Braintree Public Schools
Rebecca Fredericks
Director of English, Reading & ELE, K-12
Joanne Delaney,
District Writing Coach

Focus Area
- Identifying New Assessment Approaches
- Systems and Structures to Support Educator Collaboration
- Acting on Information from Common Assessments
- Continuous Improvement and Next Steps

Description
Braintree Public Schools MCAS data in mathematics and science from 2010 through 2013 indicated that students at one of the district’s six elementary schools were out-performing expected scores in CPI, growth, and closing the achievement gap.

- Two practices were identified: the reflective math journal and the science notebook both of which were robustly implemented at this school and were contributors to students’ writing skill development
- Braintree secured a Professional Practice Innovation (PPI) grant from ESE to implement these practices across the other five elementary schools
- Teachers worked with a PPI funded writing coach to develop units, lesson sequences, exemplars, rubrics, and instructional routines focused on metacognitive writing in the content area
- Newly developed rubrics were implemented across the schools
- Common language was developed: claims and evidence based on text, conclusions related to text

Common Assessments
- A science notebook, in which students wrestle with a “big question,” test a hypothesis, and analyze results using a claims, evidence, and conclusions format.
- A reflective math journal in which students approach challenging, multi-faceted and multi-step mathematics problems. Students attempt the problem and then explain their thinking in developing an answer and comparing that answer to the correct answer.
- A series of writing-to-text prompts that tie together humanities content by asking students to use multiple sources in answering a question.

Next steps
- Review student work and end of year data
- Implement electronic portfolios to enable students to put their writing online
- Make coherence across initiatives explicit: connections between notebooks, journals, writing to text and PARCC