

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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March 7, 2014

Dear Dever Community:

We are excited to share with you the turnaround plan for the Paul A. Dever Elementary School.

Accompanying this letter is a preliminary plan for turning around the Dever so that **all** of its children receive a world-class education. We have high expectations for what Dever's students can achieve if provided with the right tools. As a result, we have high expectations for the professionals who will work at the school, and for the effectiveness and impact of the programs and strategies we will implement.

Blueprint Schools Network will serve as the Commissioner's team in charge of the day-to-day management of the school, and will work directly with him to implement the Dever turnaround plan. More detail about the priorities and strategies for our work follows in the plan, but key themes include:

- 1) A strong focus on great teaching, so all students will achieve to their highest potential;
- 2) A program of study that provides students with a well-rounded curriculum;
- 3) Supports for students, so they have what they need to learn; and
- 4) Effective use of resources, including time, funds, staff, operational support, and other resources.

We know this work will be challenging, but it is our conviction that we must – and can – do better for Dever's students. It will take bold thinking, a commitment to continuous rapid improvement in teaching and learning, and multiple years of effort, focusing on what's best for students as the core of our work.

The Dever community deserves a school where – in every classroom, every day – we are helping students to perform at high levels, reach their full potential, and be prepared to succeed in the world that awaits them, in high school and beyond. We encourage you to read through this plan, contact Blueprint with any questions, and think about the role you can play as we move forward over the coming years.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Signed by Commissioner Chester

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner
Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

Signed by Matthew Spengler

Matthew Spengler
Executive Director
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Introduction from Commissioner Chester:

On October 30, 2013, I determined that the Dever Elementary School is chronically underperforming – a level 5 school in the Commonwealth’s accountability system. This designation provides a significant opportunity to transform the school from one of the lowest performing in the state to an extraordinary school with sustained high performance. Using the tools provided by the Achievement Gap Act, we will transform the Dever so that all students receive a high quality education.

I reached the decision to place the Dever into Level 5 due to the persistence of unacceptably low achievement rates at Dever, despite its status as a Level 4 turnaround school since 2010. Placing the school in Level 5 provides the best opportunity to address the school’s underperformance through a renewed sense of urgency, innovation, and unrelenting drive for excellence to ensure *all* of Dever’s students receive the high quality education they deserve.

The turnaround work at the Dever will be realized only through substantial reform that will require considerable time and effort. I know this work is challenging, and I do not assume that the Dever’s status as a Level 5 school is due to a lack of effort or concern by the adults working there. I also know, however, that the students at the Dever need and deserve a much stronger education than they have received at the school over the past several years. I have every conviction we can do better.

On January 29, 2014, I named Blueprint Schools Network as the receiver for the Dever. Blueprint participated with me in the creation of the turnaround plan that follows. I look forward to working with Blueprint and with the Dever community to implement the turnaround plan.

Turnaround Plan Summary

Blueprint will serve as the state-appointed receiver of Dever in order to rapidly accelerate student achievement at the school. Blueprint is a nonprofit organization whose work with schools around the country has shown that positive change is possible when five core strategies for school improvement are implemented together as part of a comprehensive and consistent turnaround plan. These strategies include:

1. Ensuring every student has an excellent teacher and a school leader committed to their success;
2. Setting clear, consistent standards for academic achievement and establishing a school-wide focus on preparing all students for college;
3. Increasing instructional time;
4. Providing daily, small group tutoring to students using highly qualified and well-trained instructors; and
5. Collecting assessment data frequently to monitor each student’s academic progress and

tailor instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

These five research-based strategies, which demonstrate a significant correlation with increased student achievement when implemented in a caring and supportive learning environment, have been integrated throughout Dever's turnaround plan.

Central Challenges

Based on a comprehensive process of data gathering and analysis – which included student achievement data, Monitoring Site Visit Reports, in-person visits, interviews and classroom observations by Blueprint and DESE staff, and Local Stakeholder Group recommendations – Blueprint has identified four central challenges requiring immediate attention at the school. These are:

1. Instructional quality is not consistent and rigorous and student academic performance is persistently below benchmarks;
2. The needs of Dever's diverse student population are not being met effectively – including English language learners, students with disabilities and low-income students, which currently make up 42.2%, 14.1%, 87.8% of the student population respectively;
3. Data is not used effectively to inform instructional practice and decision-making; and
4. The school has not consistently established ambitious goals and expectations for student achievement with an aim toward preparing students for college and career success.

Priority Areas for Improvement

In order to address these central challenges, Blueprint has identified five Priority Areas for Improvement at Dever. Each priority area is aligned with an aggressive set of strategies and action-items to ensure these targeted areas of need are met. The five designated Priority Areas for Improvement at Dever are:

1. **Improve Instructional Quality:** Blueprint will prioritize improving instructional quality at Dever to ensure the needs of all learners – including the substantial English Language Learner (ELL) population – are met with rigorous, proven-effective methods and highly-qualified staff.
2. **Increase Time for Core Instruction:** Blueprint will implement targeted strategies to increase and optimize instructional time and launch academic interventions and programs focused on students' differentiated needs in order to improve student learning.
3. **Use Data to Drive Instruction:** Blueprint will implement data-driven instructional systems and targeted intervention programs in order to inform instructional practice and meet the needs of all learners.
4. **Establish a Culture of High Expectations and College and Career Readiness:** Blueprint will implement strategies and build systems that establish high expectations for students' scholarship and achievement, with a focus on preparing them for college and careers.

5. Hire and cultivate high-performing and high-potential staff: Blueprint will ensure Dever is fully staffed with highly effective leadership and instructional teams dedicated to pursuing transformational change for the school.

The effective use of resources to maximize student achievement is the principle on which these five strategies will be based. All resources allocated to the Dever – including time, funds, human capital, operational supports, and other resources – will be fully aligned in support of student learning.

A central question that was considered in assessing root causes for the persistently low academic achievement of Dever’s students despite three years of turnaround was the impact of the Dual Language Program being implemented in the school since 2009. A thorough analysis of the existing program was part of the turnaround planning process. (See Appendix E for a summary of this analysis.)

This analysis led us to conclude that, despite the best intentions of the leaders and staff at the Dever, the current program is not providing an effective academic environment, nor is the current instructional approach leading to strong literacy skills fundamental to the students’ capacity to learn. Given the challenge of getting the school from low functioning to proficient, the existing dual language program is neither mature nor supportive enough to produce the rapid academic growth we need to see and the students deserve.

We have developed a comprehensive and carefully aligned set of strategies and initiatives to support Dever students while still retaining the value the Dever community places on multilingualism. More detail about the priorities and strategies for the work follows in the plan, but the key approach centers on serving students through careful and purposeful daily instruction using English Language Development (ELD) strategies. In a school comprised of almost half English language learners, not all of whom speak the same native language, the focus on ELD in concert with academic attainment will be the centerpiece of a coherent instructional program.

ELD instructional supports can provide beneficial scaffolding and differentiation strategies to address the learning needs of a wide variety of students. Blueprint will adopt these principles as best-practice guidelines for all whole-class, academic instruction at Dever and will provide training, guidance, and support for all core-instruction teachers regarding these instructional strategies.

Blueprint is committed to establishing a new trajectory of success for Dever that will set all students on track to meet and exceed grade-level expectations. With the following comprehensive school turnaround plan, Blueprint will ensure that the five Priority Areas for Improvement and associated strategies are executed faithfully, consistently, and with high quality so that all Dever students can reach their full potential.

Priority Areas for School Improvement

Priority Area for Improvement #1

Improve Instructional Quality: Blueprint will prioritize improving instructional quality at Dever to ensure the needs of all learners are met and that students are receiving an education that prepares them for graduation, college, and career. All resources allocated to Dever—including time, funds, human capital, operational supports, and other resources—will be used to maximum effectiveness and will be fully aligned in support of student learning. This strategy is informed by an analysis of student performance data and inputs from multiple stakeholders—including parents, teachers, school leadership, external partners, and students—which were collected during whole-day visits at Dever by Blueprint staff, information sessions held by Blueprint at both staff and School Site Council meetings, and interviews and focus groups with teachers, school leaders, and students. For a list of fact finding activities conducted please see Appendix E.

Rationale for Identifying Area #1 as a Priority

Dever has consistently struggled with low student academic performance for all its students. Accelerating achievement and closing the current gaps at Dever requires an emphasis on a coherent and well-aligned curriculum and excellence in instructional quality across its classrooms. An explicit focus on implementing data-driven instruction will allow us to track student progress on a daily basis. Additional strategic interventions will address achievement gaps of the English language learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students that currently make up 42.2%, 14.1%, 87.8% of the total student population respectively.

A unified, systematic approach to English language development (ELD) instruction is essential for serving linguistically and culturally diverse student population. 2013-14 enrollment by race/ethnicity at Dever is 24.9% African American, 7.5% Asian, 62.3% Hispanic, 3.3% white, 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 1.9% multi-race non-Hispanic. For 55% of Dever students, English is not their first language. In addition to the most common first language of Spanish (74.1%), the school also serves 11.9% Vietnamese, 3.4% Haitian Creole, 3.1% Cape Verdean, and 2.2% Kurdish native speakers.

By implementing the guiding principles of ELD instruction, Dever teachers will be able to accelerate the learning of the English language required for students to meet grade-level academic standards as they reach Levels 5 and 6 in the four domains of the English language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as reaching proficiency or above on MCAS assessments.

If Dever students are to excel academically, it is essential that all teachers are equipped to support English language learners' language development in their classrooms so students can access the same content in order to meet subject-area grade-level expectations.

Challenge Addressed by Priority Area #1

Instructional quality is not consistent and rigorous, and student academic performance is persistently below benchmarks.

Students persistently perform below the district average in ELA and Math with only 14% of students proficient in ELA and 31% in math. Furthermore, the percentage of students performing at an advanced level is very low, with 1% for ELA and 8% for math achieving at the highest levels. The school has struggled to implement a coherent and well-aligned curriculum grades K-5 that will be required to accelerate learning and significantly raise student achievement. Up to half of the students are English language learners from a growing variety of native language groups, so consideration of language needs is central. However, the resources and energy required to implement the Dual Language program over the past several years has not enabled a school-wide approach to instructional routines and strategies that supports all its students.

Academic Performance

Student achievement at Dever lags significantly behind that of the district and state, as measured by the 2013 MCAS exam (See Fig. 1 and 2).

Figure 1: Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 2013 MCAS ELA

	School	District	State
3rd Grade	16	32	57
4th Grade	14	29	53
5th Grade	13	45	66
All Grades	14	35	61

Figure 2: Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 2013 MCAS Mathematics

	School	District	State
3rd Grade	38	47	66
4th Grade	29	31	52
5th Grade	24	42	61
All Grades	31	40	62

In addition, the percentage of students scoring **Below Proficient (Needs Improvement or Warning)** on the MCAS assessment is well above the district and statewide averages (See Fig 3 and 4).

Figure 3: Percentage of Students Scoring Below Proficient on 2013 MCAS ELA

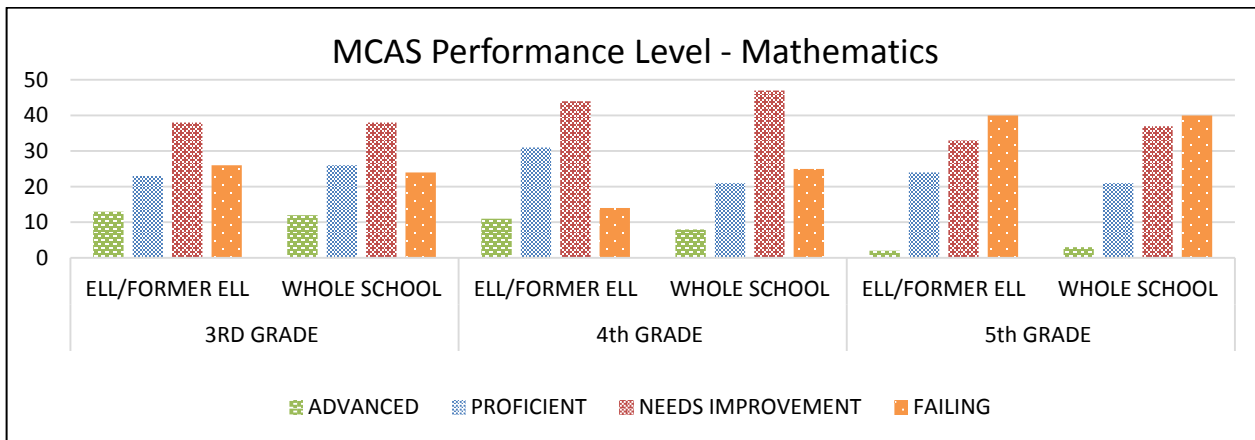
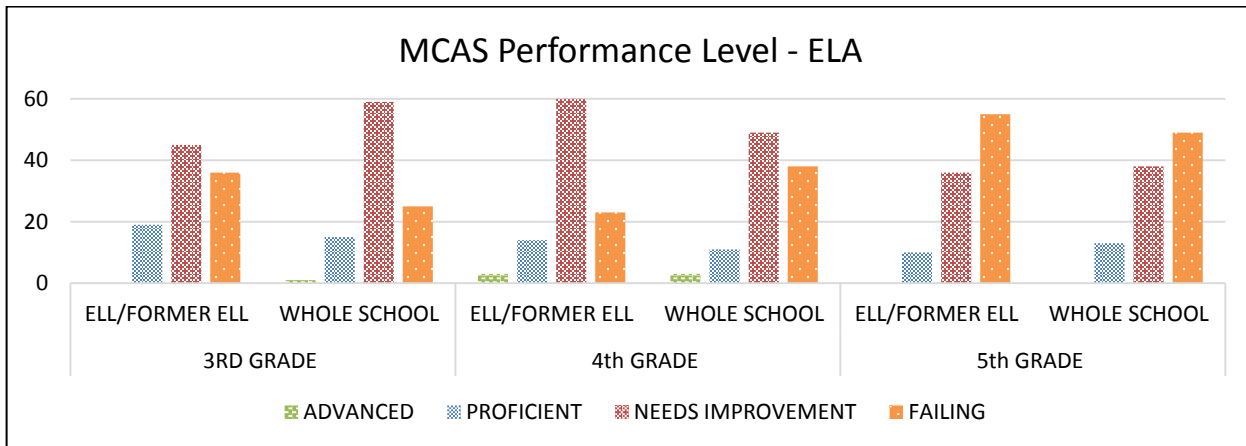
	School	District	State
3rd Grade	84	68	44
4th Grade	86	71	46
5th Grade	87	55	34
All Grades	86	65	39

Figure 4: Percentage of Students Scoring Below Proficient on 2013 MCAS Mathematics

	School	District	State
3 rd Grade	60	54	33
4 th Grade	72	69	48
5 th Grade	77	57	39
All Grades	69	60	38

Dever also faces an achievement gap for its subgroup populations, including ELL and former ELL students and students with disabilities, with proficiency rates trailing significantly behind both district and state-wide averages. The proficiency rates of Dever’s subgroup populations are summarized in Fig. 5 below.

Figure 5: Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 2013 MCAS: Subgroups



Achievement Trends

- Over the last five years, the percentage of students at Dever scoring proficient or advanced in ELA has remained stagnant at 14%, dropping 8 percentage points from 2012. Since 2009 the

average percentage of students scoring advanced is below 1.5%. Advanced ELA students: 1% in 2013, zero students in 2012 (See Figure 6).

- Substantial gains have been made on the MCAS mathematics assessment, with proficiency levels increasing from 11% to 31% in five years. The largest gains came between 2009 and 2011. Though math proficiency in 2013 is up from 2012 by four percentage points, proficiency is down from a 2011 high of 35% (See Figure 7).

Figure 6: ELA Student Achievement Trends by MCAS Performance Level, All Grades, 2009 to 2013

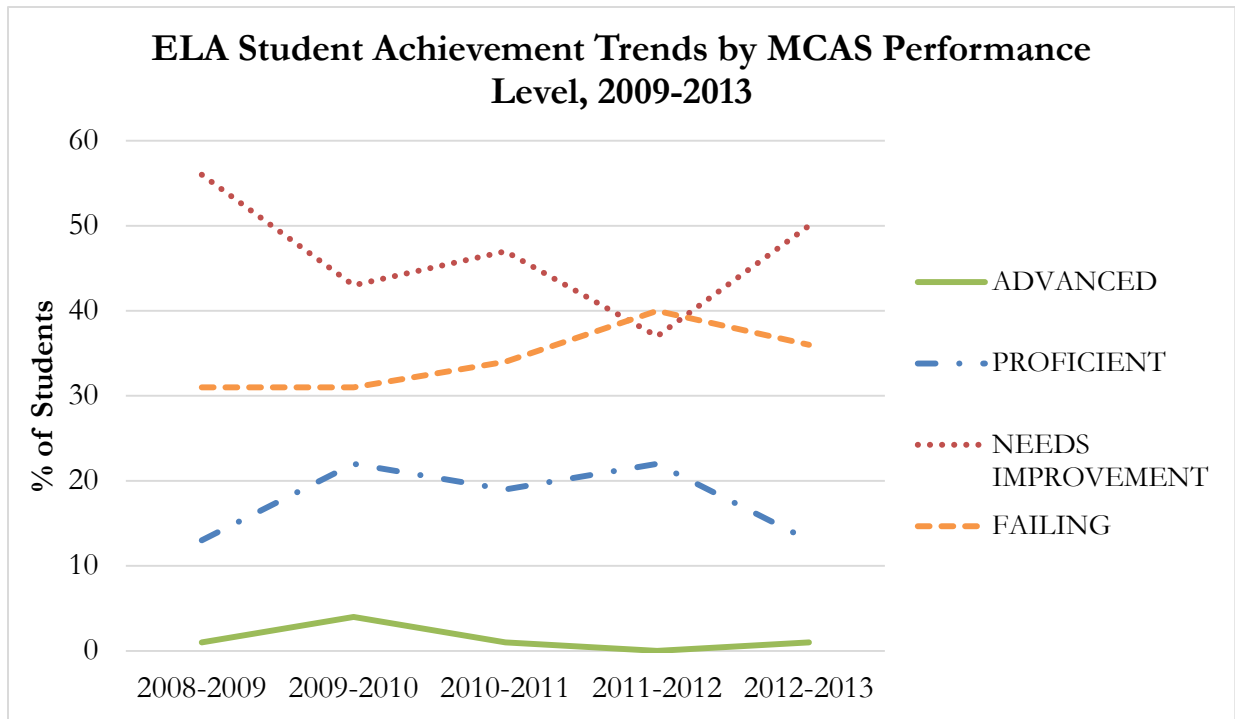
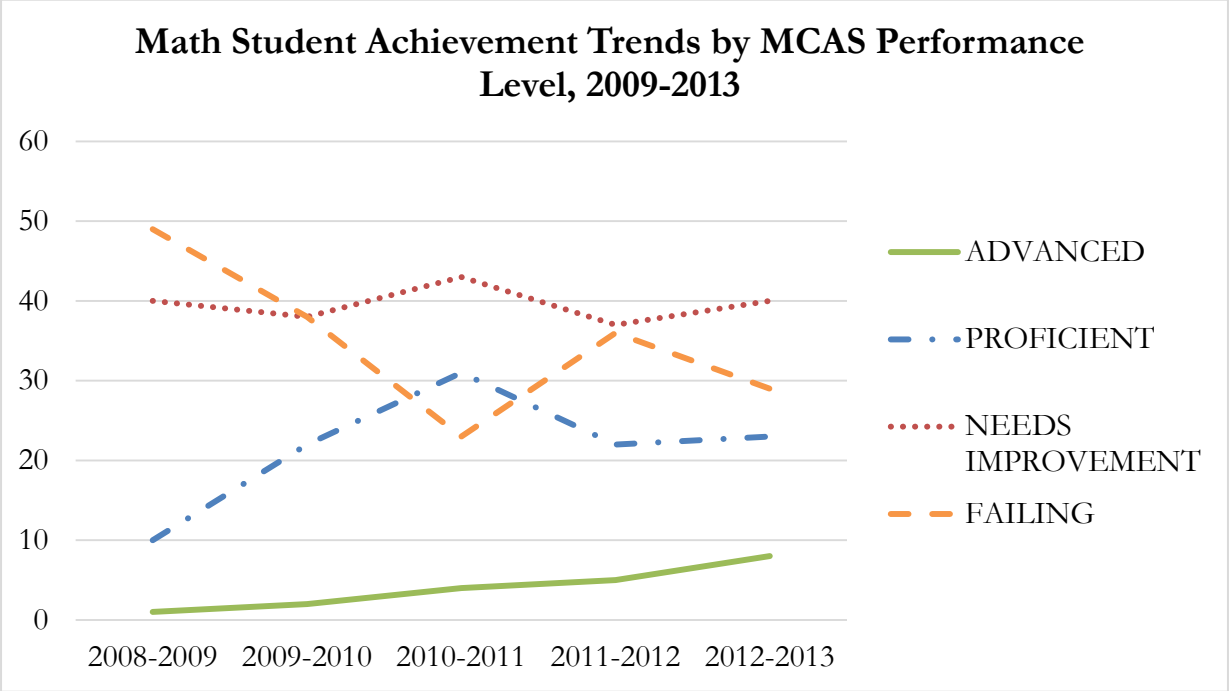


Figure 7: Math Student Achievement Trends by MCAS Performance Level, All Grades, 2009-2013



Strategies to Achieve Priority Area #1

Key Strategy	Owner	Timeline
<p>Strategy 1: Establish clear expectations for instructional design, effectiveness and rigor.</p> <p>Blueprint focuses on improving instructional quality to ensure that the needs of all Dever learners are met and that students are receiving an education that prepares them for college and career success. To accomplish this, we will focus on implementing and monitoring the guidelines, expectations, and policies below regarding instructional design and practice. <i>(Please see Priority Area 3 for more information regarding data-driven instruction and evaluations of instructional effectiveness.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson Planning: Blueprint will ensure lessons at Dever are 1) rigorous; 2) planned in alignment with grade-level standards and pacing guides; 3) driven by measurable, student-friendly objectives; and 4) designed or differentiated based on students’ learning styles and needs. • Curriculum Selection: Currently, teachers at Dever are designing, writing and planning literacy-based units, lessons and assessments, including for Spanish-instruction classes in the dual language program. In preparation for the 2014-15 school year, Blueprint will vet and select high quality curriculum materials at Dever for K-5 literacy, math, science, and social studies and ensure these materials complement and are aligned with state learning standards, the Common Core State Standards, and the needs of Dever’s student population. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Curriculum Vetting and Due Diligence: Blueprint will leverage the expertise, experience, and success of school leaders in high performing elementary schools in our own national network to select high quality curriculum programs. This process will begin with a comprehensive review of Dever’s current curricula to determine what can be used and/or modified and what new curricula are needed. Dever currently uses FOSS science texts and BPS’s social studies program. In this way, Blueprint will ensure the selection and implementation of curriculum programs for Dever that are robust, proven effective, and well suited to meet the needs of Dever’s students. ○ Substantially Separate Classroom Program: Dever currently implements a substantially separate classroom program to serve the needs of students with specific learning disabilities who require a different classroom environment, smaller class sizes, and lower student-teacher ratios to be successful. Four classrooms of approximately 8 to 10 students each serve students from kindergarten through 5th 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>February 2014 - Ongoing</p>

<p>grade. Blueprint will continue to support the substantially separate program at Dever, with the goal of preparing students to transition into mainstream classroom environments when appropriate.</p>		
<p>Strategy 2: Provide targeted professional development. Blueprint will use an expanded school year for teachers to implement professional development (PD) programs with a particular focus on planning and instructional quality at Dever, including PD regarding strategies for improving student engagement, instructional rigor, data collection and analysis, and differentiation in classroom instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Time for All Staff: Teachers will work up to 210 days during the course of each year allowing for professional development and planning prior to the start of the school year and during the school year. The teacher schedule will be 9 hours per day with a maximum of 45 hours per week. Administrators will work up to 232 days during the course of each year. The administrator schedule will be 10 hours per day with a maximum of 50 hours per week. Clerical staff will work up to 227 days during the course of the year. The clerical staff schedule is 9 hours per day on a regular school day and 8 hours per day on a non-school day, not to exceed 50 hours in any given week. • Increase Time for Summer PD: Blueprint will use the autonomy granted by state law to build additional PD time for teachers and leaders that we believe will be necessary to successfully improve instructional quality at the school. This will include up to 20 days in the summer (before students arrive) to focus on visioning for the staff and developing a collaborative culture, as well as providing initial PD and orientation to new curricular materials. Professional development at the beginning of the year will also focus on team building and planning for collaborative structures that will be used throughout the school year. • Support Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Blueprint will create PLC structures and redesign the daily and weekly schedule to minimize the PLCs’ impact on student transitions and provide opportunities for consistent implementation of PLC structures across all grade levels and content areas. PLCs will be an essential structure to align instruction and enhance educator capacity. • Provide Targeted Leadership Coaching: Blueprint will provide additional targeted coaching and monitoring for Dever’s leadership team using our network directors and other school leaders in Blueprint’s national network. Specifically, Dever’s principal and leadership team will be paired with an experienced mentor or peer coach at another Blueprint School in our national network. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>February 2014 - Ongoing</p>

<p>Strategy 3: Instructional Supports for English Language Learners. Dever’s staff and community have made a clear and consistent effort to build a successful dual language program. However, this instructional approach is not leading to growth in the academic achievement of the students in the program. Thus, moving forward, the dual language program at Dever will be discontinued.</p> <p>In its place, students will be served through careful and purposeful scaffolded daily instruction using English Language Development (ELD) strategies. Systematic ELD instruction will provide a solid language foundation following a scope and sequence of language skills in functional contexts. These are organized by the levels of English proficiency and provided during small group instruction with a clear focus on language instruction alongside content instruction. Explicit language instruction will occur throughout the day in the context of all curriculum and content areas. Students who require additional individualized supports in English language will have additional small group instruction during the regular school day from a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsed teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instructional Strategies: The research-based guiding principles of ELD instruction will provide all students at Dever with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language instruction that is explicit and is intentionally planned, delivered, and assessed; ○ Instruction that incorporates and connects all four domains of language (speaking, listening, reading, and writing); ○ Instruction that includes multiple opportunities for students to orally practice language structures in order to communicate information, ideas and concepts; ○ Instruction that is differentiated by language proficiency levels and by student needs based on data; ○ Instruction that incorporates flexible structures, grouping, and approaches based on student needs; ○ Instruction and responses to instruction that are assessed and monitored for progress regularly through frequent data collection and analysis; ○ Planning that takes into consideration students’ socio-cultural background. <p>ELD instructional supports can provide beneficial scaffolding and differentiation strategies to address the learning needs of a wide variety of students. Thus, Blueprint will adopt these principles as best-practice guidelines for all whole-class academic instruction at Dever and will provide training, guidance, and support for all core instruction teachers regarding these instructional strategies during mandatory summer PD and through year-long integrated ongoing training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted Recruitment and Hiring: Blueprint will conduct targeted recruitment and hiring for teachers and leaders who are bilingual 		
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and/or have demonstrated success in serving ELLs. In addition, starting with the summer workshops, Blueprint will hire a full-time literacy coach with expertise in ELD instruction to work with teacher teams to identify and develop grade-appropriate, differentiated assignments and support materials in alignment with the principles of appropriate ELD instruction and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) standards.

- **Training in ELL Supports:** Blueprint’s expectation is for all general education teachers to obtain an endorsement in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI). SEI strategies align with the guiding principles of ELD instruction. SEI is a method of instructional practice that is specially designed to meet the needs of ELLs. Instructional and administrative staff at Dever who do not already possess an SEI endorsement will be required to obtain one as soon as course availability allows by June 2015.

In addition, Blueprint recognizes that it is essential for teachers to be equipped to address the challenges ELL students face in accomplishing the dual task of learning the English language while simultaneously meeting grade-level expectations. Thus, Blueprint will provide all staff with an orientation to these challenges during the summer, as well as ongoing ELL-specific professional learning opportunities.

Blueprint will also provide targeted training regarding the selection of culturally relevant and appropriate texts and resources.

- **Learning Environments with ELL Supports:** Blueprint will incorporate the learning needs of ELL students in establishing learning environment expectations for Dever. Some ELL-specific instructional environment features will include:
 - Targeted language supports that are posted and used to increase English language development , including sentence frames, word walls, pictures, models, graphs, diagrams, charts, graphic organizers, etc.;
 - Relevant materials and resources that are accessible at a variety of reading levels in English and other languages that represent the home languages of ELLs at Dever;
 - Visuals and interactive hands-on materials that are available and utilized;
 - Student work areas that are purposefully arranged to allow for a variety of groupings; and
 - Prominent displays of visual materials and student work products that reflect the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of Dever’s students.

Quarterly Benchmarks #1

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Establish clear expectations for instructional design, effectiveness and rigor.	<p>Lessons are</p> <p>1) planned in alignment with grade-level standards and district pacing guides;</p> <p>2) Driven by measurable, student-friendly objectives;</p> <p>3) Utilize developmentally appropriate and engaging learning strategies and</p> <p>4) Aligned with objectives, assessments, and activities from the Depth of Knowledge framework.</p>	January 2015	Evidence of student engagement, instructional rigor, and alignment with grade level standards is collected and observed in 80% of classrooms. Evidence may include lesson activities, plans and student work.	Starting November 2014 and continuing every 4-6 weeks thereafter	<p>Blueprint Site Visit Reports, which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint’s site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction.</p> <p>Daily classroom observations</p>	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	September 2015	Managing Director

<p>Strategy 1: Establish clear expectations for instructional design, effectiveness and rigor.</p>	<p>Teachers will use student data to inform planning and instruction and will analyze student data to develop strategies for addressing student needs.</p>	<p>January 2015</p>	<p>Visible evidence of up-to-date classroom and student level data-tracking are present in 80% of classrooms. Evidence may include charts, graphs, and benchmark targets.</p>	<p>November 2014</p>	<p>Blueprint Site Visit Reports- which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint’s site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction.</p>	<p>Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Managing Director</p>
<p>Strategy 1: Establish clear expectations for instructional design, effectiveness and rigor.</p>	<p>Blueprint will vet and select high quality curriculum materials to meet the needs of all students at Dever.</p>	<p>August 2014</p>	<p>Students are receiving instruction that is aligned with appropriate grade-level standards in 80% of classrooms.</p>	<p>November 2014</p>	<p>Blueprint Site Visit Reports, Sample Curriculum Materials.</p>	<p>Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Managing Director</p>

						gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.		
Strategy 2: Provide targeted professional development	School-wide scope and sequence of professional development designed to address Priority Areas for Improvement.	August 2014	100% of teachers receive an average of at least 5 hours of targeted PD per week and are observed using effective practices learned in PD (see strategy 1).	September 2014	School-wide Professional Development Schedule.	Provided supports will translate into improvement in the instructional practices of teachers and the academic performance of students.	June 2015	Managing Director School Principal
Strategy 2: Provide targeted professional development	Professional Learning Community (PLC) structures in place and targeted PD for building PLCs developed.	October 2014	100% of teachers work in PLCs to develop and align instructional practices.	October 2014	PLC rosters, schedules, and documentation of meetings.	Provided supports will translate into improvement in the instructional practices of teachers and the academic	June 2015	Managing Director School Principal

						performance of students.		
Strategy 2: Provide targeted professional development	The school year is expanded to increase the amount of time spent on job-embedded PD.	August 2014	100% of teachers receive an average of at least 5 hours per week of job-embedded PD that address Individual Professional Development plan goals.	November 2014	School-wide Professional Development Schedule/Scope and Sequence Document, documentation of PD provided and attendance records.	Provided supports will translate into improvement in the instructional practices of teachers and the academic performance of students.	June 2015	Managing Director School Principal
Strategy 2: Provide targeted professional development	A scope and sequence of targeted professional development for school leadership is designed.	August 2014	100% of School Leaders receive at least 5 hours per week of job-embedded PD and leadership coaching that address appropriate Individual Professional Development	November 2014	Professional Development Schedule/Scope and Sequence Document, documentation of PD provided and attendance records.	Provided supports will translate into improvement in leadership practices from school administration and the academic performance of students.	June 2014	Managing Director School Principal

			plan goals.					
Strategy 3: Instructional Supports for English Language Learners.	Training is provided to all staff regarding ELD strategies and best practices.	August 2014	Students are receiving instruction using ELD strategies in 80% of classrooms.	October 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports, which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint’s site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction. Daily classroom observations Documentation of lesson plans	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	June 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Priority Area for Improvement #2

Increase Time for Core Instruction: Blueprint will implement targeted strategies to increase and optimize instructional time at Dever and use this time to develop a system of academic supports focused on students' differentiated needs in order to improve student learning.

Rationale for Identifying Area #2 as a Priority

By increasing the amount of time devoted to instruction in these core academic areas, Blueprint will be able to provide additional, appropriate academic supports suited to meet the needs of all students. Our experience has shown that when increased instructional time is used to provide meaningful and effective interventions, academic performance improves.

Challenges Addressed by Priority Area #2

The needs of Dever's diverse student population are not being met effectively.

Student achievement trends at Dever indicate that additional instructional time is needed to provide opportunities for targeted interventions in ELA and mathematics. Dever currently employs academic interventionists who are largely used to provide instructional support in a whole group setting. There are limited and inconsistent opportunities for the kind of small-group, individualized instructional interventions and supports needed to effectively meet the learning needs of all students and accelerate achievement.

Dever's 2013-14 daily schedule begins when students arrive for breakfast at 9:10 a.m. and includes dismissal times that range from 4:08 to 4:20 p.m., depending on the grade level. Formal literacy and math blocks do not begin until 9:50 a.m.

In addition, Dever has scheduled 50 minute phonics blocks that provide whole class interventions. Blueprint intends to ensure that time for literacy and mathematics intervention supports will be used exclusively to provide small group, individualized instruction to students.

Strategies to Achieve Priority Area #2

Key Strategy	Owner	Timeline
<p>Strategy 1: Increase instructional time. Blueprint will implement an 8-hour school day for students to allow for additional time in literacy and math. Leveraging this autonomy will allow for students to be immersed in additional instructional time, and allow teachers to plan and reflect together to best meet the needs of all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the school day and school year: Using the authorities provided in statute for chronically underperforming schools, Blueprint will redesign the school day, week, and year at Dever to include additional time for student learning. Students will be provided with up to 185 days of instruction. Blueprint will replicate the conditions established in our successful past turnaround partnerships, which include increasing instructional time by at least 20 percent over what students typically receive. In addition, Blueprint will explore options for providing academic support services on Saturdays to help prepare students struggling in ELA and math. • Restructure school schedule, policies and procedures to maximize learning time and minimize student transitions: In 2014-15, Blueprint will redesign the daily schedule such that the school day will begin at 7:30 a.m. for students and end at 3:30 p.m. Pushing the day to an earlier start will provide an additional hour to implement strategies outlined below and, according to interviews with the school’s leadership team, better accommodate some parents’ workday schedules. In addition, after-school enrichment and/or academic support opportunities may be provided to help accommodate parents seeking late pick-up options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extended instructional time for English language arts (ELA), mathematics and interventions: Blueprint will create a master schedule for Dever that includes approximately 120 minutes for reading, writing and integrated social studies, and 90 minutes for mathematics instruction each day. <p>Every day will include 45 minutes of academic enrichment/interventions for every student in the school, regardless of ability level. Students will be grouped by like need during the enrichment/intervention block, such as for English Language Development (ELD) support, Response to</p> 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>Beginning July 2014</p>

<p>Intervention (RTI) support, extra mathematics support, and Gifted and Talented (GT) enrichment. Selected Dever students performing below grade level in mathematics will receive approximately 45 minutes of high-dosage tutoring daily (see Strategy 2). These time allocations in core subjects and interventions are an increase compared to what Dever students currently receive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Daily Morning Meetings: Dever will continue to use the “Morning Meeting” within the current school schedule. Twenty minutes each morning will be used to solidify Dever’s core values and expectations for academic achievement and student conduct, and to build a solid sense of school community. This time will be an opportunity for students to celebrate academic success and learn about and reflect upon school-wide scholarship initiatives such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and commitment. <p>Use of Specials: Approximately 55 minutes of specials will provide enrichment to support the development of the whole child as well as an opportunity to integrate core academic subjects into the arts, science, technology and physical education (such as writing across content areas). This daily specials time will also provide valuable common planning time for grade level teams to work together to assess growth in student achievement and to co-plan for instruction.</p> <p>Spanish Class: Blueprint recognizes the value of multi-lingualism and that some parents have selected Dever so that their students will have an opportunity to learn Spanish as a second language or further develop their Spanish language skills if Spanish is their home language. For these families Blueprint will offer a Spanish language enrichment special.</p>		
<p>Strategy 2: Increase small-group mathematics instructional time for students in need of additional support. Blueprint’s research-based and proven-effective tutoring program, the “Blueprint Fellows Program,” will provide daily, individualized math instruction through small group tutoring sessions to selected students who need intensive math supports in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. This instruction will supplement students’ regular core math instruction. Students will be tutored in small groups not greater than a 4:1 student-to-tutor ratio,</p>	<p>Blueprint Managing Director Fellow Coordinator</p>	<p>September 2014 and ongoing</p>

<p>in 45 to 60 minute sessions. Blueprint will seek candidates for tutoring positions who demonstrate fluency in languages that match the needs of Dever’s student population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial Structure: Fellows will provide daily, individualized mathematics instruction for selected students. Thus, each Fellow works with approximately 18 to 24 students throughout the day. Tutorial units include daily lessons, a unit test, and a time for re-teaching non-mastered skills or for extending students’ thinking. Instruction is informed by student achievement data and adapted to meet students’ needs. Each tutorial session includes a warm-up activity, practice in foundational skills, support with grade-level content, and a daily assessment. Fellows will have common planning time with grade-level teachers to facilitate tutor/teacher collaboration on instruction and student data. 		
<p>Strategy 3: Prioritize Literacy Intervention Strategies and Programs. Literacy will be prioritized across the curriculum. Blueprint will focus on integrating reading and writing strategies into all subjects to provide additional instructional time dedicated to building students’ literacy skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary: Vocabulary-building will be emphasized in all classes. This is especially important to support the language development needs of Dever’s ELL students. • Modeling: Read Aloud sessions will be integrated into all classes to reinforce and model strong reading strategies. • Writing: Writing will also be used as a check for understanding in all classes and to help students to attain fluency in writing. • Restructuring the ELA block: Blueprint will restructure Dever’s schedule to ensure all students receive a minimum of two hours of ELA instruction daily. This literacy block will be based on the “Uncommon Schools/Great Habits, Great Readers” model for reading instruction and will include at least 60 minutes dedicated to small group, differentiated instruction. The program comprehensively addresses the key areas of reading including: phonemic awareness; phonics/word study; fluency; vocabulary; and comprehension. Small group reading instruction will be provided using “Mondo’s Bookshop” program which is designed to provide teachers with the tools they need to provide precise, personalized instruction in core reading, writing and oral language strategies to small, differentiated reading groups. Direct instruction will also be provided in writing during this block. • Intervention Programs: One or more specific reading 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>Fellow Coordinator</p>	<p>March 2014 and ongoing</p>

<p>intervention programs (similar to Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI)) will be implemented at Dever beginning in September 2014. Currently, interventionists work with whole classes to deliver “Writers Express”, “Foundations”, and “Estrellita” programs while grade-level teachers attend PLCs. In the winter/spring of 2014, Blueprint will closely analyze student performance data in ELA to best match the appropriate programs, interventions and strategies with identified student needs. Training on selected programs will be integrated with the year-long scope and sequence of professional development sessions for teachers. Blueprint will explicitly focus on selecting programs and curriculum models that have embedded strategies to address the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities.</p>		
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Quarterly Benchmarks #2

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Increase instructional time.	Blueprint will expand and redesign the school day, week, and/or year at Dever to increase instructional time by at least 20 percent over what students typically receive.	May 2014	100% of students receive an additional 60 minutes of instructional time for ELA and mathematics support each day.	September 2014	Dever official school calendar and daily master class schedule.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	September 2015	Blueprint Executive Director Managing Director
Strategy 1: Increase instructional time.	Blueprint will create a master schedule for Dever that uses increased instructional time to provide additional ELA	September 2014	100% of students receive daily, 120 minutes of ELA and 90 minutes of core mathematics	September 2014	Daily master class schedule and schedule of academic intervention supports with documentation of student	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
	and math instruction, as well as robust intervention programs for all students below grade level in critical core subject areas.		instruction. 80% of students receive daily, supplemental instruction tailored to meet their learning needs.		rosters.	achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.		

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Increase instructional time.	Each instructional session will follow a consistent structure, including the execution of a Do Now that activates students' knowledge of the day's lesson while also maximizing students' time on task, as well as consistent use of Exit Tickets that teachers will use to assess student mastery at the conclusion of each lesson.	September 2014	Frequent review of lesson plans will show evidence of consistent lesson plan structures in 100% of classrooms. Classroom observations will confirm effective implementation of lesson planning structure that effectively uses available instructional time.	November 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint's site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction. School Principal's classroom observations. Daily oversight and monitoring by school and Blueprint staff.	Consistent execution of routines and procedures will maximize learning time and translate into improved academic performance for students.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

<p>Strategy 2: Increase small-group mathematics instructional time for students in need of additional support.</p>	<p>The Blueprint Fellows Program will provide daily, individualized math instruction through small group tutoring sessions to selected students who need intensive math supports in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>	<p>100% of selected students in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades will receive 45-60 minutes of additional, individualized math instruction daily.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>	<p>Math Fellow tutorial schedule and student rosters.</p>	<p>Interim assessments and yearly MCAS results will indicate accelerated achievement in math for students participating in the Blueprint Fellows Program.</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Managing Director Fellow Coordinator</p>
<p>Strategy 3: Prioritize Literacy/ Establish Literacy Intervention Strategies and Programs</p>	<p>Reading and writing strategies will be integrated into all subjects to provide additional instructional time dedicated to building students' literacy skills.</p>	<p>November 2014</p>	<p>Evidence of reading and writing strategies will be present in 80% of lessons observed across all subject areas.</p>	<p>November 2014</p>	<p>Blueprint Site Visit Reports which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint's site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction.</p>	<p>Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA; and demonstrating growth in student performance</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Managing Director School Principal</p>

						in ELA.		
Strategy 3: Prioritize Literacy/ Establish Literacy Intervention Strategies and Programs	One or more specific reading intervention programs will be implemented at Dever with an explicit focus on meeting the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities.		80% of students performing below grade-level in ELA, and/or ELLs and students with disabilities requiring additional academic support will be enrolled in an academic intervention program tailored to their specific learning needs.	November 2014	Documentation of enrollment in academic intervention programs, as well as student performance data used to determine placement and/or classification as an ELL and/or student with disabilities.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Priority Area for Improvement #3

Use Data to Drive Instruction: To meet the needs of all learners, Blueprint will build a culture of daily data collection and frequent data analysis to inform modifications to instructional practice and the use of targeted academic interventions.

Rationale for Identifying Area #3 as a Priority

Data collection and analysis will be used to inform instructional practice with a focus towards improving student achievement in ELA and mathematics. Blueprint will place explicit emphasis on using data – including ACCESS assessment results – to address achievement gaps of English language learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students, which currently make up 42.2%, 14.1%, and 87.8% of the total student population respectively. Data collection will be used to support ELLs and students with disabilities by informing the implementation of appropriate academic interventions and programs matched to their needs. Data will also help to reduce the number of students scoring below grade level standards by allowing school staff to track academic progress of all students more closely and initiate necessary interventions quickly.

Challenges Addressed by Priority Area #3

Data is not used effectively to inform instructional practice and decision-making.

Dever has a diverse student population with many different learning needs. As a whole, the majority of the school's student population is not meeting grade level standards.

During recent school visits and discussions with teachers and the leadership team at Dever, Blueprint has learned that formal data cycles occur approximately every six weeks, both for Achievement Network assessments and Dever-designed literacy units. However, the use of weekly assessments and daily Exit Tickets is not consistent across grade levels. There is also little visible evidence of school, classroom, or student-level data tracking. Classroom observations and conversations with school staff and leadership indicate that the current staff at Dever would benefit from additional support and training regarding the daily and weekly use, consolidation, and integration of data to inform their instructional practice and planning.

Strategies to Achieve Priority Area #3

Key Strategy	Owner	Timeline
<p>Strategy 1: Implement frequent data cycles. Blueprint will implement data-driven instructional systems that empower teachers to identify struggling students and differentiate their instruction and interventions accordingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Assessment Systems: Teachers will use frequent interim assessments (e.g. District Predictives) to collect data on an ongoing basis. Blueprint will use the Scholastic Mathematics Inventory (SMI), a widely used norm-referenced diagnostic assessment series, to track student progress in mathematics throughout the year in the Fellows Program. In addition, Blueprint will seek highly qualified external partners to provide interim assessment systems that will facilitate frequent opportunities for ongoing data collection and analysis to inform instruction. • Lesson Structure: Blueprint expects that each instructional session will follow a consistent structure, including the execution of a Do Now that activates students’ knowledge of the lesson objective and consistent use of Exit Tickets that teachers will use to assess student mastery at the conclusion of each lesson. Information gathered about student mastery will directly inform core instruction and tiered supports. • Leverage School-Based Partnerships: Blueprint will leverage resources and support from an external partner organization with experience supporting the execution of high quality data-driven instruction, to support the training, systems, and analysis required to successfully implement this practice at Dever. This approach explicitly addresses Dever’s Local Stakeholder Group recommendation to “maximize assets and talents of partners to improve student learning.” • Site Visit and Observation Data: Blueprint site visit classroom observation data is formally collected every four to six weeks. Using a rubric of research-based best practices associated with accelerated student achievement and high performing schools, Blueprint staff will collect quantitative and qualitative data to identify Dever’s strengths and areas for growth in instructional practice. These formal site visits also include focus group conversations with teachers and students regarding their use and understanding of student performance data which, in turn, is used to inform professional development and strategic decisions for the school. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>August 2014 and Ongoing</p>
<p>Strategy 2: Differentiate data by teacher. Blueprint will ensure each teacher at Dever has access to data specific to each of his or her classes and students.</p>	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p>	<p>September 2014 and Ongoing</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Reports: Data reports will be generated for content teachers organized by, and aligned to, curriculum standards. These reports will provide up-to-date, actionable data showing how students are performing on particular standards. • Differentiation: Data reports will be used to influence classroom instruction. They will show each teacher which of their students are struggling with a concept and need extra help, and if the whole class is struggling with mastery of a standard or skill. • Grade Level Teams: Each grade level team will hold weekly meetings that are explicitly focused on student data. Using common planning time, teams will work together to analyze data and determine how to best serve the common group of students they teach. • Data Tracking: Blueprint will set the expectation for evidence of data tracking in all classrooms. Blueprint will provide professional development to teachers on how to set up and use data walls and displays to track student progress and motivate students. • Professional Development: Blueprint will use data reports and observations to support and inform targeted professional development based on the needs of specific teachers, content areas and grades across the school. 	<p>School Principal</p> <p>Blueprint Data Analyst</p>	
<p><u>Strategy 3:</u> Train teachers on how to use daily and weekly data collection to inform and improve instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueprint will incorporate training regarding data collection, analysis, and assessment into orientation and ongoing professional development sessions for all school-based staff, fellows, and other program-related staff as needed. Training will explicitly focus on how data – such as student work, exit tickets, assessment results, etc. – can, and should, be used to inform, drive, modify, and improve daily instructional practice and initiate necessary academic interventions quickly and effectively. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p> <p>Blueprint Data Analyst</p>	<p>August 2014 and Ongoing</p>

Quarterly Benchmarks #3

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Implement frequent data cycles.	Teachers will collect and analyze student performance data on an ongoing basis to inform instruction, including the use of daily exit tickets to assess student mastery at the end of each lesson.	November 2014	Evidence of whole class and student-level data collection and tracking will be present in 100% of classrooms.	November 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint’s site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction. Principal observations	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	September 2015	Managing Director

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 2: Differentiate data by teacher.	<p>Data reports will be generated frequently for content teachers.</p> <p>Data will be organized by, and aligned to, curriculum standards and will provide up-to-date, actionable data showing how students are performing on particular standards.</p>	November 2014	80% of grade-level teams will plan differentiated instruction in weekly data meetings.	November 2014	<p>Documentation of all data reports generated, a schedule of team meeting times, and documentation of meeting content and outcomes.</p> <p>School Principal observations of attended meetings.</p>	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	September 2015	Managing Director
Strategy 3: Training on how to use data systems effectively to inform and improve instruction.	Blueprint will provide training regarding data-collection, analysis, and assessment into orientation and on-going professional development		80% of necessary staff, including, teachers and school leaders, participate in training regarding	September 2014 and ongoing	<p>School-wide professional development schedule/scope and sequence document.</p> <p>Documentation of lesson plans showing</p>	Provided supports will translate into 100% of teachers incorporating data-informed differentiated, small group sessions and	September 2015	Managing Director

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
	<p>sessions for all school-based staff, Fellows, and other program-related staff as needed. Training will explicitly focus on how data can, and should, be used daily and weekly to inform, drive, modify and improve instructional practice and initiate necessary academic interventions quickly and effectively.</p>		<p>data-driven instruction and are observed targeting instruction based on needs.</p> <p>Reviews of lesson plans show that 90% of teachers are using data to drive instructional planning and delivery.</p>		<p>evidence of data informed instructional planning and delivery.</p> <p>Documentation of classroom observations - by school and Blueprint leadership - showing evidence of data informed instructional planning and delivery.</p>	<p>specific individualized instructional strategies into daily lesson plans which will translate into improvement in the academic performance of students.</p>		

Priority Area for Improvement #4

Establish a Culture of High Expectations and College and Career Readiness: Blueprint will set ambitious goals for student achievement with explicit focus on preparing students for success in college and careers.

Rationale for Identifying Area #4 as a Priority

Blueprint's experience has shown that when schools establish high expectations for scholarship and achievement, with an emphasis on college and career readiness, positive academic outcomes occur. Elementary school is a particularly important time to instill these values in students so that they are well-equipped to succeed in future high-stakes environments. By setting the bar high for excellence in both academics and conduct, Blueprint will ensure Dever's students and staff are working towards achieving rigorous standards of excellence and achievement.

Challenges Addressed by Priority Area #4

The school has not consistently established ambitious goals and expectations for student achievement with an aim toward preparing students for college and career success.

Dever has established consistent routines and expectations for student behavior that has contributed to a safe and orderly environment. However, there is little visible evidence of a college-going culture or displays of school wide or student-specific academic performance goals. The April 2013 Monitoring Site Visit report indicates "the school does not yet provide instruction that promotes higher order thinking or student engagement." Thus, Blueprint will emphasize the academic culture and expectations to complement the school's current focus on student behavior and learning environments.

Given Dever's location, many students and families must travel long distances by bus, car, or other public transportation, to attend or visit the school. This circumstance can make engagement with families and the community-at-large a challenge. In addition, Dever has a wide variety of external partnerships. It will be important to ensure these partnership are aligned with the school's priorities moving forward and that new partnerships can be leveraged to promote college and career readiness and academic success.

Strategies to Achieve Priority Area #4

Key Strategy	Owner	Timeline
<p>Strategy 1: Create a college- and career-focused culture. Beginning with the first day of school, teachers and staff at Dever will emphasize that college and career readiness is a primary goal that will be regularly re-enforced throughout the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible Evidence of College-Going Culture: College paraphernalia will be present throughout the school and classrooms. Teachers will incorporate a college corner in each classroom that highlights their alma mater. College-focused displays will also be present in common spaces and hallways. Blueprint will integrate best practices from high achieving elementary schools to enrich the physical environment at Dever Elementary School. • Positive, College and Career Focused Learning Environments: Blueprint will create a positive setting for learning by developing a school-wide positive culture plan that sets high expectations for student scholarship and academic excellence. Teachers, school support staff, and volunteers will be present in hallways during transitions, arrival, and dismissal periods to support and encourage students. Classrooms and common areas – such as hallways and entryways – will reinforce the school’s college- and career-focused mission, with exemplary student work prominently displayed and updated monthly to highlight knowledge and skills that put students on a track toward college. • Goal-Setting: Blueprint and school leadership will set ambitious goals for student performance. These goals will be posted prominently throughout the school. Connected to the evaluation process (see Priority Area 5), teachers will be expected to set individual learning goals for their students as well as support students to set their own goals. • Leverage Strategic External Partnerships: Dever currently has many external partners, and Blueprint will work with current leadership to assess how these partners support the school and what gaps still exist. Blueprint will also explore potential external partnerships to support the creation of a college-going culture. • Collaboration with the McCormack Middle School: Although Blueprint intends for Dever to have an independent, Dever-specific school-culture and identity moving forward, we are aware that many students at Dever will transition to the McCormack Middle School for their secondary schooling due to its location and the two schools’ history of partnership. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>September 2014 and on-going</p>

<p>Blueprint plans to remain in close communication with the leadership at McCormack to pursue appropriate methods of collaboration and alignment, such as “step-up days” for graduating Dever 5th graders and coordinated school culture initiatives to help ensure students’ transition from Dever to McCormack is as seamless as possible.</p>		
<p>Strategy 2: Refine and continue clear, non-negotiable behavior expectations and policies.</p> <p>In order to improve student learning, Blueprint will continue the implementation of a clear Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), with an outcome of increased expectations of behavior in regards to daily rituals and routines throughout the school. Firmly establishing a positive environment will enable Dever to maximize student learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School-Culture Plan: Our goal is to establish a bully-free environment where students feel both respected and cared for. Specifics of our school culture plan will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued implementation of Dever’s PBIS strategies – students “caught” doing the right thing by any staff member anywhere in the building will be praised and rewarded; ○ Continued implementation of a bully-proof policy, where students clearly understand there is a zero-tolerance policy for bullying; ○ Blueprint will initiate weekly behavior intervention groups for students identified through analysis of behavior data. Intervention groups will be held for thirty minutes each week, with the outcome of goal setting and self-monitoring of behavior; ○ New training on culture, diversity, and inclusion will be provided to staff and families – with a particular emphasis on building awareness of the needs and diversity of Dever’s ELL student population; ○ Students will exhibit an understanding of the building-wide rituals and routines in the existence of a safe and orderly school environment; and ○ To minimize distractions and maintain an environment focused on academics and achievement, the Dever School will have a uniform policy. ● School Compact: Parents, guardians, and students will be asked to sign a Dever Compact that will outline key commitments from Blueprint, school leaders, teachers, students and parents or guardians. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>September 2014 and on-going</p>

<p>Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever’s strong school identity and build stronger family and community engagement. Blueprint will hire a community liaison to work proactively to conduct targeted outreach to families and community members to foster a sense of ownership, pride, and investment in the school and its success. This strategy explicitly addresses Dever’s Local Stakeholder Group recommendation to “maximize the engagement and support of family and community members for student learning.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build systems for effective and on-going school-to-home communication and outreach. Blueprint will conduct targeted outreach to Dever’s families, and the broader community, to ensure they are well-informed and invested in the success of the school and its students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Outreach: Blueprint will institute an orientation for parents before the school year begins and mandatory teacher bi-weekly home communication through phone calls, home visits, email or the establishment of a classroom newsletter or website. In addition, through the School Compact, Blueprint will establish an expectation that parents or guardians ensure that all students read or are read to nightly, complete all homework, and work collaboratively with their child’s teacher in achieving improved behavioral and academic outcomes. ○ Family Participation: Blueprint will work to create opportunities for parents, families, and community members to participate in the school community. Vehicles for participation may include academic events (e.g. parent-teacher conferences, curriculum nights) representation on school advisory bodies (e.g. the School Site Council), and volunteer opportunities (e.g. mentoring, homework help,). These efforts are designed to foster strong community relationships and yield an ongoing awareness, engagement, and support for the school’s improvement efforts. ○ Neighborhood Assets and Resources: Blueprint will work to leverage the assets of neighborhood organizations and resources, like the Harbor Point Community Task Force, to contribute to the school. In addition, as recommended by Dever’s Local Stakeholder Group, Blueprint will conduct proactive and targeted outreach to the Harbor Point Apartment Community to encourage students from that facility to attend the school. 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>September 2014 and on-going</p>
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Quarterly Benchmarks #4

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Create a college and career focused culture.	Blueprint will leverage external partnerships to support the creation of a college-going culture.	September 2014	One or more external partners will develop and implement a plan that engages students in activities that promote specific connections to, and awareness of, college and career pathways.	October 2014	Documentation of external partner meeting dates, agendas and attendance. Documentation of external partner’s plan to promote awareness of, and connection to, college and career pathways in students.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to school culture and college readiness.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal
Strategy 1: Create a college and career focused culture.	Visible evidence of student work displaying foundational knowledge and skills for college and career will be present throughout school and classrooms.	September 2014	100% of classrooms will include college paraphernalia. Teachers, students, and parents connect to life after high school in their conversations about goals and	October 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports- which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint’s site visit rubric – which is	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to school culture and college readiness.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
			the purpose of particular lessons		calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction. Daily visits of administrators. Surveys of students, teachers and parents.			
Strategy 2: Set clear, non-negotiable behavior expectations /policies.	A set of consistent, school-wide expectations for student behavior and a clear, tiered process for responding to infractions will be communicated to school staff, students, and families.	September 2014	100% of families will sign a Dever Compact that will outline key commitments around behavior expectations and policies from Blueprint, school leaders, teachers, students and parents or guardians and student behavior and student survey data provides	October 2014	Documentation of signed Dever Compacts from all families; school behavior data	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to school culture and college readiness.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
			evidence that the compacts are being followed by the school community.					
Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever's strong school identity and build stronger school-community ties.	Blueprint will institute mandatory bi-weekly home communication through phone calls, home visits, email or the establishment of a classroom newsletter or website for all teachers.	September 2014	80% of Dever families will receive bi-weekly communication from teachers.	October 2014	Family outreach and communication logs maintained by each teacher, documentation of classroom newsletters and websites.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to parent and family engagement.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal
Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever's strong school identity and build stronger school-community ties.	Blueprint will create opportunities for parents, families, and community members to participate in the school community that incorporates	October 2014	A monthly schedule of school events and volunteer opportunities will be provided to all families and participation data increases.	October 2014	School Event Calendar Documentation of attendance at school events and volunteer opportunities.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to parent and family engagement.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when
ties.	their input.	
Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever's strong school identity and build stronger school-community ties.	Building upon successful structures already in place at the Dever, Blueprint will develop a school-wide positive culture plan that includes incentives for exemplary behavior and scholarship, and learning environment expectations.	September 2014
Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever's strong school identity and build stronger school-community ties.	Blueprint and school leadership will set ambitious goals for student learning, attendance, and behavior. These goals will be posted	September 2014

Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool
100% of classrooms will be clean and orderly with school-wide behavior and scholarship expectations clearly posted.	November 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint's site visit rubric – which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction.
100% of students and teachers will be able to demonstrate awareness and understanding of school-wide goals.	November 2014	Blueprint Site Visit Reports which include detailed overviews of data collected, and observations made, using Blueprint's site visit rubric –

Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to building a culture of academic success.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal
Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to building a culture of academic success.	September 2015	Managing Director School Principal

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when
	prominently throughout the school.	
Strategy 3: Reinforce Dever's strong school identity and build stronger school-community ties.	Support for, and participation in, school activities by community partners will be actively enlisted.	

Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool
		which is calibrated to identify best-practices for instruction and school culture.
A monthly schedule of school events and volunteer opportunities will be provided to all community partners and participation data increases.		Documentation of community partners' attendance at, and involvement in, school events and volunteer opportunities.

Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to parent and family engagement.		

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

Priority Area for Improvement #5

Hire and cultivate high-performing and high-potential staff: Blueprint will ensure Dever is staffed with a highly effective principal, leadership team, and teachers who are dedicated to pursuing transformational change for the school.

Rationale for Identifying Area #5 as a Priority

Having qualified, effective, and talented staff is a fundamental requirement for developing, implementing, and maintaining a successful school turnaround. Thus, Blueprint will prioritize the recruitment, hiring and cultivation of effective, passionate, dedicated and experienced professionals. This team will be an essential asset in Blueprint's efforts to plan, execute, and monitor Dever's turnaround strategies.

Challenges Addressed by Priority Area #5

Currently, Dever has a full-time literacy coach for grades 3-5 and part-time coaches for grades K-2. Dever does not have a full time math coach on staff, and the district provides a math coach to work with the school approximately two days per month. Thus, there has been an uneven distribution of instructional coaching.

Although Dever provides opportunities for teachers to engage in professional learning communities (PLCs), scheduling structures are inconsistent from grade to grade and the number of transitions currently required to accommodate the PLC schedule appear to be having a negative impact on both the learning climate and on students' experience of the school day at Dever.

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

Key Strategy	Owner	Timeline
<p>Strategy 1: Hire high performing and high potential leaders, teachers and related service providers. Blueprint will recruit top instructional talent, provide targeted professional development, and hold teachers individually and collectively accountable for increasing student achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening and Selection of Existing Staff: The Receiver and the school principal will have the sole discretion to select the staff for any and all positions at the school. In order to execute this authority, consistent with G.L. 69 1J(o) (8), following consultation with the union, all existing Dever staff will be asked to reapply to work at the school. Specifically, the Principal may select staff for Boston Teachers Union (BTU) positions without regard to seniority within the BTU or past practices between the Boston School Committee and the BTU. Further, the Principal, in collaboration with Blueprint, may formulate job descriptions, duties, and responsibilities for any and all positions in the school. The Principal may make adjustments annually. The Principal may unilaterally move staff to other positions if they are properly licensed for those positions. Additional necessary autonomies are included in Appendix A. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of Dever Turnaround Plan and Application Process with Existing School Staff: The first step in this process will be to facilitate a series of optional group meetings with existing staff to explain Dever’s turnaround plan and the anticipated changes to school policy and working conditions that will occur as a result of its implementation. An outline of the Dever application process will be reviewed. Staff members who wish to continue working at Dever will have the opportunity to submit application materials for review and consideration. ○ Performance-based Interviews and Evaluations: Blueprint will screen and evaluate existing staff by conducting in-person interviews; observing classroom instruction; and reviewing student achievement data, district staff evaluations and other relevant data sources. Blueprint will screen staff using its Teacher and School Leader Selection Toolkits, which are designed to highlight competencies that are aligned with effective teaching and leadership in a turnaround school setting. These include: drive for results, ability to influence and motivate others, data-driven 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>Blueprint Director of Human Capital</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>February 2014- Ongoing</p>

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>problem-solving, ability to overcome adversity, sense of self-efficacy, and initiative and persistence. These mindsets should complement and enhance traditional teaching skills such as strong pedagogy and delivery, and effective classroom management. Final selection decisions will be conditional on feedback from professional references and background screening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Targeted Recruitment for Teachers and Leaders. Blueprint will implement a targeted recruitment strategy for Dever that will explicitly focus on ensuring the school is staffed with teachers, leaders and support staff who possess competencies that will best support the kind of high quality instruction and leadership the school requires. This will include targeted recruiting of teachers with three or more years of instructional experience and demonstrable impact with a variety of student populations, especially ELLs and students with disabilities. Blueprint will leverage our national network and established partnerships with education organizations, as well as the local Massachusetts network in order to identify the most capable and high-performing candidates for open staff positions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Leadership: Excellent school leadership is a fundamental requirement for developing, implementing, and maintaining a successful school turnaround. Thus, Blueprint will prioritize the recruitment and hiring of a top-level principal for Dever who will, in turn, be able to assemble a qualified and talented instructional team. ○ Building a Candidate Pipeline: Blueprint will work nationally, across the Commonwealth, and locally in Boston to recruit top-quality candidates for all of its positions. In addition to finding talent through its national networks, Blueprint will conduct direct outreach to state-wide teacher preparatory programs. Blueprint has developed formal partnerships with top-ranking education organizations, such as Teach for America and teacher preparation programs at local universities, in order to build a pipeline of candidates for open staff positions at Dever. Notably, Blueprint will focus leveraging the Teach for America alumni network in order to bring demonstrably effective teachers and leaders who have experience working in an urban, high needs school. Blueprint will also investigate other potential partnerships that could bring teams of teachers and leaders to Dever. 		
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Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>Screening will include performance-based assessments, demonstration debriefs, assessment of candidates' experience with using data to promote effective practice, in-person interviews targeting candidates' beliefs and values regarding serving high-need student populations, the academic performance of schools they have previously led or worked in, and their experience leading or teaching in turnaround schools. Final selection decisions will be conditional on feedback from professional references and background screening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compensation structures: Blueprint will leverage the autonomies provided by Level 5 receivership regarding the pay scale and structure of school leader and teacher salaries to attract high performing, highly qualified candidates with opportunities for a performance-based system of compensation. Effective in School Year 2015-2016, a new performance-based compensation system will be used to compensate employees based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. See Appendix A for additional information about Dever's working conditions. ○ Fellow Recruitment and Selection: Blueprint manages the national recruitment, selection, training, professional development, and evaluation of Fellows who will provide math support to selected students in Grades 3-5. Blueprint's Regional Director, National Fellows Program Director and other members of the national team will train and support a school-based, Fellow Coordinator to oversee student assignments and support Fellows in delivering effective tutorial sessions. 		
<p>Strategy 2: Systems for Teacher Support, Monitoring and Evaluation. Blueprint will establish a comprehensive system based on the Massachusetts educator evaluation framework for regularly evaluating and monitoring teaching staff at Dever that will be used to identify and support high performing and high potential individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Daily Monitoring for all Staff: Dever's system of support and evaluation will include <u>daily</u> monitoring for evidence of lesson planning and weekly teacher monitoring of formative assessment data to focus on delivery of high-quality instruction. Teachers will be observed at least once every two weeks by school leadership, coaches and/or Blueprint staff 	<p>Blueprint Managing Director</p> <p>School Principal</p>	<p>February 2014- Ongoing</p>

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>and will be provided actionable feedback in an effort to support their continued growth and improvement and provide targeted professional development opportunities in real time. Blueprint will then work proactively to use evaluation and support systems to retain effective staff members at the school for the long term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiated Support for Staff: Teachers at Dever will have access to two full-time instructional specialists (math and literacy). These instructional specialists will provide differentiated, individualized support to teachers to improve their instructional practice. This embedded support will include, but not be limited to, facilitating data dialogues with teachers to help determine strategies that will best support the specific learning needs identified through real-time data collection and analysis; leading model lessons; and providing one-on-one coaching sessions for teachers. • Professional Expectations for Staff: Teachers and other professional staff will be expected to achieve and maintain high quality education at Dever Elementary School. In addition to their traditional responsibilities, all staff members are expected to be involved in a variety of educational and administrative activities necessary to fulfill the mission of the school. Blueprint, working with the principal, will have the authority to set professional expectations and put policies and procedures in place for the school that will promote the rapid academic achievement of Dever’s students. (See Appendix A.) • Dispute resolution: The Receiver will utilize a dispute resolution process that values employees’ input and allows for the rapid and effective resolution of employee concerns. • Policies and agreements: Certain changes to the district’s policies, agreements, and working terms as they relate to the Dever Elementary School are necessary to achieve the goals of the turnaround plan. Appendix A contains changes that will take effect as of July 2014 and must be incorporated into future collective bargaining agreements as they relate to the Dever school. 		
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Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

Quarterly Benchmarks #5

Strategy	Implementation Milestone	By when	Early Evidence of Change	By when	Measurement tool	Expected Outcome	By when	Owner
Strategy 1: Hire high performing and high potential leaders, teachers, and related service providers.	Existing staff screened and selected.	May 2014	Final selection decisions will have been made based on a comprehensive screening and selection process informed by research on key competencies that are aligned with effective teaching and leadership in a turnaround setting.	May 2014	Documentation of screening and selection process for all existing staff members, including interview questions, observation notes, relevant performance data, reference checks, and all other documentation collected to inform final hiring decisions.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	September 2015	Blueprint Director of Human Capital Managing Director School Principal

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>Strategy 1: Hire high performing and high potential leaders, teachers, and related service providers.</p>	<p>For every opening at the Dever, there will be a minimum of 5 applicants.</p> <p>Pipeline of qualified and diverse applicants from across the country established through leveraging Blueprint's national network and partnerships.</p>	<p>May 2014</p>	<p>Initial recruitment targets met for 90% of known openings at Dever.</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	<p>At least 150 applications processed through Blueprint's application portal</p>	<p>Reduced time from (about 3 months to 1 month based on pipeline development) to fill known or unexpected openings using an established base of highly qualified candidates to ensure students receive continuous instruction from an effective and qualified teacher thus improving student academic performance.</p>	<p>May 2014 - ongoing</p>	<p>Blueprint Director of Human Capital</p>
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Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>Strategy 1: Hire high performing and high potential leaders, teachers, and related service providers.</p>	<p>Principal and leadership team hired to lead school.</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	<p>100 qualified applications received by April 1</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	<p>The number of viable candidates received and processed through Blueprint’s application portal.</p>	<p>Dever will be staffed with a highly effective principal, leadership team, and teachers who are dedicated to pursuing transformational change for the school.</p>	<p>April 2014</p>	<p>Blueprint Director of Human Capital Managing Director Executive Director</p>
<p>Strategy 1: Hire high performing and high potential leaders, teachers, and related service providers.</p>	<p>Hiring for all open staff positions complete.</p>	<p>June 2014</p>	<p>Final selection decisions will have been made based on a comprehensive screening and selection process informed by research on key competencies that are aligned with effective teaching and leadership in a</p>	<p>May 2014</p>	<p>Candidates hired for an anticipated 55 staff positions – to be confirmed as budget and funding is determined which will dictate final staffing roster.</p>	<p>Dever will be staffed with a highly effective principal, leadership team, and teachers who are dedicated to pursuing transformational change for the school</p>	<p>September 2015</p>	<p>Blueprint Director of Human Capital Managing Director</p>

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

			turnaround setting.					
Strategy 2: Systems for Teacher Support, Monitoring and Evaluation.	Comprehensive system established for staff observation, feedback, and regular evaluation.	August 2014	90% of teachers are observed bi-weekly and provided actionable feedback. 80% of follow-up observations show evidence that this feedback is resulting in improved practice and accelerated student learning.	November 2014	Observation notes and documentation for every teacher observation at Dever - Teachers will have access to observation feedback and recommended professional development to support growth.	Dever will meet or exceed all of its Measurable Annual Goals related to student achievement including: narrowing proficiency gaps in ELA and math; and demonstrating growth in student performance in ELA and math.	June 2014	Managing Director School Administration

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

<p>Strategy 2: Systems for Teacher Support, Monitoring and Evaluation.</p>	<p>Opportunities available for teachers to develop their leadership skills and use some non-teaching time to serve as coaches.</p>	<p>September 2014</p>	<p>80% of experienced teachers serving as mentors report observing noticeable evidence of feedback incorporated in ways that are accelerating student achievement.</p>	<p>November 2014</p>	<p>Observation notes and documentation for every mentor/mentee meeting, results from questionnaire distributed to mentors/mentees.</p>	<p>Positive, supportive and productive relationships are fostered among school staff, as evidenced by a staff survey conducted at the beginning and end of year.</p>	<p>June 2015</p>	<p>Managing Director School Administration</p>
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Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

Statutory Requirements	Related Priority Area(s)
Achievement gaps for limited English-proficient, special education and low-income students	Priority Area 1 Priority Area 2 Priority Area 3
Alternative English language learning programs for limited English proficient students	Priority Area 1 Priority Area 2
Social service and health needs of students at the school and their families, to help students arrive and remain at school ready to learn; may include mental health and substance abuse screening	Priority Area 4
Improved or expanded child welfare services and, as appropriate, law enforcement services in the school community, in order to promote a safe and secure learning environment	Priority Area 4
Improved workforce development services provided to students at the school and their families, to provide students and families with meaningful employment skills and opportunities	Priority Area 4
A financial plan for the school, including any additional funds to be provided by the district, commonwealth, federal government or other sources	Appendix C
Formation of a Parent Advisory Committee focused on English Language Learners (if applicable)	Priority Area 1
Strong leadership in schools, including a new or current principal with a track record of success	Priority Area 5
Redesigned school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration	Priority Area 2

Turnaround Plan Authorization

The turnaround plan is authorized for a period of three years. The Receiver may develop additional components of the plan, which must be approved by the Commissioner.

Turnaround Plan: Priority Areas for School Improvement

Guidance on Changes in Policy and Strategies to Consider under State Law

Curriculum and Instruction

- Expand, alter, or replace curriculum:** The Commissioner may expand, alter or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses
- Expand use of time:** The Commissioner may expand the school day or school year or both of the school
- Add Kindergarten or pre-Kindergarten:** The Commissioner may, for an elementary school, add prekindergarten and full day kindergarten classes, if the school does not already have such classes

Financial and Asset Management

- Reallocate school budget:** The Commissioner may reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school
- Reallocate district budget:** The Commissioner may provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district, if the school does not already receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district

Human Resources

- Attract and retain leaders and teachers:** The Commissioner may provide funds, subject to appropriation, to increase the salary of an administrator, or teacher in the school, to attract or retain highly qualified administrators, or teachers or to reward administrators, or teachers who work in chronically underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan
- Make staffing changes:** The Commissioner may, following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers and staff to reapply for their positions in the school
- Implement a new system of evaluation and performance compensation:** The Commissioner may establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with a common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, professional development, teacher advancement, school culture and organizational structure
- Leadership development:** The Commissioner may establish a plan for professional development for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership

Professional Development and Collaboration

- Embedded professional development:** The Commissioner may include a provision of job embedded professional development for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback
- Expanded teacher planning time:** The Commissioner may provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction

Leadership and Governance

- Change Contract or Collective Bargaining Agreements:** The Commissioner may limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided that the Commissioner shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced; and provided that the Commissioner may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising authority pursuant to this clause
- Change District Policies:** The Commissioner may limit, suspend or change 1 or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school

Additional Strategies

- Study best practices:** The Commissioner may develop a strategy to search for and study best practices in areas of demonstrated deficiency in the school
- Address mobility and transiency:** The Commissioner may establish strategies to address mobility and transiency among the student population of the school
- Additional strategies:** The Commissioner may include additional components based on the reasons why the school was designated as chronically underperforming and the recommendations of the local stakeholder group

Appendix A: Required Working Conditions

Following are the terms for working conditions and compensation specific to the Level 5 school(s) in the district. These terms have been drafted with the understanding that the Commissioner and Receiver reserve the right to make additional changes to the collective bargaining agreement and/or any existing practice or school district policy as applied to the school as needed and that nothing contained in the turnaround plan or the collective bargaining agreement shall be construed to limit the rights of the Commissioner as they are provided for under G.L. c.69, §1J.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYEES AT THE DEVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Pursuant to G.L. c. 69, §1J, the Commissioner must create a turnaround plan intended to maximize the rapid improvement of the academic achievement of students in the school. The Commissioner will take all appropriate steps necessary to support the goals of the turnaround plan. Among other things, the Commissioner may:

- (1) expand, alter or replace the curriculum and program offerings of the school, including the implementation of research-based early literacy programs, early interventions for struggling readers and the teaching of advanced placement courses or other rigorous nationally or internationally recognized courses, if the school does not already have such programs or courses;
- (2) reallocate the uses of the existing budget of the school;
- (3) provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district, if the school does not already receive funding from the district at least equal to the average per pupil funding received for students of the same classification and grade level in the district;
- (4) provide funds, subject to appropriation, to increase the salary of an administrator, or teacher in the school, in order to attract or retain highly-qualified administrators or teachers or to reward administrators, or teachers who work in chronically underperforming schools that achieve the annual goals set forth in the turnaround plan;
- (5) expand the school day or school year or both of the school;
- (6) for an elementary school, add pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten classes, if the school does not already have such classes;
- (7) limit, suspend, or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school; provided, however, that the commissioner shall not reduce the compensation of an administrator, teacher or staff member unless the hours of the person are proportionately reduced; and provided further, that the commissioner may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising authority pursuant to this clause;
- (8) following consultation with applicable local unions, require the principal and all administrators, teachers and staff to reapply for their positions in the school, with full discretion vested in the superintendent regarding his consideration of and decisions on rehiring based on the reapplications;
- (9) limit, suspend or change 1 or more school district policies or practices, as such policies or practices relate to the school;
- (10) include a provision of job-embedded professional development for teachers at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that involve teacher input and feedback;
- (11) provide for increased opportunities for teacher planning time and collaboration focused on improving student instruction;
- (12) establish a plan for professional development for administrators at the school, with an emphasis on strategies that develop leadership skills and use the principles of distributive leadership;

(13) establish steps to assure a continuum of high expertise teachers by aligning the following processes with the common core of professional knowledge and skill: hiring, induction, teacher evaluation, professional development, teacher advancement, school culture and organizational structure;

The terms outlined below are necessary for the successful implementation of the turnaround plan and reflect mandatory changes to the school's policies, agreements, work rules, and any practices or policies. These terms will take effect July 1, 2014. The Commissioner reserves the right to make additional changes to collective bargaining agreements as needed. Nothing contained in the turnaround plan or the collective bargaining agreements shall be construed to limit the rights of the Commissioner as they are provided for under G.L. c.69, §1J.

Central to the School Turnaround Plan is the requirement that the Dever Elementary School make effective use of its resources to maximize student achievement. In particular, the Dever Elementary School Turnaround Plan requires the Receiver to develop a new performance-based compensation system, which will contain a career path and which will compensate employees based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. The compensation plan must be affordable and sustainable and, once developed, could serve as a model for the district to consider in setting compensation policies.

Part I, below, sets out working conditions for all staff at the school.

Part II, below, sets out the performance-based compensation system.

These terms shall supersede any contrary provisions of the district's collective bargaining agreements or any pre-existing practice or policy. The terms reflect mandatory changes to the district's policies, agreements, working rules and any practices or policies, and are implemented pursuant to G.L. c. 69, § 1J. Provisions of the collective bargaining agreement that are inconsistent with or do not otherwise support the goals of the turnaround plan are hereby suspended as applied to the Dever Elementary School.

I. WORKING CONDITIONS

To implement the School Turnaround Plan, the Commissioner has selected Blueprint Schools Network ("Blueprint") to serve as the Receiver. The Receiver shall have full managerial and operational authority for the school.

The Receiver retains final authority over school-based decision-making and his or her determination shall be final.

Conditions Necessary for BLUEPRINT SCHOOLS NETWORK to Succeed

During the Receivership by Blueprint Schools Network, the Dever Elementary School will operate as a traditional (non-charter) school. Key autonomies would be derived from those articulated in the Commissioner's school turnaround plan. Below are the conditions and autonomies that are necessary for the Receiver to be successful in the transformation of the Dever Elementary School from a low-performing to a high-performing school:

Staffing

Collective Bargaining Agreements:

- All staff members at the school will be members of their respective collective bargaining units. However, certain terms of the collective bargaining agreement in effect across the local district will not apply at the Dever Elementary School managed by Blueprint. Also, prior Level 4 agreements and/or decisions of the Dever Elementary School Joint Resolution Committee (JRC) will not apply beyond June 30, 2014. School employees will also accrue seniority while employed at the school. The Receiver will adopt a new compensation strategy to be effective July 1, 2014 and a new performance-based compensation system for teachers will be in effect beginning July 1, 2015. (See Part 2).

Dispute Resolution:

Any employee assigned to the Dever Elementary School shall use the following process as the exclusive mechanism for resolving all disputes. This process replaces the contractual grievance and arbitration provision.

- The employee may bring a grievance to the Principal/Head of School in writing within five (5) school days of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the grievance. The employee should specify the desired resolution.
- The employee may be represented by a union representative at any stage of the dispute resolution process.
- Within 5 school days of the receipt of the concern, the Principal/Head of School should meet with the employee to discuss the concern.
- Within 5 school days of the meeting, the Principal/Head of School should issue a decision to the employee.
- If the employee is not satisfied with the resolution issued by the Principal/Head of School, s/he may bring the concern to the Receiver in writing within 10 school days of receiving the Principal's decision.
- Failure of the employee to advance the grievance to the next level within the time period shall be deemed to be acceptance of the prior grievance response.
- The Receiver may suspend the time periods in writing with notice to the union.
- The Receiver should issue a decision within 5 school days of the meeting. This decision will be sent in writing to the employee.
- If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the Receiver, the employee may bring the concern in writing to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In bringing the concern to the Commissioner, the employee must provide all correspondence presented and received in the previous steps. The Receiver's decision will be entitled to substantial deference during the Commissioner's review. The Commissioner's determination will be final.

Personnel:

- Blueprint has the sole discretion to select the staff for any and all positions at the Dever Elementary School, including administrators, teachers, maintenance staff, nurses, security guards, etc. There is to be no requirement for Blueprint to employ any specific individuals in the school that it operates. Blueprint has the sole discretion to decide which staff to retain or renew annually.
- Blueprint may select staff for union positions without regard to seniority within the union or past practices between the local school committee and the union.
- Blueprint may formulate job descriptions, duties and responsibilities for any and all positions at the Dever Elementary School.
- Blueprint may establish a code of conduct for all staff.
- Staff in the existing school (and its district) shall not have attachment rights to any position and the Principal may unilaterally move any school staff member to another position provided that the staff member is properly licensed and certified.
- Blueprint may involuntarily excess members of the local union at the Dever Elementary School. The provisions in the local union agreement regarding excessing, seniority and transfer shall not apply to the school managed by Blueprint except that union members shall continue to accrue seniority.
- Blueprint may remove staff as a result of misconduct or performance deficiencies and shall not be bound by the practices or procedures established between the local school district and any collective bargaining unit.
- The school and its employees are exempt from the layoff and recall language in the local union contract and any associated practices.
- Blueprint will be responsible for hiring, managing and evaluating the necessary personnel to serve Students with Disabilities in accordance with their needs and services/supports identified in IEPs.
- Blueprint will be responsible for all hiring, managing, and evaluating staff required to meet the needs of students who are English Language Learners.
- Blueprint may outsource positions in whole or in part, may transfer bargaining unit work in the best interests of the school operations and the students it serves, and may hire part-time employees at its discretion.

Professional Obligations

Teachers and other professional staff shall devote whatever time is required to achieve and maintain high quality education in the Dever Elementary School. For example, unless formally excused, teachers and other professional staff shall participate in all regular school functions during or outside of the normal school day, including faculty meetings, parent conferences, department meetings, curriculum meetings, graduations and other similar activities. Teachers will also be afforded regular preparatory time during their work week. Such preparatory time may include common planning periods and professional development.

Teachers

- The term of employment for teachers will be July 1 through June 30, and will include the following:
 - Up to 20 days of professional development and planning time before the school year begins, with each day including up to eight hours of professional development and/or staff planning time;
 - Up to 185 instructional days; and

- Up to 5 days of professional development and planning days after the school year begins, with each day including up to eight hours of professional development and/or staff planning time.
- Blueprint and Dever Elementary School leaders will develop the schedule for utilization of all professional development and planning days, both prior to and throughout the academic year.
- Blueprint will select and use its own Teacher Evaluation process consistent with state regulations.
- Except as noted below, the standard workday for BTU members at the Dever Elementary School during a school day will be nine hours. For the majority of BTU members, required hours will approximate 7:15am–4:15pm. While some BTU members may be asked to work a different schedule to accommodate school programming, required hours will never exceed 45 hours per week.

The standard workday for all Dever Elementary School Staff and Full-time Service Providers during a school day will be nine hours.

Grade Level Teachers: Grade Level Teachers will have a minimum of 45 minutes of planning time during all full days.

Math Fellows: Blueprint expects to engage full-time Math Fellows to provide math tutoring services to selected Dever Elementary School students in not greater than a 4:1 student to tutor ratio. Math Fellows will be AmeriCorps members (conditional on approved continuation of AmeriCorps funding) and subject to AmeriCorps rules and regulations that govern their living stipend and responsibilities. The working conditions and compensation for Math Fellows are set by the Receiver and are not subject to terms and conditions of any district collective bargaining agreement. Workday and planning time expectations for the Math Fellows shall be consistent with other Full-time staff members of the Dever Elementary School.

Blueprint may outsource positions in whole or in part, may transfer bargaining unit work in the best interests of the school operations and the students it serves, and may hire part-time employees at its discretion.

All Staff Members:

All staff members are expected to participate in Professional Development and Collaboration activities and staff meetings, unless otherwise directed by the Principal.

During a typical Monday-Friday week, all staff members are expected to perform additional duties that are necessary to fulfill the mission of the Dever Elementary School. These duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Substitute coverage of classes and duties of others who are absent from school;
- Coverage of afterschool activities, not exceeding 120 minutes per week; and
- Tutoring of students; not exceeding 165 minutes per week, unless tutoring represents a primary component of a BTU member’s job responsibility (e.g., Special Education teachers, ESL teachers).
- Participation in family conference evenings during the school year;
- Phone contact with families about the academic progress of students;
- Preparation of individual student Progress Reports, and Report Cards;
- Leading student extracurricular activities;
- Participating in staff recruitment and selection processes;
- Maintaining a subject or grade-level-area bulletin board and data walls;
- Engaging and Collaborating with Math Fellows Program

- Working regularly with school administrators to improve one’s instructional practices;
- Checking homework on a daily basis; and
- Attending student-related meetings.

Employees Represented by BASAS

The provisions in the BASAS Contract that address working conditions shall not apply to BASAS members employed at the Dever Elementary School. The working conditions for all BASAS members at the Dever Elementary School are articulated below. BASAS members selected to work at Dever Elementary School are voluntarily electing to work at the school and will acknowledge doing so by signing a form developed by the Receiver.

The term of employment will be from July 1 – June 30 and will include the following:

- Up to 40 working days prior to the first day of school, including but not limited to the 20 days of staff orientation in August;
- Up to 185 instructional days;
- Up to 5 days of professional development and planning days after the school year begins, with each day including up to eight hours of professional development and/or staff planning time; and
- 2 working days after the last day of school, but before the end of this term of employment.

The standard workday for BASAS members will be 10 hours. For the majority of BASAS members, required hours will approximate 7:15am–5:15. While some BASAS members may be asked to work a different schedule to accommodate school programming (e.g., Saturday programming), required hours will never exceed 50 hours per week.

The standard workday for BASAS members varies from the standard workday at the Dever Elementary School. As a result, Boston Public Schools’ time-reporting system does not reflect the actual hours of all Dever Elementary School employees’ workdays.

All BASAS members are expected to meet with all direct reports at least once every two weeks. BASAS members that supervise instructional staff are expected to observe and provide actionable feedback at least once every two weeks. All BASAS members are expected to participate in weekly administrative meetings. These meetings may periodically occur outside of traditional hours. All BASAS members are expected to develop, plan, and execute professional development for the Dever Elementary School staff members.

Unless otherwise directed by the Principal, all BASAS members are expected to participate in Professional Development and Collaboration activities and staff meetings one afternoon a week.

All BASAS members have some responsibilities for the overall effective operation of the school. In addition to traditional responsibilities and those duties listed above, all Dever Elementary School BASAS members are expected to be involved in a variety of educational and administrative activities that are necessary to fulfill the missions of the school and of Blueprint Schools Network. These activities may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Drafting performance evaluations for each of their direct reports;
- Working with the school principal to plan Family, Teacher, and Student orientations;

- Communicating proactively and effectively with the Dever Elementary School families when concerns regarding their children arise;
- Participating in three parent conference evenings during the school year;
- Participating in staff recruitment and selection processes;
- Working regularly with school administrators to improve their own practice and the instructional practices of their teachers;
- Attending student-related meetings, as needed;
- Serving as an advisor to a small cohort of students; and
- Ensuring that teachers create standards-aligned, rigorous curricula and that it is well documented.
- Connecting with and providing professional support for school leaders in other Blueprint Network Schools.

Feedback, Performance Improvement, and Dismissal

Blueprint and Dever Elementary School leaders aim to provide ongoing feedback, coaching, and support to all employees. If and when an employee is not meeting the expectations of his or her job, Blueprint and/or the principal may choose to place an employee on a Performance Improvement Plan. If and when the principal and/or her designee has determined that an employee's performance is egregious, the school may elect to remove an individual from the school without instituting a Performance Improvement Plan.

Employees Represented by the Administrative Guild

The provisions in the Guild Contract that address working conditions for Guild members shall not apply to Guild members employed at Dever Elementary School. The working conditions for Guild members at the Dever Elementary School are articulated below. Guild members selected to work at the Dever Elementary School are voluntarily electing to work at the school and will acknowledge doing so by signing a form developed by the Receiver.

The term of employment will include the following:

- Up to 185 instructional days;
- Up to 5 days of professional development and planning days after the school year begins, with each day including up to eight hours of professional development and/or staff planning time; and
- Up to 37 additional work days either before the school year begins or after the school year ends.

In the case that a Guild member begins work at the Dever Elementary School after July 1, that individual's additional work days will be pro-rated based on his/her start date in relation to the July 1st date.

The standard workday for Guild members during school days will be nine hours. The standard workday for Guild members during non-school days will be eight hours, 8:00am-4:00pm. The Principal and/or the direct supervisor has discretion to adjust these hours to meet the needs of the school, but Guild members' required hours will never exceed 50 hours per week.

The standard workday for members of this union varies from the standard workday at the Dever Elementary School. As a result, Boston Public Schools' time-reporting system does not reflect the actual hours of all Dever Elementary School employees' workdays.

Guild staff members will be expected to staff the front office at the Dever Elementary School. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Oversee the day to day activities of the school;

- Serve as the main point of contact in the school reception area;
- Manage phones (answering calls, re-directing calls, taking messages, placing calls, creating school announcements, etc.);
- Manage the collection and maintenance of student, personnel, and school information (receiving forms and paperwork, tracking missing forms, managing databases, updating contact information, maintaining records, etc.);
- Manage school-wide daily systems (managing student attendance, tracking the student discipline system, etc.);
- Plan and manage logistics and preparations for school events and activities as needed;
- Support staff meetings, staff retreats, and staff orientation;
- Greet and document all visitors;
- Manage school maintenance and supply systems;
- Maintain office equipment and furnishings;
- Maintain school calendar of events;
- Process student and faculty applications; and
- Participate in some elements of an intensive staff orientation and training for up to four weeks prior to the school year.

All Guild members have some responsibilities for the overall effective operation of the school. All Dever Elementary School Guild members are expected to be involved in a variety of educational and administrative activities that are necessary to fulfill the mission of the Dever Elementary School. These activities may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Participation in parent conference evenings during the school year;
- Support during transitions, arrival, dismissal, lunch, etc.;
- Phone contact with parents/guardians about the academic progress of students;
- Preparation of individual student weekly reports, Progress Reports, and Report Cards;
- Participating in staff recruitment and selection processes; and
- Serving as an advisor to a small cohort of students.

Feedback, Performance Improvement, and Dismissal

Blueprint and Dever Elementary School leaders aim to provide ongoing feedback, coaching, and support to all employees. If and when an employee is not meeting the expectations of his or her job, Blueprint or the principal may choose to place an employee on a Performance Improvement Plan. If and when the principal and/or her designee has determined that an employee's performance is egregious, the school may elect to remove individual without instituting a Performance Improvement Plan.

II. PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION SYSTEM

The Commissioner is now releasing certain implementation terms of the Dever Elementary School Turnaround Plan relating to teachers. As the Working Conditions and Compensation document (which was shared and discussed with the unions) expressed, “[c]entral to the Turnaround Plan is the requirement that the Dever Elementary School make effective use of its resources to maximize student achievement. In particular, the Dever Elementary School Turnaround Plan requires the Receiver to develop a new performance-based compensation system, which will contain a career path and which will compensate employees based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. The compensation plan must be affordable and sustainable and, once developed could serve as a model for the District to consider in setting compensation policies.”

As part of the Turnaround Plan, the compensation provisions of the collective bargaining agreement are suspended effective June 30, 2014. The Dever Elementary School's compensation system during the receivership shall be modified, based on the following components.

Phase One:

Year 1 (2014-2015 school year):

- All teachers who are selected by the Receiver to work at the Dever Elementary School for the 2014-2015 school year shall be compensated according to the Boston Teachers Union salary scale for the 2014-2015 school year, including steps, lanes, and career awards, if applicable.
- Incumbent teachers who remain at the Dever Elementary School shall receive a \$4,100 stipend during the 2014-2015 school year.
- Teachers who are newly hired or newly assigned to the Dever Elementary School will receive a \$2,000 stipend during the 2014-2015 school year.

Phase Two:

Year 2 and beyond (beginning with the 2015-2016 school year):

Given the fluidity of the current revenue-setting process and budgetary environment for the District, it is necessary to extend the time for developing the future compensation model. Prior to the release of the final Dever Elementary School Turnaround Plan, the Receiver (in coordination with the District and the Commissioner) will develop a performance-based compensation system which will contain a career path and will compensate teachers based on individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. Effective July 1, 2015, this system will replace the 2014-2015 BTU salary model.

Prior to finalizing the details of the new performance-based compensation system, the Boston Teacher's Union will be provided with notice and an opportunity to consult.

III. SUMMARY OF BARGAINING ACTIVITY

On January 29, 2014, Commissioner Chester sent letters to Boston School Committee and several unions representing employees who work at the Dever and Holland schools notifying them that the turnaround plans for these schools would require changes to the collective bargaining agreements, and requiring them to bargain with respect to these changes. The district scheduled sessions with each union. DESE provided the required changes to working conditions at the Dever and Holland schools to the Superintendent. The Boston Public Schools Superintendent assigned key staff members and the school department's labor relations attorney to handle the negotiations. There were several preparatory meetings which included the receivers, DESE representatives, and school department personnel.

Boston Teacher's Union (BTU)

Representatives of the Boston Public Schools (BPS) met with representatives of the BTU on Monday, February 24, 2014 pursuant to the Commissioner's directive. The negotiation session was also attended by representatives of the Receivers for both the Holland and Dever Schools, as well as a representative of the Commissioner. Prior to the meeting, the Boston School Committee had provided the BTU with a Working Conditions Summary Document for each school, that outlined various changes to terms and conditions of Dever Elementary School Preliminary Turnaround Plan, submitted to the Superintendent, School Committee, and Local Stakeholder

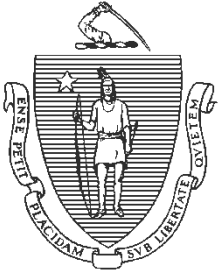
employment and set forth a model compensation plan which would serve as a basis for compensation changes in both schools. Boston School Committee representatives and the Receivers explained the intended changes at both schools and answered questions posed by the BTU. The BTU made counterproposals to the changes, but ultimately no agreement was reached. As a consequence of the district's budgetary situation, a decision was made to await further details regarding next year's budget for the schools before presenting a detailed compensation proposal. It is anticipated that as soon as the budget uncertainties are resolved, the Receivers will consult with the union regarding the performance-based compensation plan.

Boston Association of School Administrators (BASAS)

Representatives of the BPS met with representatives of BASAS on Friday, February 28, 2014, pursuant to the Commissioner's directive. The negotiation session was also attended by representatives of the Receivers for both the Holland and Dever Schools as well as a representative of the Commissioner. Prior to the meeting, the Boston School Committee had provided BASAS with a Working Conditions Summary Document for each school that outlined various changes to terms and conditions of employment. Boston School Committee representatives and the Receivers explained the intended changes at both schools and answered questions posed by BASAS. BASAS made counterproposals to the changes, but ultimately no agreement was reached.

Administrative Guild (GUILD)

Representatives of the BPS met with representatives of the Administrative Guild which represents school secretaries on Thursday, February 27, 2014, pursuant to the Commissioner's directive. The negotiation session was also attended by representatives of the Receivers for both the Holland and Dever Schools as well as a representative of the Commissioner. Prior to the meeting, the Boston School Committee had provided the Guild with a Working Conditions Summary Document for each school that outlined various changes to terms and conditions of employment. Boston School Committee representatives and the Receivers explained the intended changes at both schools and answered questions posed by Guild representatives. The Guild made counterproposals, but ultimately no agreement was reached.



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000
TTY: N.E.T. Relay 1-800-439-2370

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

January 29, 2014

Michael O'Neill, Chair
Boston School Committee
26 Court Street, 4th floor
Boston, MA 02108

Richard Stutman, President
Boston Teachers Union
180 Mt. Vernon Street
Boston, MA 02125

Re: Dever and Holland Elementary Schools

Dear Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Stutman:

As you know, after careful consideration, and pursuant to the authority granted to me in the Achievement Gap Act, G.L. c. 69, § 1J, I announced on October 30, 2013 my determination that the Dever and Holland Elementary schools are chronically underperforming – Level 5 schools under the state accountability system. Having received the recommendations from the Local Stakeholder Group for each school, I am now in the process creating turnaround plans for these schools.

The Achievement Gap Act states that in creating the turnaround plan, I may “limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school. . . .” Chapter 69, § 1J(o)(7) The statute also provides that I may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising this authority.

The turnaround plans for these schools will require changes in the collective bargaining agreement. Both the Dever turnaround plan and the Holland turnaround plan will include a longer school day, a longer school year, a performance based compensation system, and new

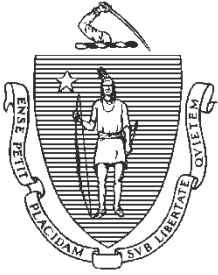
working conditions. As a result, by this letter, I am requiring that the Boston School Committee and the Boston Teachers Union bargain in good faith for 30 days in connection with these matters. I will be providing you with additional details regarding the necessary changes in the collective bargaining agreement in the next few days.

Sincerely,

Signed by Commissioner Chester

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

C: John McDonough, Interim Superintendent



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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

January 29, 2014

Michael O'Neill, Chair
Boston School Committee
26 Court Street, 4th floor
Boston, MA 02108

Darrin Copleand
Boston Public Schools
26 Court Street
Boston, MA 02108

Re: Dever and Holland Elementary Schools

Dear Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Copeland:

As you know, after careful consideration, and pursuant to the authority granted to me in the Achievement Gap Act, G.L. c. 69, § 1J, I announced on October 30, 2013 my determination that the Dever and Holland Elementary schools are chronically underperforming – Level 5 schools under the state accountability system. Having received the recommendations from the Local Stakeholder Group for each school, I am now in the process creating turnaround plans for these schools.

The Achievement Gap Act states that in creating the turnaround plan, I may “limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school. . . .” Chapter 69, § 1J(o)(7) The statute also provides that I may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising this authority.

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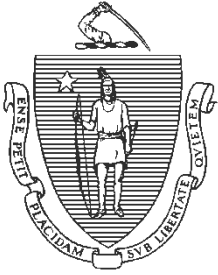
working conditions. As a result, by this letter, I am requiring that the Boston School Committee and the Boston Teachers Union bargain in good faith for 30 days in connection with these matters. I will be providing you with additional details regarding the necessary changes in the collective bargaining agreement in the next few days.

Sincerely,

Signed by Commissioner Chester

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

C: John McDonough, Interim Superintendent



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Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

January 29, 2014

Michael O'Neill, Chair
Boston School Committee
26 Court Street, 4th floor
Boston, MA 02108

Dominic Sachetti, BASAS President
50 Redfield Street, Suite 203
Dorchester, MA 02122

Re: Dever and Holland Elementary Schools

Dear Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Sachetti:

As you know, after careful consideration, and pursuant to the authority granted to me in the Achievement Gap Act, G.L. c. 69, § 1J, I announced on October 30, 2013 my determination that the Dever and Holland Elementary schools are chronically underperforming – Level 5 schools under the state accountability system. Having received the recommendations from the Local Stakeholder Group for each school, I am now in the process creating turnaround plans for these schools.

The Achievement Gap Act states that in creating the turnaround plan, I may “limit, suspend or change 1 or more provisions of any contract or collective bargaining agreement, as the contract or agreement applies to the school. . . .” Chapter 69, § 1J(o)(7) The statute also provides that I may require the school committee and any applicable unions to bargain in good faith for 30 days before exercising this authority.

The turnaround plans for these schools will require changes in the collective bargaining agreement. Both the Dever turnaround plan and the Holland turnaround plan will include a longer school day, a longer school year, a performance based compensation system, and new working conditions. As a result, by this letter, I am requiring that the Boston School Committee and the Boston Teachers Union bargain in good faith for 30 days in connection with these matters. I will be providing you

with additional details regarding the necessary changes in the collective bargaining agreement in the next few days.

Sincerely,

Signed by Commissioner Chester

Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

C: John McDonough, Interim Superintendent

Appendix B: Measurable Annual Goals (MAGs)

The Measurable Annual Goals for Dever Elementary School's preliminary turnaround plan are located at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level5/schools/>

Paul A. Dever Elementary School Financial Plan

The Commissioner and the Receiver are fully committed to the most effective use of the Dever Elementary School's resources in order to achieve the rapid, dramatic improvement of the school. The effective use of resources to maximize student achievement is the principle on which all of the school's strategies will be based. All resources allocated to Dever Elementary School, including time, funds, human capital, operational supports and other resources – will be aligned in support of student learning.

Given that salaries and employee benefits are the largest and most significant portion of a school's budget, the Commissioner and the Receiver will ensure that those investments are allocated in a manner most likely to promote increased student learning. In addition, the Commissioner and the Receiver will ensure the provision of sufficient time for student instruction and staff development, and that the use of that time maximizes student achievement. At the same time, they will curtail expenditures that fail to demonstrate a positive relationship to student learning.

Projected Funding Available for Dever Elementary School in Fiscal Year 2014-2015

Pursuant to the Achievement Gap Act, a district is required to provide funding to a Level 5 school that is at least equal to the average per pupil funds received by other schools in the district for students of the same classification and grade level.¹ The Act also authorizes the Commissioner to reallocate the use of those funds within a Level 5 school. If the Commissioner determines that a district has not provided the required level of funding to a Level 5 school, the Commissioner is authorized by the statute to provide additional funds to the school from the budget of the district. The Commissioner reserves the right to exercise this authority, following further review of the total funding provided by the district to Dever Elementary School. If the Commissioner decides to provide additional funds to Dever Elementary School from the district budget, the Commissioner will notify the school committee and the superintendent in writing of the amount and the rationale for the additional funds.

¹ G.L. c. 69, § 1J(o).

The information provided below includes projected funds to be available for operating the Dever Elementary School in School Year 2014-15, including district, state, and federal funding sources.

Funding Source	FY15 Estimated Amount*	Notes
Weighted Student Funding allocation	\$4,244,464	This includes staff and general school-based expenses for grades Pre-K to 5. It does not include transportation, food services, payroll services, benefits and similar district services which will be provided to the Level 5 school on the same basis as other schools.
Other district allocations to school budget	\$221,895	Nurse, Coordinator of Special Education Services, food service grant and rules-based soft landing allocation for students with emotional impairment
Extended learning time and discretionary central services	TBD	Funding for extended learning time and/or other supplemental services, as well as discretionary central services such as library & media support, technology, printing, and curriculum.
Special education services and positions	TBD	Funding for services stated in IEPs such as OT, PT, 1:1 aides, psychiatrists
Federal grants	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I: Funds to improve education for children with low academic achievement - School allocation, including additional allocation for low-performing schools To be determined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I – Additional allocation for other centrally-budgeted supports to schools • Title IIA: Funds to improve educator quality • Title III: Funds to improve education for English language learners • Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): Funds to improve education for children with disabilities • Other federal grants
State grants	TBD	To be determined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Expansion • Other state grants
State payment to receiver	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation of the school

*As of March 7, 2014, before final FY15 budget has been approved by the school committee and before FY15 grant amounts are known.

Within the broad budgetary framework identified above, and consistent with the statutory requirement of equity in per pupil funding, the Commissioner will use his discretion to determine whether and to what extent the per pupil funding formula will include provision of “in-kind” services. For example, it is anticipated that the district will provide certain services to the Dever Elementary School (including but not limited to: transportation, employee benefits, facilities, payroll, safety, food service, and other central office services) as “in-kind” support. It is also anticipated that the receiver will provide certain services to

the Dever Elementary School that the district provides to other non Level 5 schools. The funding formula may recognize the provision of services from the district. Where the receiver is providing services that the district provides to other non Level 5 schools, the district will provide commensurate funding to the Dever Elementary School. The district, receiver and DESE will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the provision of these services and will work together to ensure that the appropriate resources are available for the school's daily operations.

Compensation and Student Achievement

Good teaching matters and is a key to addressing proficiency gaps. Some teachers routinely secure a year-and-a-half of gain in achievement while others with similar students consistently produce only one-half a year gain. As a result, two students who begin the year with the same general level of achievement may know vastly different amounts one year later – simply because one had a weak teacher and the other a strong teacher. Further, no other attribute of schools comes close to having the magnitude of influence on student achievement that teacher effectiveness provides.² Research on school leadership underscores the importance of effective leaders in attracting, retaining, and supporting effective teachers and creating organizational structures and environments where powerful teaching and learning is the norm.

The impact of teachers is cumulative. Having effective teachers for successive years accelerates student growth while having ineffective teachers for successive years dampens the rate of student learning. Research in the Dallas school district and the State of Tennessee suggests that having a strong teacher for three years in a row can effectively eliminate the racial/ethnic and income achievement gap.³

No other expenditure comes close to that which is devoted to personnel: often as much as 85 percent of the budget is dedicated to educator salaries and benefits.⁴ In a typical school district, compensation has little nexus to performance. Drawing from the example above, given identical length of service and continuing education credits, the teacher who consistently is highly effective would be paid the same as the teacher who routinely underperforms. Further, it is likely that both teachers have identical responsibilities and opportunities for leadership, despite the vast difference in accomplishment.

The development of a performance-based compensation system is an essential strategy for maximizing the rapid academic achievement of students at Dever Elementary School.

Effective in School Year 2015-16, a new performance-based compensation system will be employed to compensate employees based on responsibilities and leadership roles, individual effectiveness, professional growth, and student academic growth. The Receiver will restructure compensation to ensure that the district's investment in the school promotes, supports, and values effective performance. The new compensation system will help to improve student learning by attracting new high potential teachers and allowing the school to retain its most effective leaders and teachers.

The evidence demonstrating that the primary compensation factors – longevity and credit accumulation – have little relationship to educator performance continues to accumulate. For example:

² Hanushek, E. (2010), "The Economic Value of Higher Teacher Quality." National Bureau of Economic Research.

³ Carey, K. "The Real Value of Teachers: Using Information about Teacher Effectiveness to Close the Achievement Gap," Thinking K-16, Vol. 8, Issue 1, Winter 2004.

⁴ <http://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/stateRole.pdf>

- Generally, teachers with master’s degrees have little or no additional positive effect on student achievement compared to teachers who do not have an advanced degree.⁵ The exception to this statement is in a few specific content areas--math and science--where researchers found student achievement to be slightly higher for high school students whose math and science teachers held advanced degrees.⁶
- Approximately 90 percent of the master’s degrees held by teachers are degrees attained from education programs that tend to be unrelated to or unconcerned with instructional impact.⁷
- “Although teachers with master’s degrees generally earn additional salary or stipends--the so-called ‘master’s bump’ – they are no more effective, on average, than their counterparts without master’s degrees.”⁸
- The traditional structure is built on the assumption that teachers get better with experience. While it is true that novice teachers, particularly in their first year, experience a steep learning curve, teacher performance tends to plateau after 6 to 10 years.⁹

In order to direct school fiscal resources to most directly promote rapid improvement of student achievement, the performance-based compensation plan at Dever Elementary School will include the following basic principles: 1) provide competitive compensation for teachers; 2) reward teachers for excellent performance and effectiveness; 3) provide a career path for teachers to grow professionally without leaving the classroom; and 4) reward teachers for their contribution to student growth. Restructuring compensation in this way ensures that the Dever Elementary School’s investment in educators promotes and values effective performance.

⁵ Raegen Miller and Marguerite Roza, 2012. “The sheepskin effect and student achievement: De-emphasizing the role of master’s degrees in teacher compensation.” Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Available: http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/07/pdf/miller_masters.pdf

⁶ Dan Goldhaber and Dominic Brewer, 1998. “When should we reward degrees for teachers?” *The Phi Delta Kappan* 80(2): 134-138.

⁷ National Center for Education Statistics, “2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey” as cited by Miller and Roza, 2012.

⁸ Miller and Roza, 2012, p.1.

⁹ Eric A Hanushek, John F. Kain and Stephen G. Rivkin, “Teachers, Schools and Academic Achievement.” Working Paper 6691 (National Bureau of Economic Research, 1998).

Appendix D: Local Stakeholder Group Recommendations

Dever Elementary School Local Stakeholder Group Recommendations to the Commissioner Submitted January 6, 2014

Dever Elementary School was designated by Commissioner Chester as chronically underperforming (“Level 5”) on October 30, 2013. Massachusetts law indicates that within 30 days of a school being designated as chronically underperforming, the Commissioner shall convene a local stakeholder group to solicit the group’s recommendations for the Commissioner’s Level 5 School Turnaround Plan.

The Dever Elementary School Local Stakeholder Group was convened on Friday, November 22, 2013. The statute allowed 45 days for the local stakeholder group to complete its work. The Local Stakeholder Group met four times during this period, on the following dates and times:

- Meeting #1: Friday, November 22nd, 2:00-4:00 pm
- Meeting #2: Tuesday, November 26th, 5:00-7:00 pm
- Meeting #3: Monday, December 9th, 10:00 am-12:00 pm
- Meeting #4: Tuesday, December 17th, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

The meetings were held either at the school or at a facility in the neighborhood. All of the meetings were open to the public. All meetings were facilitated by an ESE staff member or a consultant hired for this purpose. All meetings were also observed by at least one ESE staff member.

The membership of the Dever Elementary School Local Stakeholder Group is listed below. The committee’s membership meets the requirements of the statute as outlined in M.G.L. Chapter 69, Section 1J, subsection m.

Position, per statute	Designee
The superintendent or designee	John McDonough; designated alternates Rasheed Meadows, Melissa Dodd
School committee chair or designee	Michael O’Neill; designated alternate Eileen de los Reyes
Local teachers’ union president or designee	Ana Arroyo Montano
Administrator from the school, who may be the principal, chosen by the superintendent	Sarah McLaughlin; designated alternate Mike Sabin
Teacher from the school, chosen by the faculty of the school	Cristin McElwee
Parent from the school, chosen by the local parent organization. (Note: If school or district doesn’t have a parent organization, the Commissioner shall select a volunteer parent of a student at the school.)	Barbara Donnelly
Representatives of applicable state and local social service, health and child welfare	Michael Clontz, LICSW, Asst. Director, School-based services, WEDIKO Children’s Services

agencies, chosen by the Commissioner	
Representatives of applicable state and local social service, health and child welfare agencies, chosen by the Commissioner	Roger Rice, Executive Director, META, Inc. (Multicultural Education, Training, and Advocacy)
For elementary schools, a representative of an early education and care provider, chosen by the Commissioner of the Department of Early Education and Care	Mary Kinsella, Vice President, Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester
Community member, chosen by the chief executive of the city or town	Orlando Perilla, Executive Director, Harbor Point Community Task Force
Total number of members allowed by statute: Not more than 13 individuals	Total number of members on the Local Stakeholder Group: 10

The Dever Elementary School Local Stakeholder Group worked diligently to execute its charge to provide recommendations to the Commissioner as he creates his turnaround plan for the school; these recommendations are designed to maximize the rapid academic achievement of students.

The Local Stakeholder Group offers the following recommendations for the Commissioner’s consideration.

Overarching Recommendation by Consensus of the LSG members

RECOMMENDATION: Continue, expand, and improve the culturally responsive Dual Language school model articulated in the *Two-Way Bilingual Education in Boston Public Schools: Required Features, Recommendations and Guidelines Report* (pp 39-45).

Context

The members of the Dever Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) share the conviction that the Dual Language Model is an appropriate and effective lever for turnaround for the Dever Elementary School. A well-implemented school-wide model will further galvanize a set of shared goals focused on high quality instruction, and provides a touchstone for data-based decision making at the school, classroom, and student levels in this very large elementary school (see Dever Data Packet, p 2).

We offer evidence to support our recommendation that building on and accelerating the foundational work already done in Grades K-2 to build a school-wide dual language model during the past few years—especially during these last three years of Level 4 Turnaround status—will lead to dramatically increased achievement for all Dever students. For over three years, our work at the Dever has been structured around seven core improvement priorities:

- Unified Culture
- Effective Instruction
- Rigorous Curriculum
- Data Focus
- Adult Teamwork
- Family and Community Support
- Extra Time on Learning

The Dever Data Packet we have provided in the supporting documents includes recent assessment results that show evidence of the success of dual language instruction in accelerating student growth in literacy from Kindergarten-Grade 2. The school has also shown evidence of improvement in attendance, school climate and behavior, and mathematics.

We also submit that a strong Dual Language model will make the Dever a school chosen by increasing numbers of parents of both bilingual and single language Boston Public School children (ELL students and native English speakers). With strong implementation and proper supports for this model, the Dever could provide the district and the state with a flagship for Dual Language instruction in other schools.

Specific recommendations regarding the design and implementation of the Dual Language Model

The following sub-recommendations specific to the Dual Language Model as it is currently being implemented are from the Dever Dual Language Program supporting document submitted with these recommendations:

1. Continue to implement the Dual Language 50-50 model, as developed, until at least through SY 2016-2017. This will allow the program to be fully developed.
2. Continue to evaluate the development of the program annually using the Center for Applied Linguistics Guiding Principles document.
3. Maintain the current faculty members with full Principal autonomy in hiring for vacancies that arise.
4. Continue to organize and support peer visitations within the school and across programs.
5. Continue to refine curriculum units as additional information about the PARCC assessments are released.
6. Continue to invest funds in Literacy Team staffing. This bilingual team of teachers who are certified in ESL, Moderate Special Needs, and Elementary Education provide critical interventions and supports to students.
7. Work with the district and the state to identify a standardized assessment to fully assess knowledge and skills of Dual Language Learners.

During our discussions, the LSG highlighted the importance of continuing or adding the following elements as important to continued progress:

1. Preserve the additional 100 hours of PD time currently in place (this time is beyond the standard BTU contract provisions).
2. Ensure that new measures of success include measures for dual language and keep fully disaggregated data in order to properly target interventions.
3. Test students in both their dominant language and second language to prevent confusion between language issues and/or cognitive challenges.
4. Determine the best approach to including the current Therapeutic Learning Community, sub-separate classrooms in the Dual Language school-wide model.
5. In addition, at least some LSG members recommended that there be a focus on enabling students with disabilities to access content in their dominant language.

Recommendations: Maximizing the engagement and support of family and community members for student learning

As one of Dever's seven improvement priorities, we have been working to increase and deepen the engagement and empowerment of parents and community as advocates for the Dever students.

Stakeholders suggest sustaining the following strategies now in place:

1. Continue to stipend Dever teachers to tutor Dever students four times a week at the Boys and Girls Club to provide another way for teachers to connect with families around academic work.

2. Sustain the transparent and active School Site Council as a vehicle for parent voices in school decision making.
3. Continue to “make a big school smaller” by focusing parent engagement at grade levels, linking teacher conferences with parents to academic concerns; e.g. reviewing assessment results. Ensure this strategy is in place for all grade levels.
4. Continue to deepen the community relationship with Harbor Point Association, including linking Harbor Point families with the Dever and services available through the school.

Stakeholders would also recommend the following to further maximize engagement:

1. Consider re-hiring a full time bilingual Parent and Community Outreach Coordinator at the school.
2. Provide more opportunities for parent conferences.
3. Encourage participation in Parent University.
4. Poll parents to see what times and activities are most useful to them.

Recommendations: Maximizing assets and talents of partners to improve student learning

The Dever’s whole school culture relies on a core set of partners to support the academic and social-emotional needs of students. Wediko, Open Circle, City Year and City Connects work together, and have a liaison on the Administrative team to align them to the school’s seven Improvement Priorities (see “Context” section above). Data provided in the Dever Data Packet show improvement in several important cultural indicators—attendance, violations, and a teacher survey—as evidence of partners’ positive impact on the climate for learning.

Two additional key partners are already building capacity in the Dever staff by providing predictable and consistent cycles for structured monitoring of student academic progress and to target appropriate interventions to student needs in literacy and mathematics on an ongoing basis. Achievement Network (ANet) has provided teachers of Grades 2-5 with regular five week assessments in ELA and mathematics as well as training and support for incorporating these formative results into their instructional planning. Teach Plus offers needed support with staffing (recruiting and retaining high quality teachers) as well as coaching the team leaders to lead regular data meetings and inquiry cycles.

We want to acknowledge the time and deliberate investment required to build strong and effective partnerships. We would emphasize the characteristics that make these core partners effective and essential components of Dever students’ educational experience:

1. Developed deep relationships with a smaller set of core partners, deliberately selected for their link to one of the specific focus areas and contribution to the goals for that area;
2. Embedded in the school, present in the building and know the students and are known by them as part of the school;
3. Shared accountability along with the shared goals;
4. Structure for coordination—Leadership Team for social emotional service providers; and finally
5. Time for partnerships to develop and grow.

Several additional steps could enhance partners’ positive impact on student learning:

1. Increase the language capacity of all partners working with the school.
2. Increase amount and frequency of times in the regular administrator meetings for the partners’ Leadership Team to report on progress and troubleshoot any issues.
3. Provide closer links with community resources for Tier II and III interventions for behavioral strand students; for example, provide clinical services at the school site for psychiatric needs.
4. Enlist a partner who could increase the staff’s capacity to meet the Tier II and Tier III needs in literacy for the large number of students who enter the Dever well behind grade level in literacy.

5. The district should continue to cultivate the relationship with University of Massachusetts Boston School of Education whose campus is on the Harbor Point peninsula, specifically in service to the needs of, and opportunities at, the Dever.
6. Ensure the relationship with the Harbor Point Community continues to grow. Give strong priority to families with children who reside at the complex for enrollment at the Dever Elementary School to enhance the neighborhood feel in this large school.

Supporting Documents¹⁰

1. 2013 Dever Data Packet: includes most recent assessment results showing improvements in math and literacy; improvements in daily student attendance rates and reduced incidences of behavioral issues; survey results showing teachers spend more time on instruction with new school-wide behavioral expectations and increased social-emotional supports available.
2. Dever-McCormack Dual Language Program Development Timeline: includes summary timeline, program strengths and additional recommendations.
3. SY 2013-2014 BPS Data Packet: includes ACCESS assessment data disaggregated by language levels and Students with Disabilities.
4. Two-Way Bilingual Education in Boston Public Schools: Required Features, Recommendations and Guidelines Report, Gaston Institute, May 2013. Includes characteristics of effective programs within the district to which the Dever is now adhering, as well as citing national research on the positive school-wide impact of Dual Language instruction on high need student populations.

¹⁰ Supporting documents can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level5/>

Purpose, Intended Outcomes, and Discussion Topics
for Paul A. Dever Elementary School LSG Meetings

Upon designation as a Level 5 school, state law requires that the Commissioner develop a Turnaround Plan for accelerated improvement and outlines a timeline and process accordingly. The first step in this process is for the Commissioner to convene a local stakeholder group. The guidance below is designed to help Local Stakeholder Group (LSG) members understand that process.

Purpose of the Level 5 School LSG

- To engage in an evidence-based conversation regarding the core issues and challenges facing Dever Elementary School and identify what the school community believes are the key challenges creating barriers to its students' academic progress.
- To make recommendations to the Commissioner about the key components of his turnaround plan for the Dever, "in order to maximize the rapid academic achievement of students."

The Commissioner has chosen to increase the intensity to a Level 5 intervention for Dever because he believes that despite the efforts taken during the first three years of turnaround, a different mix of interventions and practices are required to put the conditions in place for an educational experience that prepares all of Dever's students to succeed. He looks forward to the LSG's ideas for how to create substantial change at the school – change that will secure rapid improvement in the academic achievement of students.

Intended Outcomes

Through the LSG's discussion and exploration of the data, to generate a set of rigorous, evidence-based recommendations that will provide the Commissioner with input directly from the Dever community and advise him as he creates his Level 5 Turnaround Plan.

The Local Stakeholder Group will consider

- The key **issues and challenges** facing the school, and the district's support of the school;
- The impact and sufficiency of the **strategies and supports** employed by the school to date – what has worked, what has not worked;
- The **school's and district's capacity**—including its systems, polices, and use of resources— to fully implement proposed strategies; and
- The **interventions and practices** that are most likely to promote rapid improvement of student achievement.

Within 45 days of its initial meeting, the stakeholder group shall make its recommendations to the Commissioner. Meetings of the local stakeholder group shall be open to the public and the recommendations submitted to the Commissioner shall be publicly available upon submission.

Meeting focus areas and discussion questions are described below.

Meeting #1: What does the evidence tell us about the key issues and challenges facing the Dever?

Data will be presented regarding the school and its performance.

Questions for discussion:

- What do the data tell us about where the school is now? What do we know about changes to the data over the past three years?
- What do the data tell us about the school's core assets and strengths?
- What do the data tell us about the school's core challenge areas?
- How is Dever using data now to inform instruction? How does the school select the most relevant data to use? What are the Dever's greatest strengths in using data? Greatest challenges?
- What data tools, skills would the school need to push the school to the next level?
- What does the LSG recommend to the Commissioner about how the school can better use data tools, skills, and resources to improve instruction?

Meeting #2: How can Dever support all students to learn at the highest levels?

Information will be presented regarding the school's existing structures and supports that facilitate all students' learning.

Questions for discussion:

- What do LSG members believe to be the most significant academic challenges at the school?
- What strategies has the school already tried to overcome these academic challenges? What worked? What didn't work?
- What specific supports has the school tried to facilitate English Language Learners' (ELLs') learning? What about the school's dual language program? Are these programs and supports working? How do you know?
- What specific supports has the school tried to facilitate the learning of students with special needs? Are they working? How do you know?
- What strategies can the school try to improve science?
- Is the school currently challenging all students to work to their highest potential? If not, what specific actions can be taken to increase the level of rigor in Dever's instruction?
- What does the LSG recommend to the Commissioner about how the school can support all students to learn at the highest levels?

Meeting #3: How can the Dever maximize the engagement and support of family and community members for students' learning?

Information will be presented regarding existing family (family members of students at the school) and community (other community members or organizations unrelated to students at the school) engagement efforts at the school.

Questions for discussion:

- While engagement varies by individual, how would you rate the overall level of family member engagement at the school (low/medium/high)? What evidence supports this rating?
- While engagement varies by individual, how would you rate the overall level of community engagement at the school (low/medium/high)? What evidence supports this rating?
- What structures are in place to encourage family member and community engagement at the school? (e.g. regular, frequent schedule of calls to students' families; annual community open house, etc.) Are they working? How do you know?
Note: Please identify school-wide efforts, not unique efforts by individual teachers or staff members.
- How do school leaders and/or the school's partners bolster the school's structures to encourage family member and community engagement? What has worked? What else could school leadership and/or partners do to facilitate engagement?
- How can family and community members' talents be incorporated into the strategy to improve the school's academic performance?
- How can family and community members be part of the strategy to help improve Dever students' attendance?
- What does the LSG recommend to the Commissioner about how the school can maximize family and community members' support to maximize students' learning?

Meeting #4: How can the Dever maximize the assets and talents of partners to improve students' learning?

Information will be presented regarding existing partnerships with the school.

Questions for discussion:

- What partners currently work at the school? In what academic and non-academic areas do they provide support?
- What areas do you believe need partner support? How can partners be utilized to help improve Dever students' attendance?
- What structures are in place to align partner efforts with school goals?
- What structures are in place to coordinate efforts between partners?
- If you had to pick just three of the school's current partner initiatives to continue, which would you select? Why? Is there evidence to show how these partners are being effective in the school?

- Does the school have an unaddressed (or under-addressed) challenge area that you believe could benefit by a partner's support? Which one, and why?
- What does the LSG recommend to the Commissioner about how the school can maximize the assets and talents of partners to improve students' learning?

Note: A portion of this meeting will be used to finalize the recommendations made across all meetings.

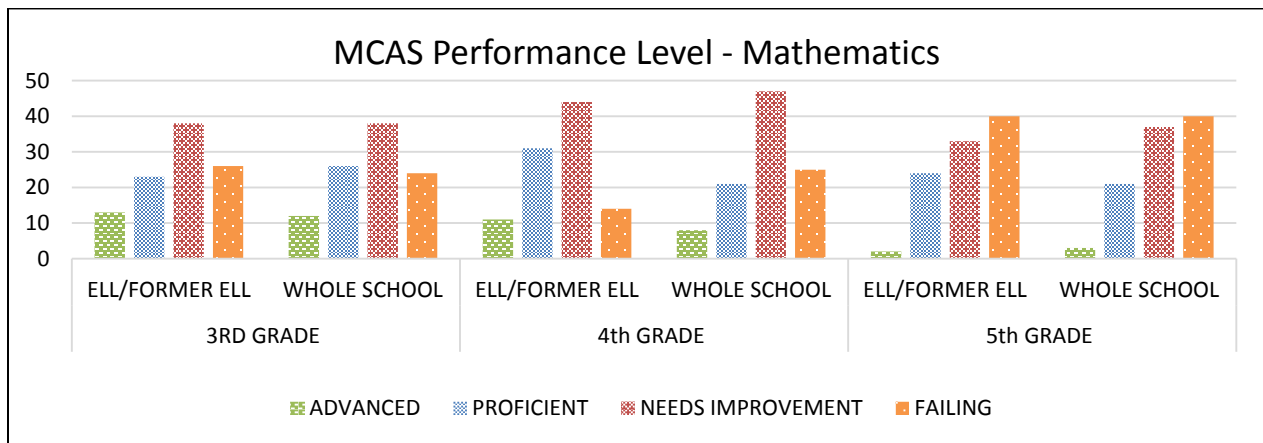
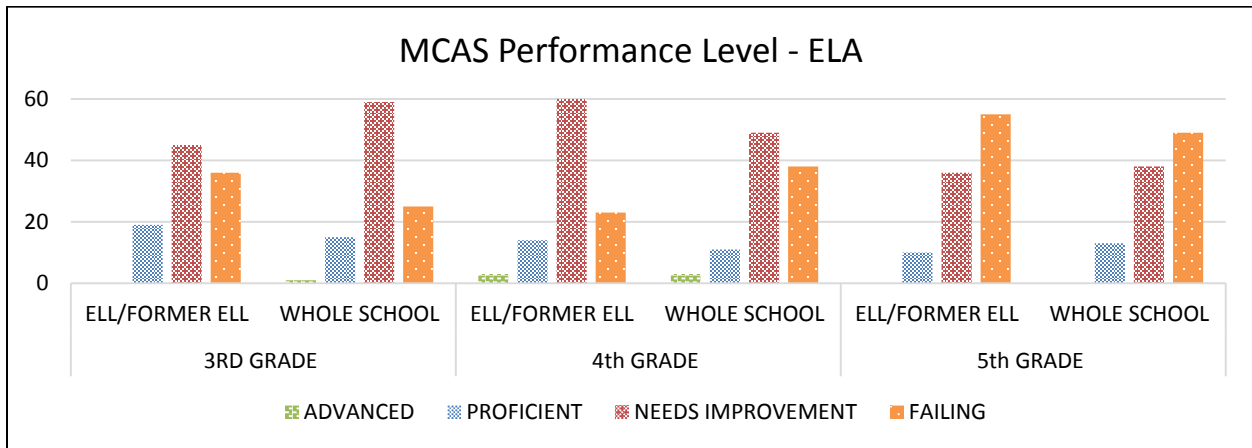
Appendix E: Rationale for discontinuing the English-Spanish 50-50 Dual Language Program at Paul A. Dever Elementary School¹¹

Summary

Given the passionate and vocal advocacy for retaining the Dual Language Program at the Paul A. Dever expressed during the Commissioner’s meeting with stakeholders there last October, and echoed by the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG), in its recommendations, a thorough analysis of the existing program was part of the turnaround planning process.¹²

Notable Trends on the 2013 MCAS Assessment:

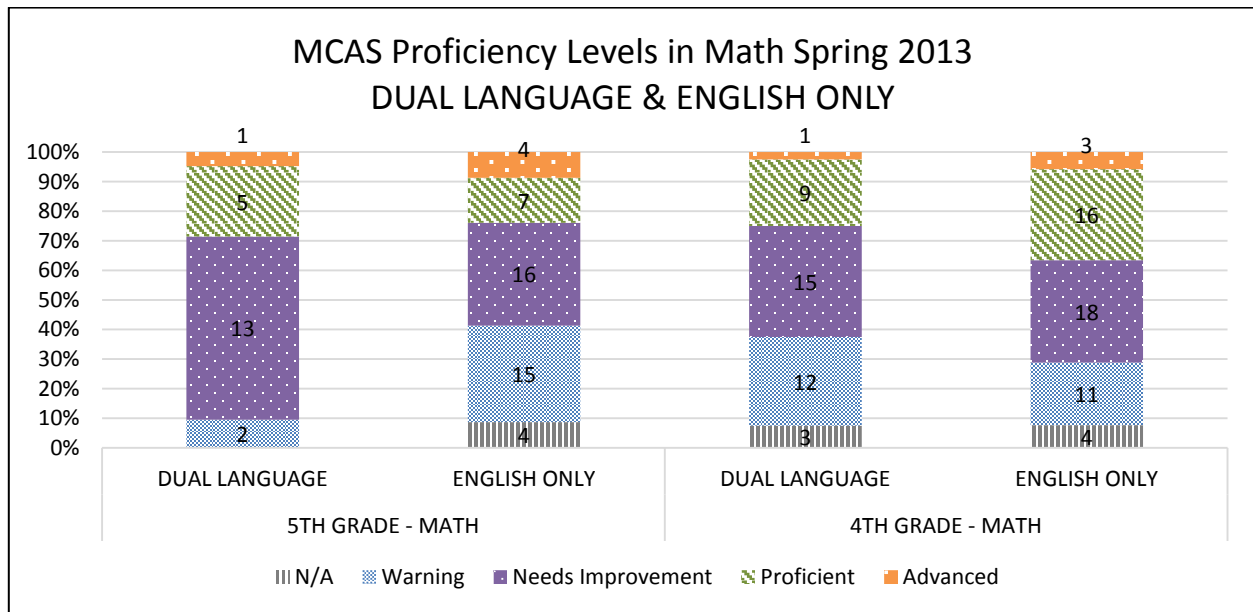
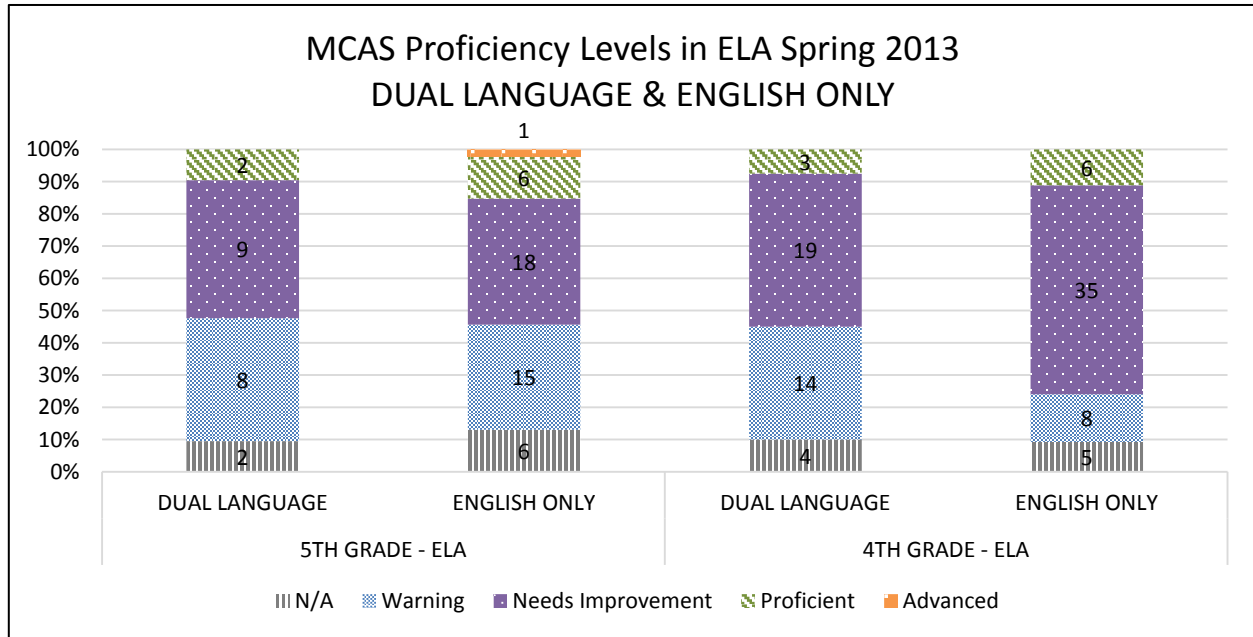
- There is a consistent trend of low proficiency for the ELL/former ELL, and the entire student population at Dever. In fact, the proportion of warning/failing scores is higher at 5th grade than at 3rd or 4th grade.



¹¹ As of the visit in February 2014, Grades K-2 were implementing dual language, in all four classes. Grades 3-5 implement the dual-language in two out of four total classrooms.

¹² See Appendix D. Dever Elementary School Preliminary Turnaround Plan, submitted to the Superintendent, School Committee, and Local Stakeholder Group March 7, 2014

- The number of students functioning at proficient or higher levels in ELA is exceptionally low across dual language and English-only programs, with the English-only students performing slightly better.



As we assessed root causes for the alarmingly low academic achievement of Dever’s students despite three years of focused support through the turnaround process, the role of the Dual Language Program was central in our consideration.

Blueprint and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) reviewed a variety of data and information including:

- Resources made available to the Local Stakeholder Group (LSG);

Dever Elementary School Preliminary Turnaround Plan, submitted to the Superintendent, School Committee, and Local Stakeholder Group March 7, 2014

- The LSG’s recommendations;
- Additional ESE documents (e.g. a survey of existing Monitoring Site Visit Reports over three years, School Redesign Grant applications);
- Information gathered by Blueprint during regular visits to the school during these past few weeks, from School Site Council, staff, and other meetings, classroom visits, and ongoing conversations with school leaders and staff. (See the end of this document for a full list of fact finding activities at the school.); and
- MCAS performance data for ELL, former ELL, and non-ELL students.

This analysis led us to conclude that, despite the best intentions of the leaders and staff at the Dever, the current program is not providing an effective academic environment, nor is the current instructional approach leading to strong literacy skills fundamental to the students’ capacity to learn. Faced with the already daunting challenge of getting the school from low functioning to proficient, the existing dual language program is not functioning at a level that is likely to produce the rapid academic growth that Dever students need and deserve.

The school has struggled throughout the three years of turnaround to implement an instructional program that is meeting its students’ needs. Specific factors contributing to low achievement in the Dual Language Program that our data collection and analysis revealed to date include:

- Competing imperatives of turnaround, K-8 merger, and dual language activities
- Challenges with staffing and scheduling the program
- Challenges with access to high quality curriculum, instruction, and assessments
- Inadequate professional development for dual language instruction for teachers
- Poor match between the characteristics of effective dual language programs and the students served by the school

Addressing and remediating the many implementation challenges within the existing program is not feasible within a reasonable timeframe given the extensive achievement gaps facing Dever’s students.

Discussion of Challenges to Effective Implementation of the Existing Dual Language Program

Competing Imperatives: Turnaround, Dual Language, and K-8

A series of challenges have impeded the school’s ability to implement the Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion program as it was originally envisioned at the Dever Elementary School. When the Dever K-5 School was designated a Level 4 school in 2010, along with 12 other Boston Public Schools, the school was in year three of planning and implementing a Spanish-English Dual Immersion program.¹³

With the appointment of a new leader and a substantial turnover in staff, the decision was made to continue implementing the program; and the school submitted a Level 4 Turnaround Plan in early 2010 that described a kindergarten through grade 2 program in place and a plan to continue with phasing in one grade level per year.

When the district replaced the principal, a leader with turnaround experience in the district at the middle school level was appointed to serve as leader of both the Dever K-5 and of the adjacent McCormack Middle

¹³ Dever-McCormack Dual Language Program Development Timeline. See additional documents related to Dever’s Level 5 status, at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/turnaround/level5/schools/>.

School 6-8. This in effect created the Dever-McCormack K-8 School. This “merger” was never codified by the district and the schools remain two separately coded schools.

These significant and oftentimes competing imperatives added considerable challenges to school improvement that appear to have impeded the school’s progress to put fundamental conditions in place to ensure fidelity of implementation of an effective dual language program, or to improve the quality of instruction overall at the school.

Challenged with staffing and scheduling the program

The successful implementation of any dual language program relies on well-qualified, well-trained teachers “who know, understand, and are able to apply the theories of first and second language acquisition and the understanding of language as a system to the classroom.”¹⁴ The Dever, like many schools across the country, has had difficulty recruiting and hiring teachers with the knowledge and skills to implement a program that immerses students in two languages. This has slowed growth of the program as it was envisioned, and at least in part, played a role in a schedule that is less than optimal for students.

On February 25, 2014, a team of nine that included the Executive Director and staff from Blueprint, and representatives from ESE and Boston Public Schools Office of English Language Learners participated in a full day site visit to Dever. The team discussed the 50-50 partial immersion model being implemented in 2014 in which students receive core instruction for one week in English and the following week in Spanish. Students typically move each Monday morning from one classroom to another during these weekly transitions. During the focus group conversation with teachers it was reported that while some students seem to do fine with this, others struggle for a day or two with the transition. To address this challenge, beginning in September the dual language classes in grades 3-5 began spending two weeks in English and two in Spanish, to minimize the negative impact of the number of transitions involved for elementary students. However, the impact of this shift remains unclear.

This model puts high demand on teacher teams with paired language classrooms both for their planning and integration of curricula and instructional strategies. During the visit, the synchronicity of the instruction between teachers of each language who share the same two groups of students appeared to be inconsistent.

Challenges with access to high quality curriculum, instruction, and assessment

Fully implemented and effective dual language programs “map curriculum to ensure that students cover in two languages the same amount of curriculum as monolingual student in English-only schools. [and]...identify authentic materials in Spanish aligned with Common Core instructional shifts.”¹⁵ The articulation of curricular materials, both horizontally across grade levels and vertically up through the grades, presents a further challenge.

During classroom observations, the site visit team noted use of materials below grade level in both English and Spanish. Teachers have been spending a lot of time during and beyond the school day writing curriculum and translating reading materials into Spanish. They do not have access to many outside resources to draw from (i.e. non-translated Spanish texts or rigorous curriculum materials). The practice also raises questions about quality, authenticity, and academic complexity of the translations being presented to students. Also concerning is the question regarding students’ mastery of material in Spanish

¹⁴ Cited in “Two-Way Bilingual Education in Boston Public Schools,” p15.

¹⁵ Cited in “Two-Way Bilingual Education in Boston Public Schools,” p25.

and the absence of Spanish-language interventions. The school does not currently have specific interventions for building Spanish skills where students are struggling.

Inadequate professional development for dual language instruction for teachers

Teachers have not received sufficient professional development and supports for effectively implementing a dual language instructional program. This year one all-staff professional development session for dual language was reported to have been provided.

Research is clear that “in order to obtain the full benefits [of dual language programs] students need to remain in dual language programs for a minimum of five years, and preferably for six to eight years.”¹⁶ Students at the Dever who entered the Dual Language Program in kindergarten in 2009 with the first cohort and are still at the school this year in fourth grade will have been in the program for the five-year minimum. Only 14 current 5th grade students remain in the program from the initial cohort 40 students that entered in second grade.

Notable highlights:

- Dever consistently sees approximately a quarter of their total students transfer in or out of the school throughout the year. This is higher than the state average of approximately 10%.
- Less than 85% of students at Dever attend school from the first to the last day. This trend has remained consistently below average over multiple years.
- 14 5th graders out of the original cohort of 40 remain in the program.

Year	Student Group	% Stability			% Churn		
		Dever	District	State	Dever	District	State
2013	All Students	84.5	86.6	95.6	21.6	19.0	9.0
2013	ELL	82.0	84.2	89.3	23.5	23.4	21.8
2012	All Students	78.4	83.0	94.8	28.8	22.8	9.9
2012	ELL	77.0	79.9	87.1	30.9	27.7	23.7
2011	All Students	82.7	84.5	95.5	25.6	21.2	9.5
2011	ELL	86.4	85.0	89.2	21.6	23.2	22.3
2010	All Students	83.5	82.3	95.3	23.8	24.3	9.7
2010	ELL	85.3	82.2	88.9	23.0	26.5	24.1

To its credit, Dever accepts all students assigned to it; however, new students entering the program whose first language is neither English nor Spanish do not have access to intervention supports for Spanish language development. This can affect their ability to access content that is delivered in Spanish. More than 80 students at Dever have a first language that is neither Spanish nor English.

¹⁶ Cited in “Two-Way Bilingual Education in Boston Public Schools,” p44.

Dever- All First Languages		
Language	Frequency	Percent
English	263	45.1%
Spanish	237	40.7%
Vietnamese	38	6.5%
Haitian Creole	11	1.9%
Cape Verdean	10	1.7%
Other	24	4.1%
Total	583	100.0%

A school with this set of challenges is not an optimal setting for a strong dual language program. Blueprint's focus on English Language Development (ELD) in concert with academic attainment will be the centerpiece of a coherent instructional program moving forward. This focus continues the value that the Dever community places on multilingualism, while using a more effective approach to accelerating learning for all of its students.

Blueprint On-site Meetings and Fact Finding Activities at Paul A. Dever Elementary

January 29, 2014

- Blueprint Schools Network named Receiver of Dever Elementary School by Commissioner Chester

February 3, 2014:

- Attended Dever staff meeting regarding Level 5 process and timeline with representatives from Boston Public Schools and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Introduced Blueprint staff and its program model
- Distributed informational material

February 7, 2014:

- Held open “office hours” at the Dever for staff to meet with Blueprint representatives individually
- Provided a handout on the teacher hiring process and FAQs in response to questions that emerged from our introductory meeting
- Met with school leadership to learn more about school systems, history and context - including school culture and discipline tracking, data collection and tracking, and the dual language program
- Began meeting with current school partners
- Collected student achievement data

February 11, 2014:

- Attended a “PAWS Pride” student assembly
- Conducted informal classroom walkthroughs
- Met with AP Christine Cronin to discuss implementation, strengths, and challenges of the dual language program
- Presented Blueprint model and answered questions at a Parent Committee meeting

February 25, 2014:

- Conducted full-day site visit with a focus on the dual language program, alongside representatives from Boston Public Schools and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Observed all 18 dual language classrooms K2-5 and selected intervention classes, conducted focus groups with teachers and students in the program, and met with school leadership
- Attended School Site Council monthly meeting

February 27, 2014:

- Met with community partner, Harbor Point Task Force, to discuss family and community engagement
- Attended the Dever Literacy Night with staff, students, and families

March 4, 2014:

- Met with school leadership to collect additional data regarding dual language enrollment and achievement

March 6-7th, 2014:

- Conducted interviews for current Dever teachers who have reapplied for their positions
- Interviews included classroom observations, detailed interviews based on the core competencies for success in a turnaround school, and a data analysis discussion
- Continued meetings and conversations with current school partners