



**David P. Driscoll**  
Commissioner of Education

[Commissioner's Update Archive](#)

## Commissioner's Updates

July 23, 2001

Dear Superintendents, Charter School and Collaborative Leaders, Principals and Interested Parties:

In this letter, I have five announcements and five items recently posted on our website at [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu).

### District Performance Evaluation Guide is on the Web

At the Massachusetts Association for School Superintendents meeting last week, I distributed a guideline for your reference as you begin to think about engaging in your district self assessment. This guide, *District Performance Evaluation Instrument: Standards, Indicators and Sources of Evidence*, takes the district improvement standards that were approved by the Board of Education last year and divides them into five manageable areas (curriculum, teacher quality, student support services, leadership and governance, and business and financial management). Each section is accompanied by a suggested list of staff activities and some examples of evidence that can be used to document your improvement efforts. Superintendents who have used this reference guide, located at [www.doe.mass.edu/ata/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ata/), have told me that it is quite useful, and I hope it can be of help to you, as well.

### State Expands Opportunities to take Educator Licensure Tests

Given the feedback we have received from institutions of higher education, college students and the field, I am expanding the number of administrations of the educator licensure tests given annually. Beginning this September, the test will be given one additional time, five times a year, with one of the tests taking place in July. Further, we will be offering the test in seven locations around the country: Chicago, Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. I know that added opportunities for teacher candidates to take the tests can make a big impact on the needs that schools are facing, and I hope this added convenience will attract many more qualified people into the teaching profession. For details, see our [website](#).

### Last Year's 2000 MCAS Results by Race and Gender

Last year's 2000 MCAS results by race and gender, by district, are ready for release and will be mailed to you this week. At the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, July 24, a statewide executive summary of the data will be distributed, and given that the data is "cleaned up," it is ready to be released to the public by law. Consequently, we will be posting the district results to our website on the 24th, as well.

### Request for Public Comment: Early Childhood Standards for Three- and Four Year Olds

The draft of the *Early Childhood Standards for Programs for Three- and Four Years Olds* is posted on our website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/els/>. As you know, the Board of Education voted at their June meeting to solicit comment on the proposed early childhood standards that include guidelines for preschool curriculum experiences based on the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Written comments will be accepted until late September and can be sent to: Sandy Putnam-Franklin, Early Learning Services, Massachusetts Department of Education, fax: 781-338-3370, or email to [sputnam-franklin@doe.mass.edu](mailto:sputnam-franklin@doe.mass.edu).

## Notice of Equitable Participation in Grant Opportunities

This is a reminder that federal entitlement grant programs and some competitive grants require the equitable participation of private schools. The RFP section that addresses "Fund Use" clarifies whether there is a provision for equitable participation of private schools provision.

---

### Recently posted documents on our website include the following five items:

1. Academic Support Services Programs for Fiscal Year 2002 (Fund Code 632)  
[\[ HTML \]](#)
2. Eisenhower Professional Development Program  
[\[ HTML \]](#)
3. Eisenhower Teacher Quality Activities Form  
[\[ PDF \]](#)
4. Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure 2001-2002 Registration Information  
[\[ No longer available \]](#)
5. *District Performance Evaluation Instrument: Standards, Indicators and Sources of Evidence*  
[\[ PDF \]](#)

It was great seeing so many superintendents at the MASS conference last week, and I look forward to seeing secondary school principals this week.

Sincerely,

David P. Driscoll  
Commissioner of Education

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)



- > [HSSSS Home](#)
- > [HSSSS Staff](#)



## Academic Support Services Programs for Fiscal Year 2002 (Fund Code 632)

To: Superintendents, Charter School Directors, and Interested Parties

From: David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education

Date: July 16, 2001

I am writing to provide you with updated information on the Academic Support Services Program for Fiscal Year 2002. It is evident that there is a clear commitment from the Governor, the Legislature and the Board of Education to maintain the Academic Support Services Program so that students can receive expanded instructional opportunities to meet State performance standards. However, the Department of Education has not yet released the Request for Proposals for this program because the State budget has not been completed and the House and Senate proposals recommend different appropriation amounts and fund use.

I recognize that it is essential for the Department to provide guidance to districts so that you can adequately plan services for the fall. The following highlights major program priorities and changes that will be reflected in the forthcoming RFP:

### 1. Program Priorities and Fund Use

- **Funds will be used to provide intensive small group or one-to-one instruction for students who scored in the failing or needs improvement categories on the MCAS.** Instruction will address students' individual needs and, for students who scored in the failing category, will be described in their Individual Student Success Plans.
- **School districts and charter schools serving high school students will be required to target substantial resources to the class of 2003.** The funding formula will reflect funds specifically for this class based on the numbers of students who failed the 10th grade MCAS in either English language arts or mathematics in 2000. Districts are encouraged to provide a range of strategies targeted to address the individual needs of students in the class of 2003, including tutoring and mentoring, as part of the Individual Student Success Plans for these students. The item analysis of the Class of 2003 multiple choice results from the spring MCAS, which we released to you earlier than ever before, can and should provide some useful information for you as you design programs to address individual student needs. Districts may develop partnerships with other educational organizations to support and deliver instruction by qualified personnel.
- **School districts and charter schools will have the flexibility to use funds during the school day, as well as after school, on weekends and in the summer for services to high school students.** Services delivered during the school day will be *supplemental* to regular school programs and services currently supported with local, state and federal funds.

### 2. Program Planning and Timelines

- **School districts and charter schools should begin to develop plans now to deliver academic support services programs in the fall for 11th grade students who will be taking the December 12th MCAS retest.**
- **The Department of Education will issue the Academic Support Services Program RFP as soon as we are confident about the final funding amounts and budget language.** Applications will be accepted from school districts on a rolling basis anytime after the RFP has been released. The RFP will specify recommended deadlines for fall, winter and summer program implementation.

It is our intent to craft a funding formula for this grant program that provides targeted resources for the class of 2003 and enables school districts to continue many of the effective academic supports you have provided to your students over the past few years.

I appreciate your patience and planning while we await the final State budget.

[E-mail this page](#) | [Print View](#)

*Massachusetts Department of Education*

[Search](#) · [Site Map](#) · [Privacy](#) · [Site Info](#) · [Contact DOE](#)



- › [Finance/Grants](#)
- › [Recent Updates](#)
- › [Accounting & Auditing](#)
- › [Chapter 70 Program \(Foundation Budget\)](#)
- › [Charter Schools](#)
- › [DOE Budget](#)
- › [Federal Renovation Program](#)
- › [Grants: Information](#)
- › [Nutrition Programs \(School Lunch\)](#)
- › [Per Pupil Expenditure Reports](#)
- › [School Building Assistance](#)
- › [School Choice](#)
- › [School Finance Regulations](#)
- › [Special Education](#)
- › [Statistical Comparisons](#)
- › [Transportation](#)
- › [Vocational Education](#)
- › [Key Contacts](#)
- › [Links](#)

## Grants and Other Financial Assistance Programs: FY2002

### Memorandum

**To:** Superintendents of Schools and Charter School Leaders  
**From:** David P. Driscoll, Commissioner of Education  
**Date:** June 8, 2001  
**Subject:** [Title II Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Grant Program](#)

In a recent communication from the United States Department of Education (USED) regarding final state allocations for the Title II Eisenhower Professional Development Program, we received information about new spending requirements that apply to FY2002 grants. This memorandum explains the new fund use requirements and provides guidance on how districts can meet these requirements. In addition to the new program guidelines, there has been a change in the proportion of funding designated for mathematics and science, allowing districts greater flexibility in core academic areas.

For FY02, the federal appropriation requires that districts spend any funds that are in excess of the funding they received in FY01 for special teacher quality activities that are designed to reduce the percentage of teachers in the following categories:

1. Teachers who do not have state certification, or who are certified through emergency or provisional means;
2. Teachers who are teaching out of field in some or all of the subject areas and grade levels in which they teach;
3. Teachers who lack sufficient content knowledge to teach effectively in the areas they teach.

Districts must spend their excess allocation in ways that address this new requirement as well as the program priority for mathematics and science (57% of funding amount for FY02). In many cases, professional development activities already planned may meet both spending requirements simultaneously. To illustrate, a district may provide funding for an uncertified science teacher to take a science course that will lead toward certification or for a mathematics institute for elementary or middle school teachers who are certified but need greater content knowledge to teach mathematics effectively.

To assist districts to meet the new federal requirement, we have attached information indicating the final allocation for each district, and the amount of increased funding for FY02 that must be designated for teacher quality. As you consider program plans for improving mathematics and science education, please be certain that a sufficient

number of activities are included to address the teacher quality priority and that you maintain documentation of how this priority has been met. We anticipate these special teacher quality activities may be a federal reporting requirement for the FY02 Eisenhower program.

For districts that are still developing their Eisenhower proposal, the new teacher quality requirement can be addressed in relationship to overall program goals, objectives and activities for the coming year. Districts that have already submitted a FY02 proposal must explain how they intend to meet the new teacher quality priority through professional development already planned for this coming year, or through alternative program activities. Based on the new spending requirements, some districts may find budget revisions are necessary, but at this time amendments are **not** being requested. A new teacher quality activities form, designed to facilitate program planning and reporting, has been enclosed. Current information concerning FY02 funding amounts can be found on this form. All districts are required to submit the new form as part of their grant application.

Your understanding and cooperation concerning these recent changes in federal funding requirements are appreciated. We welcome any questions you may have regarding eligible program activities and expenditures, or about FY02 allocations. For information and assistance, please contact Christine Harris, State Eisenhower Program Director, at (781) 338-3495, or via email: [charris@doe.mass.edu](mailto:charris@doe.mass.edu). Please send all grant application materials to:

Katie Bowler, Grants Coordinator  
Office of Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering  
Massachusetts Department of Education  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

[Print View](#)

**Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development Program  
Teacher Quality Activities Form- FY2002**

<b>APPLICANT:</b>		<b>Fund Code: 303</b>
<b>FY2002 Allocation Amount:</b>	<b>Funding Increase:</b>	

Please describe how you intend to meet the FY2002 spending requirement for special teacher quality activities designed to address the following priority areas:

1. Teachers who do not have state certification, or are certified through emergency or provisional means;
2. Teachers who are teaching out of field in some or all of the subject areas and grade levels in which they teach;
3. Teachers who lack sufficient content knowledge to teach effectively in the areas they teach.

**Assessment of Need:**

Goals/Objectives for Teacher Quality	Professional Development Activities

***If this is a revised program plan, do you anticipate the need for a budget amendment? Yes No***

*To be completed by the Department of Education:*

<b>Authorized Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
------------------------------	--------------

# DISTRICT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT: STANDARDS, INDICATORS, AND SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

## **1. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT**

**Key Question:** *Do the instructional programs provided by the district's schools in each core subject area, at each grade level, meet the educational needs of all students and result in steadily improving student achievement?*

**Items 1.1—1.7 will be applied separately to each of the following disciplines as appropriate.**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS  
MATHEMATICS  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE  
THE ARTS  
HEALTH, SAFETY & PHYSICAL EDUCATION  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES

### **1.1 Curriculum**

The district and each of its schools have an academically sound, documented curriculum that prepares students to meet State performance standards.

#### ***Indicators***

1. The district has written curriculum materials for all programs (TBE, SPED, Vocational & Regular) and all grade levels that are aligned with State curriculum frameworks and include a rationale, course descriptions, measurable learner objectives, cross-references to State Frameworks, scope and sequence, textbooks and instructional materials, instructional strategies and activities, and assessment plans.
2. Curriculum has been reviewed and revised as needed to address changes in State frameworks and/or to fill gaps identified through analysis of MCAS and other standardized student performance assessments, subsequent to each test administration.
3. Staff members are involved in curriculum development and revision.
4. The district performs item analysis of MCAS results to uncover significant gaps in students' acquisition of knowledge and skills from the Strands in the Curriculum Frameworks.
5. The district ensures that adequate instructional time is scheduled within the day and year for each subject area.
6. The district appoints curriculum leaders and has a policy for K-12 curriculum decision making and implementation.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

The district's written curriculum guides  
Curriculum committee minutes  
Teacher surveys  
Teacher and administrator interviews  
Classroom observations  
The district's analysis of MCAS results  
Professional development records

### **1.2 Instructional Practices**

Teachers in the district's schools have high expectations for student achievement and use a variety of instructional methods and strategies to teach students with varied interests, talents, and abilities.

**Indicators**

1. Teachers consistently communicate to students and parents their high expectations for all students.
2. Teachers assign and hold students accountable for completion of appropriate homework.
3. The district applies consistent performance criteria for student improvement and achievement.
4. Teachers use a variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of LEP and SPED students, and all others with special learning needs.
5. Teachers utilize educational technology as a tool for individualizing instruction and reinforcing their classroom instruction.
6. Teachers use instructional strategies designed to help students develop analytical thinking skills and problem-solving techniques.
7. Teachers are familiar with the concepts and content of MCAS and use this knowledge to develop their own assessments and to prepare lessons.
8. Teachers in all programs and at all grade levels and at each of the district's schools are delivering the content and skills aligned in scope and sequence with State curriculum frameworks.

**Sources of Evidence**

Classroom observations  
Lesson plans  
Teacher interviews and surveys  
Student Handbooks  
Teacher evaluations  
Student work & homework assignments

**1.3 Instructional Materials and Equipment**

The district supplies academically sound, age- and program-appropriate instructional materials and equipment for use by teachers and students in all schools, grades, and programs.

**Indicators**

1. The district provides students and teachers with a sufficient supply of instructional materials and equipment, including library resources, software, and multimedia technology.
2. The district uses valid criteria for selecting instructional materials and equipment.
3. The district evaluates the effectiveness of the resources it uses to ensure that they are academically sound and fitting for their audiences.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and classroom inspections  
Teacher interviews and surveys  
Procedure manuals  
District evaluation documents  
Line item in budget

**1.4 Instructional Technology**

All district schools have the infrastructure and technical support necessary for students, teachers, and program administrators to use technology appropriately to augment instruction and enhance student learning.

**Indicators**

1. The district has an approved technology plan.
2. The district has met the Department of Education’s Local Technology Benchmark Standards for the year 2003.

**Sources of Evidence**

District technology plan  
Teacher interviews and surveys

**1.5 Climate for Learning**

The district’s schools provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to rigorous instruction, purposeful activity, and attainment of individual student potential.

**Indicators**

1. The district imparts strong beliefs about the ability of all students to work hard and achieve a high level of academic performance.
2. Each school has a mission statement that is known to, and understood by, faculty, students, and parents, and is used to guide their work.
3. The district makes an effort to increase the number of students who take advanced level classes.
4. The district provides a variety of school-wide activities, which involve all students and staff, to celebrate school-wide achievements and/or embark on school-wide initiatives.
5. The district regularly assesses staff, student, and parent satisfaction and uses this information to make decisions and set policies.

**Sources of Evidence**

Programs of study	District conducted surveys
Student and teacher interviews	Mission statements
Student and teacher handbooks	Statistics for participation in advanced courses
Activity schedules	Exclusion and suspension statistics
School inspections	

**1.6 Student Assessment**

District administrators and teachers regularly assess the performance of their students relative to State and local student performance standards, and use student assessment results to review and improve curricula, courses, programs, and instructional practices.

**Indicators**

1. The district has an assessment program that includes and integrates classroom-based, school-wide, district-wide, and statewide assessments with clear policies, procedures, and schedules.
2. The district analyses the results of the assessment program both at the district-level and school-level, as well as disaggregating results for all appropriate subgroups of students.
3. The district uses the results on MCAS and other external measures to evaluate locally developed assessments to ensure that district and classroom assessment standards and practices are valid, reliable, and aligned with the learning standards delineated in the Curriculum Frameworks.
4. The district uses the results of the assessment program as part of a comprehensive plan of program evaluation.
5. School curricula and teachers’ instructional practices are adjusted to address gaps identified through the district’s assessment program.
6. The district educates all staff on assessment techniques and procedures for analyzing and using the results of student assessment.

7. The district educates all staff on the role of the district’s assessment program.
8. The district compiles and disseminates aggregated and disaggregated assessment results to all relevant audiences in an appropriate manner.
9. The district provides frequent and useful reports of individual student performance to parents and provides adequate resources for interpretation and feedback.
10. The district tracks the progress (through local and State assessments) of all students, including those who are not in a discrete language program, i.e., language minority students in the mainstream population.

**Sources of Evidence**

District Assessment Plan  
 District Assessment Evaluation  
 District Curriculum Evaluation  
 Samples of Assessment Instruments  
 Samples of Assessment Reports for all relevant audiences  
 Samples of Professional Development Materials  
 Teacher and administrator surveys  
 School level documents showing use of evaluation information

**1.7 Preparation for Post-Secondary Employment or Education**

Students complete high school prepared for higher education or employment and responsible citizenship.

***Indicators***

1. The district’s current dropout rate and trends over five years.
2. Students in general and in identifiable subgroups meet State and local requirements for high school graduation.
3. The district has established a dropout recovery program.
4. The district evaluates the dropout recovery program’s impact on the percentage of students graduating from high school.
5. PSAT and SAT test results.
6. SAT II results.
7. Students’ participation in and results obtained on Advanced Placement tests.
8. The percentage of students awarded the Certificate of Mastery.
9. Percent of high school graduates who matriculate to four-year and two-year college/university programs.
10. Percent of high school graduates completing post-secondary education within 5 years of high school graduation.
11. The district has a process to track the progress of its graduates and uses this data to improve the secondary instructional program.
12. Graduates of vocational/technical educational programs are admitted to post-secondary career education/training programs (if applicable).
13. Graduates of vocational/technical educational programs complete two or more years of post-secondary training within 5 years of finishing high school (if applicable).
14. Students who complete a course of vocational/technical study in the district’s schools obtain employment in the field in which they trained.
15. The District encourages students to participate in community service projects and activities.
16. The district provides Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses in all subject areas.
17. The district’s high school(s) is(are) accredited and in good standing.

**Sources of Evidence**

Department of Education SIMS Database  
 District drop out data  
 District graduation records

GED records  
Test scores  
Administrator and teacher interviews  
Student post graduation surveys  
NEASC reports  
Program of Studies  
Dropout Recovery Program literature

## **2. TEACHER QUALITY**

**Key Question:** Are teachers in the district well qualified and well prepared to provide a high quality of education to the students they teach?

### **2.1 Recruitment and Hiring**

The district recruits and employs qualified professional teaching and support staff whose knowledge, skills, and experience are sufficient to continuously raise the level of student achievement.

#### ***Indicators***

1. The district analyzes student performance and staff evaluation results to establish criteria for teacher selection that are consistent with the district’s mission and the needs of students served by the particular school.
2. The district provides full orientation and ongoing support for new teachers.
3. The district targets quality in its recruitment, hiring, and teacher assignment practices.
4. The district makes an effort to hire teachers who have content area expertise.
5. The district has written policies and procedures for recruitment and hiring.
6. The district’s employment and termination practices of professional staff comply with the State Education Reform Act, applicable State law, and the operative negotiated agreement.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

Policy and procedure manuals  
Interviews with administrators and new teachers  
Teacher profiles  
Grievance Documents  
Recruitment/Hiring planning documents  
Mentoring Program documents  
Staffing analysis reports  
Collective bargaining contracts

### **2.2 Participation in Professional Development**

Teachers in all district schools, programs, and subject areas participate in professional development programs/activities designed to raise student achievement.

#### ***Indicators***

1. The district meets all State professional development standards and laws.
2. Teachers participate in prescribed and voluntary professional development activities inside and outside the district.
3. Teachers further their education by matriculating in graduate programs leading to advanced degrees or by seeking and obtaining Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).
4. Teachers lead and/or participate in professional association/organization committees, and training sessions.

5. Teachers stay current in their field by reading or participating in professional conferences and training opportunities in their primary discipline.
6. The district offers professional training for all its teachers, which is based on identified need and is intended to raise student achievement.
7. The district and schools provide the means and opportunity for teachers to participate in all forms of professional development, including training to meet re-certification requirements at no cost to teachers.
8. The district and schools offer professional development that involves collaboration among teachers and staff working at the same school.

**Sources of Evidence**

Records of professional development participation  
 Teacher interviews  
 Professional development course descriptions and schedule  
 Department of Education Educator Database  
 Summary statistics of teacher credentials and professional progress  
 Teacher surveys

**2.3 Teacher Professional Development Plans**

Teachers in the district have individual professional development plans that are consistent with their schools' and districts' improvement plans.

*Indicators*

1. The district requires individual professional development plans for teachers that address individual teacher improvement goals and the goals for their school and the district.
2. The district reviews and approves annual professional development plans for all teachers.

**Sources of Evidence**

Samples of teacher evaluations and individual professional development plans  
 Teacher and administrator interviews  
 School and District Improvement plans (to examine the relationship between these and PD plans)

**2.4 Personnel Performance Evaluation**

The district regularly and systematically evaluates the performance of all teachers and instructional personnel serving in the district's schools to promote high standards of professional practice, to identify areas of need for professional development, and respond to instances of below standard performance.

*Indicators*

1. The district's evaluation system includes identification of strengths and weaknesses, improvement goals, and an individual professional development plan related to those goals (and to school and district objectives) for each district employee.
2. The district provides/coordinates a peer-teacher assistance program for teachers with identified weaknesses.
3. The district publishes and disseminates broadly the district evaluation process and the criteria used to evaluate personnel.
4. The district uses the results of evaluations to determine continued employment and to offer recognition and other rewards.
5. The district provides training for evaluators in how to perform effective teacher evaluations.

**Sources of Evidence**

Teacher evaluation reports  
Written evaluation procedures and criteria  
Evaluation schedule  
Teacher and administrator interviews  
Teacher handbooks  
Teacher survey  
Documentation for peer-teacher program  
Teacher recognition list

**2.5 Retention and Career Advancement**

The district has employment policies and practices that encourage skilled personnel to remain in the district's employment.

***Indicators***

1. The district provides new teachers with successful, veteran mentor-teachers and ensures that an ongoing relationship exists between the two.
2. The district actively promotes and maintains collaborative working relationships with collective bargaining units.
3. The district provides opportunities for teachers to learn about the effective practices of site-based leadership under Education Reform and involves staff in decision making.
4. The district encourages professional development participation with the aim of building its leadership capacity.
5. The district creates opportunities for teachers to increase their responsibilities with a corresponding increase in professional status or pay. ex. Leading a committee for a stipend.
6. The district recognizes the accomplishments of its teachers and praises good practice.

**Sources of Evidence**

Teacher interviews and survey  
Teacher mentor/induction program documents; teacher handbooks  
Examples of teachers who have functioned in leadership roles  
Funding budgeted for professional development  
DOE teacher attrition rates  
Administrator interviews

**3. STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

***Key Question:*** *Does the district provide the supportive programs and services its students need to achieve educational success?*

**3.1 Early Childhood**

The district provides early childhood programs and services that develop reading readiness skills and other competencies that are the foundation for learning.

***Indicators***

1. Pre-school and kindergarten teachers use assessments to identify student learning needs and to determine students' progress.
2. The district conducts comprehensive outreach and has a reliable screening process to identify children in need and promotes early intervention where needed in children ages 3-5.
3. The district conducts an annual evaluation of its early childhood programs and services with attention to reading readiness and assessment data such as Developmental Reading Assessment.

4. The district commits local and in-kind resources to early childhood programs in addition to State and Federal grants.
5. The district implements an early childhood curriculum that is aligned with the content and skills contained in the State Curriculum Frameworks.
6. Teachers use instructional strategies that meet the unique learning needs of their students, and make an effort to create an environment that is exploratory, nurturing, and interactive.
7. Teachers conduct activities designed to foster students' language, social, and cognitive development.

**Sources of Evidence**

Samples of school readiness assessment results  
 Samples of student progress reports  
 Documentation of early childhood programs  
 The district budget  
 Parent and teacher interviews and surveys  
 Most recent CPR report  
 Program evaluation results  
 Curriculum materials

**3.2 English Language Learner (ELL) Services**

The district provides specialized instruction and programs that promote the academic success of students for whom English is a second language.

***Indicators***

1. The district aligns its curricula of Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs with the State Frameworks to assure that English Language Learners successfully cover the same academic material as mainstream students.
2. The district ensures full access to the curriculum frameworks to all English Language Learners, particularly those who are in ESL classes.
3. Teachers, for both regular education and Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs, have the knowledge required to be effective teachers of English Language Learners.
4. As much as possible and as early as possible, English Language students have opportunities to interact socially and learn along with native English speakers.
5. The district promotes the effective and continuous development of English oral, aural, reading, and writing proficiency among all its English Language Learner students.
6. The district provides effective first language instruction to students who are enrolled in TBE programs, so that these students read and write in their first language, and demonstrate content knowledge on grade level.
7. The district provides effective transitional instruction.

**Sources of Evidence**

TBE curriculum  
 ESL Program philosophy  
 School & classroom observations  
 Samples of Individual Professional Development Plans  
 Classroom lessons  
 Assessment documents  
 Interviews and surveys  
 Professional Development courses and descriptions  
 LEP MCAS data

### **3.3 Special Education**

The district provides specialized instruction and individualized services to help students with disabilities that require special education services achieve annual educational goals.

#### ***Indicators***

1. The district has successfully implemented Federal and State laws related to special education.
2. Students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) prescribe clear, challenging, and fully attainable goals.
3. Students meet the learning objectives set forth in their Individual Education Plans.
4. The district ensures that students with disabilities are covering the material in the State Curriculum Frameworks.
5. The district ensures equitable access to school programs and services to students with disabilities by making timely accommodations where needed.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

Most recent Coordinated Program Review report and follow-up documents  
Sample IEPs and corresponding student results across schools  
Curriculum used with special education students  
Surveys and interviews  
Program observations  
SPED MCAS data

### **3.4 Academic Support Services**

The district provides academic support services in reading, writing, and mathematics to students who are not meeting grade level performance expectations.

#### ***Indicators***

1. The district successfully targets students who would benefit from academic support, and directs them to participate in, or take advantage of, a supplementary program or service that meets the needs of students, including English Language Learners.
2. The district offers programs that meet the needs of students who are performing below grade level or are at risk of failing.
3. The district makes an effort to offer academic support to students at times, such as after school and during the summer, that do not interfere with the regular academic schedule.
4. The district provides adequate funding for academic support service programs, and applies for all grants for which it is eligible when there are insufficient funds available in the district.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

District budget and grant development documents  
Program schedules and descriptions  
Documented methodology and criteria for recruiting students  
Interviews  
Program evaluations  
Data Reports on program participation

### **3.5 Career Education and Exploration**

The district provides all students with information about, and opportunities to explore their interest in a wide array of career opportunities.

**Indicators**

1. Career education in the district exposes all students to the same career material and encourages students to pursue the vocation of their choice.
2. Students have concrete, viable post-graduation plans by the spring of their senior year.
3. The district offers career education consistently over time, beginning in the early grades.
4. The district provides students with specific, current information about multiple career possibilities including the traditional professions, trades-work, and service-related jobs.
5. Students participate in School-to-Career placements.
6. The district has business partners who visit district schools to share information with students about their careers/workplaces.
7. Teachers point out the connections between their disciplines and specific career fields.
8. The district assists students with identifying colleges, researching academic fields of study, and preparing college applications.

**Sources of Evidence**

Written career education agenda/curriculum  
Student surveys and interviews  
Guidance office materials

**3.6 Counseling/Psychological Services**

The district provides professional counselors to help students and their families identify and address obstacles to full participation in their educational programs.

**Indicators**

1. Students attend school without long-term interruptions and are successfully enrolled in courses and programs commensurate with their motivation and performance.
2. Professionals are available to help students overcome emotional and social obstacles to their education.
3. Teachers refer students for the professional assistance they need.
4. Students are aware of, and use, the professional help available to them.
5. The district has provided an easy, confidential way for students and families to access these professionals.
6. The district makes an effort to involve parents in the counseling process.
7. Parents approve of the quality of the counseling services and the professional manner in which all matters concerning their children are conducted.
8. All services are accessible to English Language Learners, including services in the student’s first language if appropriate.
9. Teachers receive support and training to identify and manage emotional and behavioral barriers to learning.
10. The district and its schools offer integrated student support services that provide in-school and out-of-school assistance for students and their families.

**Sources of Evidence**

Interviews and surveys  
Written procedures  
Catalogue or list of services available in (or through) the district  
Case study documenting a student’s progress from problem identification to resolution  
Documents showing collaboration with agencies/organizations outside the district

**3.7 Health Services**

The district has health care professionals to provide in-school medical services where needed, and to advise and assist students and their parents with individual student health issues.

### ***Indicators***

1. The district has an adequate number of staff members at each school who are qualified to deliver basic and emergency in-school medical services in the native language of students and their parents.
2. The district accommodates students' particular medical needs and ensures that students returning from extended medical leaves have a smooth transition back to school.
3. The district promotes good health and makes referrals to outside medical professionals where needed.
4. The district has a comprehensive K-12 Health Education and Human Service Program as specified in the 1999 Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework.
5. The district maintains a Health Coordinator and a comprehensive Health Advisory Council.
6. The district promotes good student nutrition by encouraging participation in school breakfast, lunch, and summer school nutrition programs.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

Written description of the district's Health Program & Services  
Samples of students' health records  
Personnel list with professional credentials  
Parent and student interviews  
504 plans  
Samples of Individualized healthcare plans (source: The Department of Public Health)

### **3.8 Extra-Curricular Programs/Activities**

The district provides students with programs and activities beyond the regular curriculum that enhance their intellectual and social development.

### ***Indicators***

1. The district offers a range of enriching programs and activities in multiple areas, including the athletic, social, and academic spheres, which provide students with diverse educational opportunities that, where appropriate, reinforce the school day curriculum.
2. The district offers extra-curricular activities at convenient times and supports the participation of interested students.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

Observation of activities  
Written descriptions of extra-curricular offerings  
Student interviews and surveys

## **4. LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE**

***Key Question:*** Does *the district have effective leadership and governance?*

### **4.1 Vision**

The district and school leaders share a vision for improving their students' education.

### ***Indicators***

1. The district's leaders are able to articulate the district's mission and the method and course for accomplishing it.
2. School leaders communicate a commitment to the continuous improvement of instruction that inspires school personnel toward excellence.

3. The district has formed a clear statement of its long-term and short-term goals for improving the quality of education for all its students.
4. The district's mission statement reflects identified student learning needs.
5. The district's actions are unified and reflect and reinforce the district's vision.

**Sources of Evidence**

Management meeting minutes  
 The district's written mission statement  
 Interviews and surveys of teachers  
 School and district improvement plans

**4.2 Planning**

The district and each of its schools have clear, credible, and academically sound improvement plans that are based on a detailed analysis of student performance data.

***Indicators***

1. District engages a broad-based group of stakeholders in the formulation, dissemination and monitoring of a strategic District Improvement Plan (DIP); the same process is undertaken at each of the district's schools for School Improvement Plans (SIP).
2. Improvement plans state specific goals for improved student performance and detail actions to be taken, by whom, on what timeline and using what resources, to meet those long-term goals.
3. SIPs and DIPs are regularly reviewed and revised based on clearly defined measures of success and an analysis of student performance data.
4. The District Improvement Plan is formulated in coordination with School Improvement Plans.
5. The School Committee is involved in the district planning process, and sets policies and approves the allocation of resources required to accomplish agreed upon goals.
6. Annual action plans give high priority to initiatives for improving student achievement in specific content areas, grades, and for specific student populations for any school(s) within the district that failed to meet improvement expectations for the last accountability cycle.
7. The district develops a Local Technology Plan in accordance with the State's Local Technology Benchmark Standards for the year 2003.
8. The District Improvement Plan and School Improvement Plans are developed in conjunction with district professional development and technology plans.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and district improvement plans (compared over three years)  
 School and district budgets  
 District level professional development plan  
 Planning meeting minutes  
 Interviews with administrators, teachers, school committee members  
 Observations of school committee meeting and other strategic planning meetings  
 School Performance Rating System Reports  
 Local Technology Plan (LTP)

**4.3 Evaluation**

The district employs a well-designed system of school and program evaluation that ensures accountability and effectiveness.

***Indicators***

1. The district engages in a systematic self-assessment process at all levels, including an evaluation of its progress on strategic objectives outlined in Improvement Plans.

2. The district formulates action plans in response to the findings generated from the assessments of its programs, and is willing to discontinue or change initiatives that are found inadequate to the task for which they were undertaken.
3. The district responds in a timely manner to recommendations from outside evaluators of programs and services (examples: Comprehensive Program Review, NEASC reports).
4. The district has a standardized evaluation system for principals that establishes high expectations, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and creates improvement goals and professional development plans related to these goals.

**Sources of Evidence**

District and school Improvement plans  
 Self-assessment reports  
 Analysis of MCAS and other student performance results  
 Outside evaluation reports  
 Administrator interviews  
 Samples of written principal evaluations

**4.4 Parent and Community Engagement**

District and school leaders engage parents and members of the broader community in collaborative efforts to improve students’ academic performance.

***Indicators***

1. Schools have policies and practices in place that enable parents, families, and community members to play an integral role in assisting student learning, and indicate in specific ways that they are welcome, and that their support and assistance are needed.
2. Communication systems are established between home and school that are varied, consistent, two-way, and meaningful, and ensure that the information is provided in the native language of parents including those who have English as a second language.
3. The district contacts parents directly and in ongoing ways to inform them of student performance results, what students are learning, school practices, and other educational issues, with explanations as to what parents and guardians can do to help their children improve.
4. The district provides opportunities for parents, families, community leaders, and the public to contribute to decisions about strategic plans and other decisions that impact teaching and learning.
5. Community resources are sought and relationships developed to improve student learning.
6. The district actively solicits information and feedback from local organizations that supports teaching and learning, such as the current and future requirements of the job force.
7. Training is offered to staff on parent, family, and community involvement.

**Sources of Evidence**

Fliers, newsletters, progress reports, and policy manuals  
 Parent surveys and interviews  
 Administrator interviews  
 Samples of School Council meeting minutes (to determine the extent of input from parents)

**4.5 Organizational Structures, Policies and Practices**

The district has organizational structures, policies, and practices that result in the effective and efficient operation of the district and its schools and promote student achievement.

### ***Indicators***

1. The superintendent consults senior administrators and the School Committee when formulating the district's mission and District Improvement Plan, and invites input from principals, parents, and community members.
2. The superintendent delegates the educational and operational management of the schools to building principals.
3. The district publishes all policies, procedures, and improvement plans and makes them available to all of the staff in each school in the district and to the general public.
4. District-wide and inter-site communications systems and practices are used regularly to keep district and school staff well informed, and to provide school staff with the opportunity to respond; each school and office in the district is linked via network with appropriate municipal and city departments.
5. The district has an organizational chart/scheme/diagram or documents clearly defining the duties and lines of responsibility and reporting for all staff in the district
6. District personnel are familiar with the chain of command and the protocol for decision-making in the district.
7. Logical, orderly district records are available to anyone in the district who needs them.
8. The School Committee evaluates the superintendent annually to establish high expectations, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to create improvement goals and a professional development plan related to these goals.
9. The district's schools have organizational structures and schedules that promote and support effective instructional practices.
10. School leaders foster effective instructional practices through the school's organizational structure and schedule.

#### **Sources of Evidence**

Organizational chart  
Procedure and policy manuals  
Administrator/Teacher interviews and surveys  
Observations of meetings  
Observation of record keeping and communication systems  
Superintendent's evaluation report and contract

### **4.6 School Discipline and Safety**

The district has documented codes of conduct and school safety practices and assures consistent and effective implementation in all district schools.

### ***Indicators***

1. The district and its schools have a discipline code that defines unacceptable behavior, identifies policies, procedures, and school rules that promote appropriate behavior, and is communicated to all students, parents, and staff.
2. Schools enforce conduct policies consistently and fairly for all students, a fact that is corroborated through the district's exclusion and suspension rates.
3. Teachers are able to instruct, and students are able to learn, without interference from behavioral problems.
4. Schools have well-publicized processes for resolution of student conflicts.
5. The district routinely communicates with parents regarding the discipline of their children.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and classroom observations  
Samples of discipline records  
Administrator, parent, student, and teacher interviews  
Student and teacher handbooks  
DOE exclusion and suspension rates  
Peer mediation program documentation

**5. BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

**Key Question:** *Does the district employ sound, effective business and financial practices that use resources effectively to support attainment of the district's student achievement goals?*

**5.1 Budgeting**

The district has a budgeting process that ensures efficient use of available resources for district and school improvement initiatives.

**Indicators**

1. Financial implications of school level improvement plans are considered in the formulation of district budget proposals.
2. Budget decisions are premised upon up-to-date data and sound projections.
3. The district has a process for evaluating how well its resources are allocated.
4. The district regularly reviews and reports on its budget performance in comparison to established benchmarks.
5. The district regularly analyzes the relationship between expenditures and outcomes.
6. The district takes into account potential grant and other income when preparing the budget.
7. The district has a systematic process for identifying priority budget items.
8. The essential material and service needs of each school in the district are met.
9. The district's budget includes a line item dedicated to its Local Technology Plan.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and district budget reports  
Financial-analysis documents  
Policy and procedure manual  
School observations to determine if funds are being allocated equitably and adequately  
Administrator interviews  
Improvement plans and annual budgets (to determine if identified needs are supported)

**5.2 Financial Management**

The district maintains adequate accounting and financial reporting procedures to inform district-level and school-level decision making, ensure effective managerial control over the use of funds, and facilitate public accountability.

**Indicators**

1. The district has procedures to test the reliability of data collected and generated, and these procedures are used to correct identified data errors.
2. The district satisfies all State and Federal data reporting requirements.
3. The district supports the efforts of its schools to produce school-level financial reports.

4. The district has an integrated accounting system, which generates regular reports that track expenditures with the budget (Example: Creating a chart that matches the budget against incurred costs and noting the variance).
5. The district analyzes the impact of financial spending decisions on student achievement.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and district financial reports  
 District end of year reports  
 Observation of district financial office systems and practices  
 Administrator interviews  
 Policies and procedures manual

**5.3 Financial Resources**

The district obtains and allocates adequate funding from public and private sources to ensure a high quality of education in the district’s schools.

*Indicators*

1. The district has knowledge of all existing, relevant grants and applies to those for which it is eligible.
2. The district and the district’s schools make systematic efforts to obtain revenue from agencies, foundations, and businesses.
3. The district effectively negotiates with city/town officials to increase spending on education.

**Sources of Evidence**

Grant applications  
 School committee/town meeting minutes  
 Administrator interviews  
 Records of financial receipts

**5.4 Information Management Systems**

The district has information management technology for efficient collection, storage, and reporting of student, personnel, program, and financial data.

*Indicators*

1. The district maintains data that meets State IMS standards.
2. The information systems generate reliable, periodic reports needed by management on a regular cycle.
3. Key staff members are familiar with the systems and use them as a management tool to perform necessary work.
4. The district information management systems are integrated.

**Sources of Evidence**

Inspection of district databases  
 Samples of student, financial, and personnel reports  
 Administrator interviews  
 Policies and procedures manual

**5.5 Personnel and Business Management**

The district has personnel and business management systems that meet legal requirements and facilitate the orderly and efficient handling of personnel and business matters.

***Indicators***

1. The district has a procedure manual for all essential policies and transactions that is up-to-date and circulated to appropriate staff.
2. Collective bargaining agreements advance the district's efforts in the provision of high quality education in the district's schools.
3. The district conforms to Chapter 30B (Uniform Procurement Act) of the Massachusetts General Laws.
4. The district's procurement process is efficient and leads to individuals receiving the requested items for the best value and on time.
5. The district delegates responsibility to one individual for maintenance decisions and planning.
6. The district has a documented transportation policy.
7. The district resolves disputes and claims in a timely, cost-effective manner.

**Sources of Evidence**

Policy and procedure manuals  
Procurement records  
Minutes of meetings between administration and union

**5.6 Maintenance of Facilities and Equipment**

The district's schools have clean, well-maintained, healthy environments conducive to teaching and learning.

***Indicators***

1. School buildings, and the essential equipment within schools, are safe and functional.
2. District assesses facility requirements and performs maintenance, renovation, and new construction work as needed, with priority given to problems that cause the greatest impediments to learning.
3. The district maintains facilities and equipment in an energy efficient and cost-effective manner.
4. The district has a written long-range capital and extraordinary maintenance plan (projects costing up to \$100,000) linked to enrollment projections.

**Sources of Evidence**

School and equipment inspections  
Maintenance records and plans  
Teacher interviews and surveys  
Facility planning and enrollment projection documents