

**School Panel Review Report
N. B. Borden Elementary School
Fall River 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 not at a level that reaches the school's Adequate Yearly Progress targets in English language arts or mathematics or both. The N. B. Borden Elementary School met these criteria and was one of 15 schools selected for panel review in Fall/Winter of 2004-05. The panel review was conducted on December 7-8, 2004.

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 will be forwarded to the Commissioner of Education for consideration, together with school performance data, in determining whether the N.B. Borden School 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 sound improvement strategies 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.

N.B. Borden School Profile

Enrollment

The N.B. Borden School is one of 24 elementary schools in Fall River. The school serves students in grades K-5. Enrollment at the N.B. Borden School has decreased from 176 in 2001 to 146 as of October 1 of this school year. There have also been changes evident in the demographics of the school's population.

Between 2001 and 2004, the proportion of Hispanic students attending N.B. Borden increased from 8 percent in 2001 to 18 percent in 2004. The percentage of Black students increased slightly from 10 percent in 2001 to 13 percent in 2004, while the percentage of White students decreased from 78 in 2001 to 66 in 2004. Asian students accounted for 4 percent in 2001 and 1 percent in 2004. In 2004, 91 percent of the N.B. Borden School's students were from low income families; in previous years, this percentage ranged from 71 to 87 percent. In 2004, 32 percent of the students are reported as having a primary language other than English. This represents a decrease from 40 percent in 2001. No students were reported as being Limited English Proficient in 2004; in 2001, this figure was 16.5 percent. In 2004, 6 percent of students are reported to be receiving special education services, which is a 6 percent decrease from last year.

In 2004, the N.B. Borden School registered an attendance rate of 93 percent, with students absent 11.7 days on average. The school's retention rate was 3.3 percent in 2003, the last year for which this data are available. Out-of-school suspensions averaged 0.6 percent, and no in-school suspensions or exclusions were reported.

Staffing

The 2004-2005 N.B. Borden School's staffing report indicates that the school is composed of 1 administrator, 13 teachers and 1 guidance counselor. Approximately 36 percent of educators at the school have been there for three or fewer years. One hundred percent of teachers are reported as being licensed in their current teaching area.

MCAS Overview

Students at the N.B. Borden School are assessed in grades 3 and 4 in English language arts (ELA) and in grade 4 in mathematics. The school has not made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA since 2000. In mathematics, the school did not make AYP in the aggregate in 2001 – 2003, but did meet its AYP targets in 2004. In the school's Cycle III End-of-Cycle (2003-2004) AYP Report, the school failed to make AYP in ELA in the aggregate and for the sole reported subgroup: Free/Reduced Price Lunch.¹ In mathematics, the school made AYP in the aggregate;

¹ In accordance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act passed in 2001, student performance is disaggregated by the following subgroups: Limited English Proficient, Special Education, Free/Reduced Price Lunch, African-American/Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Native American, and White. A minimum of 40 students (or 5% of the total number of students assessed, whichever is greater) per subgroup is required to issue a statistically sound rating or determination of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The only subgroup meeting the minimum sample size at N.B. Borden Elementary School in 2004 was Free/Reduced Price Lunch for ELA; no subgroups were large enough to be reported for mathematics.

there were no subgroup determinations made in mathematics. The school is currently identified for Corrective Action in ELA and for Improvement in mathematics.

Student Performance in English Language Arts

GRADE 3

All Students

At the grade 3 level in Reading, results for all students have been variable, with a performance decline evident from 2003 to 2004. In 2001, 24 percent of students were found Proficient, 65 percent performed at the Needs Improvement level and 12 percent at the Warning level. In 2002, the percentage of Proficient students decreased to 14 percent, Needs Improvement decreased to 59 percent and Warning increased to 27 percent. In 2003, 22 percent were Proficient, 52 percent scored in Needs Improvement and 26 percent were in Warning. In the most recent administration of the MCAS test, the percentage of students who scored at the Proficient level decreased to 0 percent, the percentage of students at the Warning level increased to 39 percent and the percentage of students in Needs Improvement increased to 61. Small populations (17 to 27 students) in each testing year link to variability in the scores.

Special Education

Fewer than 10 Special Education students were assessed in the grade 3 Reading test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

Limited English Proficient

Fewer than 10 Limited English Proficient (LEP) students were assessed in the grade 3 Reading test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

GRADE 4

All Students

Results for all students in grade 4 English language arts indicate a slight improvement trend between 2001 and 2004. In 2001, no students scored in the Advanced or Proficient ranges, 44 percent were in Needs Improvement and 56 percent were in Warning. Results in 2002 represent improvement: 14 percent of students scored in the Proficient range, 50 percent were in Needs Improvement and 36 percent were in Warning. In 2004, no students were Advanced, 22 percent were Proficient, 48 percent were in Needs Improvement and 30 percent were in Warning. Small populations (22 to 28 students) in each testing year link to variability in the scores.

Special Education

Fewer than 10 Special Education students were assessed in the grade 4 ELA test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

Limited English Proficient

Fewer than 10 LEP students were assessed in the grade 4 ELA test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

Student Performance in Mathematics

GRADE 4

All Students

The performance of all students in grade 4 mathematics at this school has been variable, with a performance gain evident between 2003 and 2004. Small populations (22 to 28 students) in each testing year link to variability in the scores. In 2002, 14 percent of students scored in the Proficient range, 41 percent were in Needs Improvement and 45 percent were in Warning. In 2003, no students scored in the Proficient range, 43 percent were in Needs Improvement and 57 percent were in Warning. In 2004, no students were Advanced, the percentage of Proficient students increased to 19 and the percentage of students in the Warning category decreased to 22.

Special Education

Fewer than 10 Special Education students were assessed in the grade 4 mathematics test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

Limited English Proficient

Fewer than 10 LEP students were assessed in the grade 4 mathematics test; as such, no aggregated results are reported for this subgroup.

PANEL RESPONSES TO THE KEY QUESTIONS

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

Yes. The administration, faculty and staff of the N. B. Borden School, with the assistance of district personnel, have produced an ambitious but sound school improvement planning document that is focused on three priority areas identified by the district. This work was accomplished through an inclusive process that is likely to support its successful implementation.

The Borden School Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) team continues to collect additional data for the development of the next improvement plan. The team realizes that with a faculty of only 12 teachers, a more realistic and less intense professional development and implementation schedule needs to be considered for the next iteration of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

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

Yes. Faculty, school and district staff have analyzed available data and program information to identify student academic weaknesses and identified possible reasons for those weaknesses.

As described in the principal's School Leadership Report and confirmed through faculty interviews, the N.B. Borden School Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) team analyzed math and ELA MCAS performance data for grades 3 and 4 for the 2000-2003 test periods. The executive summary to the SIP also references 2001 and 2002 TerraNova math test scores, which show results similar to those on the MCAS tests. TerraNova assessments are no longer used in the district.

Changes in school and district programs and services since the creation of the current SIP have increased the amount of data available to the PIM team. The next version of the SIP will include additional student assessment results from the following sources:

- DIBELS (3x/yr for grades K-5) and GRADE (2x/yr for grades K-3) as part of the Reading First program
- Pre- and post-tests from the Harcourt Trophies program
- The Brigance test of early literacy skills
- CBM Reading, CBM MAZE assessments to measure accuracy, fluency and comprehension
- NWEA Measures of Academic Progress in ELA and math, grades 3-5 (a pilot program)
- Study Island – an on-line test for math, Reading and ELA, grades 4-5

This emphasis on data collection and analysis is in line with one of the district priorities, mentioned in the District Improvement Plan (DIP), of developing and maintaining a useful data collection and analysis system for all schools and the district.

The PIM team data analysis showed that a primary area of student weakness in ELA at N.B. Borden is below average entry-level literacy skills of all students compared to the rest of the district, as reported by the Superintendent and Reading First administrators. Students are unable to decode written words or to read connected text with sufficient fluency and accuracy for comprehension. Student weaknesses in mathematics are, in part, related to understanding fractions as well as models of multiplication and division and concepts of probability. Teachers also recognized through the PIM process that there are issues surrounding inadequate instructional practices in their classrooms that need attention.

In response to uncovering student weaknesses through analysis of data and programs, the school has implemented a number of improvement initiatives. One initiative undertakes a reappraisal of the Reading Collaborative, a reading program used in the school for several years but that was no longer felt to be meeting the needs of students. The school made a commitment to the Harcourt Trophies program and to extensive professional development for K-5 teachers. The school is also implementing a Reading First grant, which includes the hiring of a school-based reading specialist to work directly with the teachers. The Reading First program includes a three-tiered intervention system of Project Read (grades 1-5), Early Reading Intervention (ERI) (K-early 1st) and the already existing Reading Recovery (grade 1). This will enable the school to provide intervention services to many more students than previously. A comparison of before- and after-data provided by the school shows promising improvement in certain reading skills for Kindergarten and first grade students following Reading First implementation. A 90-minute literacy instructional block for grades K-3 and a 60-minute block for grades 4-5 are in place.

The N.B. Borden School uses the district-provided Scott Foresman math program, but the school felt the program did not provide enough support in the area of enrichment activities or remedial review. Therefore, the school provides 24 hours of professional development in Developing Math Ideas (DMI), which encourages children to do mental math and promotes critical thinking and writing skills. All teachers participated in DMI training last school year. Everyday Counts and the Problem of the Day are additional opportunities the school uses to reinforce math concepts. Lastly, math instructional time has been increased to one hour per day.

The district-funded extended day program provides tutorial services for more than 50 students in grades K-5 in both morning and afternoon sessions. Activities are focused on math, literacy, arts and crafts and homework completion, and they are coordinated with classroom curriculum whenever possible. Teachers report positive results in their students' work from attending these sessions. An evaluation of the before- and after-school program completed by the Title I teacher revealed marked improvement in students' math and literacy skills as compared with other students who did not attend.

Because of the small size of the school, Panel Review team members were able to observe 10 of 12 classroom teachers. They reported seeing teachers using a variety of instructional practices with varying degrees of success. Teachers do not have scheduled common planning periods during the school day due the fact that the school has only five grades. Collegial discussions of student or professional concern take place before or after school or when other school meetings are scheduled. Participation in professional development opportunities, necessary for successful implementation of the adopted programs, often requires leaving the classroom. This is the first time many staff members participated in writing a school improvement plan and received training in data analysis. The present plan reflected their enthusiasm for school improvement. However, teachers stated in interviews and focus groups that "the plan was not realistic in terms of accomplishing effectively all that they had planned." As a result, they are looking for more assistance implementing the Math program strategies across all grade levels and a professional development program that does not require as much time out of the classroom.

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

Yes. The plan's improvement objectives are grounded in the school's analysis of the reasons for poor student performance.

The school's analysis of assessment results for ELA, as mentioned in the Borden SIP and the Leadership report, indicated that students in Grade 3 Reading and Grade 4 ELA had difficulty, for example, in identifying basic facts in a text and providing evidence to support their answers. They also found analyzing and identifying fiction and dramatic literature challenging.

Student learning objectives are written as "...students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of sentence structure..." and "...students will be able to identify and apply knowledge of various genres...". Corresponding Instructional Change Objectives are written as

“all teachers will model and scaffold instruction in sentence structure...” and “...teachers will engage students in reading a wide variety of genres...”.

Mathematics showed the same “thread” from analysis to objective. For example, data analysis showed that N. B. Borden students had difficulty with open-response questions across the board, as mentioned in the SIP. Student learning objective #1.5 states, “...students will be able to use pictures, graphs...to interpret and express mathematical relations in open response questions.” The corresponding instructional change objective #1.8 asks for “teachers to have their students communicate their ideas using pictures, models, graphs...”.

As evidence of the plan’s focus on teaching and learning, additional instructional change and student learning objectives in the plan all reference the Massachusetts Frameworks.

The SIP clearly identifies specific goals and objectives and details the data analysis that led to their adoption. The Panel Review team finds the goals specific and measurable. However, the PIM team and teachers in focus groups said they realized that this plan, as written, was overly ambitious and was a reflection of their desire to really affect student achievement. They feel that perhaps the plan put too much pressure on teachers in the form of professional development necessary for the implementation of the Reading First program and DMI math strategies. According to the school’s PIM team, the next plan will reflect these realities. Nevertheless, the faculty and staff remain enthusiastic about the plan and dedicated to the improvement of student achievement.

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

Yes. The program and instructional strategies written into the plan appear likely to lead to the desired improvement in student achievement.

The analysis of the school’s data and programs performed by the N. B. Borden PIM team identified the following student and program weaknesses in literacy: students were entering school unprepared to do grade-level work; there was not enough instructional time scheduled; and teachers had a lack of assessment data useful for monitoring student progress.

Literacy strategies adopted included the implementation of the scientifically based reading program provided by the Reading First grant. In addition to the existing Reading Recovery, this program provides assessments of struggling students who receive reading intervention.

In Mathematics, identified weaknesses included an insufficient amount of instructional time, limited use of student assessment data and the teachers’ limited knowledge of math content and pedagogy.

The school’s response was to increase the amount of instructional time in Math, provision of additional hours of professional development in DMI, writing a scope and sequence for each grade level and the implementing Everyday Counts and the Problem of the Day.

The Scott Foresman Math series is the school's district-adopted mathematics program. The school's Literacy program is Harcourt Brace's Trophies. Both programs are ostensibly research-based and have a proven level of effectiveness. Successful implementation of the strategies would likely impact weaknesses in student performance.

The Reading First grant provides significant professional development on implementing proven research-based strategies but teachers need a great deal of professional support during the long implementation stage in administering student assessments and using assessment data to influence instructional practice. A district-hired consultant is providing this help presently but funding for the position is questionable for next year.

Developing Math Ideas (DMI) is supplementing the Scott Foresman Math series. All N.B. Borden teachers received 24 hours of professional development in the DMI program during last school year. Interviews with district personnel indicated, however, that implementation of the DMI has not been successful at N.B. Borden, perhaps because there has not been adequate district follow-up support for teachers in the classroom. To bolster DMI implementation, district leaders indicate that a math specialist might be assigned to the school next year to assist the teachers.

The SIP has defined student learning objectives. However, benchmarks do not include the incremental progress expected of students. Benchmarks are simply an assessment timeline. In some cases, the desired level of student performance indicated uses vague or non-specific language; for example, the ELA student learning objective #1.1 states the "...student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of sentence structure, English grammar, usage...". Assessment dates for the writing prompt are November and May and the desired levels of performance are "consistent gain" or "adequate gains." In Mathematics, the language used for desired levels of performance in all but one case is "increase in % of correct answers." During interviews with the PIM team members and the principal, they agreed that this needs to be corrected in the next version of the SIP.

Classrooms observed by members of the Panel Review team were print-rich, with many references to reading and writing strategies and the Problem of the Day (POD). During one observation, a teacher remarked to the class that POD was a chance to try new ideas without worrying whether it were right or wrong. In another class observed by a Panel Review member, students worked cooperatively on literacy skills in five different reading groups and had opportunities to be in one of four learning centers during the day, depending on the particular literacy skill being highlighted.

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

Yes. The N.B. Borden school SIP is a comprehensive document, clear and specific enough to guide planned improvement initiatives.

As mentioned in the executive summary to the SIP, the N.B. Borden school has three main initiatives: a focus on improving student performance in Math, Reading and ELA; implementation of a school-wide research-based initiative; and activities that increase parental involvement. These initiatives parallel most of the District Improvement Initiatives as stated in the District Improvement Plan (DIP). The SIP is clearly written and provides a sense of direction for teachers and staff as they implement the improvement initiatives.

There are assessment timelines mentioned in the SIP but identified as benchmarks. They are not truly benchmarks as they fail to indicate the performance level students are expected to attain by the indicated time of the assessment.

In an interview with a member of the Panel Review team following an observation, a teacher who had participated in the data and causal analysis for the SIP remarked that there was a clear linkage between the data analysis and planned solutions. The teacher indicated that because of the SIP, teachers were working towards a common goal, that there was more collaboration across classrooms and that there was better usage of support people to assist in instruction.

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

Yes. The SIP was developed through a process that involved the N.B. Borden school faculty and staff and provides for a regular review of progress and opportunities for revision.

Due to the school's consistent low MCAS scores in ELA and mathematics over several years, the Fall River School District provided their own training in the PIM process to the school PIM team, under the direction of the district School Support Specialist. Due to the small size of the faculty, all staff received this training before and after school and during the summer prior to the start of the 2003-04 school year. Student MCAS data was examined by grade level, by individual classroom and by student. As a result, curriculum, instructional and assessment causes were identified for student academic weaknesses. In contrast, the previous year's improvement plan available for Panel Team review was long on narrative and short on analysis.

There is and has been a Leadership Team (previously called the Literacy Team) at the school for the past four years. Members of this team meet to discuss data, parental involvement issues, professional development needs and other related issues. Due to the size of the school staff, many people serve on both the PIM and Leadership Teams. Interviews with representatives from these teams evidence some confusion about their respective roles. Discussions are ongoing at the school on ways to consolidate these and other committees to make the staff more efficient, consuming less time.

Interviews with the School Council, which includes P.T.O. representatives (a community business representative and the school parent liaison), show a familiarity with the SIP and satisfaction with the school. They are not involved with the development of the plan at this time but the School Support Specialist indicated that steps are being taken to train some members of the council to assume this role. Teachers who are not members of the PIM team indicated during

interviews that they are aware of developments in the SIP because the PIM team always provides updates to the entire faculty during monthly curriculum meetings.

Professional development planning is tied to the goals and objectives of the SIP. However, much of the professional development, especially for the implementation of the Reading First grant, occurs during the school day. Additional district professional development occurs during the school day. All the professional development offered during the school day requires teachers to be frequently absent from their classes that, according to teachers and the principal, are not always covered by substitutes. At least one teacher during an interview stated that he no longer attended all meetings to avoid leaving his class too much. The Superintendent stated that there is not as yet a district professional development plan.

Finally, the principal monitors plan implementation by checking teacher lesson plans. He looks for evidence of instructional change objectives in literacy and mathematics. PIM team members meet monthly and look for instructional trends that might inform the present or the next SIP. The principal showed the Panel Review team his annotated version of the SIP used to track classroom visits.

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

Yes. The conditions are in place for the successful implementation of the N. B. Borden School Improvement Plan. The faculty and staff and school council representatives are knowledgeable about the plan and supportive of its focus. The district office continues to be involved in the refinement of the plan and provides resources and guidance to support improvement initiatives.

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

Yes. The school has effective leadership and sound management.

In several interviews with the Panel Review Team and in the Leadership Report, the principal spoke enthusiastically, but realistically, about the challenges his school faces in raising student achievement including the low entry-level student literacy scores. His vision for the school is to have all children reading on grade level by the end of the third grade and his motto is “achieve and succeed.”

This positive outlook has been communicated to the staff as, in focus groups and individual interviews, they report satisfaction with the school leadership. The staff reports high morale and high expectations for both teachers and students. Teachers were quoted as saying, “I think there is good leadership in the school,” and, “The building principal seeks input and consensus from the staff before making a decision.” In spite of the small number of school staff, the principal has provided leadership opportunities across the grades through the creation of subject area and special interest committees and participation on the School Leadership and PIM teams.

In an interview with the Panel Review Team, the School Council reported their awareness of the contents of the SIP and their satisfaction with the school. One parent remarked, “the teachers in this school know your child and know you.”

The principal indicated he benefited greatly from the district-sponsored professional development for administrators – “Resources for Better Teaching (RBT)” and “Lens on Learning” – and teachers and the principal report that he visits every class every day. The principal also checks teachers’ lesson plans weekly. However, because there is not presently a district standard that teachers must follow for writing lesson plans, the documents are often simply a listing of pages of assignments and the principal checks only for indications of the Instructional Change Objective (ICO) on the lesson plan form and not the other elements of sound lesson planning.

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

Yes. There is evidence that the school’s faculty supports the planned improvement efforts.

According to the Leadership Report and interviews with the Leadership/PIM teams, the entire N. B. Borden School staff has been trained in the district-sponsored PIM process. This was possible and feasible because of the small size of the school staff. Due to this training and involvement in the process of writing the SIP, staff agree with the identified needs and improvement strategies; although as previously mentioned, they also realize that this first iteration of the plan is overly ambitious.

Responses to questions on the staff survey indicate that 95% of the faculty feel that the school has a well-defined plan for reaching student performance goals.

Teachers spoke enthusiastically about their involvement in the Reading First program, the numerous assessments that monitor student progress and the success that staff are having in remediating student reading difficulties. District personnel are aware of the problem teachers have implementing DMI and spoke positively about providing an additional math support position next year. Despite reported difficulties, the school achieved AYP this year in mathematics.

The Panel Review team found that there did not seem to be a process for regular review of instructional practice. By contract, teachers are observed for evaluation purposes every other year. Walk-throughs, conducted frequently by the principal and less frequently by district staff, are short in duration and do not provide opportunities for discussion of classroom practice. Lesson planning is not formalized and, although teachers know what to teach because of the Reading and Math programs’ curricula, potential deficits in instruction usually will appear only in student assessment results.

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

Yes. The school is receiving guidance and support from the district leadership but more assistance needs to be provided to the school in the area of instructional supervision.

As stated in the District Improvement Plan (DIP), it is a Fall River District goal to have all the schools engage in a continuous cycle of planning to improve student achievement through ongoing data collection and analysis. For that and other reasons, the school district provided the funding to train PIM teams in all the schools, including the N.B. Borden School. The district provided funding for N.B. Borden school staff to meet during the summer and before and after school while writing their SIP, as well as for the School Support Specialist to guide the process and provide training. The Superintendent gives a final review and approval to the SIP but only after a district team has reviewed and made recommendations for possible revisions to the school. There is also a District Panel Review team that visits the school prior to the DOE Panel Review team visit and provides feedback to the school on their findings.

During the interview with the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent and the Title 1 Director, district officials spoke of some of the supports the district provides to the school:

- Piloting of the NWEA (Measures of Academic Progress-MAP) for grades 3-5
- District-wide programs in Math (Scott Foresman) and Literacy (Harcourt Trophies)
- A part-time student adjustment counselor, a full-time parent liaison, and support staff, as well as Reading Recovery through Title 1
- Developing Math Ideas Training
- Extended Day program

The Superintendent recognizes some weaknesses that the district needs to work on in the near future. He feels that the teachers still do not understand what a collaborative, inquiry-based classroom looks like but that language in the new teachers' contract that calls for teachers to write standards-based lesson plans is a step in the right direction and will assist in instructional supervision. He recognizes the need to assign a Math coach to the N.B. Borden School to model lessons and to provide instructional support for the teachers.

Resources in the district continue to be a problem, as the Superintendent stated that they have been level-funded for the past three years and that a charter school in the district is diverting funds from the other schools.

CONCLUSION

In response to Key Question 1, the panel review team finds that the N.B. Borden Elementary School has a sound plan for improving student performance. The district-sponsored Performance Improvement Mapping (PIM) process, under the direction of the School Support Specialist, provided necessary training in analysis of data and opportunities for reflection on the quality of instructional practice. The new plan should reflect an analysis of an increased amount of student assessment data now available as well as a more reasonable schedule for the faculty to implement the plan.

The panel review team finds that in response to Key Question 2, the conditions are in place for the successful implementation of the improvement plan. The appropriate school district

personnel are knowledgeable of the school's needs but must provide additional curricular and instructional support to the school to maintain progress. The school's stakeholders are enthusiastic in their support of the improvement initiatives, continue to work on revisions to the plan and are actively implementing the plan.

**Appendix A
Team Members**

Joseph Trunk, Panel Chairperson, Consultant, SchoolWorks, Beverly, MA

Matthew Pakos, Panel Coordinator, Department of Education, Office of Accountability and Targeted Assistance, Malden MA

Paula DelPrete, Panel Member, Vice-Principal, Barbieri Elementary School, Framingham, MA

Lois Sullivan, Panel Member, Consultant, Cambridge, MA

Nicholas Young, Panel Member, Superintendent of Schools, Hadley, MA

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

- 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.* 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]
- 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.* **Team meeting # 1:** team meets for the first time to discuss each panelist’s individual analysis; team forms preliminary judgments on key questions. [location: hotel]
- 12:00—2:00 p.m.* Panelists meet with Principal (and one other school-based individual, if appropriate). [location: school]
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.* Panelists meet with School Leadership Team
- 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.* Panelists meet with the district Superintendent (and Assistant Superintendent, if appropriate). [location: school]
- 4:30 – 6:00 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.

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