District Review Report

Attleboro Public Schools

Comprehensive review conducted December 9–12, 2019

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Executive Summary

The Attleboro Public Schools offers a comprehensive educational program for 5,982 pre-kindergarten through grade 12+ students in 11 schools including an early learning center, 5 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, a comprehensive high school and the Attleboro Community Academy. The high-school program includes a three-year elective pathway for career and technical education (CTE) that prepares students for technical and human services work. In the 2019-2020 school year, 1,034 of the high school’s 1,766 students were enrolled in CTE courses, including 51.6 percent of female students and 64.5 percent of male students. At the time of the review, the position of director of the CTE program was vacant and the review team did not have the opportunity to explore the program in depth. The Network Program and the Attleboro Community Academy are alternative high-school programs that offer opportunities for struggling students to earn a high-school diploma. The district’s four-year cohort graduation rate of 90.5 percent was above the state rate of 87.9 percent in 2018, and the district five-year cohort graduation rate of 92.4 percent was above the state rate of 90.1 percent in 2017. Both rates have improved over four years.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The district’s total student enrollment has been relatively constant in recent years, increasing by only 1.1 percent, from 5,918 in 2016 to 5,982 in 2020. During this five-year interval, the percentage enrollment of high needs students[[2]](#footnote-2) increased by 2.6 percent from 41.7 percent in 2016 to 44.3 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 48.7 percent in 2020; the percentage enrollment of students whose first language is not English increased by 0.7 percent, from 13.3 percent in 2016 to 14.0 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 23.0 percent in 2020; and the percentage enrollment of students who are economically disadvantaged increased by 4.4 percent, from 26.0 percent in 2016 to 30.4 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 32.8 percent in 2020. At the same time, the district’s percentage enrollment of English learners decreased by 1.0 percent, from 6.4 percent in 2016 to 5.4 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 10.8 percent in 2020; and the percentage enrollment of students with disabilities decreased by 0.3 percent from 17.0 percent in 2016 to 16.7 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 18.4 percent in 2020 .

The racial/ethnicity profile of the student body has changed incrementally since 2016. White enrollment decreased by 3.7 percent from 70.6 percent in 2016 to 66.9 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 57.9 percent in 2020. African-American/Black student enrollment increased by 1.6 percent from 4.9 percent in 2016 to 6.5 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 9.2 percent in 2020. Hispanic/Latino student enrollment increased by 1.9 percent from 13.6 percent in 2016 to 15.5 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 21.6 percent in 2020. The Asian student enrollment has been remained constant at 4.7 percent in 2016 and 4.6 percent in 2020, compared with the state average of 7.1 percent in 2020.

*Access, Equity, and Engagement*

The district has begun to address topics of educational equity and racial equity in a variety of ways, and district leaders are aware that there is more to accomplish. The district leadership team has engaged in professional development (PD) with a consultant to better understand issues and strategies to make the district a more equitable, accessible, and welcoming learning community for students, staff, and families. District leaders intend to apply the lessons learned to plan staff PD and identify priorities to better serve all students as a component of the new five-year strategic plan, in development at the time of the onsite review.

A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey was administered to all stakeholders to inform the strategic planning effort. Several student groups have created formats for holding difficult discussions, including use of the “N word” and other disrespectful language at one middle school and the *Be Heard* initiative at the high school.[[3]](#footnote-3) The high-school faculty has vetted curriculum materials for bias and racist overtones, but school leaders and teachers acknowledged that they needed to be more attentive to curriculum to ensure an inclusive program and equitable access for all students to all learning opportunities. This was underscored during the onsite visit when educators became aware of the underperformance of the district’s male students in almost all indicators, especially ELA/literacy at all grade levels subject to MCAS testing. Data also shows that traditionally underserved groups such as economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners are underrepresented in higher-level courses at the high school.

*Leadership and Governance*

The superintendent and assistant superintendent have been in their current roles since 2015. Both have had fairly long careers in the district, beginning as teachers. Since many staff are school system veterans and city residents, there is an inherent familiarity, trust, and respect evident in district culture that facilitates a collaborative and responsive working relationship among all educators.

Over the five years before the onsite review, the leadership team made a meaningful impact on decision-making, teaching, learning, and the curriculum. One unusual initiative enabled by the district’s collaborative culture is the Leadership Advisory Board (LAB), a contractual commitment between the district and the Attleboro Education Association to share decision-making. The board is composed of representative stakeholders from all school levels and roles. The LAB relies on well-researched recommendations from four councils: human resources, professional growth, teaching and learning, and operations and infrastructure. For example, the professional growth council and the teaching and learning council collaborated to produce an interactive online tool for teachers and leaders to use to better understand and implement the district’s essential components of high-quality teaching. The human resources council is reviewing strategies for hiring and retaining a more diverse staff.

*Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment*

Guided by the 2015-2020 strategic plan, the district has worked to develop innovative approaches to teaching, learning, and the curriculum. The district uses the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) framework with standards-aligned units of study that are accessible through the Aspen platform for kindergarten through grade 8 and on the shared Google platform for grades 9-12. UbD is most prominent in the elementary and middle schools.

The district has begun to use two other conceptual frameworks for lesson planning, *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL) and brain-based learning, an initiative brought forth by a teacher group. Attleboro does not rely exclusively upon MCAS tests results to measure student progress. District leaders believe that teachers can best assess student achievement by using performance assessments that demonstrate deep understanding and the application of knowledge and skills. Attleboro has been using performance assessments since 2014 and at the time of the review was expanding its performance assessment repertoire and accompanying rubrics in partnership with the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Educational Assessment.

Although the district uses a variety of diagnostic and summative assessments that produce common assessment data, it has not developed a common data inquiry process, or provided training to increase the capacity of teachers, coaches, and instructional leadership teams at all school levels to use data consistently and effectively to improve student achievement. In addition, the district’s data is stored on several incompatible platforms, making access difficult for many users.

*Human Resources and Professional Development*

The district has had a strong focus on improving instruction. The superintendent and assistant superintendent conduct learning walks every three weeks, guided by the school principal. Principals also conduct frequent learning walks informally and in conjunction with educators’ performance evaluations. The review team found that while the feedback to teachers on formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations was frequently informative in describing instruction, it provided limited actionable, high-quality recommendations that could improve practices. Also, there are multiple formats for meetings of teachers and leaders to discuss improvements to instruction. The meeting process is more systematic in kindergarten through grade 8 where teachers have common planning time (CPT). CPT meetings are facilitated by coaches at the elementary level.

A PD committee with districtwide representation is responsible for selecting PD initiatives. The district has aligned PD offerings with the Massachusetts standards for professional development. PD opportunities are both mandated by the district and chosen by teachers, and they are aligned well with the goals and priorities set forth in district and school improvement plans and educators’ professional growth plans.

*Student Support*

The district had made a strong effort to create a safe and supportive school climate and culture. At the elementary level especially there are tiered systems for both academic and social-emotional support. At the middle-school and high-school levels student support teams and behavioral support teams provide formats for teachers and families to address students learning and behavioral needs; however, systematic data-driven practices at Tier 2 and Tier 3 are not fully developed at the secondary level. The high school has an advisory program for students that meets regularly. Students reported that discussions and supports were uneven, depending on the topic and the teacher or administrator assigned.

*Financial and Asset Management*

Although the district’s financial systems and practices are clear, transparent and collaborative, it is in the finance area that the district struggles the most. Leaders described a budget crisis in fiscal year 2016 when state aid and the city’s allocation increased the budget by only 1 percent, and the district had to lay off 70 employees. Some were rehired, but many of these positions have not been restored. The crisis developed because of a disparity between rising fixed costs and limited available funds. The repercussions continue to this day including larger-than-desired class sizes; loss of half of the coaches at the elementary-school level and all of the coaches at the middle-school level; no guidance counselors at the elementary-school level; and an insufficient number of adjustment counselors and bi-lingual counselors. At the same time, students in Attleboro, as in other communities, are coming to school with more complex social-emotional and behavioral needs. Some students are experiencing trauma and homelessness.

The city has since committed $1 million per year from a new meals tax and half the tax revenue from new growth to the schools. The new growth revenue was not passed on to the schools for fiscal year 2020.

The fiscal year 2020 district budget is 4.3 percent above required net school spending (NSS) and well below the state average of 26.8 percent above NSS. It was unclear at the time of the site visit how recent changes to the state’s school funding formula would affect available funding for the Attleboro Public Schools.

*Observed Instruction*

The review team observed 92 classes throughout the district: 26 at the high school, 23 at the three middle schools, and 43 at the 5 elementary schools. The team observed 39 ELA classes, 33 mathematics classes, 10 science classes, 8 social studies classes, and 2 classes in other subject areas. Among the classes observed were 27 special education or inclusion classes, 2 ELL classes, and 3 career and technical education classes. The observations were approximately 20 minutes in length. All review team members collected data using DESE’s Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is presented in Appendix C.

The review team found that instruction overall showed strengths demonstrating several of the district’s expectations for high-quality teaching. Most students were engaged in lesson activities and took responsibility for tasks, whether they were collaborative or independent learning. At all school levels, a majority of observed lessons exhibited real-world application and relevance. In addition, most middle- and high- school teachers and a majority of elementary teachers demonstrated ease and expertise in explaining content. Overall, in most observed lessons, classroom routines and supports ensured that students had strong learning dispositions. Similarly, most classrooms exhibited a climate conducive to learning.

Alternatively, there were missed opportunities to demonstrate a firmer grasp of other prioritized strategies. More work is required to ensure that students have opportunities to develop higher-order thinking skills and probe ideas and concepts in depth. Also, there is a need for lesson design and implementation that is more consistently attuned to the diverse learning needs of all students.

**Strengths**

* The district has established collaborative structures and practices that support shared district initiatives.
* District and school leaders and teachers have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching in Attleboro.
* The district has established several inclusive strategies and distributed leadership roles to monitor, strengthen, and expand the quality of teaching and learning districtwide.
* District and school leaders are in the elementary stages of introducing more culturally responsive practices to enhance equity, access, and inclusiveness in curriculum and instruction.
* In most observed classes, students assumed responsibility for learning and were engaged in the lesson activities. In a majority of observed lessons, teachers demonstrated fluency in explaining lesson content and putting it into a larger context. Students often engaged with meaningful real-world tasks in classroom settings that were conducive to teaching and learning.
* The district administers a range of state, locally developed, and commercial formative and summative assessments. The results are analyzed in various ways at the district and school levels.
* The district is committed to embedding performance assessments in the curriculum and provides training and professional development for teachers on the development and use of these assessments.
* The district has developed a comprehensive professional development program that supports all educators.
* The district has a proactive approach to meeting the needs of students through tiered supports and strategies, especially at the elementary level.
* The district’s budget development process is collaborative and transparent and is based on student needs and district goals and priorities. Budget presentations and documentation clearly and accurately exhibit these characteristics.
* The district cleans and maintains the schools to ensure that environments are conducive to student learning. The district has plans for technology enhancements and capital repairs to the buildings. With community support, it has invested in capital repairs at some buildings and in a new high school that is currently under construction.

**Challenges and Areas for Growth**

* The district does not use a comprehensive, systematic, regular process to review and revise the content area curriculum in kindergarten through grade 12.
* The district has not taken sufficient steps to ensure that all high-school students are prepared for, enroll in, and succeed in advanced and challenging coursework, especially those from historically marginalized groups.
  + - The district is not sufficiently meeting the academic needs of male students. District data show that male students are underperforming female students on a number of academic indicators and other demographics.
    - In observed classes, instruction did not consistently challenge students with tasks that promote rigorous, higher-order thinking; students did not often communicate their ideas and thinking with each other; and lesson design did not consistently support and challenge students with varied learning needs.
    - In observed classes, teachers did not consistently set and explain clear objectives and their importance for learning, particularly at the elementary and high-school levels. Learning activities were often not well-aligned with both lesson content and students’ cognitive demands. In high-school classes in particular, teachers did not regularly conduct checks for students’ understanding and adjust practice based on what students knew, could do, or understood, and provide consistent, relevant feedback to help students improve.
    - The district does not have a protocol for analyzing data that is applied consistently in all schools at every level. Staff do not have training in data analysis and access to data is hindered by the variety of data platforms. Under current conditions, it is difficult to construct longitudinal data to determine trends.
* The district’s educator evaluation system does not prioritize opportunities for educators to receive high-quality feedback[[4]](#footnote-4) that helps them improve their practice.
* The district has implemented PBIS districtwide, but does not have adequate counseling staff to provide crisis intervention and direct supports to students.
  + - The district does not have counseling staff who are fluent in a second language to support English learners and develop strong collaborative relationships with non-English speaking families.

The district and the city do not have a written agreement on municipal expenditures in support of the schools.

**Recommendations**

* The district should develop and implement an ongoing process for reviewing and revising curricula in all content areas in kindergarten through grade 12.
* The district should ensure that all students are prepared for and have equitable access to a range of rigorous academic coursework as well as courses that are aligned with and can develop students’ interests, talents, and ambitions.
* The district should continue to actively engage in and support improvements to teaching to ensure that all teachers provide high-quality instruction that challenges and supports all students.

District leaders should increase educators’ capacity to analyze and use data to improve teaching and learning by increasing access to data, training staff in data analysis, and increasing opportunities for teachers at all levels to review and interpret data.

The district should improve evaluation procedures and promote educators’ growth by fully implementing all components of the educator evaluation system, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that all educators receive high-quality feedback.

The district should review its hiring practices and priorities to ensure sufficient guidance and counseling personnel.

* In compliance with 603 CMR 10.04, the district and the city should develop a written agreement that details the calculation process and/or amounts to be used in calculating municipal expenditures that are provided to the district.

Attleboro Public Schools District Review Overview

Purpose

Conducted under Chapter 15, Section 55A of the Massachusetts General Laws, comprehensive district reviews support local school districts in establishing or strengthening a cycle of continuous improvement. Reviews consider carefully the effectiveness of systemwide functions, with reference to the six district standards used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE): Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, Student Support, and Financial and Asset Management.[[5]](#footnote-5) Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. In addition, the comprehensive district review is designed to promote district reflection on its own performance and potential next steps. In addition to providing information to each district reviewed, DESE uses review reports to identify resources and/or technical assistance to provide to the district.

Methodology

Reviews collect evidence for each of the six district standards above. A district review team consisting of independent consultants with expertise in each of the district standards reviews documentation, data, and reports for two days before conducting a four-day district visit that includes visits to individual schools. The team conducts interviews and focus group sessions with such stakeholders as school committee members, teachers’ association representatives, administrators, teachers, students, and students’ families. Team members also observe classroom instruction. Subsequent to the onsite review, the team meets for two days to develop findings and recommendations before submitting a draft report to DESE. DESE edits and fact-checks the draft report and sends it to the district for factual review before publishing it on the DESE website.

Site Visit

The site visit to the Attleboro Public Schools was conducted from December 9–12, 2019. The site visit included 37 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 114 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students’ families, and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted 3 focus groups with 4 elementary-school teachers, 2 middle-school teachers, and 14 high-school teachers.

A list of review team members, information about review activities, and the site visit schedule are in Appendix A, and Appendix B provides information about enrollment, attendance, and expenditures. The team observed classroom instruction in 92 classrooms in 10 schools. The team collected data using DESE’s Instructional Inventory, a tool for recording observed characteristics of standards-based teaching. This data is contained in Appendix C.

**District Profile**

Attleboro has a mayor/council form of government and by city charter, the mayor does not sit on the school committee. The school committee chair is elected by its members. The school committee meets twice a month.

The current superintendent has been in the position since July 2015. The district leadership team includes the assistant superintendent, the director of special education, the director of finance, the director of human resources, the humanities coordinator, the STEM coordinator, the K–12 data and accountability coordinator, the K–12 education technology coordinator, and the grants coordinator. The number of central office positions has been relatively constant. The district has 9 principals leading 9 schools; the director of the Early Learning Center; the director of the Network Program, an alternative high school program conducted at Attleboro High School; and the director of the Attleboro Community Academy, an alternative high school program conducted on a separate campus. At the time of the site visit, the position of director of career and technical education at the high school was unfilled.

In addition, there are 8 assistant principals, 9 high-school department heads, 7 high-school guidance counselors, 14.5 (FTE) adjustment counselors, and 6 (FTE) school psychologists. In the 2018–2019 school year, there were 379.9 (FTE) teachers in the district.

In the 2019–2020 school year, 5,982 students enrolled in the schools.

**Table 1: Attleboro Public Schools**

**Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment\*, 2019–2020**

| **School** | **Type** | **Grades Served** | **Enrollment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Early Learning Center | EES | Pre-K | 184 |
| A. Irvin Studley Elementary School | ES | K–4 | 379 |
| Hill-Roberts Elementary School | ES | K–4 | 456 |
| Hyman Fine Elementary School | ES | K–4 | 461 |
| Peter Thacher Elementary School | ES | K–4 | 450 |
| Thomas Willett Elementary School | ES | K–4 | 390 |
| Cyril K. Brennan Middle School | MS | 5–8 | 621 |
| Robert J. Coelho Middle School | MS | 5–8 | 655 |
| Wamsutta Middle School | MS | 5–8 | 563 |
| Attleboro High School | HS | 9–12 | 1770[[6]](#footnote-6) |
| Attleboro Community Academy | Alternative HS | 11–12 | 53 |
| **Totals** | **11 schools** | **Pre-K–12** | **5,982** |
| \*As of October 1, 2019 | | | |

Between 2016 and 2020 overall student enrollment increased by 1.1 percent. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and English learners (ELs) and former ELs) as compared with the state are provided in Tables B1a and B1b in Appendix B.

The total in-district per-pupil expenditure was lower than the median in-district per-pupil expenditure for 31 K–12 districts of similar size (5,000–7,999 students) in fiscal year 2018:  $13,296 as compared with $14,042 (see [District Analysis and Review Tool Detail: Staffing & Finance](http://www.doe.mass.edu/dart/)). Actual net school spending has been slightly above what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table B3 in Appendix B.

Student Performance

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| **Table 2: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Accountability Percentile, Criterion Reference Target (CRT) Percentage, Reason for Classification** | | | | |
| **School** | **Accountability Percentile** | **Cumulative CRT Percentage** | **Overall Classification** | **Reason for Classification** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | Insufficient data | Insufficient data |
| Studley | 60 | 43% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward targets |
| Willett | 57 | 54% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Fine | 85 | 83% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Hill-Roberts | 26 | 59% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Thacher | 72 | 73% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Coelho Middle | 44 | 48% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward targets |
| Brennan Middle | 26 | 48% | Requiring assistance or intervention | In need of focused/targeted support: Low subgroup performance Asian students |
| Wamsutta Middle | 40 | 56% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Attleboro High | 26 | 35% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Moderate progress toward goals |
| Attleboro Community | -- | -- | Insufficient data | Insufficient data |
| District | -- | 51% | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |

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| **Table 3: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA Scaled Scores Grades 3–8, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State (2019)** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 157 | 494.3 | 497.4 | 499.0 | 4.7 | 491.2 | 7.8 |
| Asian | 134 | 502.9 | 504.4 | 504.1 | 1.2 | 512.8 | -8.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 402 | 494.2 | 494.6 | 494.8 | 0.6 | 490.6 | 4.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | 187 | 498.0 | 500.2 | 500.8 | 2.8 | 503.6 | -2.8 |
| White | 1,819 | 501.2 | 503.8 | 503.1 | 1.9 | 504.9 | -1.8 |
| High Needs | 1,307 | 491.1 | 493.7 | 492.8 | 1.7 | 490.7 | 2.1 |
| Econ. Dis. | 927 | 492.7 | 495.0 | 494.3 | 1.6 | 490.6 | 3.7 |
| SWD | 485 | 479.9 | 481.1 | 479.7 | -0.2 | 481.1 | -1.4 |
| EL | 364 | 491.1 | 494.2 | 494.7 | 3.6 | 489.3 | 5.4 |
| All | 2,705 | 499.7 | 501.8 | 501.5 | 1.8 | 501.2 | 0.3 |
| Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440–470 Not Meeting Expectations; 470–500 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500–530 Meeting Expectations; 530–560 Exceeding Expectations | | | | | | | |

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| **Table 4: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Math Scaled Scores Grades 3–8, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State (2019)** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 157 | 490.5 | 488.8 | 492.5 | 2.0 | 487.8 | 4.7 |
| Asian | 134 | 500.8 | 500.8 | 502.8 | 2.0 | 516.4 | -13.6 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 401 | 491.6 | 489.6 | 491.6 | 0.0 | 488.2 | 3.4 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 189 | 496.8 | 495.4 | 497.4 | 0.6 | 500.8 | -3.4 |
| White | 1,819 | 500.4 | 499.8 | 500.8 | 0.4 | 502.7 | -1.9 |
| High Needs | 1,304 | 489.4 | 489.3 | 490.2 | 0.8 | 488.8 | 1.4 |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 923 | 490.2 | 489.7 | 490.8 | 0.6 | 488.1 | 2.7 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 485 | 479.6 | 478.8 | 479.4 | -0.2 | 479.5 | -0.1 |
| English Learners | 365 | 490.0 | 490.2 | 492.2 | 2.2 | 489.3 | 2.9 |
| All | 2,706 | 498.4 | 497.5 | 498.9 | 0.5 | 499.2 | -0.3 |
| Next Generation MCAS Achievement Levels: 440–470 Not Meeting Expectations; 470–500 Partially Meeting Expectations; 500–530 Meeting Expectations; 530–560 Exceeding Expectations | | | | | | | |

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| **Table 5: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State (2019)** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 157 | 37% | 46% | 47% | 10% | 33% | 14% |
| Asian | 134 | 60% | 58% | 57% | -3% | 72% | -15% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 402 | 38% | 39% | 41% | 3% | 33% | 8% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 187 | 45% | 48% | 52% | 7% | 56% | -4% |
| White | 1,819 | 53% | 57% | 56% | 3% | 59% | -3% |
| High Needs | 1,307 | 32% | 36% | 35% | 3% | 32% | 3% |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 927 | 36% | 38% | 38% | 2% | 33% | 5% |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 485 | 11% | 13% | 13% | 2% | 16% | -3% |
| English Learners | 364 | 34% | 38% | 39% | 5% | 32% | 7% |
| All | 2,705 | 50% | 53% | 53% | 3% | 52% | 1% |

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| **Table 6: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations Grades 3–8, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State (2019)** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 157 | 31% | 24% | 34% | 3% | 28% | 6% |
| Asian | 134 | 54% | 57% | 55% | 1% | 76% | -21% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 401 | 31% | 31% | 34% | 3% | 29% | 5% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 189 | 43% | 40% | 45% | 2% | 51% | -6% |
| White | 1,819 | 50% | 52% | 54% | 4% | 56% | -2% |
| High Needs | 1,304 | 27% | 30% | 33% | 6% | 29% | 4% |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 923 | 29% | 30% | 34% | 5% | 29% | 5% |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 485 | 11% | 14% | 15% | 4% | 15% | 0% |
| English Learners | 365 | 27% | 30% | 37% | 10% | 32% | 5% |
| All | 2,706 | 46% | 47% | 49% | 3% | 49% | 0% |

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| **Table 7: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next Generation MCAS ELA and Math Scaled Scores in Grade 10, 2019** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **ELA** | | | | **Math** | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/Below** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 26 | 490.7 | 493.8 | -3.1 | 26 | 488.1 | 492.3 | -4.2 |
| Asian | 24 | 505.5 | 516.8 | -11.3 | 25 | 501.7 | 522.5 | -20.8 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 65 | 489.8 | 492.0 | -2.2 | 66 | 490.8 | 491.0 | -0.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 26 | 498.8 | 509.0 | -10.2 | 26 | 499.2 | 506.7 | -7.5 |
| White | 293 | 504.0 | 510.7 | -6.7 | 293 | 503.9 | 509.0 | -5.1 |
| High Needs | 184 | 490.7 | 492.6 | -1.9 | 185 | 488.0 | 491.6 | -3.6 |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 138 | 494.7 | 493.4 | 1.3 | 138 | 492.0 | 492.1 | -0.1 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 68 | 480.0 | 486.2 | -6.2 | 68 | 476.9 | 483.8 | -6.9 |
| English Learners | 31 | 470.6 | 480.6 | -10.0 | 33 | 476.4 | 485.4 | -9.0 |
| All | 437 | 500.9 | 506.2 | -5.3 | 439 | 500.6 | 505.1 | -4.5 |

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| **Table 8: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next Generation MCAS ELA and Math Scaled Scores in Grade 10, 2019** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **ELA** | | | | **Math** | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/Below** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/Below** |
| African American/Black | 26 | 31% | 38% | -7% | 26 | 23% | 35% | -12% |
| Asian | 24 | 58% | 78% | -20% | 25 | 60% | 82% | -22% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 65 | 32% | 37% | -5% | 66 | 36% | 33% | 3% |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 26 | 58% | 65% | -7% | 26 | 46% | 60% | -14% |
| White | 293 | 58% | 69% | -11% | 293 | 62% | 67% | -5% |
| High Needs | 184 | 32% | 36% | -4% | 185 | 29% | 33% | -4% |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 138 | 40% | 38% | 2% | 138 | 36% | 35% | 1% |
| Student w/ Disabilities | 68 | 12% | 22% | -10% | 68 | 4% | 18% | -14% |
| English Learners | 31 | 6% | 18% | -12% | 33 | 18% | 24% | -6% |
| All | 437 | 52% | 61% | -9% | 439 | 54% | 59% | -5% |

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| **Table 9: Attleboro Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5 and 8, and 10, 2019** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Next-Generation MCAS 5 and 8** | | | | **MCAS Grade 10** | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/ Below** | **N (2019)** | **2019** | **State** | **Above/ Below** |
| African American/Black | 47 | 34% | 24% | 10 | 19 | 47% | 54% | -7 |
| Asian | 40 | 53% | 67% | -14 | 24 | 75% | 88% | -13 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 123 | 30% | 26% | 4 | 59 | 58% | 53% | 5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | 59 | 54% | 51% | 3 | 26 | 73% | 76% | -3 |
| White | 602 | 54% | 56% | -3 | 279 | 78% | 81% | -3 |
| High Needs | 424 | 33% | 27% | 6 | 168 | 54% | 53% | 1 |
| Econ. Disadvantaged | 302 | 37% | 27% | 11 | 128 | 60% | 54% | 6 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 151 | 14% | 17% | -3 | 60 | 28% | 38% | -10 |
| English Learners and Former EL | 109 | 26% | 23% | 3% | 28 | 21% | 39% | -18% |
| All | 874 | 50% | 48% | 2 | 410 | 73% | 74% | -1 |

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| **Table 10: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Grade** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State (2019)** | **Above/Below** |
| 3 | 466 | 55% | 61% | 57% | 2 | 56% | 1 |
| 4 | 427 | 53% | 63% | 62% | 9 | 52% | 10 |
| 5 | 453 | 47% | 46% | 52% | 5 | 52% | 0 |
| 6 | 469 | 46% | 50% | 44% | -2 | 53% | -9 |
| 7 | 467 | 50% | 45% | 51% | 1 | 48% | 3 |
| 8 | 423 | 49% | 55% | 52% | 3 | 52% | 0 |
| 3–8 | 2,705 | 50% | 53% | 53% | 3 | 52% | 1 |
| 10 | 437 | -- | -- | 52% | -- | 61% | -9 |

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| **Table 11: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grades 3–8, 2017–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Grade** | **N (2019)** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **State** | **Above/Below** |
| 3 | 466 | 52% | 48% | 48% | -4 | 49% | -1 |
| 4 | 427 | 49% | 57% | 56% | 7 | 50% | 6 |
| 5 | 450 | 45% | 42% | 52% | 7 | 48% | 4 |
| 6 | 469 | 43% | 44% | 55% | 12 | 52% | 3 |
| 7 | 469 | 43% | 38% | 43% | 0 | 48% | -5 |
| 8 | 425 | 43% | 51% | 42% | -1 | 46% | -4 |
| 3–8 | 2,706 | 46% | 47% | 49% | 3 | 49% | 0 |
| 10 | 439 | -- | -- | 54% | -- | 59% | -5 |

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| **Table 12: Attleboro Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Grades 5, 8, and 10, 2016–2019** | | | | | | | |
| **Grade** | **N (2019)** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2019)** |
| 5 | -- | 46% | 50% | 41% | -- | -- | -- |
| 8 | -- | 39% | 40% | 34% | -- | -- | -- |
| 10 | 410 | 70% | 75% | 73% | 73% | 3 | 74% |

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| **Table 13: Attleboro Public Schools**  **English Language Arts and Math Mean Student Growth Percentile, 2018-­-2019** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **ELA** | | | | **Math** | | | |
| **Grade** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **State (2019)** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **State (2019)** |
| 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| 4 | 382 | 55.9 | 51.9 | 49.7 | 383 | 59.0 | 58.1 | 49.8 |
| 5 | 428 | 38.8 | 40.2 | 50.0 | 424 | 46.9 | 44.3 | 50.0 |
| 6 | 446 | 50.7 | 45.4 | 50.0 | 446 | 41.6 | 57.2 | 50.0 |
| 7 | 438 | 54.2 | 55.6 | 49.9 | 438 | 48.3 | 49.4 | 50.1 |
| 8 | 387 | 52.4 | 54.0 | 49.9 | 388 | 47.0 | 51.7 | 49.9 |
| 3–8 | 2,081 | 50.3 | 49.3 | 49.9 | 2,079 | 48.5 | 52.1 | 49.9 |
| 10 | 382 | 47.1 | 39.7 | 49.4 | 382 | 52.5 | 48.6 | 49.7 |

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| **Table 14: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade, 2019** | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **3–8** | **10** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Studley | 62% | 53% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 58% | -- |
| Willett | 60% | 70% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 66% | -- |
| Fine | 64% | 79% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 71% | -- |
| Hill-Roberts | 50% | 45% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 48% | -- |
| Thacher | 50% | 66% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 58% | -- |
| Coelho Middle | -- | -- | 52% | 46% | 49% | 51% | 49% | -- |
| Brennan Middle | -- | -- | 47% | 42% | 50% | 64% | 50% | -- |
| Wamsutta Middle | -- | -- | 57% | 49% | 57% | 46% | 53% | -- |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 54% |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 57% | 62% | 52% | 44% | 51% | 52% | 53% | 52% |
| State | 56% | 52% | 52% | 53% | 48% | 52% | 52% | 61% |

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| **Table 15: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations by School and Grade, 2019** | | | | | | | | |  |
| **School** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **3-8** | **10** | |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | |
| Studley | 56% | 59% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 58% | -- | |
| Willett | 48% | 51% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 50% | -- | |
| Fine | 48% | 68% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 57% | -- | |
| Hill-Roberts | 45% | 46% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 45% | -- | |
| Thacher | 44% | 69% | -- | -- | -- | -- | 56% | -- | |
| Coelho Middle | -- | -- | 62% | 53% | 53% | 59% | 57% | -- | |
| Brennan Middle | -- | -- | 45% | 48% | 26% | 30% | 37% | -- | |
| Wamsutta Middle | -- | -- | 51% | 69% | 51% | 41% | 53% | -- | |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | 57% | |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | |
| District | 48% | 56% | 52% | 55% | 43% | 42% | 49% | 54% | |
| State | 49% | 50% | 48% | 52% | 48% | 46% | 49% | 59% | |

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| **Table 16: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Science Next-Generation MCAS Percent Meeting or Exceeding Expectations and**  **MCAS Percent Proficient or Advanced by School and Grade, 2019** | | | | | |
|  | **Next-Generation MCAS** | | |  | **MCAS** |
| **School** | **5** | **8** | **5 & 8** |  | **10** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Studley | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Willett | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Fine | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Hill-Roberts | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Thacher | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| Coelho Middle | 64% | 47% | 57% |  |  |
| Brennan Middle | 50% | 35% | 42% |  |  |
| Wamsutta Middle | 52% | 52% | 52% |  |  |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- |  | 74% |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- |  |  |
| District | 55% | 43% | 50% |  | 73% |
| State | 49% | 46% | 48% |  | 74% |

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| **Table 17: Attleboro Public Schools**  **3—8 Next-Generation MCAS ELA Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **English Learners** | **African American** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **Multi-race** | **White** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Studley | 58% | 39% | 39% | 12% | 52% | -- | -- | 43% | 64% | 57% |
| Willett | 66% | 44% | 52% | 12% | 57% | 69% | -- | 46% | 43% | 73% |
| Fine | 71% | 58% | 58% | 43% | 52% | -- | -- | 54% | 73% | 76% |
| Hill-Roberts | 48% | 36% | 39% | 8% | 50% | 60% | 54% | 45% | 30% | 48% |
| Thacher | 58% | 38% | 37% | 15% | 40% | 57% | 30% | 43% | 67% | 63% |
| Coelho Middle | 49% | 31% | 35% | 15% | 44% | 43% | 77% | 36% | 48% | 50% |
| Brennan Middle | 50% | 37% | 40% | 11% | 33% | 30% | 54% | 41% | 60% | 53% |
| Wamsutta Middle | 53% | 30% | 35% | 8% | 29% | 52% | 47% | 36% | 40% | 58% |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 53% | 35% | 38% | 13% | 39% | 47% | 57% | 41% | 52% | 56% |
| State | 52% | 32% | 33% | 16% | 32% | 33% | 72% | 33% | 56% | 59% |

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| **Table 18: Attleboro Public Schools**  **3—8 Next-Generation MCAS Math Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **English Learners** | **African American** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **Multi-race** | **White** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Studley | 58% | 40% | 38% | 12% | 48% | -- | -- | 39% | 36% | 63% |
| Willett | 50% | 31% | 38% | 12% | 35% | 44% | -- | 33% | 21% | 58% |
| Fine | 57% | 45% | 47% | 36% | 36% | -- | -- | 35% | 67% | 61% |
| Hill-Roberts | 45% | 38% | 43% | 19% | 44% | 50% | 54% | 32% | 40% | 47% |
| Thacher | 56% | 38% | 35% | 20% | 40% | 57% | 30% | 33% | 52% | 66% |
| Coelho Middle | 57% | 34% | 36% | 18% | 41% | 28% | 74% | 41% | 58% | 60% |
| Brennan Middle | 37% | 28% | 28% | 15% | 28% | 17% | 36% | 27% | 40% | 42% |
| Wamsutta Middle | 53% | 35% | 39% | 10% | 39% | 48% | 63% | 36% | 46% | 57% |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 49% | 33% | 34% | 15% | 37% | 34% | 55% | 34% | 45% | 54% |
| State | 49% | 29% | 29% | 15% | 32% | 28% | 76% | 29% | 51% | 56% |

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| **Table 19: Attleboro Public Schools**  **ELA Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **English Learners** | **African American** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **Multi-race** | **White** |
| Attleboro High | 54% | 32% | 40% | 11% | 6% | 29% | 58% | 33% | 60% | 59% |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 52% | 32% | 40% | 12% | 6% | 31% | 58% | 32% | 58% | 58% |
| State | 61% | 36% | 38% | 22% | 18% | 38% | 78% | 37% | 65% | 69% |

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| **Table 20: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Math Meeting or Exceeding Expectations in Grade 10, 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **English Learners** | **African American** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **Multi-race** | **White** |
| Attleboro High | 57% | 31% | 38% | 5% | 19% | 25% | 63% | 38% | 48% | 65% |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 54% | 29% | 36% | 4% | 18% | 23% | 60% | 36% | 46% | 62% |
| State | 59% | 33% | 35% | 18% | 24% | 35% | 82% | 33% | 60% | 67% |

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| **Table 21: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Next-Generation MCAS Science Percent Meeting and Exceeding Expectations by School, 2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **School** | **All** | **High Needs** | **Econ. Dis.** | **SWD** | **English Learners** | **African American** | **Asian** | **Hispanic** | **Multi-race** | **White** |
| Early Learning Center | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Studley | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Willett | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Fine | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Hill-Roberts | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Thacher | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Coelho Middle | 57% | 37% | 44% | 17% | 33% | 47% | 56% | 33% | 67% | 58% |
| Brennan Middle | 42% | 32% | 39% | 7% | 22% | 8% | 50% | 28% | 52% | 47% |
| Wamsutta Middle | 52% | 32% | 33% | 16% | 25% | 55% | 54% | 31% | -- | 57% |
| Attleboro High | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Attleboro Community Academy | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| District | 50% | 33% | 37% | 14% | 26% | 34% | 53% | 30% | 54% | 54% |
| State | 48% | 27% | 27% | 17% | 23% | 24% | 67% | 26% | 51% | 56% |

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| **Table 22: Attleboro Public Schools**  **MCAS Science Percent Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Science by School and Student Group, 2016–2019** | | | | | | |
| **School** | **N (2019)** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **4-yr Change** |
| Attleboro High | 399 | 71% | 76% | 74% | 74% | 3 |
| African American/Black | 17 | 32% | 48% | 47% | 47% | 15 |
| Asian | 23 | 72% | 67% | 80% | 78% | 6 |
| Hispanic | 58 | 45% | 60% | 54% | 57% | 12 |
| Multi-race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 26 | 87% | 80% | 80% | 73% | -14 |
| White | 273 | 76% | 81% | 80% | 79% | 3 |
| High Needs | 158 | 48% | 54% | 50% | 54% | 6 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 121 | 52% | 60% | 57% | 60% | 8 |
| Students with Disabilities | 55 | 27% | 35% | 16% | 29% | 2 |
| English Learners | 26 | 39% | -- | 36% | 19% | -20 |
| Attleboro Community Academy | 2 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

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| **Table 23: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2015–2018** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N**  **(2018)** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 26 | 65.0 | 93.3 | 85.7 | 88.5 | 23.5 | 80.1 |
| Asian | 17 | 93.8 | 91.7 | 81.3 | 94.1 | 0.3 | 94.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 49 | 69.6 | 81.5 | 81.0 | 77.6 | 8.0 | 73.8 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 19 | 86.7 | 90.5 | 54.5 | 94.7 | 8.0 | 86.5 |
| White | 316 | 85.3 | 84.1 | 92.4 | 92.4 | 7.1 | 92.2 |
| High Needs | 203 | 73.3 | 75.9 | 80.2 | 81.8 | 8.5 | 78.0 |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 170 | 73.7 | 75.1 | 81.5 | 80.0 | 6.3 | 77.4 |
| English Learners | 15 | 80.0 | 65.2 | 81.3 | 73.3 | -6.7 | 64.1 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 72 | 62.0 | 59.3 | 64.9 | 73.6 | 11.6 | 72.4 |
| All | 432 | 82.8 | 85.0 | 89.5 | 90.5 | 7.7 | 87.9 |
| \* Four-year cohort graduation rate for students from low-income families used for 2015 rates. | | | | | | | |

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| **Table 24: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2014–2017** | | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N**  **(2017)** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2017)** |
| African American/Black | 21 | 95.0 | 75.0 | 96.7 | 85.7 | -9.3 | 85.7 |
| Asian | 16 | 95.7 | 93.8 | 100.0 | 81.3 | -14.4 | 81.3 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 42 | 81.0 | 75.0 | 85.2 | 90.5 | 9.5 | 90.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 11 | 77.8 | 86.7 | 90.5 | 54.5 | -23.3 | 54.5 |
| White | 329 | 90.6 | 88.8 | 87.1 | 94.8 | 4.2 | 94.8 |
| High Needs | 212 | 81.8 | 78.5 | 80.7 | 85.8 | 4.0 | 85.8 |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 173 | 82.9 | 78.9 | 79.7 | 87.3 | 4.4 | 87.3 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 77 | 68.5 | 68.0 | 66.3 | 74.0 | 5.5 | 74.0 |
| English Learners | 16 | 44.4 | 90.0 | 73.9 | 87.5 | 43.1 | 87.5 |
| All | 420 | 89.9 | 86.6 | 88.2 | 92.4 | 2.5 | 92.4 |
| \* Four-year cohort graduation rate for students from low-income families used for 2014 rates. | | | | | | | |

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| **Table 25: Attleboro Public Schools**  **In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2015–2018** | | | | | | |
| -**Group** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 4.8 | 7.1 | 8.0 | 4.8 | 0.0 | 3.4 |
| Asian | 2.2 | 0.7 | 3.1 | 2.0 | -0.2 | 0.6 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3.9 | 2.3 | 3.3 | 4.5 | 0.6 | 2.4 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 0.4 | 2.3 |
| White | 2.6 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 0.4 | 1.4 |
| High Needs | 4.0 | 3.5 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 0.8 | 2.7 |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 4.1 | 3.5 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 1.4 | 2.9 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 5.0 | 4.4 | 5.8 | 5.2 | 0.2 | 3.3 |
| English Learners | 2.3 | 0.2 | 2.6 | 1.4 | -0.9 | 1.8 |
| All | 2.9 | 2.3 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 0.5 | 1.8 |

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| **Table 26: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2015–2018** | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 10.2 | 14.4 | 10.5 | 8.8 | -1.4 | 6.0 |
| Asian | 1.5 | 1.4 | 2.4 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 6.7 | 6.0 | 6.1 | 6.9 | 0.2 | 5.1 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 5.4 | 5.6 | 3.9 | 4.5 | -0.9 | 3.3 |
| White | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.4 | -0.3 | 1.9 |
| High Needs | 7.5 | 7.6 | 7.0 | 6.9 | -0.6 | 4.6 |
| Economically Disadvantaged\* | 7.6 | 7.8 | 7.5 | 7.4 | -0.2 | 5.4 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 9.4 | 10.7 | 8.5 | 8.1 | -1.3 | 5.8 |
| English Learners | 4.8 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.6 | -1.2 | 3.7 |
| All | 5.2 | 5.2 | 4.6 | 4.9 | -0.3 | 2.9 |

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| **Table 27: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2015­­-­-2018** | | | | | | |
| **Group** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 2.2 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 3.9 | 1.7 | 2.9 |
| Asian | 0.0 | 1.3 | 2.9 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 0.6 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 2.5 | 6.4 | 4.2 | 1.7 | -0.8 | 4.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 1.5 | 1.4 | 4.4 | 0.0 | -1.5 | 1.9 |
| White | 0.9 | 2.4 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 1.0 |
| High Needs | 2.1 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 2.7 | 0.6 | 3.6 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 1.7 | 4.6 | 5.1 | 2.0 | 0.3 | 3.6 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 3.5 | 5.2 | 3.4 | 3.4 | -0.1 | 3.4 |
| English Learners | 4.6 | 11.1 | 5.3 | 3.8 | -0.8 | 7.6 |
| All | 1.1 | 2.7 | 2.1 | 1.2 | 0.1 | 1.9 |

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| **Table 28: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Advanced Coursework Completion by Student Group, 2018–2019** | | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **Target** |
| African American/Black | 59 | 37.0 | 47.5 | 10.5 | 44.2 |
| Asian | 32 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Hispanic or Latino | 124 | 50.0 | 47.6 | -2.4 | 58.0 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 38 | 62.5 | 68.4 | 5.9 | 66.8 |
| White | 606 | 61.8 | 64.7 | 2.9 | 66.0 |
| High Needs | 303 | 40.2 | 38.3 | -1.9 | 47.5 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 252 | 42.8 | 39.7 | -3.1 | 50.2 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 94 | 23.5 | 16.0 | -7.5 | 30.5 |
| English Learners | 42 | 41.3 | 21.4 | -19.9 | 46.8 |
| All | 863 | 59.3 | 61.5 | 2.2 | 63.6 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 29: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Progress toward Attaining English Language Proficiency, 2018–2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Non-high school** | | | | | **High school** | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **Target** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **Target** |
| English Learners | 226 | 57.5 | 64.2 | 6.7 | 62.4 | 35 | 44.2 | 14.3 | -29.9 | 45.5 |
| All | 226 | 57.5 | 64.2 | 6.7 | 62.4 | 35 | 44.2 | 14.3 | -29.9 | 45.5 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 30: Attleboro Public Schools**  **Chronic Absence Rates by Student Group,\* 2018–2019** | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Non-high school** | | | | | **High school** | | | | |
| **Group** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **Target** | **N (2019)** | **2018** | **2019** | **Change** | **Target** |
| African American/Black | 242 | 11.5 | 6.6 | -4.9 | 9.0 | 130 | 15.5 | 20.8 | 5.3 | 11.8 |
| Asian | 182 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 82 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Hispanic or Latino | 559 | 10.0 | 9.7 | -0.3 | 7.1 | 284 | 22.1 | 26.4 | 4.3 | 17.7 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 270 | 13.5 | 11.1 | -2.4 | 12.5 | 86 | 23.1 | 22.1 | -1.0 | 21.5 |
| White | 2,423 | 8.6 | 9.0 | 0.4 | 7.4 | 1,284 | 17.5 | 20.0 | 2.5 | 15.7 |
| High needs | 1,850 | 14.3 | 13.1 | -1.2 | 12.5 | 735 | 26.3 | 32.5 | 6.2 | 23.4 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 1,167 | 16.7 | 15.6 | -1.1 | 14.3 | 504 | 28.7 | 35.7 | 7.0 | 24.2 |
| Students w/ Disabilities | 636 | 14.4 | 14.5 | 0.1 | 12.0 | 245 | 29.4 | 35.1 | 5.7 | 25.9 |
| English Learners | 524 | 10.9 | 10.3 | -0.6 | 8.4 | 129 | 14.9 | 19.4 | 4.5 | 10.8 |
| All | 3,684 | 9.5 | 9.1 | -0.4 | 8.5 | 1,876 | 18.0 | 21.3 | 3.3 | 16.4 |
| \* Chronic absence is defined as the percentage of students absent 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school. | | | | | | | | | | |

Leadership and Governance

***Contextual Background***

*School Committee Governance*

Attleboro’s nine-member school committee understands its role as defined by Massachusetts statute. The committee meets regularly to review and approve policy; establish and approve the annual budget; evaluate the superintendent; and review data about district progress on the implementation of strategic and school improvement plans regularly. Working with the superintendent and city officials, the school committee secured overwhelming approval for the high-school building project in April 2018. This four-year, $260 million project was approved by 65.7 percent of the voters.

*District and School Leadership*

Central office district leaders include the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the director of finance, the special education director, the director of human resources, and the K–12 data and accountability coordinator. This level of staffing presents challenges in a district of nearly 6,000 students with ambitious improvement initiatives underway. For example, the assistant superintendent fills several roles that are typically performed by other professional staff. Each school is led by a principal and there are assistant principals at three of the five elementary schools, both middle schools, and the high school. At the elementary level, the district is the process of replacing instructional coaches with assistant principals over a multi-year period.

The superintendent has the support of the school committee as evidenced by his most recent evaluation and has worked successfully to establish a culture of collaboration in the district. The superintendent works well with the school committee in establishing a vision and general direction for the district and keeps the committee well informed about issues and developments within their purview. The superintendent has also developed structures to support a collaborative culture among district leaders, school leaders, and teachers.

*District and School Improvement Planning*

The district is in the final year of a five-year strategic plan. This plan is focused on four pillars: learning, culture, engagement, and infrastructure. While the plan has guided the work of the district for the last four years, and progress toward realization of the plan goals has been regularly documented for the school committee, the granular, data-driven planning anticipated in the original document appears to have been abandoned by the district. School instructional leadership teams develop improvement plans that are approved by the school committee on a two-year cycle. These plans have common goals endorsed by the district in areas that include curriculum planning and assessment; teaching all students; parent and family engagement; and professional culture. School Improvement Plans reference student performance data, intended growth outcomes, strategic initiatives and process benchmarks, and set areas for improvement in general. However, the plans do not include SMART goals[[7]](#footnote-7) with specific objectives.

*Budget Development*

District and school leaders have worked hard to maintain school facilities and implemented several cost-effective programs to conserve energy and ensure that school facilities are safe and comfortable. The district has also worked hard to secure donor support for its ongoing upgrade of technology in the form of a one-to-one Chromebook initiative. The district’s budget process is transparent and budget recommendations are clear and well-reasoned. The district has recently worked cooperatively with city officials to avert short-term fiscal problems and to approve the high-school building project.

***Strength Finding***

**1. The district has established collaborative structures and practices that support shared district initiatives.**

* 1. The Leadership Advisory Board (LAB) contributes to the sense of collaborative governance that permeates the district.
     1. The school committee and the Attleboro Education Association (AEA) have contractually committed themselves to a collaborative relationship through the establishment of the LAB.
     2. The LAB consists of councils designed to organize the district’s work in four domains: human resources, teaching and learning, operations and infrastructure, and professional growth.
     3. The composition and governance of the four LAB councils are designed to give teachers and administrators equal standing and place a premium on compromise and consensus.

a. The contractual language that established the LAB structure clearly specifies equal representation of administrators and teachers on the LAB. LAB councils are comprised of five teachers, one from each level[[8]](#footnote-8) and two who represent the teachers’ association. District and school leaders comprise the remainder of the 10-person membership. Each LAB council is co-chaired by a teacher and an administrator.

b. The contractual language places a high premium on consensus by specifying that deliberations will continue until consensus is reached on a matter and that majority rule is specifically prohibited as a means for arriving at decisions.

* + 1. Each council has been responsible for important developments and improvements in the district.

a. The human resources council reviewed and revised job descriptions and is currently considering streamlining hiring practices. The human resources council developed safety plans though the District Safety Team.

b. The teaching and learning council implemented project-based learning and revised homework policies.

c. The operations and infrastructure council coordinated the district’s one-to-one Chromebook initiative and researched the reconfiguration of the five elementary schools.

d. The professional growth council established professional development pathways and is considering consistency issues related to teacher evaluation.

* + 1. Teachers and school leaders expressed the opinion that the LAB structure has contributed to a positive working environment in the district.

**B.** Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) are another collaborative structure in the district that provides teachers with opportunities to work with school leaders on matters of importance to school improvement and leadership.

* + 1. School-based ILTs are composed of teachers from each grade level.
    2. Principals reported that the ILTs helped to develop school improvement plan goals and met regularly throughout the school year to analyze data on progress toward the realization of these goals.

3. Teachers exhibited an awareness of the work of the ILT in establishing improvement goals for their school. Teachers said that ILT direction of professional development “felt less top down” than direction by the principal.

**C.** The superintendent has taken additional important steps to increase the level of collaboration with teachers in the district.

1. The superintendent meets with the leadership of the AEA twice monthly. Association leaders reported that these meetings contributed to the positive working relationship that the association enjoys with the district.
2. Working with school principals, the superintendent created a survey to solicit input from teachers about the progress of their schools and the performance of the principals. Principals were then required to create action plans to address identified issues.

**D.** The superintendent has developed a wide range of structures and practices that increase communication with school leaders and foster a sense of shared responsibility for the implementation of initiatives.

1. The district leadership team attends an annual summer leadership academy during which the improvement agenda for the coming year is discussed.
2. The superintendent has implemented a comprehensive meeting schedule for the administrative team to ensure high levels of communication and accountability for important district and school initiatives.
3. Debriefings following regular learning walks conducted by the superintendent and the assistant superintendent provide another opportunity for collaborative communication between district and school leaders.
4. Principals reported that learning walks were often structured to review or highlight the implementation of district initiatives and contributed to the shared responsibility for innovation that is apparent in the district.
5. Learning walks also address the areas and activities chosen by the principal, strengthening the collaborative relationship between district and school leaders.
6. School leaders spoke positively about the high level of visibility of district leaders in their schools and agreed that the frequency of meetings and level of communication contributed to a shared understanding of district progress and direction on the multiple initiatives currently underway.

**Impact:** The emphasis on shared decision-making and frequent, high-quality communication at all levels of the organization has enabled the district to pursue multiple improvement initiatives with coherence and cohesion.

Curriculum and Instruction

***Contextual Background***

The assistant superintendent oversees and manages all aspects of academic curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the district. This role also includes responsibility for 15 additional programs and services related to curriculum, teaching, learning, and support of learning, including English learner programming, accountability, homeless and displaced students, the educator evaluation system, dropout prevention, and professional development. At the time of the onsite review in December 2019, the position of director of the career and technical education program was vacant. There are two districtwide coordinators, one for humanities subjects (English, history/social studies) and one for STEM subjects (sciences, technology, engineering, mathematics), who collaborate with the assistant superintendent and school-level educators. The district’s prevailing culture of collaboration, trust, and respect has enabled this small cadre of district leaders to accomplish a number of thoughtful and purposeful initiatives, given the scale of their responsibilities.

At the elementary schools, the principal, the instructional leadership team (ILT), and an instructional coach provide support for monitoring and improving teaching, data analysis, and improvement planning.[[9]](#footnote-9) At the middle schools, the principals are central to instructional leadership since there are no content experts or coaches. At the comprehensive high school, department heads, who teach part–time, are responsible for departmental leadership.

*Curriculum Selection and Use*

While the district does not conduct comprehensive kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum reviews, curriculum teams with teacher representation from all grade levels make ongoing adjustments and improvements to units of study and focus on a particular segment of a subject when there are funds budgeted for a new textbook adoption. At the time of the onsite visit, the district was in the midst of a multi-year review of its kindergarten through grade 6 English Language Arts (ELA) program and was piloting three different kindergarten through grade 6 literacy programs.

*Student Access to Coursework*

The district has begun to address equity and access issues in the academic program. The leadership team has participated in professional development (PD) as a precursor to introducing more in-depth conversations and PD for faculty and staff, particularly as the team develops a new five-year strategic plan. Data show that traditionally underserved student groups are underrepresented in higher level coursework at the high school. In addition, male students, in particular, show lower participation in challenging coursework and lower achievement than female students, especially in ELA/literacy on the MCAS tests at all grade levels subject to testing.

Curricula in some content areas are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. ELA/literacy and mathematics curricula are aligned with the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in kindergarten through grade 12; alignment is particularly strong in grades 9–12. Sample science and social studies curriculum maps and units are aligned in kindergarten through grade 4 and in grades 9–12. At the middle-school level, however, alignment of science and social studies curricula is still a work in progress. Teachers and leaders identified the need for more updated instructional materials, especially in science, as a priority. To meet the expectations of the 2018 state standards, the district is piloting *iCivics* in grade 8 as well as in the high-school. The goal is to introduce new courses in 2020–2021.

Units of study usually follow the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) framework, which is more prevalent in kindergarten through grade 8 than in grades 9–12. There is a focused effort at the middle schools to remove academic, social-emotional, and physical barriers to learning by incorporating the *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL) framework. In addition, a group of teachers formed a brain-based learning team in 2017–2018. This group has been studying and sharing resources on neuro-cognitive literacy as well as advocating and practicing curriculum modifications that are aligned with brain-based evidence about teaching and learning.

Academic resources and teaching materials include teacher-developed curriculum maps and units of study, DESE-developed units, and proprietary programs and textbooks, some of which are 10 or more years old.

*Classroom Instruction*

Throughout the district, there is clarity about and high expectations for what constitutes effective teaching. The interactive tool, “Our Instructional Design,” identifies five components that all teachers should incorporate into their teaching that are aligned with evidence-based best practices: objectives, culture, social-emotional learning, relevant learning experiences, and assessment and reflection.

The Our Instructional Design tool probes each component in depth and teachers and leaders use it when planning and analyzing instruction. In addition, a structured lesson planning guidance document developed under a previous superintendent is still in use. Yet, there is room for instructional improvement given the uneven implementation of some teaching practices closely aligned with the district’s essential components of instruction in observed lessons across the district.

Instructional improvement is a continual focus districtwide. For example, the superintendent and the assistant superintendent conduct regular learning walks accompanied by school principals to observe and address specific teaching and learning issues that principals have identified. Principals noted that they visited classrooms and aimed to provide immediate feedback to teachers, verbally or by email, on their observations and suggestions.

The district’s mission “to develop and deliver relevant learning experiences that engage, challenge and inspire all students to maximize their unique potential and improve our world” is very much at the core of how leaders and teachers conceive of and approach their work with Attleboro’s students.

***Strength Findings***

**1. District and school leaders and teachers have a shared understanding of what constitutes effective teaching in Attleboro.**

**A.** A district leader stated that an interactive framework entitled, Our Instructional Design (Our ID) defined the five components that teachers should incorporate in instruction in Attleboro.

* + 1. Our ID (see diagram below) grew out of collaboration between the professional growth council and the teaching and learning council of the district’s Leadership Advisory Board.
    2. According to a description on the district website, Our ID identifies and defines the components of instruction that are essential in Attleboro. The gear symbolizes the drive necessary to meet the needs of all students and includes the pieces that support successful instructional design in Attleboro. The councils have shared Our ID at all school levels and it is discussed and used districtwide to plan, analyze, and improve instruction. [[10]](#footnote-10)



3. Our ID is a multi-tiered interactive tool. By clicking on a component, Attleboro educators can obtain layers of information such as purpose, definition, exemplars, lesson examples, and resources for each component that help them to understand and apply it.

a. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a key component of Our ID that highlights the integration of strategies to create safe and supportive learning and emotional environments in classrooms for all students.

4. The superintendent emphasized that the district had high expectations for instruction and the district continually tried to clarify what effective instruction looked like.

* 1. Leaders and teachers identified expectations for high-quality teaching with clarity and purpose. Their comments are aligned well with evidence about how students learn best.
     1. School leaders look for instruction that is standards based and engages students. Their vision of effective lessons includes structured, project-based cooperative learning in which students understand the rationale for what they are doing and its relevance and connection to the real world. Teachers are expected to check for understanding throughout lessons.
     2. District and school leaders told the team that instruction should address social-emotional as well as academic learning in order to support all students’ needs. In addition, the learning environment should be safe to enable students to take academic risks and make mistakes.
     3. Teachers noted the importance of meaningful and challenging lessons that engaged students and provided support for students with social-emotional challenges. Teachers also cited rigor and relevance as key characteristics of effective teaching, adding that students should feel “comfortably uncomfortable” when they were challenged.
     4. Teachers also noted the importance of employing differentiated instruction and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies to help students overcome barriers to learning by providing sensory and visual supports, graphic organizers, and peer teaching.
     5. Both elementary and high-school teachers noted that rigor was important and could be different for every student. They said that teachers need to know their students well and use their skills to push and challenge them.
  2. The district’s expectations of high-quality teaching also value “meaningful learning” and defines success as more than attaining high scores on specific measures, such as the MCAS assessment.
     1. District leaders articulated a philosophy of learning that integrated curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
        1. From the district’s perspective, the MCAS tests are an important accountability tool to track and ensure student success, but not the only tool. Teaching and learning should also provide students with opportunities to demonstrate understanding by using and applying what they have learned. This is realized through using the Understanding by Design (UBD) framework for lesson design and performance assessments.
        2. A district leader said that there was more than one way to assess learning. While the MCAS tests measure proficiency in standards, performance assessments offer another way to understand how well students have gained knowledge, skills, and understandings.
     2. District and school leaders stated that the district’s association with the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Educational Assessment (MCIEA) has expanded instructional practices to make them more inclusive with an emphasis on measuring student understanding, relevance, and engagement using project-based learning and performance assessments.
        1. For example, the district is piloting *Illustrative Math* in grades 6–8 and in high-school algebra I and geometry classes. This is an evidence-based approach to teaching mathematics that focuses on developing students’ mathematical thinking and understanding through collaborative problem solving, using real-world applications.
           1. As an illustration, the team reviewed a geometry unit on transformations that required students to demonstrate understanding of the mathematical properties of transformations found in designs in everyday life, in addition to describing them geometrically or by coordinates.
        2. Team members also reviewed several units of study that accentuated engagement and relevance in teaching.
     3. In a grade 9 ELA unit, students learn how responsibility to self, society, and humanity made an impact on one’s actions.
     4. In a grade 1 ELA and social studies unit entitled “Animals, Tame and Wild,” students write a book to explain a pet’s need for shelter, food, and care. In a culminating activity, they bring a representation of a pet, such as stuffed animal, toy, photo, or drawing to the classroom for a pet expo that includes an oral presentation.

**Impact**: By clearly aligning expectations for effective teaching with evidence about how students learn best, the district can provide students more understandable, useful, and memorable learning experiences. By engaging students in relevant and challenging cooperative learning, the district can better ensure students’ understanding and success in school. Through the use of performance assessments, the district can learn how well students have understood and can apply newly gained knowledge and skills. This likely prepares them well for college, the world of work, and careers after high school.

**2. The district has established several inclusive strategies and distributed leadership roles to monitor, strengthen, and expand the quality of teaching and learning districtwide.**

1. District leaders described how the superintendent and the assistant superintendent conducted learning walks with principals in approximately one-third of the schools every three weeks. [[11]](#footnote-11)

Principals said that they set the agenda for learning walks by identifying a teaching focus or other topic of concern. They accompany the superintendent or the assistant superintendent on the walk and debrief together afterward.

Recent learning walks have addressed school improvement goals, special education instruction (with the participation of the director of special education), career and technical education, questioning techniques, and mathematics instruction.

Principals stated that they valued this uninterrupted, one-on-one time with the superintendent or the assistant superintendent when conducting learning walks.

1. District and school leaders engage in multiple collaborative interactions to reflect on teaching and learning and identify topics to address for instructional improvement.

District and school leaders noted that meetings focusing on teaching and learning took place regularly throughout the district, including the summer leadership academy, monthly meetings of the superintendent and principals, and weekly meetings that include the assistant superintendent, districtwide humanities and STEM coordinators, and assistant principals.

Principals reported that discussions at the 2019 summer academy focused on inclusive practices, new rubrics for performance assessments, collaboration, and social bias.

1. Several leaders work with teachers to support instructional improvements.

At the elementary schools, coaches lead and principals attend grade-level meetings with teachers during common planning time (CPT) held twice monthly. Topics of discussion include using data to guide instructional decisions, discussing student work using the School Reform Institute protocol, and identifying strategies for improvement.

CPT action agenda topics reviewed by the team included “Identify a standard students struggled with to target intensified instruction,” “Discuss math assessments for purpose and success criteria,” “Discuss Our ID,” “The *Be Heard* initiative,” and “The MCAS tests results.”

Middle-school principals lead grade-level team meetings during CPT every other week. There are no coaches for grades 5–8, because of budget reductions in the 2015–2016 school year. Meeting attendees stated that the topics focused on meeting students’ needs, content, best practices, and instructional strategies to improve teaching.

High-school interviewees stated that without scheduled CPT by department school, teacher collaboration took place only informally among teachers who shared the same students or courses. For example, teachers who work with at-risk students convene to address instructional or student-centered issues.

High school department heads set the agenda for instructional improvement at department meetings. They also work with teachers to improve teaching, analyze data, and “spearhead” interventions by identifying struggling students in need of extra help.

Kindergarten through grade 12 coordinators, one for Humanities subjects (ELA/English, history and social studies) and one for STEM subjects (sciences, technology, engineering. and math), communicate with principals, assistant principals and teachers to support effective instruction. For example, in 2019–2020, coordinators are supporting the development of rubrics to guide the use of performance assessments.

1. Instructional coaches also support teachers in improving teaching and the curriculum.

At the elementary schools, instructional coaches lead grade level teacher teams during twice monthly CPT and in staff meetings, and occasionally meet with individual teachers to provide support.

a. Elementary instructional coaches conduct model lessons and help teachers learn to analyze data and review student work. Coaches also help teachers understand the standards and develop strategies to use with struggling students, especially English learners and students with disabilities.

Since there are no longer instructional coaches at the middle-school level, middle-school principals are responsible for guiding teachers in instructional improvement and leading grade-level meetings.

**Impact**: With multiple roles for supporting and monitoring instruction, the district has a variety of opportunities to promote instructional improvement and improve learning. In addition, there are numerous structures at the district and school levels to communicate and support implementation of new initiatives to improve instruction. Overall, students benefit the most when a district continually and thoughtfully addresses instructional improvement.

1. **District and school leaders are in the elementary stages of introducing more culturally responsive practices to enhance equity, access, and inclusiveness in curriculum and instruction.**
2. As a precursor to priority setting for its forthcoming strategic plan, the district administered a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Survey to all stakeholders including staff, students, and families in the fall of 2019. The survey assessed perceptions of diversity, equity, and inclusion districtwide on topics such as access to resources, programming, inclusivity, school climate, and communication.

The survey results, published in November 2019, provide insights on stakeholders’ perceptions and can help inform the new strategic plan.

Stakeholders’ awareness and support were relatively high in most categories; however, there were a few discrepancies that could focus planning on ensuring more supportive, accessible, and respectful practices to support all students, whatever their backgrounds, academic needs, and social-emotional needs.

1. District and school leaders described how they have begun to initiate more culturally responsive practices to improve teaching, learning, and the curriculum.

In 2019–2020, leadership professional development (PD) focuses on strengthening practices that ensure greater equity and opportunities for all students to learn.

1. During the 2018 and 2019 summer leadership academies, the district leadership team participated in leadership trainings on cultural diversity, equity and inclusion, facilitated by a consultant. This was a precursor to involving all staff in similar PD programs in the 2020–2021 school year.

a. Examples of topics addressed include challenging bias and prejudice, speaking your truth, sharing racial experiences, and strategies to use in unpacking racial dilemmas.

1. In 2019–2020, the leadership team is conducting a book study of *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*. They also plan to use the book for staff PD in the 2020–2021 school year.
2. High-school leaders and teachers described Attleboro’s Be Heard Community Engagement Coalition for Education, which is supported by Great Schools Partnership and Everyday Democracy. Stakeholders expressed the view that this coalition has helped to create a more culturally focused staff and student body.
   1. *Be Heard* has also helped identify the need for more family and community engagement personnel to support families.
   2. One recent *Be Heard* activity focused on conducting a school climate survey to better understand students’ social, cultural, and instructional needs in order to support a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse culture at school.

5. Coordinators, coaches, and department heads said that during the 2018–2019 school year, teachers of English, social studies, and humanities electives reviewed curricula for bias and adapted the curriculum and lessons to better reflect the diversity of the student body.

a. For example, teachers told the team that they were working to be more sensitive to students’ cultural backgrounds by including more relatable literature, especially for students of color, Khmer students, and students whose first language is Arabic.

b. In an outline of high-school English curriculum units, the review team found literature that explored Hispanic, African, African-American, Native-American, and Asian lives. For example, the units included *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee*, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, and *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.

**C.** To support first-generation college-bound students, the district initiated the Attleboro College Readiness Expedition (ACRE) in the 2018–2019 school year to help first-generation college students gain study skills and prepare for success in college.

There were two ACRE cohorts at the time of the review in December 2019: one each for grades 9 and 10.

The expectation is for ACRE students to enroll in dual-enrollment courses at Bristol Community College by grade 11, just as other Attleboro High School students do.

A faculty ACRE team increases students’ study skills during the school day.

**Impact**: Introducing culturally diverse and relevant practices and topics in teaching, learning, and the curriculum can ensure a more inclusive, respectful, and informed school community. When educators consider and implement ways to eliminate barriers to students’ success in school, including race, language, physical, and social-emotional barriers, students likely are better prepared to succeed and participate in a more diverse, global society and workforce.

* + 1. **In most observed classes, students assumed responsibility for learning and were engaged in the lesson activities. In a majority of observed lessons, teachers demonstrated fluency in explaining lesson content and putting it into a larger context. Students often engaged with meaningful real-world tasks in classroom settings that were conducive to teaching and learning.**

1. The review team observed sufficient and compelling evidence that students assumed responsibility to learn and were engaged in the lesson in 75 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 70 percent of middle-school classrooms, and 77 percent of high-school classrooms (characteristic #5).

In a grade 4 ELA lesson, students were observed to be animated and highly engaged while researching, drawing, and writing about a chosen animal and its habitat as they prepared to write and assemble a “tunnel book.”

In multiple elementary, middle, and high-school classrooms observed by the review team in various content areas, students easily collaborated in small groups and/or worked well independently on productive and engaging lesson activities.

In a high-school biology lab, students were particularly enthusiastic as they competed and shared results in a lab activity on the polarity of water. The teacher provided numerous easy to understand examples that were connected to students’ own lives.

1. Observers noted sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers demonstrated knowledge of the subject matter by fluently explaining lesson content, often in multiple ways that were easy for students to understand, in 63 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 83 percent of observed middle-school classrooms, and in 73 percent of observed high-school classrooms (characteristic #1).

In a mixed-grade ELA lesson at the Network Alternative High School, a teacher provided each student individually with a detailed clarification and explanation of a misconception about writing an introduction to a paragraph.

An observer noted that a teacher in a high-school science lesson clearly explained how evidence was collected and why; then the teacher demonstrated evidence collecting steps before the students went outdoors to do the same.

1. Review team members observed sufficient and compelling evidence that students had either some or consistent opportunities to engage meaningfully with tasks that connected to their lives or with the larger world in 61 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 73 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in 66 percent of high-school classrooms (characteristic # 8).

In an observed grade 10 English lesson, students spent 20 minutes reading a text they had chosen. After completing the reading, they wrote a description of the context of what they had read. Finally, they selected a quote from the text and explained why it was important to them in personal, reflective, and relevant terms.

Review team members noted a contrast in teaching techniques in two grade 2 classes studying a unit on landforms. In an effective lesson, the teacher had students crumple up pieces of paper to create a topographical model in which they could describe hills, valleys, plains, and peaks. After marking the peaks and ridges with markers, the students sprayed water on the models and observed how the water flowed to make rivers and pools. In contrast, in the other lesson, the teacher read aloud from a book on volcanoes for about 10 minutes while the students sat, listened, and looked at the pictures.

1. Observers found sufficient and compelling evidence that classroom rituals, routines, and responses generally or consistently limited disruptions. Teachers positively redirected misbehaving students to refocus them on learning in 89 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 73 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in 81 percent of high-school classrooms (characteristic #11).

1. Although there were several disruptions to an observed high-school English classroom, the teacher respectfully redirected the students to more productive learning.

**E.** In addition, there was sufficient and compelling evidence of a classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning in 86 percent of observed elementary classrooms, in 78 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in 69 percent of high-school classrooms (characteristic #12).

A grade 3 mathematics lesson on division exemplified a classroom conducive to learning. The teacher called on four students to repeat the answer to a problem, reinforced their learning by asking them to explain their thinking, then asked all of the students to recall the strategy the class had used on the previous day.

**Impact**: When teachers provide clear and purposeful lesson objectives; students take responsibility for their work and engage in lesson activities; lesson activities and topics relate to the real world; and classroom climate and culture ensure positive environments conducive to effective learning, classroom instruction can promote students’ dispositions to learn and stimulate stronger learning outcomes and understanding.

***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

**5. The district does not use a comprehensive, systematic, regular process to review and revise the content area curriculum in kindergarten through grade 12.**

**A.** The district conducts curriculum reviews on a limited basis as a consequence of the lingering effects of major reductions in the 2015–2016 budget.

1. District leaders said that limited funding since the 2015–2016 school year has prevented the district from conducting systematic kindergarten through grade 12 curricular reviews of each content area and from purchasing new curricular materials and program resources so that all content areas are eventually reviewed and renewed in rotation over a period of years.

A district leader noted that the cost of new material resources and the needed professional development to implement new programs were unaffordable and prevented large-scale changes to the curriculum on a regular cycle.

Curriculum committees for each content area review the curriculum on an informal and ongoing basis in order to assess what is working well, track students’ progress in meeting standards, and refine curriculum units and lessons.

**B.** Educator teams conduct a more in-depth curricular review of a segment of a content area when the district allocates funds to purchase a new academic program or text. The district plans to review the kindergarten through grade 6 ELA program in 2019–2020.

1. The timeline for the 2019–2020 ELA review shows a thoughtful, multi-year, inclusive process to research, pilot, purchase, and phase in a new kindergarten through grade 6 literacy program.

Forty-four teachers are in groups that are piloting three elementary ELA programs in 2019–2020. The district plans to select a new program later in the year using earmarked funding. This will be followed by a two-year adoption and implementation phase beginning in 2020–2021.

Two other pilots requiring fewer resources also address segments of the curriculum:

A pilot to implement *Illustrative Math* is underway in grades 6–8, and algebra I and geometry classes are using an on-line mathematics workbook that emphasizes relevant and real-world problems at the high school. The high-school pilot is a useful fit for the district which is gradually moving to a one-to-one Chromebook model.

There is also a pilot for a civics course at grade 8 at the middle-school level and at the high school. The pilots are using *iCivics* open-source materials which teachers are putting into *Understanding by Design* (UbD) units.

**C.** Coordinators, coaches, department heads, and teachers said that the district needed a curriculum review cycle, since most ongoing curriculum work has focused mainly on ensuring alignment with standards, including relevant real-world examples in units and lessons, and project-based learning to engage students.

**Impact**: By not taking a broader and more comprehensive look at the kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum sequentially by subject, over time, the district has missed opportunities to monitor progress and develop or adopt academic curricula that provide the most updated, appropriate, and meaningful learning experiences districtwide that meet the learning needs of all students.

**6. The district has not taken sufficient steps to ensure that all high-school students are prepared for, enroll in, and succeed in advanced and challenging coursework, especially those from historically marginalized groups.**

1. District and school leaders, teachers, and parents expressed awareness that the district’s demographics were changing over time and that more effective and equitable access and inclusion in high-quality teaching and learning experiences were essential to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

1. According to DESE data, between 2016 and 2020, the enrollment of White students declined by 3.7 percent (from 70.6 percent to 66.9 percent), while the enrollment of English learners decreased by 1 percent (from 6.4 percent to 5.4 percent). The enrollment of African American/Black students increased by 1.6 percent (from 4.9 percent to 6.5 percent) and the enrollment of Hispanic or Latino students increased by 1.9 percent (from 13.6 percent to 15.5 percent). In addition, the enrollment of economically disadvantaged students increased by 4.4 percent (from 26.0 percent to 30.4 percent). The enrollment of students with disabilities was fairly constant; it hovered around 17 percent.

1. In 2019–2020, the percentage enrollment of high-school students representing historically marginalized groups in honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses is disproportionate to their percentage enrollment in the high-school student population. See Table 31, below.

**Table 31: Attleboro High School**

**Percentage of Enrollment for Selected Student Groups,**

**Compared with Percentage of Enrollment for Selected Student Groups in Higher-Level Academic Courses,**

**2019–2020**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Percentage of High-School Enrollment** | **Percentage of Enrollment in AP Classes** | **Percentage of Enrollment in Honors Classes** |
| **Females** | 46.5 | 59.1 | 56.7 |
| **Males** | 53.5 | 40.9 | 43.2 |
| **Economically disadvantaged** | 38.0 | 18.8 | 24.1 |
| **EL** | 3.7 | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| **Students with disabilities** | 15.6 | 1.4 | 2.2 |
| **African-American/Black** | 6.2 | 3.7 | 4.2 |
| **Asian** | 4.5 | 5.1 | 4.5 |
| **Hispanic or Latino** | 16.5 | 10.0 | 12.7 |
| **White** | 68.3 | 76.1 | 73.2 |

Data source: Attleboro Public Schools

1. As shown in Table 31, district male students, economically disadvantaged students, English learners (ELs) , students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students are underrepresented in AP and honors courses, compared with their representation in the total high-school enrollment.

a. While male students constitute 53.5 percent of the high-school enrollment, males represent 40.9 percent of all AP students and 43.2 percent of all honors students.

b. While economically disadvantaged students constitute 38.0 percent of the high-school enrollment, they make up 18.8 percent of all AP students and 24.0 percent of all honors students.

c. While ELs constitute 4.0 percent of high-school enrollment, no ELS were enrolled in AP courses.

d. While students with disabilities represent 16.0 percent of high-school enrollment, they make up 1.4 percent of all AP students and 2.2 percent of all honors students.

e. While Hispanic/Latino students make up 16.5 percent of high-school enrollment, they represent 10.0 percent of all AP students and 12.7 percent of all honors students.

**C**. While the high school has removed some prerequisites for advanced courses and permits students to select any course at any level, enrollment of students from certain student groups remains low.

1. For several groups in the district---including economically disadvantaged students, English learners, students with disabilities, and Hispanic/Latino students---the percentage of students completing advanced coursework declined from 2018 to 2019 and was well below the average for all students.

a. In 2019, 61.5 percent of all students completed advanced coursework. Percentages for the groups noted above were as follows: economically disadvantaged students: 39.7 percent; English learners: 16.7 percent; students with disabilities: 16.0 percent; and Hispanic/Latino students: 47.6 percent.

**D**. The review team found through a review of district data that students from historically marginalized groups enrolled in electives such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), art, computer, music and world languages approximately in proportion to their percentage of the total population. However, the percentage enrollment of female students in computer related courses is half the percentage enrollment of female students (31 percent female in comparison with 69 percent male).

**Impact**: By not ensuring that all students, especially historically marginalized student groups, have equitable access to challenging learning experiences and high-level coursework, the district is taking insufficient action to close opportunity and achievement gaps and prepare all students well for college, career, the work of work, and life after high-school graduation. In addition, when female students are under-represented in computer course work, they may have limited access to higher education programs and careers that are among the most expanding in the U. S. economy.

**7. The district is not sufficiently meeting the academic needs of male students. District data show that male students are underperforming female students on a number of academic indicators and other demographics.**

**A.** The table below compares the results for male and female students on the 2019 ELA MCAS test at each grade level subject to testing. According to the table, male students have lower rates of Meeting or Exceeding Expectations than female students, and higher rates of Not Meeting Expectations than female students.

1. DESE data also shows that 263 of all Attleboro students in grades 3-8 did not meet expectations on the ELA MCAS test. Seventy-five percent of these students were male and twenty-five percent were female.

**Table 32: Attleboro Public Schools 2019 ELA MCAS Test Results**

**Comparative Percentage Rates for Male and Female Students by Grade Level for**

**Meeting or Exceeding Expectations, Not Meeting Expectations, and Partially Meeting Expectations**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade Level** | **Percentage Meeting or Exceeding Expectations** | | **Percentage Not Meeting**  **Expectations** | | **Percentage Partially Meeting Expectations** | |
|  | **Males** | **Females** | **Males** | **Females** | **Males** | **Females** |
| **Grade 3** | 55 | 60 | 14 | 2 | 32 | 38 |
| **Grade 4** | 54 | 70 | 11 | 3 | 35 | 27 |
| **Grade 5** | 45 | 59 | 8 | 4 | 48 | 37 |
| **Grade 6** | 37 | 53 | 16 | 7 | 47 | 41 |
| **Grade 7** | 44 | 59 | 17 | 8 | 40 | 32 |
| **Grade 8** | 39 | 67 | 16 | 7 | 44 | 25 |
| **Grade 10** | 45 | 61 | 15 | 6 | 40 | 33 |
| **All Students Grades 3–8** | 46 | 61 | 14 | 5 | 41 | 34 |

Sources: DESE Data Warehouse, Attleboro Public Schools 2019 MCAS Assessment Results

**B.** Based on data from DESE’s data warehouse, other academic indicators also demonstrate that male students trail female students in performance and in attainment of milestones. Male students in Attleboro overall have:

1. *Higher in grade retention rate*: In the 2018–2019 school year, male students constituted 68 percent of the 47 students retained in grade.

2. *Lower rates of passing all grade 9 courses*: In the 2018–2019 school year, 78 percent of grade 9 male students passed all courses, compared with 89 percent of grade 9 female students.

3. *Lower enrollment rates in advanced courses:* In 2019–2020, according to district data, of all students who took honors courses, 43.2 were male compared with 56.7 percent who were female. In addition, of all students who enrolled in AP courses, 40.9 percent were male, compared with 59.1 percent who were female.

4. *A higher percentage of male students complete MassCore requirements:* Inan exception to the trend described above, in the 2018-­2019 school year, 81.9 percent of MassCore completers were male as compared with 76.7 percent female.

**C.** According to DESE data, the suspension and dropout rates are higher and the graduation and college enrollment rates are lower for male students than female students as described below.

1. Higher *In-school and out-of-school suspension rates*: In the 2017–2018 school year, male students constituted 88 percent of the 161 students suspended in-school and 76 percent of the 251 students suspended out-of-school.

2. *Higher dropout rates*: In the 2018–2019 school year, 14 of the 21 dropouts were male.

3. *Lower graduation rates*: Of the 432 students who graduated from Attleboro High School in 2018 (the latest available data), 92 percent were female and 89 percent were male. However, in the class of 2018, 7.1 percent of males were still in school, while 3.8 percent of females were still in school. In the class of 2018, 4.0 percent of male students dropped out as compared with 2.4 percent of female students.

4. *Lower rates of high-school graduates enrolling in college*: In the class of 2018, (the latest available data), 54 percent of male students enrolled in college as compared with 71 percent of female students.

**Impact:** The discrepancies between male and female students’ achievement on key academic and non-academic measures indicate that the district has not managed to address the academic and behavioral needs of its male students to a level that would ensure higher rates of successful performance at school. Both male and female students who do not have successful school experiences and preparation have limited opportunities, at least initially, in their choices after high-school graduation.

* + 1. **In observed classes, instruction did not consistently challenge students with tasks that promote rigorous, higher-order thinking; students did not often communicate their ideas and thinking with each other; and lesson design did not consistently support and challenge students with varied learning needs.**

1. Although educators mentioned rigor as a key characteristic of effective teaching, observers saw sufficient and compelling evidence that students engaged in tasks requiring higher-order thinking such as analysis, synthesis, problem-solving, and application of new knowledge in only 45 percent of observed elementary classes, in 65 percent of middle-school classes, and in 58 percent of high-school classes (characteristic #6).

In a middle-school ELA lesson on argument, the teacher opened the class with a provocative question, “Can you use the same fact to argue both sides?” Then, after discussing the fact of the day, (i.e. the average life span increased from 47 to 74 since 1900) the students engaged in a lively analytical discussion about why people died younger 100 years ago, often because of wars, absence of medicine, among other causes.

2. In a number of observed elementary classes where the teacher was working with a small group on reading or mathematics, the rest of the class was occupied with activities that were unfocused and often unchallenging, such as reading silently to self, completing simple worksheets that kept them busy but did not stretch their thinking, or playing an easy word game with another student.

3. In a high-school English class discussing a film, the teacher was animated and spirited, but the lesson appeared disjointed and was missing challenging substance. Students were asked to write down three words with the word “auto” in them. The students were often observed to be off track and talking, likely because of the low cognitive demand.

1. Team members found sufficient and compelling evidence that students authentically communicated their ideas and thinking with each other in 49 percent of elementary classes, in 60 percent of middle-school classes, and in 54 percent of high-school classes (characteristic #7).

In a geometry class on congruent triangles, students collaborated on a worksheet to solve problems in thoughtful ways. The teacher asked them to explain what was the same and what changed; what they wondered about; whether they could make predictions, draw conclusions, and explain whether angles could be both similar and congruent, and why.

2. In contrast, there were missed opportunities for communication and shared thinking in a high-school geometry class where students sat in rows and found angles on a worksheet by following along as the teacher modeled how to do it.

**C.** Lesson design did not consistently support or challenge students with diverse learning needs such as linguistic background, disability, or academic giftedness. Review team members found sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher ensured that students were engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs in 53 percent of observed elementary classes, in 43 percent of middle-school classes, and in 43 percent of high-school classes (characteristic #9).

The teacher of a high-school English class containing a number of students with disabilities conducted a lesson in which students applied what they had learned about transitions and time in the graphic novel they were studying. The teacher used projected images from the novel and provided his own example to demonstrate his expectations for students’ work. The students continued by generating their own examples using Google Docs™ on their Chromebooks.

2. In contrast, in an elementary ELL class, the teacher did almost all the speaking while students mostly listened. Students followed directions to color, cut out, and paste paper Christmas ornaments into a book using adverbs of place. Students barely spoke, did not read, did not repeat or apply the lesson vocabulary, and did not write. The classroom was devoid of displays of language and literacy, such as word walls and English labels on classroom objects.

**Impact:** Without consistently challenging students with rigorous learning experiences and tasks that help develop their higher-order thinking skills, the district cannot ensure that all students can meet high expectations. At the same time, by not ensuring that students engage in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs, the district does not provide students the support they need to be consistently successful in their lessons. In addition, students are limited in learning and applying what they know if they do not consistently communicate their ideas and thinking with each other.

* + 1. **In observed classes, teachers did not consistently set and explain clear objectives and their importance for learning, particularly at the elementary and high-school levels. Learning activities were often not well-aligned with both lesson content and students’ cognitive demands. In high-school classes in particular, teachers did not regularly conduct checks for students’ understanding and adjust practice based on what students knew, could do, or understood, and provide consistent, relevant feedback to help students improve.**

Review team members found sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers ensured that students understood the lesson’s objective(s) and why they were important in 59 percent of observed elementary classes, in 74 percent of middle-school classes, and in 65 percent of high-school classes (characteristic #2).

Students in a grade 4 ELA class were clear about what they would learn. The teacher gave them a graphic organizer that detailed the format and characteristics of clear narrative writing and the class spent time reviewing and commenting on an example.

1. In a middle-school science lesson on climate the lesson objective, “describe the factors affecting climate and draw your own continent and explain its climate,” was posted. Students worked in small groups creating questions about their continent’s climate.
2. In contrast, in a high-school social studies lesson on propaganda, the teacher explained the lesson task/activity in terms of process, but did not explore what the students would learn and why it was important.

**B.** In observed classes, there was sufficient and compelling evidence that the teacher used appropriate classroom activities well-matched to the learning objectives in both content and cognitive demand in 63 percent of elementary classes, in 78 percent of middle-school classes, and in 65 percent of high- school classes (characteristic #3).

1. In a high-school math class, an observer noted that the lesson included individual, small-group, and large-group activities.

2. In a grade 2 ELA class where students had read *The Three Little Pigs*, the students spent much time cutting out pictures of the pigs and gluing them to re-tell the story, which was so familiar that the lesson appeared to be more about arts and crafts than improving reading comprehension.

3. In a grade 3 mathematics class, an observer noted that the students worked on a worksheet that had a low cognitive demand and while some students used computers, they were “wandering among applications” with little purpose or focus.

**C**. Review team members noted sufficient and compelling evidence that teachers frequently checked for student understanding, adjusted teaching, and provided consistent and relevant feedback to students in 70 percent of elementary classrooms, in 79 percent of middle-school classrooms, and in 54 percent of high-school classrooms (characteristic #4).

1. In a positive example, in a high-school career and technical education (CTE) class, the teacher circulated among groups constantly, probing students’ understanding and offering clarification.

2. In a high-school physics lesson in which the teacher had been answering the questions, students said that they did not “get it.” The teacher responded, “Yes, you do, we just did it...focus on how to do well on the quiz.”

3. In observed high-school classes, teachers often called only on students who volunteered to respond, rather than using strategies that would involve opportunities to check for understanding among other individuals or groups of students.

**Impact**: When learning objectives are not well-defined and clearly articulated, students may have difficulty understanding the purpose of the lesson, focusing their efforts in class, and taking ownership of their work. In addition, without appropriately matching lesson activities to learning objectives in both content and students’ cognitive needs, the teacher may not maximize individual and groups of students’ attempts to master standards. Finally, checking for understanding only with students who raise their hand, or not providing feedback or adjusting instruction, limits students’ progress in gaining the required knowledge, skills, and understandings.

***Recommendations***

**1. The district should develop and implement an ongoing process for reviewing and revising curricula in all content areas in kindergarten through grade 12.**

1. In collaboration with the Leadership Advisory Board (LAB) and its relevant councils, the district should develop a process for the regular review and revision of curricula.
2. District leaders should develop and implement a formal cyclical planning process, to review and revise curricula.
3. As part of the planning process, the district should consider specifying the roles that central office staff, principals, and school-based staff will perform.

a. The district’s strategy of using curriculum teams with teacher representation from all grade levels can provide an inclusive group of educators to participate in thorough and transparent reviews.

**Benefits:** By conducting regular reviews and revisions of the curricula for the core content areas the district will enhance its ability to provide high-quality, challenging, current and useful learning experiences for students. In addition, Attleboro’s leaders and teachers will remain up to date in their academic fields and be able to sustain high expectations for teaching and learning. Finally, all teaching materials and instruction will better meet the learning needs of all students.

**Recommended resources:**

* + - DESE’s Instructional Materials and Professional Development page [(http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/)) provides resources for improving and collaborating on curriculum, including quick reference guides and maps designed to facilitate cross-district communication about curriculum.
    - Quick Reference Guide: Aligning Curriculum to Massachusetts Standards (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/>) is designed to support teachers, coaches, administrators, and curriculum developers in the work of considering the ways in which curricular materials may diverge from the Massachusetts standards.
    - Quick Reference Guide: Assessing Your Curriculum Landscape (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/>) is designed to support districts assess their curriculum landscape by asking three questions: (1) Do teachers have ready access to high-quality, standards-aligned curricular materials? (2) Do sustained and collaborative professional learning structures empower teachers to use those materials in ways responsive to their students’ needs? (3) Are curriculum review processes regular, rigorous, and responsive to stakeholder input and needs?
* DESE’s Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>) provides information about the 2017 ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Frameworks, including grade-by-grade comparisons between the 210 and 2017 Frameworks and a slide deck supporting implementation of the 2017 Frameworks.
  + - *Mathematics Framework Exploration Activities* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/>) are a growing set of activities designed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mathematics staff and educators. The activities can be accessed and used to promote discussion and collaborative inquiry.
    - The Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Framework web page (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/>) provides links to the current frameworks and supporting documents, including updated strand maps, crosswalks, and other guidance materials.
* *Quick Reference Guide: Establishing an Effective Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Program* ([http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/STEprogram.docx](https://mail.doe.mass.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=dwIEOlS9GSTHXNe4UkNghewicANuIyVzsQ_YV3vIFzSXCqKt6NjUCA..&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.doe.mass.edu%2fstem%2fste%2fSTEprogram.docx)): ESE has identified five components districts should attend to when designing a rigorous, coherent and relevant pre-K-12 STE education program. Educators, administrators and curriculum designers can refer to this guide for brief descriptions and resources for each component.
* *DESE’s STE Quality Review Rubric* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/>) is designed to help educators determine the quality, rigor, and alignment of lessons and units to the 2016 MA STE Curriculum Framework.
  + - EdReports.org (<http://www.edreports.org/>) provides free, independent reviews of K-12 education materials. The reviews focus on alignment to college and career ready standards and other indicators of high quality as recommended by educators.

**2. The district should ensure that all students are prepared for and have equitable access to a range of rigorous academic coursework as well as courses that are aligned with and can develop students’ interests, talents, and ambitions.**

**A.**  Key to preparing students for success in challenging, high-level courses at the high-school level is rigorous, high-quality preparation in kindergarten through grade 8.

Toward this goal, the district should ensure that the rigor and comprehensive knowledge, skills, and understandings reflected in the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks are fully and effectively implemented at all grade levels.

The district should continue to use the analysis from its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey to help develop priorities related to equity and access to address in its new strategic plan.

**B.** The district should also conduct a self-evaluation or equity audit to better understand the root causes of the district’s opportunity and achievement gaps for specific groups of students. The components can include an analysis of disaggregated student performance data and curricular reviews for bias.

**C**. The district should continue to develop its advisory program for students to ensure that all groups provide equally strong mentoring and role modeling for high-school students.

**D.** The district should plan and implement professional development offerings related to equity and diversity, including continuing its book study approach, to create schools that are free of bias, prejudice, and discrimination.

**E.** The district should consider how to reduce gender-based opportunity and achievement gaps.

1. The district might hold a student summit to share patterns of opportunity and achievement in school by gender (with sensitivity to being judgmental). Small groups can discuss the strengths and challenges males face in school as well as those for females. This should lead to identifying strategies to address male students’ motivation and lower achievement in ELA and English classes as well as female students’ participation, skills, and knowledge in STEM and computer courses.

2. There is considerable educational evidence on how best to educate males. By accessing this evidence, the district can focus study groups of teachers and leaders in order to yield additional useful and already proven strategies.

3. The district should require algebra I in grade 8, unless there are extenuating circumstances for specific students. There is evidence to suggest that access to higher-level mathematics and science courses rely on success in algebra I before grade 9.

**Benefits:** By implementing a self-evaluation or an equity audit, the district will likely create a more equitable school community. These activities can also help the district better understand its challenges and identify best practices and the resources needed to meet all students’ learning and developmental needs, including those of the district’s male and female students, without prejudice and without barriers.

**Recommended resources:**

* + - “A Leak in the STEM Pipeline: Taking Algebra I Early,” November 2018, U. S. Department of Education white paper (<https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/stem/algebra/index.html>) discusses U.S. trends and the benefits of early access to algebra as key to success in STEM subjects in high school and beyond.
    - DESE’s Curriculum Review and Institutional Self-Evaluation Training Toolkit (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/psm/resources/traininig-toolkit.pptx> ) provides useful guides and suggestions for district to prepare leadership staff for discussions about race and equity. The toolkit makes suggestions for curriculum review implementation strategies to address implicit and explicit bias in curriculum and instruction and also offers suggested strategies for institutional self-evaluation.
    - An article in the September 2013 issue of *The Atlantic*, “How to Make School Better for Boys,” by Christine Hoff Sommers (<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/09/how-to-make-school-better-for-boys/279635/>) provides thoughtful insights and useful examples (including one from Blackstone Valley Regional Technical School in Upton, Massachusetts) for how schools can more successfully prepare boys for better achievement and engagement in school.

**3. The district should continue to actively engage in and support improvements to teaching to ensure that all teachers provide high-quality instruction that challenges and supports all students.**

**A.** The district should consider ways of scheduling regular common planning time for high-school teachers such as by modifying the hours of the school day, or composing mixed discipline teacher groups that collaborate on resolving the school’s common instructional topics and themes and share ideas and resolutions with their departments.

1. The district should ensure that there is content expertise at the middle schools.

Currently, there is no one responsible for the details of curriculum, instruction, and assessment for grades 5–8, other than the districtwide coordinators for humanities and STEM subjects.

1. Teachers should receive appropriate guidance and feedback as they implement the district’s instructional expectations.

1. Professional development should focus on elements of the instructional expectations as applied to the specific curricula that teachers and students work with every day.

2. Principals and other instructional leaders should ensure that teachers have the information and support necessary to meet the district’s expectations for instruction.

3. The district should continue to provide teachers with high-quality feedback[[12]](#footnote-12) that helps them to improve instruction.

**Benefits:** Implementing this recommendation will mean attention to developing teachers’ instructional practices. Teachers will be better equipped to meet the district’s already high expectations. When instruction is challenging and can support all students to learn and grow and the district provides ongoing professional supports for teachers and administrators, the district will have created a stronger learning community and a culture of continuous improvement, resulting in professional growth and increased student achievement.

**Recommended resources:**

* DESE’s *Learning Walkthrough Implementation Guide* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/implementation-guide.docx>) is a resource to support instructional leaders in establishing a *Learning Walkthrough* process in a school or district. It is designed to provide guidance to those working in an established culture of collaboration as well as those who are just beginning to observe classrooms and discuss teaching and learning in a focused and actionable manner. (The link above includes a presentation to introduce Learning Walkthroughs.)
* Appendix 4, *Characteristics of Standards-Based Teaching and Learning: Continuum of Practice* (<http://www.mass.gov/edu/docs/ese/accountability/dart/walkthrough/continuum-practice.pdf>) is a framework that provides a common language or reference point for looking at teaching and learning.
* DESE’s *"What to Look For" Observation Guides* ***(Updated August 2017)*** ( <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/observation/>) describe what observers should expect to see in a classroom at a particular grade level in a specific subject area. This includes the knowledge and skills students should be learning and using (as reflected in state learning standards) and best practices related to classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each subject area. The guides are not designed to replace any evaluation system or tools districts currently use; but are a resource to help classroom observers efficiently identify what teachers and students should be experiencing in specific subjects and grade levels.

Assessment

***Contextual Background***

*Data Collection System*

The district collects student progress and achievement data from a range of assessments. The district K-12 data and accountability coordinator is responsible for creating data reports for district and school leaders including data from MCAS and ACCESS[[13]](#footnote-13) tests, and data from the ASPEN student information database. The assistant superintendent has overall responsibility for assessment. The K–12 data and accountability coordinator maintains the *SchoolCity* data dashboard, which is used by teachers to design formative assessments; publishes a district data and accountability report which encompasses all of the assessments administered in the district; and works in concert with the IT staff responsible for data entry and state reporting.

The district’s formative assessments are locally designed on *SchoolCity* or purchased. The district’s commercial assessments include the Diagnostic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Star Reading Assessment. DIBELS is administered in kindergarten through grade 4 and the Star Reading Assessment in grades 2–8. Common course assessments and common mid-year and end-of-year assessments are administered at the high school. A combination of mathematics unit tests and common assessments are administered at the middle-school level. The district began to introduce performance assessments at all levels in 2014. This initiative evolved from project-based learning in the elementary schools. Since 2016, teachers have received trained in performance assessment through the district’s membership in the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovate Education Assessment (MCEIA). The last cohort of teachers will complete this training in the in 2019–2020.

*Data Use*

Analysis and use of data is inconsistent throughout the district. At the elementary level, one of the two instructional coach positions was eliminated in 2017–2018 in favor of an assistant principal position, leaving the remaining coach with responsibility for both ELA and mathematics. Data analysis takes place during common planning time at the elementary level. The Instructional coaches who led data analysis at the middle schools were eliminated, and middle school principals and assistant principals now lead data analysis at grade-level meetings when they are available. At the high school, department heads lead data analysis.

There are no formal data teams in the district and there has been little professional development training for teachers in data analysis. Although the schools have instructional leadership teams (ILTs), they have limited involvement in data analysis, except in the process of developing their school’s school improvement plan.

The review team found little evidence that district and school leaders and teachers routinely analyzed disaggregated student data to identify students’ strengths and needs and to ensure the progress of all students.

The district produces a range of data, but teachers must use multiple platforms to access it, which acts as a barrier to understanding the data and discourages teachers’ use and analysis of data. Reports from the K–12 data and accountability coordinator are not directly available to teachers.

*Sharing Results*

There is no district protocol for sharing data with students. District leaders stated that high-school students had access to the results of formative and other in-class assessments on the teachers’ online gradebook. They also receive report cards and progress reports. Families receive report cards and progress reports.

***Strength Findings***

**1. The district administers a range of state, locally developed, and commercial formative and summative assessments. The results are analyzed in various ways at the district and school levels.**

**A.** The K–12 data and accountability coordinator disseminates the MCAS tests results and a district analysis to the schools. These results are analyzed further at each school.

1. The superintendent prepares an MCAS report that is reviewed at the subcommittee level of the school committee before a review by the full committee.

2. A review of agendas for common planning time (CPT) meetings at the elementary level showed that an analysis of MCAS tests results was on the October agendas of all elementary schools.

* + 1. At the middle-school level, MCAS tests results and analysis are distributed and discussed at a bi-weekly grade level meeting led by the principal or assistant principal.
    2. District leaders and high-school teachers stated that the MCAS tests results were discussed at high-school department meetings and in meetings with individual teachers.

**B.** The district purchased the Diagnostic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and STAR Reading Assessment to provide formative assessment data at the elementary and middle-school levels.

1. Interviews with teachers and a review of district documents indicated that the DIBELS was administered three times annually in kindergarten through grade 4 and the STAR Reading assessment was administered three times annually in grade 2 through grade 8.

**C.** The district has developed common formative and summative assessments. These assessments are designed to give teachers information to inform instruction, identify students in need of intervention, and guide the composition of instructional groups.

1. A document review indicated that district-developed reading and writing assessments were administered two or three times annually in kindergarten through grade 8.

2. The district uses SchoolCity, a computer-based program, to administer and report the results of formative assessments in ELA and mathematics.

a. The district has been using SchoolCity for five years at all levels, and district leaders reported that it enabled them to identify and analyze trends.

b. The test items are locally developed by teachers, instructional coaches, coordinators, and the K–12 data and accountability coordinator.

3. The district administers common assessments in ELA and common unit tests in mathematics at the elementary and middle-school levels.

4. At the high school, common assessments are administered across sections of a course. Midterms and end-of-year assessments are administered at the discretion of the teacher.

5. Performance assessments in all core subjects are used at all levels.

**D.** The K–12 data and accountability coordinator publishes a data and accountability report in February which lists the assessments administered from kindergarten through grade 12, the purpose of each, and to whom the results are disseminated. This report is provided to school leaders late in the school year; however, teachers do not have access to this document.

The coordinator maintains the ASPEN database and prepares reports for staff from various state and national assessments, such as the MCAS and College Board examinations. The coordinator also produces reports Naviance data.

**Impact**: The range of assessments in the district help provide educators with multiple sources of data and a comprehensive picture of student progress and achievement. The data available to teachers and administrators is actionable and can lead to the redesign of interventions, reallocation of resources and an understanding of whether the curriculum and instruction are challenging and rigorous.

**2. The district is committed to embedding performance assessments in the curriculum and provides training and professional development for teachers on the development and use of these assessments.**

**A.** The district philosophy of assessment has evolved over the five years before the onsite.

1. District leaders expressed the view that the MCAS should not be the definitive measure. Performance-based assessments are another indicator of students’ knowledge and skills. School committee members stated that they did not rely exclusively on the MCAS to assess what students know and are able to do.

2. Performance-based assessments evolved from project-based learning. District leaders stated that they encouraged teachers to incorporate performance assessments in their instruction.

The implementation of performance assessments is consistent with and reinforces the district’s use of universal design for learning (UDL) as an instructional framework.

Review team members observed students working collaboratively in groups to produce a project that demonstrated their understanding of concepts and the content of the unit that they were working on.

District leaders define effective teaching as engaging, project based, and hands-on. Consistent with the UDL guidelines, they emphasize checking for understanding, cooperative learning, and developing communication skills.

**B.** The district is a founding member of the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA). This organization provides performance-assessment training.

1. The consortium was formed in 2016 and the superintendent and the president of the teachers’ association are on the board of governors.
2. MCIEA is training cohorts of Attleboro teachers in “quality” performance assessment. The district is in its fourth cohort training, and all teachers in the district will have been trained upon completion. At the high-school level, MCIEA is providing professional development to help teachers develop rubrics for rating performance assessments to determine whether these assessments are as effective as previous assessments.
3. In kindergarten through grade 8, Attleboro High School is revising grading practices.

**C.** The application of performance assessments was evident across the school district.

1. Staff said that performance assessment took place at all levels.

a. Elementary teachers reported that they began developing performance assessments in 2017–2018.

* + - 1. Middle-school teachers reported that they conducted three performance assessments in ELA annually.
      2. High-school teachers reported that performance assessments were components of most core subjects. These assessments sometimes take the form of a showcase, which may be open to peers, families, and the larger community.

Performance assessments are embedded in the curriculum and included in curriculum maps. For example, the review team observed a performance assessment on seasons related to the grade 8 unit on earth/space science. Students demonstrated understanding by making models of concepts in cooperative groups. These models included a diorama and a paper mâché construct of the earth that rotated.

Performance assessments are widely used in the career and technical education (CTE) program.

**Impact**: The implementation of performance assessments at all levels enables students to demonstrate their knowledge in an authentic and multilayered manner that can give teachers a better understanding of their strengths and needs. The assessment becomes a learning experience that enhances student understanding and provides teachers valid evidence for planning and adjusting instruction.

***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

**3. The district does not have a protocol for analyzing data that is applied consistently in all schools at every level. Staff do not have training in data analysis and access to data is hindered by the variety of data platforms. Under current conditions, it is difficult to construct longitudinal data to determine trends.**

**A.** The analysis of data at the school level is inconsistent. The review team found little evidence of specific and focused data meetings.

1. The K–12 data and accountability coordinator produces an analysis of MCAS tests results that is distributed to administrators. The data coordinator does not analyze local and school assessments. Reports by the data coordinator are not generally available to teachers.
2. Data analysis methods vary by school leader and grade span.

a. Data analysis at the elementary level takes place during common planning time under the leadership of the instructional coach; however, a document review indicated that data analysis was a limited part of CPT agendas. Some elementary teachers told the team that they had regular data meetings to monitor students’ academic and behavioral progress.

b. At the middle-school level, data analysis is led by principals or assistant principals at grade-level meetings, when they are available.

c. High-school teachers said that there were no data teams. Teachers analyze the results of common assessments. Department heads lead the discussion of MCAS results.

1. District leaders told the review team that the district had not provided training in data analysis, including for those tasked with leading staff in analyzing data at the school level.
2. District leaders expressed the need for a standard approach for sharing and analyzing data.

**B.** Data from the various assessments used by the district are stored on different platforms. Teachers and administrators cannot access all student assessment data in one place. Under current conditions, it is impossible to access longitudinal student performance data, except MCAS data.

1. The district data and accountability report lists multiple platforms including SchoolCity, DIBELS, STAR Reading (Renaissance Learning), and ASPEN for locally developed assessments.

**C.** Teachers have limited time to discuss and analyze data. Elementary and middle-school teachers have twice monthly CPT meetings and high school teachers have a monthly department meeting. All formal grade-level and department-level collaboration takes place during these few interactions, except for occasional informal meetings and professional development time.

**Impact**: When teachers and data leaders do not have adequate time and training to review, discuss, and interpret data, the opportunities to make data actionable and use it to inform instructional improvement are limited.

***Recommendation***

**District leaders should increase educators’ capacity to analyze and use data to improve teaching and learning by increasing access to data, training staff in data analysis, and increasing opportunities for teachers at all levels to review and interpret data.**

**A.** The district should attempt to secure a data platform compatible with the separate data sources used in the district to provide a single point of access to all student data, both in the current year and longitudinally.

**B.** The district should provide professional development training for all educators in data analysis, including the analysis of disaggregated student group data.

**C.** The district should provide trained data leaders at all schools to maximize the effectiveness of teachers’ data meetings.

1. The district should make restoring instructional coaches who led data analysis at the elementary and middle school levels a high priority.

**D.** The district should consider adding data analysis to the functions of the instructional leadership team in each school. Instructional leadership teams are composed of teachers from each grade level, and could provide a vertical perspective on the data for a single year and a longitudinal perspective when data from prior years are available.

**E.** The district should review master schedules to create more opportunities for common planning time for teachers dedicated to the analysis and interpretation of data, especially at the high school.

**Benefits:** Educators who have been trained in the analysis and use of data and whose schedule allows adequate common planning time dedicated to data analysis can use data from multiple, quality sources to inform instruction, create effective interventions, and improve student performance and outcomes.

**Recommended resources:**

* + - DESE’s *Assessment Literacy Self-Assessment and Gap Analysis Tool* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/continuum.pdf>) is intended to support districts in understanding where their educators fit overall on a continuum of assessment literacy. After determining where the district as a whole generally falls on the continuum, districts can determine potential next steps.
    - DESE’s *District Data Team Toolkit* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/toolkit/district-data-toolkit.pdf#search=%22Data Team Toolkit%22>) is a set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a District Data Team.

Human Resources and Professional Development

***Contextual Background***

*Infrastructure*

The human resources department was eliminated in 2008 and reorganized in 2016. It is currently staffed by the director of human resources and two human resources specialists. The department maintains a webpage where district employees can access employment opportunities, district and state forms, professional development (PD) offerings, and the district’s Employee Handbook. The director of human resources is responsible for hiring, recruitment, labor relations, and school safety and meets monthly with principals to discuss future staffing needs, projected enrollment trends, and teaching assignments.

*Recruitment, Hiring, and Assignment*

The district’s teacher retention rate has increased considerably from 86 percent in 2017 to nearly 93.8 percent in 2019. Currently, an important human resources department goal is to build a pool of candidates that better reflects the diversity of the student body. Recent recruitment efforts include postings on the district website, School Spring, and Frontline, partnerships with state colleges and universities, and attendance at a variety of educational job fairs.

*Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development*

For the two years before the onsite (2018–2020), the PD committee and the professional growth council worked diligently to improve the quality of PD offerings for Attleboro’s teachers. As a first step, the committee and the council developed and distributed a staff PD interest/needs survey. After analyzing the survey results, the committee and the council developed a comprehensive PD program aligned with the district’s strategic plan, individual school improvement plans, and the Massachusetts standards for PD. The 2019–2020 PD calendar, accessible on the district website, includes four half days of targeted PD and two full days of choice PD. Teachers can choose from a variety of choice pathways (brain-based learning, universal design for learning, social/emotional strategies, and the inclusive classroom), aligned with the district’s initiatives. Teachers can review all offerings and enroll in workshops, conferences, and courses on TalentEd.[[14]](#footnote-14) Pathway offerings include the DESE online courses Foundations for Instructional Practices, Literacy for Grades K–4, Instruction for English Learners and Special Education Students, Engage Science for Grades Pre-K–2, and Brain-Based Learning.

In order to sustain a high-quality PD program, every year the staff evaluates the workshops/courses offered by the district. In 2018, the district partnered with a consultant to conduct a survey on the impact of its PD program. Results indicated that 85 percent of the teachers who responded reported that the pathways offerings related to their instructional needs and affected their instructional practices. In addition, 64 percent reported improvements in student achievement. The results of the survey administered by the consultant in June 2019 indicated that 69 percent of the teachers who responded were satisfied with the targeted PD offered by the district and 70 percent reported that the PD positively affected their teaching and student learning.

The district provides a two-year mentoring program for teachers. The first year is formal; the second, informal. Teachers can apply to serve on the district’s councils. Those who are selected to serve on the councils receive a stipend. In addition, the district is working with Bridgewater State University on certification of teachers who aspire to be principals and assistant principals.

***Strength Finding***

**1. The district has developed a comprehensive professional development program that supports all educators.**

**A.** Interviews and a review of documents indicated that school leaders and teachers shared responsibility for the planning and implementation of the district’s professional development (PD) initiatives.

1. The assistant superintendent is responsible for determining the district’s PD initiatives in collaboration with the district’s PD committee and professional growth council.

* + - 1. The 2017–2020 collective bargaining agreement between the Attleboro Education Association and the Attleboro School Committee requires the formation of a PD committee annually by October 15th. This committee consist of a maximum of 12 members including two administrators, coordinators, and teachers from all levels, including career and technical education and specialized content areas. The assistant superintendent, the PD committee, and the professional growth council determine the district’s PD offerings and calendar.
      2. The professional growth council, a subcommittee of the district’s Leadership Advisory Board (LAB), includes a representative from each grade level, two administrators, and two members of the teachers’ association. Teachers expressed the view that the professional growth council has reinvented how PD is conducted in the district. Teachers, coordinators, and school leaders reported that programming was appropriately differentiated and balanced to provide district, school, and individual teacher offerings.
      3. School leaders, teachers, PD committee, and professional growth council members stated that multiple sources were reviewed to make informed decisions about targeted and choice PD initiatives and to plan implementation. In 2019–2020, these sources included district and school data, the Attleboro Public Schools Professional Culture Report, results of the district’s work with MCIEA (Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment), staff input, feedback from learning walks from teachers and administrators, and evidence-based teaching and learning models.
      4. All PD offerings and the PD calendar are posted on the district’s website. The 2019–2020 calendar includes four targeted half-days focused on performance-based assessments and rubrics, and three choice full-days aligned with other district initiatives.
      5. School leaders and teachers told the review team that teachers could enroll in selected PD offerings on the web-based TalentEd performance evaluation platform. A teacher’s PD pathway of choice must be approved by the school principal and must remain the same for the year. Credit for participation is awarded after the teacher completes an evaluation of the workshop/course. The district’s website also includes out-of-district choices available through the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Network, Edtech Consortium, and Bridgewater State University.

**B.** The district’s PD pathways are aligned with the district’s essential beliefs and teaching expectations and are intended to have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

1. School leaders and teachers expressed the view that PD on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) educational framework supports the district model of high-quality teaching. School leaders and teachers agreed that the district’s focus on performance assessment and rubrics was aligned with the UDL framework. At the time of the onsite review in December 2019, the Center for Applied Special Technology was providing expanded training for Attleboro’s UDL teams.

2. Teachers indicated that the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program has expanded from its initial focus on bullying prevention to encompass social-emotional learning, which is embedded in of Our ID lesson design. The University of Connecticut has provided Tier 1 and Tier 2 PBIS training in the district. This training continues to be a focus at the high school in 2019–2020.

3. In 2017–2018, the district began to implement a three-year plan for the development of teaching methods and lesson design informed by the neuroscience of learning. The brain-based team, a voluntary group of 18 teachers, collected information on brain-based learning strategies, created a webpage for the staff and community, and developed a PD pathway for teachers. This team holds seven open meetings annually to solicit teacher input on current and future PD needs and to share best practices. School leaders stated that they looked for brain-based teaching strategies during learning walks.

**Impact**: The district has developed a collaborative process for determining a comprehensive PD program for all educators intended to advance district priorities. This program can result in improvements in classroom practices, the curriculum, and enriched learning opportunities for teachers and students.

***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

**2. The district’s educator evaluation system does not prioritize opportunities for educators to receive high-quality feedback[[15]](#footnote-15) that helps them improve their practice.**

**A.** The team reviewed the evaluative documentation of 37 randomly selected teachers. At the time of the onsite review, the district was transitioning to the TalentEd performance evaluation platform. Some evaluative documentation was made available on TalentEd and some on Google Docs. Twenty-eight of the teachers had professional status and were on self-directed growth plans and nine were developing educators. Most files reviewed included the teacher’s goals and a formative assessment/evaluation or a summative evaluation.

1. The formative assessments/evaluations and summative evaluations reviewed by the team were informative and included descriptions and details, related to the teacher’s methodology, pedagogy, and subject-based knowledge.

2. The evaluations of 23 of the of the 37 teachers were missing specific and actionable recommendations for professional growth and improvement. These evaluations consisted mostly of praise, appreciation, and encouragement to continue implementing effective practices.

3. All 37 teachers included written goals in the Educator Goals and Plan document[[16]](#footnote-16); however, most of these goals were not expressed as SMART goals.[[17]](#footnote-17)

4. The Educator Evaluation Framework requires that educators and administrators conduct a self-assessment addressing the performance standards and indicators and discuss it with their evaluators. Only 9 of the 37 teacher files included a self-assessment.

5. Only 3 of the 37 teacher files contained evidence collections. In most instances, teachers listed evidence aligned with their goals as part of their summative evaluations or formative assessments/evaluations.

6. Teachers stated that many evaluators provided feedback verbally rather than in writing. They stated that the quality of the feedback depended on the evaluator and could be inconsistent and inaccurate.

**B.** The team reviewed the goals and summative evaluations of 11 administrators. Seven of the summative evaluations culminated in feedback that could lead to improved practice and professional growth.

1. Eight of the eleven administrators’ evaluations did not include SMART goals.

2. The team did not find self-assessments in the administrator files reviewed.

3. None of the administrators’ files contained evidence collections.

**C.** When asked about the process for giving feedback, evaluators expressed several views.

1. District and school leaders expressed the view that there were too few personnel to conduct classroom observations, especially at the elementary and middle-school levels.

2. Principals expressed the view that coaching was preferable to formal evaluation. District administrators stated that they had greater confidence in what they observed in the classroom and discussed with teachers than what was written about a teacher’s performance.

**D.** In its self-assessment submitted in advance of the onsite, the district rated its supervision and evaluation systems as “Somewhat Well” described by the indicator “Supervision and evaluation systems prioritize opportunities for educators to receive high-quality feedback that improves their practice” and noted the following: “Some evaluators provide more feedback than others. Each administrator is offered the Research for Better Teaching and Student Success course to guide evaluators in providing feedback.”

**E**. The review team found that the requirements for specificity and manner of feedback in the district’s Professional Employee Evaluation document were not being implemented effectively.[[18]](#footnote-18)

1. The definition of feedback in the document specifies that feedback is to be timely and specific to improve performance and shared in writing.

**F.** As of the 2015–2016 school year, state educator evaluation regulations (603 CMR 35.07) call for districts to collect and use student feedback as evidence in the teacher evaluation process and staff feedback as evidence in the administrator evaluation process. This feedback may also be used to inform an educator’s self-assessment, goal setting, or as evidence to demonstrate growth over time.

1. The team was told that the district asked for staff feedback. It was unclear to the review team how staff feedback was used in the education evaluation process.

2. The team did not find evidence that student feedback was used in the educator evaluation process.

**G.** The district surveys teachers about the impact of teaching on student achievement. It was unclear to the review team whether the district used educators’ impact on student learning in the education evaluation process.[[19]](#footnote-19)

**Impact**: The district’s evaluation process has limited opportunities to further cultivate a culture of continuous learning and student achievement when meaningful written feedback to improve instructional practices and student performance is not an essential component of a teacher’s or administrator’s performance evaluation.

***Recommendations***

**1. The district should improve evaluation procedures and promote educators’ growth by fully implementing all components of the educator evaluation system, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that all educators receive high-quality feedback.**

**A**. The district should implement systems to ensure high quality verbal and written feedback, and provide additional professional development for evaluators that is aligned with the Research for Better Teaching and Student Success course, required of all administrators.

1. Evaluators should have structured opportunities to review and discuss the Professional Employee Evaluation System Manual. Attention should be paid to the teacher rubric(s) and the performance descriptors/statements of observable and measurable actions to ensure accuracy and consistency in the evaluation process and documentation.

2. Performance ratings for all educators should be based in part on student and staff feedback and educators’ impact on student learning.

**B.** The district should support and monitor the skills and practices of evaluators to ensure that the feedback they provide is specific, instructive, actionable, and relevant to professional growth and student outcomes.

1. Evaluators should participate in calibration training and activities to ensure consistency, quality, and accuracy in the evaluation process and documentation.

**C.** The superintendent should consider periodically examining evaluation documents to assess the quality of written feedback provided to educators to determine alignment and inclusion of the Massachusetts standards and indicators for effective teaching practices in evaluation documents.

**D.** The district should identify opportunities to streamline the evaluation process to ensure that it is valuable to educators and supports their growth and development.

**Benefits:** A fully implemented educator evaluation system that prioritizes high-quality feedback will likely promote professional growth, improve skills and knowledge, and lead to improved student performance and outcomes. Providing PD for evaluators can improve the consistency and quality of instructive feedback.

**Recommended resources:**

* *A Protocol for developing S.M.A.R.T Goal Statements* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/>) is designed to support educators in developing S.M.A.R.T. goal statements using the appropriate evaluation rubric and an ESE-developed protocol. *The Evidence Collection Toolkit* (http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/) is designed to help districts establish clear and consistent expectations for evidence collection and promote a meaningful process for the collection, analysis, and sharing of high-quality artifacts. The toolkit Includes: brief guidance, examples of district strategies, a worksheet for district decision-making, and a handout of Evidence Collection Tips for Educators.
* *On Track with Evaluator Capacity* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/pln/OnTrack-EvaluatorCapacity.pdf>) is an interactive document that provides specific strategies, lessons learned, and links to district-created resources. It was produced by eight districts that were part of a Professional Learning Network for Supporting Evaluator Capacity.
* *Quick Reference Guide: Opportunities to Streamline the Evaluation Process* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Streamline.pdf>) is designed to help districts reflect on and continuously improve their evaluation systems:
  + What’s working? What are the bright spots?
  + How can we streamline the process to stay focused on professional growth and development?
  + What do we need to adjust to ensure our system is valuable to educators and students?
* *Identifying Meaningful Professional Development* (<https://youtu.be/zhuFioO8GbQ>) is a video in which educators from three Massachusetts districts discuss the importance of targeted, meaningful professional development and the ways districts can use the evaluation process to identify the most effective PD supports for all educators.
* *Quick Reference Guide: Student and Staff Feedback* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/resources/QRG-Feedback.pdf>) provides information about how to select feedback instruments and use feedback as part of the educator evaluation system, along with links to relevant resources.
* The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/>): This website includes descriptions of the components of the Framework, implementation resources, and frequently asked questions. The site includes links to instructive videos and forms on most components of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework.

Student Support

***Contextual Background***

*Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture*

Overall, the district is highly committed to supporting students’ academic, behavioral, and social-emotional growth. Its goals to “improve academic and social-emotional outcomes for all students, foster positive relationships, and engage families and the community” are evident in the district’s planning and priority setting. District and school leaders, teachers, and support staff are committed to students and work well beyond the school day to meet and communicate with families and provide support to students experiencing academic and/or social-emotional challenges.

Attleboro has acted to ensure school safety. Students reported that they practiced safety drills including intruder and lock-down drills. Parents agreed that the schools did an effective job of evacuating students in a timely way. Both students and families are aware of the district’s plan to introduce Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate (ALICE) training that includes escape and lockdown procedures.

The district has implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) throughout the schools to improve school climate and culture and has begun to implement a social-emotional curriculum at the elementary level. In 2019 the district’s in-school suspension rate was 3.0 percent compared with the state average of 1.9 percent and the out-of-school suspension rate was 3.0 percent, equal to the state average of 3.0 percent.

Families expressed general satisfaction with the schools. Some cited a need to strengthen the anti-bullying curriculum in elementary schools.

*Tiered Systems of Support*

The district has a clear and detailed student support team student referral process. Student support teams design supports to maximize student academic and social-emotional development.

The 2019 enrollment of students with disabilities of 17 percent is close to the state average of 18 percent. However, the district has a higher percentage of students with disabilities enrolled in substantially separate programs, compared with the state average. At the time of the onsite in December 2019, 18 percent of district students with disabilities were enrolled in a separate special program, compared with the state average of 13.5 percent. Although the district has provided professional development on inclusive practices, co-taught inclusion classes are not a common model and exist only at the middle and high-school levels.

The district does not have guidance counselors at the elementary and middle school levels who provide a comprehensive school counseling program and communicate with families about student progress and needs. students’ progress and needs. The district has school adjustment counselors who provide school counseling and communicate with families about students’ social-emotional and behavioral needs. The district also does not have sufficient bilingual counselors who can bridge communication between the families of English learners and the schools. District and school leaders, teachers, and parents agreed that, for the most part, communications were provided in the language of the home.

*Family and Community Engagement and Partnerships*

The district has developed partnerships with community agencies that provide a variety of supports to students, including the YMCA, the Attleboro Public Library, the Bristol County Savings Bank, and the Justice Resource Institute.

***Strength Findings***

**1. The district has a proactive approach to meeting the needs of students through tiered supports and strategies, especially at the elementary level.**

**A**. Interviews and a document review indicated that the district provided instructional and behavioral strategies at Tier 1 that are designed to improve student outcomes for all students in the general education setting.

1. The district provides high-quality support to general education teachers to address the needs of students with diverse learning styles through a well-developed District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP).

a. District leaders told review team members that the DCAP was highly utilized by the Student Support Team (SST) at the high school.

2. Elementary teachers reported that they used districtwide assessments, including DIBELS and STAR Reading, to guide instruction and inform Tier 2 interventions.

3. The district continues to add performance assessments to its accountability system through its affiliation with the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA).

a. District leaders stated that performance assessments provided students with the opportunity to present knowledge more in line with their diverse learning styles.

4. The implementation of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model is an ongoing districtwide initiative. At the high school, advisory groups meet weekly or monthly to discuss topics such as respect and equity as part of PBIS.

1. Review team members noted established routines to ensure appropriate student behavior in 83 percent of observed district classes.

5. Curriculum coordinators support teachers in implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices and introduce teachers to a variety of strategies and approaches intended to remove barriers to student learning and allow students better access to curricula.

a. Teachers used a variety of instructional strategies in 64 percent of observed district classes.

b. Administrators reported that they expect teachers to present content using a variety of instructional strategies and look for this during learning walks.

**B.** Review team members were told in multiple interviews that each school had an SST or behavioral support team that meets regularly to identify and provide Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports for struggling students.

1. To request assistance for struggling students, teachers complete SST forms to document accommodations, modifications, instructional strategies, and other interventions that were implemented in the general education setting.

2. Some elementary schools have behavioral support teams that meet monthly and some elementary schools have Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) classes. One middle school has an SEL class and the other plans to establish one.

3. The district has an inclusion model for providing academic support for students with mild to moderate special needs across all grade levels. Middle-school inclusion teachers provide support for students within and outside of the general education classroom and provide tutoring after school.

4. Title I teachers in grades 1–4, special education teachers, and teachers of English learners (ELs) work directly with students, both within the general education classroom and in other settings.

a. School leaders and staff told the review team that ELs and students with disabilities had access to a study class outside of the general education classroom where special educators provided them additional support.

**C.** At Tier 3, the district has a range of programs and staff to support students’ academic and social-emotional needs.

1. The Network Program is an alternative program housed in a separate facility that provides academic and support services to a maximum of 21 high school age students with significant social-emotional, behavioral and/or learning disabilities. This program provides numerous academic supports, and students can participate in sports and activities at Attleboro High School.

2. The district provides substantially separate programs across grade levels for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorderand for students with intensive special needs who require daily living skills training.

3. Student support/success classes across grade levels provide a therapeutic educational setting for students diagnosed with social-emotional and/or behavioral disorders.

4. Attleboro Community Academy is a state-accredited independent high-school program for 50 to 70 students between the ages of 17 and 25 from Attleboro and nearby communities who have struggled to earn a diploma or have dropped out of school. The Academy curriculum is based on state frameworks and it operates after school and in the evening at Attleboro High School.

5. The district provides a transition program for students who are significantly below grade level after 12 years of school. This program provides adult daily-living preparation, community-based experiences, and job exploratory experiences.

6. The district has hired specialized support staff including board certified behavior analysts and special education behavior specialists.

**Impact:** Districtwide procedures for identification of and intervention for struggling students, applied with consistency, help to ensure that appropriate resources and tiered interventions are provided to all students in order to increase student performance and outcomes and ensure career and college preparedness.

***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

**2. The district has implemented PBIS districtwide, but does not have adequate counseling staff to provide crisis intervention and direct supports to students.**

**A.** Administrators, teachers, support staff, families, and students reported that there was an inadequate number of adjustment and guidance counselors to provide direct prevention and intervention strategies for students.

1. There are no guidance counselors at the elementary and middle-school levels.

2. School leaders and teachers at all levels said that adjustment counselors were “swamped.” High-school students told the review team that adjustment counselors needed to be more accessible. Parents expressed concern with bullying at the middle-school level and said that adjustment counselors could only focus on the students with the most serious needs. Some parents experienced the cancellation of a meeting with an adjustment counselor because a crisis took priority.

3. District staff said that there are insufficient staff to support the increasing number of kindergarten students in crisis from trauma issues.

4. Middle-school principals expressed frustration because daily crises affected their ability to observe instruction and give immediate feedback to teachers after classroom observations. Teachers stated that feedback was sometimes delivered in a chat in the hallway.

**Impact:** Without an adequate number of trained counseling staff, support for students’ social-emotional development and early intervention to address the social-emotional and behavioral challenges students are experiencing is limited, and the ability of the district to improve student performance and build college and career readiness skills in the elementary and middle-school levels is negatively affected.

**3.** **The district does not have counseling staff who are fluent in a second language to support English learners and develop strong collaborative relationships with non-English speaking families.**

**A**. According to DESE data, Spanish, Arabic and Khmer/Khmai are the most commonly spoken first languages in the district. Administrators, teachers, and parents cited an absence of bilingual counselors.

1. At the time of onsite, the district did not have any Spanish speaking counselors.

2. In a focus group, parents reported that they had to assert themselves and take a very direct role to advocate for their child about a conflict with another student. Parents also expressed concern for non-English speaking families who may not be able to advocate for their children in a similar situation, given the absence of bilingual staff members.

3. Parents expressed the view that there was a second language barrier at the orientation session for families held at the beginning of the school year.

4. Although the district sends communications in Spanish to Spanish speaking families, parents discussed the need to better engage those families in parent organization activities.

**Impact:** Without a sufficient staff of bilingual counselors, the district cannot provide adequate support for students and in-depth communications for non-English speaking families.

***Recommendation***

**1. The district should review its hiring practices and priorities to ensure sufficient guidance and counseling personnel.**

**A.** The district should consider strategies to increase guidance counseling staff over time, especially at the elementary and middle-school levels, in order to provide high-quality prevention and intervention services and social-emotional education for all students.

1. The district should examine ways of providing additional counseling staff to promote increased family engagement at the elementary and middle school levels.

**B.** The district should take immediate steps to recruit a counseling staff that reflects the cultures and languages represented in the school community.

1. The district should increase accessibility to Spanish, Arabic and/or Khmer/Khmai translation services.

**Benefits:** By increasing the number of guidance and counseling staff with the skills and backgrounds that students and families need, the district will improve the support it provides to students and strengthen relationships with students’ families.

**Recommended resources:**

* The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments’ *School Climate Survey Compendia* (<http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/topic-research/school-climate-measurement/school-climate-survey-compendium>) is a collection of valid and reliable surveys, assessments, and scales of school climate that can assist educators in their efforts to identify and assess their conditions for learning. Additional surveys and scales are added continually.
* The *Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling* (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/initiatives/schoolcounseling/>) is a programmatic, organizational tool that links school counseling programs to supporting college and career readiness. The Model provides a framework for program implementation designed to transform the way that school counselors work.

Financial and Asset Management

***Contextual Background***

*Budget Documentation and Reporting*

The City of Attleboro is governed by a city council and a mayor. The mayor does not sit on the school committee. The mayor recommends city budgets to the city council for approval, but council members cannot increase budget line items. According to Department of Revenue data, the city population was 44,284 in fiscal year 2015 and its total expenditures for fiscal year 2018 were $152,352,922 of which $72,115,215 (47 percent) was spent on education. The average family tax bill of $4,685 is below the state average of $5,831.

A director of finance and account and payroll clerks, one of whom manages grants and revolving fund accounts, provide budgeting and financial services for the district. They reported working closely with the city auditor’s office. The business office also oversees transportation, food service, technology, and the management of facilities. A supervisor and several tradesmen maintain the school buildings and an outside contractor provides staff who clean in the evening to augment the work of the district’s custodial staff.

The district’s end-of-year financial report shows expenditures for fiscal year 2018 of $72,232,641. From fiscal year 2015 through fiscal year 2019 the district exceeded the net school spending requirement by 3 percent as compared with the state average of 23 percent above the requirement and the average in comparable communities of 31.1 percent above the requirement. According to DESE data, the district’s average per-pupil expenditure in fiscal year 2018 of $13,296 was the lowest of all but one comparable district and well below the state average of $15,953.

*Adequate Budget*

District leaders described a budget crisis in fiscal year 2016 when Chapter 70 aid and the city allocation increased by only 1 percent and the district had to lay off 70 employees. With city assistance, about half of these employees were subsequently rehired. Staff still express anxiety about a recurrence of this event, and many positions have yet to be restored. Administrators reported that the crisis was caused by limited available resources in combination with rising fixed costs, such as benefits and special education tuitions, leaving insufficient funds to keep up with increases because of collective bargaining and other items. The city has since committed $1 million per year from a new meals tax and half the tax revenue from new growth to the schools. The new growth revenue was not passed on to the schools for fiscal year 2020. Support services such as guidance and adjustment counselors remain difficult to fund. Two curriculum coordinators, all middle-school and half of elementary-school instructional coaches were eliminated in 2017–2018. The assistant superintendent’s duties reported to DESE include 15 areas of responsibility such as curriculum, accountability, displaced students and dropout prevention, educator evaluation, the English learner program, and professional development, among others.

*Financial Tracking, Forecasting, Controls, and Audits*

The district’s financial management procedures have been effective. Administrators give monthly financial reports to the school committee’s finance subcommittee and the full committee, including transfers, projections, and how overruns can be covered. They report on grants and revolving funds as well. In past years, such as fiscal year 2019, the budget was in deficit because of unexpected special education tuitions amounting to $800,000. Administrators worked hard to cover the costs by applying carryover funds from the previous year, using all available circuit breaker funds, freezing budgets and new hires, and cutting some programs back, such as after-school programs. The city finally approved an additional appropriation of $50,000 to help with the deficit, over half of which was returned by the district as surplus. The city instituted a $200,000 special education stabilization fund for fiscal year 2020.

Administrators have responded promptly to other financial management issues such as audit findings on comingling of school student activity accounts with PTO funds. Principals and administrators have access to their own budget data on the city’s Munis financial software. The district procures many items using state contracts whenever possible and when necessary administrators work jointly with city officials on bid advertisements and contracts. The finance director has earned Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official certification. The grants director applies for and monitors grants and works to encumber all the funds. The district also receives numerous donations, private grants, and trust income and reported $171,620 in private support in fiscal year 2019.

*Capital Planning and Facility Maintenance*

The city has a capital plan which includes school projects such as boilers and roofs, and the community approved $260 million for a new high school in 2018. The district has invested in technology and has a goal for a one to one Chromebook program by 2022.

***Strength Findings***

**1. The district’s budget development process is collaborative and transparent and is based on student needs and district goals and priorities. Budget presentations and documentation clearly and accurately exhibit these characteristics.**

1. Administrators and school committee members described a collaborative process for developing the budget.

1. Administrators and principals said that administrators met with principals to discuss their priorities for the upcoming budget and they met with the Leadership Advisory Board for its input.

a. Principals reported that teachers participated in establishing the budget priorities for their schools.

2. Administrators reported that school committee policy required a December discussion with the committee about anticipated revenues and priorities for the fiscal year 2021 proposed budget.

a. For example, the recent (December 9, 2019) discussion with the school committee included an estimated net school spending increase and estimated budget increases needed to fund salary and other increased costs.

b. Priorities included reducing class size, adding adjustment counselors and middle-school guidance counselors to implement social-emotional goals, additional technology, and supplementary materials for the new ELA program.

3. For fiscal year 2020 the school committee requested three budgets to consider before voting: a level services budget,[[20]](#footnote-20) an urgent needs budget,[[21]](#footnote-21) and a priorities budget.[[22]](#footnote-22)

a. The superintendent’s proposed budget included these requested budgets. The presentation highlighted urgent needs including $1 million for teachers to reduce class size, paraprofessionals to provide special education support, adjustment counselors, and English learner (EL) support staff.

b. The priorities budget included classroom teachers, additional support staff for social-emotional and EL needs, and support for technology.

c. Other budget needs, which are not included in the urgent needs or priorities budgets, cited by district and school leaders and teachers included a new ELA program, middle-school guidance counselors, implementation of a one-to-one Chromebook program for students, instructional coaches to replace those recently lost, elementary assistant principals, and reading specialists.

d. The superintendent told the team that the district was underfunded by $10.5 million which would still result in funding at less than the state average.

4. School committee members and the superintendent meet frequently with the mayor and city council members to discuss budget revenues, needs, and priorities. The superintendent emphasized his efforts to create goodwill with city officials in order to gain their support for school resources.

a. District administrators and city officials stated there has been some support from the city for the budget and for unanticipated expenses over the past few years.

b. District administrators, school committee members, and city officials noted that the mayor had considerable power over the final budget and the city council could not increase it. City support for education has declined from 3.9 percent above the net school spending requirement in fiscal year 2018 to 2.7 percent for fiscal year 2020.

c. The mayor, the school committee, and the city council ultimately approved a fiscal year 2020 budget of $78,552,024, which was a 5 percent increase over the fiscal year 2019 budget and comparable to the proposed level services budget of $78,676,460, but insufficient to fund the urgent needs or priorities budgets described above.

**B.** The proposed budget is based on district priorities and student needs.

1. Administrators reported that they looked at the strategic plan and SIPs to help establish budget priorities, together with the curriculum office five-year implementation plan.

2. The urgent needs and priorities cited by administrators and budget documents for the fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021 budgets reflected the strategic plan and SIP goals such as agreed upon class sizes, ELA curriculum implementation, technology, supports for students with disabilities, English learners, and students with social-emotional needs.

**C.** The budget process and proposals are transparent.

1. Administrators stated that budget development began in the fall months with input from district staff, followed by an initial public presentation of anticipated funding and needs in December. This presentation is followed by monthly public discussions with the school committee and their approval in April and June.

2. Presentations highlighted revenue sources from Chapter 70 and the city, along with the state net school spending requirement and the impact of city expenses for education. They also highlighted major increases in fixed costs for areas such as special education, out-of-district tuition, and health insurance.

a. The fiscal 2020 presentations noted a 35 percent anticipated increase in city expenses for education and large district budget increases for health insurance, special education tuitions, and transportation.

b. For fiscal year 2021, the presentations noted that in spite of an anticipated 6 percent increase for net school spending, fixed cost increases for out-of-district tuitions (an increase of 28.6 percent) and health insurance (an increase of 8 percent) left an increase of only 2.8 percent for salary increases and other educational needs.

3. The budget presentation is supplemented by a spreadsheet showing detail for each budget line, trends from the fiscal year 2018 budget to the level service fiscal year 2020 budget, dollar and percentage increases for each line item, and proposed reductions. Subtotals are included for each school and the central office.

**D.** The documentation for proposed budgets outlines the budget process and it clearly and accurately exhibits revenue sources and how they are based on student needs and district goals and priorities.

1. The PowerPoint presentations are clear and include information about revenue sources, student needs and priorities, and the staffing increases required to implement them.

* + - 1. The presentations also describe the process for development of the proposed budget and the schedule for stakeholders to discuss and approve it, and provide important information about the difficulties in meeting budgets proposed by the city, projected salaries, benefits, and other expenses.
      2. The April 2019 presentation included information about the three budgets requested by the school committee: level services, urgent needs, and priorities of the district.

2. The accompanying spreadsheet includes detail on proposed budgets for each budget line item for each school and program, and it clearly indicates trends and increases.

**Impact**: The transparency and collaboration of the budget development process and of the public presentations and documentation help develop community support for proposed budgets. Community support can in turn lead to support by city officials. Detail for school and program budgets together with trends and increases help the public and the school committee understand where the funds will be spent and what initiatives and other increases will cost.

**2. The district cleans and maintains the schools to ensure that environments are conducive to student learning. The district has plans for technology enhancements and capital repairs to the buildings. With community support, it has invested in capital repairs at some buildings and in a new high school that is currently under construction.**

**A.** The district and the city have maintenance and capital plans for school buildings.

1. Maintenance and finance administrators reported that the district has a formal preventative maintenance plan that includes regular cleaning and filter replacements for unit ventilators, boiler maintenance, painting, and inspections of roofs, drains, fire suppression equipment, and elevators.

2. The city capital plan includes school projects such as roofs, water damage repairs, boiler and HVAC equipment replacements, flooring, parking lots, and windows.

**B.** The schools are clean and well maintained.

1. Administrators reported that the district employs day custodians at the schools while an outside contractor does cleaning in the evening. They expressed satisfaction with this arrangement.

2. The district maintenance staff includes six workers covering major trades such as plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians, and carpenters. They respond to work orders from principals, clean and change filters in unit ventilators, and perform inspections and repairs of equipment and facilities.

According to DESE data, the district’s per-pupil expenditures on building maintenance ($668 for FY18) exceed the state average of $269.

The review team found that the schools were clean, well maintained, and in good condition. Deficiencies at the high school are being addressed by the new school under construction.

**C.** The district has addressed several capital repair needs of the schools with city assistance.

1. According to data submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), district schools vary in age from 79 to 23 years old and all but the high school have been renovated or repaired over the past 25 years.

2. Administrators reported that the city has recently used free cash, a new capital improvement fund, and bonding to fund school capital needs, such as boiler replacements and two middle-school roofs.

3. Other recent building issues included a sink hole, a defective smokestack, a sump pump failure, and an electrical power outage. District and city maintenance personnel were able to repair the sink hole and electrical power outage, and the district hired outside contractors to repair the sump pump, smoke stack, and replace a boiler. The city plans to reimburse the district for the sump pump and the boiler.

**D.** The community has supported a new high school, now under construction.

Administrators reported that the district has initiated construction of a new $260 million high school, approved by the MSBA in 2016 and by the community in a debt exclusion vote in April 2018.

The review team observed that construction of the new high school was underway in December 2019.

* 1. The district has upgraded its technology such as Wi-Fi and is purchasing Chromebooks.

Administrators reported that the school committee initiated technology improvements in 2015 resulting in the installation of Wi-Fi with expanded bandwidth in all the schools, some interactive televisions, and the provision of Chromebooks for students. The costs of these technology improvements have been heavily subsidized by perpetual trusts, donations, and E-Rate funds.

The district plans to implement a one-to-one Chromebook program for all students by fiscal year 2022.

1. The review team observed students using Chromebooks in classrooms at all levels.

**Impact**: Clean and well-maintained school buildings, attention to remediating capital infrastructure needs, and expanded technology have contributed to an environment that is conducive to student learning.

***Challenges and Areas for Growth***

**The district and the city do not have a written agreement on municipal expenditures in support of the schools.**

**A.** The district and the city do not have a written agreement on a method for determining the cost of municipal services that are provided to the district by the city, as required by Massachusetts regulation 603 CMR 10.04. This regulation requires an approved written agreement detailing services provide by the municipality for the school district to be reported to DESE by September 30 each year.

1. District leaders and city officials reported that the district and the city did not have a written agreement describing the services that the city would provide to the district or the cost of the services.

a. Expenses include retiree health insurance, crossing guards, and the school resource officer. The charges for city administrative services are based on state averages.

b. The 2019 district end-of-year report showed increases for fiscal year 2020 city charges of $2.4 million (34 percent), largely because of increased charter and choice tuitions, retiree health insurance costs, and debt service.

**Impact**: Without a written agreement between the district and the city on municipal expenditures in support of the schools, the district cannot effectively monitor and internally audit costs for education-related services and ensure the accuracy of these expenditures.

***Recommendation***

**1. In compliance with 603 CMR 10.04, the district and the city should develop a written agreement that details the calculation process and/or amounts to be used in calculating municipal expenditures that are provided to the district.**

**A.** District and city finance administrators or their designees should meet annually to develop a written agreement that details the calculation process and/or amounts to be used in calculating the cost of services provided by the city to the district.

1. The charges for city administrative services are currently based on state averages, if these charges are acceptable they can be formalized in the written agreement.

2. Other city costs such as maintenance and repairs, snow removal, public safety, and health services can be considered and included together with how they are to be calculated.

3. Benefit charges paid by the city for active and retired district employees may also be included together with the method of calculation.

4. Any disputes over charges and their calculation should be referred to DESE for resolution.

5. The district and the city should review 603 CMR 10.04 (1) for examples of costs included in a municipal agreement. Examples include the salaries of health services or public safety personnel who provide direct services or instruction to students.

**B.** District leaders and city officials or their designees and the chair of the school committee should review and sign the agreement.

**Benefits:** By implementing this recommendation, the district will align its budget documents with state regulation 603 CMR 10.04; ensure that the district and the city have a clear understanding of municipal expenditures that are provided to the district; and be able to monitor and internally audit costs for education-related services and ensure the accuracy of these expenditures.

**Recommended resources:**

* DESE’s webpage on school finance laws and regulations (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr10.html?section=04>) provides a list of city payments commonly made on behalf of school districts.
* DESE Chart of Accounts (Criteria for Financial Reporting): <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/accounting/eoy>
* Compliance Supplement for Massachusetts and per pupil average charges for administrative services: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/accounting>

Appendix A: Review Team, Activities, Schedule, Site Visit

Review Team Members

The review was conducted from December 9–12, 2019, by the following team of independent DESE consultants.

1. Tom Pandiscio, Ed. D., Leadership and Governance
2. Linda L. Greyser, Ed. D., Curriculum and Instruction and *review team coordinator*
3. John Retchless, Assessment
4. Mary Jo Nawrocki, Human Resources and Professional Development
5. Valerie Murphy, Student Support
6. George Gearhart, Ed. D., Financial and Asset management

District Review Activities

The following activities were conducted during the review:

The team conducted interviews with the following financial personnel: the director of finance, the city auditor, and the facilities manager.

The team conducted interviews with the following members of the school committee: the vice-chair and two members.

The review team conducted interviews with the following representatives of the teachers’ association: the president, two vice-presidents, the secretary, and three teacher members.

The team conducted interviews/focus groups with the following central office administrators: the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the director of special education, the director of human resources, and the director of finance .

The team visited the following schools: A. Irvin Studley Elementary School (K–4), Hill-Roberts Elementary School (K–4), Hyman Fine Elementary School (K–4), Peter Thacher Elementary School (K–4), Thomas Willett Elementary School (K–4), Cyril K. Brennan Middle School (grades 5–8), Robert J. Coelho Middle School (grades 5–8), Wamsutta Middle School (grades 5–8), and Attleboro High School[[23]](#footnote-23) (grades 9–12).

During school visits, the team conducted interviews/focus groups with students, students’ families, and 9 principals, and focus groups with 4 elementary-school teachers, 2 middle-school teachers, and 14 high-school teachers.

The team observed 92 classes in the district: 26 at the high school, 23 at the three middle schools, and 43 at the 5 elementary schools.

The review team analyzed multiple data sets and reviewed numerous documents before and during the site visit, including:

* + Student and school performance data, including achievement and growth, enrollment, graduation, dropout, retention, suspension, and attendance rates.
  + Data on the district’s staffing and finances.
  + Published educational reports on the district by DESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA).
  + District documents such as district and school improvement plans, school committee policies, curriculum documents, summaries of student assessments, job descriptions, collective bargaining agreements, evaluation tools for staff, handbooks, school schedules, and the district’s end-of-year financial reports.
  + All completed program and administrator evaluations, and a random selection of completed teacher evaluations.

Site Visit Schedule

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Monday**  12/09/2019 | **Tuesday**  12/10/2019 | **Wednesday**  12/11/2019 | **Thursday**  12/12/2019 |
| Orientation with district leaders and principals; interviews with district staff and principals; document reviews; interview with teachers’ association; and visits to Studley Elementary School and Brennan Middle School for classroom observations. | Interviews with district staff and principals; review of personnel files; teacher focus groups; students and students’ families focus groups; interview with city official and visit to Attleboro High School for classroom observations. | Interviews with school leaders; interviews with school committee members; visits to Wamsutta Middle School, Willett Elementary School, Fine Elementary School, and Thacher Elementary School for classroom observations. | District review team meeting; visits to Coelho Middle School, Attleboro High School, The Network alternative high school program, Hill-Roberts Elementary School, and Studley Elementary School for classroom observations; district wrap-up meeting with the superintendent and assistant superintendent. |

Appendix B: Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

**Table B1a: Attleboro Public Schools**

**2018–2019 Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **District** | **Percent**  **of Total** | **State** | **Percent of**  **Total** |
| African-American | 377 | 6.3% | 87,104 | 9.2% |
| Asian | 279 | 4.7% | 66,890 | 7.0% |
| Hispanic | 881 | 14.8% | 197,644 | 20.8% |
| Native American | 12 | 0.2% | 2,159 | 0.2% |
| White | 4,025 | 67.7% | 561,096 | 59.0% |
| Native Hawaiian | 5 | 0.1% | 802 | 0.1% |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hisp./Lat. | 367 | 6.2% | 35,936 | 3.8% |
| All | 5,946 | 100.0% | 951,631 | 100.0% |
| Note: As of October 1, 2018 | | | | |

**Table B1b: Attleboro Public Schools**

**2018–2019 Student Enrollment by High Needs Populations**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **District** | | | **State** | | |
| **N** | **Percent of High Needs** | **Percent of District** | **N** | **Percent of High Needs** | **Percent of State** |
| Students w/ disabilities | 995 | 37.3% | 16.6% | 173,843 | 38.0% | 18.1% |
| Econ. Dis. | 1,804 | 67.5% | 30.3% | 297,120 | 64.9% | 31.2% |
| EL and Former EL | 351 | 13.1% | 5.9% | 99,866 | 21.8% | 10.5% |
| All high needs students | 2,671 | 100.0% | 44.6% | 458,044 | 100.0% | 47.6% |
| Notes: As of October 1, 2018. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs students are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 5,992; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 962,297. | | | | | | |

**Table B2a: Attleboro Public Schools**

**Attendance Rates, 2015–2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N (2018)** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 373 | 95.6 | 95.0 | 95.2 | 95.0 | -0.6 | 94.1 |
| Asian | 293 | 95.3 | 94.9 | 94.9 | 95.4 | 0.1 | 96.2 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 911 | 94.3 | 94.7 | 94.6 | 94.5 | 0.2 | 92.7 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | 395 | 95.0 | 94.8 | 94.8 | 94.1 | -0.9 | 94.4 |
| White | 4,225 | 95.1 | 95.2 | 94.8 | 94.8 | -0.3 | 95.1 |
| High Needs | 2,940 | 93.7 | 93.9 | 93.6 | 93.6 | -0.1 | 93.2 |
| Econ. Dis. | 2,215 | 93.1 | 93.3 | 93.0 | 93.2 | 0.1 | 92.5 |
| SWD | 1,013 | 93.2 | 94.2 | 93.5 | 93.4 | 0.2 | 92.9 |
| EL | 365 | 95.1 | 95.0 | 94.6 | 95.1 | 0.0 | 93.3 |
| All | 6,221 | 95.0 | 95.1 | 94.8 | 94.7 | -0.3 | 94.5 |
| Notes: The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the total number of days students attended school by the total number of days students were enrolled in a particular school year. A student’s attendance rate is counted toward any district the student attended. In addition, district attendance rates included students who were out placed in public collaborative or private alternative schools/programs at public expense. Attendance rates have been rounded; percent change is based on unrounded numbers. | | | | | | | |

**Table B2b: Attleboro Public Schools**

**Chronic Absence Rates by Student Group\*, 2015–2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **N (2018)** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **4-yr Change** | **State (2018)** |
| African American/Black | 373 | 12.1 | 14.8 | 12.1 | 13.1 | 1.0 | 16.4 |
| Asian | 293 | 14.5 | 16.5 | 11.0 | 10.9 | -3.6 | 7.6 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 911 | 16.0 | 14.8 | 15.1 | 14.3 | -1.7 | 22.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hisp./Lat. | 395 | 15.8 | 13.9 | 13.1 | 15.9 | 0.1 | 14.2 |
| White | 4,225 | 11.5 | 11.2 | 12.4 | 12.3 | 0.8 | 10.0 |
| High Needs | 2,940 | 18.5 | 18.2 | 18.6 | 18.5 | 0.0 | 20.1 |
| Econ. Dis. | 2,215 | 21.4 | 21.9 | 21.4 | 20.4 | -1.0 | 22.9 |
| SWD | 1,013 | 19.4 | 15.3 | 18.0 | 19.1 | -0.3 | 20.7 |
| EL | 365 | 12.6 | 15.1 | 13.3 | 11.8 | -0.8 | 20.4 |
| All | 6,221 | 12.6 | 12.3 | 12.8 | 12.8 | 0.2 | 13.2 |
| \* Chronic absence is defined as the percentage of students absent 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school. | | | | | | | |

**Table B3: Attleboro Public Schools**

**Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years 2017–2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FY17** | | | **FY18** | | | **FY19** | | |
|  | **Estimated** | | **Actual** | **Estimated** | **Actual** | | **Estimated** | | **Actual** |
| Expenditures | | | | | | | | | |
| From local appropriations for schools: |  | | | | | | | | |
| By school committee | $71,659,387 | $70,767,624 | | $70,294,393 | | $72,232,641 | | $71,659,387 | $75,055,399 |
| By municipality | $7,161,603 | $7,239,566 | | $7,016,051 | | $8,859,124 | | $7,161,603 | $6,608,636 |
| Total from local appropriations | $78,820,990 | $78,007,189 | | $77,310,444 | | $81,091,766 | | $78,820,990 | $81,664,036 |
| From revolving funds and grants | -- | $8,199,275 | | -- | | $9,754,641 | | -- | $9,564,263 |
| Total expenditures | -- | $86,206,465 | | -- | | $90,846,407 | | -- | $91,228,299 |
| Chapter 70 aid to education program | | | | | | | | | |
| Chapter 70 state aid\* | -- | $35,659,451 | | -- | | $35,846,981 | | -- | $37,773,985 |
| Required local contribution | -- | $32,806,836 | | -- | | $33,973,326 | | -- | $35,206,834 |
| Required net school spending\*\* | -- | $68,466,287 | | -- | | $69,820,307 | | -- | $72,980,819 |
| Actual net school spending | -- | $71,087,780 | | -- | | $72,576,108 | | -- | $76,144,403 |
| Over/under required ($) | -- | $2,621,493 | | -- | | $2,755,801 | | -- | $3,163,584 |
| Over/under required (%) | -- | 3.8% | | -- | | 3.9% | | -- | 4.3% |
| \*Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations.  \*\*Required net school spending is the total of Chapter 70 aid and required local contribution. Net school spending includes only expenditures from local appropriations, not revolving funds and grants. It includes expenditures for most administration, instruction, operations, and out-of-district tuitions. It does not include transportation, school lunches, debt, or capital.  Sources: FY16, FY17, and FY18 District End-of-Year Reports, Chapter 70 Program information on ESE website  Data retrieved 1/13/20 | | | | | | | | | |

**Table B4: Attleboro Public Schools**

**Expenditures Per In-District Pupil**

**Fiscal Years 2017–2019**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Expenditure Category** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| Administration | $492 | $495 | $406 |
| Instructional leadership (district and school) | $649 | $720 | $708 |
| Teachers | $5,264 | $5,403 | $5,609 |
| Other teaching services | $1,180 | $1,251 | $1,373 |
| Professional development | $158 | $105 | $122 |
| Instructional materials, equipment and technology | $193 | $157 | $147 |
| Guidance, counseling and testing services | $352 | $369 | $370 |
| Pupil services | $1,135 | $1,240 | $1,151 |
| Operations and maintenance | $1,216 | $1,258 | $1,294 |
| Insurance, retirement and other fixed costs | $2,273 | $2,298 | $2,394 |
| Total expenditures per in-district pupil | $12,912 | $13,296 | $13,575 |
| Sources: [Per-pupil expenditure reports on DESE website](http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/ppx.html)  Note: Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding. | | | |

Appendix C: Instructional Inventory

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #1: Learning Objectives & Expectations** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg Number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (1 to 4) |
| 1. The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter. | **ES** | 5% | 33% | 49% | 14% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 0% | 17% | 57% | 26% | 3.1 |
| **HS** | 4% | 23% | 58% | 15% | 2.8 |
| **Total #** | 3 | 24 | 49 | 16 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 3% | 26% | 53% | 17% |  |
| 2. The teacher ensures that students understand what they should be learning in the lesson and why. | **ES** | 2% | 40% | 40% | 19% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 0% | 26% | 48% | 26% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 0% | 35% | 42% | 23% | 2.9 |
| **Total #** | 1 | 32 | 39 | 20 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 1% | 35% | 42% | 22% |  |
| 3. The teacher uses appropriate classroom activities well matched to the learning objective(s). | **ES** | 2% | 35% | 42% | 21% | 2.8 |
| **MS** | 4% | 17% | 61% | 17% | 2.9 |
| **HS** | 0% | 35% | 42% | 23% | 2.9 |
| **Total #** | 2 | 28 | 43 | 19 | 2.9 |
| **Total %** | 2% | 30% | 47% | 21% |  |
| 4. The teacher conducts frequent checks for student understanding, provides feedback, and adjusts instruction. | **ES** | 5% | 26% | 49% | 21% | 2.9 |
| **MS** | 4% | 17% | 57% | 22% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 0% | 46% | 35% | 19% | 2.7 |
| **Total #** | 3 | 27 | 43 | 19 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 3% | 29% | 47% | 21% |  |
| **Total Score for Focus Area #1** | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **11.1** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **12.0** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **11.3** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **11.4** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #2: Student Engagement & Higher-Order Thinking** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg Number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (1 to 4) |
| 5. Students assume responsibility to learn and are engaged in the lesson. | **ES** | 2% | 23% | 42% | 33% | 3.0 |
| **MS** | 4% | 26% | 35% | 35% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 4% | 19% | 46% | 31% | 3.0 |
| **Total #** | 3 | 21 | 38 | 30 | 3.0 |
| **Total %** | 3% | 23% | 41% | 33% |  |
| 6. Students engage in higher-order thinking. | **ES** | 14% | 42% | 33% | 12% | 2.4 |
| **MS** | 9% | 26% | 52% | 13% | 2.7 |
| **HS** | 4% | 38% | 46% | 12% | 2.7 |
| **Total #** | 9 | 34 | 38 | 11 | 2.6 |
| **Total %** | 10% | 37% | 41% | 12% |  |
| 7. Students communicate their ideas and thinking with each other. | **ES** | 14% | 37% | 42% | 7% | 2.4 |
| **MS** | 4% | 35% | 43% | 17% | 2.7 |
| **HS** | 4% | 42% | 35% | 19% | 2.7 |
| **Total #** | 8 | 35 | 37 | 12 | 2.6 |
| **Total %** | 9% | 38% | 40% | 13% |  |
| 8. Students engage with meaningful, real-world tasks. | **ES** | 7% | 33% | 40% | 21% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 0% | 26% | 43% | 30% | 3.0 |
| **HS** | 12% | 23% | 35% | 31% | 2.8 |
| **Total #** | 6 | 26 | 36 | 24 | 2.8 |
| **Total %** | 7% | 28% | 39% | 26% |  |
| **Total Score for Focus Area #2** | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **10.6** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **11.5** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **11.2** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **11.0** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Focus Area #3: Inclusive Practice & Classroom Culture** |  | Insufficient Evidence | Limited Evidence | Sufficient Evidence | Compelling Evidence | Avg Number of points |
|  | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (1 to 4) |
| 9. The teacher ensures that students are engaging in challenging tasks regardless of learning needs. | **ES** | 9% | 37% | 37% | 16% | 2.6 |
| **MS** | 4% | 52% | 39% | 4% | 2.4 |
| **HS** | 15% | 42% | 35% | 8% | 2.3 |
| **Total #** | 9 | 39 | 34 | 10 | 2.5 |
| **Total %** | 10% | 42% | 37% | 11% |  |
| 10. The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies. | **ES** | 9% | 23% | 53% | 14% | 2.7 |
| **MS** | 9% | 30% | 52% | 9% | 2.6 |
| **HS** | 0% | 38% | 58% | 4% | 2.7 |
| **Total #** | 6 | 27 | 50 | 9 | 2.7 |
| **Total %** | 7% | 29% | 54% | 10% |  |
| 11. Classroom routines and positive supports are in place to ensure that students behave appropriately. | **ES** | 0% | 12% | 40% | 49% | 3.4 |
| **MS** | 0% | 26% | 30% | 43% | 3.2 |
| **HS** | 12% | 8% | 31% | 50% | 3.2 |
| **Total #** | 3 | 13 | 32 | 44 | 3.3 |
| **Total %** | 3% | 14% | 35% | 48% |  |
| 12. The classroom climate is conducive to teaching and learning. | **ES** | 5% | 9% | 42% | 44% | 3.3 |
| **MS** | 0% | 22% | 48% | 30% | 3.1 |
| **HS** | 12% | 19% | 38% | 31% | 2.9 |
| **Total #** | 5 | 14 | 39 | 34 | 3.1 |
| **Total %** | 5% | 15% | 42% | 37% |  |
| **Total Score for Focus Area #3** | **ES** |  |  |  |  | **12.0** |
| **MS** |  |  |  |  | **11.3** |
| **HS** |  |  |  |  | **11.1** |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  | **11.5** |

1. The four-year cohort rate improved 7.7 percentage points, from 82.8 percent in 2015 to 90.5 percent in 2018, compared with the state rate of 87.9 percent. The five-year rate improved 2.5 percentage points, from 89.9 percent in 2014 to 92.4 percent in 2017, above the state rate of 90.1 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Students in the high needs group are in one or more of the following student groups: economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners (ELs) or former ELs. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Be Heard*: Attleboro Community Coalition for Education is a district community engagement initiative developed to increase parent and community engagement to support education. The Student Equity Council which was created through *Be Heard* is a group of students who discuss relevant issues and topics related to Attleboro High School. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. High-quality feedback is specific, timely, and actionable. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The District Standards and Indicators are posted at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/district-standards-indicators.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Attleboro High School enrollment includes students enrolled in The Network alternative high school program. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. SMART goals are Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action-Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused; and Timed and Tracked. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The four levels are early childhood, elementary, middle school, and high school. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Assistant principals are replacing one of the two coaching positions at each elementary school in a phased-in process over multiple years. At the time of the review in December 2019, three of the five elementary schools had assistant principals and only one instructional coach. In fiscal year 2020–2021, all K–4 schools will have one assistant principal and one instructional coach. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Essential components of instruction in Attleboro are objectives, culture, social-emotional learning, relevant learning experiences, and assessment and reflection. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. District leaders stated that the superintendent visited classes during week 1; the assistant superintendent visited during week 2; and week 3 was a week off. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. High-quality feedback is specific, timely, and actionable. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. ACCESS stands for Accessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. TalentED is a web-based performance evaluation platform. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. High-quality feedback is specific, timely, and actionable. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Representatives from the teachers’ association and school administrators developed the Professional Employee Evaluation document over two years. The teachers’ collective bargaining agreement refers to the Professional Evaluation document. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. SMART goals are Specific and Strategic; Measurable; Action-Oriented; Rigorous, Realistic, and Results-Focused; and Timed and Tracked. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Representatives from the teachers’ association and school administrators developed the Professional Employee Evaluation document over two years. The teachers’ collective bargaining agreement refers to the Professional Evaluation document. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. On Tuesday, February 28, 2017, after collecting public comment since November 2016, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted 9-1 to amend the educator evaluation regulations. The most significant change in the regulations is the elimination of a separate student impact rating. Under the amended regulations, evaluators do not have to make a separate judgment about an educator’s impact on student learning. Instead, student learning is embedded as an indicator within one of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Framework’s four standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. A level services budget provides the same staffing and services as the current year. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. An urgent needs budget includes services that the district believes are urgent needs, such as class size and ELL support staff. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. A priorities budget includes items that are less urgent, such as ELA curriculum, guidance counselors, coaches, assistant principals, and technology. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Attleboro High School enrollment includes students enrolled in The Network alternative high school program. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)