

## **School Panel Review Report Magnet Middle School for the Arts Holyoke Public Schools**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the School Panel Review Process is to assist the Commissioner of Education in determining whether State intervention is needed to guide improvement efforts in schools where students' MCAS performance is critically low and no trend toward improved student performance is evident from MCAS data. The Magnet Middle School for the Arts met this criterion at the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades and was one of fourteen schools selected for panel review in spring, 2003. The panel review was conducted on February 11–12, 2003.

The Review Panel's charge was to analyze data and written information on the school's performance and improvement efforts, visit the school, and meet with school and district officials in order to advise the Commissioner on the answers to the following two key questions:

1. Does the school have a sound plan for improving student performance?
2. Are the conditions in place for the successful implementation of the school's improvement plan(s)?

The Panel's responses to the two key questions that defined the scope of its review are included in this report. These findings and conclusions are the product of the panel's analysis, discussion, and observation, based on the evidence available to it. A list of panel members who participated in the review is provided in Appendix A. A detailed schedule of the panel's activities is provided in Appendix B.

The Panel's findings and conclusions on the two key questions, as well as school performance data, will be forwarded to the Commissioner of Education for consideration in determining whether Magnet Middle School for the Arts is deemed under-performing. The panel was not asked to formulate a sound plan for school improvement where such a plan does not presently exist or to recommend a course of action to create the conditions for successful implementation of a sound plan where such conditions at present do not appear to exist. Diagnostic and/or prescriptive intervention, where needed to assist an under-performing school, occurs at the next stage of the school review process.

### **Magnet Middle School for the Arts Profile**

#### **Enrollment**

Magnet Middle School for the Arts is one of three middle schools in the Holyoke Public Schools and serves approximately 342 students in grades 6 through 8. Enrollment has fluctuated somewhat since 1999, with a low of 321 in 1999, a peak of 373 in 2001. The distribution of students across sub groups has remained fairly constant, with 83 percent Hispanic, 11 percent White, 4 percent Black and 1 percent Asian. There was an increase in 2001 enrollment of

students qualifying for free and reduced lunch to 91 percent (up from 77 percent) that went slightly down to 87 percent in 2002. There is a School-wide Title I program. English is not the first language for 71 percent of the students enrolled in 2002, 26 percent of Magnet's students are designated as Limited English Proficient.

The programs and services report indicates that 78 students of Magnet's students are receiving special education services. Of these students, eight receive instruction in a separate BIG classroom (behaviorally involved group). The remaining 69 receive services primarily in a resource room setting or with other on-site providers (occupational, physical and speech therapists). Fifty-nine students receive ESL instruction at the school, and there are two students receiving Transitional Bilingual Education services.

### **Staffing**

In addition to the Principal and Acting Assistant Principal, there are 36 full-time teachers serving Magnet Middle School's 342 students, two of whom are Teacher Leader/Curriculum Facilitators. Sixty-seven (24) percent of the teachers at the Magnet middle School have been at the school four five or fewer years. And eight of the school's teachers are not certified in the subjects they teach.

### **MCAS Overview**

Students at the Magnet Middle School are tested in grade 6 in mathematics, in grade 7 in English language arts, and in grade 8 in mathematics. The school failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in both Cycle I (1999-2000) and Cycle II (2001-2002).

#### *Student Performance in English Language Arts*

In Cycle II, Magnet Middle School received a performance rating of "Very Low" for its proficiency of 48.4 in ELA. Compared to Cycle I, the school was found to have "Declined" in terms of improvement. Participation rates in Cycle II were 89 percent and 98 percent in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

In 2001, 16 percent of Regular Education performed at the Proficient level, 43 percent at Needs Improvement, and 40 percent at Warning in ELA. In 2002, one percent of Regular Education students were advanced, the percentage of proficient students doubled to 32, 49 percent were in need of improvement, and those in Warning fell to 18 percent.

In 2001, there were no proficient Special Education students at the Magnet Middle School in ELA. Four percent of students in this subgroup were in need of improvement while 96 were at Warning. In 2002, 24 percent of Special Education students were at the Needs Improvement level and 76 percent at Warning.

The performance of Limited English Proficient (LEP) in Cycle II was characterized by high percentages of students in the Warning category, (100 and 91 in 2001 and 2002, respectively). *Student Performance in Mathematics*

In Cycle II, Magnet Middle School received a performance rating of “Critically Low” in mathematics, based on its proficiency index of 26.8. The school was also found to have “Declined” in improvement. In Cycle, participation rates in the mathematics portion of the MCAS test was 94 percent and 95 percent in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

The performance of Regular Education students at Magnet Middle School has concentrated in the Warning category in the last four years. In 1999, only seven percent of students were proficient, nine percent were Needs Improvement, and 84 percent in Warning. In 2000, two percent of all Regular Education students tested at this were at the Advanced level of performance, eight percent at Proficient, 28 percent at Needs Improvement, and 63 percent in Warning. In the first year of Cycle II, there were no proficient, 26 percent were in need of improvement, and 74 were at Warning. In 2002, six percent of scores fell in the Proficient category, 28 percent in Needs Improvement, and 66 percent in Warning. Regular Education student performance in the grade 6 mathematics test in Cycle II mirrored the trends observed in Cycle II in grade 8 mathematics.

The performance of Special Education students has remained the same over the last four years. All students have scored at the Warning level. Special Education student performance at the grade 6 level in mathematics in Cycle II exhibit similar trends.

The performance of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students has been stagnant over the last three years (in 1999, fewer than 10 LEP students were tested). Most students (92-100 percent) have scored at the Warning level, with insignificant percentages at the Needs Improvement level. LEP student performance trends at the grade 6 level in Cycle II mirror those in grade 8 mathematics.

## **PANEL RESPONSES TO THE KEY QUESTIONS**

### **KEY QUESTION 1: DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE A SOUND PLAN FOR IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE?**

It is the judgment of the panel that the Magnet Middle School for the Arts’ current School Improvement Plan lacks several essential elements for improving student performance. Notwithstanding the apparent dedication of the staff and the energetic leadership of the principal observed during interviews and classroom observations, the plan does not prioritize or clearly outline strategies to directly address the significant and sustained performance gaps since 1998 between students in regular education, and those designated as Limited English Proficient and Special Education—which together constitute 39 percent of the student population. This makes it unlikely that those initiatives that are outlined in the Action Plans will lead to needed improvements.

**A. Has the school analyzed appropriate data and program information to accurately identify the gaps in student performance and determined why those gaps exist?**

The 2002-2003 School Improvement Plan displays summary MCAS and Terra Nova results from the past four years, for each content area, and by subgroup. The 2000-2002 School Improvement Plan identified the need for more staff training in data analysis that was to begin in Spring 2001. As of the panel's visit, this training had not been provided for the principal or the staff. In interviews and focus groups, the principal and teachers often referred to data analysis activities in the preparation of the 2002-03 plan, and the principal reported some support from the district with data analysis. In the plan, and in interviews and focus groups with the Principal, Superintendent, School Council, and teachers, there are broad categories of student weaknesses defined. The primary causes cited were a high percentage of failure in content areas, especially math, and a high percentage of students for whom English is a second language who are not in any language program. There are some more direct instruction-related causes identified for the low performance in the plan, such as lack of a consistently implemented writing program across the curriculum, the need for content area teachers to receive additional training in teaching reading in the content area, and the need for textbooks and material written at the literacy level of many students.

The Superintendent and the Principal acknowledge the notable student performance gaps for Special Education and LEP students evident in the data since 1998. The School Leadership Report submitted by the Principal includes among the major findings of a needs assessment last year that "the vast majority of our students are English language learners and need specialized instruction that helps them develop and retain academic vocabulary." The report later notes deep concern about the low achievement of special education students and the need for more support and resources for SPED staff and students. In the SIP, Section E: Unique School Challenges, item 5, describes Special Education as a major challenge, and points to the location of a Behaviorally Involved Group (currently with 8 students), overcrowded resource rooms and inadequate or unstable staffing as causes for low performance among these groups. While students are assigned to the school based on an open-choice system, the principal reports that all students in the district with an IEP requiring resource room instruction are assigned to Magnet Middle School for the Arts. There are 20 resource rooms at the school, four with enrollments of 13-14 students, the remaining 16 with enrollments of up to 8 students. These rooms appear to be adequately staffed at present. The Principal has suggested that the addition of one special education teacher would help achieve smaller class sizes and improve instruction.

Several parents who met with the panel reported that the school was their first choice, for the arts component and for the comparatively small student population and sense of community at the school. The Principal and staff feel strongly that the arts component is a key piece of their program and is what attracts many of their students and keeps them coming to school.

There was no evidence in the plan or provided elsewhere of a systematic evaluation of the existing curricula being used school-wide and in the separate classrooms for the identified subgroups. Connected Math has been implemented over the past three years at the school, beginning with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and is now fully implemented at that grade level. A full-time

Noyce-funded math coach is now working in the school to help teachers with implementation and monitoring of CMP. She has recently provided the school with sub-scores for 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade math. The data presented shows apparent improvement in students answering almost every type of question at both grades in 2002. Unfortunately, this data offers a confusing measure of progress, since the improvement is calculated as a percentage of the baseline rather than as a percentage of students tested. This calculation is not an appropriate measure of MCAS criterion referenced tests.

In addition, while algebra is integrated into the CMP curriculum, a small number of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, selected by test scores and other factors, reportedly take an Algebra class. This year, this “advanced” class of Algebra contains 20 students. According to the principal, CMP is being taught in all other mainstream, ESL, and special education classes, with most ESL students being team taught this year alongside their mainstream peers. These ESL/mainstream classes are supported by both a mainstream and ESL teacher. In addition, two Title I math teachers support instruction and team teach with mainstream math teachers at the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade levels. One Title I math teacher also supports instruction in a special education math class.

Magnet Middle School for the Arts currently has no written articulation of, or plan for, how the arts curriculum is integrated with and supports core academics. The needs assessment prefacing the plan does not reflect analysis of the possible impact of this factor on student performance. The school offers students the opportunity to study the arts in self-selected classes in instrumental band music, percussion, ceramics, violin, cello, the visual arts, and drama. The staffing report shows that the 3 visual arts teachers are all certified. Of the two music teachers on staff, one is certified and one is on waiver. The school also employs two artists-in-residence who are not certified. This year, attempts are being made to incorporate more material from academic subjects into the arts classes through the art teachers’ participation in monthly vertical team meetings.

The Superintendent indicated in his meeting with the panel that the curriculum in place in the district was aligned with the Curriculum Frameworks when developed, but that the documents are out of date and are not consistently implemented in the classrooms across the district. He acknowledged that at some schools in the district the same content is not taught in many classrooms for LEP and Special Education students. The Principal at Magnet Middle School reports that “ESL students receive instruction alongside their mainstream peers in social studies, science, math, reading, and ELA, in a team teaching situation that finds content area specialists paired with ESL teachers. The exception to this would be in the seventh grade, where the decision was made to separate the seventh grade ESL and mainstream students for their reading and language arts, based upon language proficiency issues. These same seventh graders are team taught in social studies, science, and math by a content area specialist and an ESL teacher.”

In interviews, focus groups and classroom observations, the panel found little evidence of a consistent ELA curriculum in use, nor any guides or supporting curricular materials available from the district to help teachers translate the learning standards in the ELA Framework into classroom lessons and assessments. Magnet’s teachers reported using tradebooks and “Spotlight on Literature,” a skills-based program in reading. Language arts classes use the Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston writing and literature books. More than a third of the respondents to the

instructional staff survey rated the district's guidance/implementation of the curriculum as inadequate or not available.

**B. Does the plan set out specific improvement objectives that are grounded in the school's analysis of the reasons for poor student performance?**

Broad areas of student weakness have been identified, and student performance goals have been established, consistent with the district's guide on developing school improvement plans. The goals for each content area and each subgroup within the content area are a 5 percent increase in the "passing" (i.e., Needs Improvement) rate. These are too low for the school to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) under the NCLB requirements, and reflect the overall low expectations for student performance in the school that were echoed in staff surveys and interviews. In math, for instance, the goal is to get 28 percent of all students "passing" (Needs Improvement) MCAS (from 23 percent in 2002), and 5 percent of SPED students and LEP students "passing" (Needs Improvement, from 0 in 2002 and 8 percent in 2001).

There is no strong link drawn between these performance goals for students and root causes of the low performance, but there is some connection with what the school has identified as reasons for low student performance. The school has outlined four goals, prioritized based on test results. While these goals and the strategic objectives within them reflect the general level of analysis done on performance results data, they are focused on increasing student achievement: first in math, then in language and literacy in Reading and Writing. The last goal is related to climate. The strategic objectives for math, in addition to increasing "passing" (Needs Improvement) rates in MCAS by 5 percent, is that "math instruction in all classrooms will reflect best practices in teaching as intended in the Connected Mathematics Curriculum." For Reading, "all students will perform at or above the partial mastery level on Terra Nova and Supera assessments."

The action plans presented to achieve these goals do not include specific plans, schedules and timelines for professional development to improve teaching, nor do they reflect a systematic revision of curriculum and materials to increase consistency of instruction across programs.

**C. In order to accomplish each improvement objective, does the plan specify strategies that appear likely to lead to improved student results?**

Some of the Action Steps, if fully implemented, hold promise for some improvement to student achievement: assigning two new Title 1 mathematics teachers to provide classroom support to teachers and students, mentoring support for every mathematics teacher by a full-time coach, professional development in differentiated instruction. Teachers report that the LINKS program they have been using and the training they have received are helping them to teach writing.

The Superintendent also mandated an additional three hours of math instruction per week district-wide. The Principal reported that the "test sophistication/content enhancement" program, initiated by the Superintendent last year, was incorporated into the school day differently at each grade level. At the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, additional time-on-learning in math was incorporated into science and social students in specific CMP units. The program was incorporated into all academic classes at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It was not clear to the panel how much of the 3-hour increase was

dedicated to content enhancement in the delivery of the CMP math curriculum and how much focused on test sophistication.

Other key initiatives being implemented, such as vertical teaming, team teaching by content area and ESL teachers in mainstream classes, and daily team meetings appear to be sound strategies that could have some positive impact. Some students with special needs were moved into smaller groups when the unified arts schedule was modified this year.

In their needs assessment, the school identifies systemic cause of low performance in their needs assessment—especially the district-wide performance gap for special education and ESL Students. However, the action plans outlined in the plan for the four goals do not specify strategies designed to meet the needs of these particular student subgroups, or offer clear student learning outcomes for these students.

In its needs assessment, the plan also identifies the lack of school-wide professional development as a challenge, and cites the need for professional development in a number of areas, including reading, math and school-wide need for training in diversified instruction and effective strategies for teaching LEP students and team teaching. There is currently little time built into the academic calendar for school-wide professional development. According to the Principal and teachers this may in part be resolved by the new contract. However, as of the panel's visit, there were no specific plans, timelines, or schedules for staff training included in the plan, nor could the panel elicit any during interviews and focus groups.

In the past two years, teachers have received training in a variety of areas, including classroom management strategies, as component of implementing LINKS, CMP and other programs. There are a Noyce math coach, a Turning Points coach and NELMS coach who are also providing staff training and support. Teachers are also receiving some professional development in team meetings. The Principal keeps a notebook of professional development opportunities in the office, and encourages the teachers she thinks will benefit from various trainings to attend them during school time, if necessary. The Principal is also trying to develop a mechanism for those teachers that do receive training to share it with their team and other teachers. There is no central record, and no system for tracking to identify which teachers are receiving what kinds of training and when. Individual teachers currently participate in professional development voluntarily and at their own discretion.

In the absence of deeper analysis of student results, there is often not a clear link between what the plan identifies as Key Problems/Root Causes, and the Action Steps and the Measurable Outcomes set out to address them. For instance, the plan calls for the development and implementation of Individual Student Success Plans for all students at risk of failing math, to be coordinated by Team Leaders. The Measurable Outcomes for this action step are: established protocol for development of ISSPs; use ISSPs to dictate work in After School program; and increased student achievement in math measured by classwork, homework, quizzes, tests, and math portfolios. The Principal reports that a great deal of effort has been expended on the plans, but that the process is not yet complete, and she and the staff question their value, given the large numbers of students requiring the plans. The sample plan reviewed by the panel was not specific enough to direct instruction. The plans do appear to be in use by the After School teachers, but

there is no specific mechanism to measure their effectiveness outside the After School program, or to connect them back to the instruction taking place during the regular school day.

**D. Are the school's written improvement planning document (s) clear and specific enough to guide their implementation of planned improvement initiatives?**

The template used in the district for school improvement planning is laid out in a clear structure, with vertical columns for problem/cause, action step, timeline, persons responsible and measurable outcomes. The responsible party for monitoring most of the action steps is the Principal. The timeline in the SIP for implementing and completing the prescribed actions are either for the 2002-2003 school year or ongoing.

As stated elsewhere, the identified root causes for persistently low student achievement reflect a summary of the results, or in some cases a statement of symptoms. There is little analysis of causes within the school's control or statement of particular student learning needs that would generate more specific strategies to effect improvement in student achievement. The SIP contains some detailed action steps that correspond directly with an identified need, such as the rubric for writing samples (pg. 23), which are adequate guides to implement instructional improvement; while other statements ("write more compositions") are more general.

The current plan is an outline of various activities and strategies which, in the panel's judgement, does not provide a clear guide for the implementation of specific strategies, lacking specific schedules for specific actions, and clear benchmarks and mechanisms for monitoring their effectiveness.

**E. Was the School Improvement Plan developed through a process that will support its successful implementation?**

The SIP evolved in a series of stages, initiated first by the principal. This was in response to a directive from the Superintendent at the end of the previous school year. She had to wait until August before a small group of teachers was available to work on it with her. They reviewed the previous plan for its effectiveness, making changes where needed. This work continued in September 2002, when the Principal met with teams of teachers during school hours to solicit teacher input before the plan went to the School Council. School Council representatives were elected at an Open House on September 27, with the first meeting scheduled for October 3, 2002. The SC was able to review the plan in its entirety on November 6, 2002. An interview of SC members verified that all stakeholders reported involvement, having been consulted about the goals of the SIP. It should be noted that the current 2001-2002 plan carries forward many of the same problems/causes, action steps and measurable outcomes (progress indicators) as the previous plan. Some of the improvement initiatives discussed by the Principal and staff during the panel's visit were initiated over the past two years. CMP math has been in place for three years.

The SIP has been communicated to the faculty. Most teachers spoke about the plan in interviews and focus groups, and in several cases had the plan with them, highlighted in their different

areas. The staff survey and teacher interviews suggest that there are different levels of familiarity with the plan, but there was ample evidence of their investment in its success in focus groups, and in interviews. The staff surveys indicated a general level of understanding of the broad goals and a range of clarity among teachers about their individual roles in the process of implementation.

Over the past two years the Principal appears to have mobilized the school community. The School Council reported that they review the plan every other month, allowing for ongoing evaluation and revision as needed.

**KEY QUESTION 2: ARE THE CONDITIONS IN PLACE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN(S)?**

In the panel's judgement, key conditions are not in place for the implementation of plans to improve student performance at the school. The energetic leadership and willing staff are working from a general interpretation of student performance data, with broad goals and very low expectations for improving student achievement. While the district has provided support for improvement planning, its systemic approach to improvement does not yet address the specific needs of the students at Magnet Middle School, particularly for the special education and Limited English Proficient populations.

**A. Does the school have effective leadership and sound management?**

The interviews with the Superintendent, Principal, School Council and staff, as well as the data from the teacher surveys and on-site visit all confirm that there is an energetic and committed leader at Magnet, and a process of good administration. Teachers and parents speak of the principal with high regard, and the school community believes that the new Superintendent has the ability and experience to direct the efforts of the district appropriately. In meetings with the panel, parents spoke about the active choice they made in placing their children at Magnet, after researching the opportunities there. They were impressed that the principal met with them personally, as opposed to assigning a guidance counselor to this task, when they came on exploratory visits.

The principal works hard to foster a positive climate and to keep morale high. She projects confidence and displays enthusiasm for her work. She involves the staff and other stakeholders in decision-making, with a clear sense of purpose. She recognizes the need for professional development and tries to keep the staff apprised of appropriate individual opportunities. The principal has changed the school culture in her two-year tenure. Staff reports that she listens to their concerns and needs, and actively seeks their input on decisions. There is a sense of community in evidence at the school.

The panel also found evidence of low expectations for student performance, reflected in the minimal goals in the School Improvement Plan and in teachers' characterizations of student academic ability. From parent, student and teacher interviews it was evident that homework was assigned inconsistently, with a lack of rigor. The school reports that retention rates increased slightly in 2002. The data for the previous three years shows a retention rate well below the state average of 2.5, with 11 students retained school-wide (1 in 1999, 5 in 2000, and 5 in 2001), despite very high failure rates on both MCAS and Terra Nova reading assessments.

**B. Is there evidence that the school's faculty supports the planned improvement efforts?**

The Principal has earned the confidence of her staff, as evidenced by the testimony from teacher interviews and focus groups, as well as the staff survey. To the survey statement, "Our school principal provides effective leadership to guide and support staff efforts to improve the academic performance of our students", 48 percent responded that they strongly agreed, with 41 percent

responding that they agreed. To the statement, “Our school has a well-defined plan for reaching student performance goals”, 46 percent and 43 percent respectively responded strongly agreeing and agreeing.

In the area of school improvement planning, 76 percent of the staff responded that it was available and adequate. The faculty believes that the improvement plans currently being implemented will result in student performance gains, and that they have a role to play in this work.

### **C. Is the school receiving adequate guidance and support from the district leadership?**

The Superintendent appeared to be well-informed of the basic needs of all schools in the district. New to the district last year, he is taking a global vision, or district perspective on improvement, including planning for a reorganization of the schools. He envisions the NELMS program as a resource to improve instruction at Magnet. They have been working in the district for two years, but there was little evidence of comprehensive data analysis at the district level to monitor or support their efforts at the individual schools. The Superintendent described a new organizational structure that includes five directors of key areas at the central office. Since he did not bring any of these administrators to the meeting with the panel, it is difficult to assess the capacity for this type of organizational structure to support Magnet in its improvement efforts.

The previous SIPs, as described by the Superintendent, were eighteen months old when he arrived; and they were not linked to the district’s strategic plan. He directed each school to submit a current SIP, which was subjected to a rubric evaluation designed by central office staff. A subcommittee of the school committee, comprised of four members, was also involved in its review. Magnet’s plan was delayed, as the principal was not able to get a small group of staff members together for reaction to her draft until August of 2002. The Superintendent said, in retrospect, that he was glad it was delayed, as it turned out to be the best SIP in the district. He strongly endorsed it.

The Superintendent reportedly provided financial resources to support the implementation of the SIP, including Title 1 funds, money to establish a library, NELMS membership and consultant services from NELMS for coaching the principal, as well as Turning Points support for Magnet. The team found no evidence that the Title I School-wide project Team met to determine how additional school-wide funds should be used, based on a comprehensive needs assessment.

The Superintendent gave a lot of positive reinforcement to the principal for her work on the SIP. In addition to the coaches from NELMS and Turning Points, he reported that district staff worked with the principal to assist with data analysis and curriculum initiatives. The panel saw little evidence of this support with data analysis reflected in the plan. The Superintendent also described a new Pre-Referral process instituted district-wide which has had little apparent impact on Magnet Middle School’s special education services, which are still primarily delivered in a resource room setting.

**CONCLUSION**

The Principal and staff at the Magnet Middle School for the Arts have created a welcoming environment for the students entrusted to their care. The leadership is fostering promising practices in team teaching and vertical teaming, and has scheduled daily time for team meetings.

However, the panel did not find a sound plan that addresses the persistent performance gaps in student performance at the school (and in the district) as evidenced by the data from 1998 to 2002. Nor did the panel find sufficient conditions in place for the successful implementation of such a plan. Of particular concern was the fact that even if the current plan was fully implemented and all of its stated student performance goals achieved, the Magnet Middle School for the Arts would still not make AYP in the coming year.

It should be noted that during the panel's visit, the principal reported that the district was in the process of formulating a reorganization plan, which could include the closure of the Magnet Middle School at the end of this school year.

**APPENDIX A  
Team Members**

**William Conners**, Chair, Superintendent of Schools, Burlington Public Schools

**Denise Delorey**, Coordinator, Department of Education

**Peter Kalafarski**, K-12 Science Coordinator, Haverhill Public Schools

**Noel Pixley**, Principal, Thornton W. Burgess Middle School, Hampden, MA

**Paul Zinni**, Director of Pupil Services, Avon Public Schools

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**APPENDIX B**  
**UNDER-PERFORMING PANEL REVIEW SCHEDULE**  
**Detailed Schedule for Review Panel School Site Visit**

**The times specified on the following schedule may be adjusted slightly to align with the daily schedule and practices in each of the schools being reviewed.**

**Day 1**

- 10:30—12:00*            Panel chairperson and panel coordinator meet to discuss and clarify roles, prepare for the first team meeting, and review general logistics/schedule for the review. [location: hotel]
- 12:00—2:00 p.m.*        **Team meeting # 1:** team meets for the first time to discuss each panelist’s individual analysis; team forms preliminary judgements on key questions. [location: hotel]
- 2:00—3:00 p.m.*        Panelists meet with the district Superintendent (and Assistant Superintendent, if appropriate). [location: hotel]
- 3:30—4:30 p.m.*        Panelists meet with Principal (and one other school-based individual, if appropriate). [location: the school]
- 6:00—8:00 p.m.*        **Team meeting # 2:** panelists synthesize interview information, further define findings, prepare questions, and develop a team strategy for Day 2 of the review. [location: hotel]

**Day 2**

**All activities take place in the school**

- 7:30—8:00 a.m.*            Panelists meet with the Principal
- 8:00—8:30 a.m.*            Panelists meet with the School Council
- 8:30—9:00 a.m.*            Panelists meet with Focus Groups. The Panel Review Coordinator and the Principal will identify participants for each Focus Group. The groups will be organized, as appropriate, to include groups of individuals who can respond to questions designed for parents, students, classroom teachers, curriculum facilitators, content-area specialists, grade-level instructors, or other specific inquiry groups.

Panelist A	Panelist B	Panelist C	Panelist D	Panelist E
Focus Group	Focus Group	Focus Group	Focus Group	Focus Group

9:00—11:00 a.m. Classroom observations and teacher interviews

	Panelist A	Panelist B	Panelist C	Panelist D	Panelist E
9-10 a.m.	Observe teacher 1 and teacher 2	Observe teacher 3 and teacher 4	Observe teacher 5 and teacher 6	Observe teacher 7 and teacher 8	Observe teacher 9 and teacher 10
10-11 a.m.	Interview teacher 1 and teacher 2 individually	Interview teacher 3 and teacher 4 individually	Interview teacher 5 and teacher 6 individually	Interview teacher 7 and teacher 8 individually	Interview teacher 9 and teacher 10 individually

11 a.m.—12:30 p.m. **Team meeting # 3:** panelists meet to discuss findings so far and to plan the remainder of the day (working lunch)

12:30—1:00 p.m. Panelists use time as needed to analyze findings and to gather more information; panelists are encouraged to roam the entire school and visit classrooms not yet seen.

1:00—2:00 p.m. Panelists meet with teachers in groups; consultant co-chair is free to work on report

	Panelist A	Panelist B	Panelist C	Panelist D	Panelist E
1:00-1:30	Teacher	Focus Group 1	Teacher	Focus Group 3	Prepare report
1:30-2:00	Teacher	Focus Group 2	Teacher	Focus Group 4	

2:00—2:30 p.m. Closing meeting with the Principal to discuss next steps (all panelists are present)

2:30—5:00 p.m. **Team meeting # 4:** panelists deliberate and form conclusions