# Lexington Public Schools

Comprehensive District Review Report

January 2024

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office of District Reviews and Monitoring

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Acting Commissioner

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## Executive Summary

In accordance with Massachusetts state law, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) contracted with the American Institutes for Research® (AIR®) to conduct a comprehensive review of Lexington Public Schools (hereafter, Lexington) in January 2024. Data collection activities associated with the review included interviews, focus groups, and document reviews and were focused on understanding how district systems, structures, and practices operate in support of district continuous improvement efforts. The review focused on the six standards (and related indicators) that DESE has identified as being important components of district effectiveness.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Five observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited Lexington during the week of January 22, 2024. The observers conducted 96 observations in a sample of classrooms across nine schools in Grades K-12, focused on English language arts (ELA), and mathematics instruction. The Teachstone Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) protocol, developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning at the University of Virginia,[[2]](#footnote-3) guided all classroom observations in the district. These observations used the three grade-band levels of the CLASS protocols: K-3, Upper Elementary (4-5), and Secondary (6‑12). Overall, for the K-5 grade band, instructional observations suggest generally strong evidence of emotional support, classroom organization, student engagement (Grades 4-5) and mixed evidence of rigorous instructional support. For the 6-8 grade band, instructional observations provide generally strong evidence of classroom organization and mixed evidence of emotional support, student engagement, and rigorous instructional support. For the 9-12 grade band, instructional observations provide generally strong evidence of classroom organization and mixed evidence of emotional support, student engagement, and rigorous instructional support.

### [Leadership and Governance](#_Leadership_and_Governance)

Lexington’s superintendent, since 2018, is Dr. Julie Hackett. She receives support from a large group of directors and administrators, including the office manager, the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, the assistant superintendent of personnel and staff support, the director of innovation and technology, the director of equity and student support, the director of special education, the director of health services, the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunities (METCO) director, the director of elementary education, the director of secondary education, the director of data and strategy, and department heads for each grade span (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) and content area (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies). At the school level, each K-12 school has a principal, an assistant principal, and various leadership teams focused on academic and behavioral support.

The school committee, comprising five members elected by Lexington residents, provides oversight. The school committee has three main responsibilities: (a) developing district policy to guide administrative action; (b) approving the district’s budget; and (c) hiring and evaluating the superintendent. In addition, the school committee has a variety of community liaison responsibilities.

The district has a current, 10-year strategic plan for 2019-2029 that guides the district’s priorities. In addition, each school develops a two-year innovation plan, aligned with district goals. The individual school plans are a collaboration between school leaders and the school committee. All school plans closely align with the district’s strategic plan while addressing their individual school needs.

In terms of strengths, the school committee is highly connected with the Lexington community and has strong communication and collaboration with the superintendent. The evaluation process for the superintendent closely aligns with the district’s strategic goals. District leaders also work closely with school leaders. The district’s 10-year strategic plan guides the district’s work moving forward, stakeholders across the district know this plan and the strategic goals, school leaders intentionally align their school innovation plans with the district’s strategic plan, and school innovation plans include input from community members. The district has a clearly defined budget development process that includes close collaboration with district leaders, school committee members, and town officials. An area of growth is developing a written agreement between the town and district officials about the allocation of local tax monies.

### [Curriculum and Instruction](#_Curriculum_and_Instruction)

Lexington prioritizes equitable, inclusive, and effective instruction aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Directors of primary and secondary education oversee all curricula, employing a thorough curricular review process involving various stakeholders. Recent updates include a new mathematics curriculum, with plans to update the ELA curriculum. The district offers diverse course options, with most high school academic courses available at multiple levels. Recently, ELA courses adopted an “honors for all” model at the high school, focusing on differentiation to meet all students’ needs. In addition, the district reduced prerequisite requirements for Advanced Placement (AP) courses to enhance accessibility.

Lexington has several strengths related to curriculum and instruction, including a well-defined process for critically reviewing curricular materials that includes a variety of stakeholder input and feedback, positive and productive classroom environments across schools, and a commitment to expanding student access to advanced learning opportunities.

Areas for growth include selecting and implementing high-quality curricula, assisting educators in making the current curriculum accessible to all students, bringing greater consistency to the social-emotional learning curriculum and its implementation at different schools, and improving equitable access to advanced learning opportunities within the district, particularly for African American/Black students.

### [Assessment](#_Assessment)

Lexington administers various standard assessments across all grade levels throughout the year. Assessment, both selection and ownership, is embedded in the work of curriculum departments. Assessment selection aligns with the curricular review process. LPS employs a director of data and strategy who oversees centralized reporting, evaluation, and data management, and also provides coaching and consultation as needed to teams working on assessment design and/or selection. Working with other department leaders, this role supports school and district teams in using this information to inform plans (for individual students and at a school/district level).

At the elementary level, educators administer the eighth edition of DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), mCLASS, and Aimsweb assessments three times annually; at the middle school level, educators are piloting STAR assessments. At the high school level, teachers administer common unit assessments that they develop. At each school, data teams and professional learning communities (PLCs) analyze data for trends and individual student needs. Currently, with data dispersed across multiple systems, efforts are underway to adopt a centralized “data warehouse” for storing, tracking, and sharing assessment data.

In terms of strengths, the district (a) uses a variety of assessments to track student progress and identify student needs in both ELA and mathematics, (b) regularly examines a variety of disaggregated data, (c) allocates time for teachers and specialists to meet to discuss student data, (d) transparently shares data on barriers to achieving equitable outcomes with the broader Lexington community, and (e) uses multiple methods for sharing student information with families throughout the school year. In terms of an area of growth, parents would like more ongoing, two-way communication with the schools that extends beyond information sharing.

### [Human Resources and Professional Development](#_Human_Resources_and)

Lexington’s human resources department manages recruitment, retention, evaluations, and professional learning for staff, with an emphasis on hiring diverse personnel who reflect the demographics of the students. The human resources department works in collaboration with district and school leaders to determine needed positions, posts positions across a variety of platforms, oversees the onboarding process, and completes the orientation process. The district prioritizes hiring a diverse workforce, employing strategies such as leveraging internal staff networks and asking standard questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the application and interview process. The district also operates a robust three-year mentoring program, pairing new teachers with experienced mentors by school and subject area. Professional learning opportunities are plentiful and include both mandatory and optional activities throughout the year.

Lexington has several strengths related to human resources and professional development, including aligning and standardizing the district’s practices for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, using a variety of strategies to improve diversity among the workforce, involving students in teacher and school leader hiring decisions, supporting staff affinity groups to promote DEI and support staff retention, providing professional learning on culturally responsive teaching practices, providing a comprehensive mentoring program to support new staff, and providing opportunities for participation in meaningful teacher leadership activities.

Areas for growth include continuing to expand efforts to improve and diversify the teacher and leader workforce, especially for Asian educators and leaders; implementing the educator evaluation framework for all educators in accordance with regulatory requirements; increasing opportunities for teachers to receive formative feedback to grow their instructional practices; and creating districtwide formal structures to recognize strong teacher performance.

### [Student Support](#_Student_Support)

Lexington demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting the safety, well-being, and sense of belonging for all students, staff, and families. The district implements various strategies and structures to accomplish this support, including school-based student support teams (SSTs) and mental health teams to address students’ academic and nonacademic needs. Schools allocate dedicated time during the school day for interventions and enrichments, with some services offered in small groups via push-in or pull-out models. All schools provide special education and English learner (EL) services, individual counseling, social workers, school health services, and student safety programs. Each school has a school site council to involve families in improvement planning, but levels of family engagement vary. The district also collaborates with identity-based community organizations for support and policy input.

Strengths include implementing positive behavioral and restorative justice approaches for student behavior, implementing DEI-focused lessons across all elementary schools, providing meaningful opportunities for student engagement and leadership, having a problem-solving team to assess data and make decisions about interventions for students, allocating time in the schedule for students to receive additional supports as needed, collaborating with identity-based groups that the district employs as thought partners, and offering student leadership opportunities at the elementary and middle school levels.

Areas for growth include improving school culture, as demonstrated by lower climate scores on the Views of Climate and Learning (VOCAL) at three schools, supporting student mental health at the high school, addressing in a holistic and comprehensive manner all incidents of identity-based conflicts as they occur at the high school, continuing efforts to create school environments that are safe and supportive for historically marginalized students, ensuring that structured intervention time is used effectively to support students’ needs, improving the structure of communications with parents to more concisely convey important information, posting minutes from school site councils in a more timely manner, and working with the high school class councils to become more meaningful opportunities for student governance.

### [Financial and Asset Management](#_Financial_and_Asset)

District and town leaders collaborate to develop Lexington’s annual budget, and the district is working to make the budget book more accessible and user-friendly. The budget closely aligns with the district’s strategic plan, and the four strategic goals assist with prioritizing budgetary decisions. The district recently prioritized creating an accessible and user-friendly budget book. The district has a 10-year Master Planning Compendium (i.e., capital plan), which includes designing and developing a new high school building to accommodate projected enrollment increases and address safety concerns with the current building. Plans for the new high school are still in the early stages, and the district is collaborating with students and families to gather their input.

The district has several strengths related to financial and asset planning, including redesigning the budget book to be more accessible to the community, aligning budget priorities with the district’s strategic plan, considering new budget requests and proposals through their alignment with the district’s strategic plan, and soliciting family and student input on the design of the new high school building. An area for growth for the district is working with the town to ensure timely submissions of end of year reports to DESE.

## Lexington 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 carefully consider the effectiveness of systemwide functions, referring to the six district standards used by DESE: Leadership and Governance, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment, Human Resources and Professional Development, Student Support, and Financial and Asset Management. Reviews identify systems and practices that may be impeding improvement as well as those most likely to be contributing to positive results. The design of the comprehensive district review promotes 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

A district review team consisting of AIR staff members and subcontractors, with expertise in each district standard, reviews documentation and extant data prior to conducting an on-site visit. On-site data collection includes team members conducting interviews and focus group sessions with a wide range of stakeholders, including school committee members, teachers’ association representatives, district and school administrators, teachers, students, and students’ families. Virtual interviews and focus groups also are conducted as needed. Information about review activities and the site visit schedule is in Appendix A. Team members also observe classroom instruction and collect data using the CLASS protocol. The Districtwide Instructional Observation Report resulting from these classroom observations is in Appendix B.

Following the site visit, the team members code and analyze the data to develop a set of objective findings. The team lead and multiple quality assurance reviewers, including DESE staff, then review the initial draft of the report. DESE staff provides recommendations for the district, based on the findings of strengths and areas of growth identified, before AIR finalizes and submits the report to DESE. DESE previews and then sends the report to the district for factual review before publishing it on the DESE website. DESE also provides additional resources to support implementation of DESE’s District Standards and Indicators, summarized in Appendix C.

### Site Visit

The site visit to Lexington occurred during the week of January 22, 2024. The site visit included 20 hours of interviews and focus groups with approximately 100 stakeholders, including school committee members, district administrators, school staff, students, students’ families, and teachers’ association representatives. The review team conducted three teacher focus groups with six elementary school teachers, six middle school teachers, and six high school teachers; two focus groups with 10 middle school and six high school students; and one family focus group with 25 parents. The site team also conducted 96 observations of classroom instruction in nine schools. Certified team members conducted instructional observations using the Teachstone CLASS protocol.

### District Profile

Lexington’s superintendent, since 2018, is Dr. Julie Hackett. She receives support from an assistant superintendent of finance and operations, an assistant superintendent for personnel and staff supports, the director of elementary curriculum, the director of secondary curriculum, the director of assessment and strategy, the director of special education, and the director of English language education, among others. A school committee composed of five members who are elected for three-year terms governs the district.

In the 2022-2023 school year, there were 615 teachers in the district, with 6,805 students enrolled in the district’s 10 schools. Table 1 provides an overview of student enrollment by school for the 2023-2024 school year.

Table 1. Schools, Type, Grades Served, and Enrollment, 2023-2024

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School | Type | Grades served | Enrollment |
| Lexington’s Children’s Place | Elementary | PK | 76 |
| Bowman Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 428 |
| Bridge Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 365 |
| Fiske Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 335 |
| Harrington Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 378 |
| Joseph Estabrook Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 537 |
| Maria Hastings Elementary School | Elementary | K-5 | 631 |
| Jonas Clarke Middle School | Middle | 6-8 | 810 |
| William Diamond Middle School | Middle | 6-8 | 927 |
| Lexington High School | High | 9-12 | 2,318 |
| Total |  |  | 6,805 |

*Note.* Enrollment data as of October 1, 2023.

Between 2021 and 2024, overall student enrollment decreased by 96 students. Enrollment figures by race/ethnicity and high needs populations (i.e., students with disabilities, students from low-income families, and ELs and former ELs) compared with the state are in Tables D1 and D2 in Appendix D. Appendix D also provides additional information about district enrollment, attendance, and expenditures.

In fiscal year 2022, the total in-district per-pupil expenditure for Lexington was $21,352, which is $1,936 more than the average in-district per-pupil expenditure in districts with similar demographics ($19,416), and $48 less than the average in-district per-pupil expenditures in districts of similar wealth ($21,400).[[3]](#footnote-4) In-district per pupil expenditures for Lexington were $1,798 more than the average state spending per pupil ($19,554). Actual net school spending was greater than what is required by the Chapter 70 state education aid program, as shown in Table D4 in Appendix D.

### School and Student Performance

The following section includes selected highlights regarding student performance in Lexington. This section is meant to provide a brief synopsis of data, not a comprehensive analysis of district performance data. For additional details and data on district performance, please see Appendix E and [School and District Profiles (mass.edu)](https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/general/general.aspx?topNavID=1&leftNavId=100&orgcode=01550000&orgtypecode=5).

#### Achievement

* In English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics in Grades 3-8 and science in Grades 5 and 8, the percentage of Lexington’s students meeting or exceeding expectations on the Next Generation Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was above the state rate for each student group, except for African American/Black students in science.
  + ELA: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 4 to 43 percentage points higher than their statewide peers.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 3 to 53 percentage points higher than their statewide peers.
  + Science: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was 14 to 43 percentage points higher than their statewide peers, except for African American/Black students, who were 4 percentage points lower than their statewide peers.
* In Grade 10, every student group with reportable data met or exceeded expectations on the Next Generation MCAS at a higher rate than their statewide peers.
  + ELA: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was above the state rate by 8 to 50 percentage points.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was above the state rate by 17 to 65 percentage points.
  + Science: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations was above the state rate by 5 to 52 percentage points.
* English Learner (EL) and former EL students in Lexington met or exceeded expectations on the Next Generation MCAS at higher rates than their statewide peers.
  + ELA: the percentage of EL and former EL students meeting or exceeding expectations was 43 points higher in Grades 3-8 and 50 percentage points higher in Grade 10.
  + Mathematics: the percentage of EL and former EL students meeting or exceeding expectations was 53 percentage points higher in Grades 3-8 and 65 percentage points higher in Grade 10.
  + Science: the percentage of EL and former EL students meeting or exceeding expectations was 43 percentage points higher in Grades 5 and 8 and 51 percentage points higher in Grade 10.
* African American/Black students tended to meet or exceed expectations at higher rates than their statewide peers in each subject and grade span on the Next Generation MCAS, but by less than other Lexington student groups did.
  + ELA: African American/Black students outperformed their statewide peers in Grades 3-8 by 4 percentage points (compared to 16 to 43 percentage points for other student groups), and in Grade 10 by 8 percentage points (compared to 14 to 50 percentage points for other student groups).
  + Math: African American/Black students outperformed their statewide peers in Grades 3-8 by 3 percentage points (compared to 15 to 53 percentage points for other student groups) and in Grade 10 by 29 percentage points (compared to other student groups by 17 to 65 percentage points).
  + Science: African American/Black students were outperformed by their statewide peers in Grades 5 and 8 by 4 percentage points (other student groups outperformed their statewide peers by 14 to 43 percentage points), and outperformed their statewide peers in Grade 10 by 5 percentage points (compared to 18 to 52 percentage points for other student groups).

#### Growth**[[4]](#footnote-5)**

* In Grades 3-8 in ELA and mathematics, student growth percentiles (SGP) were typical or exceeded typical growth in 2023 for each student group with reportable data.
* In Grade 10, ELA SGPs were typical or exceed typical growth for each student group with reportable data. In mathematics in Grade 10, SGPs exceeded typical growth for every student group with reportable data.

#### Other Indicators

* Four-year graduation rates in 2022 for Hispanic/Latino students and ELs and former ELs were higher than their statewide peers by 14.6 percentage points and 23.6 percentage points, respectively.
* Dropout rates in Lexington in 2022 were well below the state rate for every student group with reportable data. These data were most notable for ELs, whose dropout rate was 0.0 percent compared to 7.8 percent for the state.
* The percentage of students completing advanced coursework in 2023 was above the state rate for high needs students, students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, and ELs by 20.5 percentage points to 31.9 percentage points.
* The chronic absenteeism rates in Lexington were lower than the state rate for each student group by 7.3 percentage points to 22.3 percentage points. The chronic absenteeism rate was less than half the state rate for most student groups.
* In 2023, Lexington High School was identified as a *School of Recognition* via the state’s accountability system. Schools of recognition demonstrate high achievement and high growth and meet or exceed accountability targets.

### Classroom Observations

Five observers, who focused primarily on instruction in the classroom, visited Lexington during the week of January 22, 2024. The observers conducted 96 observations in a sample of classrooms in nine schools across grade levels, focused on ELA and mathematics. The CLASS protocol guided all classroom observations in the district. These observations used the three grade-band levels of CLASS protocols: K-3, Upper Elementary (4-5), and Secondary (6-12).

The K-3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support, in addition to Student Engagement. The three domains observed at all levels broadly are defined as follows:

* Emotional Support. Describes the social-emotional functioning of the classroom, including teacher-student relationships and responsiveness to social-emotional needs.
* Classroom Organization. Describes the management of students’ behavior, time, and attention in the classroom.
* Instructional Support. Describes the efforts to support cognitive and language development, including cognitive demand of the assigned tasks, the focus on higher order thinking skills, and the use of process-oriented feedback.

When conducting a classroom visit, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 (low range) indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 (middle range) indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 (high range) indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

In Lexington, ratings are provided across three grade bands: K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. For each grade band, ratings are provided across the overarching domains, as well as at individual dimensions within those domains. The full report of findings from observations conducted in Lexington is in Appendix B, and summary results are in Tables 17, 18, and 19 in this appendix.

In summary, findings from the Lexington observations were as follows:

* Emotional Support. Ratings were in the middle-high range for the K-5 grade band (5.6) and the middle range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (4.4 and 4.7, respectively).
* Classroom Organization. Ratings were in the middle-high range for the K-5 grade band (5.8) and the high range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (6.1 and 6.4, respectively).
* Instructional Support. Ratings were in the lower middle range for all grade bands (3.6 for K‑5, 3.6 for 6-8, and 4.1 for 9-12).
* Student Engagement. For Grades 4 and up, where student engagement was measured as an independent domain, ratings were in the middle-high range for Grades 4-5 (5.4) and in the middle range for the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands (4.8 and 5.0, respectively).

Overall, in the K-5 grade band, instructional observations suggest moderate evidence of emotional support, classroom organization, and student engagement (Grades 4-5) and mixed evidence of consistently rigorous instructional support. In the 6-8 grade band, instructional observations provide evidence of consistently strong classroom organization, mixed evidence of student engagement, and consistently rigorous emotional and instructional support. In the 9-12 grade band, instructional observations provide evidence of consistently strong classroom organization, moderate evidence of student engagement, and mixed evidence of consistently strong emotional support and rigorous instructional support.

## Leadership and Governance

Lexington’s superintendent, since 2018, is Dr, Julie Hackett. She receives support from a large group of directors and administrators, including the office manager, the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, the assistant superintendent of personnel and staff support, the director of innovation and technology, the director of equity and student support, the director of special education, the director of health services, the METCO director, the director of elementary education, the director of secondary education, the director of data and strategy, and department heads for each grade span (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) and content area (ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies). These district officials, particularly the superintendent, work closely with the elected school committee members who represent Lexington residents through their oversight of the district. The school committee has five members, each serving a three-year term.

At the school level, all nine schools have a principal and an assistant principal, with the two middle schools having two assistant principals and the high school having five (known as Deans). Each school also has distributed leadership teams, such as data teams, SSTs, grade-level teams, and subject area teams. These teams consist of a combination of school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and behavioral interventionists who work together to support students’ academic and behavioral needs.

District and school improvement planning starts as a collaborative process between the superintendent and the school committee. The district has an overarching 10-year strategic plan (2019-2029), and the superintendent and the school committee collaboratively narrow this strategic plan into concrete goals every two years to make implementation of this plan more manageable. Each school has an innovation plan developed in collaboration between school leadership and the school site council and then approved by the school committee. School innovation plans closely align with the district’s strategic plan and the specific strategic goals agreed on by the superintendent and the school committee.

Table 2 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in leadership and governance.

Table 2. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Leadership and Governance Standard

| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [School committee governance](#_School_Committee_Governance) | * The school committee is highly connected with the Lexington community. * Strong communication and collaboration exist between the superintendent and the school committee. * The evaluation of the superintendent closely aligns with the district’s strategic goals. |  |
| [District and school leadership](#_District_and_School) | * District leaders work closely with school leaders. |  |
| [District and school improvement planning](#_District_and_School_1) | * The district has a 10-year strategic plan that guides the district’s work. * Stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and community members, are well informed about the district’s strategic goals. * School leaders intentionally align their school innovation plans with the district’s strategic plan. * School innovation plans are developed with input from community members. |  |
| [Budget development](#_Budget_Development) | * The district has a clearly defined budget development process that includes close collaboration with district leaders, school committee members, and town officials. | * Developing a written agreement between the town and district officials about the allocation of local tax monies |

### School Committee Governance

The school committee has five members who work closely with the superintendent throughout the year to fulfill their roles within the district and the Lexington community. According to statute, and confirmed through interviews, the school committee is responsible for hiring and evaluating the superintendent, overseeing policy decisions, and working collaboratively with the superintendent and the finance department on the district’s budget. In addition to these formal responsibilities, the school committee has a variety of community liaison responsibilities. For example, district leaders acknowledged that school committee members collaborate with community groups and serve on various community input teams. School committee members are seen as “liaisons to the community for difficult topics.” For example, at the time of the district review, there was hateful graffiti about the Israel-Palestine conflict found at the high school, and the school committee, the superintendent, and the high school principal worked together to issue a joint statement about the issue. In addition, the superintendent and members of the school committee held a joint community meeting to address the issue with members of the community. The school committee effectively performs its roles within the district, and the strong connections between the school committee and the broader Lexington community is a strength of the district.

As reported by numerous stakeholders, the superintendent and the school committee work closely together to represent the district, which is a strength. According to the *Lexington Superintendent-School Committee Norms & Beliefs: A Working Agreement* document, which is publicly available on the district’s [website](https://www.lexingtonma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Final-Lexington-Norms-and-Beliefs-8-28-18-1.pdf), the school committee and the superintendent work together to “set the tone” for the district by communicating regularly and positively with one another, “assuming positive intent” and collaborating on major policy decisions with input from the community through subcommittees. As stated in this agreement, Lexington values communication between the superintendent and the school committee because “how we engage and interact with one another serves as a model for the respectful behaviors and interactions we expect of all students, staff, and school community members.” District leaders confirmed this commitment to communicate regularly with one another.

In addition to working together on policy issues and serving as community liaisons, the school committee and the superintendent also collaborate on the superintendent’s evaluation cycle, which closely aligns with the district’s strategic goals. Every two years, the superintendent and members of the school committee collaboratively decide which strategic goals from the district’s 10-year plan will be the focus. According to district leadership, deciding collaboratively which goals to focus on every two years helps ensure that the superintendent and the school committee “are all on the same page in terms of priorities and [that both parties] can work together towards a shared vision” on a shorter time frame. Once the superintendent and the school committee jointly agree on the priority strategic goals, the school committee then evaluates the superintendent based on the progress of these goals. Historic superintendent goals and subsequent evaluations are publicly available on the district’s website. The most recent set of collaborative goals is guiding the 2023-2025 school years (see District and School Improvement Planning for more information on the strategic goals). The close alignment of the superintendent’s evaluation with the district’s strategic goals is a strength of the district.

### District and School Leadership

The superintendent receives support from a robust team of district leadership: the office manager, the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, the assistant superintendent of personnel and staff support, the director of innovation and technology, the director of equity and student support, the director of special education, the director of health services, the METCO director, the director of elementary education, the director of secondary education, the director of data and strategy, department heads for different content areas, and the principals of each school within the district. Each school in the district has a variety of distributed leadership teams, including data teams (elementary only), SSTs, grade-level teams, and subject area teams. Similarly, these teams consist of combination of school administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, and behavioral interventionists who work together to support students’ academic and behavioral needs.

Overall, there is strong collaboration between district and school leadership teams, which is a strength of the district. District leaders and school leaders meet quarterly as a joint council, in which they keep one another updated about each school’s needs. Additionally, principals meet biweekly as an administrative council to discuss the needs of their schools more comprehensively and ensure alignment across schools. The superintendent also holds monthly meetings with new principals throughout the district to develop their leadership capacity.

### District and School Improvement Planning

Lexington has a 10-year strategic plan spanning from 2019 to 2029. This plan has four main overarching goals:

* Address and Narrow Equity Gaps. Identify, address, and narrow equity gaps in student opportunities, experiences, and achievement, ensuring the meaningful inclusion and integration of every member of our school community.
* Redefine Success. Transform our practices, systems, and structures to reflect a broader definition of success for our students, staff, and schools, including new measures of student achievement that extend beyond academics to include the knowledge, skills, and attributes students need for the future and contentment in life.
* Cultivate Student Agency and a sense of self-efficacy by ensuring that all PK-12 students’ educational experiences place them at the center of their learning; consistently revisit our curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional learning practices to (a) ensure relevancy and student voice, (b) teach students to set their own meaningful goals, (c) value productive struggle as they work toward them, and (d) reflect and monitor their progress toward attaining those goals.
* Innovate for Sustainable Change. Refine and improve school- and districtwide practices, systems, and structures related to managing innovation and promoting lasting change. We will develop clear decision-making structures and communication methods to prevent initiative overload and enable us to scale up promising practices more consistently.

Each overarching goal has a subset of “possible strategies” that the district can focus on during the 10-year plan. As mentioned in the School Committee Governance section, every two years the superintendent and the school committee jointly select which strategies they will focus on in the upcoming couple of years to set the district’s strategic vision. This process includes selecting a strategic priority within each overarching goal. The superintendent is then responsible for making progress on implementing these strategies.

For the current two-year cycle, the superintendent and the school committee are focusing on Strategic Priority 1.1 and Strategic Priority 1.2 under the first overarching goal in the district’s 10-year plan to address and narrow equity gaps. Strategic Priority 1.1 states that the district will “continue efforts to develop and implement a PK-12 DEI curriculum,” with full implementation by 2025-2026. Strategic Priority 1.2 states that “within five years . . . all schools in Lexington will demonstrate that they are ‘halving the gap’ on disproportionate students’[[5]](#footnote-6) outcomes as measured by State and/or local assessments.”

For the second overarching goal in the district’s 10-year plan, the superintendent and the school committee are focusing on Strategic Priority 2.1, which states that the district will

engage our school community (i.e., parents/caregivers, faculty and staff, leaders, and those with expertise) in helping to determine the academic and social-emotional knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students need to succeed in the 21st century and align these skills to PK‑12 measurement tools, including school assessments, report cards, and graduation requirements.

For the third overarching goal, the superintendent and the school committee members chose to focus on Strategic Priority 3.1, which states that the district will “organize various opportunities for students to participate in a “Student School Building Committee,” which can expose them to college and career opportunities and engage them in the process of creating a new or renovated high school.

For the fourth and final overarching goal, the superintendent and the school committee chose to focus on Strategic Priorities 4.1 and 4.2, which state that the district will re-create the district’s budget book so that it will be easier to navigate, include more visuals, and be “aesthetically pleasing” for the community.

The superintendent and school committee jointly determine and communicate each specific strategic goal to all school and district leaders, as well as teachers, parents, and other community members, which is a strength of the district. Across all focus groups conducted for this district review, stakeholders were aware of the district’s strategic goals, especially the district’s DEI goals. Most of the school initiatives reported in school-level focus groups directly align with the district’s prioritized strategic goals for the next two years. Examples of these include using student data to identify equity gaps, conferring with members of the community on policy issues regarding DEI, working to reevaluate curricula and standardize curricula across schools, providing opportunities for students to give input on the new high school building, allowing middle school students the opportunity to participate in morning announcements and school councils, and updating the district’s budget book to make it more concise and include more visuals.

In addition to the district’s overarching strategic plan and prioritized strategic goals, each school also develops their own unique innovation plan every two years. School innovation plans intentionally align with the district’s improvement plan as well as the school committee and superintendent’s prioritized strategic objectives. Across the nine schools (excluding Lexington Children’s Place, which was not part of this district review), school leaders create these innovation plans in collaboration with their school’s site council. According to parents in focus groups, site councils include parents and members of the community, allowing for community input in the development of each school’s innovation plan. Once finalized, all school innovation plans are publicly available on the district’s website. The intentional alignment of school innovation plans with the district’s strategic plan, as well as input from community members, is a strength of the district.

### Budget Development

Budget development in Lexington is a collaborative and public process that engages district and school leaders, the Board of Selectmen, the school committee, the appropriations committee, and the capital expenditures committee.

As described by district and school leaders, budget development begins in the summer when the school committee establishes the goals and priorities for the district. Budget development closely ties into the district’s strategic plan. According to several district leaders, the first question they consider when looking at a proposed budget is, “How will this accomplish our strategic plan?” In early fall, the school committee approves annual budget guidelines and the calendar for budget development each year. Throughout the fall, more than 50 budget managers throughout the district (including a budget manager for each school and for each department) develop their proposed budget. During late fall and early winter, each department meets with the assistant superintendent of finance and operations to review existing staffing levels, review budget priorities, and discuss anticipated budget requests. During this time, in a series of working summit meetings, the Board of Selectmen, the school committee, the appropriations committee, and the capital expenditures committee discuss the current financial health of the town, discuss budget issues, and provide policy guidance to town and school staff in finalizing the budget recommendations. The superintendent, in consultation with the assistant superintendent for finance and operations and the school department’s administrative council, reviews budget requests and makes recommendations for all school programs to the school committee. In February, there is a final school committee vote on the budget. Once the school committee approves the budget, the budget is distributed to the town meeting members and the finance committees, and they vote on the budget.

The district informs the budget development process by examining a variety of data. As described by district leaders and included in budget documents, the district considers student enrollment data including enrollment overall, by school and by grade level, compared to historical trends, and for future enrollment projections. The district also closely examines the needs of specific student groups, including enrollment numbers of multilingual learners and students with disabilities, and the need for related service providers (e.g., speech/language services, occupational therapy, counseling). Additional data used to inform the district’s budgeting documents include the number of students who qualify for financial assistance, preschool enrollment, and more. These data are used to determine staffing needs and drive budgeting decisions.

District and town leaders both referenced a long-standing verbal agreement between the town and the district in which “74 percent of the taxes and money raised from the town goes to the school [budget], and 26 percent goes to the town [budget].” This long-standing agreement came from previous district and town administration and neither party could remember the origination of this verbal agreement. A potential area for growth for Lexington would be developing a written agreement between the town and the district for this percentage split to ensure prioritization of the district in the future despite changing district and town administration. Currently, however, both town and district leaders agree that funding the district was a major priority within the town, and the community overall regards their district highly.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should work with the town to memorialize its practice of splitting tax revenues in a written agreement.*

## Curriculum and Instruction

In accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Lexington strives to ensure equitable, inclusive, and effective instruction for all students. The directors of primary and secondary education oversee curricular selection and classroom instruction. The district uses a well-defined and comprehensive curricular review process to regularly examine and update all curricula, both internally and externally developed. These review teams include school leaders, teachers, and specialists at all levels to promote vertical integration and feedback from a variety of stakeholders. Through this curricular review process, Lexington recently implemented a new mathematics curriculum and is working toward updating the ELA curriculum.

Lexington offers a wide variety of courses to provide learning and growth opportunities for all students. Most high school academic courses are available at three or four levels, from college prep to honors, but the school recently moved toward an “honors for all” model in ELA courses, with instruction differentiated at an individual level rather than the classroom level. The district also relaxed prerequisites for AP courses to enable greater access to these courses. Instructional observations found strong evidence of classroom organization, especially in middle school and high school classes, but less evidence of strong instructional support practices.

Table 3 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in curriculum and instruction.

Table 3. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Curriculum and Instruction Standard

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| [Curriculum selection and use](#_Curriculum_Selection_and) | * The district has a well-defined process for critically reviewing curricular materials that includes a variety of stakeholder input and feedback. | * Selecting and implementing high-quality curricula |
| [Classroom instruction](#_Classroom_Instruction) | * Classroom scores and student focus groups indicate that the district has positive and productive classroom environments. | * Providing support or resources to assist educators in making the current curriculum accessible to all students * Bringing greater consistency to the social-emotional learning curriculum and its implementation at different schools |
| [Student access to coursework](#_Student_Access_to) | * Lexington High School has been working to expand student access to advanced learning opportunities. | * Improving equitable access to advanced learning opportunities within the district, particularly for African American/Black students |

### Curriculum Selection and Use

According to a review of Lexington’s curricula being implemented, the district uses a combination of teacher-developed and published curricula. For mathematics, the district primarily uses Kendall Hunt’s Illustrative Math, used in all grades except 6-8. For literacy, all elementary schools Units of Study in Reading and Units of Study in Writing as the primary ELA curriculum for Grades K-5. In Grades K-3, Wilson’s Fundations and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness complement Units of Study, whereas Words Their Way complements Grades 4-5. In the 2023-24 school year, LPS piloted the Revised Units of Study in reading (K-2) and plans to expand use in the 2024-25 school year. In most other subjects, including almost all 6-12 courses, teachers develop their own curricula. District leaders reported that teachers and department leaders create a curriculum map through PLCs to ensure vertical and horizontal consistency.

A review of trusted curricular resources, including CURATE[[6]](#footnote-7) or EdReports, found that most ELA and mathematics curricula used across the district have no rating or do not meet expectations. One exception is in mathematics: EdReports rated Illustrative Math as meets expectations for Grades K-5 and 9-12. In literacy, EdReports rated Units of Study as not meeting expectations (Grades K-5), Fundations as partially meeting expectations (Grades K-2), and Heggerty was not rated in either CURATE or EdReports. The current lack of high-quality curricula is an area of growth for the district.

Curriculum review and selection is a well-defined and comprehensive process, which is a strength of the district. The directors of elementary and secondary education, supported by curricular review teams, lead reviews of all curricula. According to district leaders, instructional leaders select the team members, including teachers, specialists, and coaches across all grade levels, to promote vertical and horizontal review of curricula. Multiple special education teachers reported being members of curricular review teams. Together, district leaders, school leaders, and review teams conduct a structured and rigorous review process of all curricula (both externally and teacher-developed) taught across Lexington within the content area of focus.

The review cycle has four distinct phases: audit, research, development, and implementation. District leaders, school leaders, and documentation described these cycles. During the audit phase, the K‑12 curricular review teams examine the current status of the materials within the content area of focus, looking at the curriculum used, how it is taught in classrooms at all levels, and how it aligns to frameworks and guidelines. The second year is the research phase, in which committee members attend conferences, read books, visit other districts, and reach out to the school community, including other teachers, staff, students, and parents, to gather feedback. In the development phase, the team may select a new curriculum, create one in-house, or make updates to previously developed curricula in preparation for implementation in the fourth phase. During this time, the team plans professional development, plans any required adjustments to the curriculum, and conducts pilots if necessary. The implementation phase lasts five years, during which leaders and team members continually monitor and adjust the program. At the end of the five years, the teams return to the audit phase to identify focal areas for the next review. During all phases, they use rubrics and consider questions relating to DEI. The directors of elementary and secondary education stated that they conduct regular classroom visits, twice per department per year, to observe curriculum as it is taught, and the annual communication sent to department heads confirms this schedule. The *Curriculum Review Process Overview* document described the process as follows:

In Lexington, all content areas engage in cyclical curriculum reviews. The purpose of these reviews are to ensure both vertical and horizontal alignment of the district’s curricula, to be certain that our curriculum is current with state and national standards, and to ensure that our curriculum, resources, and instructional practices are reflective of current research and best practices. Throughout the four phases, student and community voice is used to guide decision making and evaluate progress. Overarching all of the curriculum review work is a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.

At the time of the district review, Lexington was early in the implementation phase for mathematics and in the audit phase for ELA.

District leaders, school leaders, and teachers generally agreed that the curricular review process is consistent and rigorous. In particular, elementary teachers expressed optimism about the new mathematics curriculum, appreciating how its lessons build on each other in a strong sequence. They also see significant student growth in student reading skills with the adoption of Fundations and Heggerty. The district provides teachers the opportunity to revise the curriculum outside the regular review cycle, paying for their time to make such changes during the summer. For example, 10th grade history teachers recently overhauled their curriculum to bring it into better alignment with ninth grade courses and updated state standards.

However, in focus groups, parents expressed some confusion and discomfort about the current status of curricula within Lexington. Multiple parents expressed their concerns with the continued use of Units of Study at the elementary level after it received recent criticism in the media. Community reactions to the Units of Study also was a topic of conversation during the January 24, 2024 school committee meeting, with a variety of perspectives shared both in support of and against the Units of Study. Although the district supplements Units of Study with Heggerty and Fundations for phonemic awareness and phonics instruction, respectively, parents in focus groups expressed both positive and negative experiences with these programs. They also expressed concerns about ongoing literacy gaps with older students who did not get to benefit from these supplemental programs.

According to district leaders, school leaders, and documentation, providing diverse and equitable curricula is a high priority within Lexington. Documentation details the inclusion of DEI in all curricular review rubrics and stages. Teachers across all grade levels agreed that their curricula are attentive to representing an array of viewpoints and cultures. For example, teachers described how Illustrative Math uses first names and images from many different cultures. School leaders also discussed their goals for improving diversity in curriculum and instruction, mentioning the use of a tool developed for culturally responsive walkthroughs to monitor teacher practice and provide feedback to teachers. (See Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development for more information about these walkthroughs.)

Students in both the middle and high school focus groups noted an emphasis on diversity and reflecting their own lives through their coursework, particularly with the books they are reading. Middle school students had a more positive attitude, mentioning that their teachers make efforts to connect learning to “their real life.” However, high school students were more skeptical, wondering how “genuine” the effort to improve diversity is. For example, one student mentioned reading a graphic novel about an immigrant, but several students who were immigrants themselves did not find the story relatable. Another said that “it feels like someone Googled the countries to pick from [that we learn about]” rather than trying to find opportunities to directly connect to students’ experiences; this was reportedly especially apparent for Asian students. Across focus groups, staff described how appropriately incorporating diversity into the curriculum is particularly challenging because of the high percentage of Asian students in the district, which tend to be less represented in most standard curricula.

The directors of elementary and secondary education work closely with departmental leaders and coaches to support the implementation of curricula. Curricular documents are on a Google Drive that is accessible to all teachers and staff. As described previously, professional development is part of the curriculum adoption process (See [Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development](#_Supervision,_Evaluation,_and) for more information about professional development.).

### Classroom Instruction

Classroom observations revealed a strength in positive and productive classroom environments throughout the district. As described previously (see Classroom Observations), across all grade levels, ratings within the Classroom Organization domain were generally in the high range. Observations provide evidence that rules and guidelines for behavior are clear and consistently reinforced by the teacher, and teachers provide a steady flow of activities to help the classroom run smoothly. When asked about the classroom environment and quality of instruction, middle school and high school students spoke well of their educational experiences. Middle school students reported that their teachers are understanding and check in with them regularly, and high school students also described their teachers as caring. The observation scores reflect these reports, with very high scores within the negative climate dimension (6.9 in the 6-8 grade band and 7.0 in the 9-12 grade band), indicating that relationships between teachers and students are respectful with few displays of negative affect. Students in focus groups also reported that teachers provide hands-on opportunities and connect coursework to their daily lives. More middle school than high school students reported that teachers ask them for ongoing feedback; in high school, popular teachers are more likely to ask for feedback, whereas less well-liked teachers “never” do.

However, classroom observations also reveal that throughout the district, analysis and reasoning was in the low-middle range for all grade ranges (3.0 for Grades 4-5, 2.8 for Grades 6-8, and 2.8 for Grades 9-12). Observations provide evidence that students have few opportunities to engage in higher order thinking skills through novel or open-ended tasks, such as developing arguments, analyzing data, or hypothesizing and brainstorming. In classrooms with lower scores for analysis and inquiry, instruction often occurs in a rote manner, with limited opportunities to apply previous knowledge and skills to a new problem. Students lack encouragement to think about and reflect on their own learning.

There is relatively little evidence of a common schoolwide vision for classroom instruction in each building. Elementary teachers and leaders generally reported using a workshop model, particularly for literacy, in which teachers use a blend of whole-group and small-group instruction. However, the new Illustrative Math curricula does not lend itself to this model, so mathematics is primarily whole-group instruction with individual practice. In other subjects, teachers use a variety of practices, such as some project-based learning in science and social studies, although such practices are not a schoolwide expectation. Secondary teachers generally agreed that they have a large amount of autonomy within their classrooms. High school teachers mentioned an “overarching direction” within the school and within departments, and they work within departments, subjects, and courses to ensure that students meet the expectations for college readiness; within those parameters, teachers have flexibility to choose their own models. According to high school students in focus groups, this approach results in a wide variety of experiences for students, even when taking the same course but from different teachers. As one student summarized, “two people in the same course with different teachers can have a widely different experience.”

Although there is no common schoolwide vision for instruction in each building, ensuring that all students can access the curricula is an expectation of all teachers. Teachers reported using multiple strategies to differentiate instruction and determine which students need extra support. Both general education teachers and specialists reported having flexibility to make accommodations for students so that they can access the curricula, such as supplementing with different materials or using different instructional strategies. Elementary teachers and interventionists reported that the core math and ELA curricula, Illustrative Math, and Units of Study, require extensive modification for some students, particularly students with disabilities and ELs. As one teacher described:

“I often find for the students I work with who have specific learning disabilities… [such as] an executive functioning issue or language weaknesses, [that] Units of Study and [Illustrative] math are very language heavy…. It’s a great framework… for general ed classrooms, but it requires a lot of modifications on my end.”

Providing more support or resources to assist educators in making the current curriculum accessible to all students is an area of growth for the district.

Lexington articulates the importance of developing students’ social and emotional competencies but lacks a coherent strategy for actualizing these values. At the elementary level, some teachers described having dedicated time to provide social-emotional learning lessons to students on a weekly basis, whereas others reported having time every other week. Secondary school specialists (including counselors, social workers, and other non-instructional support staff) also differed in their reports of how often they provide social-emotional learning instruction, with one describing opportunities at the middle schools as “limited,” whereas another said they come into classrooms for an extended homeroom “once per cycle.” Further, the *Lexington Public Schools Mental Health Programs & Services* guidebook states that teachers and specialists offer social-emotional learning instruction using “evidence-based curriculum, including Open Circle, Responsive Classroom, Second Step, Social Thinking, Zones of Regulation, Mind-Up, 7 Habits of Highly Effective Students, Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, etc.” Teachers described pulling from a variety of these programs, depending on what they had access to. Bringing greater consistency to the social-emotional learning curriculum and its implementation at different schools is an area of growth for the district.

### Student Access to Coursework

At the elementary level, schools regularly offer music, art, physical education, and library courses. Students can start learning a string instrument in fourth grade and other instruments in fifth grade, with lessons and band class meeting during school time. Digital learning coaches also come into classrooms and the library to teach coding, video making, and other technological tools. The schools provide various club opportunities, including mathematics teams, chess clubs, sports clubs, and knitting clubs. Teachers, guidance counselors, parents, or students themselves (starting in the upper elementary grades) can start clubs.

According to the middle school program of studies, students take world language (French, Mandarin, and Spanish) as a core academic subject, and students also may take elective courses in engineering, drama, music fundamentals and performance groups (including choral groups, band, and orchestra), visual arts, creative writing, and computer science. Diamond Middle School offers studio art courses, and Clarke Middle School has a speech and debate course. All students must take health and physical education courses. Middle school students expressed satisfaction with the number of electives available to them and said that counselors will let them switch classes without much difficulty. The students also mentioned various club opportunities, such as computer science club, coding club, Dungeons & Dragons, and Model UN [United Nations]. They also reported that students can create their own clubs if they want to explore other interests.

Lexington High School offers a wide variety of advanced and elective coursework. The school’s program of studies lists and describes 20 AP offerings and honors courses. Per the program of studies, most courses are at varying levels: college preparatory (CP) 2 for a structured learning environment, CP 1 or CP for a guided learning environment, and Honors and AP for an independent learning environment. To improve students’ access to advanced learning opportunities, the program of studies described how school leaders adjusted the number of prerequisites required to be eligible for AP courses:

Our focus and work over the past two years has been to review, revise, and further diversify our elective opportunities for students. We have made adjustments to a number of course requirements to broaden student access. The point is to provide students with more equitable access to high-interest and rigorous curricular offerings at LHS. (Lexington High School Program of Studies Grades 9-12, p. 2)

In practice, high school leaders describe using “stretch placements” as part of advising, meaning that they consider student interest and ability along with past course performance when making course recommendations. When considering students for stretch assignments, staff are careful to identify students from historically marginalized groups, who are not typically recommended for advanced placement courses. For example, during the 2021-22 school year (the most recently reported data from the district), 159 students participated in stretch assignments, of whom, 25% had IEPs or 504s and over 60% identified as students of color and/or Hispanic/Latinx. Overall, these students performed well in the stretch placements, averaging a B- grade. The *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity: Annual Update* from January 2023 also noted that the high school lifted all prerequisites for four senior-level AP social studies courses (AP Economics, AP American Government, AP Psychology, and AP Human Geography) in the 2022-23 school year, allowing open enrollment.

To further support student success after they enroll in AP courses, district and school leaders described a greater emphasis on scaffolding the AP content to meet a wider variety of students’ needs and providing students with more individualized support. District leaders also reported that teachers and leaders are working to ensure that middle school classes prepare more students for honors-level work.

According to DESE’s district profile in 2023, 90 percent of 11th and 12th graders completed at least one advanced course. This percentage includes a large majority of students from low-income backgrounds (77 percent), high needs students (70 percent), ELs (64 percent), and students across some ethnic groups (e.g., 96 percent of Asian students). A smaller percentage of African American/Black students (56 percent) are currently accessing advanced courses, indicating a potential opportunity gap. Similar gaps are noted in the *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity: Annual Update.* The lower percentage of African American/Black students suggests that ensuring equitable access for all students to advanced coursework is an ongoing area of growth for the district.

In fall 2023, Lexington High School transitioned to offering an “honors for all” ELA program for students in Grades 10-12, replacing the prior leveled system described previously. With this new approach, all students completing the 10th-12th-grade English curriculum receive an honors designation on their transcript. As described in a Frequently Asked Questions document about this transition, “this approach will close opportunity gaps, reinforce students’ beliefs in their own academic potential, and reduce student stress, while preserving a robust curriculum.” With this transition, high school teachers explained that they use Aspen data and support from special education teachers to differentiate their instruction in these classes to ensure that all students can access the curriculum. District leaders reported receiving minimal pushback from parents about the “honors for all” model, and the topic did not come up in parent focus groups. However, some high school students felt that these courses are not rigorous enough to be true honors courses.

Lexington High School offers courses in elective areas including performing and visual arts, world languages (American Sign Language, French, German, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, and Spanish), social studies, and sciences. Health education is a requirement in ninth and 11th grades, and students in all grades must take at least one semester of physical education per year.

According to the Lexington High School program of studies, the high school offers concurrent enrollment at Middlesex Community College, University of Massachusetts at Boston, and Syracuse University Project Advance. For the 2023-24 school year, course options include opportunities in science (physics, astronomy, and environmental studies), world language (Latin), and social studies (personal finance), depending on the partnering institution. Any student may take the course, but they must pass the college’s requirements and pay a fee to receive college credits. According to school leaders, for most courses, students have until December to decide whether they want to enroll for credit.

Across a wide variety of focus groups, including school staff, families, and students, there is a broad assumption at Lexington High School that most if not all students will apply to and attend a competitive college. In addition to college preparation, some career-focused programs are available at the high school, such as the Community Health Certificate and the Introduction to Special Education course. Previously, high school students were able to take vocational educational courses through Minuteman High School (in the town of Lexington), but this opportunity was discontinued. District leaders recognize this gap in their offerings and “are working on it” with the help of guidance counselors.

Overall, high school students agreed that they have many opportunities to take interesting courses that are relevant to their lives. They noted that Lexington High School seems to be an “unofficial” STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) school, with more opportunities in mathematics and science than other subject areas. They also described the atmosphere as extremely competitive, with a strong focus on getting into college. Students did mention the large number of clubs offered and said that a club fair occurs every October to let them know what is available. Some mathematics and science-focused clubs can be difficult to get into, and some students feel that the clubs are primarily for listing on résumés and college applications, and are not organizations with a true purpose behind them.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should review the implementation of its curricular review process to select or develop high-quality instructional materials across all subject areas and grade levels.*
* *With its high-quality instructional materials, the district should partner with its educators to aid them in the differentiation of materials, so that all learners are able to access the curriculum.*
* *The district should develop a coherent plan to implement differentiated social emotional curricula across all grade bands.*
* *The district should continue to systematically evaluate barriers to advanced coursework and implement remedies, particularly for African American/Black students, whose participation rate falls below most other student groups.*

## Assessment

Lexington administers multiple standard assessments across all grade levels throughout the year. Assessment, both selection and ownership, is embedded in the work of curriculum departments. Assessment selection aligns with the curricular review process. LPS employs a director of data and strategy who oversees centralized reporting, evaluation and data management, and also provides coaching and consultation as needed to teams working on assessment design and/or selection. Working with other department leaders, this role supports school and district teams in using this information to inform plans (for individual students and at a school/district level).

In the elementary schools, students take DIBELS, mCLASS, and Aimsweb three times per year. At the time of the district review, the middle schools were piloting STAR as a common assessment tool. In the high school, teachers give common district-developed unit assessments. Data teams, PLCs, and grade-level meetings provide time for teachers and specialists to review data for trends and determine individual student needs. Currently, data are spread out across multiple systems; the district is currently working to adopt a centralized “data warehouse” that will serve as a repository for storing, tracking, and sharing assessment data.

Table 4 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in assessment.

Table 4. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Assessment Standard

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| [Data and assessment systems](#_Data_and_Assessment) | * The district uses a variety of assessments to track student progress and identify student needs in both ELA and mathematics (e.g., mCLASS, Aimsweb, STAR). |  |
| [Data use](#_Data_Use) | * The district regularly examines a variety of disaggregated student data (e.g., MCAS, course enrollments, behavioral data, referral data). * Each school allocates time for teachers and specialists to meet to discuss student data (e.g., data teams, PLCs). |  |
| [Sharing results](#_Sharing_Results) | * The district transparently shares data on barriers to achieving equitable outcomes with the Lexington community. * The district uses multiple methods for sharing student information with families throughout the school year. | * Increasing ongoing, two-way communication between schools and families |

### Data and Assessment Systems

Assessment, both selection and ownership, is embedded in the work of curriculum departments. Assessment selection aligns with the curricular review process. LPS employs a director of data and strategy who oversees centralized reporting, evaluation and data management, and also provides coaching and consultation as needed to teams working on assessment design and/or selection. At the elementary level, all schools administer literacy and mathematics screeners three times per year, including mCLASS and the eighth edition of DIBELS as the literacy screeners in Grades K-5, and Assessing Math Concepts for Grades K-2 and Aimsweb for Grades 2-5 as the mathematics screeners. Additional literacy assessments used at the elementary level include the Benchmark Assessment System, Heggerty, primary spelling inventory, common writing prompts, and more. At the middle school level, teachers are piloting STAR as both a literacy and mathematics screener for Grades 6-8. At both the middle and high school levels, teachers administer teacher-developed common unit assessments. Across all levels, teachers administer formative assessments built into their curriculum (e.g., daily cool down exercises, midpoint check-ins) to evaluate student progress more frequently. District leaders noted that the high school also is moving toward using screeners versus examining only traditional midterm and final examinations as part of the focus on skills-based learning. The district’s utilization of a variety of assessments to track student progress and identify student needs in both ELA and mathematics is a strength.

Other data sources mentioned by school leaders and teachers include MCAS, ACCESS for ELs, AP examinations, SAT examinations for college placement, and more. School leaders also review report cards, which are standards based at the elementary and middle school levels and traditional letter grades at the high school level.

Currently, these data are stored in a variety of places. According to district leaders, mCLASS, Aimsweb, and STAR each have their own management tools. Aspen, the district’s student information system, houses grades and certain behavioral data (e.g., attendance, suspensions). Most other data and tools, including teacher-developed assessments and district-developed behavior trackers, are on Google Drive, using Google Sheets and other Google reporting applications. District leaders referred to these as “orphan data.” Teachers also mentioned having technical difficulties with the STAR system, so they have not yet had an opportunity to analyze the data collected.

To improve data management and analysis, the district is in the second year of a three-year plan to adopt a centralized data warehouse system, particularly for data related to their multitiered system of support (MTSS: e.g., referral data, progress monitoring data). Because each school has its own process for tracking data in Google, and each data set has a slightly different organization, looking for trends across schools is difficult. In addition, this organization makes student transition points (e.g., moving from eighth to ninth grade) less streamlined and efficient. District leaders also noted that the disparate systems make it difficult to share data across grade levels and teams, especially at the secondary level. According to the *Adoption of District-wide Data Warehouse: Project Timeline, December 2023*, LPS’s project goals included:

* Improve centralized tracking of student interventions (that would be reliably passed grade to grade, school to school) and allow for longitudinal review of student progress over time.
* Integrate data across assessment systems (e.g. pulling data from mCLASS/DIBELS, MCAS, AMC, Aimsweb, select data from ASPEN)
* House data that isn’t currently captured consistently or centrally that should be (e.g. key common assessments and other screening tools) that would support more comprehensive assessment of student need and how we’re doing as a system

The three-year plan delineates the steps to review and select a data platform. During the 2022-23 school year, district staff researched the options and gathered feedback from staff and teachers about their data tracking and analysis needs. In fall 2023, a committee convened to further the project, with a goal of piloting the new system in the 2024-25 school year.

### Data Use

### At the district level, leaders have a goal to “achieve equitable outcomes [for all students].” To accomplish this, the district regularly examines a variety of academic and nonacademic data, disaggregated by student groups. District leaders report examining MCAS results, AP outcomes, course enrollments, student grades, referrals to SST, disciplinary data and more for discrepancies by student groups. These data analyses revealed a need to consistently focus efforts on working to address achievement gaps for African American/Black students, students with disabilities, and students from low-income backgrounds (see District and School Improvement Planning for more information on how the district has identified achievement gaps and Student Access to Coursework for more information on how the district is working to ameliorate disparities). The district’s regular examination of a variety of disaggregated student data is a strength of the district.

At the school level, teachers and specialists generally agree that the district expects them to use data to make decisions about instruction and student supports and provides supports in using data. Teachers described having dedicated time to collaboratively discuss data on a regular basis (e.g., grade-level meetings, PLCs, data team meetings). During these various meetings, the teams identify individual students in need of additional supports and patterns across classrooms and grades. These teams also provide an avenue for teachers to be supported in using data regularly, in addition to larger trainings on specific assessment platforms. For example, at the introduction of mCLASS, the district provided training sessions to administrators, specialists, and teachers, with online resources provided for more information. One specialist said that the literacy team did an “amazing job” of creating refresher videos “that you can watch if you forget how to do something.” The allocation of time for teachers and specialists to meet to discuss student data is a strength of the district.

### Sharing Results

District personnel regularly create data-based reports and presentations for district leaders, the school committee, and the broader Lexington community. The reporting calendars provided by the district show a schedule of annual and quarterly reports on topics such as MCAS results, benchmark assessments, budgeting, enrollment data, and the superintendent’s annual *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity*. As described earlier, these reports include disaggregated data to transparently report on achievement gaps within the district. The following is an excerpt from the 2023 *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity* that demonstrates how the district is sharing performance differences on the most recent administration of MCAS with the community:

Performance differences between African American/Black students (22% in Grades 3-8 and 52% in Grade 10 in 2022) and the highest performing racial/ethnic group, Asian (92% in Grades 3-8 and 94% in Grade 10 in 2022) have widened since 2021. This was also the case for students receiving special education services (36% special education vs. 86% non-special education in Grades 3-8; 51% special education vs. 92% non-special education in Grade 10). These outcomes are aligned with public health experts’ warnings that the pandemic was likely to have more severe impacts on certain populations (e.g., communities of color and lower-income earners).

At the elementary level, parents receive standards-based report cards and progress reports each semester. As described in the Fall 2023 Literacy Screening for Families presentation, if students score “significantly below” on the mCLASS screener, parents receive formal notification via a telephone call from the school and a letter from the principal. Regardless of how their child performed on this screener, all parents can reach out to their child’s teacher to receive their results and have them explained.

At the middle and high school levels, parents also receive report cards (standards based at the middle school and traditional letter grades at the high school) at the end of each grading period (trimester at the middle schools, quarters at the high school). All teachers are expected to have grades updated in the grading system at the mid-point of those reporting periods. Caregivers and students can see the grades, and teachers are expected to reach out to caregivers if a student is struggling. In focus groups, parents and students described having access to Google Classroom and Aspen to access grades, although not all teachers keep these platforms up to date, which can limit the usefulness of these tools.

In general, parents expressed concerns about inconsistency about how often and how clearly teachers communicate. For example, some elementary teachers send biweekly emails with classroom updates, whereas others do not regularly communicate. Further, although some parents of students with disabilities report receiving monthly emails, others said they hear from the school only when “something is wrong.” Increasing ongoing, two-way communication regarding student progress between schools and families is an area of growth for the district.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should investigate the source of inconsistencies around communication with families and then develop a plan that includes proactive, two-way communication with families on student progress.*

## Human Resources and Professional Development

Lexington’s human resources department oversees recruitment, retention, formal evaluations, and professional learning opportunities for staff. In recent years, a main focus of the department, along with the superintendent and the director of equity and student support, is hiring diverse staff that represent the demographics of students in the district. The equity and student support department has published many materials related to recruitment, hiring, and retention practices intended to promote diversity.

The district has a strong, three-year mentoring program, in which new teachers pair with seasoned mentor teachers, matched by school and subject area. Lexington also has many professional development opportunities throughout the district, both mandatory and optional, for teachers to engage in throughout the year. As reported by teachers and school administrators, Lexington does not currently have any formalized structures in place to recognize exemplary teachers throughout the district.

Table 5 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in human resources and professional development.

Table 5. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Human Resources and Professional Development Standard

| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Infrastructure](#_Infrastructure) | * The district has standardized documentation about their practices for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. |  |
| [Recruitment, hiring, and assignment](#_Recruitment,_Hiring,_and) | * The district uses a variety of strategies to improve and diversify the educator workforce across all roles. * Students participate in teacher and school leader hiring decisions. * The district supports staff affinity groups to promote DEI, foster camaraderie across staff, and retain staff. | * Continuing to expand efforts to improve and diversify the teacher and leader workforce, especially for Asian educators and leaders |
| [Supervision, evaluation, and educator development](#_Supervision,_Evaluation,_and) | * District and school leaders receive professional development on providing teachers with feedback on culturally responsive teaching practices. * The district has a well-defined and comprehensive mentorship program that supports new teachers during their first three years in the district. | * Implementing the educator evaluation framework for all educators in accordance with regulatory requirements, including goal setting and summative evaluations * Increasing opportunities for teachers to receive formative feedback to grow their instructional practices |
| [Recognition, leadership development, and advancement](#_Recognition,_Leadership_Development) | * The district provides many opportunities for participation in meaningful teacher leadership activities (e.g., serving as mentor teachers, participating on various committees). | * Creating districtwide formal structures to recognize strong teacher performance |

### Infrastructure

The assistant superintendent of human resources and professional learning leads the human resources department for the district. The assistant superintendent receives support from the human resources office manager, the director of equity and student support, and other staff within the department. These staff members collaborate to support current and potential employees within Lexington. Overall, the human resources department oversees the district’s hiring process; collaborates with district leadership on retention processes and reporting; stores formal educator evaluations on Google Drive; and collaborates with district, school, and department leadership to organize professional learning opportunities for staff.

As described by district leaders, the department’s responsibilities about hiring include collaborating with district, school, and department administrators; reviewing building and department hiring managers’ requisition forms in TalentEd for new staff positions; posting job descriptions for new positions on the district website, School Spring, HandShake, Indeed, The Teacher’s Lounge, and other specific job websites as necessary; providing necessary documentation to hiring mangers about district-standardized procedures intended to increase diversity in hiring (e.g., the *Guidelines for Promoting Diversity in Hiring* document, the *Mitigating Bias During Interview Processes* document); and aiding new employees through the onboarding process into the district, including overseeing the new employee orientation and providing mandatory DEI training to all new hires.

After onboarding a staff member into the district, the human resources department has written strategies for retaining staff members, detailed in the *Lexington Public Schools: Guidelines for Supporting Staff with Diverse Backgrounds* document. This document provides some district- recommended best practices for principals and administrators to support staff from diverse backgrounds, including making sure that staff are aware of the district’s affinity groups, including the employees of color affinity group, the LGBTQIA+ group, the women in leadership group, the administrators of color group; and ensuring the matching of new staff members with diverse mentors throughout the district. In addition, district leadership review new staff retention data, looking for patterns in retention across diverse categories of new hires. The superintendent annually reports these retention and hiring data in the *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity*. According to this report, average staff retention rates within Lexington fluctuated from 85% to 90.5% over the past four years, with a small decrease during the COVID-19 pandemic. The report further describes some differences in staff retention percentages by staff members’ race/ethnicity, "across demographic groups, retention rates ranged from 82.6% (among Hispanic/Latino staff) to 89.2% (among Asian staff) in 2021-2022."

According to district leaders and documentation, a main priority for the human resources department in recent years has been diversifying the workforce. Outlined in the goal of the district’s strategic plan to “identify, address, and narrow equity gaps in student opportunities, experiences, and achievement,” this goal is part of the superintendent’s first goal related to annual barriers. Alignment and standardization occur throughout documentation about the district’s practices for recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, which is a strength of the district.

### Recruitment, Hiring, and Assignment

To begin the hiring process, as reported by district leaders, principals determine staffing needs at the elementary schools, but both principals and department heads determine staffing needs at the middle and high school levels. District leaders also reported that after identifying a staffing need, hiring managers make their requests to the district’s assistant superintendent of finance and operations for approval. Once approved, the hiring manager can start the recruiting process through the district’s human resources department by filling out a requisition form in TalentEd. After approving a requisition form, the human resources department posts available positions both internally and through a variety of recruitment platforms, intentionally prioritizing the recruitment of a diverse workforce. (See Infrastructure for more information.)

Lexington is committed to recruiting a diverse educator workforce across all roles. According to the district’s strategic plan, “striv[ing] for staffing that is reflective of the diversity of our community” is a major priority. To work toward this goal, the human resources department outlined the district’s expectations for and commitment to diversity in hiring in the January 2020 Joint Council slideshow, presented to all district and school leaders, as well as the *Guidelines for Promoting Diversity in Hiring* document, which every hiring manager receives. District leaders in interviews also emphasized that the major goal of the human resources department is to recruit and retain a diverse workforce within the district.

One important component of recruiting a diverse workforce, mentioned in interviews with district representatives, is posting job opportunities to diverse recruitment platforms. District leaders noted that the district’s human resources department intentionally posts job opportunities on recruitment channels specifically aimed toward candidates of color, including Teacher’s Lounge and alumni associations of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In addition, district leaders reported in interviews that hiring manager training encourages administrators to use nontraditional means of recruitment, such as recruiting through recommendations from staff affinity groups. The district uses an intentional and varied approach to recruiting diverse candidates—a strength of the district.

According to documentation, once an applicant applies for a job, the human resources department forwards the application to the hiring manager through the TalentEd Applicant Tracking system. As described in the *Guidelines for Promoting Diversity in Hiring* document, expectations for commitment to diversity in hiring practices include requiring hiring managers to interview all candidates of color and applicants who diversify a school or department; looking through résumés and applications for indicators that a potential candidate may help diversify staffing; using gender neutral and inclusive language in written and oral communication; maintaining diverse interviewing teams that reflect the diversity in a school or department, including the students it serves; and including interview questions that reflect the district’s commitment to diversity. Upon reviewing an application, the hiring manager assembles a hiring committee, prioritizing the diversity of committee members. District leaders also noted that hiring managers receive training to specifically pay attention to how a potential employee answers DEI questions and identify the difference between “a surface level response and a deeper response.” As mentioned earlier, the expectation is that hiring managers promote diversity throughout the hiring process and hire qualified candidates who add diversity to the district, according to the district’s strategic goals.

In interviews, district leaders emphasized the importance of including student voice in hiring decisions and stated that the district intentionally “incorporates student voices” through a variety of platforms, including having students sit in on hiring committees or getting student feedback from prospective teachers’ lessons. The consistent involvement of students’ feedback in all teacher and school leader hiring decisions is a strength of the district.

In addition to hiring diverse staff, the district exemplifies a commitment to retaining staff as evidenced by the wide variety of staff affinity groups. These groups promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion by providing space for employees with common interests, backgrounds, and experiences to come together and support each other. The groups are open to all Lexington staff. According to district and school staff, there are many different affinity groups for staff, including employees of color, LGBTQIA+, Asian/Asian American, multilingual staff, women in leadership, and more. Some affinity groups receive stipends, whereas others do not—a decision made primarily by the group in collaboration with the district. The district’s support of these affinity groups to develop camaraderie across staff is a strength of the district.

The human resources department actively monitors staff demographic data and works with district leadership to promote and report the successful diversification of staff. The superintendent annually produces the Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity to improve transparency for community members. A portion of this report breaks down the demographics of staff compared with the demographics of the students within the district. According to DESE’s *Employed Educators Report* for 2023, 85 percent of administrators and 87 percent of teachers are White, whereas only 36 percent of all students identify as White. According to this data report and staff interviews, a unique demographic context of this district is that roughly 45.6 percent of the district’s student population is Asian—a higher average percentage than other districts in the state, which have an average of 7.3 percent Asian students, according to the fiscal year *2025 Budget Book*. However, Lexington’s workforce does not reflect the district’s large Asian student population, as prioritized in the district’s strategic goals. One area for growth is prioritizing recruitment of an Asian workforce to better align with student demographics in the district.

### Supervision, Evaluation, and Educator Development

Depending on the school building and level of the staff member being evaluated, a building’s principal, assistant principal, or department head oversees evaluations. The district uses a supervision and evaluation tool based on DESE standards. The evaluation process includes self-assessment, goal setting, and plan development components. Overall, the evaluation process differs for teachers who have been with the district for less than four years and those who have been with the district for more than four years. Teachers who have been in the district less than four years have observations in their classrooms four times per year, and each year these teachers must set goals for themselves, prepare a self-assessment, and get approval from their administrator on their goals and objectives throughout their evaluation process. After the first three years, when teachers are eligible for and receive Professional Teacher Status, teachers write their goals for review on a two-year cycle, and in the second year of each evaluation cycle, the evaluator observes teachers in their classrooms.

District records suggest evaluations for teachers are managed using Google Drive. Lexington Public Schools entered into a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the teachers and administrators, which had implications for the supervision and evaluation process for the 2022-2023 school year. The evaluation process would only focus on two standards and three focus indicators which are Standard II: Teaching All Students (indicators: II-A: Instruction; and II-B: Learning Environment) and Standard IV: Professional Culture (indicators IV-C: Shared Responsibility, Collaboration, and Decision-Making); and creating one goal, either a “Professional Practice Goal” or a “Student Learning Goal.” The district requests that feedback is centered around Standards II and IV; however, if there are concerns around other standards or indicators, evaluators were encouraged to provide feedback and document concerns related to those areas. Additionally, completion of the summative evaluation form was not a requirement, whereas completion of the “Goal Setting” form was a requirement in the evaluation process. This evaluation process, however, does not align with state regulatory requirements; therefore, an area for growth is implementing the educator evaluation framework for all educators in accordance with state regulations, including goal setting and summative evaluations.

Simple random sampling was used to select the sample of 10 percent of 313 teachers (31 teachers) due for summative evaluations for the 2022-2023 school year. While completion of the summative evaluation form was not a requirement based on the MOA, 16 of the 31 teachers (52 percent) selected for review had a summative evaluation available for review, complete and not missing required components. Nearly all (97 percent) of the teachers developed one goal, either a student learning or a professional practice goal using the “goal setting” form. A small proportion of the sample (19 percent) developed both a student learning and a professional practice goal. Additionally, a large majority (77 percent) of teachers provided multiple (more than 2) artifacts to evidence progress toward their goals.

Similarly, the supervision and evaluation process for administrators is conducted in Google Drive. According to district records, 76 administrative district staff were due for a summative evaluation for the 2022-2023 school year. Although not required based on the MOA, 27 evaluations of the 76 administrators (36 percent) had a summative evaluation available for review and complete with ratings for each standard and an overall rating. A small majority (68 percent) of evaluations included either student learning, or professional practice. Additionally, slightly less than half of administrative staff (43 percent) provided multiple (more than 2) artifacts to evidence progress toward their goal.

Outside the formal evaluation process, school leaders conduct informal observations to provide formative feedback to teachers throughout the school year. According to school leaders, the frequency with which they conduct informal observations varies. For example, some school leaders described that they went into classrooms “at least once or twice a day,” whereas others described doing walkthroughs only when tied to the formal evaluation process. Teachers within schools also described this disparity in observations across schools, saying “[the frequency of observations] really varies building to building.” Many teachers throughout focus groups reported desiring observation by school administration on a more frequent cadence. Therefore, an area for growth within the district across multiple schools is increasing opportunities for teachers to receive formative feedback to grow their instructional practices.

Some school leaders also described other informal methods by which they provided feedback to teachers. These methods include participating in instructional learning walks with teachers, setting up weekly 1:1 office hour slots for teachers to discuss instruction with them, and leaving informal notes with feedback for teachers about their instruction. Generally, teachers in focus groups responded positively to administrators who engaged in more frequent, informal feedback on their instruction, further illustrating the need for administrators across all buildings to be intentional about allocating the time for observations.

In addition to traditional classroom observations, the district also provides feedback to teachers on culturally responsive instruction. Recently, all school administrators have been participating in professional development on how to evaluate culturally responsive instruction. Over the 2023-2024 school year, the district brought in an external equity expert to do school-based walkthroughs within the district and to work with evaluators to improve their comfort about what to look for and how to provide feedback on culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. For the 2023-2024 school year, the plan is for each school to participate in two rounds of walkthroughs with the consultant to examine culturally responsive teaching practices. This professional learning opportunity for evaluators and administrators to learn more about evaluating culturally responsive instruction is a strength of the district.

In terms of other professional development opportunities, as detailed in the *2023-2024 LPS Professional Learning Plan*, teachers have multiple mandatory and optional learning opportunities, including synchronous and asynchronous learning and in-person and remote opportunities. Professional development includes summer professional learning opportunities, leadership retreats, building-based professional learning, afterschool professional learning programs, a summer workshop program, district professional learning half days, and external professional learning opportunities through district partners. Despite the large number of professional learning opportunities, teachers repeatedly expressed concern in focus groups that some of these opportunities, especially the optional opportunities, are available only during the school day, versus after school. With a shortage of substitutes, it is difficult for teachers to take advantage of these opportunities. For example, although the district is encouraging the use of restorative practices, this professional development is optional and offered two times during the school day and one time over the summer; consequently, many interested teachers cannot commit to this opportunity.

Throughout the academic year, the district has two full days of professional learning: the day before students return to school and Lexington Learns Together, a midyear professional learning day for all staff throughout the district. During Lexington Learns Together, teachers develop and present their own sessions to other teachers about topics or teaching practices in which they are strong. The district has 10 districtwide half days for professional learning. For five of these days, individual teachers and staff can determine which professional learning opportunities they would like to attend. The other five days are predetermined at the school level. Overall, teachers reported being pleased with the variety of professional learning opportunities offered throughout the district and the frequency of these opportunities. They reported that every year the district’s professional learning committee (composed of both teachers and administrators throughout the district) distributes a survey asking teachers what professional learning opportunities they want in the upcoming year.

Specific to new teachers, the district has a well-defined mentoring program, which is a strength of the district. Teachers described the three-year mentoring program as “robust” and explained that becoming a mentor is a professional learning option. Teachers interested in mentoring must complete a district certification to become a mentor. Then the principal and the department head work together to match new teachers with their mentors within the same subject area and school building. Mentors submit recording logs of their mentorship activities, including weekly meetings for new, full-time staff. Mentor teachers also observe their new staff and provide them feedback on their instruction. Teachers who previously were mentees within the district described this process as “helpful,” especially for “making connections with other teachers.”

### Recognition, Leadership Development, and Advancement

Across schools, the district provides many opportunities for participating in meaningful teacher leadership activities, such as serving as mentor teachers and working on various committees and school-based teams (e.g., professional learning committee, curriculum review committee, SSTs), which is a strength for the district. For those aspiring to become school or district administrators, the district supports the practicum hours required for licensure. In addition, teachers mentioned that the professional learning day, Lexington Learns Together, provides them with an opportunity to share their expertise and experiences with other teachers.

One area for growth within the district is a lack of districtwide structures to recognize excellent teachers within the district. In addition to no district-level structures, none of the teachers in focus groups mentioned any informal mechanisms to recognize teachers for their exemplary work at the school level.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should build upon its educator diversity efforts by developing targeted strategies to recruit educators whose racial and ethnic backgrounds reflect those of the student body.*
* *The district must align its educator evaluation process with regulatory requirements so that all educators set a minimum of two goals, all educators receive one of four ratings on each Performance Standard, and all educators (teachers and administrators) have a summative evaluation.*
  + *Additional resources for Educator Evaluation can be found* [*here*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/implementation/default.html)*.*
* *The district should collaborate with its building leaders to better understand the reasons for differing levels of informal classroom observations, and addressing them where possible, to provide more formative feedback to teachers.*
* *The district should work with its leaders and community to devise formal and informal structures for recognizing strong teacher performance on a regular basis.*

## Student Support

Lexington offers many programs to support students and families, including special education services, individual counseling and social work services, school health services, and student safety programs. Each building has a school site council to engage families in school improvement planning and operations, although some councils are more proactive than others. The district partners with various identity-based community affinity organizations to support events and serve as thought partners on policy and planning.

All Lexington schools have a student mental health team and an SST to identify, address, and progress monitor the academic and mental health needs of individual students, particularly those needing Tier 2 and Tier 3 services. Schools have time built into their schedules to provide students with interventions and enrichments, through What I Need (WIN) blocks and intervention blocks (iBlocks). Some Tier 2 and 3 services occur in small groups, through either a push-in or pull-out model, depending on the supports needed.

Table 6 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in student support.

Table 6. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Student Support Standard

| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Safe and supportive school climate and culture](#_Safe_and_Supportive) | * The district implements positive behavioral and restorative justice approaches for student behavior. * The district is implementing DEI-focused lessons across all elementary schools. * The district provides meaningful opportunities for student engagement and leadership, particularly at the high school level. | * Improving school culture, as demonstrated by lower climate scores on VOCAL data at Estabrook Elementary School, Diamond Middle School, and Lexington High School, especially among African American/Black students * Supporting student mental health at the high school * Addressing repeated incidents of identity-based conflicts that have recently occurred at the high school in a holistic and comprehensive manner * Continuing efforts to create school environments that are safe and supportive for historically marginalized students |
| [Tiered systems of support](#_Tiered_Systems_of) | * Each school has a problem-solving team (e.g., SST, mental health team) to assess data and make decisions about interventions for students. * All schools include dedicated, structured time in the schedule for students to receive additional supports as needed (e.g., WIN block, iBlock). | * Ensuring that structured intervention time is used effectively to support students’ needs |
| [Family, student, and community engagement and partnerships](#_Family,_Student,_and) | * The Lexington community has many identity-based groups that the district uses as thought partners. * Students have a variety of leadership opportunities at the elementary and middle school levels. | * Improving the structure of communications with parents to more concisely convey important information * Posting minutes from school site-based councils in a more timely manner * Working with the high school class councils to become meaningful opportunities for student governance |

### Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture

The district has various programs that focus on the health and safety of its students. The *Lexington Public Schools Mental Health Programs & Services* guidebook describes counseling and social work services, school health services, and the role of the school resource officer “to integrate school and town efforts in keeping students safe and well.” The guidebook also lists various protocols and initiatives focused on student safety, including a bullying prevention plan, supports for students experiencing homelessness, and child protection teams that assist students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect. The district also has an Office of Equity and Student Supports, led by the director of equity and student supports, which provides resources and information for teachers, parents, and students related to DEI.

District leaders, school staff, and teachers mentioned current efforts to create a DEI curriculum that teachers can consistently teach across levels, which aligns with Strategic Priority 1.1 of the district’s strategic plan. At the time of the district review, a program developed at Bowman Elementary called Dismantling Racism and Learning for Justice were the source materials for these lessons. Nonacademic support staff noted that all schools were currently doing their own DEI work, but the district desires more standardization. According to a presentation to the school committee on August 29, 2023, the district is beginning to implement professional development and DEI lessons in all elementary schools this year, with full rollout of the new elementary DEI curriculum in 2025-2026. After rollout, the DEI curriculum will enter the regular rotation of curriculum reviews. The district’s efforts to develop and implement a DEI curriculum is a strength.

School staff focus groups and a review of documents demonstrate the district’s commitment to positive behavioral approaches, which is a strength of the district. The Lexington Public Schools Mental Health Programs & Services guidebook explains the positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) approach of the district. Although not all schools have PBIS teams, each school has clearly defined behavioral expectations (e.g., DRUM: diverse, responsible, united, and mindful at Diamond Middle School) and offers initiatives to reward positive behavior and support student growth. Each middle school has their PBIS framework outlined in their student handbook, which is publicly available on each school’s website. CLASS data provides additional evidence that schools have clearly defined expectations for student behavior, as averages for the Behavioral Management dimension were generally in the high range (6.0 for Grades K-5, 5.7 for Grades 6-8, and 6.1 for Grades 9-12). These ratings suggest that rules and guidelines for behavior are generally clear and consistently reinforced by teachers in practice. In addition to PBIS, the district is supporting buildings’ and departments’ implementation of more restorative justice practices across schools. As one elementary teacher explained, “I think if you were to ask staff and parents about discipline in [school name], they might say ‘there is no such thing’ because we really push for restorative practices instead of old-school punishments.” However, not all schools and teachers have had training in restorative justice approaches. The district offers two Tier 1 trainings annually, open to all interested staff, and certain schools and departments are implementing restorative justice practices more quickly, offering additional training targeted at members of the department or school community. Moving forward, the district also plans to provide more training in de-escalation and trauma-informed practices.

Results from the VOCAL student survey indicate a relatively strong school climate across school levels and student subgroups, as evidenced by overall school climate scores in the “favorable” range (51 to 70, with a maximum score of 100) at most schools. However, three schools had overall scores in the high end of the “somewhat favorable” range (31 to 50): Estabrook Elementary School (50), Diamond Middle School (50), and Lexington High School (49). In particular, overall school climate scores for African American/Black students at Diamond Middle School and Lexington High School were notably lower (42 and 39, respectively) compared with White students (47 at both schools) and Asian students (53 at Diamond Middle School and 51 at Lexington High School). These data indicate room for improvement in establishing a strong school climate in which all students feel a sense of belonging—an area of growth for the district.

In focus groups, middle school students spoke highly of their school environment, describing it as welcoming and staff as helpful and supportive. Middle school students appreciated having the same counselor across all three years at their school to help them build relationships and get consistent support. In contrast, high school students had more mixed opinions. They also described teachers as “nice” and “caring,” but they noted that the academically competitive climate can pose mental health challenges. Although their school does provide mental health supports, the “broader [Lexington] culture” does not encourage students to use these services. School staff also expressed similar sentiments about the difficulty of combating external stigma about mental health and supports. These sentiments around competitiveness within the high school, combined with the previously described VOCAL student survey data, indicates that supporting students’ mental health at the high school level is an area of growth for the district.

To help students develop relationships with one another, the high school offers a large number of clubs and affinity groups. According to Lexington High School’s website, the school has approximately 160 different clubs, activities, and affinity groups that students can get involved with (e.g., artificial intelligence research club, Chinese calligraphy club, girls who invest, peer leaders and mentors, video gaming design club). The wide variety of opportunities for student engagement and involvement is a strength of the district.

Although the high school provides multiple opportunities to develop relationships among students, high school students described several anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim incidents that occurred this school year, allegedly in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Although students agreed that teachers do not tolerate racist, homophobic, or anti-Semitic statements in class, they find that much of this type of conflict occurs between students outside class (e.g., online), and they do not see the school doing enough to proactively address student mindsets. At the time of the district review, an incident of hate speech had recently occurred, and the superintendent and the high school principal worked closely with the school committee, religious leaders in the community, and community-based affinity groups to develop a statement and host a community meeting. Students would still like to see more done to address these incidents and the implications for current events. Continuing to address these incidents in a holistic and comprehensive manner is an ongoing area of growth for the district.

Parents also expressed concerns about the school environment in terms of truly supporting diverse students. They agreed that some teachers and staff are more understanding and attentive than others. One parent mentioned experiences with teachers who made broad generalizations about their child’s race, saying “all brown girls got the same name.” Another parent noted that they had to provide education to their child’s teachers about their cultural differences, rather than the staff and teachers reaching out to learn more and sharing with their students. Other parents described needing more education on ableism, and how students with disabilities should be part of the district’s DEI efforts. As a parent explained, “The SEL [social-emotional learning] curriculum is for all and not specifically geared toward [educating students and educators about those] who look or practice differently.” These parent reports, along with the preceding information from students, suggest that although the district has made many efforts to improve DEI, the district has room to grow in establishing supportive school environments for historically underserved students.

### Tiered Systems of Support

Each school has a mental health team and an SST—a strength of the district. According to district staff, the mental health teams typically consist of a social worker, a counselor, the school nurse, the school therapist, the principal, and the assistant principal. These teams meet every other week to discuss student behavior and grades—in general and for specific students of concern. Each school also has an afterschool program that typically consists of an administrator, a grade-level counselor, a special education teacher, an interventionist, and teachers. District leaders and support staff noted that other specialists, such as EL specialists, may attend to discuss students needing those particular services. In both teams, teachers and staff use data to identify and track students needing Tier 2 and 3 services.

To identify students needing Tier 2 and 3 services, school staff use mCLASS and Aimsweb as universal screeners, along with various teacher-developed tools, student work samples, and classroom observations (see Data Use section). After students receive a referral to an SST, the team will recommend interventions and monitor progress. All schools offer times for students to receive different types of supports. In the elementary and middle schools, interventions occur in WIN blocks, whereas the high school calls them iBlocks. WIN blocks vary; for example, Bowman Elementary offers them for 30 minutes per week, whereas Fiske Elementary offers WIN blocks for 15 minutes, four times per week. At the middle schools, WIN Blocks are 49 minutes, three times in each six-day cycle. At the high school, iBlocks occur three times per cycle; two are 45 minutes long, and one is 30 minutes. According to both teachers and students, teachers may select what the students do during WIN Blocks and iBlocks, if needed, or students can select an enrichment activity (e.g., knitting club, extra physical education). Teachers and interventionists also provide Tier 2 and 3 services in small groups, sometimes in the classroom and sometimes using a pull-out model when it would benefit the student. The high school also offers a learning center at which students can get extra support in mathematics, humanities or science via teacher or peer tutoring. Building structured time into the schedule for students to receive interventions and enrichments is an area of strength for the district.

However, some academic support staff felt as if room still exists for improving how to effectively use these times. Interventionists expressed concern that WIN blocks and push-in instruction time slots do not provide them with sufficient time to provide meaningful interventions and monitor progress. One described it as “a competition between who gets to see the kids” because students have so many competing demands on their time for core instruction and enrichment, especially in the upper elementary grades. As another pointed out, “If students are receiving any sort of services out of the classroom, they are coming out of something.” Working with interventionists to ensure that this structured time is used effectively to support students’ needs is an area of growth for the district.

For elementary students who do not make progress after two 6-12 week cycles of interventions and monitoring, the SST may refer a student for a disability evaluation. In parent focus groups, some parents thought the district takes too long to refer students for a diagnosis, which delays their child receiving the services they need in a timely fashion. The district provides a variety of specialized programming for students with disabilities, including an intensive learning program for students with autism; a therapeutic learning program for students with emotional impairments; a developmental learning program for students with significant developmental delays or intellectual impairments; and a language learning program for students with significant, language-based learning disabilities. According to academic specialists, all such programs emphasize students in the general education setting whenever possible.

In addition to academic supports, all schools provide nonacademic supports, including skills-based groups (e.g., social skills, anxiety groups, lunch groups) and individual counseling. Social workers from all grade levels reported that they coteach social-emotional learning lessons with classroom teachers on topics appropriate for their age group. Elementary specialists mentioned lessons on “getting along” and “unkind behavior”; secondary specialists described lessons on suicide prevention, antiracism, sexual harassment, and leadership skills.

### Family, Student, and Community Engagement and Partnerships

Families had mixed perceptions of communication from the district and schools, which is an area of growth for the district. Parents in focus groups noted that although the district uses a variety of communication strategies, such as regular newsletters, email updates, updates on social media platforms, and the Parent Square app, communications do not have a structure that is easily accessible for busy parents. As one parent summarized, “The content is there, but it needs to be structured better so that you can be more easily attune to what is important.” In addition, many agreed that communications tend to be primarily one way, with the district notifying parents of decisions afterward, rather than inviting feedback or allowing parents to participate in decisions. At the school level, some parents felt well informed by their children’s teachers and principals, but many noted a need for more frequent communications. As one parent noted, “If my kids don’t tell me what’s going on, I don’t know.”

Parents did report opportunities for them to get involved with school decision making, although the perceptions of these opportunities also varied. Each building has a school site council that meets monthly, with the council composed of elected teachers, parents, community representatives, and the principal. These councils advise the principal, particularly in creating and evaluating school innovation plans. However, parents in focus groups had mixed experiences with serving on the councils and involvement in school planning, with some describing that they did not participate in the creation of their school’s innovation plans. For those unable to regularly join the school site councils, parents reported how it is difficult to stay up to date on council discussions. Many parents described how minutes from these council meetings are either not posted on school websites or posted too slowly, and they would like to be able to access these minutes more readily to stay informed. Posting minutes from school site councils in a timely manner is an area of growth for the district.

Lexington families also have opportunities to get involved within the broader Lexington community through community-based affinity groups, and the district leverages these groups to provide insight and feedback. According to district focus groups and the town’s website, the town of Lexington has several cultural and affinity groups (e.g., Association of Black Citizens of Lexington, Chinese American Association of Lexington). As detailed previously, the district works with these groups as needed during the research phase of the curriculum review process (see Curriculum Selection and Use) and when incidents occur within the community that the district needs to communicate about and respond to (see Safe and Supportive School Climate and Culture). Working with these community-based groups to improve the public schools is an area of strength for the district.

For students enrolled in the METCO program, there is the Lexington METCO Parents Group to encourage parental involvement in the school community. According to the group’s mission statement posted on their online website, the group is looking for 100% parental involvement, “To work toward the continued success of the METCO Program and to maintain accountability of all stakeholders for the academic achievement of our children. In addition, our mission is to promote respectful and caring relationships with each other while embracing multicultural partnerships with students, families, and the Lexington Public School staff.” This group meets monthly and is open to all the families of all students involved in the METCO program (grades K-12). During the 2023-24 school year, the group had approximately nine meetings, both in-person (in Dorchester or Roxbury) and virtual.

Students have several leadership opportunities within the district. At the elementary and middle school levels, teachers, parents, and students described student councils at each school. These councils lead all-school meetings and help plan other school events (e.g., spirit days, community service). One middle school student mentioned the principal advisory, which gives students from each grade an opportunity to meet the principal and share their perspective; this student also noticed that the district is implementing some student suggestions. The variety of student leadership opportunities at the elementary and middle school levels is a strength of the district.

For students at the high school level, class councils composed of elected officers are at each grade level. However, high school students expressed concern that these positions are not truly meaningful, saying “it’s for show; you don’t actually do anything.” Working with the high school class councils to become meaningful opportunities for student governance is an area of growth for the district.

### DESE Recommendations

* *The district should conduct a deeper analysis of its VOCAL data and other corresponding data to diagnose root causes and develop an action plan in establishing safe and supportive school climates for all students in all buildings.*
* *The district should continue its efforts to decrease stigma around accessing mental health resources.*
* *The district should work to prevent incidences of intolerance and identity-based incidents by continuing to partner with local leaders and by proactively providing education and resources to students and their families.*
* *The district should team with its students and families, particularly those from historically underserved student groups, to better understand the district’s challenges in establishing supportive school environments and determine a direction for action.*
* *The district should review and refine its guidance around structured intervention time, and work with leaders and mentors to ensure strategic use of that time.*
* *The district should review its communication strategies for consistency across buildings so that information is proactively shared with families on a regular basis and parents can remain engaged with the school community.*
* *The district should increase transparency around school council proceedings by publicly posting all meeting minutes in a timely manner.*
* *Where feasible, the district should work with its high school leaders to increase the class council involvement in school-level decision-making.*

## Financial and Asset Management

The district has a designated finance and operations office, which according to the *Lexington Public Schools Organizational Chart,* includes the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, assistant director of finance and operations, procurement and operations manager, special education financial operating manager, the accounting and payroll staff, and central registration. The finance and operations office, the town manager, the school committee, the superintendent, and budget managers work together to develop Lexington’s budget each year. District leaders work together to ensure that the proposed yearly budget highly aligns with the district’s strategic goals. A main priority for the district’s finance department in recent years has been to develop a budget book that is easily accessible and user-friendly.

As part of the district’s 10-year 2019-2029 capital plan, the district is currently focusing on the design and development of a new high school building to meet projected increases in enrollment and to mitigate safety concerns from the current Lexington High School building. Currently, the district is consulting with a design firm to help them plan out a brand-new building. The design firm and the district also are collaborating to engage students and the community through student and teacher focus groups and regular parent updates on planning for the new school building in years to come.

Table 7 summarizes key strengths and areas for growth in financial and asset management.

Table 7. Summary of Key Strengths and Areas for Growth: Financial and Asset Management Standard

| Indicator | Strengths | Areas for growth |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Budget documentation and reporting](#_Budget_Documentation_and) | * The recently redesigned budget book is more user friendly (e.g., shorter, more visuals). * Budget priorities closely align with the district strategic plan. |  |
| [Adequate budget](#_Adequate_Budget) | * All new budget requests and proposals directly tie into the district’s strategic plan. |  |
| [Financial tracking, forecasting, controls, and audits](#_Financial_Tracking,_Forecasting,) |  | * Working with the town to ensure timely submission of end-of-year reports to DESE |
| [Capital planning and facility maintenance](#_Capital_Planning_and) | * The district is requesting parent and student input on the design of the new high school building. |  |

### Budget Documentation and Reporting

The finance and operations office, which includes the assistant superintendent for finance and operations, the assistant director of finance and operations, the procurement and operation manager, and accounting and payroll staff, in collaboration with the superintendent, are responsible for preparing Lexington’s budget book. This budget book, as well as previous years’ budget books, are publicly available on the district’s website and easily accessible to the public.

In addition to being readily available on the district’s website, the finance department has been working to make the budget books more user-friendly, which aligns with Strategic Priorities 4.1 and 4.2. District leaders reported that a major priority of the finance department was shortening the budget book and increasing the number of graphs and other visuals, making it easier for a common reader to understand. These modifications improved transparency about the district’s budget—a strength of the district.

An additional strength for the district is that the budget book closely aligns with the district’s strategic plan, with text from the strategic plan clearly present and emphasized along with the proposed spending amounts. As district leaders reported, “It is highly important to us to make sure that our actions [with the budget] are connected to the words in the strategic plan.”

In terms of reporting, the superintendent gives quarterly reports to the school committee on every line item in the district’s budget throughout the academic year. In addition, the finance subcommittee reviews the budget and the district’s spending and brings questions to the superintendent and the finance department in time for these quarterly meetings. More frequently, the district’s central office team reportedly reviews the district’s spending weekly.

### Adequate Budget

Lexington’s budget clearly aligns to the four district goals laid out in the strategic plan: (a) addressing and narrowing equity gaps, (b) redefining success, (c) cultivating student agency, and (d) innovating for sustainable change. These four overarching goals are explicitly stated throughout all budgeting discussions, and all budget decisions directly tie into the district’s goals, which is a strength of the district. As school leaders stated throughout interviews, “When considering adding an item to the budget, the first question that a budget manager will consider is how that item will contribute to the four [strategic] goals.”

The district is a major priority of the town, and the district consistently has funding greater than net school spending requirements. According to Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR) data, Lexington’s in-district per-pupil expenditure in 2022 was $21,352, which is higher than the state average. As mentioned by both town and district leaders, the town and district have had a long-standing collaborative relationship, as well as a long-standing informal agreement that 74 percent of the town’s revenue goes to the district and the remaining 26 percent goes to the town, emphasizing the town’s continued commitment to the school department.

The town consistently prioritizes the district’s financial needs and considers the superintendent’s reported budget requests, even when they exceed the aforementioned 74 percent revenue agreement. As demonstrated by the current budgeting cycle for the 2024-2025 school year, the superintendent recommended a budget of $140,335,244, representing an increase of $5,605,000, which is approximately 4.16 percent greater than the fiscal year 2024 base budget. Throughout the budgeting season, as reported in interviews, the superintendent, the school committee, Board of Selectmen, the appropriation committee, and the capital expenditures committee meet regularly to rectify the superintendent’s proposed budget with the town’s financial status. As discussed by district leaders across multiple interviews, historically, the town has been very generous to the district and has been willing to provide the funds necessary for district expenses.

### Financial Tracking, Forecasting, Controls, and Audits

The district’s finance department, overseen by the assistant superintendent of finance and operations, tracks financial activity across the district’s 10 schools throughout the school year. The finance department reports quarterly to the superintendent and the school committee.

The finance department also oversees the end-of-year financial report audit for DESE. Historically, Lexington submits these end-of-year reports to DESE late because the town does not close their books for the prior fiscal year until late September. Thus, the district’s finance office cannot obtain the necessary financial information from the town related to their spending in time for DESE’s deadline, which is also the end of September. Recently, the town and the district discussed changing the timeline for budget decisions and reporting to accommodate the timeline for the district’s end-of-year report. However, as an ongoing challenge, late end-of-year reporting to DESE is an area for growth for the district.

In terms of grants, the district formerly had a dedicated grants and special funds manager, but the staff member in that position recently retired, so members of the finance central office staff split up the responsibilities among themselves. In terms of spending down their grants, district leaders reported, historically, returning small amounts of money to grantors but “generally nothing over $200.” The singular exception was when a larger amount of a $100,000 health grant was returned during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, such returns are not indicative of a chronic problem in the district.

In addition to grants, Lexington also has a large METCO program that has been in place since 1968. This program provides a suburban public school education for African American, Hispanic, and Asian students from Boston. The district receives money to service students in the METCO program, and the district’s METCO director specifically manages this money.

In terms of audits, the town of Lexington used Melanson, an independent auditor, to analyze the town’s financial statements, including those of the district, which represents a line item in the town’s expenses. The most recent audit publicly available on the town’s and district’s websites ended on June 30, 2022. The most recent audit revealed no significant findings.

### Capital Planning and Facility Maintenance

Lexington has a 10-year *2020-2030 Master Planning Compendium* that assists the district in prioritizing all future capital planning projects. The Lexington Public Schools Master Planning Advisory Committee created this plan in 2020. The advisory committee made three major recommendations to the district about the most pressing capital needs within the district:

* The district’s review indicates no need for new space at the preschool or elementary levels—now or for several years. However, the district will carefully monitor elementary school enrollments for opportunities to replace aging facilities in the event of more dramatic enrollment declines or unexpected enrollment growth.
* The district’s review indicates that no new space is necessary at the middle school level, although enrollments may stay near or just above capacity for several years. The district also will carefully monitor middle school enrollments.
* In light of current and projected enrollment at the high school being substantially higher than a reasonable estimate of the school’s capacity, the advisory committee endorsed a plan to increase the size of the high school facility by replacing it with a new building or completing a comprehensive renovation with additions.

As corroborated by district, school leader, and parent focus groups, Lexington High School is currently a paramount capital concern for the district. As described in the 2020-2030 Master Planning Compendium,

Based on current projections, by the year 2025, enrollment in Grades 9-12 is expected to reach its peak with over 2,500 students. An enrollment topping 2,500 means that LHS will be approximately 650 students over the capacity of the core spaces and classrooms. In addition to overcrowding, the current high school facility faces deteriorating conditions, and it is not well configured for modern instructional approaches and educational needs. The current facility, with its unique design, also presents certain security challenges.

The district is currently collaborating with the Massachusetts School Building Authority for a new Lexington High School, and at the time of the district review, the district was completing a feasibility study. The district hired an external firm to help them design the new high school, and they are receiving input from students and teachers via focus groups about their desires for the new school building. Additionally, according to the new high school’s building project website, the district has been hosting a series of community forums (with meetings in September 2023, November 2023, March 2024, and May 2024) so the broader community can learn more and get updates on the project. Parents in focus groups reported receiving lots of communication about the new high school building. Enlisting community involvement in the new high school building design process is a strength of the district.

Upon completing this feasibility study, the district will submit a preliminary design program and preferred schematic report. Based on the anticipated timeline on the district’s website, a town meeting and debt exclusion vote will occur in late 2025, as the town anticipates needing an override to pay for the new high school. If this override passes, construction could potentially begin in 2027.

In terms of maintenance needs, public facilities are a shared department between the town and district that covers several utilities, including electric, heat, and gas. The department of public works within Lexington is responsible for plowing and maintaining the district’s fields. In general, district leadership described capital and maintenance needs as the town’s responsibility.

### DESE Recommendations

* *Where feasible, the district should work with town officials to accelerate the closing of the prior fiscal year’s records, so that the district can comply with DESE’s end-of-year reporting deadline.*

## Appendix A. Summary of Site Visit Activities

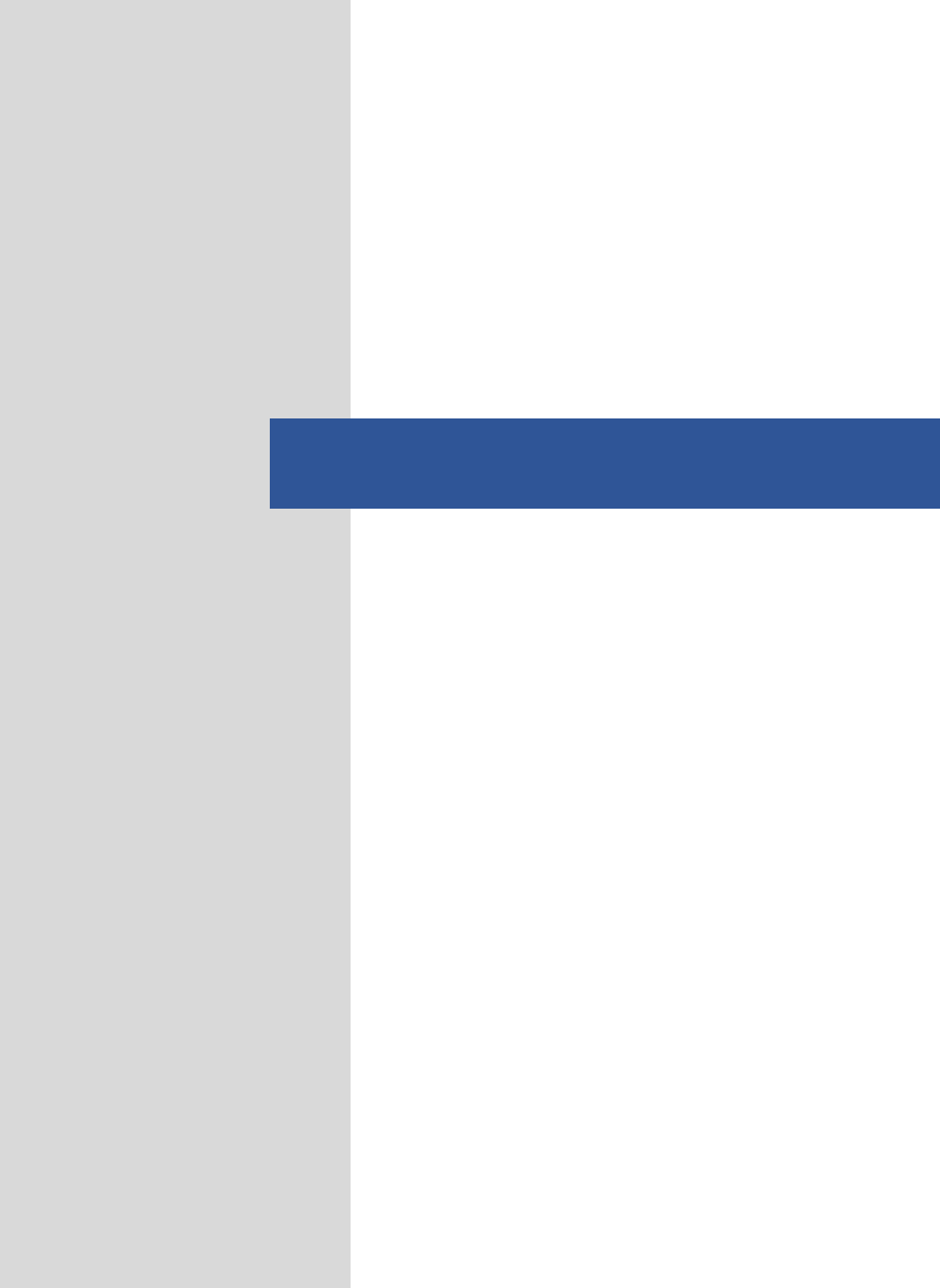
The AIR team completed the following activities as part of the district review activities in Lexington. The team conducted 96 classroom observations during the week of January 22, 2024, and held interviews and focus groups this same week. The site visit team conducted interviews and focus groups with the following representatives from the school and the district:

* Superintendent
* Other district leaders
* School committee members
* Teachers’ association members
* Principals
* Teachers
* Support specialists
* Parents
* Students
* Town representative

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

* 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
* Curricular review process and timeline
* Published educational reports on the district by DESE, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, and the former Office of Educational Quality and Accountability
* 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

## Appendix B. Districtwide Instructional Observation Report



Lexington Public Schools

Classroom Visits: Summary of Findings

Districtwide Instructional Observation Report

January 2024



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Introduction

The *Districtwide Instructional Observation Report* presents ratings for the classroom observations that were conducted by certified observers at American Institutes for Research (AIR) as part of the Massachusetts District Reviews.

Five observers visited Lexington Public Schools during the week of January 22, 2024. Observers conducted 96 observations in a sample of classrooms across nine schools. Observations were conducted in grades K-12 and focused primarily on English language arts and mathematics instruction.

The classroom observations were guided by the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), developed by the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) at the University of Virginia. Three levels of CLASS Manuals were used: K–3, Upper Elementary, and Secondary. The K–3 tool was used to observe grades K–3, the Upper Elementary tool was used to observe grades 4–5, and the Secondary tool was used to observe grades 6–12.

The K–3 protocol includes 10 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 1).

Table 1. CLASS K–3 Domains and Dimensions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Emotional Support | Classroom Organization | Instructional Support |
| * Positive Climate * Negative Climate * Teacher Sensitivity * Regard for Student Perspectives | * Behavior Management * Productivity * Instructional Learning Formats | * Concept Development * Quality of Feedback * Language Modeling |

The Upper Elementary and Secondary protocols include 11 classroom dimensions related to three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support (listed in Table 2), in addition to Student Engagement.

Table 2. CLASS Upper Elementary and Secondary Domains and Dimensions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Emotional Support | Classroom Organization | Instructional Support |
| * Positive Climate * Teacher Sensitivity * Regard for Student Perspectives | * Behavior Management * Productivity * Negative Climate | * Instructional Learning Formats * Content Understanding * Analysis and Inquiry * Quality of Feedback * Instructional Dialogue |
| Student Engagement | | |

When conducting a visit to a classroom, the observer rates each dimension (including Student Engagement) on a scale of 1 to 7. A rating of 1 or 2 indicates that the dimension was never or rarely evident during the visit. For example, a rating of 1 or 2 on Teacher Sensitivity indicates that, at the time of the visit, the teacher was not aware of students who needed extra support or attention, was unresponsive to or dismissive of students, or was ineffective at addressing students’ problems; as a result, students rarely sought support from the teacher or communicated openly with the teacher. A rating of 3, 4, or 5 indicates that the dimension was evident but not exhibited consistently or in a way that included all students. A rating of 6 or 7 indicates that the dimension was reflected in all or most classroom activities and in a way that included all or most students.

Members of the observation team who visited the classrooms all received training on the CLASS protocol and then passed a rigorous certification exam for each CLASS protocol to ensure that they were able to accurately rate the dimensions. All observers must pass an exam annually to maintain their certification.

Research on CLASS protocol shows that students in classrooms that rated high using this observation tool have greater gains in social skills and academic success than students in classrooms with lower ratings (MET Project, 2010; CASTL, n.d.). Furthermore, small improvements on these domains can affect student outcomes: “The ability to demonstrate even small changes in effective interactions has practical implications—differences in just over 1 point on the CLASS 7-point scale translate into improved achievement and social skill development for students” (CASTL, n.d., p. 3).

In this report, each CLASS dimension is defined, and descriptions of the dimensions at the high (6 or 7), middle (3, 4, or 5), and low levels (1 or 2) are presented *(definitions and rating descriptions are derived from the CLASS K–3*, *Upper Elementary, and Secondary Manuals).* For each dimension we indicate the frequency of classroom observations across the ratings and provide a districtwide average of the observed classrooms. In cases where a dimension is included in more than one CLASS manual level, those results are combined on the dimension-specific pages. In the summary of ratings table following the dimension-specific pages the averages for every dimension are presented by grade band (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12). For each dimension, we indicate the grade levels for which this dimension is included.

Positive Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K−12

Positive Climate reflects the emotional connection between the teacher and students and among students and the warmth, respect, and enjoyment communicated by verbal and nonverbal interactions (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 23, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 21, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 21). Table 3 (as well as tables for the remaining dimensions) includes the number of classrooms for each rating on each dimension and the district average for that dimension.

Table 3. Positive Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Positive Climate District Average\*: 5.2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 5.2 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 12 | 8 | 31 | 5.9 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 31 | 5.0 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 2 | 34 | 4.9 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 3, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 1] + [3 x 7] + [4 x 15] + [5 x 32] + [6 x 29] + [7 x 12]) ÷ 96 observations = 5.2

Ratings in the Low Range. All indicators are absent or only minimally present. Teachers and students do not appear to share a warm, supportive relationship. Interpersonal connections are not evident or only minimally evident. Affect in the classroom is flat, and there are rarely instances of teachers and students smiling, sharing humor, or laughing together. There are no, or very few, positive communications among the teacher and students; the teacher does not communicate encouragement. There is no evidence that students and the teacher respect one another or that the teacher encourages students to respect one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some indications that the teacher and students share a warm and supportive relationship, but some students may be excluded from this relationship, either by the teacher or the students. Some relationships appear constrained—for example, the teacher expresses a perfunctory interest in students, or encouragement seems to be an automatic statement and is not sincere. Sometimes, teachers and students demonstrate respect for one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There are many indications that the relationship among students and the teacher is positive and warm. The teacher is typically in close proximity to students, and encouragement is sincere and personal. There are frequent displays of shared laughter, smiles, and enthusiasm. Teachers and students show respect for one another (e.g., listening, using calm voices, using polite language). Positive communication (both verbal and nonverbal) and mutual respect are evident throughout the session.

Teacher Sensitivity

Emotional Support domain, Grades K−12

Teacher Sensitivity encompasses the teacher’s awareness of and responsiveness to students’ academic and emotional needs. High levels of sensitivity facilitate students’ abilities to actively explore and learn because the teacher consistently provides comfort, reassurance, and encouragement (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 32, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 27, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 27).

Table 4. Teacher Sensitivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Teacher Sensitivity District Average\*: 5.2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 5.2 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 12 | 5 | 31 | 5.6 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 31 | 4.6 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 34 | 5.3 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 4, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 3] + [3 x 8] + [4 x 17] + [5 x 24] + [6 x 31] + [7 x 13]) ÷ 96 observations = 5.2

Ratings in the Low Range. In these sessions, the teacher has not been aware of students who need extra support and pays little attention to students’ needs. As a result, students are frustrated, confused, and disengaged. The teacher is unresponsive to and dismissive of students and may ignore students, squash their enthusiasm, and not allow them to share their moods or feelings. The teacher is not effective in addressing students’ needs and does not appropriately acknowledge situations that may be upsetting to students. Students rarely seek support from the teacher and minimize conversations with the teacher, not sharing ideas or responding to questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher is sometimes aware of student needs or aware of only a limited type of student needs, such as academic needs, not social-emotional needs. Or the teacher may be aware of some students and not of other students. The teacher does not always realize a student is confused and needs extra help or when a student already knows the material being taught. The teacher may be responsive at times to students but at other times may ignore or dismiss students. The teacher may respond only to students who are upbeat and positive and not support students who are upset. Sometimes, the teacher is effective in addressing students’ concerns or problems, but not always.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher’s awareness of students and their needs is consistent and accurate. The teacher may predict how difficult a new task is for a student and acknowledge this difficulty. The teacher is responsive to students’ comments and behaviors, whether positive or negative. The teacher consistently addresses students’ problems and concerns and is effective in doing so. Students are obviously comfortable with the teacher and share ideas, work comfortably together, and ask and respond to questions, even difficult questions.

Regard for Student Perspectives

Emotional Support domain, Grades K−12

Regard for Student Perspectives captures the degree to which the teacher’s interactions with students and classroom activities place an emphasis on students’ interests, motivations, and points of view and encourage student responsibility and autonomy (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 38, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 35, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 35).

Table 5. Regard for Student Perspectives: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Regard for Student Perspectives District Average\*: 3.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 3.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.2 |
| Grades 6-8 | 1 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 31 | 3.6 |
| Grades 9-12 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 34 | 3.9 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 5, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 3] + [2 x 14] + [3 x 24] + [4 x 22] + [5 x 21] + [6 x 8] + [7 x 4]) ÷ 96 observations = 3.9

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher exhibits an inflexible, rigid adherence to his or her plan, without considering student ideas or allowing students to make contributions. The teacher inhibits student enthusiasm by imposing guidelines or making remarks that inhibit student expression. The teacher may rigidly adhere to a lesson plan and not respond to student interests. The teacher does not allow students any autonomy on how they conduct an activity, may control materials tightly, and may offer few opportunities for students to help out with classroom responsibilities. There are few opportunities for students to talk and express themselves.

Ratings in the Middle Range. The teacher exhibits control at times and at other times follows the students’ lead and gives them some choices and opportunities to follow their interests. There are some opportunities for students to exercise autonomy, but student choice is limited. The teacher may assign students responsibility in the classroom, but in a limited way. At times, the teacher dominates the discussion, but at other times the teacher allows students to share ideas, although only at a minimal level or for a short period of time.

Ratings in the High Range. The teacher is flexible in following student leads, interests, and ideas and looks for ways to meaningfully engage students. Although the teacher has a lesson plan, students’ ideas are incorporated into the lesson plan. The teacher consistently supports student autonomy and provides meaningful leadership opportunities. Students have frequent opportunities to talk, share ideas, and work together. Students have appropriate freedom of movement during activities.

Negative Climate

Emotional Support domain, Grades K− 3  
Classroom Organization domain, Grades 4− 12

Negative Climate reflects the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. The frequency, quality, and intensity of teacher and student negativity are key to this dimension (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 28, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 55, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 55). For the purposes of this report, we have inversed the observers scores, to be consistent with the range scores across all dimensions. Therefore, a high range score in this dimension indicates an absence of negative climate, and a low range score indicates the presence of negative climate.[[7]](#footnote-8)

Table 6. Negative Climate: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Negative Climate District Average\*: 6.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 6.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 26 | 31 | 6.8 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 27 | 31 | 6.9 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 34 | 7.0 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 6, the district average is computed as:   
([6 x 9] + [7 x 87]) ÷ 96 observations = 6.9

Ratings in the Low Range.Negativity is pervasive. The teacher may express constant irritation, annoyance, or anger; unduly criticize students; or consistently use a harsh tone and/or take a harsh stance as he or she interacts with students. Threats or yelling are frequently used to establish control. Language is disrespectful and sarcastic. Severe negativity, such as the following actions, would lead to a high rating on negative climate, even if the action is not extended: students bullying one another, a teacher hitting a student, or students physically fighting with one another.

Ratings in the Middle Range. There are some expressions of mild negativity by the teacher or students. The teacher may express irritability, use a harsh tone, and/or express annoyance—usually during difficult moments in the classroom. Threats or yelling may be used to establish control over the classroom, but not constantly; they are used more as a response to situations. At times, the teacher and students may be sarcastic or disrespectful toward one another.

Ratings in the High Range. There is no display of negativity: No strong expressions of anger or aggression are exhibited, either by the teacher or students; if there is such a display, it is contained and does not escalate. The teacher does not issue threats or yell to establish control. The teacher and students are respectful and do not express sarcasm.

Behavior Management

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K−12

Behavior Management refers to the teacher’s ability to provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 45, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 41, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 41).

Table 7. Behavior Management: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Behavior Management District Average\*: 5.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 5.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 31 | 6.0 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 31 | 5.7 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 21 | 34 | 6.1 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 7, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 1] + [3 x 6] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 13] + [6 x 21] + [7 x 46]) ÷ 96 observations = 5.9

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the classroom is chaotic. There are no rules and expectations, or they are not enforced consistently. The teacher does not monitor the classroom effectively and only reacts to student disruption, which is frequent. There are frequent instances of misbehavior in the classroom, and the teacher’s attempts to redirect misbehavior are ineffective. The teacher does not use cues, such as eye contact, slight touches, gestures, or physical proximity, to respond to and redirect negative behavior.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Although rules and expectations may be stated, they are not consistently enforced, or the rules may be unclear. Sometimes, the teacher proactively anticipates and prevents misbehavior, but at other times the teacher ignores behavior problems until it is too late. Misbehavior may escalate because redirection is not always effective. Episodes of misbehavior are periodic.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the rules and guidelines for behavior are clear, and they are consistently reinforced by the teacher. The teacher monitors the classroom and prevents problems from developing, using subtle cues to redirect behavior and address situations before they escalate. The teacher focuses on positive behavior and consistently affirms students’ desirable behaviors. The teacher effectively uses cues to redirect behavior. There are no, or very few, instances of student misbehavior or disruptions.

Productivity

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K−12

Productivity considers how well the teacher manages instructional time and routines and provides activities for students so that they have the opportunity to be involved in learning activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual,* p. 51, *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual,* p. 49, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 49).

Table 8. Productivity: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Productivity District Average\*: 6.0

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 6.0 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 15 | 31 | 6.0 |
| Grades 6-8 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 31 | 5.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 17 | 34 | 6.1 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 8, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 1] + [3 x 4] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 13] + [6 x 22] + [7 x 47]) ÷ 96 observations = 6.0

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low level, the teacher provides few activities for students. Much time is spent on managerial tasks (such as distributing papers) and/or on behavior management. Frequently during the observation, students have little to do and spend time waiting. The routines of the classroom are not clear and, as a result, students waste time, are not engaged, and are confused. Transitions take a long time and/or are too frequent. The teacher does not have activities organized and ready and seems to be caught up in last-minute preparations.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher does provide activities for students but loses learning time to disruptions or management tasks. There are certain times when the teacher provides clear activities to students, but there are other times when students wait and lose focus. Some students (or all students, at some point) do not know what is expected of them. Some of the transitions may take too long, or classrooms may be productive during certain periods but then not productive during transitions. Although the teacher is mostly prepared for the class, last-minute preparations may still infringe on learning time.

Ratings in the High Range. The classroom runs very smoothly. The teacher provides a steady flow of activities for students, so students do not have downtime and are not confused about what to do next. The routines of the classroom are efficient, and all students know how to move from one activity to another and where materials are. Students understand the teacher’s instructions and directions. Transitions are quick, and there are not too many of them. The teacher is fully prepared for the lesson.

Instructional Learning Formats

Classroom Organization domain, Grades K−3

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4− 12

Instructional Learning Formats refer to the ways in which the teacher maximizes students’ interest, engagement, and abilities to learn from the lesson and activities (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 57; *CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 63, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 61).

Table 9. Instructional Learning Formats: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Learning Formats District Average\*: 5.1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 5.1 |
| Grades K-5 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 12 | 2 | 31 | 5.4 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 16 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 14 | 7 | 5 | 34 | 5.2 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 9, the district average is computed as:   
([3 x 8] + [4 x 11] + [5 x 45] + [6 x 24] + [7 x 8]) ÷ 96 observations = 5.1

Ratings in the Low Range. The teacher exerts little effort in facilitating engagement in the lesson. Learning activities may be limited and seem to be at the rote level, with little teacher involvement. The teacher relies on one learning modality (e.g., listening) and does not use other modalities (e.g., movement, visual displays) to convey information and enhance learning. Or the teacher may be ineffective in using other modalities, not choosing the right props for the students or the classroom conditions. Students are uninterested and uninvolved in the lesson. The teacher does not attempt to guide students toward learning objectives and does not help them focus on the lesson by providing appropriate tools and asking effective questions.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the teacher sometimes facilitates engagement in the lesson but at other times does not, or the teacher facilitates engagement for some students and not for other students. The teacher may not allow students enough time to explore or answer questions. Sometimes, the teacher uses a variety of modalities to help students reach a learning objective, but at other times the teacher does not. Student engagement is inconsistent, or some students are engaged and other students are not. At times, students are aware of the learning objective and at other times they are not. The teacher may sometimes use strategies to help students organize information but at other times does not.

Ratings in the High Range.The teacher has multiple strategies and tools to facilitate engagement and learning and encourage participation. The teacher may move around, talk and play with students, ask open-ended questions of students, and allow students to explore. A variety of tools and props are used, including movement and visual/auditory resources. Students are consistently interested and engaged in the activities and lessons. The teacher focuses students on the learning objectives, which students understand. The teacher uses advanced organizers to prepare students for an activity, as well as reorientation strategies that help students regain focus.

Concept Development

Instructional Support domain, Grades K−3

Concept Development refers to the teacher’s use of instructional discussions and activities to promote students’ higher order thinking skills and cognition and the teacher’s focus on understanding rather than on rote instruction (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 64).

Table 10. Concept Development: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Concept Development District Average\*: 3.5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 22 | 3.5 |
| Grades K-3\*\* | 1 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 3.5 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 10, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 1] + [2 x 2] + [3 x 8] + [4 x 7] + [5 x 4]) ÷ 22 observations = 3.5

\*\*Concept Development does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher does not attempt to develop students’ understanding of ideas and concepts, focusing instead on basic facts and skills. Discussion and activities do not encourage students to analyze and reason. There are few, if any, opportunities for students to create or generate ideas and products. The teacher does not link concepts to one another and does not ask students to make connections with previous content or their actual lives. The activities and the discussion are removed from students’ lives and from their prior knowledge.

Ratings in the Middle Range. To some extent, the teacher uses discussions and activities to encourage students to analyze and reason and focuses somewhat on understanding of ideas. The activities and discussions are not fully developed, however, and there is still instructional time that focuses on facts and basic skills. Students may be provided some opportunities for creating and generating ideas, but the opportunities are occasional and not planned out. Although some concepts may be linked and also related to students’ previous learning, such efforts are brief. The teacher makes some effort to relate concepts to students’ lives but does not elaborate enough to make the relationship meaningful to students.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the teacher frequently guides students to analyze and reason during discussions and activities. Most of the questions are open ended and encourage students to think about connections and implications. Teachers use problem solving, experimentation, and prediction; comparison and classification; and evaluation and summarizing to promote analysis and reasoning. The teacher provides students with opportunities to be creative and generate ideas. The teacher consistently links concepts to one another and to previous learning and relates concepts to students’ lives.

Content Understanding

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4− 12

Content Understanding refers to the depth of lesson content and the approaches used to help students comprehend the framework, key ideas, and procedures in an academic discipline. At a high level, this dimension refers to interactions among the teacher and students that lead to an integrated understanding of facts, skills, concepts, and principles (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 70, *CLASS Secondary Manual,* p. 68).

Table 11. Content Understanding: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Content Understanding District Average\*: 3.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 74 | 3.9 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3.6 |
| Grades 6-8 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 31 | 3.6 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 34 | 4.4 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 11, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 2] + [2 x 9] + [3 x 17] + [4 x 16] + [5 x 24] + [6 x 5] + [7 x 1]) ÷ 74 observations = 3.9

\*\*Content Understanding does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the focus of the class is primarily on presenting discrete pieces of topically related information, absent broad, organizing ideas. The discussion and materials fail to effectively communicate the essential attributes of the concepts and procedures to students. The teacher makes little effort to elicit or acknowledge students’ background knowledge or misconceptions or to integrate previously learned material when presenting new information.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At the middle range, the focus of the class is sometimes on meaningful discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. At other times, the focus is on discrete pieces of information. Class discussion and materials communicate some of the essential attributes of concepts and procedures, but examples are limited in scope or not consistently provided. The teacher makes some attempt to elicit and/or acknowledge students’ background knowledge or misconceptions and/or to integrate information with previously learned materials; however, these moments are limited in depth or inconsistent.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, the focus of the class is on encouraging deep understanding of content through the provision of meaningful, interactive discussion and explanation of broad, organizing ideas. Class discussion and materials consistently communicate the essential attributes of concepts and procedures to students. New concepts and procedures and broad ideas are consistently linked to students’ prior knowledge in ways that advance their understanding and clarify misconceptions.

Analysis and Inquiry

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4− 12

Analysis and Inquiry assesses the degree to which students are engaged in higher level thinking skills through their application of knowledge and skills to novel and/or open-ended problems, tasks, and questions. Opportunities for engaging in metacognition (thinking about thinking) also are included (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 81, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 76).

Table 12. Analysis and Inquiry: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Analysis and Inquiry District Average\*: 2.8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 74 | 2.8 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3.0 |
| Grades 6-8 | 5 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 31 | 2.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 6 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 34 | 2.8 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 12, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 13] + [2 x 21] + [3 x 18] + [4 x 12] + [5 x 8] + [6 x 2]) ÷ 74 observations = 2.8

\*\*Analysis and Inquiry does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, students do not engage in higher order thinking skills. Instruction is presented in a rote manner, and there are no opportunities for students to engage in novel or open-ended tasks. Students are not challenged to apply previous knowledge and skills to a new problem, nor are they encouraged to think about, evaluate, or reflect on their own learning. Students do not have opportunities to plan their own learning experiences.

Ratings in the Middle Range. Students occasionally engage in higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry, but the episodes are brief or limited in depth. The teacher provides opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills within familiar contexts and offers guidance to students but does not provide opportunities for analysis and problem solving within novel contexts and/or without teacher support. Students have occasional opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning; these opportunities, however, are brief and limited in depth.

Ratings in the High Range. At the high range, students consistently engage in extended opportunities to use higher order thinking through analysis and inquiry. The teacher provides opportunities for students to independently solve or reason through novel and open-ended tasks that require students to select, utilize, and apply existing knowledge and skills. Students have multiple opportunities to think about their own thinking through explanations, self-evaluations, reflection, and planning.

Quality of Feedback

Instructional Support domain, Grades K− 12

Quality of Feedback refers to the degree to which the teacher provides feedback that expands learning and understanding and encourages continued participation in the learning activity (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 72). In the upper elementary and secondary classrooms, significant feedback also may be provided by peers (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 89, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 93). Regardless of the source, the focus of the feedback motivates learning.

Table 13. Quality of Feedback: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Quality of Feedback District Average\*: 3.9

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 96 | 3.9 |
| Grades K-5 | 1 | 1 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 31 | 3.8 |
| Grades 6-8 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 31 | 3.4 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 34 | 4.4 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 13, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 2] + [2 x 12] + [3 x 31] + [4 x 23] + [5 x 15] + [6 x 7] + [7 x 6]) ÷ 96 observations = 3.9

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, the teacher dismisses incorrect responses or misperceptions and rarely scaffolds student learning. The teacher is more interested in students providing the correct answer than understanding. Feedback is perfunctory. The teacher may not provide opportunities to learn whether students understand or are interested. The teacher rarely questions students or asks them to explain their thinking and reasons for their responses. The teacher does not or rarely provides information that might expand student understanding and rarely offers encouragement that increases student effort and persistence.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, the teacher sometimes scaffolds students, but this is not consistent. On occasion, the teacher facilitates feedback loops so that students may elaborate and expand on their thinking, but these moments are not sustained long enough to accomplish a learning objective. Sometimes, the teacher asks students about or prompts them to explain their thinking and provides information to help students understand, but sometimes the feedback is perfunctory. At times, the teacher encourages student efforts and persistence.

Ratings in the High Range. In this range, the teacher frequently scaffolds students who are having difficulty, providing hints or assistance as needed. The teacher engages students in feedback loops to help them understand ideas or reach the right response. The teacher often questions students, encourages them to explain their thinking, and provides additional information that may help students understand. The teacher regularly encourages students’ efforts and persistence.

Language Modeling

Instructional Support domain, Grades K− 3

Language Modeling refers to the quality and amount of the teacher’s use of language stimulation and language facilitation techniques (*CLASS K–3 Manual*, p. 79).

Table 14. Language Modeling: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Language Modeling District Average\*: 3.7

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 22 | 3.7 |
| Grades K-3\*\* | 0 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | 3.7 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 14, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 5] + [3 x 7] + [4 x 5] + [5 x 2] + [6 x 1] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 22 observations = 3.7

\*\*Language Modeling does not appear in the CLASS Upper Elementary Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades K-3 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, there are few conversations in the classroom, particularly between the students and the teacher. The teacher responds to students’ initiating talk with only a few words, limits students’ use of language (in responding to questions) and asks questions that mainly elicit closed-ended responses. The teacher does not or rarely extends students’ responses or repeats them for clarification. The teacher does not engage in self-talk or parallel talk—explaining what he or she or the students are doing. The teacher does not use new words or advanced language with students. The language used has little variety.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In this range, the teacher talks with students and shows some interest in students, but the conversations are limited and not prolonged. Usually, the teacher directs the conversations, although the conversations may focus on topics of interest to students. More often, there is a basic exchange of information but limited conversation. The teacher asks a mix of closed- and open-ended questions, although the closed-ended questions may require only short responses. Sometimes, the teacher extends students’ responses or repeats what students say. Sometimes, the teacher maps his or her own actions and the students’ actions through language and description. The teacher sometimes uses advanced language with students.

Ratings in the High Range.There are frequent conversations in the classroom, particularly between students and the teacher, and these conversations promote language use. Students are encouraged to converse and feel they are valued conversational partners. The teacher asks many open-ended questions that require students to communicate more complex ideas. The teacher often extends or repeats student responses. Frequently, the teacher maps his or her actions and student actions descriptively and uses advanced language with students.

Instructional Dialogue

Instructional Support domain, Grades 4− 12

Instructional Dialogue captures the purposeful use of content-focused discussion among teachers and students that is cumulative, with the teacher supporting students to chain ideas together in ways that lead to deeper understanding of content. Students take an active role in these dialogues, and both the teacher and students use strategies that facilitate extended dialogue (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 97, *CLASS Secondary Manual*, p. 101).

Table 15. Instructional Dialogue: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Instructional Dialogue District Average\*: 3.6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 74 | 3.6 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 4.1 |
| Grades 6-8 | 3 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 31 | 3.4 |
| Grades 9-12 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 34 | 3.6 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 15, the district average is computed as:   
([1 x 9] + [2 x 15] + [3 x 12] + [4 x 16] + [5 x 13] + [6 x 4] + [7 x 5]) ÷ 74 observations = 3.6

\*\*Instructional Dialogue does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. At the low range, there are no or few discussions in the class, the discussions are not related to content or skill development, or the discussions contain only simple question-response exchanges between the teacher and students. The class is dominated by teacher talk, and discussion is limited. The teacher and students ask closed-ended questions; rarely acknowledge, report, or extend other students’ comments; and/or appear disinterested in other students’ comments, resulting in many students not being engaged in instructional dialogues.

Ratings in the Middle Range. At this range, there are occasional content-based discussions in class among teachers and students; however, these exchanges are brief or quickly move from one topic to another without follow-up questions or comments from the teacher and other students. The class is mostly dominated by teacher talk, although there are times when students take a more active role, or there are distributed dialogues that involve only a few students in the class. The teacher and students sometimes facilitate and encourage more elaborate dialogue, but such efforts are brief, inconsistent, or ineffective at consistently engaging students in extended dialogues.

Ratings in the High Range.At the high range, there are frequent, content-driven discussions in the class between teachers and students or among students. The discussions build depth of knowledge through cumulative, contingent exchanges. The class dialogues are distributed in a way that the teacher and the majority of students take an active role or students are actively engaged in instructional dialogues with each other. The teacher and students frequently use strategies that encourage more elaborate dialogue, such as open-ended questions, repetition or extension, and active listening. Students respond to these techniques by fully participating in extended dialogues.

Student Engagement

Student Engagement domain, Grades 4−12

Student Engagement refers to the extent to which all students in the class are focused and participating in the learning activity that is presented or facilitated by the teacher. The difference between passive engagement and active engagement is reflected in this rating (*CLASS Upper Elementary Manual*, p. 105).

Table 16. Student Engagement: Number of Classrooms for Each Rating and District Average

Student Engagement District Average\*: 5.0

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade Band | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 74 | 5.0 |
| Grades 4-5\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 5.4 |
| Grades 6-8 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.8 |
| Grades 9-12 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 13 | 6 | 5 | 34 | 5.0 |

\*The district average is an average of the observation scores. In Table 16, the district average is computed as:   
([2 x 1] + [3 x 9] + [4 x 9] + [5 x 35] + [6 x 13] + [7 x 7]) ÷ 74 observations = 5.0

\*\*Student Engagement does not appear in the CLASS K-3 Manual, therefore scores for the Elementary School Level represent grades 4-5 only.

Ratings in the Low Range. In the low range, the majority of students appear distracted or disengaged.

Ratings in the Middle Range. In the middle range, students are passively engaged, listening to or watching the teacher; student engagement is mixed, with the majority of students actively engaged for part of the time and disengaged for the rest of the time; or there is a mix of student engagement, with some students actively engaged and some students disengaged.

Ratings in the High Range. In the high range, most students are actively engaged in the classroom discussions and activities.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades K–5

Table 17. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades K–5

|  | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average Scores\* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Emotional Support Domain | 0 | 4 | 7 | 12 | 27 | 34 | 40 | 124 | 5.6 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 12 | 8 | 31 | 5.9 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 26 | 31 | 6.8 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 12 | 5 | 31 | 5.6 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 0 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.2 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 0 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 23 | 29 | 30 | 93 | 5.8 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 13 | 31 | 6.0 |
| Productivity | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 15 | 31 | 6.0 |
| Instructional Learning Formats\*\*\* | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 12 | 2 | 31 | 5.4 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 5 | 12 | 32 | 31 | 14 | 4 | 4 | 102 | 3.6 |
| Concept Development (K-3 only) | 1 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 3.5 |
| Content Understanding (UE only) | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3.6 |
| Analysis and Inquiry (UE only) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 3.0 |
| Quality of Feedback | 1 | 1 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 31 | 3.8 |
| Language Modeling (K-3 only) | 0 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | 3.7 |
| Instructional Dialogue (UE only) | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 4.1 |
| Student Engagement (UE only) | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **6** | **2** | **1** | **9** | **5.4** |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([4 x 1] + [5 x 10] + [6 x 12] + [7 x 8]) ÷ 31 observations = 5.9

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([6 x 5] + [7 x 26]) ÷ 31 observations = 6.8. In addition, Negative Climate appears in the Classroom Organization Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

\*\*\*Instructional Learning Formats appears in the Instructional Support Domain for the Upper Elementary Manual.

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 6–8

Table 18. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 6–8

|  | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average Scores\* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Emotional Support Domain | 1 | 6 | 18 | 23 | 25 | 17 | 3 | 93 | 4.4 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 31 | 5.0 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 0 | 31 | 4.6 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 1 | 5 | 10 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 31 | 3.6 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 1 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 16 | 54 | 93 | 6.1 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 31 | 5.7 |
| Productivity | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 15 | 31 | 5.8 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 27 | 31 | 6.9 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 10 | 27 | 41 | 29 | 36 | 10 | 2 | 155 | 3.6 |
| Instructional Learning Formats | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 16 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.8 |
| Content Understanding | 1 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 31 | 3.6 |
| Analysis and Inquiry | 5 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 31 | 2.8 |
| Quality of Feedback | 1 | 5 | 12 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 31 | 3.4 |
| Instructional Dialogue | 3 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 31 | 3.4 |
| Student Engagement | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 4.8 |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([3 x 2] + [4 x 8] + [5 x 12] + [6 x 7] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 31 observations = 5.0

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([6 x 4] + [7 x 27]) ÷ 31 observations = 6.9

Summary of Average Ratings: Grades 9–12

Table 19. Summary Table of Average Ratings for Each Dimension in Grades 9–12

|  | Low Range | | Middle Range | | | High Range | | n | Average Scores\* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Emotional Support Domain | 2 | 8 | 14 | 19 | 25 | 22 | 12 | 102 | 4.7 |
| Positive Climate | 0 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 2 | 34 | 4.9 |
| Teacher Sensitivity | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 34 | 5.3 |
| Regard for Student Perspectives | 2 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 34 | 3.9 |
| Classroom Organization Domain | 0 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 14 | 72 | 102 | 6.4 |
| Behavior Management | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 21 | 34 | 6.1 |
| Productivity | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 17 | 34 | 6.1 |
| Negative Climate\*\* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 34 | 7.0 |
| Instructional Support Domain | 12 | 25 | 27 | 29 | 46 | 17 | 14 | 170 | 4.1 |
| Instructional Learning Formats | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 14 | 7 | 5 | 34 | 5.2 |
| Content Understanding | 0 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 15 | 3 | 1 | 34 | 4.4 |
| Analysis and Inquiry | 6 | 11 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 34 | 2.8 |
| Quality of Feedback | 0 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 34 | 4.4 |
| Instructional Dialogue | 6 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 34 | 3.6 |
| Student Engagement | 0 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 13 | 6 | 5 | 34 | 5.0 |

\*The district average is an average of the scores. For example, for Positive Climate, the district average is computed as: ([2 x 1] + [3 x 5] + [4 x 6] + [5 x 10] + [6 x 10] + [7 x 2]) ÷ 34 observations = 4.9

\*\*Negative Climate is rated on an inverse scale. An original score of 1 is given a value of 7. The scoring in the table reflects the normalized adjustment: ([7 x 34]) ÷ 34 observations = 7.0

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## Appendix C. Resources to Support Implementation of DESE’s District Standards and Indicators

Table C1. Resources to Support Leadership and Governance

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Resource | Description |
| [Coherence Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csdp/guidebook/coherence-guidebook.pdf) | The guidebook illustrates a systems-level path toward deeper learning. School system leaders and teams may use the guidebook, along with its companion self-assessment, to articulate a vision of deeper learning, identify high-leverage instructional priorities, refine tiered supports, and leverage systems and structures—all in service of the articulated vision. |
| [Principal Induction and Mentoring Handbook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/principal.html) | A series of modules designed to support novice principals and their mentors in the development of antiracist leadership competencies aligned to the Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership. |
| [Planning for Success In Massachusetts](https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/success/) | Planning for Success (PfS) is an inclusive, hands-on planning process designed to build district and school capacity and coherence while also building community understanding and support. |

Table C2. Resources to Support Curriculum and Instruction

| Resource | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [Coherence Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/csdp/guidebook/coherence-guidebook.pdf) | The guidebook illustrates a systems-level path toward deeper learning. School system leaders and teams may use the guidebook, along with its companion self-assessment, to articulate a vision of deeper learning, identify high-leverage instructional priorities, refine tiered supports, and leverage systems and structures—all in service of the articulated vision. |
| [Curriculum Frameworks Resources](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/) | Some of the most frequently used resources include “What to Look For” classroom observation guides; the Family Guides to help families understand what students are expected to know and do by the end of each grade; and the Standards Navigator tool and app, which can be used to explore the standards, see how they are connected to other standards and related student work samples, reference guides, and definitions. |
| [Curriculum Matters Webpage](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/default.html) | A suite of resources to support the use of high-quality curriculum, including [IMplement MA](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/implement-ma.html), our recommended four-phase process to prepare for, select, launch, and implement new high-quality instructional materials with key tasks and action steps. Also includes [CURATE](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate/default.html), which convenes panels of Massachusetts teachers to review and rate evidence on the quality and alignment of specific curricular materials and then publish their findings for educators across the Commonwealth to consult. |
| [Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) Curriculum Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/dlcs/curriculum-guide.pdf?v=4/12/2023) | The DLCS Curriculum Guide provides curricular overviews for schools to engage students in learning digital literacy and computer science (DLCS) concepts and skills aligned to the standards found in the 2016 Massachusetts DLCS Framework. |
| [Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/ccr/ewis/) | Tools for districts to identify students who are at risk of not meeting important academic goals to help students get back on track. This comprehensive system spans first grade through high school graduation and beyond. |
| [Foundations for Inclusive Practices](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/guidebook/) | This Guidebook includes tools for districts, schools, and educators that are aligned to the MA Educator Evaluation Framework and promote evidence-based best practices for inclusion. |
| [Guidebook of Culturally Diverse Artists and Artworks](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Finstruction%2Farts%2Fdiverse-arts-guidebook.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) | The purpose of this resource is to promote culturally responsive teaching in the arts through the study of culturally diverse artists and their artworks. This guidebook highlights art made by people with racial identities that historically have been and continue to be marginalized. |
| [Mass Literacy Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/massliteracy/) | An interactive site with research, information, and resources on evidence-based practices for early literacy that are culturally responsive and sustaining. There is current information on complex text, fluent word reading, language comprehension, students experiencing reading difficulties, equity in literacy, how to support a multitiered system of support for ELA/literacy, and much more. |
| [Massachusetts Blueprint for English Learner Success](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/blueprint/default.html) | Framework for English learner education in MA, with embedded Quick Reference Guides (QRGs) and other resources to support implementation. |
| Massachusetts Curricular Resources:   * [Appleseeds](https://sites.google.com/view/appleseedsk2/home) * [Investigating History](https://www.doe.mass.edu/investigatinghistory/) * [OpenSciEd](https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/ste/openscied.html) | Free, open-source curricular resources aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. |
| [Planning for Deeper Learning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/kaleidoscope/planning/default.html) | KCL worked with educators and leaders across the Commonwealth to develop tools, protocols, examples, and professional learning experiences. |
| [Supporting Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/culturally-sustaining/default.html) | Culturally and linguistically sustaining practices are essential for all students in the classroom, regardless of their background, culture, or identity. |
| [Synthesized ILT Framework](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.doe.mass.edu%2Fcsdp%2Fguidebook%2Fappendix-ilt-framework.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) | District and school teams can use this resource to reflect and identify specific actions they could take to establish or improve their instructional leadership teams (ILTs). |

Table C3. Resources to Support Assessment

| Resource | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [Approved Early Language and Literacy Assessments for Preschool](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/default.html) | DESE's Early Learning Team in collaboration with EEC is working with a vendor to approve preschool language and literacy assessments to support classroom instruction. |
| [Assessment Literacy Continuum](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/continuum.pdf) | Tool to help teachers identify what aspects of assessment literacy they should focus on for their own goal setting. |
| [District Data Team Toolkit](http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/toolkit/) | A set of resources to help a district establish, grow, and maintain a culture of inquiry and data use through a district data team. |
| [Early Literacy Universal Screening Assessments](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/screening-assessments.html) | Guidance and support for schools and districts to select and use an early literacy universal screening assessment. Grant funding may be available. |
| [Student Assessment](https://www.doe.mass.edu/assessment/) | Statewide assessments help parents, students, educators, and policymakers determine where districts, schools, and students are meeting expectations and where they need additional support. |

Table C4. Resources to Support Human Resources and Professional Development

| Resource | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [Early Literacy Observation Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/early-literacy-observation.html) | This tool supports the observation and provision of high-quality feedback to teacher candidates on their practice in evidence-based early literacy. |
| [Educator Evaluation Implementation Resources](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/implementation/default.html) | A suite of resources and practical tools for effective and equitable implementation of educator evaluation, including Focus Indicators, a subset of Indicators from the Classroom Teacher and School Level Administrator Rubrics that represent high-priority practices for the school year. |
| Induction and Mentoring:   * [Teacher Induction and Mentoring](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/default.html) * [Principal Induction and Mentoring](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/mentor/principal.html) | Resources that highlight best practices and reinforce the recently updated guidelines and standards for induction and mentoring. |
| [Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel/) | Information on MTEL exams, MTEL alternatives, and licensure requirements for educators. |
| [OPTIC](https://www.ma-optic.com/) | A professional development tool that supports Massachusetts educators to build a shared understanding of high-quality instruction and improve the feedback that teachers receive. |
| [Professional Learning Partner Guide](https://plpartnerguide.org/) | A free, online, searchable list of vetted professional development providers who have expertise in specific sets of high-quality instructional materials. Schools and districts can use this guide to easily find PD providers to support the launch or implementation of high-quality instructional materials. |
| [“What to Look For” Observation Guides](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/observation/) | Observation tools to help district staff observe instruction. |
| [Talent Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edeffectiveness/talent-guide/default.html) | An online hub of resources, considerations, and updates for recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and supporting educators and school staff, with a focus on equity. |
| [WIDA Professional Development](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/prof-learning/wida/default.html) | WIDA professional development provides great information and strategies to support multilingual learners in Massachusetts public schools, and WIDA PDPs satisfy educator licensure renewal requirements. These DESE Sponsored courses are available at no cost to participants and are perfect for teams of teachers seeking impactful collaboration to support students' access to rigorous course content. |

Table C5. Resources to Support Student Support

| Resource | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [Bullying Prevention and Intervention](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/bullying/default.html) | DESE’s Guidance and Technical Assistance for districts/schools related to state requirements around bullying prevention and intervention. |
| Emergency Management   * [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools](https://rems.ed.gov/) (Federal Guidance) * [Emergency Management Planning](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/emergencyplan/default.html) (State Guidance) | Guidance and Technical Assistance for districts/schools related to emergency management planning and implementation. |
| Family Partnerships   * [DESE Family Portal](https://www.doe.mass.edu/families/) * [Strengthening Partnerships: A Framework for Prenatal through Young Adulthood Family Engagement in Massachusetts](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/family-engagement-framework.pdf) * [Learning Standards For Families](https://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/default.html) | Resources for authentically engaging families in their child’s education and centering families voices in school and district decision-making. |
| [Guidance on Updated Expectations for School and District Leaders Related to Student Discipline](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/discipline/updated-expectations.docx) | Guidance on updated expectations for school and district leaders related to student discipline associated with the 2022 mental health law (G.L. c. 71, §37H¾). |
| MTSS Resources:   * [MTSS Blueprint, Self-Assessment, and Resources](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfss/mtss/) * [Massachusetts Tools for Schools](https://matoolsforschools.com/) | MTSS is a framework for how school districts can build the necessary systems to ensure that every student receives a high-quality educational experience. |
| [Resources for Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Students](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/resources/immigrant-refugee.html) | An evolving compilation of resources that can support districts in meeting the needs of immigrant and refugee students. |
| [Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Reflection Tool](https://www.sassma.org/) | These resources can help guide school- and district-based teams to create safer and more supportive school climates and cultures. Through a phased process (with preliminary and deeper dive self-reflection options) teams can create plans based on local context and data, and through examination of six areas of school operation. |
| [School Breakfast: Breakfast After the Bell Resources](https://www.projectbread.org/resource-directory/breakfast-after-the-bell-resources) | The Breakfast After the Bell Toolkit Series is designed to help with the launch and implementation of alternative breakfast models. |
| [School Wellness Initiative for Thriving Community Health](https://massschoolwellness.org/) (SWITCH) | SWITCH provides resources that support and advance wellness efforts for Massachusetts students, schools, and communities. |
| Social Emotional Learning:   * [SEL Resources Grades 1-3](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/resources/sel1-3/resources-g1-3.docx) * [SEL Guide](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/bullying/selguide.docx) (K-12) * [SEL/APL Standards](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/resources/#standards) (PK/K) * [Playful Learning Institute, Preschool through 3rd Grade](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/earlylearning/pli.html) * [Culturally Responsive Social-Emotional Competency Development](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/sel/sel-all.docx) | These resources provide evidence-based and developmentally appropriate guidance around supporting social emotional learning in schools. |
| [Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education](https://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/slife/default.html) | Guidance and resources to support districts in meeting the needs of Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE). |

Table C6. Resources to Support Financial and Asset Management

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Resource | Description |
| [DESE Spending Comparisons Website](https://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/default.html) | A clearinghouse of school finance data reports and other resources available to district users and the public. |
| [General Resources for Federal Grant Programs](https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/resources/default.html) | General federal grants resources. |
| [Massachusetts Farm to School Grant Opportunities](https://www.massfarmtoschool.org/announcement/grant-opportunities/) | A summary of state, regional and national grant opportunities related to farm to school, school gardens, hydroponics, school food and more. |
| [Office for Food and Nutrition Programs](https://www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/) | Resources for school districts, childcare centers, family day care homes, adult day health programs, Summer Eats community organizations, USDA Foods storage and distribution vendors, food banks, and anti-hunger organizations across the Commonwealth. |
| [Planning for Success (PfS)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/success/) | An inclusive, hands-on planning process designed to build district and school capacity and coherence while also building community understanding and support. |
| [Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/radar/) | RADAR is a suite of innovative data reports, case studies, and other resources that provide a new approach to resource decisions. |
| [Spending Money Wisely: Getting the Most From School District Budgets (scroll down to Research section)](https://gtlcenter.org/products-resources/spending-money-wisely-getting-most-school-district-budgets) | A discussion of the top 10 opportunities for districts to realign resources and free up funds to support strategic priorities. |
| [Summer Eats | Free Meals for Kids and Teens in MA](https://www.projectbread.org/summer-eats-program?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=summereats_pmax&utm_content=english-2023&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=summereats_pmax&utm_content=english-2023&gclid=CjwKCAjwzo2mBhAUEiwAf7wjkljB4ngm0uZLSTYsl5hK5QGTkC3mKF_4ae_5AUxyrVs6UiPIIrys1RoCQV0QAvD_BwE) | Summer Eats is a free-of-charge program that provides free meals to all kids and teens, ages 18 and under, at locations all across Massachusetts during the summer months. |
| [Transforming School Funding: A Guide to Implementing Student-Based Budgeting (SBB) from Education Resource Strategies](https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/2752-student-based-budgeting-guide.pdf),%20from%20Education%20Resource%20Strategies) | This guide describes a process to help districts tie funding to specific student needs. |

## Appendix D. Enrollment, Attendance, Expenditures

Table D1. Lexington Public Schools: Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 2023-2024

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | District | Percentage  of total | State | Percentage  of total |
| All | 6,805 | 100.0% | 914,959 | 100.0% |
| African American | 292 | 4.3% | 88,104 | 9.6% |
| Asian | 3,103 | 45.6% | 67,847 | 7.4% |
| Hispanic | 379 | 5.6% | 229,930 | 25.1% |
| Native American | 2 | 0.0% | 2,178 | 0.2% |
| White | 2,468 | 36.3% | 484,692 | 53.0% |
| Native Hawaiian | 2 | 0.0% | 790 | 0.1% |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | 559 | 8.2% | 41,418 | 4.5% |

*Note*. As of October 1, 2023.

Table D2. Lexington Public Schools: 2023-2024 Student Enrollment by High-Need Populations

|  | District | | | State | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | *N* | Percentage of high needs | Percentage of district | *N* | Percentage of high needs | Percentage of state |
| All students with high needs | 2,273 | 100.0% | 33.0% | 515,939 | 100.0% | 55.8% |
| Students with disabilities | 979 | 43.1% | 14.2% | 187,160 | 36.3% | 20.2% |
| Low-income | 578 | 25.4% | 8.5% | 385,697 | 74.8% | 42.2% |
| English learners | 600 | 26.4% | 8.8% | 119,749 | 23.2% | 13.1% |

*Note*. As of October 1, 2023. District and state numbers and percentages for students with disabilities and high needs are calculated including students in out-of-district placements. Total district enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 6,898; total state enrollment including students in out-of-district placement is 924,947.

Table D3. Lexington Public Schools: Chronic Absencea Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | *N* (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 7,133 | 4.3 | 8.1 | 8.0 | 22.2 |
| African American/Black | 288 | 10.4 | 22.3 | 12.8 | 25.3 |
| Asian | 3,189 | 2.3 | 6.0 | 6.6 | 13.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 374 | 9.8 | 17.3 | 15.5 | 34.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 568 | 5.3 | 6.1 | 7.2 | 23.3 |
| Native American | 3 | 0.0 | — | — | 33.5 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 2 | — | — | — | 28.3 |
| White | 2,709 | 4.8 | 8.2 | 8.2 | 17.0 |
| High needs | 2,483 | 8.0 | 13.4 | 12.0 | 30.3 |
| Low income | 680 | — | 22.0 | 18.7 | 33.5 |
| ELs | 669 | 5.4 | 12.4 | 11.2 | 33.5 |
| Students w/disabilities | 1,115 | 10.1 | 17.5 | 14.3 | 30.4 |

a The percentage of students absent is 10 percent or more of their total number of student days of membership in a school.

Table D4. Lexington Public Schools: Expenditures, Chapter 70 State Aid, and Net School Spending Fiscal Years, 2020-2022

|  | Fiscal year 2020 | | Fiscal year 2021 | | Fiscal year 2022 | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Estimated | Actual | Estimated | Actual | Estimated | Actual |
| Expenditures | | | | | | |
| From local appropriations for schools |  | | | | | |
| By school committee | $113,553,757 | $109,906,571 | $118,357,656 | $115,144,696 | $123,376,981 | — |
| By municipality | $50,526,396 | $50,559,209 | $54,513,741 | $47,960,585 | $57,887,172 | — |
| Total from local appropriations | $164,080,153 | $160,465,780 | $172,871,397 | $163,105,281 | $181,264,153 | — |
| From revolving funds and grants | — | $14,977,472 | — | $11,108,706 | — | — |
| Total expenditures | — | $175,443,252 | — | $174,213,987 | — | — |
| Chapter 70 aid to education program | | | | | | |
| Chapter 70 state aida | — | $14,438,034 | — | $14,438,034 | — | $14,647,494 |
| Required local contribution | — | $66,088,777 | — | $67,155,786 | — | $66,509,907 |
| Required net school spendingb | — | $80,526,811 | — | $81,593,820 | — | $81,157,401 |
| Actual net school spending | — | $132,583,062 | — | $141,484,365 | — | $150,016,427 |
| Over/under required ($) | — | $52,056,251 | — | $59,890,545 | — | $68,859,026 |
| Over/under required (%) | — | 64.6% | — | 73.4% | — | 84.8% |

*Note*. Data as of July 25, 2023, and sourced from fiscal year 2022 district end-of-year reports and Chapter 70 program information on DESE website.

a Chapter 70 state aid funds are deposited in the local general fund and spent as local appropriations. b 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.

Table D5. Lexington Public Schools: Expenditures Per In-District Pupil, Fiscal Years 2020-2022

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Expenditure category | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Administration | $507 | $544 | $555 |
| Instructional leadership (district and school) | $1,797 | $1,844 | $1,998 |
| Teachers | $7,889 | $8,504 | $8,765 |
| Other teaching services | $2,135 | $2,285 | $2,531 |
| Professional development | $192 | $279 | $136 |
| Instructional materials, equipment, and technology | $272 | $303 | $393 |
| Guidance, counseling, and testing services | $859 | $919 | $998 |
| Pupil services | $1,926 | $1,672 | $2,027 |
| Operations and maintenance | $85 | $197 | $182 |
| Insurance, retirement, and other fixed costs | $2,715 | $3,478 | $3,766 |
| Total expenditures per in-district pupil | $18,376 | $20,025 | $21,352 |

*Note*. Any discrepancy between expenditures and total is because of rounding. Data are from <https://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/statistics/per-pupil-exp.xlsx>.

## Appendix E. Lexington Public Schools: Student Performance Data

[Table E1. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-2](#_Toc147841819)

[Table E2. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-2](#_Toc147841820)

[Table E3. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-3](#_Toc147841821)

[Table E4. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-3](#_Toc147841822)

[Table E5. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grades 5 and 8, 2022-2023 E-4](#_Toc147841823)

[Table E6. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-4](#_Toc147841824)

[Table E7. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-5](#_Toc147841825)

[Table E8. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-5](#_Toc147841826)

[Table E9. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023 E-6](#_Toc147841827)

[Table E10. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-7](#_Toc147841828)

[Table E11. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-7](#_Toc147841829)

[Table E12. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023 E-8](#_Toc147841830)

[Table E13. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023 E-8](#_Toc147841831)

[Table E14. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2022-2023 E-9](#_Toc147841832)

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[Table E16. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-9](#_Toc147841834)

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[Table E19. In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-11](#_Toc147841837)

[Table E20. Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023 E-11](#_Toc147841838)

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Table E1. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 3,275 | 75 | 76 | 42 | 21 | 19 | 39 | 5 | 5 | 19 |
| African American/Black | 132 | 26 | 30 | 26 | 54 | 44 | 45 | 20 | 27 | 29 |
| Asian | 1,392 | 86 | 85 | 64 | 12 | 12 | 27 | 2 | 3 | 9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 170 | 47 | 54 | 22 | 38 | 34 | 43 | 15 | 13 | 34 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 275 | 81 | 81 | 49 | 15 | 13 | 35 | 4 | 5 | 16 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 29 | — | — | 42 | — | — | 28 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 1 | — | — | 45 | — | — | 37 | — | — | 18 |
| White | 1,304 | 70 | 72 | 50 | 25 | 23 | 37 | 5 | 5 | 13 |
| High needs | 1,129 | 51 | 52 | 24 | 36 | 33 | 45 | 13 | 15 | 31 |
| Low income | 292 | 41 | 40 | 24 | 43 | 39 | 44 | 15 | 21 | 32 |
| ELs and former ELs | 580 | 62 | 63 | 20 | 31 | 29 | 42 | 7 | 8 | 38 |
| Students w/disabilities | 511 | 32 | 33 | 12 | 42 | 39 | 40 | 25 | 27 | 48 |

Table E2. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 597 | 88 | 90 | 58 | 10 | 8 | 30 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| African American/Black | 18 | 42 | 50 | 42 | 58 | 50 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Asian | 260 | 92 | 93 | 79 | 6 | 6 | 16 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 32 | 76 | 84 | 36 | 24 | 13 | 39 | 0 | 3 | 24 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 43 | 85 | 93 | 63 | 12 | 5 | 29 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Native American | — | — | — | 42 | — | — | 41 | — | — | 18 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 41 | — | — | 47 | — | — | 11 |
| White | 244 | 91 | 91 | 67 | 8 | 7 | 27 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| High needs | 134 | 70 | 71 | 37 | 24 | 22 | 42 | 6 | 7 | 21 |
| Low income | 31 | 71 | 87 | 39 | 27 | 13 | 40 | 2 | 0 | 21 |
| ELs and former ELs | 47 | 77 | 66 | 16 | 18 | 28 | 39 | 5 | 6 | 45 |
| Students w/disabilities | 73 | 59 | 62 | 22 | 31 | 27 | 47 | 10 | 11 | 31 |

Table E3. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 3,277 | 78 | 79 | 41 | 17 | 16 | 41 | 5 | 5 | 18 |
| African American/Black | 132 | 22 | 24 | 21 | 58 | 53 | 47 | 20 | 23 | 32 |
| Asian | 1,393 | 92 | 91 | 71 | 6 | 7 | 23 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 169 | 51 | 52 | 19 | 32 | 31 | 47 | 17 | 17 | 34 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 274 | 87 | 86 | 46 | 9 | 9 | 38 | 4 | 5 | 16 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 28 | — | — | 46 | — | — | 26 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 1 | — | — | 41 | — | — | 43 | — | — | 16 |
| White | 1,307 | 71 | 73 | 49 | 24 | 22 | 40 | 5 | 5 | 11 |
| High needs | 1,131 | 59 | 58 | 23 | 29 | 29 | 47 | 13 | 14 | 30 |
| Low income | 291 | 42 | 36 | 21 | 38 | 42 | 48 | 19 | 21 | 31 |
| ELs and former ELs | 585 | 77 | 74 | 21 | 18 | 20 | 44 | 5 | 6 | 34 |
| Students w/disabilities | 511 | 36 | 38 | 13 | 40 | 36 | 41 | 24 | 26 | 46 |

Table E4. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 597 | 86 | 92 | 50 | 13 | 7 | 42 | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| African American/Black | 18 | 52 | 56 | 27 | 39 | 44 | 58 | 9 | 0 | 15 |
| Asian | 261 | 94 | 97 | 80 | 5 | 3 | 17 | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 32 | 62 | 84 | 25 | 38 | 16 | 57 | 0 | 0 | 18 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 42 | 83 | 98 | 54 | 15 | 0 | 39 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Native American | — | — | — | 32 | — | — | 59 | — | — | 10 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 36 | — | — | 57 | — | — | 7 |
| White | 244 | 83 | 91 | 60 | 15 | 8 | 36 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| High needs | 134 | 64 | 75 | 27 | 31 | 21 | 57 | 6 | 4 | 16 |
| Low income | 30 | 65 | 77 | 27 | 29 | 20 | 57 | 6 | 3 | 16 |
| ELs and former ELs | 48 | 75 | 79 | 14 | 25 | 19 | 58 | 0 | 2 | 28 |
| Students w/disabilities | 73 | 49 | 60 | 16 | 41 | 32 | 59 | 10 | 8 | 25 |

Table E5. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grades 5 and 8, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 1,146 | 79 | 77 | 41 | 17 | 18 | 40 | 4 | 5 | 19 |
| African American/Black | 52 | 29 | 17 | 21 | 45 | 60 | 47 | 25 | 23 | 32 |
| Asian | 457 | 89 | 86 | 65 | 9 | 12 | 27 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 52 | 55 | 56 | 20 | 39 | 33 | 45 | 6 | 12 | 35 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 103 | 84 | 84 | 47 | 12 | 7 | 37 | 4 | 9 | 15 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 31 | — | — | 44 | — | — | 25 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 43 | — | — | 41 | — | — | 16 |
| White | 481 | 76 | 77 | 50 | 20 | 19 | 38 | 4 | 4 | 11 |
| High needs | 358 | 57 | 51 | 23 | 32 | 35 | 46 | 11 | 14 | 31 |
| Low income | 99 | 48 | 36 | 22 | 41 | 43 | 46 | 11 | 20 | 32 |
| ELs and former ELs | 174 | 70 | 61 | 18 | 22 | 31 | 43 | 8 | 7 | 39 |
| Students w/disabilities | 158 | 36 | 37 | 14 | 41 | 36 | 40 | 24 | 27 | 45 |

Table E6. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023

| Group | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 561 | 85 | 89 | 47 | 12 | 9 | 42 | 3 | 2 | 11 |
| African American/Black | 16 | 50 | 31 | 26 | 32 | 69 | 55 | 18 | 0 | 20 |
| Asian | 241 | 92 | 93 | 75 | 6 | 5 | 21 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 25 | 57 | 76 | 24 | 39 | 20 | 52 | 4 | 4 | 24 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 42 | 75 | 93 | 51 | 23 | 5 | 39 | 3 | 2 | 10 |
| Native American | — | — | — | 30 | — | — | 58 | — | — | 12 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 31 | — | — | 54 | — | — | 15 |
| White | 237 | 86 | 90 | 55 | 12 | 8 | 39 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| High needs | 125 | 64 | 65 | 26 | 26 | 28 | 54 | 10 | 7 | 21 |
| Low income | 27 | 67 | 63 | 26 | 25 | 33 | 53 | 8 | 4 | 21 |
| ELs and former ELs | 42 | 68 | 64 | 13 | 27 | 33 | 50 | 5 | 2 | 38 |
| Students w/disabilities | 72 | 55 | 56 | 16 | 29 | 32 | 53 | 15 | 13 | 31 |

Table E7. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023

| Grade | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| 3 | 470 | 73 | 72 | 44 | 23 | 24 | 40 | 4 | 5 | 16 |
| 4 | 527 | 71 | 71 | 40 | 24 | 23 | 43 | 5 | 6 | 17 |
| 5 | 528 | 68 | 74 | 44 | 27 | 20 | 40 | 5 | 6 | 16 |
| 6 | 558 | 77 | 76 | 42 | 17 | 17 | 34 | 6 | 7 | 24 |
| 7 | 579 | 81 | 78 | 40 | 14 | 19 | 40 | 4 | 4 | 19 |
| 8 | 613 | 77 | 82 | 44 | 19 | 14 | 34 | 4 | 5 | 22 |
| 3-8 | 3,275 | 75 | 76 | 42 | 21 | 19 | 39 | 5 | 5 | 19 |
| 10 | 597 | 88 | 90 | 58 | 10 | 8 | 30 | 2 | 2 | 11 |

Table E8. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023

| Grade | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| 3 | 469 | 71 | 73 | 41 | 22 | 21 | 39 | 7 | 6 | 20 |
| 4 | 526 | 81 | 78 | 45 | 14 | 17 | 37 | 6 | 6 | 18 |
| 5 | 530 | 75 | 76 | 41 | 19 | 19 | 46 | 7 | 5 | 13 |
| 6 | 559 | 85 | 78 | 41 | 13 | 17 | 42 | 2 | 5 | 17 |
| 7 | 579 | 81 | 86 | 38 | 16 | 10 | 40 | 3 | 4 | 22 |
| 8 | 614 | 77 | 81 | 38 | 19 | 15 | 42 | 3 | 4 | 20 |
| 3-8 | 3,277 | 78 | 79 | 41 | 17 | 16 | 41 | 5 | 5 | 18 |
| 10 | 597 | 86 | 92 | 50 | 13 | 7 | 42 | 2 | 1 | 9 |

Table E9. Next-Generation MCAS Science Achievement by Grade, 2022-2023

| Grade | # included (2023) | Percentage meeting or exceeding expectations | | | Percentage partially meeting expectations | | | Percentage not meeting expectations | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| 5 | 531 | 75 | 73 | 42 | 20 | 21 | 40 | 5 | 7 | 19 |
| 8 | 615 | 83 | 81 | 41 | 14 | 15 | 40 | 3 | 3 | 19 |
| 5 and 8 | 1,146 | 79 | 77 | 41 | 17 | 18 | 40 | 4 | 5 | 19 |
| 10 | 561 | 85 | 89 | 47 | 12 | 9 | 42 | 3 | 2 | 11 |

Table E10. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 2,562 | 62.6 | 58.2 | 49.7 |
| African American/Black | 105 | 55.0 | 46.7 | 48.0 |
| Asian | 1,057 | 67.1 | 60.8 | 56.4 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 113 | 52.0 | 55.5 | 47.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 211 | 64.8 | 57.8 | 50.0 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 46.7 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 50.5 |
| White | 1,075 | 59.5 | 57.0 | 50.0 |
| High needs | 839 | 57.5 | 53.7 | 47.3 |
| Low income | 231 | 54.5 | 51.0 | 47.0 |
| ELs and former ELs | 413 | 60.6 | 57.3 | 49.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 386 | 51.6 | 49.8 | 43.7 |

Table E11. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 508 | 55.7 | 58.3 | 49.5 |
| African American/Black | 13 | 44.4 | — | 45.5 |
| Asian | 230 | 55.5 | 58.0 | 56.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 20 | — | 63.7 | 45.1 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 39 | 55.1 | 60.4 | 51.3 |
| Native American | — | — | — | 46.4 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 45.2 |
| White | 206 | 58.3 | 57.5 | 50.7 |
| High needs | 100 | 58.9 | 54.1 | 44.7 |
| Low income | 22 | 60.5 | 55.3 | 44.9 |
| ELs and former ELs | 34 | 62.2 | 54.3 | 42.1 |
| Students w/disabilities | 55 | 59.8 | 52.3 | 39.9 |

Table E12. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grades 3-8, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 2,566 | 64.4 | 58.9 | 49.8 |
| African American/Black | 107 | 54.6 | 50.6 | 47.8 |
| Asian | 1,058 | 69.1 | 63.2 | 57.7 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 115 | 58.7 | 50.1 | 47.5 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 211 | 65.1 | 61.5 | 50.3 |
| Native American | 1 | — | — | 47.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 51.5 |
| White | 1,074 | 61.2 | 55.9 | 50.1 |
| High needs | 842 | 61.4 | 56.7 | 47.8 |
| Low income | 233 | 55.8 | 55.2 | 47.3 |
| ELs and former ELs | 414 | 67.0 | 59.9 | 49.3 |
| Students w/disabilities | 385 | 56.5 | 52.6 | 44.8 |

Table E13. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Student Group, Grade 10, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All students | 512 | 57.1 | 68.9 | 49.6 |
| African American/Black | 14 | 55.3 | — | 41.4 |
| Asian | 232 | 55.5 | 63.8 | 55.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 20 | 54.9 | 78.5 | 41.8 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 39 | 61.9 | 74.6 | 51.1 |
| Native American | — | — | — | 45.4 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | 56.1 |
| White | 207 | 58.2 | 72.0 | 52.9 |
| High needs | 101 | 58.6 | 67.1 | 43.9 |
| Low income | 22 | 52.0 | 66.0 | 43.2 |
| ELs and former ELs | 35 | 70.2 | 62.2 | 40.2 |
| Students w/disabilities | 55 | 60.6 | 67.9 | 41.7 |

Table E14. Next-Generation MCAS ELA Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| 3 | — | — | — | — |
| 4 | 473 | 65.2 | 60.4 | 49.4 |
| 5 | 485 | 57.9 | 55.4 | 49.8 |
| 6 | 511 | 65.4 | 60.8 | 49.9 |
| 7 | 531 | 61.5 | 57.2 | 49.9 |
| 8 | 562 | 62.9 | 57.1 | 49.7 |
| 3-8 | 2,562 | 62.6 | 58.2 | 49.7 |
| 10 | 508 | 55.7 | 58.3 | 49.5 |

Table E15. Next-Generation MCAS Mathematics Mean Student Growth Percentile by Grade, 2022-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | # included (2023) | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| 3 | — | — | — | — |
| 4 | 476 | 67.8 | 63.9 | 49.6 |
| 5 | 489 | 60.7 | 51.3 | 50.0 |
| 6 | 509 | 67.8 | 63.7 | 49.9 |
| 7 | 530 | 67.8 | 59.6 | 49.9 |
| 8 | 562 | 58.6 | 56.3 | 49.7 |
| 3-8 | 2,566 | 64.4 | 58.9 | 49.8 |
| 10 | 512 | 57.1 | 68.9 | 49.6 |

Table E16. Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2022) | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | State (2022) |
| All | 587 | 96.6 | 96.9 | 96.1 | 90.1 |
| African American/Black | 33 | 100 | 93.3 | 90.9 | 86.2 |
| Asian | 232 | 98.7 | 99.0 | 96.6 | 96.2 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 24 | 90.0 | 96.0 | 95.8 | 81.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 33 | 93.8 | 94.3 | 87.9 | 88.7 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 82.2 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 81.3 |
| White | 265 | 95.4 | 95.8 | 97.4 | 93.2 |
| High needs | 156 | 88.3 | 91.3 | 86.5 | 83.9 |
| Low income | 82 | 86.7 | 92.4 | 82.9 | 83.2 |
| English learners | 30 | 96.6 | 100 | 96.7 | 73.1 |
| Students w/disabilities | 78 | 79.2 | 86.5 | 79.5 | 78.0 |

Table E17. Five-Year Cohort Graduation Rates by Student Group, 2019-2021

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2021) | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | State (2021) |
| All | 544 | 97.7 | 97.5 | 97.8 | 91.8 |
| African American/Black | 15 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 88.1 |
| Asian | 203 | 99.5 | 99.1 | 99.5 | 97.0 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 25 | 95.2 | 90.0 | 96.0 | 84.0 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 35 | 95.5 | 93.8 | 100 | 91.2 |
| Native American | 2 | — | — | — | 84.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 87.7 |
| White | 264 | 96.7 | 96.9 | 96.2 | 94.4 |
| High needs | 150 | 90.6 | 90.9 | 94.0 | 85.8 |
| Low income | 79 | 95.3 | 89.3 | 94.9 | 85.1 |
| English learners | 21 | 100 | 96.6 | 100 | 78.0 |
| Students w/disabilities | 96 | 84.9 | 84.4 | 90.6 | 80.6 |

Table E18. Annual Dropout Rates by Student Group, 2020-2022

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2022) | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | State (2022) |
| All | 2,273 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 2.1 |
| African American/Black | 88 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.1 | 2.8 |
| Asian | 982 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 100 | 0.0 | 2.9 | 0.0 | 4.3 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 150 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 2.4 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 4.3 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 1.2 |
| White | 953 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| High needs | 543 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 3.6 |
| Low income | 176 | — | — | 1.1 | 3.8 |
| English learners | 66 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.8 |
| Students w/disabilities | 279 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 3.4 |

Table E19. In-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 7,056 | -- | 0.2 | 0.2 | 1.4 |
| African American/Black | 284 | -- | 1.8 | 1.4 | 2.1 |
| Asian | 3,181 | -- | — | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 375 | -- | — | — | 1.8 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 561 | -- | — | — | 1.6 |
| Native American | 3 | -- | — | — | 1.5 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 2 | -- | — | — | 1.4 |
| White | 2,650 | -- | 0.2 | — | 1.2 |
| High needs | 2,404 | -- | 0.7 | 0.6 | 2.0 |
| Low income | 648 | -- | 1.4 | 1.4 | 2.1 |
| English learners | 686 | -- | — | — | 1.3 |
| Students w/disabilities | 1,029 | -- | 1.2 | 1.0 | 2.5 |

Table E20. Out-of-School Suspension Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 7,056 | — | 0.2 | 0.2 | 2.5 |
| African American/Black | 284 | — | 1.1 | 1.1 | 5.0 |
| Asian | 3,181 | — | — | 0.2 | 0.6 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 375 | — | — | — | 3.9 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 561 | — | — | — | 3.0 |
| Native American | 3 | — | — | — | 4.1 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 2 | — | — | — | 3.1 |
| White | 2,650 | — | 0.2 | — | 1.6 |
| High needs | 2,404 | — | 0.5 | 0.5 | 3.8 |
| Low income | 648 | — | 1.1 | 0.8 | 4.3 |
| English learners | 686 | — | — | — | 2.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 1,029 | — | 0.9 | 0.8 | 4.7 |

Table E21. Advanced Coursework Completion Rates by Student Group, 2021-2023

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group | # included (2023) | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | State (2023) |
| All | 1,122 | 91.4 | 90.7 | 90.0 | 65.8 |
| African American/Black | 39 | 56.5 | 75.0 | 56.4 | 57.3 |
| Asian | 511 | 97.0 | 95.6 | 96.5 | 84.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 49 | 83.3 | 82.6 | 83.7 | 51.2 |
| Multi-Race, non-Hispanic/Latino | 77 | 93.8 | 90.8 | 88.3 | 67.4 |
| Native American | — | — | — | — | 50.6 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | — | — | — | — | 60.0 |
| White | 446 | 90.4 | 88.0 | 86.5 | 70.4 |
| High needs | 290 | 77.6 | 70.7 | 70.3 | 49.8 |
| Low income | 107 | — | 75.7 | 76.6 | 50.7 |
| English learners | 22 | 73.7 | 70.7 | 63.6 | 31.7 |
| Students w/disabilities | 155 | 68.9 | 59.3 | 57.4 | 36.0 |

Table E22. Accountability Percentile and Classification, 2023

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School | Progress toward improvement targets (%) | Percentile | Overall classification | Reason for classification |
| District | 93 | — | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Lexington Children’s Place | — | — | Insufficient data | Insufficient data |
| Bowman Elementary | 93 | 99 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Bridge Elementary | 88 | 97 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Fiske Elementary | 74 | 94 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Harrington Elementary | 70 | 96 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Joseph Estabrook Elementary | 74 | 97 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Substantial progress toward targets |
| Maria Hastings Elementary | 83 | 99 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Jonas Clarke Middle | 86 | 99 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| William Diamond Middle | 93 | 98 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | Meeting or exceeding targets |
| Lexington High | 97 | 99 | Not requiring assistance or intervention | School of Recognition |

1. DESE’s District Standards and Indicators are at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/district-review/district-standards-indicators.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For more information on the Teachstone CLASS protocol, visit <https://teachstone.com/class/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Districts with similar demographics and similar wealth are based on [Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/research/radar/) (retrieved February 2024). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Average SGP ranges: Very Low Growth = 1.0-29.9, Low Growth = 30.0-39.9, Typical Growth = 40.0-59.9, Exceeded Typical Growth = 60.0 or higher. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. In the *Report on Efforts to Reduce Systemic Barriers to Equity: Annual Update*, the district further elaborates about disproportionate outcomes identified within the district, stating, "Performance differences between African American/Black students (22% in grades 3-8 and 52% in grade 10 in 2022) and the highest performing racial/ethnic group, Asian (92% in grades 3-8 and 94% in grade 10 in 2022) have widened since 2021. This was also the case for students receiving special education services (36% special education vs. 86% non-special education in grades 3-8; 51% special education vs. 92% non-special education in grade 10).” [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. CURATE: CUrriculum RAtings by TEachers. See <https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/curate>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. When observers rate this dimension it is scored so that a low rating (indicating little or no evidence of a negative climate) is better than a high rating (indicating abundant evidence of a negative climate). To be consistent across all ratings, for the purposes of this report we have inversed this scoring. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)