)	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year change	State (2021)
All	806	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.2	1.5
African American/Black	9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8
Asian	70	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
Hispanic/Latino	43	5.3	0.0	2.7	0.0	-5.3	3.2
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	15	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4
White	664	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.8	0.5	1.0
High need	162	2.3	1.3	1.4	2.5	0.2	2.7
Economically disadvantaged	59	5.3	2.3	2.4	1.7	-3.6	2.9
ELs	7	—	0.0	12.5	0.0	—	5.8
Students with disabilities	116	1.0	1.9	1.0	3.4	2.4	2.4

Table E25. Holliston Public Schools: Advanced Coursework Completion Rates by Student Group, 2019-2021

Group	N (2021)	2019	2020	2021	3-year change	State (2021)
All	414	73.0	74.5	76.3	3.3	65.3
African American/Black	5	—	—	—	—	54.9
Asian	37	92.0	96.6	89.2	-2.8	84.3
Hispanic/Latino	16	60.0	30.8	43.8	-16.2	50.2
Multirace, non-Hispanic/Latino	6	55.6	100	100	44.4	65.5
White	348	72.5	74.4	76.4	3.9	69.6
High need	92	35.1	35.8	50.0	14.9	47.7
Economically disadvantaged	35	50.0	48.1	54.3	4.3	49.0
ELs	4	—	—	—	—	28.1
Students with disabilities	64	23.1	24.6	43.8	20.7	33.1