Student Opportunity Act Plan

Marlborough

# Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

*Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.*

* High Needs students (defined as any student who is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an English learner/former English learner)

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

MPS serves a diverse population of students, where 47% of homes first language is Spanish or Portuguese. Additionally, close to 66% of our students are economically disadvantaged, and the district sees our high needs population as the group who needs the highest investment in potential SOA funds.

**Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

This year (FY21) we were able to eliminate tuition for our PK program. A huge step forward. We are working on FY22 budget, and we assuming again that we will no longer have tuition for our PK program.

## Focus Area 1: Expanded access to full-day, high-quality pre-kindergarten for 4-year-olds, including potential collaboration with other local providers (D, F, and G)

Steps

1.1 Form a volunteer team to study the research and best practices (including other successful programs in public schools) for preschool programs serving economically disadvantaged children. Form the team by October 1st 2019; Report out findings by June 30th 2020. The team has been formed at the Early Childhood Center. We meet for the first time September 16th.

Timeframe

Action

Person Responsible

Oct. 2019

Form a volunteer team to study the best practices for preschool programs; to make staffing and resource suggestions to administration for future budget years.

ECC Staff; Director

June 2020

Report out findings of best practices from other preschool programs; to inform the growth of the preschool program over time in Marlborough and how to best service students in this program.

ECC Staff; Director

1.2 Study the physical limitations of the current ECC and make recommendations for expansion of classroom space and maximum enrollments to the Superintendent of Schools. Report our findings by June 30th 2020. Facilities director will work with ECC Director to determine necessary modifications to the building. Necessary for one classroom in year one and six more by FY25. I have drafted a report of what rooms will be used and what needs to be done in order for that to happen.

Timeframe

Action

Person Responsible

June 2020

After studying the physical space and layout, make recommendations to administration for future space utilization of the DEC/ECC building to support our preschool initiative. Draft report of findings.

ECC Staff; Andy White; ECC Director

1.3 Create a five-year plan, from FY20 through FY25 to expand access and opportunities for preschool services at the current ECC facility; and to eliminate the tuition to families to expand enrollment of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

Report out by June 30th 2020.

Based on data collected and parent survey, I would like to add another full-day classroom. This will require 1 teacher, 1 paraprofessional, additional funds for classroom materials (furniture, curriculum, technology).

Timeframe

Action

Person Responsible

June 2020

Create a five-year plan to expand preschool services to MPS families; and to increase the number of students who receive high quality preschool in the city.

ECC Director

1.4 Survey families during the 2019-2020 school year about their needs for preschool; full time or part time programs and wrap around services. Report out by June 30th 2020. Survey has been developed and is posted on the ECC website. We also handed surveys out at the "Trunk and Treat" event in October. I have sent surveys to local doctors’ offices and day cares in the city.

Timeframe

Action

Person Responsible

June 2020

Present survey findings to administration on parental needs for preschool services. ECC Director

Rationale for inclusion:

Multiple research studies have confirmed high quality preschool programs have a long term educational and economic impact on its students.

Expected outcomes:

Investing in Early Education and Care will lead to readiness for kindergarten, increase literacy knowledge and practice, and increase positive social peer interactions. Access to high quality language rich preschool classes will also assist EL students in their English language development.

Resources needed for implementation:

FY22: Request 1.0 FTE Teacher, and 1.0 FTE Para Educator: $91,000 Request 25% Tuition Reduction: $50,000

Total: $141,000

FY23: Request 1.0 FTE Teacher, and 1.0 FTE Para Educator $92,820

Request 25% Tuition Reduction: $50,000 Total: $142,820

FY24: Request 1.0 FTE Teacher, and 1.0 FTE Para Educator $94,700

Request 25% Tuition Reduction: $50,000 Total: $144,700

FY25: Request 1.0 FTE Teacher, and 1.0 FTE Para Educator $96,600

Request 25% Tuition Reduction: $50,000

Total: $146,600

## Focus Area 2: Another evidence-based program proposed by the district – Reducing class sizes

The Marlborough Public Schools will be opening a fourth elementary school this year (FY21), and we are requesting additional elementary teaching (4.0 FTE) to be able to lower class sizes across the district. Over the past 5 years, Elementary enrollment is up 7.26% and we are at our highest ever elementary enrollment. Without the additional teachers, our class sizes will exceed 23 students per classroom, and we will be especially vulnerable at the Kindergarten and 1st grade classrooms. (Priority 1.2)

Additionally, we are committing additional FTE in FY22 to continue to lower class size across the district elementary schools. (Partially completed- we did add the 4.0 FTE, reduced class size to 21, and for FY22 we are looking to go to sub-20 elementary figures districtwide.)

## Focus Area 3: Dropout prevention and recovery programs (I)

## SOA program categories for this strategy:

Implement dropout prevention programs at MHS

Marlborough seeks to implement an after-school model of competency-based education for Older, under-credited EL students. Marlborough's drop out profile requires direct intervention for EL students, of which are dropping out of Marlborough High School at a higher and more substantial rate than any other subgroup. The after-school program will be designed to provide ELD, Math, Science; Gym and a civics program to complete a well-rounded education experience as well as prepare students to succeed on the MCAS exam. (Priority 1.3)

Update: The district has funded this program and received approval from DESE to run this year. (Completed)

## Focus Area 4: Another evidence-based program proposed by the district –common planning time for teachers

Teachers working together to systematically examine focused aspects of their educational practices by exploring student responses to instruction, leading to new understandings and changes in classroom teaching. This is a cyclical process that fosters an ongoing dialogue about classroom practices and student achievement. This approach is systematic, collaborative work that will increase student learning and cultural proficiency across the district. (Priority 2.3)

The district has funded this and begun the training and planning to roll this out district wide. (completed)

**Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

*Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.*

* Student Achievement: English language arts (ELA) achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* Student Achievement: Mathematics achievement as measured by average scaled scores on MCAS
* High School Completion: Four-year cohort graduation rate
* High School Completion: Extended engagement rate (5-year cohort grad rate plus percentage of students who are still enrolled)
* High School Completion: Annual dropout rate
* Custom District Metric 1: Increased participation in high quality PK programs
* Custom District Metric 2: Reduction of class sizes districtwide K-5

**Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

*District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students’ needs.*

We will focus on engagement and reaching families through a district priority as described below, as well as using all of our title 1 engagement nights to promote engagement in our schools.

In FY22 we are asking for funds to continue to make progress toward this goal of family engagement.

Steps

3.1 Survey: Research has shown that parent engagement in a student's education results in higher student achievement. One method of ensuring parents engage with their child's academic career is by developing methods/programs to engage parents and creating a stronger home-school bond.

Therefore, we have developed a survey aimed at understanding parents' perception of MPS's community engagement initiatives and to seek their input on how we can more effectively engage them in their child's education.

Time Frame

Action

Person Responsible

FY20 - December 2019 to February 2020

Create a survey to be handed out to parents.

Community Engagement Group Members, Translators

FY20 - February - April 2020

Hand out surveys to EL parents at adult ESL class and identify additional parents to distribute surveys to. Evening ESL Teachers

FY20 - March 2020 to April 2020

Analyze survey responses and adjust Strategy for Improvement document as needed

Community Engagement Group Members

Resources Needed: All resources needed are already in existence.

3.2: Media Campaign: Research has shown that Districts with a large immigrant community has successfully engaged immigrant families through radio programming in their native language. Research also shows that parent engagement leads to higher student achievement.

Therefore, we will seek to develop and implement a radio campaign aimed at engaging parents in becoming partners with the District in their child's education. The goal is to work with radio stations with Brazilian and Hispanic audiences with the goal of increasing parent engagement in their student's education.

Time Frame

Action

Person Responsible

FY21 - July 2020 to December 2020

Seek out partnerships with other MA districts with high enrollment of Brazilian and Hispanic students. RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison

FY21 - January 2021 to March 2021

In partnership with other districts, develop a radio/social media campaign aimed at communicating how parents can have an impact on student achievement, as well as important dates such as MCAS and ACCESS testing and how parents can help their students prepare for and do well on those exams.

Test out strategy and advocate for funding within the FY22 budget. RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison

FY22

Implement radio/social media campaign with other MA partner districts and monitor impact on parent engagement and academic return on investment.

RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison

FY22 - July 2021 to December 2021

Create a committee to assess the viability of creating MPS-specific content on Brazilian and Hispanic radio stations, such as Q&A or role-play shows discussing K-12 education in the United States and how parent involvement can have a positive impact on student achievement.

RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison FY22 - January

2022 to June 2022

Create and test out content.

Advocate for funding in FY23 budget.

RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison

FY22-FY25

Continue developing and adjusting content of radio campaigning. Monitor impact and ascertain if return on investment justify the program's existence.

RPOC Staff, Communication Coordinator or Community Liaison

Resources Needed: $15,000 to $25,000 per year for media campaign, plus $5,000 to $7,500 in wages (assuming 3 to 4 hrs. weekly at $25/hr.).

3.3 Proactive Community Outreach: Studies show that districts who proactively engage with parents out in the community have been successful in increasing parent engagement in their child's education, which in turn increases student achievement. Other districts have successfully applied this strategy by communicating to parents’ ways in which they can support their students academically by having high expectations of their student's learning at school and at home.

Therefore, we will create a process in which MPS employees proactively deliver important academic messages to parents at community locations such as places of worship, local fairs, etc.

Time Frame

Action

Person Responsible

FY21 - July 2020 to December 2020

Identify a list of congregations and other community events frequented by MPS families.

Identify appropriate message that should be delivered to parents in order to increase parent engagement in their child's academic success.

Community Liaison, Daisy Reis, School Personnel, etc.

FY21 - January 2021 to June 2021

Identify and schedule personnel to attend events, relay school related messages, set up MPS information pamphlets and table, etc.

Community Liaison and ELPAC members

FY22 - FY25

Gather feedback, gauge effectiveness of initiative, and make changes as necessary. Community Liaison, District Leadership

Resources Needed: The District currently has an Immigrant Grant from which we are paying for five Community Liaisons, these positions could be levered to assist in this initiative. Once the grant is exhausted, we estimate that a total of $13,000 may be needed annually to keep this specific initiative going (10 hours per week at $25/hr.).

3.4 RPOC Redesign: The District has invested heavily in creating a Registration and Parent Outreach Center and staffing it with a Manager, Clerks, Translators, and a phone bank. The District has also invested in developing an online registration software for parents, and two computer stations have been set up at RPOC.

Therefore, we propose additional investments aimed at transforming RPOC into a more welcoming and useful space that appropriately represents the Marlborough Public Schools and the services we wish to provide our families.

Time Frame

Action

Person Responsible

FY20 - January 2020 to June 2020

Seek and attain proposals to redesign RPOC's office space into a more comfortable, welcoming, and presentable environment for families.

Ask for budget funds to move forward with space redesign.

Daisy Reis

FY21 - July 1 to December 2020

Schedule and implement RPOC space redesign

Daisy Reis, Andy White

Resources Needed: Up to $30,000 for RPOC space redesign.

Rationale for inclusion:

Research has found that parent involvement in their child's education has a significant correlation with student achievement. Our action steps were guided by research findings as well as the observation that the Marlborough Public Schools already engage in multiple internal (in-district) community outreach strategies, and very few external strategies. Our goal is to establish multiple platforms in which we can communicate to parents from within the community itself, rather than from within school buildings.

Expected outcomes:

By adding multiple new external methods of reaching families and communicating ways that parents can partner with their students and the school district, we expect higher parent engagement in their child's education, which research shows result in higher student achievement.

Resources needed for implementation:

Ongoing operating budget funding is anticipated to support media campaign as well as the stipended position that would be charged with maintaining an open line of communication between the district and media/community partners. Funding would also be necessary for the redesign of RPOC's front office space.

**Certifications**

*Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.*

Public meetings, public presentation to the School Committee, presentation to MEA teachers’ association leadership as well as their field rep, and development of priorities in a collaborative manner with faculty involvement.

*Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district’s Student Opportunity Act Plan.*

Date of Approval: 08/11/2020